

Napoleonic Brigade Series 3.0:

Aspern-Essling

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This document is the synthesis of the former Aspern-Essling special rules book and its known errata, and the adaptation to the new NBS3.0 rules. It includes a revision to elements of the Orders of battles, as well as new options.

New loss charts are provided. They include all the modifications and corrections to the former version. These new loss charts have to be followed if any doubts or ambiguities arise.

0.0 Orders of Battle

0.1 Austrian

Some recent historical discoveries point to a lot of discrepancies between the Austrian Order of Battle used in the 2.1 version and the actual army. The major ones are probably concerning the artillery (as usual in Napoléonic Orders of battle), the 4th and 5th columns and the size of the reserve of cavalry. The new rules propose simple solutions to fix these discrepancies with little effort.

The solutions proposed here have been chosen in order to add no new counters. Else, it would have been necessary to change almost the whole counter mix. Hopefully, this version fits very well with the actual Austrian army. There are still discrepancies in unit names but these don't have any impact on the game.

Here is what you need to do:

Remove from the game the following counters:

Cav 2-1,

Lt-2-4, 4b (2Lf),

C-2C-R, 1C-Rb (5Lh) and one 2C-Rb (4Lh).

Using number markers, adjust artillery as follows:

1b (2Hf) becomes 4Hf, 1b (2Lf) becomes 4Lf, and 2-1b (2Lh) becomes 4Lh,

2b (2Hf) becomes 4Hf,

4b (2Hf) becomes 4Hf,

and add a Rb (2Lh) using a detached battery counter.

0.2 French

New counters are provided to complete and correct the french Order of battle. (Note that these are the same counters that were previously available to correct the 2.1 version).

Here is what you need to do:

Remove from the game the 4Corpsb (3Lf).

Using number markers, adjust artillery as follows:

4b (3Hf) becomes 5Hf, 1-4b (4Lf) becomes 5Lf,

2-3b (3Lh) becomes 4Lh, 3-3b (4Lf) becomes 5Lf.

As the Morand division (1-3) was too far to reach the battle, remove it entirely from the French order of battle.

1.0 General Special Rules

1.1 The Bridge over Stradler Arm

This bridge (24.02) was very improvised. It was narrow and was awash as the Danube rose with the spring floods. Cavalry, especially, was slowed by this condition in that crossing units were required to dismount and cross very slowly.

As such, this bridge has specialized movement costs and effects which apply onto it. The movement costs for this hex are: Infantry, Skirmisher and foot artillery 4 MPs, Cavalry and Horse artillery 8 MPs, Leaders 2 MPs. It is considered 2 hexes for command range purpose.

No stack of units can cross this bridge. All units must cross individually.

1.2 The Flood Dyke & the Breastworks

The flood dyke running between the two villages made an excellent impromptu breastwork and was successfully defended by the French on the 21st. On may 22nd, Lannes also used it to mark the jump-off point for his attack. Its (and breastworks') effects for game purpose are as follows:

for purpose of	Flood Dyke & Breastwork
movement	slope
close combat	fortified terrain ⁽¹⁾
charge	blocked
line of sight	blocked ⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ When attacking a village hex through the Flood Dyke, treat the Close Combat as an attack on a Fortified hex without applying the village fighting special rules.

(2) Line of Sight specials: breastworks and the Dyke are special terrain features that are set along hexsides. For Line of Sight purpose, they are handled in the following way:

A Line of Sight crossing a Dyke or a breastwork hexside is :

- Unblocked if the Line of Sight is ending in (or is originating from) the hex bordered by the Dyke or Breastwork.
- Blocked in the other cases.

Note that a Line of Sight traced along a Dyke or Breastwork hexside is always blocked.

1.3 Essling's Granary and Great Garden

This massive building is one of the legendary structures of the Napoléonic Wars. Repeated Austrian attacks were shattered at the base of this three-foot thick wall. The Granary (34.16) and the Great Garden (33.16) are Fortified hexes and are treated as villages for movement (but not combat) purposes. Artillery can enter the Great Garden, but is limited to two gun points for fire purposes. No artillery unit is allowed in the Granary.

2.0 French Special Rules

2.1 Ammunition Shortages

Several times during the battle, French plans were modified for fear of lack of ammunition. When the bridge of Kaiser-Ebersdorf is down (see 2.9.1), French army can suffer from ammunition shortage (as well as delayed reinforcements). When it is up, troops may be supplied again, and the effects of ammunition shortage vanish.

If the bridge is down:

- During the command phase, roll one die for each command that has been involved in artillery fire, skirmisher fire or close combat during the preceding game turn. Make these rolls after Local Initiative and before checking for Attack Stoppage. If a 6 is rolled the command is suffering ammunition shortage.

If the bridge is up:

- Each command suffering from ammunition shortage rolls one die: on a 1-2 ammunition shortage is no longer in effect for this command.

To a command suffering from ammunition shortage apply the following:

- All infantry suffer a -1 to check to stand roll.
- All artillery suffer a +1 to all fire.
- Cavalry and skirmishers are unaffected.
- Attack stoppage checks are modified by -2.

2.2 The Imperial Guard & the Lobau Island Artillery

The Imperial Guard is a set of divisions directly under Napoléon's control. They do not belong to any corps. Add 20 to the 11..66 roll for Order Acceptance (e.g. 11 becomes 31, results higher than 66 are considered 66).

The two Imperial Guard Artillery units deployed on the Lobau Island can move on and shoot from the Lobau

Island only. They can never leave this island and are completely independent for command purpose. Treat them as a command for ammunition shortage purpose. These batteries were very destructive. Consequently, all artillery fire from the Lobau Island batteries benefit of a modifier of -1, and the range is considered to be one less than normal (one hex minimum). Consequently, such batteries are able to fire at one hex further than the normal range (but no more than the max given by the tables and the visibility, of course).

The other Imperial Guard artillery unit can trace to any of the IG division commander. No orders are required to switch from one division to another.

2.3 Aides de Camp

Napoléon made use of his high ranking staff officers to directly influence the battle. These officers did not have their own commands, but instead were directly attached to the army HQ. The Emperor could use these men as an extension of his will to intervene in the battle. This was a remarkably effective technique.

Two generals, *Généraux de division* Mouton and Rapp represent the men available to Napoléon. These men (when not otherwise on map) are always stacked with Napoléon.

Napoléon can issue an Order (Independent Order) to either of these men. This order is received the turn it is sent, and the French player rolls for acceptance on the "10 or more" column in the New Order Acceptance table. Once accepted, place one of these commanders in Napoléon's hex. He can immediately start acting on his order. The French are limited to two *Aides de Camp* in play at one time. Once in play, the *Aides de Camp* function like normal commanders in all respects.

An Aide de Camp can be given command of any two units in the army or any number of artillery. These units now trace command radius to the *Aide de Camp*. These units do not become parts of the *Aide de Camp* command until the *Aide de Camp* moves such that the unit(s) fall within his command radius (4 hexes).

Such an *Aide de Camp* command exists until either:

- Napoléon sends him an order to return the units to their normal commands, and the *Aide de Camp* should return to Napoléon. This order is handled normally.
- Napoléon stacks with the *Aide de Camp* during a Command Phase and issue him an Order to end the Independent Order. Such an order is accepted immediately (No roll required) and the units are dispatched to their normal commands.

2.4 Lannes

The French Second Corps has two commanders. Originally, Lannes arrived on the 20th, ahead of his corps, which was commanded in his absence by Oudinot. On the 21st, Napoléon assigned Lannes the special task of defending Essling with portions of Masséna's Corps. On the 22nd, when the Second Corps arrived, Lannes resumed command of his men.

