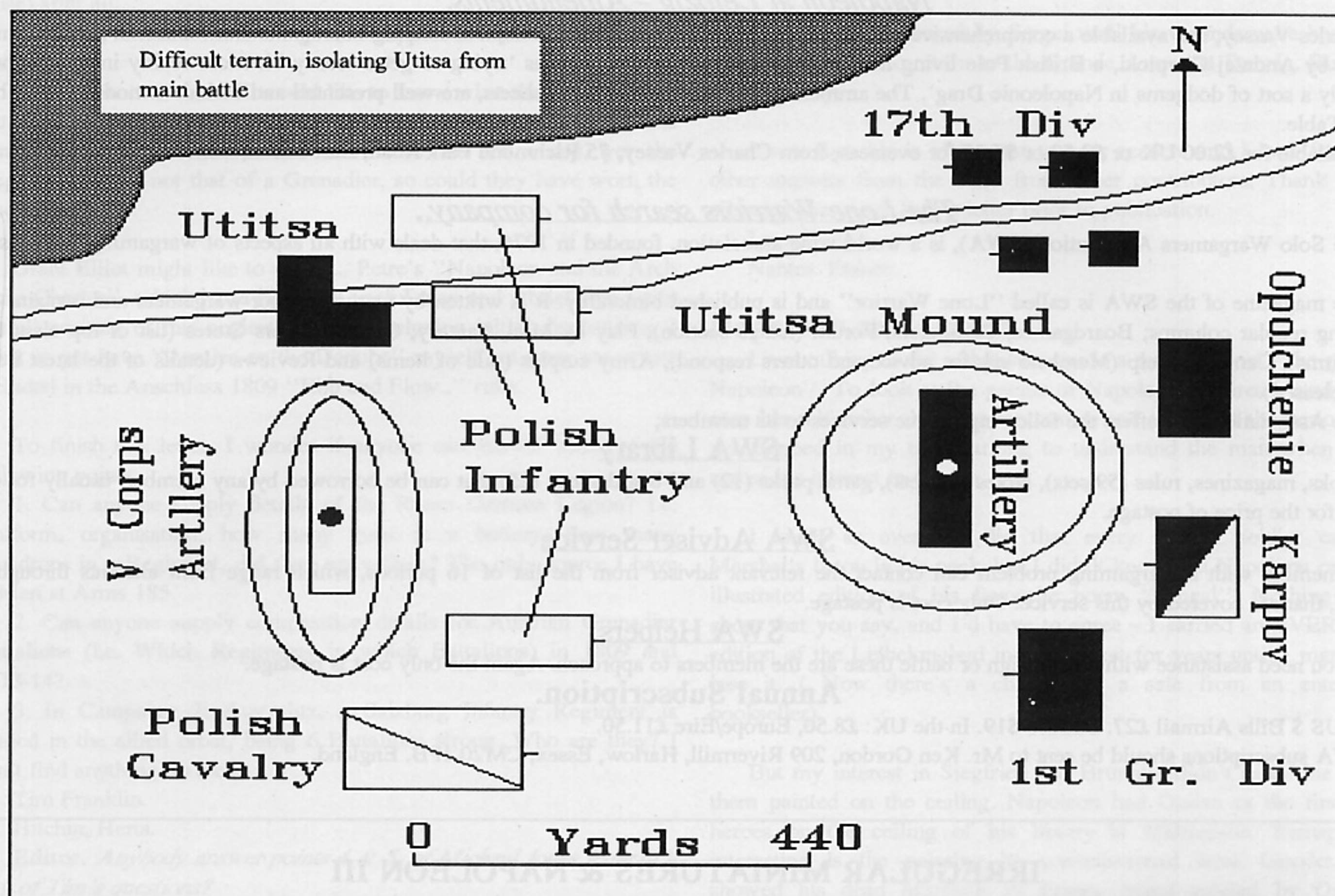


The action at Utitsa

by Leon Parté



Borodino, September 7th 1812. Napoleon's army had been fought to a standstill by Kutusov's Russians.

