

Möckern 16 October 1813: a small scenario for Blücher.

Background

On 16 October 1813 Napoleon's army stood at bay in the city of Leipzig, surrounded by advancing Allied armies. Napoleon's plan for the day was to strip his northern flank to reinforce an attack by his troops facing Schwarzenberg's Army of Bohemia to the South. He ordered Marmont to take his VI Corps out of its entrenchments north of Leipzig and set off southward. However, after Marmont had abandoned his position and was approaching Leipzig, Blücher's Army of Silesia appeared from the North. On his own authority Marmont halted his retreat and took up a defensive position before the city, with his left flank resting on the village of Möckern. Thanks to Blücher's aggressive advance, Napoleon would now have fewer troops at his disposal against Schwarzenberg. Moreover, his northern flank was significantly at risk from Blücher's advancing army.



1 map square is 4BW per side.

The Elster river in the South western corner is impassable. Other streams may be forded.

Fortunately for Napoleon, Blücher did not take full advantage of his opportunity on 16 October. Blücher believed that significant French forces were approaching from the North East and he feared an assault on his left flank. He spent most of the battle on that side of the field and he held back much of his army in anticipation of an enemy attack that didn't happen. The burden of the day's fighting consequently fell most heavily on Yorck's First Corps.

The game begins just as Marmont has taken position at Möckern and Yorck's Advance Guard approaches the village. Both sides will have access to the troops that took part in the critical fighting on the day.

The French set up first. The Prussians set up second and take the first turn. The game lasts 24 turns or until one side is demoralised.

Reinforcements

The reinforcement rule in the Blücher rulebook has been adjusted in two ways for this scenario.

First, the reinforcement factor against each formation represents the number of dice to throw when testing to arrive each turn. If the sum of the dice rolled equals or exceeds the current turn number, the formation arrives.

Second, all the formations that enter at the same entry point are considered to be marching in a column, one behind another. You may only test for one formation per entry point per turn and must follow the order of march in the column.

Reinforcements are otherwise subject to the reinforcement rules as written, including the right to use reserve movement.

Prussians

Allied morale level is 7

Set up on the table, up to 4BW from entry point 1.

1P Yorck (hero)

Advance Guard (Katzler)

1/AG/1P 7 sk sh st -

2/AG/1P 6 -

Cav/AG/1P 6

Reinforcements

Entry point 1

1 Brigade (Steinmetz) (reinforcement factor 3)

1/1/1P 7 sk sh st -

2/1/1P 6 -

2 Brigade (Mecklenburg-Strelitz)

1/2/1P 6 sk

7 Brigade (Horn) (reinforcement factor 4)

1/7/1P 6 sk -

1/7/1P 6 -

8 Brigade (Hünerbein)

1/8/1P 6

Corps cavalry (Jürgaß) (reinforcement factor 4)

1/C/1P 6

2/C/1P 5

Corps Heavy Artillery x 1

Russians

No troops on table

Reinforcements

Entry point 2

Langeron (reinforcement factor 4)

1RC Cavalry Corps (Korff)
1/RC 6
X Corps (Kaptzevich)
8/X (Ourousov)
1/8/X 6 st
22/X (Tourchaninov)
1/22/X 6 st +

IX Corps (Olsouviev) (reinforcement factor 5)
9/IX (Udom)
1/9/IX 6 st -
2/9/IX 6 st -
15/IX (Kornilov)
1/15/IX 6 st
Heavy artillery x 1

French

Set up on the table, in or within 6BW of the village of Möckern.

French morale level is 5

Units that start the game in urban areas may be set up in garrison.

VI Corps Marmont (vigorous)

20/VI (Compans)
1/20/VI 6 sk
2/20/VI 5 sh c
21/VI (Lagrange)
1/21/VI 6 sk
2/21/VI 6 sk +
22/VI (Frederichs)
1/22/VI 5 sh c
2/22/VI 6 sk -
5C/VI 5
25C/VI 5
Heavy Artillery x 1

Set up anywhere on the table, no closer than 4BW from the north table edge

4H/IV 6

6C/III 5

Set up in or within 1BW of the village of Groß Widderitsch

27/VIII (Dąbrowski)
1/27/VIII 6 sk
C/27/VIII 6

Reinforcements

Entry point 3

9/III (Delmas) (reinforcement factor 4)
1/9/III 6 sk
2/9/III 6 sk -

Sk = skirmish; St = steadfast; sh = shock; c = conscript; + and - = over- and under-strength.

Victory Conditions

Victory goes to the side that reduces enemy morale to zero.

The village of Möckern provides an extra morale point to the side that garrisons it. Thus, provided a unit is in garrison at the start of the game, French morale at the start of the battle is 6 not 5. If Möckern changes hands, the new occupier gains the morale point as soon as they place a unit into garrison in it. At the same time the evicted side loses one morale point. Note that the point will not change sides if the village is occupied by troops who are not in garrison. The extra point will change sides as often as the village changes hands.

Marmont's Corps included several regiments of Naval Artillerymen, transferred from coastal garrisons to make up losses from the Russian campaign. These troops performed well in battle. Their dark blue greatcoats and red epaulettes confused the Prussians, who mistook them for Sailors of the French Imperial Guard. Because of this confusion, several Prussian memoirs mistakenly reported fighting the Imperial Guard at Möckern.