Treat Lannes as an extra corps commander. Through orders from Napoléon, up to three divisions can be attached to Lannes, which then act as a normal corps using

the Provisional Corps HQ. If the French player chooses to retain this new corps formation, then Oudinot remains the corps commander for the French Second Corps. Alternatively, Lannes can simply resume command of his corps when it arrives. If the French player chooses this option, then Oudinot acts as an extra leader for the Second Corps. He may be used for all non commanding activities (rally, reorganization, accompanying cavalry charges and close combat) and is available to replace Lannes if he becomes a casualty.

Lannes' Provisional Corps can only be disbanded by orders (from Napoléon or initiative) and this must happen before Lannes can assume command of the Second Corps. Remove the Provisional Corps HQ when this occurs. When commanding Second Corps (not the Provisional Corps), Lannes can attach up to one infantry division from another corps to his own command.

2.5 Attachments & Detachments

With the Lannes and *Aide de Camp* exceptions above, no French Corps can attach any other **infantry** division from another Corps. Any Corps can detach any number of divisions via Independent Orders. Any corps can attach up to one **cavalry** division from another corps. No French brigade, artillery unit, or regiment may be detached and/or assigned an Independent Order.

2.6 Acting Army Commanders

A number of highly competent French Marshals fought here. Should the player be so careless as to lose the Emperor in action, he can replace him with any Marshal. Of course, this matters not, since *Le Tondu* is dead. See the rules on victory below (4.4).

2.7 Other commanders - Fighters

The following leaders are considered fighters. Note that their ratings change a bit also.

Masséna (3F), Bessiéres (1F), Lasalle (2F), Mouton (3F) and Rapp (3F).

2.8 French skirmishers

French skirmishers are considered as elite and have a B morale rating in this game. See the Skirmisher table for their fire values.

2.9 French minor variants

2.9.1 FRENCH REINFORCEMENTS & THE BRIDGE AT KAISER-EBERSDORF

THE BRIDGE.

On May 18th, Napoléon's army began the massive task of bridging the nearly two miles of the swollen Danube to the Muhlau Salient and the marshes beyond. Once built, this represented a fragile lifeline stretched across a dangerously high and fast-flowing river. This exposed the French army's lifeline to both the whim of nature and the Austrians. Historically, this link was broken several times. There are three options relative to the bridge. No interruption, Historical reinforcements, and Random interruptions. One of these has to be chosen.

Historical reinforcement: The game's French reinforcement schedule reflects the actual interruptions. Use the Table to find out the bridge status for the purposes of Low Ammunition (2.1) rolls if using this option.

Random interruptions: here, the bridge status is unpredictable, and can vary randomly. Each player rolls two dice. If the French roll is greater than the Austrian roll, the difference between the rolls is the number of turns the bridge remains intact. If the Austrian roll is greater than the French one, the bridge at Kaiser-Ebersdorf breaks and is impassable for a number of turn equal to **twice** the difference between the rolls. In either case, after the number of turns has elapsed, repeat this procedure. If rolls are equal, the bridge is up for the current turn and roll again the next turn.

At the beginning of scenario 5.1 and 5.4, the French player rolls one die and add 5. This is the number of turn the bridge is broken. Then apply the normal rules.

Note: The French player can keep his die rolls secret so that the Austrian player is never really sure if the bridge is up or down.

No interruption: this option assumes that the bridge is undamaged during the battle. Napoléon has free access to the other side of the Danube. Ammunition shortage (2.1) is not in effect. Reinforcements are available according to the Availability table. The Austrian player gets 4 VP if this option is chosen.

THE REINFORCEMENTS

To arrive on battlefield, the French reinforcements have to be Available (they are on the other side of the Danube, ready to cross), and then have to be able to cross the bridge at Kaiser-Ebersdorf. If the No Interruption or the Random Interruption options are used troops availability is given in the table on the next page.

Historical reinforcement Table

Turn	1:00pm 5:30pm	6:00pm 7:00pm	7:30pm 9:30pm	10:00pm 1:00am	2:00am 4:00am	5:00am 8:00am	8:30am 8:00pm
Bridge status	DOWN	UP	DOWN	UP	DOWN	UP	DOWN

Turn of availability	Units
21 st may, 1:00pm	Group A: 2HC-Cav
	Group B: 2-4, 1HC-Cav
	Group C: IG, 2 Corps
	Group D: R-3
22 nd may, 8:30am	Group E: (optional 3 Corps (less R-3))

Each turn the bridge is up, available reinforcements may cross up to one division plus any number of non-divisional units belonging to the same corps. Place this division on the Lobau island. The following turn, this division can enter normally by hex 24.01. The divisions may cross the second bridge only in the same order they cross the Kaiser-Ebersdorf bridge.

Even if more than one group is available, all troops of one group have to be on the Lobau island before the following group begins to cross the bridge at Kaiser-Ebersdorf. Imagine all the available reinforcements as a long queue waiting for the bridge to be crossable.

2.9.2 DAVOUT'S ARRIVAL

Napoléon expected Davout to arrive in time to take part in the battle on the 22nd. Davout was unable to cross due to the vagaries of the bridge and so never supported Lannes' attack on the 22nd as Napoléon intended. If the No Interruption or the Random Interruption options are used allow the French player to bring on the rest of 3rd Corps (R-3 is already in the game) at 8:30am 22nd May. This corps has orders to move to 25.10 and await further orders. If Davout's corps do enter it will cost the French player one VP per two divisions, or fraction of that, that actually crosses the bridge (R-3 is free).

Note: Remember that the Morand division (1-3) is out of the game.

2.9.3 WEAKENED RESERVE OF CAVALRY.

The French reserve of cavalry is composed of three Heavy Cavalry divisions and is commanded by Bessières. Among this Corps about 2500 didn't actually cross the Danube. Some had to stay on the Vienna bank, some also drowned when the bridge broke during their crossing.

If the Historical option is in use, remove 1-1HC-Cav and 1-2HC-Cav entirely. Adjust the number of wrecked brigades needed to wreck 1HC-Cav and 2HC-Cav as if 1-1HC-Cav and 1-2HC-Cav had been sent on Independent Orders, but do not count these as casualties when counting VPs for casualties, wrecked cavalry units or wrecked Corps.

Mark three losses off the Doumerc brigade (2-1HC-Cav), but also shift the number of losses needed to wreck the brigade down by three (so the brigade starts as a full strength A brigade, and wrecks as soon as it becomes a C size). Give the French 1 VP for that.

3.0 Austrian Special Rules

3.1 Austrian Tactical Formations

Having fought the French before, Charles had begun to devise new tactics to confront French battlefield agility. He was behind a series of the Austrian army reforms in the years after Austerlitz. These, while not wholly successful, did have an impact on the tactics of the Imperial Austrian Army. The most successful reform was a wide spread acceptance of the Battalion Masse formation.

The Austrians can use combat column, but with only 7 MPs, not 8. Don't keep track of fractional MPs, keep moving until you reach the Movement allowance of the formation you are currently in.

Exception: when using road movement, Austrians columns have 8 MPs.

3.2 Austrian Cavalry Cohesion

Through the Austrian Cavalry proved capable at the brigade and regimental level, the senior commanders had more difficulty with large scale maneuvering. To simulate this, Austrian cavalry brigade have to conduct cavalry charges alone, and may not charge as a stack.

3.3 Austrian skirmishers

Austrians skirmishers are normal and have a C morale rating. See the Skirmisher table for their fire values.

