

# CHICKAMAUGA, RIVER OF DEATH

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## 16.0 INTRODUCTION

### *16.1 Historical Background*

The battle of Chickamauga was fought 19-20 September 1863 between Braxton Bragg's Confederate *Army of Tennessee* and William S. Rosecrans's Union *Army of the Cumberland*.

Rosecrans had just maneuvered Bragg out of Chattanooga, threatening among other things the Norfolk-Memphis-Atlanta railroad, the only through-route from Virginia to the western Confederacy. Rosecrans was not ready to stop—if he could not catch Bragg's army, he at least might seize a jump-off position for a subsequent drive on Atlanta—so the widely-separated Union corps threaded their way through the rugged terrain of northeastern Georgia.

Unknown to Rosecrans, it was no longer a pursuit. Bragg's army had been doubled by reinforcements from other theaters, giving him a slight numerical edge overall, and a crushing superiority over any one of Rosecrans's corps.

A first strike was made on two isolated Union divisions Dug Gap, but the attack miscarried. Alarmed, Rosecrans began consolidating his army in the valley between Missionary and Pea Vine Ridges. There, along the banks of Chickamauga Creek, Bragg sought another battle. Skirmishes across a 10-mile front on 18 September left Bragg with most of his army concentrated against the extreme Union left. A night march by half of Rosecrans's army partially redressed the balance and put the Federals beyond Bragg's right. Rosecrans then contemplated an offensive of his own. A dawn skirmish at Jay's Mill alerted Bragg to the danger.

The rest of 19 September was spent in a series of slashing attacks and counterattacks as each commander reacted to enemy strikes. Rosecrans held on to his main lateral artery, the Lafayette Road. By the time the battle resumed on the 20th, both armies were on the field and it looked like a stalemate in the making. Then, through a mix-up, a Union division pulled out of line just as a new Confederate assault hit home. A third of Rosecrans men were swept from the field. The rest, under George Thomas, held on until dark, then escaped to Chattanooga. The bloody battle was one of the greatest Confederate victories of the war, giving them an opportunity—soon wasted—to bag Rosecrans' entire army in Chattanooga.

### *16.2 Course of the Game*

The game starts at dawn on 19 September and runs through dusk on 20 September. Both players are trying to control the valley along Chickamauga Creek: the Federals needed a layer of protection for Chattanooga as well as a jump-off point for an offensive into Georgia; the Confederates needed it to split the Union army into easily digestible parts. As the game opens, the Confederates are concentrated for a drive into Rosecrans's center (his erstwhile left), while Rosecrans has gained

Bragg's right flank. Each player must hold onto his position and avoid frittering away his army in disjointed actions. Victory will go to the player who manages to concentrate his whole army for a powerful blow to dislocate and drive his enemy. The situation is fluid, fraught with danger and opportunity for both sides.

### 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 of 100 counters. The Confederate units have gray backgrounds, the Union units 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 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 4-digit hex number. The notations "w/1" and "w/2" indicate placement within 1 or 2 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" (e.g. "T2" means the specified unit is available at the start of the owning player's movement phase on Turn 2).

The Union player is the First Player. The game starts with the Union Movement Phase of Game Turn 1. Place the Game Turn marker in the first box of the Turn Record Track. There are 16 game turns; at the end of Game Turn 16, determine the winner according to section 18.0.

### 17.2 Union Set Up

<b>HQ (Inactive):</b> in Crawfish Springs Box
<b>Thomas (Active):</b> w/1—0910
<b>Wilder (Active):</b> w/1—0719
<b>Formation 1:</b> w/1—0910
<b>Formation 2:</b> Crawfish Springs Box
<b>Formation 3:</b> w/2—1408
<b>Formation 4:</b> w/1—0123
<b>Formation 5:</b> arrives T5 into the Crawfish Springs Box
<b>Formation 6:</b> arrives T4 into the Crawfish Springs Box
<b>Formation 7:</b> arrives T6 into the

