

The Battle of Pordenone

15th April 1809

In the spring of 1809, Austria achieved strategic surprise in the opening moves of a new war with France. Fueled by a heady combination of eagerness to avenge past defeats, a renewed sense of national confidence, and a misplaced trust in international support, Austrian armies crossed the borders of Bavaria, Italy, and Poland intending to engage the French while they were still in disarray. Although the main campaign in Bavaria quickly unraveled, the Army of Inner Austria under the command of Archduke Johann made good progress in Italy and won back-to-back victories over the French on April 15th and 16th at Pordenone and Sacile. This scenario will be a re-imagining of the first and smaller of those battles, at Pordenone.

In actual fact the battle proved to be a very short affair, and a disastrous day for French arms. The French Army of Italy, still assembling on the march under the command of Prince Eugene, had pushed forward a small advance guard under General Sahuc into the city of Pordenone. Although the French believed that they still had time to assemble for battle over the course of the next day, the Austrian army was in fact marching towards Pordenone in search of a battle, headed by their rather more substantial advance guard under the command of the bold and capable General Frimont. As the French attempted to withdraw from Pordenone under these confusing circumstances, they were surrounded by cavalry and light infantry and mauled. After a sharp two hour engagement the French cavalry were forced from the field and their infantry was forced to surrender, thus costing Eugene one of his most veteran infantry regiments as well as half of his immediately available cavalry.

However, this need not have been the way the story unfolded! The French had in fact positioned a supporting force of additional infantry and cavalry in the nearby town of Fontanafredda, and General Grenier's 3rd Infantry Division was further to the rear along the main road to Sacile. Neither of these forces moved to support their compatriots at Pordenone on the 15th, however with a little optimism we can imagine that they did so, and that they were met by the first part of the main Austrian army advancing behind Frimont, Albert Gyulai's 8th Corps. These slight nudges to history form the basis for the following scenario and battle report.

For those who wish to recreate the actual battle, this can also easily be done with the information provided. Simply limit the French forces to Sahuc's command, and the Austrian forces to Frimont and Splenyi's commands. All other aspects of the game remain the same, except that Sahuc's objective is to retire towards Fontanafredda rather than defend Pordenone, and he must begin his withdrawal immediately. Furthermore, each turn the French must roll to see whether the 8th Chasseurs withdraw from the battle due to command confusion: there is a cumulative 1-in-6 chance per game turn (i.e. 1 on the first turn, 2 on the second turn, and so on). Bonne chance!

I should note that the map for this game, as well as the orders of battle, were derived from the second volume of John Gill's excellent (and somewhat lengthily titled!) trilogy on the 1809 Franco-Austrian War: "1809, Thunder on the Danube, Napoleon's Defeat of the Habsburgs, Volume II: The Fall of Vienna and the Battle of Aspern" (Frontline Books, London, 2008). The maps were created using the free program "Battle Chronieler" - available for download at battlechronieler.com.

The battle was played out using the new "March Attack" rules by Crusader publishing, with more information to be found at crusaderpublishing.com. It is hoped that the attached battle report will give an impression of how quickly even such a comparatively large and confused action can be played out using these rules.

Christopher TenWolde

Army of Italy	
Prince Eugene, Viceroy of Italy	Good Command (+2) / Inspiring (+1)
Advance Guard (main body)	Veteran: Steady 7 (8 Sk), Shaken 4 (5), Spent 2 (3)
General de Division Sahuc	Average Command (+1) / Inspiring (+1)
Colonel Breissand	
1 st / 35 th Ligne (764)	V 8 Sk
2 nd / 35 th Ligne (764)	V 8 Sk
3 rd / 35 th Ligne (764)	V 8 Sk
1 st / 6 th Hussars (454)	V 6 LC
2 nd / 6 th Hussars (454)	V 6 LC
1 st / 8 th Chasseurs (467)	R 5 LC
2 nd / 8 th Chasseurs (467)	R 5 LC
Horse Battery "A" (4x 4lb)	E 4 LH
Advance Guard (support)	Regular: Steady 6 (4 Sk), Shaken 4 (3), Spent 2 (1)
General de Brigade Pages	Poor Command (+0) / Inspiring (+1)
Colonel Saint-Martin	
1 st / 1 st Ligne (614)	R 6
2 nd / 1 st Ligne (614)	R 6
3 rd / 1 st Ligne (614)	R 6
4 th / 1 st Ligne (614)	C 5
1 st / 25 th Chasseurs (404)	R 4 LC
2 nd / 25 th Chasseurs (404)	R 4 LC
3 rd Division	Regular: Steady 10 (9 Sk), Shaken 6 (6), Spent 3 (3)
General de Division Grenier	Good Command (+2) / Inspiring (+1)
Brige Abbe	
Brigade Teste	
4 th / 11 th Ligne (981)	C 7
1 st / 52 nd Ligne (723)	R 6
2 nd / 52 nd Ligne (723)	R 6
3 rd / 52 nd Ligne (723)	R 6
4 th / 52 nd Ligne (723)	C 6
1 st / 102 nd Ligne (686)	R 6
2 nd / 102 nd Ligne (686)	R 6
3 rd / 102 nd Ligne (686)	R 6
4 th / 102 nd Ligne (686)	C 6
2 nd Italian Dragoons "Napoleon" (156)	E 4 MC
Foot Battery "B" (6x 8lb)	V 4 MF
Foot Battery "C" (4x 4lb)	V 3 LF