Kutusov felt unable to maintain his position and his army was so shattered that he was not capable of covering his withdrawal, along his only valid line of retreat, the Smolensk to Moscow road.

Napoleon's forces were exhausted and unable to make an effective pursuit. He needed something or someone to break through and cut the Russian line of retreat, thereby gaining victory in the Campaign.

So it was that at 5.00pm on that day, Prince Poniatowski, commanding the Polish V Corps received the appropriate orders. This is where our scenario begins. But first a little insight into the events that befell Poniatowski while the battle raged to the North.

V Corps had at the outset of the battle been ordered to make a tactical outflanking manoeuvre against the Russian left flank. There was some debate in the French high command as to whether the forces allocated were sufficient. Marshal Davoust had strongly urged Napoleon to make a grand tactical movement around this flank combined with a frontal pinning action. Unfortunately the Emperor decided that a costly and expensive frontal attack combined with a diversionary action, (by V Corps), which would presumably draw reserves away from the centre and give the required result.

Poniatowski engaged Tutchkov and the Russian Corps, with some initial success, evicting the Russians from Utitsa village. The success of V Corps caused some alarm in the Russian headquarters and reinforcements in the shape of Baggovut's II Corps, minus all its Jager Battalions were withdrawn from the virtually unopposed right flank. These units had to march across the rear of the Russian lines and suffered considerably en route from artillery fire. They arrived in the nick of time and help repulse Poniatowski's latest efforts, driving the Poles back to Utitsa village. Tutchkov was mortally wounded leading the Pavlov Grenadiers and command of this sector of the battlefield passed to General Baggovut

The situation stabilised and until our scenario begins, both commanders glared at each other across the field exchanging artillery fire. Poniatowski had given up his attempt to turn the flank and was hoping that he had done enough to enable the Emperor's attack to break through, thereby forcing the Russians opposing him to withdraw.

At 5.00pm Poniatowski received orders to resume his attack, to break through and cut the Russian line of retreat.

Wargaming the action.

Utitsa, is an interesting scenario in as much as it has a defined time period and easily recognisable victory conditions. The Russian

withdrew from their line of battle at 6pm and by 7pm the Russian Artillery Reserve and Baggage train were well on their way. The generally static nature of the Russian actions also lend themselves to solo play. Some of the timings of events have been altered slightly in the interests of ease of play. For an excellent account of this action readers are referred to Borodino Napoleon Against Russia, 1812 by Christopher Duffy. Sphere Books Ltd.

Polish Victory Conditions.

If before nightfall, in this instance deemed to be 7pm, you can penetrate the northern flank of the Russians or cause them to abandon their position, you can claim victory. Turning the southern flank, although it might assist in causing an enemy withdrawal is unlikely to give the required result as Baggovut's forces will still be between you and the Old Smolensk Road.

Russian Victory Conditions.

To hang on in there! Historically, Baggovut held on until the main Russian army withdrew from the battlefield to more suitable position for continuing the retreat the next day. He then withdrew in relatively good order to the Old Smolensk Road. Poniatowski being unable to launch an effective pursuit.

The Forces engaged at Utitsa.

The following Order of Battle, shows the units engaged from 5.00pm onwards. The strengths have not been shown as these can only be approximated, as there is no way of knowing what the actual losses of V Corps and III (Russian) Corps were prior to 5.00pm or how many men were lost by Baggovut's II Corps crossing the battlefield.

French (Polish) Order of battle.