<b>Crawfish Springs Box</b>
<b>Formation 8: w/2—0626</b>
<b>Formation 9: w/2—0723</b>
<b>Formation 10: w/1—0624</b>
<b>Formation 11: Rossville Box</b>
<b>Formation 12: w/1—0719 (see 19.3)</b>
<b>Formation A (3 at-large battalions): See 19.6</b>
<b>Trains: Crawfish Springs Box</b>

**LOC: Hexes 0801 & 0111. Hex 0126 may be used as long as the trains unit is in the Crawfish Springs Box**

**Replacements: Roll a die at the beginning of each Union Movement Phase. One replacement step is available for the specific formations identified here:**

- 1, 2, 3—Formations 1, 2, 3, 4;**
- 4—Formations 5, 6, 7;**
- 5—Formations 8, 9, 10;**
- 6—any formation.**

***17.3 Confederate Set Up***

**HQ: roll a die each Confederate Movement Phase starting Turn 2. If the die roll is less than the current turn number, the HQ arrives in the Lafayette Box.**

<b><i>DH Hill:</i> Lafayette Box</b>
<b><i>Hood (Active):</i> Lafayette Box</b>
<b>Longstreet (Active): arrives T10 at Entry Hex "A" (2128)</b>
<b>Formation 1: w/1—1325</b>
<b>Formation 2: w/1—1026</b>
<b>Formation 3: Lafayette Box</b>
<b>Formation 4: Lafayette Box</b>
<b>Formation 5 (except Gist): w/1— 1815</b>
<b>Formation 5 (Gist): arrives T11 at Entry Hex "A" (2128)</b>
<b>Formation 6: w/1—1916</b>

Formation 7: w/1 – 1422
Formation 8: w/1 – 1622
Formation 9: w/1 – 1419
Formation 10: w/1 – 1417
Formation 11: Arrives T10, Entry Hex "A" (2128)
Formation 12 (except Dibrell): w/1 – 0926
Formation 12 (Dibrell): 1810
Formation A (3 at-large battalions): See 19.6
Trains: Lafayette Box
LOC: Hexes 2128 & 2508

Replacements: 1 replacement step per turn

## 18.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

### *18.1 Union Victory*

The Union player wins if at the end of the game there are no Confederate units or ZOC on or west of the Lafayette Road (hexes 0801 - 0625).

### *18.2 Confederate Victory*

The Confederate player has a choice of two different strategies. He may choose either at his discretion. Write the choice on a piece of paper and hide it under the map (or use any other method of fixing the decision) until the game ends.

**Option A:** The Confederate player wins if at the end of the game there are no Union units left on the map.

**Option B:** The Confederate player wins if at the end of the game at least 18 Union infantry and/or artillery units are not in play on the map for any reason. Do not count battalions or any units in the off-map boxes or on the TRT.

### *18.3 Winning a Drawn Battle*

If neither player achieves the conditions set forth above, 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 Trains.

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 Off-Map Boxes***

The off-map boxes represent areas and roads beyond the map edge. Units enter the map from the boxes as reinforcements, paying MP for the first hex entered (for example, hex 2128 from the Lafayette Box). They may use road/trail movement and/or march movement if eligible, or enter using standard movement. Units (including disengaging unit) may exit the map from the same hexes into the box, paying one MP to exit the map. Units in the boxes may make recovery rolls and may not be affected by enemy FOW. Trains and HQ in the boxes are always inactive.

### ***19.2 Forrest's Cavalry***

The three units of Confederate Formation 12 are brigades of Forrest's cavalry corps. They fought dismounted throughout the first day, and are represented as such (that is, as infantry units). When using march movement, they receive the cavalry march movement allowance of 15 MP.

### ***19.3 Wilder's Lightning Brigade***

The Lightning Brigade (1/4/14) was an ordinary infantry brigade until it was mounted (in Rosecrans's search for more cavalry) and equipped (at its own expense) with breech-loading Spencer repeating rifles. At the peak of its abilities in this battle, it also boasted excellent leadership and morale and benefited from Rosecrans's willingness to use its potential. The two counters operate as normal units in all ways except:

- 1) they use the cavalry MMA of 15 MP for march movement; and
- 2) when defending, they ignore the step loss from an Ex result (the attacking Confederates still take the loss).

