

## **MARENGO: MORNING DEFEAT, AFTERNOON VICTORY**

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### 16.0 INTRODUCTION

#### ***16.1 Historical Background***

Marengo was Napoleon's (still styled Bonaparte) first battle as (effectively) sole ruler of France. For once, French strategy was completely in his control. He had set up the battle after a strenuous Alpine crossing that put him behind the main Austrian army under Melas. Losing contact, Bonaparte spread his units in an effort to find Melas, but Melas found him first. Striking out of the fortress at Alessandria (just off the map from 1301) at dawn on 14 June, the Austrian attack caught Napoleon flat-footed and badly scattered.

Victor's corps fought a tough delaying action—greatly aided by the region's walled farmhouses—along Fontanone Creek while Napoleon hurried units to the front. By mid-afternoon the French broke, and both armies streamed east. At the critical moment, Napoleon's last division arrived. Desaix led the division, in conjunction with a slashing cavalry charge by Kellerman, shattered the Austrian spearhead and drove them back toward Marengo. Napoleon had won a minor victory, barely, but the overall situation was so much in his favor it secured northwestern Italy for him.

#### ***16.2 Course of the Game***

The game starts at dawn and runs through dusk of 14 June. The Austrian player starts with the advantage of position and numbers, but has to make hay while the sun shines. The French reaction will be quick, the terrain favors the defender, and the Austrians must cross the entire map to win. For the French, defense is the order of the day at first, but as reinforcements arrive a counterattack will be possible, and necessary if Marengo has fallen.

#### ***16.3 Folio Components***

This folio includes a booklet of Standard Rules, these Exclusive Rules (including the Combat Results Table and Terrain Effects Chart), a 17x 22" map (including the Turn Record Track), and a die-cut sheet with 80 counters. The Austrian units are on white backgrounds, French units on blue.

If any parts are missing or damaged, please write to:

Decision Games, PO Box 21598, Bakersfield, CA 93390-1598.

You can also register this game purchase on-line at: <[www.decisiongames.com](http://www.decisiongames.com)>.

**Player Note.** *The limited number of disruption and square markers is a result of limited counter space; players are free to make any mutually agreeable substitution should additional markers be needed.*

### 17.0 SET UP

#### ***17.1 Getting Started***

Determine which army each player will command. Lay out the map and sort the units by side and formation. Each player deploys his units on the map or as reinforcements according to the instructions in 17.2 and 17.3 below. Units placed on the map are identified by formation, ID, and a four-digit hex number. The notations "w/1" and "w/2" indicate placement within one or two hexes, respectively, of the specified hex.

Reinforcements are identified by formation, ID, and an entry location (entry hex or box). The turn of

arrival is indicated by a "T" (that is, "T2" means the specified unit is available at the start of the owning player's movement phase on Turn 2).

The Austrian player is the first player. The game starts with the Austrian Movement Phase of Game Turn 1. Place the Game Turn marker in the Turn 1 box of the Turn Record Track.

There are nine game turns; at the end of Game Turn 9, determine the winner according to section 18.0.

### **17.2 Austrian Set Up**

HQ: arrives with Formation 2

Melas (Effective): arrives with Formation 2

Ott (Active): arrives with Formation 8

The Austrians had been channeled across a single bridge over the Bormida River. As a result, the entire army arrives in what amounts to a single long column. The Formations of the army arrive in this order:

2, 1, 4, 5, 6, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 7

All Formations arrive at Entry Hex A (1301). Any number of units may enter on each turn, subject to the restrictions of Standard Rule 13.1. No unit may enter the map until all units of earlier-arriving Formations have entered.

In addition to entering at Entry Hex A, some units may leave the column and deploy off-map, then enter on Hexes 1401, 1501, and/or 1601. One unit may enter at each hex each turn. Placement of the unit on the hex constitutes its entire movement. Units placed on these hexes must abide by the order of arrival.