V Corps Prince Poniatowski

Chief of Staff General de Division Fiszer

16th Division: General de Division Zayonchek

1st Brigade: General de Brigade Mielzynski
3rd Polish Line Regiment 3 bns 2,160
15th Polish Line rgt 3 bns 2,238
2nd Brigade: General de Brigade Paszkowski
16th Polish Line Regiment 3 bns 1,811

16th Division Artillery Reserve: Sowinski

3rd Polish Foot Artillery Company 4 x 6pdrs, 2 x Howitzers
12th Polish Foot Artillery Company 4 x 6pdrs, 2 x Howitzers

17th Division: General de Division Dombrowski

1st Brigade: General de Brigade Zottowski
1st Polish Line Regiment 3 bns 1,512
6th Polish Line rgt 4 bns 1,556
2nd Brigade: General de Brigade Krasinski
14th Polish Line Regiment 4 bns 1,120
17th Polish Line Regiment 4 bns 880

17th Division Artillery Reserve: Gugenmus

10th Polish Foot Artillery Company 4 x 6pdrs, 2 x Howitzers
11th Polish Foot Artillery Company 4 x 6pdrs, 2 x Howitzers

18th Division: General de Division Kamienicki

1st Brigade: General de Brigade Grabowski
2nd Polish Line Regiment 3 bns 1,628
8th Polish Line rgt 4 bns 1,669
2nd Brigade: General de Brigade Pakosz
12th Polish Line Regiment 3 bns 1,466

18th Division Artillery Reserve: Uszyski

4th Polish Foot Artillery Company 4 x 6pdrs, 2 x Howitzers
5th Polish Foot Artillery Company 4 x 6pdrs, 2 x Howitzers

V Corps Cavalry Reserve

General de Division Kaminski

18th Light Brigade: General de Brigade ??
4th Polish Chasseur a Cheval Regiment 696
19th Light Brigade: General de Brigade ??
1st Polish Chasseur a Cheval Regiment 350
12th Polish Uhlan Regiment 579
20th Light Brigade: General de Brigade ??
5th Polish Chasseur a Cheval Regiment 689
13th Polish Hussar Regiment 645

V Corps Reserve Artillery

2nd Polish Horse Artillery Company 6 x 6pdrs
14th Polish Foot Artillery Company 6 x 12pdrs

(Note Polish order of Battle is shown as for 15 August 1812, figures should be adjusted by between 20% and 30%, to allow for attrition and the fact that these units had been engaged since 8.00am)

Russian Order of Battle.

General Baggovut.

II Corps

4th Division. Lt. Gen. Prince Eugene of Württemberg

1st Brigade
Tobolsk IR (2 Btns)
Volhynia IR (2 Btns)
2nd Brigade
Kremenchug IR (2 Btns)
Minsk IR (2 Btns)
3rd Brigade (detached)

17th Division. Lt. Gen. Prince Eugene of Württemberg

1st Brigade (detached)
2nd Brigade
Brest IR (2 Btns)
Willmanstrand IR (2 Btns)
17th Foot Artillery Company 6 x 6pdrs
1 Position Battery 12 x 12pdrs
1 Light Battery 12x6pdrs

III Corps

1st Grenadier Division. Lt. Gen. P.A. Stroganov

1st Brigade
Lifeguard Grenadier Regiment (2 Btns)
Arakcheev Grenadier Regiment (2 Btns)
2nd Brigade
Pavlov Grenadier Regiment (2 Btns)
Ekaterinoslav Grenadier Regiment (2 Btns)
3rd Brigade
St. Petersburg Grenadier Regiment (2 Btns)
Tavrichesk Grenadier Regiment (2 Btns)
1 Position Battery 12 x 12pdrs, 2 Light Batteries 24 x 6pdrs

3rd Division. General Konovnitsyn (detached)

Other Attached forces present

Karpov's Cossacks (c.400)
Moscow Opolchenie (Pike Armed) 500 men
Two Combined Grenadier Battalions.

Russian Battalions at between 300 and 400 men.



