

Campaign Marengo – Scenario Designer Notes

Dedication

This product is dedicated to the late Warren Bajan whose devotion to the study of the Napoleonic Wars, friendship and wit was a great help to me during the production of four games. Warren was fluent in German and could also read French. His uniform knowledge was simply amazing. I will also greatly miss our sports discussions as Warren longed for a return to glory for the New York Jets and Knicks sports teams. He was also a diehard Yankee fan. Warren is greatly missed but not forgotten. He served his country as a tank platoon commander during in the early 1980s in West Germany first in M55 Sheridans with its sophisticated missile and gun weapon system and then in the M60 tank. SALUTE!

Introduction

Since first having read “Campaigns of Napoleon” by Dr. David Chandler when I was a youth in the late 1970s, I have had a great interest in the campaigns in Northern Italy. I owned several of the board games that dealt with the campaigns in Northern Italy such as SPI’s “Napoleon at War” Quad and OSG’s “Bonaparte in Italy.” It has been an honor to be the Scenario Designer and Project Coordinator for Campaign Marengo.

Planning

From 2006 to 2008 I was given full support by John Tiller to produce Campaign Marengo. I was hard at work on Austerlitz during this period of time and in 2009 I started work on the 1813-14 game trilogy.

Meanwhile, Marengo Campaign had to wait while we produced one of our most popular titles to date: Campaign Leipzig. During this time I produced a short list of battles of the period 1796-1800 for Campaign Marengo. Included were Marengo, Castiglione, Rivoli and Arcole.

I had to decide the scope of the game. Would we cover just Northern Italy or some of the other battles that were fought in Switzerland, the Rhine and in Holland? Eventually work was done on many of the battles in these other theaters but the focus would remain on Northern Italy for Campaign Marengo. A subsequent game could cover the other theaters.

I did not know much about the 1799 campaign before I began to work on this game. I knew that the great Marshall Suvorov commanded the Russian forces but had no idea of the extent of the defeat of three French armies faced by the Allies. Of the Russian army’s heroic march into Switzerland I knew next to nothing. I decided that Duffy’s book was a good place to start but Enrico Acerbi’s articles on the Napoleon Series website turned out to be of great importance in our work.

The 1796-97 campaign had been a favorite of mine in my youth and still remains a great start to study Bonaparte’s brilliance. I had very little hard information on the order of battle for either army. “Road to Rivoli” was a great book during the design process along with the order of battle files of George Nafziger.

The 1800 Marengo Campaign was one of my favorites. I knew that getting order of battle information was not going to be difficult. I decided that the Battle of Marengo and the previous encounter at Casteggio-Montebello would come first in production.

Having gathered together a long list of battles for all three campaigns I set out to work on the project in earnest in 2013.

Research

Once I had determined which campaigns and battles to include in Campaign Marengo I needed to gather materials that would aid me in the work. As mentioned above, the articles written by Enrico Acerbi were of great importance for work on the 1799 campaign in Northern Italy. I purchased many works for the campaigns (see Bibliography) which included books on the uniforms of the period.

For 1800 I made great use of James Arnold's "Marengo and Hohenlinden." His order of battle info on the Battle of Marengo was invaluable. Add in the many works that I bought or articles I read online. Emails between our team and Historical Consultants aided me greatly as well.

For 1799 I made great use of Enrico Acerbi's articles on the Napoleon Series website as well as his information kindly provided to me via emails. Duffy's book was a great read as well giving me information on actions that Enrico did not cover such as the Battle of Magnano.

For 1796-97 I used the Boycott-Brown book "Road to Rivoli" along with other works I had on hand. In particular, the book on the Castiglione campaign by Bernhard Voykowitsch was a huge help! It is a shame that he was not able to continue producing great works like that. I will never forget the hunt for the order of battle for FML Davidovich's columns near Rivoli for the Arcole campaign. Much data was available for Alvinczy's columns but almost next to nothing on the right hand pincer coming out of the Alps. I finally located the information I needed on a Napoleonic Miniatures forum.

One of the biggest surprises was discovering the Battle of Loano fought in 1795. It was Masséna's victory at Loano, southwest of Savona, that opened the way for Bonaparte to use the coastline in his 1796 campaign in the Ligurian Alps. Enrico Acerbi had produced a board game about the battle. Along with information (order of battle and narrative) I received from him I made great use of his work in my research.

