

EN AVANT!

Game Control Rules

Modified September 2007

A One Brain Cell Diceless Napoleonic Battle System
by Jim Wallman



Introduction

This system is designed to play out a regimental level battle using 25mm figures in about half an hour or so.

The main design aims were:

- a. A game that could be understood and played by non-wargamers
- b. A game that was very fast moving
- c. A game which rewarded the correct historical tactics

In order to meet these, in some ways conflicting, objectives some considerable liberties have been taken with operational detail. The main approach has been to make the system incredibly rapid to play – and all the rules can actually be easily memorised by reasonably experienced umpires after just a couple of games.

Ideally, the game is controlled by someone acting as Game Control (or Umpire) who does not give the rules to the players. This adds some uncertainty play and discouraged player from 'rules optimising rather than just getting on and playing the game.

In order to make it as clear as possible what is going on, the status of the units is shown by labels next to the unit, and players issue orders by using order flashcards. The system does not use dice in combat resolution, which is an approach that is unusual in most wargaming circles and will come as a bit of shock to conventional gamers.

This does give a slight chess-like feel to the game, and it does mean that a game which follows the same course will always have the same result. Fortunately, no game survives first contact with the players, and the chances of two games being exactly alike is small.

Also, since the system is designed for public participation play, the number of times players will repeat the same game will be similarly be small.

Finally, my thanks to Arthur Harman for his advice and persistent attention to tactical detail, and who has repeatedly dragged me back from some of my more breathtaking oversimplifications. I'd also like to thank Rob Cooper, Jack Savory-Tarlton, Mukul Patel and members of Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group for their help with playtesting.

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Streatham 2003

Troop Representation

Infantry Battalion is 6 bases + 2 replacement skirmishing bases

Cavalry 4 bases in 2 two subgroups.

Artillery 2 bases

Command group – mounted figure base with national flag.

The bases are typically 6cm frontage per infantry base, and 8cm frontage per cavalry base. Depth can be whatever suits, but make the bases as narrow as possible, to properly reflect the space the units occupied in real life. Most Napoleonic units (even cavalry) were much wider than they were deep – and this is often not properly reflected when using toy soldiers – based figures always make the units (such as infantry columns) look a lot deeper than they would have been in reality.

Although the rules were tested using 25mm figures, it doesn't really matter what size models you use, and it might look more realistic to put, say, 15mm or 1/300 scale figures on the same sized base.

Sequence of Action

- 1.Firing
- 2.Movement
- 3.Melee
- 4.Recovery of status / Reordering
- 5.Roll for personal risk [Optional]

Command and Formations

Command

Most of the time we are dealing with a regiment/brigade a side.

It is important to understand where the centre of gravity of the formation is.

This is usually where the regimental commander / brigadier is located. He then can concentrate his command effort on any of his units by directing staff officers, messages or personal support to any one unit in his formation. We represent that by moving a separate mounted figure from the command group to the unit supported.

Formations

Formation changes take a long time, given the scale of the game. In general, a formation is chosen at the start of the action, and this is stuck to throughout. if players wish to change formation, here are illustrative times

From	Into	Turns to complete
Infantry march column	Line to left	3
Infantry march column	Line to right	3
Infantry assault column	Line to left	2
Infantry assault column	Line to right	2
Infantry Line	March column	3
Infantry Line	Assault column	2
Infantry Line	Infantry line about face	2
Infantry assault column	Square	1
Infantry march column	Square	1
Infantry line	Square	1
Cavalry column	Cavalry line	2
Cavalry line	Cavalry column	2
Artillery limbered	Artillery deployed	1
Artillery deployed	Artillery limbered	1

Cavalry formations

Cavalry regiments are divided into two sub-divisions, Each has it's own status label, but they always operate together.

When in column, these two lines are about 20 cm apart.

When in line, they are side by side.

Infantry formations

All infantry units are represented by blocks of close order troops with skirmishers out in front. The skirmishers are integral to the unit, and are factored in to all the results – so for the most part they are a visual representation. The one exception is light companies (such as British rifle companies) operating as semi-independent skirmishers, usually operating some distance in front of the main line.

When 6-base infantry units form square, temporarily remove 2 of the bases and make the square of just 4 bases. This is to represent the more compact physical size of the square.