3.4 Attachments & Detachments

Austrian corps cannot attach infantry divisions from other corps. Each corps can attach up to one cavalry brigade from the Reserve Corps. The Reserve Corps infantry divisions cannot be attached to another corps. Any division can be detached to operate on Independent Orders.

Exception: V-2C-R can't re-attach to the reserve.

For this attack, Charles decided to split the big 4 Corps in two columns (the 4th and the 5th). In the game the 4th column is called the Advance Guard (AG). As it is a part of the 4 Corps, assume that it is on Independent Orders at start but can reincorporate into its parent structure (under Rosenberg).

3.5 The Archduke's Confidence

Charles was the best commander the Austrians fielded during the era. However, he was also extremely cautious, given to sudden lapses of confidence and occasional epileptic seizures. While an early advocate of a renewed war with France, by the spring of 1809 he felt his army was still outmatched by Napoléon's. Convinced that only the survival of the Austrian Army secured the country's monarchy, Charles was inclined to take no chances with its survival.

Whenever the Austrian wrecked division count reaches 7 or more (counting all Austrian divisions), Charles immediately orders all corps to execute an Emergency Retreat. This does not go through the normal orders channels; it is implemented immediately the turn after the

7th mark is reached. All corps HQs must retreat their full MA away from the enemy, all units on Independent Orders must rejoin their corps. All existing orders are cancelled and no new attack orders can be issued until the wrecked division total falls below 7. These wrecked evaluations include both stragglers and hard casualties.

3.6 Acting Army Commanders

Should Charles become a casualty, any surviving corps commander can assume command of the army.

3.7 Other commanders - Fighters

The Austrian commanders were skilled commanders but, were upset by Charles re-organisation of the army. Treat all 0 and 1 rated commanders as fighters.

3.8 Austrian Minor Variants

3.8.1 A MORE CONFIDENT ARCHDUKE

Ignore 3.5 above. Give the French 1 VP.

3.8.2 COMMITMENT OF THE GRENADIERS

In any scenario, let 1G and 2G divisions enter with the Reserve Corps HQ. Give the French 2 VPs. Alternatively (for the sake of balance), allow these two divisions to enter attached to any corps HQ. This version gives the French 4 VPs instead. These heavy infantrymen were the best troops in Charles' army. Had they been around to help storm either town, things could have gone much worse for the French.

3.8.3 REINFORCED 4TH COLUMN

In fact the 4th column and the 5th column were more balanced. To simulate this, the Austrian player may choose to switch the AG and the 2-4 for set-up and command purposes (in other words, 2-4 becomes a command under Independent Orders that uses the historical orders listed for AG, and the rest of the 4 Corps consists of AG and 1-4 divisions).

4.0 Victory

Victory points are awarded to each side for the capture of important terrain features, for total losses, and for wrecking formations. To determine the winner, total the VPs accrued by each side and subtract the Austrian total from the French total. Compare the remainder (which can be either positive or negative) to the victory levels given in each scenario. Round any fractional VPs down.

4.1 Terrain

Each side receives VPs for holding key hexes at the end of the game. A side holds a hex by having troops in it or being the last to move through the hexes at the end of play. These hexes and their VP values (for each side) are printed on the map.

4.2 Casualties

Each side gets VPs for the casualties inflicted on the enemy. Total the losses for each side and compare to the chart below. Count the hard casualties and skirmishers

steps but not the stragglers nor the gun points lost (the gun points lost are considered separately for victory purpose.) Points awarded for French losses are given to the Austrian player and vice versa. When the French option of using the 3rd Corps is played, both sides use the Austrian column.

French Loss	Austrian Loss	VPs
1-30	1-40	1
31-45	41-65	2
46-75	66-90	3
76-90	91-110	4
91-125	111-145	5
126-170	146-205	8
171-230	206-280	11
231-300	281-371	15
301+	372+	21

For each 5 Enemy Gun Points eliminated: 1 VP

4.3 Wrecked Formation.

Each side receives VPs for crippling larger formations. Most awards are for wrecking corps. To be wrecked for this purpose, a corps must have the number of sub-units wrecked called for below and these units must be wrecked counting hard casualties only (ignore stragglers for this purpose).

Austrian awards for French Wrecked Formations

For each Guard unit wrecked: 1 VP,

Each Cavalry unit wrecked: 1/2 VP

2 Corps, 7 out of 11 units wrecked: 4 VPs

4 Corps, 11 of 16 units wrecked: 4 VPs

Cav Corps, 5 of 9 units wrecked: 8 VPs

3 Corps (if all units in play), 9 of 14 units wrecked: 6 VPs

R-3 (instead of 3 Corps above), 3 of 3 units wrecked: 1 VP

Design Note The VPs for the cavalry are enhanced because they tend to be a disposable asset in a game sense. In reality, heavy losses on the French Cavalry would have hurt Napoléon severely in future operations. To reflect the greater strategic value of the mounted arm - something beyond the scope of this game - I have made them both easier to wreck and worth more VPs when they are.

French awards for Austrian Wrecked Formations

1 Corps, 6 of 9 (including V-2C-R) units wrecked: 3 VPs

2 Corps, 6 of 11 units wrecked: 3 VPs

4 Corps, 7 of 11 units wrecked: 4 VPs

6 Corps, 4 of 7 units wrecked: 2 VPs

R Corps, 7 of 12 units wrecked: 5 VPs

4.4 Loss of Napoléon

If the Emperor is killed, shift the level of victory one in favor of the Austrians (It is bad form to get him killed). Check for recovery until a 'dead' or 'recover' result occurs if Napoléon is a casualty at the end of a scenario.

5.0 Scenarios

In all scenarios that begin with pre-existing losses, these losses count for victory purposes.

Orders are only shown for units ordered to attack or move to some location or other unit. Units not listed can choose between a Defend In place order or assume No Order status. Divisions set up outside command radii are assumed to have Independent Orders to Defend in Place in that location.

PRE-GAME LOSSES:

All pre-game losses are permanent casualties, not stragglers. Distribute each division's losses as evenly as possible among the division's infantry and cavalry. There are no artillery losses. For example: the French 4-4 division shows 6 losses. Each of the three regiments of the division should start with 2 boxes marked off. Where such an easy split is not possible, the owning player selects where the losses go, beyond that which can be made perfectly even.

5.1 The First Day.

GENERAL INFORMATION

First Turn: 1:00 pm, 21st May

Last Turn: 9:00 pm, 21st May

Game Length: 17 turns

First Player: Austrian

The Battle of Aspern Essling opened on a hot, clear Sunday. Once informed, on the preceding day, that the French army was trying to cross the swollen Danube, Charles had developed his battle plan. The Austrians moved into position during the evening to attack the French and drive the French into the river. The French waited, unconcerned, until they could hear the Austrian bands over the Marchfeld.

FRENCH INFORMATION

Set Up:

22.15: Napoléon, Army HQ

w/i 3 18.15: Masséna, 4 Corps HQ, 3-4 Div, 4b (3Hf)

w/i 3 20.11: 1-4

w/i 2 21.16: Cav-4

w/i 3 25.15: Bessières, Cav HQ, 3HC-Cav

Any hex of Essling: Lannes, Prov Corps HQ, 4-4

w/i 3 32.12: LC-Cav

Anywhere on road from 25.02 to 38.06 (inclusive):

IGb (2Hf), IGb (1Lf)

Historical Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
6:00pm	24.01	2HC-Cav
6:30pm	24.01	Saint-Cyr, 2-4
7:00pm	24.01	Nansouty, 1HC-Cav,

Orders:

2-4: Join 4 Corps

LC-Cav is attached to the Prov Corps

1HC-Cav, 2HC-Cav: Join Cav Corps

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

Set Up:

w/i 1 9.25: Lt-2-6, Cav-2-6

Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
1:00pm	4.35	Charles, Army HQ, 6 Corps
2:30pm	12.35	1 Corps, V-2C-R
4:30pm	22.35	2 Corps
	43.35	AG, W-2C-R
	29.35	Leichtenstein, R Corps HQ, 1C-R (less L-1C-R), 2C-R (less V-2C-R, W-2C-R, and C-2C-R)
6:00pm	62.15	4 Corps, L-1C-R

(1G-R and 2G-R divisions are not used in this scenario.)

