

ADVANCE TO PLANCENOIT

18TH JUNE 1815

This chapter deals with an extended example that shows how the order and strategic movement system works with regard to Major Formations. The example deals with some of the detail of tactical combat but mainly focuses on how the game mechanics work using strategic and tactical phases.

The scenario is based upon the Prussian advance to Plancenoit on the 18th June. Lobau's VI French Corps has been deployed to halt the advance of the Prussians, the first of which to arrive are the 15th and 16th Brigades of Bulow's IV Corps.

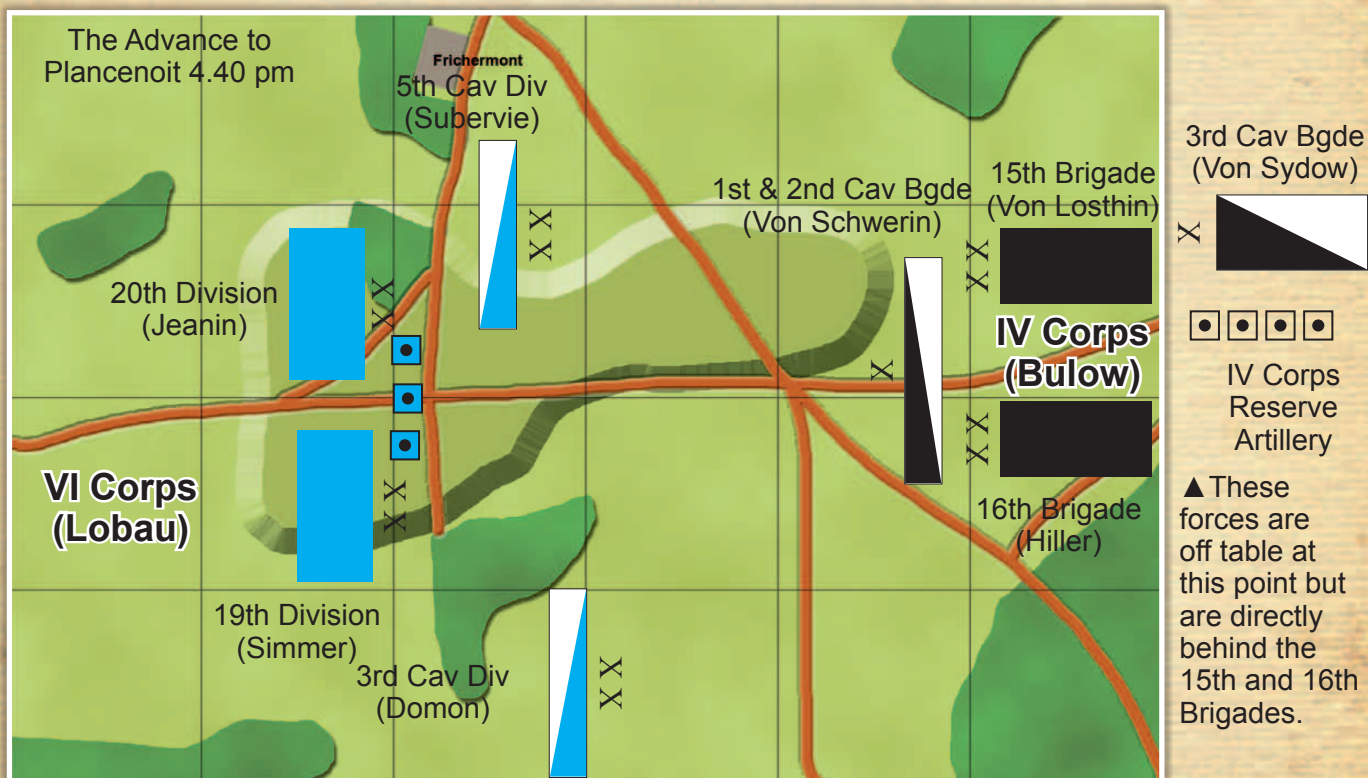
Throughout the rules there have been examples that have used the forces from this scenario. The orders of battle for both sides can be found on page 64 and the initial orders that have been allocated to each MF are described on page 17.

The situation in the diagram below shows the initial dispositions of the French forces and the Prussian positions after their entry onto the table. There are 4 French and 4 Prussian Major Formations, the Prussians have attached the reserve 11th Horse Battery to the 3rd Cavalry Brigade. The battle begins at this point with phase S1 of the 4.40 turn, each square represents 12" on the 6 by 4 foot table.

Working through the phases - S1 can be skipped as the MF's are acting on their initial orders and neither commander wants to change anything. In S2 there are no morale tests required, and S3 has no skirmish combat as there are no Infantry MF's within engagement range. S4 is the attach and detach leaders phase, neither side choose to attach. The final strategic phase is S5, determine initiative. Both sides roll 2D6 and add their CinC's command ability modifier. Comte de Lobau is rated as excellent and so adds +3 while von Bulow is good and adds +2. The French win the initiative and choose the Prussians to be active first in this turn, the French player deciding it will be better to be able to react to the Prussian advance.