Totals: 16 infantry (102 Combat Value), 7 cavalry (34 CV), 3 artillery (11 CV) = 26 units (147 CV)

Legend

C = Conscript, R = Regular, V = Veteran, E = Elite

= Combat Value (CV) of unit

Sk = skirmish capable troops

LC = Light Cavalry, MC = Medium Cavalry

LF = Light Foot battery, MF = Medium Foot battery, HF = Heavy Foot battery, LH = Light Horse battery

Steady/Shaken/Spent ratings indicate when a force drops to the indicated morale state upon losing non-artillery units, and what Skirmish Rating the force has. *Example:* the 3rd Division starts with 10 units and skirmish rating of 9, but when it loses 4 units (drops to a total of 6 units) it also drops to Shaken morale status and its skirmish rating is reduced to 6.

Army of Inner Austria FML Archduke Johann	(with VIII Corps Main Body) Terrible Command (-1) / Uninspiring (+0)
VIII Corps Advance Guard (av. sk.) FML Frimont	Regular: Steady 9 (7 Sk), Shaken 6 (5), Spent 3 (2) Good Command (+2) / Inspiring (+1)
Brigade von Schmidt	
A - 1 st / 1 st Banal Grenz #10 (616)	C 5 Sk
B - 1 st / 1 st Banal Grenz #10 (616)	C 5 Sk
A - 2 nd / 1 st Banal Grenz #10 (616)	C 5 Sk
B - 2 nd / 1 st Banal Grenz #10 (616)	C 5 Sk
3 rd / Erzherzog Franz Karl IR #52 (900)	C 6
1 st / Franz Jellacic IR #62 (661)	R 6
Brigade von Wetzel	
1 st / Ott Hussars #5 (535)	V 6 LC
2 nd / Ott Hussars #5 (535)	V 6 LC
Hohenzollern Chevaulegers #2 (440)	R 4 LC
Combined Cavalry Battery (9x 3lb)	V 5 LH
IX Corps Light Cavalry Brigade (detached) GM von Splenyi	Veteran Average Command (+1) / Inspiring (+1)
1 st / Erzherzog Josef Hussars #2 (360)	V 5 LC
2 nd / Erzherzog Josef Hussars #2 (360)	V 5 LC
Frimont Hussars #9 (470)	V 6 LC
IX Corps Reserve Cavalry Brigade (detached) GM Hager	Regular Average Command (+1) / Inspiring (+1)
Hohenloe Dragoons #2 (714)	R 6 MC
Savoy Dragoons #5 (766)	R 6 MC
VIII Corps Main Body (poor sk.) FML Albert Gyulai	Regular: Steady 12 (9 Sk), Shaken 8 (6), Spent 4 (3) Poor Command (+0) / Inspiring (+1)
Brigade Colloredo	
1 st / Strassoldo IR #27 (1091)	R 8
2 nd / Strassoldo IR #27 (1091)	R 8
3 rd / Strassoldo IR #27 (1091)	C 7
1 st / St. Julien IR #61 (918)	R 7
2 nd / St. Julien IR #61 (918)	R 7
3 rd / St. Julien IR #61 (918)	C 6
Brigade Battery "B" (8x 3lb)	R 4 LF (regimental)
Brigade von Gajoli	
A - 2 nd / 2 nd Banal Grenz #11 (636)	C 5 Sk
B - 2 nd / 2 nd Banal Grenz #11 (636)	C 5 Sk
2 nd / Johann Jellacic IR #53 (1042)	R 8
3 rd / Johann Jellacic IR #53 (1042)	C 7
2 nd / Franz Jellacic IR #62 (661)	R 6
3 rd / Franz Jellacic IR #62 (661)	C 6
Brigade Battery "C" (8x 3lb)	R 4 LF (regimental)
Artillery Reserve	
Position Battery "D" (6x 12lb)	V 4 HF
Position Battery "E" (6x 6lb)	R 4 MF
Brigade Battery "F" (8x 3lb)	R 4 LF