Orders:

1 Corps, 2 Corps, 6 Corps: Capture Aspern.

R Corps: Move to 30.25 and await further orders.

AG Division (2-4 if 3.8.3 is used): Capture Essling.

4 Corps (composed of 1-4 & AG if 3.8.3 is used):

Occupy Gross Enzersdorf then capture Essling.

V-2C-R: Permanently attached to 1 Corps.

W-2C-R: Attached to AG (to 2-4 if 3.8.3 is used).

L-1C-R: Attached to 4 Corps (composed of 1-4 & AG

if 3.8.3 is used).

VICTORY

VP Spread Victory Level

12 or more French Massive Victory

11 to 7 French Major Victory

6 to 2 French Minor Victory

0 to 1 Draw

-1 to -4 Austrian Minor Victory

-5 to -9 Austrian Major Victory

-10 or less Austrian Massive Victory

5.2 The Second Day.

GENERAL INFORMATION

First Turn: 4:00 am, 22nd May

Last Turn: 8:00 pm, 22nd May

Game Length: 32 Turns

First Player: French

Throughout the night, Napoléon received desperately needed reinforcements. However, before the 3rd Corps could cross, the bridge collapsed again. The French held the flanks and Napoléon chose to go on the offensive. Although they had not captured the towns or driven the French into the river, the Austrians were confident that a renewed attack would bring victory.

FRENCH INFORMATION

Set Up:

22.15: Napoléon, Army HQ

w/i 3 21.14: 4 Corps (less 4-4)

w/i 2 24.15: LC-Cav

w/i 2 30.12: Cav Corps (less LC-Cav)

w/i 2 33.12: 1-IG, IGb (2Hf)

w/i 5 24.11, but south of xx.11, inclusive: 2 Corps, 2-IG

w/i 2 32.15: 4-4

w/i 1 27.14: Cav-IG

on road between 25.02 to 38.06, inclusive: IGb (2Hf), IGb (1Lf)

Historical Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
5:00am	24.01	R-3

Pre-game losses: (27 total)

4-4: 6	3-4: 16	3HC-Cav: 5
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General d'Espagne died on the 21st. Use his Repl side.

Orders:

4 Corps - Recapture all of Aspern.

LC-Cav is attached to 4 Corps

R-3: Move to the redoubt running from 23.04 to 25.04.

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

Set Up:

w/i 1 36.19: AG, W-2C-R

w/i 2 13.19: 1 Corps, V-2C-R

w/i 3 23.26, but not south of xx.23: 2 Corps

w/i 4 40.12, but not east of 38.xx: 4 Corps, L-1C-R

w/i 3 14.15, but not west of 15.xx: 6 Corps

w/i 3 23.35: R Corps (less 1G-R and 2G-R)

23.26: Charles, Army HQ

Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
9:00am	30.35	1G-R, 2G-R

Pre-game losses: (38 total)

1-1: 4	1-2: 4	1-6: 7	1C-R: 4
2-1: 3	2-2: 1	2-6: 11	2C-R: 4

Orders:

1 Corps: Attack along the road to capture Aspern.

4 Corps (including AG Div see 3.4): Capture Essling.

6 Corps: Capture Aspern and Gemeinde Au.

W-2C-R: Attached to 4 Corps.

V-2C-R: Permanently attached to 1 Corps.

L-1C-R: Attached to 4 Corps.

1G-R, 2G-R: Join R Corps.

VICTORY

VP Spread Victory Level

16 or more French Massive Victory

10 to 15 French Major Victory

5 to 9 French Minor Victory

-1 to 4 Draw

-4 to -2 Austrian Minor Victory

-5 to -9 Austrian Major Victory

-10 or less Austrian Massive Victory

5.3 Lannes' Attack.

GENERAL INFORMATION

First Turn: 7:00 am, 22 May

Last Turn: 3:00 pm, 22 May

Game Length: 17 Turns

First Player: French

By the morning of the 22nd, Napoléon felt Charles had committed his army to attacking both French flanks and that the Austrian center was lightly held. It was also known that what few troops there were in the center were Landwehr reservists and not regulars. It was logical that, when he chose to go on the offensive, he aimed his attack at the Austrian center. Lannes' fresh corps and the available cavalry massed for the attack, while Napoléon counted on the arrival of Davout to complete the victory.

FRENCH INFORMATION

Set Up:

22.15: Napoléon, Army HQ

w/i 3 20.14: 4 Corps (less 4-4 and Cav-4)

w/i 2 24.15: Cav-4, LC-Cav

w/i 2 30.12: Cav Corps (less LC-Cav)

w/i 2 33.12: 1-IG, IGb (2Hf)

w/i 5 24.11, but south of xx.11, inclusive: 2 Corps, 2-IG

w/i 2 32.15: 4-4

w/i 1 27.14: Cav-IG

w/i 1 24.04: R-3

on road between 25.02 to 38.06, inclusive: IGb (2Hf),

IGb (1Lf)

Pre-game losses: (34 total)

3-4:16	3HC-Cav:5
4-4:13	

General d'Espagne died on the 21st. Use his Repl side.

Orders:

4 Corps - Capture Aspern.

Cav-4 is attached to Cav corps.

2 Corps, Cav Corps - Attack towards Breitenlee to split the Austrian center.

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

Set Up:

w/i 1 34.17: AG, W-2C-R

w/i 2 17.21: 1 Corps, V-2C-R

w/i 3 23.22: 2 Corps

w/i 3 38.12: 4 Corps, L-1C-R

w/i 3 13.16 or 13.13: 6 Corps

w/i 3 24.30: R Corps (less 1G-R and 2G-R)

23.26: Charles, Army HQ

Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
9:00am	30.35	1G-R, 2G-R

Pre-game losses: (45 total)

1-1:4	2-2:1	2-6:11	1C-R:4
2-1:4	1-4:3	Inf-AG:2	2C-R:4
1-2:4	1-6:8	Cav-AG:1	

Orders:

1 Corps: Capture Aspern.

4 Corps (including AG Div see 3.4): Capture Essling.

6 Corps: Capture Aspern and Gemeinde Au.

W-2C-R: Attached to 4 Corps.

V-2C-R: Permanently attached to 1 Corps.

L-1C-R: Attached to 4 Corps.

1G-R, 2G-R: Join R Corps.