Moving onto phase T1 the active side (the Prussians) declare any charges, the inactive (French) declares their reactions and then the charges are carried out. After that the remainder of the Prussian troops will be able to move.

The Prussian cavalry are deployed in 2 lines, even though they are under 24" away (the strategic movement allowance of light cavalry) they are not allowed to charge. This is because the tactical movement rate is only 14" and charging is considered

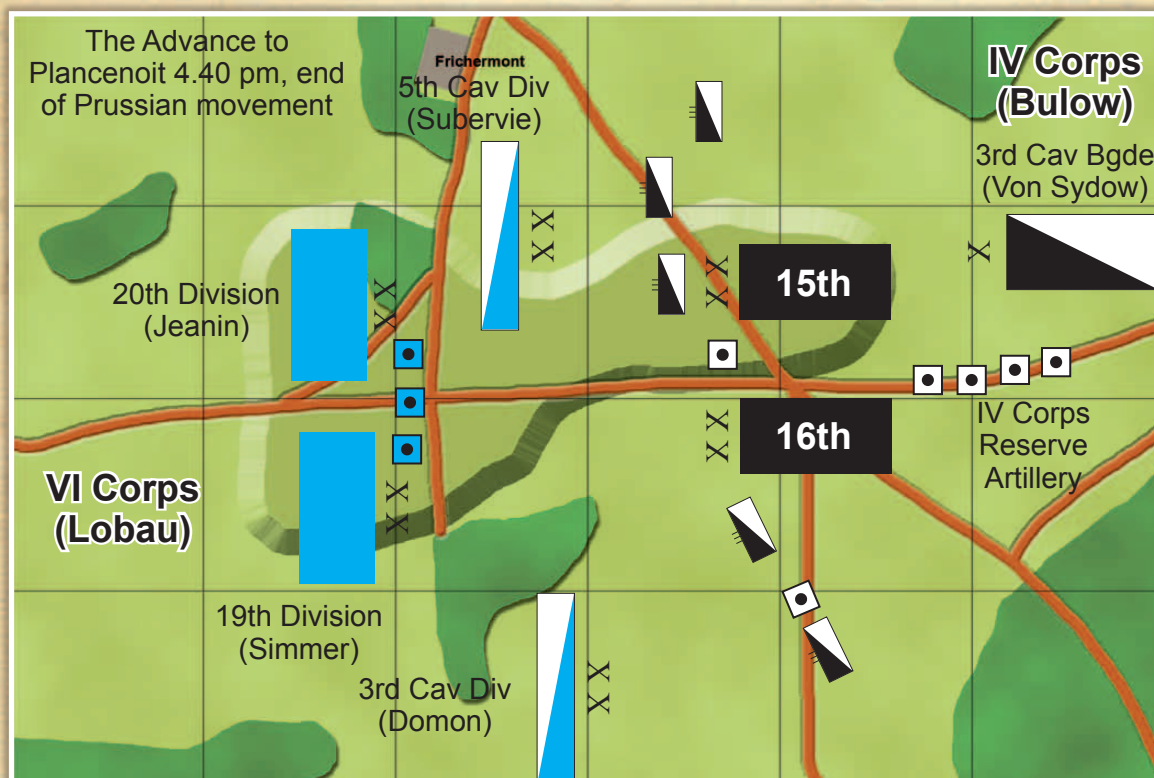


a tactical action, as such the Prussian player splits his brigade to face off the French cavalry.

The 8th Hussars and both battle groups of the 1st West Prussian Uhlans advance towards the 5th Division while the two battle groups of the 6th Hussars advance upon the 3rd Division. The cavalry regiments end up facing their opponents at distances of between 10 and 12 inches. Meanwhile both the artillery batteries attached to this cavalry use tactical movement so that they can advance and also deploy. This gives them less movement allowance (12" as opposed to 24") but if they had used strategic movement they would not have been able to unlimber after they had moved.

This concludes all of the movement for the Prussians, it is now time to move onto phase T2 where both sides will get a chance to fire. Apart from charges firing is simultaneous and effects are only applied after both sides have calculated their fire.

Both of the batteries that are attached to the 3rd and 5th French cavalry divisions are already deployed so they fire at the Prussian cavalry that have advanced into range causing slight damage (1CV loss). The 19th and 20th Divisional as well as the VI Corps artillery are deployed in the centre of the French position at the cross roads. The Prussian columns in the 16th Brigade are within range (20" or 1200 yards away) and the fire from these 30 guns begins to cause CV loss to the leading regiment.



