

Napoleonic Brigade Series 3.0:

Montebello

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To play Montebello you will need (all downloadable at MMP site):

- the series rules,
- the map and the counters/markers,
- the two loss charts,
- the special rules (you are now reading them).

1.0 General Special Rules

1.1 The village of Casteggio

This village was composed of a main avenue with houses placed on each side of it. Therefore, cavalry can charge along the main road of Casteggio (from 16.12 to 15.12 and from 15.12 to 14.11 and *vice versa*). Such a charge uses the following modifiers for the defender formation on the defender's Check to Stand roll: Defender in march column -1 ; all other formation +1.

1.2 The Castle of Jordone

The 'castle of Jordone' (now Cassina il Giardana) was in fact a walled complex of farms. It is a Fortified hex, and a village hex for all other purposes.

1.3 Variable Reinforcements

On both sides, reinforcements arrived as soon as they can. Both commanders were anxious about when their reinforcements would turn up.

To simulate this, the V Corps and the S division are variable reinforcements. At the beginning of an eligible turn, the player rolls one die. If it is equal to or more than the Entry Number, then the command enters normally. If not, then roll again next turn. If the 'Advance/Delay Reinforcements' special events are rolled, shift all the procedure accordingly.

Note

Montebello is a complete downloadable game meant to be an introduction to the Napoleonic Brigade Series (NBS). Its counter mix is small and the full game can be played in a couple of hours. It is also enjoyable by NBS grognards who lack times or space to run a bigger fight. Enjoy.

2.0 French Special Rules

2.1 French Tactical Formations

French infantry columns are combat columns.

2.2 Attachments & Detachments

The French army is composed of Lannes' Corps composed of Watrin's division, the 12th Hussars and the 28th line and Chambarlhac's Division of Victor's Corps.

Lannes is the commander of the army and the L Corps HQ functions as an army HQ for all purposes.

For the purposes of writing orders and Corps Attack Stoppage, there are four French commands:

- Watrin's division
- 12th Hussars
- 28th Line
- Victor's Corps

Lannes can give orders to Victor's Corps and independent orders to Watrin, the hussars and the 28th.

In addition to the 12th Hussars and 28th Line, up to one brigade per division can be detached and attached to the other division, or be given independent orders.

The L corps battery can be within divisional range of Watrin or within corps range of the L corps HQ.

2.3 Acting Army Commanders

If Lannes can't command anymore, Victor takes command.

2.4 Lannes and Victor special communication

Because the map is so small, Lannes is allowed to issue A-W or A-O orders to V Corps starting from the 12:30pm Command phase. To calculate the Order Delivery Time for such orders, first count the number of movement points a commander would expend traveling between Lannes and hex A, and then add 8 for each 30 mins before 2pm.

For example, if Lannes is 4 MPs away from 33.13 and issues orders to Victor in the 1pm turn, then the effective number of MPs is $4+16 = 20$, and the order will therefore arrive at 2pm. (exception: if Victor's corps arrives as reinforcements at 1:30pm, then bring forward the order arrival time by 30 minutes. To continue the example above, if Victor's corps arrived at 1:30pm, then the player would roll for Order Acceptance during the Command Phase of the 1:30pm turn). In this way, V Corps can roll for Order Acceptance before it arrives on the map, and it is considered to be under General Orders at this point. Regardless of whether orders are sent or accepted by V Corps before it actually enters the map, the Corps still arrives as reinforcements as indicated in the scenario.

2.5 French Minor Variants

2.5.a VICTOR BRINGS HIS ARTILLERY

The French artillery present at Montebello is not well known. Lannes didn't have much of it. And Victor, who forced march to Casteggio, seemed to have bring none. With this option, we assume Victor bring 2 (additional) gun points of light foot artillery.

3.0 Austrian Special Rules

3.1 Austrian Tactical Formations

Austrian infantry columns are march columns.

3.2 Austrian Cavalry Cohesion

Austrian Cavalry units may not charge in stacks.

3.3 Attachments & Detachments

The Austrian army is composed of three divisions under Feld Marshal Leutnant Ott. There are no corps structure.

Up to one brigade per division can be detached and attached to another division or be given independent order.