LOC: Entry Hex A (1301)

Replacements: 1 each turn the HQ begins the Austrian Movement Phase Active

### **17.3 French Set Up**

HQ (Inactive): 1828
Napoleon (Effective): roll one die on T2 for his arrival at Entry Hex I (1828); on a roll of 1-2 he arrives on T2, otherwise he arrives T3
Victor (Ineffective): with any unit of Formation 2
Lannes (Ineffective): with Formation 3 or Formation 4
Desaix (Effective): arrives with Formation 6
Murat (Effective): arrives with Rivaud [of Formation 7]
Formation 1: w/1 of 1204, unstacked
Formation 2: w/1 of 1108, unstacked
Formation 3: w/1 of 1515, unstacked

Formation 4: w/1 of 1515, unstacked
Formation 5: roll one die on T3 for arrival at Entry Hex I (1828); on a roll of 1-2 it arrives on T3, otherwise arrives T4
Formation 6: roll one die on T5; the Formation enters on a roll of 1-2,. If it does not enter, roll again on T6; it enters on a roll of 1-4., otherwise it enters on T7. When it does enter, roll one die for arrival location: 1 = Entry Hex E (0122), 2-4 = Entry Hex F (0427), 5 = Entry Hex G (0729), 6 = Entry Hex H (1329)
Formation 7: Bess: 1828 Cham: 1808 DuM: arrives with Formation 6 DuV: 0603 Kell: 0910
Riv: roll one die on T7; it enters on a roll of 1-2,. If it does not enter, roll again on T8; it enters on a roll of 1-4., otherwise it enters on T9. Arrives at Entry Hex L (2512) if Castel Ceriolo is French occupied, otherwise at Entry Hex J (2529) or K (2520)
Formation 0: ConGd: roll one die on T2 for arrival at Entry Hex I (1828); arrives T2 on 1-3, otherwise on T4 Res: arrives T3 at Entry Hex I (1828) Marm: see 19.4 At-Large Battalions: see 19.5
LOC: Entry Hex I (1828)
Replacements: 1 each turn the HQ begins the French Movement Phase Active

## 18.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

### **18.1 Austrian Victory**

The Austrian player wins if the French HQ leaves the map and/or if Napoleon becomes a casualty.

### **18.2 French Victory**

The French player wins if the Austrian HQ leaves the map or a French unit occupies the town of Marengo (1107) and has a safe line of retreat (see Standard Rule 7.6) at the end of the game.

### ***18.3 Winning a Drawn Battle***

If neither player achieves the conditions set forth above, or if both do, the battle is drawn and the game is won on victory points (VP). Each player receives the following points.

1 VP for each enemy unit destroyed (see 11.2); do not count eliminated steps or routed units on the TRT.

1 VP for each leader casualty.

2 VP for each unit or leader captured.

4 VP for a captured enemy HQ or train.

The player with the greatest total wins, but if the total point count for the winner is less than 10, consider the game a draw.

## **19.0 SPECIAL RULES**

### ***19.1 Surprise***

The French army was unprepared for the Austrian assault. During the Austrian Movement Phase of Turn 1, make a morale check for each French unit the first time an Austrian unit enters its ZOC. If a unit fails the morale check, it is disrupted.

### ***19.2 Chateaux***

These are not true chateaux in the manner of those in France and the Low Countries, but walled farmhouses that could be used as small fortresses. Unless otherwise noted in this rule, they have no effect on movement or combat and may be ignored.

Only battalions can utilize the chateaux. That is done by placing a square marker on a battalion in a hex containing a chateau. That takes no movement points or die rolls, just place the marker. The use of the square marker is a compromise due to countermix limitations; players are free to make any mutually agreeable substitute; for game purposes, treat any battalion in square in a chateau hex as being inside the chateau. If a stack is in the hex, put the chateau battalion and square marker on the bottom of the stack; if the stack is in square, use a second square marker for the other units.

While in the chateau, the battalion exerts no ZOC, ignores EZOC, and may not attack. If other units are stacked in the same hex, the battalion does not participate and is not affected by any combat result, including rout.

The battalion cannot be attacked until it is alone in the hex. Only enemy infantry can attack a chateau. Apply results normally to the attacker. The defending battalion ignores all results except Dx and Dm.

### ***19.3 Vineyards***

Treat vineyards as light woods for all purposes except: 1) they do not block LOS; 2) artillery may enter vineyards only on roads or trails; and 3) infantry is not halved attacking into vineyards across a clear hexside.