◀ The separate units from the 1st & 2nd Cavalry Brigades are shown facing off their French opponents.

Both of the artillery batteries that are attached to this MF have moved and deployed tactically.

Both the 15th and 16th Infantry Brigades use strategic movement to advance as far as they can towards the French lines. As all of the battalions are in column this means that they can move 16" (approximately half a mile at 1" = 60 yards). The medium artillery batteries attached to these brigades keep pace at their strategic speed of 16" which means that they cannot deploy.

The remaining troops enter the table behind the infantry brigades. The 3rd cavalry brigade takes up position to the north of the road. The Corps reserve artillery is moving along the road and, as it is using strategic movement, also gains the road bonus. Even so it will still take some time to reach a position where it can deploy to bombard the French at an effective range.

The Prussian horse artillery have also deployed during their tactical movement and will be able to fire, though long range fire causes no damage.

Once all of this fire has been completed the turn moves onto phase T3 where charging units are moved into contact with their targets. In this case there are no charges and so no melee to resolve. Finally phase T4 is where disorder markers are flipped or removed, as there are no units disordered this phase is also skipped.

This brings the Prussian tactical part of the 4.40pm turn to an end, the French and Prussians now swap roles. The Prussian is now inactive while the French player becomes active and begins to run through phase T1.



◀ The three cavalry regiments from the 3rd Division have all charged into combat. Both Battle Groups of the 6th Hussars chose to counter charge but they lose both combats and are forced back 12" with 2CV loss each.

The French player decides that they want to charge with the 3 Regiments in the 3rd Cavalry Division. This is well within the orders that the French cavalry have been given (page 17) and so the 4th, 9th and 12th Chasseurs à Cheval all declare charges. The 4th charges at the 1st battle group of the 6th Hussars while the 9th and 12th combine against the 2nd battle group. Once these charges are declared the Prussian player immediately chooses his charge reaction. He can either stand and receive the charge at the halt (not very sensible, in reality or in these rules) or he can counter charge. Both of the battle groups counter charge and the cavalry meet half way, though they are not yet moved into contact. All of the charging, and counter charging, units have a 'CHG' marker placed next to them.

Once all of the French charge movement and all Prussian reactions have been carried out the French player moves onto the remainder of his movement. He decides that the woods in front of the 19th Division should be occupied and 2 battalions from the 84th Ligne advance into them. As these 2 units are not starting, entering or ending their movement within engagement range (9") of any enemy troops they may use strategic movement. However, this does mean that they cannot change formation and so must remain in column for the time being. They are disordered as they move through the woods and both battalions have 'D2' markers placed next to them.

French movement is now complete and in phase T2 both sides again have a chance to fire. At long range the damage to either side is light but the important

firing is from the artillery battery supporting the 6th Hussars. These guns have a valid line of sight and are within range of the 9th Chasseurs and fire upon them as they are charging. Causing CV loss forces the cavalry to take a VeD test which they fail and so become disordered. They will still charge home but the disorder is a big disadvantage in the forthcoming cavalry melee.

Once all of the firing is complete the chargers are moved into contact and melee is carried out in phase T3. As the French player won the initiative they get to choose the order in which the melees are conducted. This is often only important in situations where there are multiple units fighting in one combat. You can see a detailed example of the fight between the 4th Chasseurs and BG#1 of the 6th Hussars on page 47. The combined French cavalry regiments manage to beat BG#2 as well, throwing both back 12" (720 yards), exploiting the victory and threatening the flank of the 16th Brigade.

After all melee the cavalry that charged will count as 'blown', disorder markers are used to represent this and all of the French regiments in the 3rd Division will have 'D2' markers placed next to them. The Prussian cavalry are already disordered as a result of losing the melee combats.

Finally for this turn in phase T4 disorder markers are removed and flipped. This system of D1 and D2 markers ensures that all of the units that become disordered in a turn keep that disorder for the same length of time, no matter which phase or which side is active.

This brings the French tactical phases to an end, both sides have been active and inactive and this completes the turn. The time track is moved on 20 minutes and the 5.00pm turn starts with phase S1, issue orders.

It is worth mentioning that there are some formations that are now committed. When formations move into engagement range (9") for the first time they count as being committed. This has an effect on their chance to be issued orders and also their susceptibility to some morale tests. The commitment rules, along with the strategic movement rules, represent the 'friction' that occurs when contact is made with the enemy. Keeping uncommitted reserves, deciding where and when to become engaged and forcing the enemy to react to your actions all play an important part in winning the battle.

In this example the French 3rd Division is committed, as is the Prussian cavalry belonging to von Schwerin. As well as this some units of the 16th Brigade have come within range of the French 4th Chasseurs, this is enough to make the 16th Brigade count as committed from now on.