Totals: 18 infantry (112 Combat Value), 8 cavalry (44 CV), 6 artillery (25 CV) = 32 units (181 CV)

(see French OB for an explanation of the abbreviations used)

Starting Time:	10:20, after the Austrians occupy Torre	
Starting Forces:	French, Sahuc	Defend Pordenone D5-7, E5-7, N of the Noncello, E of the E5 ravine
	Austrians, Frimont	Attack Pordenone A7, B7, C7
Order of Arrival:	Austrians, Splenyi	Turn 1: Support Frimont (no CV Loss roll) A1-2 dividing line or A3-4 dividing line, in column
	French, Pages	Turn 3: Support Sahuc (no CV Loss roll) C1, road from Fontanafredda, in column
	Austrians, Hager	Turn 4: Support Frimont A1-2 dividing line or A3-4 dividing line, in column
	Austrians, Gyulai	Turn 6: Orders determined by Johann on entry A7, road from Cordenone, in column
	French, Grenier	Turn 9: Orders determined by Eugene on entry C1, road from Fontanafredda, in column
	Austrians, Artillery Reserve:	Turn 9: Join Gyulai, under same orders A7, road from Cordenone, in column

Order of Battle

For the most part, translating an order of battle into March Attack (MA) units is fairly straightforward – a process of simply cross-referencing strength and quality to arrive at the base Combat Value. However, readers may note that the light cavalry units on both sides have been divided into two “wings”. MA encourages this practice, which has the positive effect of fielding cavalry in more and smaller maneuver units. I decided to field the Austrian medium cavalry in single maneuver units to differentiate them, giving them a more a concentrated “battle cavalry” CV.

Dealing with the large (1200+ man) Austrian Grenzer units proved problematic, as it does in many rules. Although they are huge battalions, they often operated with much of their strength dispersed in skirmish roles or divided into ad hoc groups of several companies. In MA terms, fielding them as single full strength battalions would also result in units with an unrealistically high CV, encouraging their unhistorical use as shock troops. I therefore chose to field them in two “wings” in a similar manner to the light cavalry. They are also rated as Conscripts so that their “Valeur et Discipline” tests (quality tests to determine their ability to maneuver under fire and in charges) would be a little more difficult. However, they are rated as Skirmish troops and thus contribute a large amount to their formation's Skirmish Rating; in addition, I determined that their presence raised their formation's skirmish capability from Poor (the Austrian standard here) to Average, also raising the overall Skirmish Rating. Overall I was happy with the compromises made, which resulted in them contributing significantly to the abstracted “skirmish screen” of their formation but relegated them to second-rate line troops.

Battle Report

The following battle report follows the attached maps turn-by-turn throughout the game, and hopefully gives an impression of how the game was played. Flipping through the maps should allow you to follow the course of the action. The depiction of columns and lines should be self-evident, but infantry occupying a town section are shown split into two small detachments, and limbered artillery have a “wheeled” symbol. Note that “hits” are marked with “explosion” markers, and units that are disorganized have their unit labels colored red. Units that have been eliminated during the ongoing turn are colored entirely red. The first map shows the terrain, which is hopefully self-explanatory. Houses represent a single built-up area, ravines are indicated by dry gravel courses (although part of the Noncello is flooded), and the black strip represents the main road. Where turns were complicated (usually because of charges) I have used two maps to show the intermediate and final states of the action.

Initial Deployment

The French, tasked with defending Pordenone until relief arrives, do not have enough infantry battalions to cover the entire four sector front on the village. They therefore decide to try and hold the northern half of the village while their artillery and cavalry try to keep their lines of reinforcement open to the west. The Austrians decide to try and mask the front of the village while they move through the undefended southern flank, while their cavalry positions itself to cut off the village from reinforcement.

Turn 1a - Austrian

Dicing for arrivals in the pre-turn “strategic” phase (when orders, arrivals, formation morale checks, and skirmish combat is conducted by both sides), the Austrians learn that Splenyi will arrive on Turn 2. The French win the initiative (despite Frimont's +2 Command versus Sahuc's +1), and decide to let the Austrians move first. The Austrians begin their advance, and the French battery fails to hit the 3/52 (needing a 1 to hit: 4CV -2 for light artillery -2 for long range +1 for target in column = 1).