Movement

Infantry in line	20 cm
Infantry in column	25 cm
Infantry in square	no move
Cavalry in line	40 cm
Cavalry in column	50 cm
Regt / Bde HQ Group	60 cm
Artillery deployed	no move
Artillery limbered	25 cm
Horse Artillery deployed	no move
Horse Artillery limbered	50 cm

Order

Units are either ORDERED or DISORDERED. Disorder is caused by a variety of things, such as changing formation, enemy fire or combat. A unit may re-order itself by remaining stationary and not firing for one turn.

Laying out the bases in a disorganised fashion shows disorder.

Manoeuvres.

All manoeuvres must be conducted ***instead of*** movement (i.e. while the unit is stationary.)

When they move, units can only move directly forward (or backward) on their current facing. (although game control may allow small variation, for example when closing to combat).

Unit Status

Units have a number of possible states. These are visible to all and a small card is placed by the unit indicating the current state. All the combat rules affect this status in one way or another:

6. Pugnacious – will continue to move forward and act as ordered, no matter what – and if possible **MUST** try and close with the nearest enemy.

5. Determined – will continue to move forward and act as ordered.

4. Steady – Will do as they are told, but without too much enthusiasm if it involves increased risk.

3. Nervous – Very unhappy about continuing. Will always stop and fire if the opportunity presents.

2. Wavering – Really considering whether the battlefield is the place to be. Will not move closer to the enemy. Firing becomes sporadic and inaccurate

1. Frightened – they will break and run any moment now.

0. Running away – leaving the battlefield as fast as possible.

Firing

Although firing occurs before movement, where a move brings the unit through the range of a unit, then that unit always has the opportunity to open fire in its own defence.

Type of firing	Firer is:	Pugnacious, Determined or Steady (6 / 5 / 4)		Nervous, Wavering or Frightened (3 / 2 / 1)	
	Target is:	Dense Target	Loose Target	Dense Target	Loose Target
First Infantry Volley from line (range 10 cm).		Any target drops two levels	Any target drops one level	Target of equal or lower status drops one level	
Subsequent Infantry volley from line (range 10 cm), or first volley from column or square or disordered line		Target of equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level		
Subsequent infantry volley from column or square or disordered line.		Target of lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
Artillery Canister (up to 25 cm)		Target drops 2 levels	Target drops one level		
Artillery Ball (over 25cm up to 100 cm) ¹		Target of equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
British Rifle Company (10 cm) ²		Target of equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	

Notes:

1. Artillery ball fire may not reduce a unit below a status of Frightened (1).
2. Riflemen cannot reduce a unit below status of wavering (2)

Losses are not calculated or recorded in this system - units are rarely wiped out by fire – usually major losses occur by being cut down whilst fleeing

Target Density

Dense Target = All cavalry, infantry square, infantry attack column, infantry march column, limbered artillery

Loose Target = Infantry line, light infantry, artillery

Close Assault

STEP ONE

In order for units to get into base to base contact, they must first assess their Willingness to Close. This is based on status.

If the unit's status is equal or higher to the unit facing it, then it will move forward to close.

MODIFIERS TO APPLY WHEN DETERMINING WILLINGNESS TO CLOSE:

Situation	Impact on status
Attacking on the flank	+1
Attacking on rear of enemy	+2
Outnumbering	+1
Cavalry vs infantry square	-2
Cavalry vs infantry not in square	+2
Infantry defending a major defensive feature (such as field defences, building etc)	+1
Senior officer personally involved	+1
Infantry fired their muskets last turn	-1
Infantry vs infantry in square	+1
DISORDERED	-1
Infantry forming square the same turn as a cavalry attack	-1

If the attack fails to reach the enemy, the attackers must stop at 5 cm and the attackers are DISORDERED, and the process stops – otherwise go on to Step Two

Cavalry Vs Forming Square

In the situation where cavalry are attacking an infantry square during the same turn it is forming, then take account of the distance the attacking cavalry is from the forming square. If it is more than half a turn away treat the infantry as 'in square' from the cavalry's point of view, and 'forming square' from the infantry's point of view. If the cavalry are half a turn away or closer, treat the infantry as 'not in square' from the cavalry's point of view, and 'forming square' from the infantry's point of view.