### ***19.4 The French Artillery & Marmont***

The French artillery was woefully undergunned in this battle, and fought as separate small batteries. The five batteries (all French artillery units except Marmont) operate normally.

Late in the battle, the French artillery chief (and later Marshal) Auguste Marmont collected the remnants of several batteries to form a gun line. The Marmont unit may be brought onto the map at any time by the French player if any three French batteries are stacked together. That takes no MP and there are no other restrictions; just remove the three batteries and place Marmont in their place. The batteries are out of the game for good but are not considered destroyed.

### **19.5 French "At-Large" Battalions**

The two French "0" Formation battalions may be brought into play at the beginning of any French Movement Phase. That is done by flipping a two-step French brigade to its one-step side (place the battalion on top of it) or by expending a replacement (bring the unit on per Standard Rule 13.2). The replacement can come from a die roll if aided by Napoleon (only he can do this). If it succeeds, place the unit in Napoleon's hex; if it fails, the battalion is not destroyed and no VP is awarded. The counters can be re-used any number of times after elimination or capture, but keep track of the capture for VP purposes.

### **19.6 Austrian Set Up Options**

**Option 1:** The Austrian deployment was awkward to say the least, a testament to poor planning. As a variant, the Austrian player may determine the order in which his units deploy, except that Formation 2 always comes first (they occupied the bridgehead over the Bormida).

**Option 2:** Melas's original plan counted on holding Marengo on the night of the 13<sup>th</sup>, then debouching from the Bormida bridgehead (Entry Hex "A") and another bridge upstream ("Ott's bridge"). In the event, Marengo was abandoned that night and Ott's bridge unnecessarily moved back into the bridgehead. Assume the bridge is left intact. The Austrians now may enter the map at either/both Entry Hex "A" and Entry Hex "M" (2001). Units still enter as a single column at each. The Austrian player may establish a second group of formations that enters at Entry Hex M (2001). These formations enter as a single column. Except for Formation 2, the Austrian may select any order of entry for either group. The formations entering at A may continue to use 1401, 1501 and/or 1601.

## 20.0 FOLIO NOTES

### **20.1 Designer's Notes**

Marengo was a small battle by Napoleonic standards, which affected the counters more than anything else: think of the units in the game as small-ish brigades. The only other difficulty was determining what constituted victory. San Giuliano was not Napoleon's actual base, just a stepping stone toward it; however, its capture would have forced the French to halt their operations elsewhere and reestablish a secure position. That might have given the Austrians a chance to recoup their fortunes in Italy, though given their overall sluggishness, it's doubtful they would have taken full advantage. For the French, Marengo has no value in itself, but holding it means the Austrian sortie was a complete failure and is as good a measure of success as any other. Historically, the battle was a draw, though the Austrians retreated back into Alessandria that night (on what would be Turn 10).

### **20.2 Player Notes**

Being a small game, with relatively sparse units, Marengo is affected by luck more than most games, but luck is not enough by itself. The setup and pace of reinforcements dictates the first two lines of battle: Pietrebona and the Fontanone. Unless the French player is incredibly skillful and/or lucky, or the Austrian badly mismanages his battle, the weight of numbers eventually will crack both lines.

The ensuing retreat-pursuit is perhaps the most critical part of the fighting for both players. The Austrians have to press forward rapidly, but must beware getting overextended: Boudet is on the way and the French are resilient as long as Napoleon is in action.

The French player is faced with the classic time-space-men conundrum: you must slow the Austrians, but trying to defend a fixed line likely will result in too many casualties to make a counterattack possible (in the real battle, Desaix's attack was possible only because a line still existed). Use the at-large battalions (recruited by Napoleon) to man chateaux, throwing tubs to the Austrian whale.

One other point is worth noting. The initial Austrian advantage is almost exclusively one of position and timing, not an actual strength advantage. The French actually have more infantry steps and more infantry units. The substantial Austrian advantage in artillery and cavalry can be muted by clever French use of terrain.

## 21.0 ORDERS OF BATTLE

Formations noted in [brackets].