### ***19.4 Wheeler & the Union Trains***

The Union trains unit may remain (inactive) in the Crawfish Springs Box indefinitely. If insufficiently guarded, there is a change of losing the trains to Joe Wheeler's marauding cavalry.

At the beginning of each Confederate Movement Phase, roll a die, halve the result (round up), and subtract the number of Union infantry brigades (not battalions) in the Crawfish Springs Box. If the remainder is greater than zero, Wheeler has captured the trains.

On any turn after Turn 6, the Union player may remove the trains from the map (they move to Chattanooga by an alternate route). Once removed, the trains may not reenter the game.

### ***19.5 The Rossville Box***

This box represents the northern route into Chattanooga, then being converted into a Union base. One of Forrest's enterprising cavalry brigades was operating along the route, forcing Rosecrans to station a considerable force there. It may be brought into the battle, but at the risk of enabling Confederate cavalry raids.

At the beginning of each Union Movement Phase, roll a die, halve the result (round up), and subtract the number of Union infantry brigades (not battalions) in the Rossville Box. If the remainder is greater than zero, the Confederate player receives that number of FOW which must be played before any Union movement is made.

### ***19.6 "At-Large" Battalions***

Each side has three "A" Formation battalions. Set them aside at the beginning of the game. Each battalion may be brought into play at the beginning of any Movement Phase of the owning player. This is done by expending a replacement (bring the unit on per Standard Rule 13.2). The replacement can come from a die roll if aided by Thomas (only he can do this). If it succeeds, place the unit on Thomas'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).

## **20.0 FOLIO NOTES**

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

The Chickamauga folio was one of the best “players” of the original *Blue & Gray* series, a hammer-and-tongs game in which both players had to attack and defend. Unfortunately, the only way to make that situation work was to use a completely ahistorical deployment and victory conditions that mirrored what had happened rather than what the commanders had planned.

To avoid those problems, I took Chattanooga out of the calculations (the city itself was not crucial: it was not yet a Union base, and the critical Confederate railroad running through it was blocked farther west by Rosecrans’ rear echelon), and shifted the battlefield south to include Lee & Gordon’s Mill. This point provided the pivot for the Union army and was the place Bragg thought was the Union left flank on the morning of 19 September. He had deployed, and deployed well, to attack that place with overwhelming force to bottle up the Federals in the narrow valley. A dawn skirmish at Jay’s Mill caused him to reconsider, a hesitation that would cost him dearly (represented in game terms by having the Confederate HQ inactive). Rosecrans too thought the Confederates farther south and was planning a left hook against Bragg. As a result, he held much of his army and his trains too far south during the first day.

The players thus are faced with a situation in flux. Both have positional advantages—better concentration for the Confederates, a better flank position for the Union—and a variety of options for winning. Both also start without headquarters, meaning the movement of the units on the map will be unpredictable. It is my hope that these factors will cause the game to exhibit some of the haphazardness of the original battle.

### *20.2 Player Notes*

You must make a plan. The Union player will be tempted to rush the units at Lee & Gordon’s Mill northward to plug the gaping hole in the Union line. The Confederate equally will be tempted to launch the four divisions north of Dalton’s Ford into that gap. On both counts, restraint is the wiser choice. Both armies will need half the first day to get fully deployed, and both are too strong to succumb to a lightning strike.

That said, the battle will be won or lost in the center, along the Lafayette Road. Take the time to concentrate, and do so with a view to gaining a favorable position for a major attack on the second day.

### 21.0 ORDERS OF BATTLE

Formations noted in [brackets]. All the artillery units represent corps-level reserves; they are included with specific formations solely for purposes of deployment/arrival.