VICTORY

VP Spread Victory Level

16 or more French Massive Victory

10 to 15 French Major Victory

5 to 9 French Minor Victory

-1 to 4 Draw

-4 to -2 Austrian Minor Victory

-5 to -9 Austrian Major Victory

-10 or less Austrian Massive Victory

5.4 Aspern-Essling.

GENERAL INFORMATION

First Turn: 1:00 pm, 21st May

Last Turn: 8:00 pm, 22nd May

Game Length: 57 Turns

First Player: Austrian

After a series of victories in April, Napoléon had sent the Austrians reeling. The Austrians retreated across the Danube (abandoning Vienna) to use the natural barrier for time to re-organize. While the April's battles had been hotly contested, Napoléon's low opinion of the Austrian army had not changed. Charles made peace overtures, but Napoléon preferred to win a decisive victory so he could dictate terms. Napoléon also knew that Archduke John's army was hurrying back from Italy to reinforce Charles, so the sooner Charles was forced into battle, the better. It was this combination of urgency and low opinion that caused Napoléon to take dangerous risks in forcing a crossing of the Danube. French light cavalry, despite being commanded by some of the best officers of the age, did a woeful job of screening the French army. The Austrian assault came as a surprise. For his part, Charles had hoped that the French would cross the river to his front and give the Austrians a chance to catch them while vulnerable. It was Charles' intent to use this familiar ground to drive Napoléon into the Danube.

FRENCH INFORMATION

Set Up:

22.15: Napoléon, Army HQ

w/i 3 18.15: Masséna, 4 Corps HQ, 3-4, 4b (3Hf)

w/i 3 20.11: 1-4

w/i 2 21.16: Cav-4

w/i 3 25.15: Bessières, Cav HQ, 3HC-Cav

Any hex of Essling: Lannes, Prov Corps HQ, 4-4

w/i 3 32.12: LC-Cav

Anywhere on road from 25.02 to 38.06 (inclusive):

IGb (2Hf), IGb (1Lf)

Orders:

2HC-Cav: Join Cav Corps

2-4: Join 4 Corps

LC-Cav is attached to the Prov Corps

1HC-Cav: Join Cav Corps

IG, 2 Corps: Move to 25.10 and await further orders

R-3: Move to the redoubt running from 23.04 to 25.04.

Historical Reinforcements:

	Turn	Hex	Units
21 st May	6:00pm	24.01	2HC-Cav
	6:30pm	24.01	Saint-Cyr, 2-4
	7:00pm	24.01	Nansouty, 1HC-Cav,
	10:00pm	24.01	IG
	11:00pm	24.01	Oudinot, 2 Corps HQ, 3-2, 2b (5Hf)
	12:00pm	24.01	1-2
22 nd May	1:00am	24.01	2-2
	5:00am	24.01	R-3

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

Set Up:

w/i 1 9.25: Lt-2-6, Cav-2-6

Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
1:00pm	4.35	Charles, Army HQ, 6 Corps
2:30pm	12.35	1 Corps, V-2C-R
4:30pm	22.35	2 Corps
	43.35	AG, W-2C-R
	29.35	Leichtenstein, R Corps HQ, 1C-R (less L-1C-R), 2C-R (less V-2C-R, W-2C-R, and C-2C-R)
6 :00pm	62.15	4 Corps, L-1C-R

(1G-R and 2G-R divisions are not used in this scenario.)

Orders:

1 Corps, 2 Corps, 6 Corps: Capture Aspern.
 R Corps: Move to 30.25 and await further orders.
 AG Division (2-4 if 3.8.3 is used): Capture Essling.
 4 Corps (composed of 1-4 & AG if 3.8.3 is used):
 Occupy Gross Enzersdorf then capture Essling.
 V-2C-R: Permanently attached to 1 Corps.
 W-2C-R: Attached to AG (to 2-4 if 3.8.3 is used) .
 L-1C-R: Attached to 4 Corps.

VICTORY

VP Spread Victory Level

16 or more	French Massive Victory
10 to 15	French Major Victory
5 to 9	French Minor Victory
-1 to 4	Draw
-4 to -2	Austrian Minor Victory
-5 to -9	Austrian Major Victory
-10 or less	Austrian Massive Victory

6.0 Random events.

General Note: This is best used with the “Variable Interruption” variant and letting the French Player bring on Davout’s corps if all other French units has entered. A French roll of Delay or Advance Reinforcements has no effect, as the arrival of reinforcements are already handle through the bridge rules.

	Austrian	French
1	Hiller	Train Catches Up
2	Archducial Confidence	Consolidation
3	Personal Example	Tempers!
4	Grenadier Recovery	Check the Bridges!
5	Corps? - Column?	Panic
6	Rain	Fire

Austrian

Hiller - Though one of the better Austrian Commanders, Hiller had strong opinions about orders he didn’t agree with, an attitude that led to his leaving the Army due to an «illness» on the eve of Wagram. If this result is rolled and Hiller’s Corps does not have Engage Orders, his rating drops to 0, and if he has his rating drops to 1. If this result is rolled again, Hiller calls in sick and leaves the battle as if he had become a casualty.

Archducial Confidence - Charles feels a bit more confident! If the VP’s at the moment is a Minor Austrian Victory or better (from the Austrian perspective), the Austrian player might choose to use option 3.8.1 (with the attending VP loss).

Personal Example - The Archduke repeatedly took terrible personal risks during the battle, leading by example in a quite spectacular way. When this result is rolled, Charles must immediately dash off and either personally lead a charge into Close Combat or rally a Routed unit. He may not issue any orders before he has done one of those things, something that might take several turns.

Grenadier Recovery - The Austrian player may dissolve the currently weakest unit of 1G-R or 2G-R and distribute the surviving boxes (losing any stray Stragglers in the process) to the other units of the two divisions, thereby allowing them to erase permanent kills. The dissolved brigade of course counts against wreckage.

Corps? - Column? - The Austrians were organized in corps but ordered about in columns, something that was slightly confusing to the Commanders involved. When this result is rolled, one randomly determined Austrian Divisional Commander has misunderstood things a bit and on a die roll equal or less than his Command Rating he will immediately attach his command to the nearest corps he does not belong to, automatically accepting that corps order. The division follows its new corps until either ordered to return to his original corps or the «adopted» corps suffers Attack Stoppage. Should the player roll higher than the Commander’s command rating, the Commander figures he does not belong anywhere and «detaches» his division from his corps, stopping as if has stopped while on Independent Orders.

Rain - A rainstorm starts and will go on until the player who rolled this event rolls a five or six on one dice during one of his upcoming Command Phases. During the rainstorm, the bridge is automatically down, all movement rates except for the three hexes of cavalry charges are halved, visibility is reduced to three hexes and no skirmisher firing may take place. There is a -2 modifier to the loss tables and the firefight table in Close Combat.

French

Train Catches Up - If rolled when the bridge is up this result means that the French Commanders waiting to cross allowed a few wagons loaded with cartridges to sneak past them. Roll for commands suffering of ammunition shortage as in 2.1 until one succeeds or all failed (owner choose the order). If rolled when the bridge is down a Commander cautiously restricts his troops. A command randomly chosen now suffers of ammunition shortage.

Consolidation - The French player may dissolve all infantry units but the strongest in any division of either II or IV Corps that have no enemy adjacent and «hand over» the surviving boxes of those units (losing any stray Stragglers in the process) to the stronger unit, thereby allowing it to erase permanent kills. The Division is permanently Wrecked.

Tempers! - Tempers run high among the French Commanders. When this result is rolled, Bessieres decides he can’t stand Lannes anymore. An instant duel is avoided, but from now Bessieres and his subordinates functions as «0» rated Commanders when handling any order involving attaching units to Lannes and any CAV-unit being attached to Lannes when the event is rolled immediately returns to Bessieres. If this result is rolled again, Bessieres calms down.

Check the Bridges! - The engineers need some encouragement. Napoléon must immediately move to the bridge and spend the next French Command Phase there. He may not issue any orders while he is at the bridge.

Panic - If rolled during day of the 22nd this roll means that all Wrecked French Divisions must take separate Attack Stoppage Checks and the ones that fail must make an Emergency Withdrawal towards the bridge. This roll has no effect before dawn of the 22th.