3.4 Austrian commanders

O'Reilly is a fighter.

3.5 Acting Army Commanders

If Ott is a casualty, he is replaced by Schellenberg.

3.6 Austrian Minor Variants

3.6.A GOTTESHEIM

Gottesheim was present to the battle and took an active part in it. But his troopers were absent. Melas choosed a special route for them (through Bobbio), and they should have joined Ott corps at Piacenza. They didn't make it and were captured on their way. This option gives one more leader to the Austrians (Gottesheim). This extra leader is under Vogelsang and can be used for all non command actions (CC, rally,...).

4.0 Victory

4.1 Terrain

Ott is trying to reach Piacenza.

Austrian wins: 2 Vps for Montebello; 4 Vps for Montebello, Casteggio and the road between.

4.2 Casualties

Lannes has been ordered to destroy the army of Ott.

<i>French losses</i>	<i>Austrians VPs</i>	<i>Austrians losses</i>	<i>French VPs</i>
0-10	0	0-10	0
11-20	2	11-25	4
21-30	5	26-40	8
31-50	7	41-60	10
51+	10	61+	15

Losses suffered this day (9th of June) had a consequence on the armies that set up 5 days later in front of Marengo.

5.0 Scenario

5.1 The Battle of Montebello

GENERAL INFORMATION

First Turn: 11:00 am

Last Turn: 8:00 pm

Game Length: 19 Turns

First Player: French

The 9th of June 1800. Lannes has been ordered the day before by Bonaparte to destroy any Austrian force he would encounter during his march westward. Around 9am the 6th light of General Gency attacked the O'Reilly's detachment around Santa Giuletta. To join with the Ott's corps, O'Reilly withdrew west, toward Casteggio. Around 11am, O'Reilly set a defense of the village of Rivetta. Gency was about to attack, followed by Watrin. Meanwhile, Ott, was force marching his two divisions toward Casteggio and Montebello...

FRENCH INFORMATION

All French forces enter as reinforcements.

Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
11:00am	33.13	W div
12:00pm	33.13	Lannes, L Corps-HQ, 12 th Hussars,
12:30pm	33.13	28 th line and L-artillery
Variable	33.13	V Corps

V Corps arrival:

Turn	Entry Number
1:30pm	5
2:00pm	3
2:30pm	1

Orders:

W div: Capture Rivetta Gandolfi (Engage order).

12th Hussars and 28th line: Support W div (Engage order).

V Corps: Move to 30.13 and await further orders.

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

Set Up:

w/i 1 Rivetta Gandolfi: O'Reilly advance guard.

w/i 1 Montebello: V div.

Reinforcements:

Turn	Hex	Units
11:30am	1.12	Ott, Army-HQ
Variable	1.12	S div

S Div arrival:

Turn	Entry Number
12:00pm	5
12:30pm	3
1:00pm	1

Orders:

O'Reilly advance guard: Defend Rivetta Gandolfi.

V div: Move to Casteggio and await further orders.

S div: Move to Montebello and await further orders.

6.0 Special events.

1	Thunderstorm (<i>once only</i>)	
2	Victor lends a hand	Ott thinks the enemy is weak
3	Rivaud takes initiative	Ott and Zach have an argument (<i>once only</i>)
4	Personal Example	Gottesheim takes initiative
5	Ford discovered! (<i>once only</i>)	Delay Reinforcements
6	Ford discovered! (<i>once only</i>)	Loose Cannon

Delay Reinforcements: As the standard random event.

Ford discovered!: (*once only*) Lannes receives information of a new ford across the Coppa. Secretly designate an hex-edge that will work as a regular ford. Any formation using the ford must be informed of its existence in an order.

Gottesheim gets involved: Even if 3.6.a is not in use, Gottesheim can now be given up to one brigade and one battery from the Schellenberg division, and form an ad hoc division freed of any range limitation for Schellenberg division. Gottesheim must have an order (from initiative or given by Ott) to act with his 'division' though.

Lannes is in command: When this result is rolled, Lannes must immediately 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.

Loose Cannon: As the standard random event.

Rivaud takes initiative: Rivaud (no counter) can move one unit of his brigade (43rd Line and 96th Line) out of the normal divisional range in the following movement phase. If a close combat occurs during this turn, assume this brigade to be stacked with a commander of a rating of 3. The next turn, this unit must remain in place or to get back in range.