In researching the maps I used a wide variety of sources. I had some period maps of the Arcole, Rivoli and Marengo battlefields. The rest of the maps were based on maps I found along the way.

I had to decide how to model the vineyard terrain. We do not have a vineyard terrain type in the series. I decided to use the Orchard terrain type for the vineyards of Marengo while using Orchards for the lower variety but reducing the height value accordingly. In some battles such as Marengo you will see many orchards which in fact are the vineyards which use a "canopy" style for growing the grapes. In many others the typical hillside vineyard is used.

For the Battle of Montenotte (April 1796), the Forest terrain height was reduced to give a clear LOS through these hexes due to the time of year. The trees were bare and the records of the battles in the Ligurian Alps show that the troops were spotted easily during these actions due to the lack of foliage.

The Field terrain type is a mix depending on the location. If there were a lot of cornfields I left the height value at default. However, the height of the crops at harvest time in Northern Italy does not present a LOS problem.

The uniforms of the armies were one of the biggest problems for research. The Austrian army in particular went through a major uniform transformation during 1798. Knowing which particular regiment still wore the casquette would have taken a lot of research time so please forgive me if a unit that is depicted wearing the helmet in 1799 or 1800 is in error. There is much debate on this topic.

Likewise, the Austrians were using Dragoons and Chevaulegers (both wearing green or white tunics) during 1796-97. They were later merged into Light Dragoon regiments. Again, some of the regiments retained their old hat while others had been given the newer helmet. Warren Bajan was of the mind that the use of the helmet did not occur for the Army of Italy until after the Marengo Campaign. I decided to give all units after 1798 the newer uniform style.

The Austrians were never overly fond of using Light Infantry. In the years 1796-1800 there was a plethora of light units in the Army of Italy ranging from independent Jager formations, Grenzers, and Light battalions. The Grenzer images come in the usual "brown coat" or "white coat" variety. Du Bussey's infantry and cavalry units had their own unique uniform. There is an "Italian Feld Jager" image which covers any of the Jager units.

I found a great website for the army of the Kingdom of Sardinia. They were still using the older uniform of the Seven Years War (similar to the Saxon Army which did not change to a more modern style until after the 1809 campaign). Along with information given to me by Michael Verity I was able to supply our Graphics Team with a great set of images.

The French army by this time had dropped the use of the white uniform for the veteran 2nd Ligne infantry battalion. All French Ligne infantry use a standard looking uniform. However, the French soldiers often bore little resemblance on campaign to their parade ground look. I had considered having our Graphics Team provide me with four to five different images showing them in a ragged condition but felt that it add in complexity for the players when viewing the French units in the game.

The Guides that accompanied Napoleon wore a unique uniform. Their uniform image is contained in the book about the Guides by André Jouineau (see Bibliography).

The Kingdom of Sardinia was transformed into the Cisalpine Republic following the 1796-97 campaign. Images for the units were readily obtained and in particular, the "Legion Italique" images which I found near the end of the project, were of particular satisfaction.

The Russian uniforms varied during this period but only after the 1799 campaign. Thus the images that are in the game reflect those that fought in the campaign. I decided to make the Cossacks values up to par with the French light cavalry. They fought with distinction in 1799.

The Polish legion has gotten a bad reputation by some because of the outcome of the Battle of the Trebbia. In the end I decided to give them the usual good ratings that they deserved.

I discovered that “Neapolitan Chasseurs,” noted by many in their OBs for Lodi, was actually a heavy cavalry unit that wore a uniform very similar to the Austrian cuirassiers. Credit goes Enrico Acerbi with supplying me with a good image to send to the Graphics Team. Mike Verity also verified the information provided to me by Enrico Acerbi.

Armies & Leaders

For Campaign Marengo, Napoleon is referred to as simply “Bonaparte” which is usually what people remember from this early period in his career. He commands two of the armies in the game. His subordinates for the most part loved serving under him and respond best to his command style. The other French army leaders (aside from Joubert) did not inspire the troops as well and the command values reflect this in battles such as Magnano. Many of the commanders in 1799 preferred serving under Moreau.

The Austrians had three main commanders during this period. In 1796 it was FM Würmser followed by FZM Alvinczy after the former became locked up in the Mantua fortress following his aborted 2nd attempt at relieving the garrison. In 1799 and 1800, GdK Melas served as the leader of the army but lacked initiative. After 1800 the command of the army was given to other commanders such as the Archduke Karl.