Fire - A hex in one of the villages catches fire. Place a suitable fire-marker (TCS smoke markers will do fine) in a randomly determined village hex that was the scene of a Close Combat in the previous turn. Units starting a turn in a fire hex must check morale, as must any unit that enters a fire hex. Units that fail the check become Disorganized. Each time the Turn Marker is moved any fire on the map will burn out on a roll on one die of five or six. (A rainstorm will extinguish all fires, obviously.)

Battle Notes

Throughout the Napoléonic wars, Austria and Britain remained France's most resolute foes. Though repeatedly humbled in battle, they remained steadfast in their effort to remove Napoléon from his throne and the stage of Europe. Although the 1809 campaign ended with a defeat and a humiliating peace as had the 1797, 1800, and the 1805 campaigns, the battle of Aspern-Essling was to prove that the Austrian army was a determined and earnest foe.

The complexity of the Habsburg court greatly contributed to the dismal performance of their army. After Austerlitz and the Treaty of Pressburg, the Mack, Collorodo, and Cobenzi cabal was discredited. Emperor Francis turned again to his brother (Archduke Charles) to reform and re-invigorate the army. Charles was one of the few commanders who had not suffered the humiliation of Mack's army at Ulm and the defeat at Austerlitz.

Charles, though always involved in court power struggles with the Hofkriegsrat (Austrian General Headquarters) and not always on the best terms with his brother, set about putting his theories into practice. During 1806-08, he ignored pressure to join the Prussians and later Russians on the attack and gave the Austrian army time to rebuild. As usual, however, court intrigues kept Charles from putting real reforms into effect.

The Archduke's reforms were partially set down in *The Fundamentals of the Higher Art of War for the Generals of the Austrian Army* published in 1806. Rather than reveal any lessons learned from their combat with the French, it mainly reaffirmed the eighteenth century philosophy of combat. Open order formations were acknowledged as important, but commanders were instructed that closed order was the preferred organization. Personal initiative (at the heart of French doctrine) was little discussed. Handbooks published for the benefit of regimental commanders were confidential and only issued at the rate of one per battalion. Though several of these were published; they generally broke no new ground.

The new regulations of 1806 reaffirmed the three-rank line as the basic infantry formation. The third rank was intended to extend the flanks and for skirmishing. The speed and volume of fire was deemed most important with the average soldier being issued only ten rounds per year for target practice. Line was considered the ideal formation for infantry. Charles believed that a infantry line with secure flanks could resist a cavalry attack. It was a tactic seldom used in 1809 and was rarely, if ever, successful. Battalion movement was done by companies, but the French were still more flexible in their battalion drill. While the Austrians had to form line on the left of the first company, the French could form on any company of the column. Charles introduced "mass" formations which were essentially closed columns. He did not like the three-rank square and felt they were not maneuverable enough once formed on the battlefield. The "division mass" (three two-rank company deep columns) was not popular and rarely used. More successful, and used to great effect at Aspern-Essling, was "battalion mass" (one company wide and six companies deep). It maneuvered either in open order or, if threatened, it could close up and present a dense solid mass. This formation repeatedly repelled French cuirassiers on 20 and 21 May, 1809. Cavalry regulations changed little and again showed little learned from experience. The charge was delivered in a two rank line and did not fare well against the French column. An even larger problem was that there was

no instructions for any kind of multi-unit charge. So Austrian charges tended to be small and uncoordinated. Commanders tended to draw off cavalry to protect the flanks of their infantry units. All of these reasons contributed to negate the fine quality of Austrian troops.

Charles contributed greatly to the reorganization of his artillery. He did away with regimental guns and massed the guns into brigade batteries. His transport units consisting of hired civilians were militarized. Gun crews were no longer dependent on drafted infantrymen. Guns were grouped by weight for uniformity. Although Charles was a proponent of massed fire power, old traditions die hard and many commanders continued to see guns as single units on the battlefield.

As in most armies that faced Napoléon, the command structure of the army doomed it to failure against the French. Charles felt that after the dismal showing of the 1805 the retirement of many commanders was imperative. But, in an old-style monarchy, such change was impossible. Nobility and seniority were held over merit and initiative. The average age of a general in the Austrian army was sixty-three. These men were well-entrenched and gave little interest in new ideas. Generally, they felt that warfare had changed little since the time of Maria Theresa.

Because the make-up of the Habsburg Empire composed of small ethnic groups Vienna looked on with distrust, any effort to raise a "national" army was at best half-hearted. In the spring of 1808, the Landwehr was readied but these troops were barely trained and indifferently led.

Since their humiliation in 1805, Austria had been waiting and preparing for revenge. The war party, Hofkriegsrat, and even Charles, felt in early summer 1808 that the time was right. The powers in Vienna were closely watching the fortunes of the French army in Spain. For the first time in ten years the French had to surrender in the field (when Dupont was defeated at Baylen). Emperor Francis was also concerned with his Empire's financial condition. Never in the most stable situation, the Habsburg Empire only had the money to support its current military readiness for another six months. The monarchy was also concerned about Napoléon's King Charles IV in Spain. For these and other reasons in late 1808 war plans began to be drawn up.

On the diplomatic front things began to go awry for the Habsburgs. Russia, still under the Treaty of Erfurt, wouldn't join Austria. Great Britain after much convincing decided to partially fund the endeavor. Austria also wanted to create a diversion (in the form of 80,000 Prussians invading Holland). Prussia, however, pulled out of the plan.

On 10 April, Austrian forces moved into neutral Bavaria and made characteristically slow progress. This greatly helped the over-stretched French. Berthier, who was in nominal command, had the French army scattered over a large area. Napoléon arrived at Donauworth on 17 April and began to unite his forces. Charles attacked Davout at Ratisbonne, but Davout escaped. Napoléon struck and split the Austrian army. Charles fell back to Abensberg and Hiller to Landshut. Napoléon sent Davout to pursue what he thought to be an inferior force. In a situation very similar to Auerstadt, Davout found himself confronting the main Austrian army and was outnumbered three to one. In the Battle of Eckmühl, the implacable Davout held out until Lannes and Lefebvre arrived. Charles, with his flanks collapsed, retreated with 12,000 casualties. The French pursuit was only slowed by

the exhaustion of having fought three battles in three days. At Ratisbonne, the Austrian garrison gave the main army time to escape north of the Danube. Charles' confidence was shaken and offered Napoléon a peace proposal (which Napoléon ignored). In Vienna, Charles' detractors pushed for his removal, but there was no one to replace him. On 11-12 May, French artillery fired 2,000 shells into Vienna and French troops entered the undefended capital on 13 May.

West of Vienna and across the Danube, Charles consolidated his army with Hiller on 16-17 May. After consultation, it was decided to let the French cross the river before any offensive action would be taken. It was now that Charles (who had established a corps system just prior to the war) reverted back to its earlier organization. He viewed the set backs of April as the fault of his commanders and decided to return to a tightly controlled set-piece battle.

Napoléon, whose low opinion of the Austrian army had been reinforced by recent events, felt Charles was retreating into Moravia. He was also concerned about the status of Prussia and Russia and the arrival of Archduke John who was battling Eugene in Italy.

The Austrians had destroyed all the bridges over the Danube during the retreat, so the task of finding a suitable crossing place was Napoléon's primary problem. He decided that a good crossing would be available upriver from Vienna at Nussdorf. They could use the island of Schwarzen Lackenau as a base to build up before continuing the bridging operation. On 13 May, Lannes impulsively sent 500 men of the 75th and 105th Line to the island. In the six hour battle that followed, they were overpowered and driven off with heavy casualties. Napoléon searched for a safer crossing site.