In Phase S1 the French player has no need to change any of his orders, the 3rd and 5th Cavalry Divisions are holding back the enemy cavalry and the Prussian infantry are being forced to deploy before they even reach the VI Corps positions.

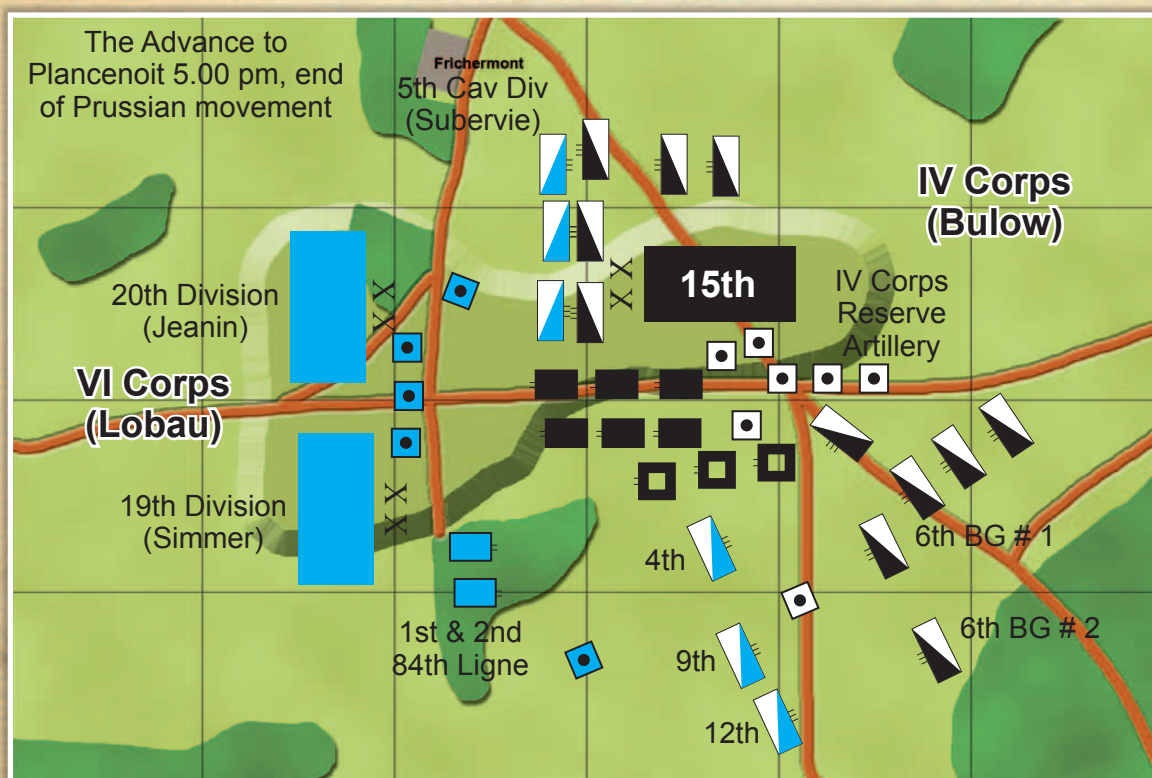
The Prussian player realises that the French cavalry screen has to be broken quickly and so orders his reserve, the 3rd cavalry brigade, to join

the fight immediately. The order is to 'Engage and disperse the French cavalry and then support the attack of the 15th and 16th Infantry Brigades'. This is enough to take them from their reserve position, help clear the enemy cavalry and then threaten the French infantry.

To see whether the order is sent, received and acted upon this turn is determined by a roll on the orders table. The proximity of the commander (between 12" and 24" gives -1), his quality (Good, +2) and the fact that the cavalry MF is uncommitted (+2) means that a roll of 4 or more will see the order succeed. The actual 2D6 roll is a 7 and the 3rd Brigade will be able to act upon their new orders this turn.

For this example we can skip the rest of the S2-S5 phases (the Prussians win the initiative roll and decide to be active first). The cavalry to the north charge at the French 5th Division who counter charge. The Prussian reserve cavalry follow their new orders and split up, three Regiments heading to the south and two to the north. The 16th Infantry Brigade form squares with their three leftmost battalions, none of the French cavalry are within opportunity charge range so the squares are formed without incident. The remaining 6 battalions of the 16th Brigade push on along the road. The 15th Brigade advances, becoming bunched up behind the cavalry fight and not getting very far.

The situation shown below is just after the Prussians have moved. This is just halfway through the second turn (roughly 30 minutes have passed so 5.10 pm) and both sides are becoming heavily engaged.



◀ To the north the Prussian cavalry charge and are counter charged by the French 5th Cavalry Division. The 16th Brigade forms a line of squares to protect its flank while the Brigade artillery and cavalry face off the French 3rd Division.