Ott and Zach have an argument: (*once only*) While Ott and Zach are talking and trying to convince each other, Ott can't send any orders to his men. This remains in effect until a 4, 5 or 6 is rolled at the beginning of a subsequent command phase. Initiative capabilities of all other leaders aren't affected.

Ott thinks the enemy is weak: (only if the French does not have more VP's than the Austrians and the '*Ott and Zach have an argument*' has not occurred). The next order Ott sends has to be an engage order. Ott need not send it immediately, but he cannot send other orders until he sends an Engage order. However, if the French get more VP's or '*Ott and Zach have an argument*' occurs, Ott is freed from this restriction.

Thunderstorm: (*once only*) A rainstorm starts and will go on until the player who rolled this event rolls a five or six on one die on a future Random Events Check. During the rainstorm all Movement Allowances except for the three hexes of Cavalry Charges are halved, visibility is reduced to three hexes and no Skirmisher Fire may take place. There is a -2 modifier to the Loss Tables and the Firefight table in Close Combat.

Victor lends a hand: Victor may move to Lannes HQ and be given an IPO order which is automatically accepted the turn it is given

Historical Notes

Montebello, 9th of June 1800. Lannes fights Ott somewhere in Northern Italy. Something like 25,000 men are engaged. Most of the troops fight at Marengo five days later. The day ends with Lannes holding the field mostly because the Austrians decided to leave it. For this Lannes is made Duke of Montebello. That is the basic outline of things.

So to expand on this: where are we? We are in North Italy, on the East-West road that runs on the south side of the Po more or less all the way from Turin to Venice. 30 kilometres down the road to the west is Alessandria, a fortress guarding the most important crossroad in the northwest. There the roads from Turin and the great port of Genoa meet. East along the road are places such as Piacenza where the roads from the Alps and the great city of Milan come down.

So this is the road with capital R. Then why are the French attacking westwards towards France? Things are arranged this way: five days ago, Field Marshal Melas' Austrians captured Genoa after a long siege, but instead of bashing their way west down the Riviera towards Nice they are now all heading back east, or at least to Alessandria. This because the French Army of Reserve has materialized behind them, thanks to Napoleon's daring march across the Alps. Milan is in French hands, and two days ago, Lannes took Piacenza, effectively cutting the Austrians off from Mantua and home. The Austrian defenders, a motley band of 3,500 men under the energetic O'Reilly, withdrew to Stradella.

On the 8th of June, Lannes, commanding Watrin's Division, Mainoni's Brigade and some hussars, all in all around 6,000 men, drove O'Reilly out of Stradella. He was now ten kilometres east of Montebello. O'Reilly, who had very unclear orders, withdrew further west to Santa Giuletta. There he most likely got in touch with Ott, who had assembled close to 10,000 men around Alessandria. Ott had orders to recapture Piacenza to open the way for the main army as soon as possible. In one stroke O'Reilly's band turned into Ott's advance guard.

The French did not press on further that day. But Napoleon, who was in Milan, seems to have learnt during the day that Melas and most of the Austrian army were marching at full tilt towards Alessandria to break out east. He ordered Lannes to press on west the next day to find the enemy and ordered the army to concentrate. The next morning Ott, who like the rest of the Austrian commanders was under the impression that the main body of the French army was running riot further east around Mantua and not concentrating right in front of them, also decided to start moving.

Both armies were now moving to attack what they thought was a weak enemy. A clash was inevitable and at 9am Gency's Brigade of Watrin's Division, having probed O'Reilly's position all morning, closed in and O'Reilly, who still felt on his own, fell back in good order to Rivetta (or Rivalta: naming practices are wild in north Italy) a few

kilometres west. There he kept the French at a distance until sometime around 11am when Watrin came up in strength and threatened to envelop him. He withdrew another two kilometres down to Casteggio where he ran into the head of Vogelsang's Division coming up from Alessandria.