After reconnoitering the Danube, a crossing four miles downstream from Vienna was decided upon. At this point, the French could use several islands to reach Mühlaus salient on the north-east side of the Danube. At this crossing, the Danube broke into four branches. The French would use the islands to leap frog to the north side of the river. The first bridge would be quarter of a mile long where it would rest on sand-bars. From there another bridge (250 yards long) would span a branch to the first large island (Lobgrund). A third bridge only 30 yards long then reached Lobau Island. Lobau was the largest of the islands (being nearly a mile wide) and would be used as a staging area before the French crossed to the north shore. From bank to bank the distance totalled nearly 2 miles. The perilous nature of this operation—crossing the spring swollen Danube over a series of improvised bridges—was not lost on the French. Time, however, was of the utmost importance.

On 19 May, the first French troops began to cross the bridges and occupy Lobau. The following day troops rowed across the Stadler Arm and driving off Austrian pickets and took control of the Mühlaus salient. As troops built up on Lobau, at about 5:00 pm, in what would become all familiar, a barge loaded with rocks crashed into the bridge at Kaiser-Ebersdorf making it unfit for troops to use the next morning. At about 6:00 pm, the bridge across the Stadler Arm was finished. Molitor's division and four regiments of light cavalry crossed to the Mühlaus and the Marchfeld beyond. Molitor occupied Aspern with the 67th and sent the light cavalry patrolling the Marchfeld.

That night, Masséna and Napoléon reconnoitered the Marchfeld. LaSalle's troopers could give no information on the whereabouts of the Austrians and confirmed Napoléon's belief

that Charles had fallen back. But, just a few miles north, Charles issued orders for what he hoped would be a decisive battle.

Masséna was not as confident as his Emperor. He climbed into the church bell tower at Aspern and saw the glow of thousands of Austrian campfires to the north. He woke LaSalle but could get no new information. Even with his apprehensions, Masséna gave no orders to fortify Aspern. This failure would have dire consequences over the next two days for the French.

At daybreak all of Masséna's corps was on the Marchfeld. Molitor's division was split, part in Aspern and part south of the village. Legrand was in reserve behind Molitor. St. Cyr had not yet crossed. Boudet was occupying Essling under the control of Marshal Lannes. Napoléon gave Lannes control of the French Right and Boudet's division until Lannes' corps could cross the repaired bridge.

Along with Boudet's division, Lannes had four regiments of cuirassiers of d'Espagne's division and four regiments of light cavalry of LeSalle's command. These troopers were under the immediate command of Marshal Bessières. The cavalry deployed in the open plain between Aspern and Essling.

Early on the morning of the 21st, Napoléon held a council to canvas the opinion of his commanders. Most were confident that there was nothing to fear in their exposed position—only Masséna and Mouton expressed reservations.

As the French waited for the repair of the bridges, the Austrians began to form up after their final orders arrived and they had a leisurely breakfast.

Charles had been watching the French build up and decided on a plan to trap Napoléon and drive the French into the Danube. His plan was to divide his army into five columns and advance in a wide arc. Three columns commanded by Hiller, Bellegarde, and Hohenzollern headed toward Aspern. The cavalry and two columns under Dedovich and Rosenberg were to converge on Essling. The troops intended to attack Essling broke camp on the night of the 20th so as to avoid making campfires which might be seen by the French during the night. The plan promised to overwhelm the French, but depended on the ability of Austrian commanders to work in unison. This was not one of their strengths.

At 1:00 pm, the first combat began when the advanced guard of the 1st Column (6 Corps) clashed with Marulaz's troopers. As the Austrians deployed into line, Napoléon received word that the bridge had been breached again and it would be some time before it could be repaired. Napoléon considered withdrawing to Lobau, but his commanders (already under attack) felt it was too late. Napoléon, who thought he was pursuing the Austrians, found himself committed to a battle with 6,000 cavalry, 16,000 infantry and 40 guns against Charles' 99,000 men and nearly 300 guns.

Hiller's corps closing on Aspern was partially obstructed by a low ridge and dust. It achieved some measure of surprise, but the initial attack was poorly coordinated and was quickly repulsed. Molitor, seeing that he was the object of the Austrian main push, moved more troops into Aspern.

As the 2nd Column (1 Corps) and 3rd Column (2 Corps) formed up and attacked, the streets of Aspern were a scene of carnage. Every street, house, wall, attic, and cellar was contested and as soon as one side wrestled it away, the other counterattacked to recapture it. Masséna, who had lost all his horses, personally led his troops forward and drove the Austrians out of town. In three hours, Masséna took, lost, and retook the church and cemetery five times. French élan and personal initiative served them well against the overwhelming numbers

the Austrians brought to bear. Marulaz (who had over two dozen horses shot from under him and was wounded sixteen times during his career) repeatedly charged units trying to work their way around the town to the south. As the French would later do at Hougoumont, the Austrians let themselves be fixated on taking the objective and gave little thought to maneuver around the French bastion.

Napoléon recognized that Charles' plan was to attack and overwhelm the two towns that anchored his flanks. Napoléon sent his artillery to his right to support the position at Essling which at this time was not yet under attack.

As Liechtenstein and his cavalry reserve moved forward it came under fire and then attack by d'Espagne's heavy cavalry around 3:30 pm. As each side added units the advantage swayed back and forth until d'Espagne was overwhelmed and had to fall back to the dike.

These tired troopers were then ordered, by Napoléon personally, to attack the Austrian 3rd Column who were forcing Masséna out of Aspern. Bessières' troopers surged forward driving back some Austrian light cavalry trying to intercept them. The Austrian massed formations that awaited the French heavy troopers did not waver. At 15 paces, they delivered a volley that devastated the French horse. The 7th Cuirassiers lost 8 officers, 104 men, and 168 horses. Bessières, personally leading the charge after a rebuke by Lannes, pressed the attack with LaSalle, but eventually was forced back by the Austrians.

In Aspern at 6:00 pm, renewed Austrian attacks led personally by Charles drove Legrand from the town. By 6:30, the bridge had been repaired and St. Cyr's division was directed toward Aspern. Nagel's brigade of Hesse-Darmstadt troops was posted on the left flank in the woods and marsh of Gemeinde Au. The remainder of the division charged into the inferno of Aspern. The battle continued into the dark, halting after 9:00 pm with both sides controlling various parts of the town.

Because of the distance involved that they had to march in order to deploy, the 4th Column (4 Corps) did not come into action until after 6:00pm. Lannes skillfully held off the uncoordinated Austrian assaults, using the massive grainery as his anchor. As Austrian troops gained a foothold in Essling, Lannes called upon d'Espagne's tired cuirassiers to attack yet again. The cavalry charged, but again the battalion masses held firm. A counterattack by Austrian horse led to a swirling battle as the French fell back towards the dike. D'Espagne was trapped on the field with a mortal wound. Napoléon watched the Austrian cavalry form up in the center and ordered Marulaz to attack. After some initial success, French cavalry again gave way before the Austrian battalion masses. The last cavalry action on the left was at 7:00 pm when the newly arrived brigade of Nansouty's division charged the Austrian 3rd Corps which was working their way around Aspern's right flank.

The action around Essling flared up again as Rosenberg and the 5th Column (4 Corps) pushed their way through the lightly held Gross-Enzersdorf and at 8:00 pm launched its assault against Essling. There, the French repelled repeated attacks. The 4th Column had not fought past the Grainery, while the 5th Column only got as far as the Great Garden. As night fell, the two Austrian columns—who never coordinated their attacks—pulled back their troops for some well earned rest.