Turn 1b - French

The French advance their cavalry, intending to try their luck with the Austrians before they are reinforced. The French artillery misses the 3/52 again, but the Austrian artillery gets in a lucky shot (also needing a 1) and inflicts 1CV loss on the 1/8 Chasseurs.

Turn 2a - Austrian Charges

As the Austrians have entered into engagement range (9”), the turn starts with skirmish combat. The French have the advantage at +1, and score a hit on the Grenzer B/2/1. The Grenzers pass their “Valeur et Discipline” (VeD) test and are not disordered. The VeD test is a simple 2d6 roll versus quality – in this case a 6 for the Conscript Grenzers – modified by losses, attached leaders, disorganization, and so on (in this case the Grenzers received a +2 for being in column). At this point Austrian eyebrows raise and it was remarked that “masking” an enemy force which has skirmish superiority might be difficult! The Austrians win the initiative this time, and opt to move first. They announce charges on the French cavalry (which countercharges), while their infantry moves into position to attack. Splenyi's three cavalry regiments enter the board and take up a reserve position, behind the attacking Austrian cavalry – this time it is French eyebrows that raise as they realize how quickly reinforcements can arrive using Strategic Movement! In the ensuing fire phase the unlucky 1/8 Chasseurs take another hit from artillery fire, but pass their VeD roll and are not disorganized. The French artillery scores a hit on the 3/52 and their infantry score another hit on the B/2/1 Grenzers.

Turn 2a - Austrian

The Austrians decide to start the charges with their 2/5 Hussars versus the battered 1/8 Chasseurs. The Austrians have a CV of 6 and roll 2 for a total of 8 (no other modifiers apply), while the French have been reduced to a CV of 3 (starting CV5 minus 2 hits) and roll a 4 for a total of 7. This defeat costs them a result of 2CV loss, Retire 12”, and become “D2” (Disorganized for 2 player turns). The regiment unfortunately recoils on the French horse artillery, which also becomes D2. Things look grim for the French, however they win the other two charge combats and force the remainder of the Austrian back on their newly arrived supports.

Turn 2b - French

The French opt to fall back in the face of the newly arrived Austrian reinforcements, moving up their reserve regiment and withdrawing the battered 1/8 Chasseurs behind the village. During the fire phase, the hapless B/2/1 Grenzers receive 2 more hits.

Turn 3a - French

In the turn start phase, the French learn that Pages will arrive this turn. Skirmish combat yields no hits this turn. The French win the initiative, and opt to move first – note that this gave them a “double move” (last on turn 2, first on turn 3) to react to the Austrian attack! The French move Pages' command quickly up the road towards Rorai Grande, and content themselves with fire combat around Pordenone. The 3/52 takes 2 more hits, while the B/2/1 Grenzers also suffer another hit – removing their last CV – and are removed from the board. The French 3/35 also suffers a loss. At this point it becomes obvious that when a force enters engagement range it had best make its attack quickly, as CV's tend to disappear at alarming rate, especially facing veteran troops!

Turn 3b - Austrian

The Austrians mass both their cavalry and infantry for an attack next turn, but inflict no damage on the (still fresh) French troops dispersed in the town.

Turn 4a - French

In the pre-turn strategic phase the Austrians learn that Hager will arrive this turn, and that his command has suffered not attrition (CV loss) from their march. The French again fail to achieve any hits in skirmish combat. The French win initiative, and opt to move first in the hopes of blunting the Austrian attack. They move Pages' cavalry to threaten the flank of the Austrian cavalry charge, and also swing their horse artillery around to face the Austrian horse. Pages' infantry swings south of Rorai Grande on its way to Pordenone. Neither side inflicts any hits during fire combat – the Austrians were careful this time to leave their battalions north of the town just out of range.

Turn 4b - Austrian Charges

The Austrians hold off their cavalry attack as Hager's dragoons move up to threaten in turn the flank of Pages' cavalry. However, they launch four battalions at the town sector held by the French 3/35. The French defenders first inflict 1 hit on the already battered 3/52, which fails its VeD test and halts disordered. It then suffers 2 more hits from the neighboring French battalion and is broken.