The most popular Allied commander was Field Marshall Suvorov. The old wily veteran brought drive and energy to the ranks. His initiative to force march to Piacenza from Marengo allowed the Allies to win a crucial victory.

Campaigns

There are (NUMBER) of campaign in Campaign Marengo. They cover the three major campaigns that were fought between 1796 and 1800.

The Quadrilateral Operations of 1796-97 (01-Quad-Ops_1796-97.cpd)

This campaign is a series of linked operations in the famed Quadrilateral region of Northern Italy. These were four operations by the Austrians to relieve or resupply the Mantua garrison. Here is a breakdown of each:

July - August 1796: Wurmser leads the Austrian army in three columns out of the north to attack the French army and resupply Mantua. Bonaparte defeated the various columns one by one with the operation culminating in the famous "Battle of Castiglione."

September 1796: Bonaparte advanced on Trent shortly after the first operation. Wurmser had reformed the army and moved southeast from Trent on Bassano via the Brenta Valley. Bonaparte followed in his wake instead of backtracking to Rivoli and Verona. Wurmser lead Bonaparte on a merry chase from Bassano to the west and after having taken Legnago by ruse the Austrian commander led his men to Mantua where they overwhelmed the small French force facing the St. Giorgio entrance to the fortress.

November 1796: With Wurmser trapped in Mantua, Alvinczy takes command of the Austrian army. The Austrian army is reinforced and is split up into two major forces. Davidovich's column from the north advanced on Rivoli while Alvinczy's from from the east took Bassano and advanced on Verona. The plan was to converge on the French army, which was spread out in an arc from Rivoli, Verona and south to Legnago. Davidovich was never sure when to advance during the operation with the result being that Bonaparte was able to defeat Alvinczy at Arcole. When Davidovich did finally make an advance Bonaparte had moved over to reinforce the lone French division and the Austrians retired back up to Trent.

January 1797: Alvinczy makes his second attempt to relieve the Mantua garrison by advancing in multiple columns from Rivoli north of Verona. Two smaller columns advance on Verona from the east but their commanders are half hearted about the venture due to the small size of their columns. Alvinczy's columns advanced over the high hills north of Rivoli and along the Adige River to assault the French forces. Bonaparte arrives with reinforcements to save the day. Thus ends the operations to relieve Mantua.

There are three additional campaign files which cover the first, second and fourth operations. The third operation is not covered because of the fact that the Austrians were outnumbered and it was decided that this would not make a good campaign situation for the players.

The three additional campaigns are:

The Castiglione Operation of July-Aug 1796 (03-Castiglione_1796.cpd)

Three branches with scenarios based on the historical actions by Bonaparte to defeat the two wings of the Austrian army.

The Arcole Operation of November 1796 (04-Arcole_1796.cpd)

Three branches concerning the actions of the Austrian commanders to merge their forces and defeat Bonaparte's army.

The Rivoli Operation of January 1797 (05-Rivoli_1797.cpd)

This campaign is composed of one branch covering the operations of the Austrian army to defeat the French army at Rivoli and relieve the garrison of Mantua. Both players can choose between one of three deployment options.

Each of these was named after the major battle which decided the operation. They could have easily been named something different such as “The First Mantua Operation” but it was felt that the players would be more familiar if a famous battle named was used.

Suvarov's Campaign of 1799 (02-Suvarov-in-Italy_1799.cpd)

Field Marshal Suvarov's great Northern Italian campaign is split up into a series of phases from the initial Allied advance on the Adda River to the actions of the French generals to defeat the Allies and regain Northern Italy. Due to the long time period between phases no losses are carried over to subsequent battles. There is even an option for MacDonald to work with Joubert later in the campaign.

The Marengo Campaign of 1800 (campaign.cpd)

The famous campaign whereby Bonaparte surprised the Austrian commander, Melas, by descending out of the Alps rather than take the simpler route via the coast, and defeated him at the Battle of Marengo. This is the most detailed campaign in the game. There are a total of 230 scenarios and over 70 “branches” or decision points in the campaign. The French player can choose to advance over the Alps or he/she can order the army to advance along the coast in order to raise the siege of Genoa if desired. The Austrian player can choose to adopt Melas' historical position or he can move more forces to cover the passes over the Alps. If the French player can clear Piedmont and most of Lombardy of Austrian forces he/she wins.

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