The bridge from Kaiser-Ebersdorf had been broken in the late afternoon and killed some troops who were in the process of crossing. But, by 10:00 pm, the bridge had been repaired well enough for some desperately needed reinforcements to arrive.

The Young Guard, Old Guard, Tharreau's and Claparède's divisions crossed over before the bridge collapsed again. As the engineers worked feverishly on the bridge, Davout and 3 Corps waited to cross.

As might well be imagined, tensions and tempers on the French side ran high. Bessières received from Lannes something he perceived as a slight against his handling of the cavalry. This was the same accusation Lannes had made at Marengo nine years earlier and Bessières was still sensitive about it. When the two met that night, only Messéna could stop them from drawing swords.

Charles was confident the French had done their best and brought up his Grenadier Reserve to secure what he felt would be a great victory the next day. He did not realize that he had only fought a portion of Napoléon's army.

Napoléon now had some 70,000 men on the Marchfeld and expected 3rd Corps to arrive soon. He knew that the center of the Austrian line was weak as they had concentrated their effort on the French flanks. Prisoners had also told the French that their center was composed mainly of Landwehr troops. Never one to remain passive when action could be taken, Napoléon decided that the center would be his target.

Before daybreak on the 22nd, the fighting around Aspern resumed with the same intensity as the previous day. Again, as reinforcements arrived the control of the town swayed back and forth. Hiller ordered his pioneers to pull the cemetery walls down and set the church and parsonage on fire. By 7:00 am, the town was again solely in French hands.

The crowded conditions of the French bridgehead was a perfect target for massed Austrian artillery. As balls rained down, there was no safe place for the French. D'Albuquerque, Lannes' trusted aide was decapitated and a grenadier standing next to Masséna was killed.

On the French right flank, Essling also came under attack early. La Salle attacked the Austrians and forced them back toward Gross-Enzersdorf. As the Austrians formed their battalion masses, French artillery trained on and devastated them. To escape this exposed position, the Austrians charged into Essling but were driven out by the Young Guard (their first action).

By 7:00 am, the breakthrough attempt began to move forward. Napoléon assembled Lannes' divisions to advance in echelon with the cavalry following. As these units ruptured the Austrian line, Davout's 3rd Corps, which he expected to arrive soon, would rout the Austrians.

Lannes led his attack columns forward in his full dress uniform. Démont's division of conscripts was held in reserve. As the assault hit the line between Hohenzollern and Rosenberg, the line wavered and some battalions broke. In the center, massed Austrian artillery slowed Lannes' advance. The cavalry charged forward with Marulaz and LaSalle making no headway against units of the 3rd column. Nansouty's replacement, Arrighi, fared better against the Austrian horse—forcing back several units and routing others.

Zach's battalion (1st Bn, 15 Inf Rgt) stood in the way of the French cavalry onslaught. The unit had held against the cavalry, but as the cavalry moved on, French artillery tore them up. As Zach began to dissolve, Charles appeared among them carrying the flag. He exhorted them to hold fast and they rallied which held the entire line firm. The French cavalry fell back in the face of the reforming Austrian infantry.

Lannes realized his assault had hit the limit and requested reinforcements. Napoléon was poised to send in the entire 3rd

Corps but at this moment got word that the bridge had failed again. Napoléon was, however, unaware of the severity of the damage. He ordered Lannes to hold his position while it was fixed. An hour later, Napoléon learned the details of the break and that there was no hope to the 3rd Corps and its ammunition wagons across and he calmly ordered Lannes to pull back to the start line.

The Danube had risen 8 feet and was now a third wider. It was beyond the ability of the French engineers to keep the bridge together. Cannons that had been sunk as anchors rested on a gravel bed. The stronger current began to pull them, and the pontoons they anchored, downstream. Upstream, the Austrians found a floating mill which they covered with tar, set on fire, and sent downstream toward the bridge. French engineers in small boats tried heroically to deflect this fire boat. The burning mill crashed into the bridge with such force that pontoons, pontonniers, and even General Perneti of the engineers were washed downstream. For two days the French engineers had fought a losing battle against the river and the Austrians to keep the bridge open.

While the situation in the center was critical, the Austrians attacked on both flanks with a ferocity the French had never seen before. After artillery barrages, the Austrians charged into the smoking ruins of Aspern only to be overwhelmed by the Young Guard. Austrian reinforcements forced the French out and by 1:00 pm, the Austrians were in sole possession of Aspern. At Essling, Austrian grenadiers under Charles and Liechtenstein forced their way over the walls of the Great Garden and up the iron shutters of the granary.

With the news that the bridge was down and would stay that way for at least the rest of the day, that Lannes' assault was forced back, that fighting raged on both flanks, that the Austrians had taken Aspern, and that he was almost out of ammunition, Napoléon chose to order a withdrawal to Lobau at 2:00 pm. As these orders were being issued, Charles' 200 guns opened up signalling the Austrian counterattack.

French guns opened up to provide cover for the withdrawal. The Old Guard stood ready as the rest of the army withdrew to the bridge. It was then that Napoléon chose to launch a small counterattack to slow the Austrian advance. The Austrians, who felt the French were beaten, were confused by this ferocious little attack. That was Napoléon's desired effect and the Austrian advance slowed.

At the bridge, the French effort to cross to Lobau and safety bordered on panic. A battalion of the Old Guard stepped in to restore order and units resumed an orderly crossing.

By 3:00 pm, Boudet's division in Essling was overwhelmed, although the granary, with Boudet inside directing fire, remained in French hands. A half-hour later, Rapp and Mouton disobeyed orders to retreat and launched a counterattack which cleared Essling of Austrian troops. A fifth, and final, attack by Austrian grenadiers was beaten off. Charles, who had seen enough, called off the attack on Essling and ordered his troops to stand down.

At 4:00 pm, Napoléon ordered the final retreat of the army to Lobau. When the bridge there collapsed again, nervous minutes passed as ropes and planks were used to keep the lifeline open. Commanding the rear guard, Lannes was struck by a roundshot that smashed both of his legs. One was amputated that day, but Lannes, a personal friend of Napoléon and one of the finest marshals died on 31 May.

Only the walking wounded were evacuated to Lobau; the more severely wounded were left on the field. Masséna was

among the last to cross over to Lobau and afterwards the pontoons were pulled up. The last troops to cross were a voltigeur company which crossed later that night in small boats. The Austrians were then in sole possession of the field and Napoléon had lost his first battle in a decade.

The Austrian victory came at a very high price. In a battlefield about 3 miles across, almost 40,000 casualties had occurred. The French lost 4,000 killed, 15,000 wounded, and 17,000 muskets. The Austrians lost 4,000 dead, 16,000 wounded, and 3,000 captured or missing.

Charles, who had hoped this victory would make Napoléon settle for a negotiated peace, was content to leave Napoléon alone in the weeks after the battle. Six weeks later, at Wagram, occurred the second largest battle of the Napoleonic wars. In a straightforward slugfest, Napoléon took none of the chances he had at Aspern- Essling and crushed Charles' army.

The net result was the humiliating Armistice of Znain which was officially signed 14 October at Schönbrunn. Charles fell out of favor and was forcibly retired from the army. Napoléon's opinion of the Hapsburg army had changed. For a decade he had known only victory and now he had suffered his first defeat. Months before he had laughed at their fighting qualities, now when he heard others deride the Austrians, he would defend them saying:

"You were not at Aspern, therefore you know nothing."