Turn 4b - Austrian

During charge combat the veteran 3/35 sees off all three remaining attacking battalions in succession! Multiple combats are conducted one at a time in MA, with the attackers receiving a bonus for each additional attacking unit – however, the high initial CV of the defending veteran unit, coupled with its bonus from village terrain, were too much for the Austrians overcome. The turn ends with the Austrian attackers scattered and disorganized.

Turn 5a - Austrian Charges

In the turn start phase, the French again fail to produce any skirmish hits, and the Austrians win the initiative and opt to move first – achieving their own “double move” and catching the French cavalry with their flanks open. The Austrians launch a massive cavalry attack, with their dragoons catching Pages' light cavalry in the flank and their remaining six regiments charging the three remaining French regiments. At Pordenone, the 1/62 decides to try and take advantage of the 3/35's disorganization (a house rule had established that winners of urban combats were disorganized, even victorious defenders) while the rest of the infantry tried to reorganize itself. The 1/62 suffers a hit, but passes its VeD test and continues the charge.

Turn 5a - Austrian

Although the French again drove off the infantry attack on Pordenone, the Austrians succeeded in defeating the bulk of the French cavalry, driving it back behind Pordenone in disarray.

Turn 5b - French

The French draw up their remaining regiments in an arc between Rorai Grande and Pordenone, hoping to cover the march of Pages' infantry as it heads towards Pordenone in column.

Turn 6 - Austrian Morale

In the turn start phase, seeing that he couldn't make any headway against the veteran French defenders of Pordeone, and with more enemy infantry on the way, Frimont attempts to change his orders to Retire but fails. The Austrians then learn that Gyulai's column will arrive next turn, having suffered no attrition on its march. However, Frimont's command has been reduced to Shaken by its losses, and it fails its morale check. The result is that formation's are changed to Retire, however all units also take a 3CV loss, which eliminates all units except a single hussar regiment and the artillery! In addition, since both Splenyi and Hager were on Support orders, they are forced to retire to conform to Frimont's new position.

Turn 6a - Austrian

The Austrians win initiative, and opt to move first and reorganize their forces in preparation for Gyulai's arrival. Frimont moves his remaining units to a position where he can attempt a Formation Rally next turn – which will allow him to try and restore CV's to his units, even those removed from the board. The Austrian cavalry withdraws and screens him, so that he is not on the front line and can attempt the rally.

Turn 6b - French

During their turn, the French content themselves with reorganizing the defense of Pordenone as Pages' infantry begins to arrive.

Turn 7 - Austrian Rally

In the turn start phase, Frimont rallies his formation and recovers 7CV of Grenzers, 6CV of regular infantry, 2CV of hussars, and 1CV of artillery. The new formation was organized thus:

RALLIED VIII Corps Advance Guard (av. sk.)	Regular: Steady 4 (3 Sk), Shaken 2 (1), Spent 1 (1)
FML Frimont	Good Command (+2) / Inspiring (+1)
Brigade von Schmidt	
A - 1 st / 1 st Banal Grenz #10 (616)	C 5 Sk
A - 2 nd / 1 st Banal Grenz #10 (616)	C 2 Sk
3 rd / Erzherzog Franz Karl IR #52 (900)	C 6
Brigade von Wetzel	
2 nd / Ott Hussars #5 (535)	V 6 LC
Combined Cavalry Battery "A" (9x 3lb)	V 3 LH

Turn 7a - French

The Austrians win the initiative, and have the French move first. The French continue deploying into Pordenone.

Turn 7b - Austrian

With the arrival of Gyulai's main column and the rallying of Frimont's troops, the Austrians begin to march towards Pordenone again. Johann orders Gyulai to attack Pordenone after Frimont reforms on his right flank.

Turn 8a - Austrian

In the turn start phase, Archduke Johann successfully orders Frimont to Support Gyulai, however he fails in his attempts to issue new Attack orders to Splenyi and Hager. With Johann now in command (-1 Command compared to Frimont's +1), the French easily win initiative and have the Austrians move first. The Austrians continue to deploy their troops for a new assault on Pordenone, and Johann moves closer to the cavalry commanders.

Turn 8b - French

The French finalize their defensive deployment in Pordenone, which now bristles with infantry, and the French artillery score a lucky hit against an advancing Austrian Grenzer column.

Turn 9a - French

In the turn start phase, Johann successfully changes Splenyi's orders to Attack, but fails again with Hager. The French learn that Grenier's command will enter this turn. Eugene orders Grenier to deploy with his right flank on Rorai Grande, and prepare to advance towards Pordenone. The Austrians learn that the VIII Corps artillery reserve will arrive next turn. A lucky roll gives the Austrians the initiative, and they opt to have the French move first. The French sit in place around Pordenone as Grenier's troops start to march eastwards, but score another hit against the Grenzers.

