

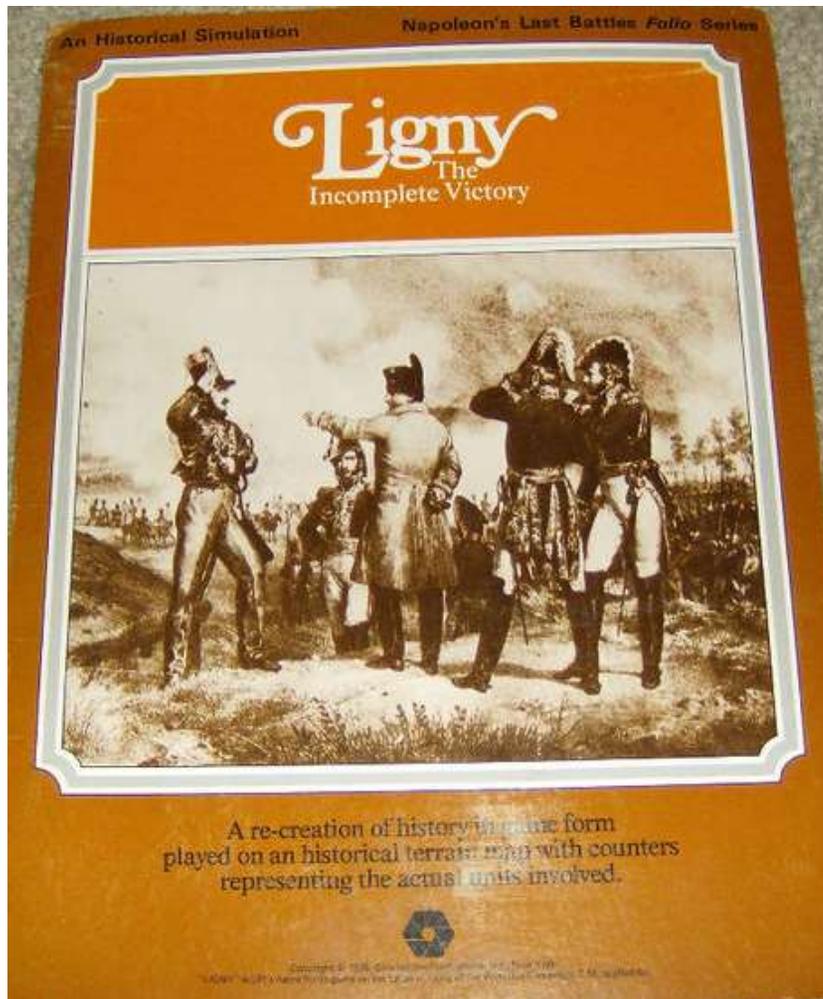
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# Ligny by SPI

## *The Incomplete Victory*

### *Replay by George Nap*

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#### **Background:**

Part of the still-popular ***Napoleon's Last Battles Quad***, published in 1976, ***Ligny*** is the moment in the Waterloo campaign when Napoleon and his troops face the Prussian I, II, and III Corps, concentrated to oppose the French invaders. This quad remains popular almost 50 years later because of its unique structure: The four individual quad games can be pieced together to allow players to recreate the entire Waterloo campaign using the popular-if-simple ***Napoleon at Waterloo*** system. The campaign adds a few additional rules important for simulating the campaign, chief of which is adding a layer of leadership rules to simpler quad game system.

At this point, It is my pleasure to introduce George Nap, gamer extraordinaire, who has produced a number of these replays for SPIGames.net. George will take you through the game introduction, objectives, and the method he has used to test with this SPI Replay!

---Russ Gifford

#### **Getting Started**

I have to admit that the Waterloo Campaign is not something I am well-versed in, so this seemed like a good opportunity to play it out. I am using the command rules from the Campaign game, noting that the French have quite a few commanders, the Prussians do not.

This is a pretty straightforward affair. The objective hexes are marked with tile spacers right in the front lines. The idea is to disintegrate the Prussians before time runs out. The game runs eight turns, the last being a night turn.