### **Melas' Austrian Army of Italy**

[1] O'Reilly's Right Wing (3,200 men, 12 guns)

Rousseau's Brigade: 4 Grenzer (light) battalions

O'Reilly's Cavalry: detachments of the 5<sup>th</sup> Hussars, 8<sup>th</sup> Hussars, 8<sup>th</sup> Dragoons

1 foot and 1 horse battery

### **The Center (Melas)**

[2] Advance Guard (Frimont; 1,300 men, 6 guns): 2 Light and 1 Jäger battalions, 450 Dragoons and mounted Jägers, 1 horse battery

[3] Pilati's Brigade (1,350 men): 1<sup>st</sup> Dragoons, 4<sup>th</sup> Dragoons

[4] Haddick's Division (3,800 men, 12 guns): Bellgarde's Brigade (52<sup>nd</sup> and 53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry), St. Julien's Brigade (11<sup>th</sup> Infantry), 2 foot batteries

[5] Kain's Division (5,100 men, 12-16 guns): de Briey's Brigade (47<sup>th</sup> Infantry), Knesevich's Brigade (23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry), Lamarseille's Brigade (63<sup>rd</sup> Infantry)

[6] Morzin's Division (4,700 men, c.24 guns): 11 Grenadier battalions divided between Lattermann and Weidenfeld, a Pioneer battalion, "several" batteries (incorporated into the Haddick and Kain artillery units)

[7] Nobili's Brigade (1,900 men, 8-12 guns): 3<sup>rd</sup> Dragoons, 9<sup>th</sup> Dragoon, two horse batteries

### **Ott's Left Wing**

[8] Gottesheim's Advance Guard (900 men, 6 guns): detachments of the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry and 10<sup>th</sup> Dragoons, plus a Jäger company and a horse battery

[9] Vogelsang's Division (2,300 men, 6 guns): Ulm's Brigade (17<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry), one foot battery

[10] Schellenberg's Division (4,300 men, 8 guns): Retz' Brigade (28<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 40<sup>th</sup> Infantry), Sticher's Brigade (51<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 57<sup>th</sup> Infantry), one foot battery

[11] 10<sup>th</sup> Dragoons (500 men)

[12] Left Wing Artillery (the combined guns of Formations 8-11)

### **Bonaparte's French Army of the Reserve**

All French infantry units are "demi-brigades," or regiments by another name.

[0] Consular Guard (800 infantry, 4 guns): Soules' infantry, Marmont's Reserve horse battery

### **Victor's Corps**

[1] Gardanne's Division (3,700 men): 44<sup>th</sup> Line, 101<sup>st</sup> Line

[2] Chambarlac's Division (5,500 men, 4 guns): 24<sup>th</sup> Light, 43<sup>rd</sup> Line, 96<sup>th</sup> Line, horse battery (corps reserve)

### **Lannes' Corps (part)**

[3] Advance Guard (1,000 men): 28<sup>th</sup> Line

[4] Watrin's Division (4,100 men, 4 guns): 6<sup>th</sup> Light, 22<sup>nd</sup> Line, 40<sup>th</sup> Line, horse battery

**Desaix's Corps (part)**

[5] Monnier's Division: (3,700 men, 4 guns): 19<sup>th</sup> Light, 70<sup>th</sup> Line, 72<sup>nd</sup> Line, foot battery

[6] Boudet's Division (5,400 men, 4 guns): 9<sup>th</sup> Light, 30<sup>th</sup> Line, 59<sup>th</sup> Line, foot battery

[7] Murat's Cavalry (2,200 men, probably 4 guns)

Bessieres: "The Guides" (Horse Guards)

Champeux's Brigade: 1<sup>st</sup> Dragoons, 8<sup>th</sup> Dragoons, 9<sup>th</sup> Dragoons

Du Moulin (detached from Rivaud): 3rd Cavalry (heavy), 1st Hussars

Du Vigneau's Brigade: 12<sup>th</sup> Chasseurs, 6<sup>th</sup> Dragoons, 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars

Kellermann's (Heavy) Brigade: 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry, 20<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, 21<sup>st</sup> Cavalry

Rivaud's Brigade: 21<sup>st</sup> Chasseurs, 12<sup>th</sup> Hussars

Horse battery (probable)

**Credits**

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