Turn 9b - Austrian

The Austrians continue to deploy, hoping to launch their attack before Grenier can arrive. They are careful to deploy outside of engagement range.

Turn 10a - French

In the turn start phase, Johann finally succeeds in ordering Hager to Attack. The Austrians win initiative and have the French move first to see what Grenier will do. Grenier starts to deploy his troops north of Rorai Grande.

Turn 10b - Austrian

As the Austrians continue to deploy in front of southern Pordenone and their cavalry moves forward to attack once again, Johann makes the fateful decision to redirect part of Gyulai's command away from Pordenone so that he can counter Grenier's deployment, instead masking the northern part of Pordenone with artillery.

Turn 11a - French

During the skirmish phase, both players agree that the ratings should be pro-rated for Sahuc and Gyulai, as portions of their formations are not facing the enemy within engagement range. The French use all of Pages' rating and half of Sahuc's, while the Austrians use 3/4 of Gyulai's. The French retain their earlier advantage, and cause a hit on one of the advancing Austrian infantry battalions, which passes its VeD test and is not disordered. The French win initiative and move first, continuing to deploy Grenier's formation. They also change their cavalry in columns, so that the Austrians cannot easily use their superior numbers. No damage is inflicted from fire – the Austrians have been careful to stay out of musket range.

Turn 11b - Austrian Charges

The Austrians launch a grand attack all along the line. Their cavalry engages the French cavalry and artillery, while their infantry moves against Sahuc's men in southern Pordenone. During the fire phase two of the attacking Austrian battalions suffer hits but pass their VeD tests and continue their charges in good order. The Austrian hussars attacking the battery are also hit and fail their VeD test, but being cavalry continue their charge even though they are disordered.

Turn 11b - Austrian

The charges prove a mixed bag for the Austrians. Although they finally gain a foothold in Pordenone, the bulk of the attacking infantry was repulsed with heavy casualties, one battalion breaking. Likewise, the Austrians win half of the cavalry combats, but the hussars attacking the battery are destroyed.

Turn 12a - French Charges

During the turn start phase, the disheartened Johann orders Hager and Splenyi to retire to the right flank of the line, and orders Gyulai to break off the attack on Pordenone and assume a defensive posture. The French fail to score any hits in skirmish combat, but win the initiative and choose to move first. As Grenier finishes his deployment and the weary French cavalry retire behind the flank of Pordenone, Pages puts himself at the head of one of his battalions and counterattacks the disordered Austrians who had occupied the southern part of the village.

Turn 12a - French (final)

Pages' counterattack is successful and the French regain control of Pordenone.

Game End

At this point both players started to ask broader strategic questions. The Austrians felt they could not move against either Pordenone or Grenier unless reinforced by the rest of the army, but also felt they could hold their present positions unless the rest of the French army appeared. Likewise, the French were confident that they could hold their positions against the current Austrian forces, but would require reinforcements to move over to the attack. Given this situation (and the fact that I had not prepared other forces!) the game was called, despite the fact that we had only been playing for about two hours. The game was declared a solid French victory, based on their still holding all vital positions and having inflicted serious damage on the enemy. The casualty totals were as follows:

Austrian: 36 Infantry (19 Grenz, 17 Line), 22 Cavalry (20 Light, 2 Medium), 2 Artillery (Light Horse)

French: 3 Infantry (Line), 19 Cavalry (Light), 0 Artillery

Total Loss Ratio = 60:22

Commentary

The game was enjoyed by all (despite some frustration on the Austrian part), and the most common remarks were that the speed of maneuver would take some getting used to. Grand attacks could develop over the course of a few turns, and formations could march with speed from the reserve to seriously effect the battlefield dynamics. In retrospect, the Austrian player felt he should have been more careful with Frimont's infantry, either holding them back or contenting himself with occupying the empty quarters of the Pordenone. If the early morale failure of Frimont's formation could have been avoided, the later attack would have been much more powerful, and it might have been possible to completely overthrow the French cavalry. The French, for their part, agreed about the effects of Frimont's morale failure, which is what caused them to hide their battered 1CV cavalry units away from harm so that they did not count as lost units. There was a general agreement that it might be better to count columns as half CV when firing rather than full CV (an option apparently considered by the author), but other than that the results seemed to fit the bill. Overall, the rules seemed to achieve that elusive balance between convincing tactical detail and playable grand tactical breadth.