*Fair warning: I am a fat-fingered old man, so if pictures of disheveled stacks will disturb you, the pictures may not be for you.*

## Rules Recap

- Stacking is two units, not counting leaders.
- Zones of Control (ZoC's) are locking, meaning units can only leave an Enemy ZOC by a combat result. *(See special rules)*
- Combat is mandatory if units are in an Enemy ZoC,
- ZoC's do not extend across rivers, but they do across streams, the watercourses in this battle.
- The rules do not explicitly state that artillery bombardment fulfills the requirement to attack all enemy units in an enemy ZoC, but I will allow this as fulfilling the requirement. *[Standard in all the NAW Quads]*
- Artillery has a range of 2 hexes

## Optional Rules in Play

- I am using the Optional Imperial Guard Rules
- I am using the Combined Arms rules,
- I am also using the Cavalry Impetus and Cavalry Retreat Rules
- I am also using the Leader Advance Advantage.
- *I am also using the Command Rules from the Campaign game.*

## Command Rules Explained:

- Command rules are: commanders (Nap, Wellington, Blucher) have a range of 5 hexes
- Commanders may command the number of formations designated by their command span number,
- They may also command a like number of individual units.
- Commanders provide command to officers (Corps/Division commanders also designated by counters) within these restrictions.
- Units not in command may not attack, nor enter an Enemy Zone of Control. (EZOc.)
- Units out of command in EZoC must have the enemy units retreated or retreat themselves after the combat phase. This is the third way (retreat due to combat or elimination being the others) to depart EZoC.

## Issue:

Unless I missed it at the setup, Blucher is not present and only one commander exists for the Prussians – Prich. I will default him to “in command” status and allow him to command II Corps units, leaving I and III Prussian Corps out of command and totally defensive.

## Morale:

We will track demoralization points.

Units in demoralized armies may not advance after combat.

Prussian demoralization 55 / Disintegration 74

French cannot lose 35 SP or they lose.

Some errata, based on the Unit Manifest in the Campaign game. Van Damme is III Corps commander (not II Corps), Gerard is IV Corps Commander not III Corps.





## 16 June 1815 – 1300 Hrs

French: Commanders on site are Napoleon and Grouchy, will split them left wing/right wing. Corps out of Command marked with red 1's The II Corps units are out of command as Rielle is not here, Nappy will pull them in as a reserve. Vandamme slams into the 12th Line in St Amand 1:1 Dr (VP hex, 3 Prussian Demoralization Points PDP). A 2:1 on Wagnelee Dr eliminates the defenders who have no retreat path. (3 more PDP), 1:2 arty bombard n 0624 misses.



Gerard attacks Ligny, Balhaus bombards 1022 forcing a retreat. Gerard attacks 1122 R 2:1 and is thrown back. Thus ends the French turn.



Prussian: Since most of this army is out of command I will not mark the out of command units. Only Pirch and II Corps may attack or enter EZoC, the rest cannot. The fortunate failure of Gerard will allow us to occupy Ligny in force with out of command units. Pirch fills in behind Ligny. The units in 0523 cannot attack and must retreat from French ZoC. The Prussian line prepares to receive the French.



PDP= 6, French casualties = 0

## 16 June 1815 – 1500 hrs

French: de Villiers out of command, everyone else in command. The Prussians have formed a tight knuckle around Ligny and are disputing the streams at Tongrionelle. There is no time for maneuver, so this may just be a slog. 0524 and 0624 are vacant and take (6PDP). Pujol leads a 2:1 vs Boignee and is repulsed.



Gerard attacks Ligny 2:1 and is repulsed, Schoeffer spoiling attack is an Ar, arty on 0923 is ineffective, a 4:1 on Treskow results in a Dr, Milhaud with Delort advances. Vandamme leads a 2:1 vs 0723 Dr, occupied. Lagarde and Gengoult attack at 1:1 and are repulsed. Lutzow is attacked 6:1 in 0622 by Corsin, Dufour and Dumon and is driven back, town occupied.