#### Confederate Army of Tennessee

##### Braxton Bragg

##### Leonidas Polk’s Corps

Cheatham’s Division [1]: Jackson, Maney, Smith, Strahl, Wright, Polk’s Artillery (6,000 men, 20 guns)

Hindman’s Division [2]: Anderson, Deas, Manigault (6,000 men, 12 guns)

##### D.H. Hill’s Corps

Breckenridge’s Division [3]: Adams, Helms, Stovall, Hill’s Artillery (3,500 men, 16 guns)

Cleburne’s Division [4]: Deshler, Polk, Wood (5,500 men, 16 guns)

##### W.H. Walker’s (Reserve) Corps

Walker’s Division [5]: Ector, Gist, Wilson, Reserve Artillery (3,750 men, 8 guns)

Liddell’s Division [6]: Liddell, Walthall (3,500 men, 8 guns)

##### Simon Buckner’s (East Tennessee) Corps

Preston’s Division [7]: Gracie, Kelly, Trigg, Hindman’s Artillery (4,250 men, 20 guns)

Stewart’s Division [8]: Bate, Brown, Clayton (4,000 men, 24 guns)

##### James Longstreet’s Corps

Johnson’s Provisional Division [9]: Gregg, Johnson, McNair (3,500 men, 12 guns)

Hood’s Division [10; incomplete]: Benning, Law, Robertson (4,250 men)

**McLaws' (Kershaw's) Division [11; incomplete]: Humphries, Kershaw (3,500 men)**

**N.B. Forrest's Cavalry Corps [12; incomplete]**

**Armstrong, Davidson, Dibrell (3,250 men, 12 guns)**

**Total Strength: 47,750 infantrymen, 168 guns**

**(20 reserve cannon are included; 5 cavalry brigades are not)**

**Union Army of the Cumberland**

**William S. Rosecrans**

**George Thomas' 14<sup>th</sup> Corps**

**Baird's 1<sup>st</sup> Division [1]: 1/1/14, 2/1/14, 3/1/14, 14<sup>th</sup> Corps Artillery - A (4,500 men, 18 guns)**

**Negley's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division [2]: 1/2/14, 2/2/14, 3/2/14, 14<sup>th</sup> Corps Artillery - B (4,000 men, 18 guns)**

**Brannan's 3<sup>rd</sup> Division [3]: 1/3/14, 2/3/14, 3/3/14 (6,000 men, 18 guns)**

**Reynolds' 4<sup>th</sup> Division [4]: 2/4/14, 3/4/14 (3,000 men, 12 guns)**

**Alexander McCook's 20<sup>th</sup> Corps**

**Davis' 1<sup>st</sup> Division [5]: 2/1/20, 3/1/20 (2,500 men, 18 guns)**

**Johnson's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division [6]: 1/2/20, 2/2/20, 3/2/20 (3,500 men, 18 guns)**

**Sheridan's 3<sup>rd</sup> Division [7]: 1/3/20, 2/3/20, 3/3/20, 20<sup>th</sup> Corps Artillery (3,750 men, 18 guns)**

**Thomas Crittenden's 21<sup>st</sup> Corps**

**Wood's 1<sup>st</sup> Division [8]: 1/1/21, 3/1/21, 21<sup>st</sup> Corps Artillery (2,750 men, 20 guns)**

**Palmer's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division [9]: 1/2/21, 2/2/21, 3/2/21 (4,250 men, 18 guns)**

**Van Cleve's 3<sup>rd</sup> Division [10]: 1/3/21, 2/3/21, 3/3/21 (3,750 men, 18 guns)**

**Gordon Granger's Reserve Corps [11; incomplete]**

**Steedman's 1<sup>st</sup> Division: 1/1/Res, 2/1/Res (3,750 men, 12 guns)**

**2//2/Res (1,500 men, 6 guns)**

**Wilder's Lightning Brigade [12]: 1/4/14 (1,750 men, 6 guns)**

**Total Strength: 45,000 infantrymen, 200 guns**

**(2 infantry and 5 cavalry brigades excluded)**

**Credits**

**Design: Chris Perello**

**Map: Joseph Youst**

**Counters: Larry Hoffman**

**Production: Callie Cummins**

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