Dispatches

from First Empire Readers



ent Poles at Utitsa

ar Sir,
n writing to correct the order of battle from the "Action
a" article in First Empire No.6.

e only Polish divisions of Poniatowski's V Corps present
rodino were the 16th and 18th Infantry divisions.
owski was detached and operating in the Mstislavi area
is approximately 200 miles from Borodino. Also
ed were the entire 18th Light Cavalry brigade and 1st
urs from 19th Cavalry brigade).

other point is the respective strengths of the Polish units.
ing that the Poles suffered as much as the other
gents of the main army, their battalions would have been
re than 350 - 450 men each and the squadrons about
men each at the beginning of the battle. Poniatowski had
imately 6000 men at Borodino. Finally, great magazine.
races.

ziger - Napoleon's invasion of Russia

andler - A Military History and Atlas of the Napoleonic

ur - Napoleon's Russian Campaign

ythornthwaite - Uniforms of the retreat from Moscow

nie - La Camapagne de Russe. Napoleon 1812

olson - Napoleon 1812

er Cross

eensland, Australia.

*r. I am the guilty party in all this. Leon's
script listed the order of battle as published but
led notes, in French, which led to the inclusion of
units outlined above, and apparently were indicative
ir intended exclusion. Leon forgot that I am of the
on that the only language worth anything is English,
'm hopeless at languages!). Apologies to the U.N.*

somebody submit an article on zyn 1809?

ar Sir,
ave just started wargaming again after a 14 year hiatus.
ng stretches at model railways, chasing girls, getting a
, etc. [Editor. Went through a similar phase myself, but
itorial concubine found out, so I had to give up chasing
railways!].

particular interest is Napoleonic and the campaign of
n Poland. I am busy building up a Polish and Austrian
Information on this campaign is scarce to say the least,
e only references in English being Pivka's "Napoleon's
Troops" and Nafziger's "Poles and Saxons of the
eonic Wars". Perhaps you could find someone to write
cle in the future. How about the battle of Raszyn 1809?
eal wargame scenario as it involves (relatively) small
on both sides.

yway, it is just a thought. Keep up the good work (the
bscure the battle the better in my view!). And finally,

no silly colour pictures of precision - painted figures that us
ordinary wargamer never hope to achieve!

Richard Dyson
Cowley, Oxford.

Advertisers take note again.....

Dear Mr. Watkins,

First of all I would like to congratulate you on your
outstanding magazine "First Empire". Apart from the fact that
the magazine contains a lot of very interesting and informative
articles, I am most pleased to find that you are brave enough to
publish decent reviews of figures, rules etc.

Living on the continent I have to order most of my
wargaming stuff by mail, and am therefore in great need of
accurate information. So far all the reviews I have seen in the
"glossy's" are not informative in the sense that they point out
the good and the bad things. None of the magazines publish
reviews like you do. Personally I think that you are doing the
hobby, both gamers and traders a very good service. The case
of the Minifigs Swedish Command group is an example of
how we all benefit from critical but fair reviews and of how
the industry is willing to listen and react. I sincerely hope that
you will be able to keep up the good work.

Rob van Staveren
Spijkenisse
The Netherlands.

*Editor. I'm certainly glad you like the review policy. I
have had to dodge a few bullets and abuse, (in one
instance), but the more "adult" traders/manufactures
apreciate that their is no malice and that I try to ensure
that reviews are fair even if damning. I wish I could say
this of all, but there you go...*

*In point of fact there is now a change of policy here. I
want to publish reviews submitted by the consumer,
YOU. It is your opinions that should count, not mine or
any of my cohorts, perhaps we can start a new trend! I
believe that you should have a forum, whether it be
praise or criticism. I may even extend this to manufac-
tures to publish a defence, although I can't guarantee it
would be in the same issue. This is not me taking the
easy option, as I shall continue to publish 'editorial staff'
reviews.*

Bavarian uniform info required...

Dear Editor,

It's quite uncanny how each issue of "First Empire" seems
to contain at least one article about a subject I've been thinking
about, dreaming about, already embarked on etc.

This is very true of the latest issue (No 8). I had already
started to paint some Bavarians for the army list for the Battle
of Hanau (from the Osprey series "Napoleon's German Allies
No3, Bavaria) and lo and behold there was an article in "First
Empire" about that very battle, plus a list of the Austrian
Corps too.

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Our Sou

Dear Mr.

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Ralph Pe
Brasilia,
Brasil.