Prussian: Again, only II Corps is in command, and that due to my rule interpretation, without Blucher on the map technically nobody is in command, which begs the question, why the Pirch counter? So only II Corps can attack, and only II Corps does not have to retreat if adjacent to the French at the end of the Prussian combat phase, so II Corps is going to have to fill the line at Ligny, since their compatriots will continue to evaporate. At this point there is a "gamey" element due to the displacement rules. Non-II Corps units will be retreating, rather than having to leave "breathing spaces" ie-open hexes for them to retreat to from EZoC, I will allow them to displace through II Corps units, rather than forcing II Corps units to displace. Totally my house rule and my call. Due to my error 2nd Ln 5/11 must make an unfavorable solo attack, ugh, of 1:4 and are eliminated for 4PDP. 12/1/I and 24/1/I unable to disengage are eliminated 8PDP. The rest of the non-II Corps units retreat.





PDP= 24, French casualties = 0

**16 June 1815 – 1600 hrs**

French – All French units now in command, time for a push, need to start eliminating Prussian units. The Guard advances in the center, we try to turn both flanks and burst into Lingy.



Dumon, Dufour y Corsin attack Lutzow and 28th Line 4:1 DR, no retreat, eliminated, cavalry control maintained, infantry advances. Gengoult y Lagarde vs 6th Line 2:1 DR no retreat path, eliminated. 2nd Elbe Ln and 22 Line attacked by DeVilliers and Dogreau arty 2:1. Van Damme leads Pyot and Dupreaux vs Thumen and 1st Elbe Ln 2:1 DR Van Damme occupies with both. Delort 1:2 vs 26th and 9th Line DR (rolled a 1), control lost cavalry advances. Gerard leads a 2:1 on Lingy DR. Capitaline 1:2 vs 28th Line retreat. 1:3 vs arty in Lingy AR (but barely, that would have been epic)





On the Prussian left, 1:1 vs 8th Line DR no retreat path, eliminated. 1:1 vs 1st Lnd Kr DR occupied.



Prussian – Remembering only II Corps can attack, the rest must withdraw. II Corps units are engaged across the right, although some may be locked in to unfavorable attacks, here goes. 14 Line 1:3 vs Gorgoult and Dufour AE, horrible roll. 2nd Elbe Line and 22nd Line vs DeVilliers 1:1 Dr. 1:1 vs VanDamme et al DR, cav control lost, occupied to try to snip off the next retreat. 2:1 vs Delot, AR eliminates 26th Line with no retreat. 1:2 vs Gerard et al in Lingy DR occupied. Not bad, but not good. 20 more Prussian factors eliminated. Only 11 to go.



PDP= 44, French casualties = 0

**16 June 1815 1700 hrs**

French - A less detailed play by play, some 1:2's planned on the far right to try and get lucky, but the Prussian right is impeding.



Shumberg EX taking out Billiard. Gerard retakes the southernmost hex of Lingy. The Prussian left recoils.



Prussian – French cavalry on the left center are pushed back, but 1st Elbe Line is lost in the spoiling attack. Domon refuses combat with II Corps units.



## **16 June 1815 1800 hrs**

French – Lehman forced out of Lingy (my mistake, should have been a mandatory retreat, they are a I Corps unit). Thuman is eliminated with no retreat path. LaGarde dies taking out 5th Line (EX). With the loss of Lingy (3VP) and 5 combat points, the Prussian army becomes demoralized. There do not exist sufficient II Corps units to inflict enough casualties on the French to change the outcome. Calling it here.



PDP=58, French casualties = 9



## **The cost of war.**

I think this is a difficult game for the French to win, even with command rules. French victory is dependent on destroying Prussian units, which is a heavy lift given the CRT. You need 6-1 odds to guarantee casualties, and then half of them will be exchanges, which dig into the French maximum casualty limitation. A canny Prussian can simply fall back, the French cannot garner enough VP's from the geographic objectives for victory. (As a Prussian I would write these off. I would set a series of lines as the Prussian falling back to the northeast corner of the board, the French will run out of time before I lose the requisite amount of units. And while I first thought this would be a "gamey" rules lawyer move, it is actually good strategy, although it may not reflect Blucher's outlook. If you want to incorporate a way to force the Prussian to stand, you would need to alter VP's to make losing geographic objectives more dangerous to the Prussian demoralization tables.