Working remarkably well together on the bounce, Vogelsang rushed Gottesheim's brigade to defend the ridge protecting the south side of Casteggio while O'Reilly deployed in the village. Flanking fire from Gottesheim's troops soon stopped the pursuing French. Without much hesitation, Watrin gave up on the village and instead started to probe for the Austrian flank on the ridge.

By now Lannes had arrived and decided to back Watrin. His entire command, save for two battalions needed to keep an eye on Casteggio, now went for Gottesheim. His hussars were ordered to clear the Austrians from the front of Casteggio but almost destroyed themselves by charging deep into the village. Soon the French drove Gottesheim's troops back, but as more and more Austrians came into view, both around Casteggio and north of him, it must have become clear to Lannes that he was no longer fighting only O'Reilly. As he was now risking being overwhelmed he urgently called for Victor, who was an hour behind, to come up to his aid.

Luck and timing had handed Lannes' Corps to the Austrians on a plate. Fortunately for Lannes, Ott had lost control over events. Not only had he come to the conclusion that the entire French army was coming his way, but Melas' Chief of Staff, Zachs, had also arrived with the same information and was now ordering him to withdraw. And while Ott and Zachs (who was a mere Colonel) argued, the fighting on the ridges south of Casteggio went on to little gain. Soon most of Vogelsang's Division - half of Ott's troops - were involved in first stopping Watrin and then trying to force him off the ridge. Still, had Ott at this time ordered Schellenberg's Division to attack east out of Casteggio he would probably have managed to crush Lannes' command altogether.

But the Austrian opportunity passed. Around 2pm enough of Victor's troops had arrived to make the French position safe. (It is worth noting that despite being Lannes' senior Victor did not try to interfere with what was Lannes' battle.) An hour later Vogelsang's troops broke as Chambarlhac's fresh Division attacked. The Austrian right fell back in disorder on Mairano losing a lot of prisoners and exposing the south flank of Casteggio. Attacking through the gap Rivaud's brigade broke the Austrian line in two by capturing the Casa di Giardina after a savage fight with the Ottocac Grenzers.

Sometime around 3pm, Ott ordered a general retreat just as the French closed on Casteggio again. The 24th Demi-Brigade entered the village on the heels of O'Reilly's tired men and a wild fight broke out inside it. The French eventually came out victorious, but were stopped by Austrian guns from crossing the bridge leading north out of the village. But with Rivaud on the right flank and fresh French troops probing the left, the retreating Austrians in Casteggio were in dire straits.

Ott brought up his last reserves from Montebello, but these could not save the Austrian left. As the troops fell back towards Montebello, IR 40 was surrounded and forced to surrender and IR 13 had to fight its way through Rivaud's troops. At the same time, a new French assault drove O'Reilly's troops out of Casteggio. Despite having fought since early in the morning, O'Reilly's grenzers and jägers still fought hard, slowing down the French pursuit.

The Austrians now withdrew towards Montebello where Ott was forming a new defensive line. As Lannes had no fresh troops left, and the Austrian cavalry still outnumbered his beat-up hussars, the pursuit was less than inspired. To the south, Vogelsang had managed to outdistance Watrin and also led his battered battalions towards Montebello along some narrow tracks.

The battle wound down to an evening of sniping and small skirmishes. At dawn the next day the Austrians were gone. At noon, Ott's column reached San Giuliano where Desaix would charge into eternity four days later. Lannes stayed at Montebello, and the role as advance guard was passed over to Victor's Corps.

Thus ended the battle for Montebello. It cost both sides less than 1,000 dead and seriously wounded and the Austrians also a couple of light guns and around 2,000 prisoners. Whatever the outcome, it would probably never have affected the outcome of the whole campaign, but had either side been very badly beaten it would probably have made its supreme commander more cautious in the coming days.

As for Lannes' dukedom, Montebello was a solid, but not in anyway a stellar, performance. It was not the stuff legends are made of, especially considering that five days later Lannes and Victor saved the Imperial Marbles by defending the Marengo line far longer than anyone could have expected them to. But Marengo was Napoleon's own battle, just as it seven years later did not suit him to make Lannes "Prince of Friedland". He would have been worth both the titles, though.

On a further general note: Andreas Graf von O'Reilly of Ballenlough, Ireland had served the Austrian crown with distinction since the 1760's. He was married to a Bohemian Countess.