STEP TWO

If the attack actually reaches the enemy unit, then the highest base status wins. The only modifiers are:

- +1 if attacking on the flank
- +2 if attacking on rear
- +1 Cavalry line vs cavalry column
- +1 Infantry defending a major defensive feature

If both end up equal, then the attacker wins.

Artillery closed with always lose melee, and are destroyed in the process.

All units involved in a close assault are automatically DISORDERED, whether win or lose.

Other results depend on the unit's status

Cavalry			Infantry		
Status	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Status
5-6	Pursue enemy -1 status	Withdraw 10 cm -2 status	Player can choose whether unit pursues -1 status	Withdraw 5cm -1 status	5-6
3-4	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 25 cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 10 cm -1 status	3-4
1-2	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 50cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 15cm -1 status	1-2

Units that reach 'run away' status (0) do so at double their normal move for the first turn, then at their normal move every turn after that.

Results apply to the *following turn*, and supersede any orders players' might wish to issue.

Withdraw is a controlled movement backwards facing the enemy.
Run away is always facing away from the enemy, unsurprisingly.

Cavalry will pursue an enemy off the table. The losers are removed from play. The winners are dispersed, but will rally back on their side's command group after 3 turns (simply place the units next to the HQ flag). They arrive DISORDERED.

Cavalry Second Lines in Cavalry vs Cavalry Actions

Once the result of the first line of cavalry action is resolved, on the following round, the second line has options depending on the results and effects on the first line. Usually the second line is ORDERED, so that gives some initial advantage.

First Line Winning

The second line can follow up and join in, or hold back and wait for something else to happen.

First line losing

The first line can withdraw on to the second line and combine the two line's status, taking the average.

First line drawn

The second line can join in, the resulting status being the average status of the two lines.

Status Recovery

It is possible to recover status in one of two ways.

- 2 turns of conspicuous rallying activity by Commander will raise status by one level. In order to qualify, the unit must not be under musket fire or within 30 cm of cavalry. It can be moving though.
- Bring up reinforcements. Moving a higher status unit to stand within 10cm. Both units must remain stationary for 2 turns, and they cannot be under musket fire or within 30cm of cavalry.

EN AVANT – QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

Sequence of Action

1. Firing
2. Movement
3. Melee
4. Recovery of status / Reordering
5. Roll for personal risk

Movement

Infantry in line	20	Command group	60
Infantry in column	25	Artillery deployed	n.a.
Infantry in square	n.a.	Artillery limbered	25
Cavalry in line	40	Horse Artillery deployed	n.a.
Cavalry in column	50	Horse Artillery limbered	50

Firing

Firer is	Pugnacious, Determined or Steady (6/5/4)		Nervous, Wavering or Frightened (3/2/1)	
	Dense Target	Loose Target	Dense Target	Loose Target
1st Line Volley (range 10 cm)	Any target drops two levels	Any target drops one level	Target of equal or lower status drops one level	
2 nd Line volley (range 10 cm), or 1 st volley from others	Target equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level		
2 nd volley from others	Target lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
Cannon Canister (up to 25 cm)	Target drops 2 levels	Target drops one level		
Cannon Ball (up to 100 cm)	Target equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
British Rifle Company (10 cm)	Target equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	

Melee

STEP ONE: MODIFIERS TO APPLY WHEN DETERMINING WILLINGNESS TO CLOSE:

Attacking on the flank	+1	Attacking on rear of enemy	+2
Outnumbering	+1	Cavalry vs infantry square	-2
Cavalry vs infantry not in square	+2	Infantry defending	+1
Senior officer personally involved	+1	Infantry fired last turn	-1
Infantry vs infantry in square	-1	DISORDERED	-1
Infantry forming square vs Cav	-1		

If the attack fails - stop at 5 cm and DISORDERED.

STEP TWO

If it reaches enemy - highest status wins

+1 if attacking on the flank, +2 if attacking on rear, +1 Cavalry line vs cavalry column

If both end up equal, then the attacker wins.

Artillery always lose melee, and are destroyed in the process.

Status	Cavalry		Infantry		Status
	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	
5-6	Pursue enemy -1 status	Withdraw 10 cm -2 status	Choose if pursues -1 status	Withdraw 5cm -1 status	5-6
3-4	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 25 cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 10 cm -1 status	3-4
1-2	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 50cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 15cm -1 status	1-2

Units at Zero status run away at double move for the first turn, then normal move after that.