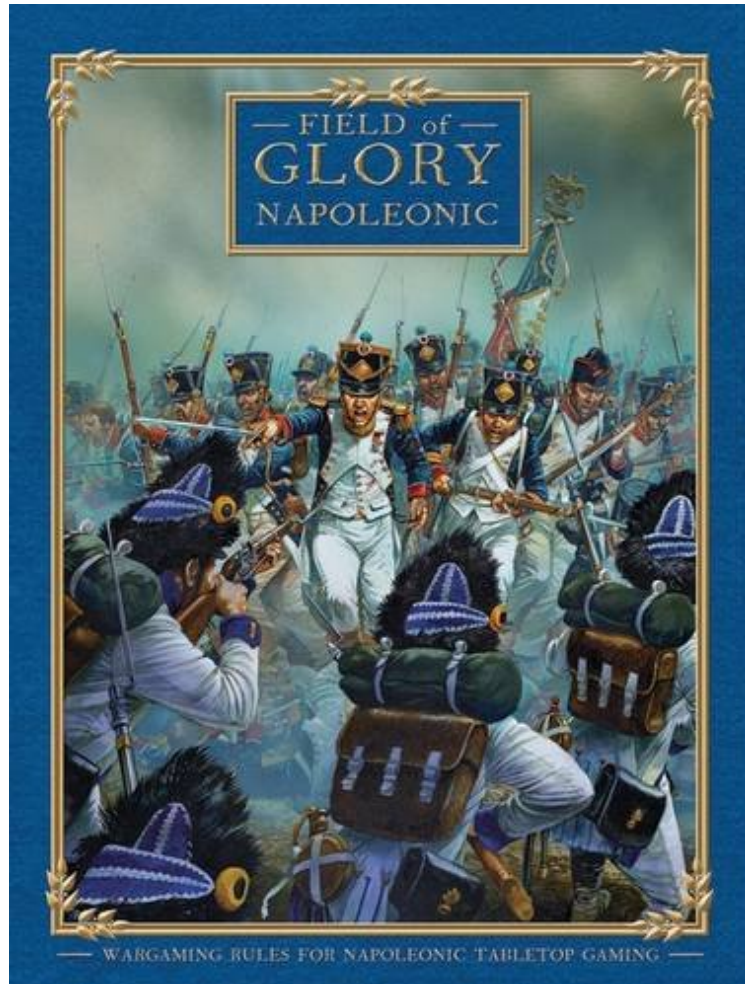


(Free read ebook) Field of Glory Napoleonic

## Field of Glory Napoleonic

*Slitherine*

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**Slitherine : Field of Glory Napoleonic** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Field of Glory Napoleonic:

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reworked or replaced to better fit the combat of this era. **WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE?** This is the threshold question when looking at Napoleonic-era miniatures rules, since engagements ran from small skirmishes up to battles with hundreds of thousands of men in the field. Do you want to command a company? Battalion? Run several battalions as a regimental or brigade commander? Control a Division? Be a Corps or Army commander, or even L'Empereur? There are rulebooks pitched to every level, though many cluster where the basic units are infantry battalions, artillery batteries, and cavalry squadrons or regiments and the player is acting as a brigade or division commander. These forces tend to be fielded as mixed task forces of up to divisional size made more interesting than run-of-the-mill divisions by allowing a broad range of troop selections. Some players delight in minor tactical action between opposing battalions, batteries and squadrons. However, this is just a small battle or a slice of a major battle. Many Napoleonic players also want the feel of high command, controlling combined arms forces of corps size (averaging 20,000-30,000 men at full strength) or larger. The player can enjoy the combined arms grand tactical challenges of maneuvering his divisions and brigades across a full battlefield, but may not want to lose sight of what happens at the tactical level. In a straightforward approach to experience both levels (and put awesome numbers of miniatures on a crowded table), players often try to fight very large battles using battalions as the basic units. Even with multiple players per side this tends towards time-consuming games that have an unwieldy number of units even using simplified and abstracted mechanisms. The FoG(N) player commands one or more Corps, each consisting of 2 to 4 Divisions. Divisions may be infantry, cavalry or a mixed, may include substantial artillery, and are comprised of maneuver units (some 50% larger than standard) each the size of several infantry battalions, small cavalry regiments, or artillery batteries. These unit sizes might correspond to an infantry demi-brigade or regiment or a small British brigade (e.g., 1200-3000 infantry, 500 to 1200 cavalry, or 12 to 30 guns). These units may be reinforced for the battle by various "Attachments" of Corps or Division-level assets. Basing the rules on regimental-size units rather than battalions or full brigades or divisions seemed odd at first but I was won over in theory by the detailed historical explanation in the rules and web forums and in practice by how it works to represent what Napoleon called the grand tactical level as well as key elements of the tactical level of battle without burdening the player. Positioned in Corps command while keeping in view the most essential elements and feel of tactical engagement below the Division level, I don't feel a need to see the detailed evolutions of individual battalions, batteries and squadrons because I see how they work together tactically reflected concretely on the table in the maneuvers, formations, assaults, firefights, and close combats of the Divisions' units. March Columns, Squares, and Extended Lines (battalions abreast) are special unit formations specifically represented in the game, but generally infantry and cavalry are in "Tactical" formation, shown by bases two deep and representing the footprint or area within which local commanders attempt to dispose the battalions as best they can for the circumstances (e.g., double line, ordre mixte or attack columns screened by skirmishers). Since the effects and interactions of different troop types within different tactical systems are reflected in the mechanics and modifiers, I'm comfortable letting go of the detailed formations and evolutions at the battalion level when playing Corps command. I will first outline the contents of the rulebook and then discuss what I see as the most important or intriguing workings of the game in enough detail for you to decide whether you wish to take a deeper look. **THE RULEBOOK:** As usual for Field of Glory rules, all aspects of the game are covered in detail. The rules style is not conversational but instead direct and carefully phrased with the goal of being comprehensive, complete and unambiguous, something inherently useful in a set of rules but in practice hard to achieve given the fluidity of English. The hardcover bound rulebook is attractive, durable and professionally executed, but I find the old-style typeface too small, thin, and squat so less readable than its predecessors. The book is considerably thinner than its predecessor Field of Glory Renaissance volume with fewer photos and historical illustrations but ample diagrams (I do like explanatory diagrams!). The contents include: 'Introductory and army organizational info first, followed by the playing rules roughly in the order of the sequence of play (I describe the SOP below). Movement and ranges are measured in Movement Units (MUs) of 25mm (1") at 15mm figure scale and 40mm at 25/28mm scale. Ground scale is 60m or 67 yards/MU (so 3 MU=200 yards) and a pair of turns represents 20 minutes.' Sections on special terrain features. The special rules for combat in built-up areas and other defensive positions are very good—a common weak spot for rules. At Waterloo, Plancenoit changed hands several times. This can happen in FoG(N)—capturing troops take a turn to organize a prepared defense, meaning an immediate counter-attack by the former defenders can tumble the captors out before they are able to establish an effective defense.' Basing and background: FoG-standard 40mm frontage in 15mm scale, but 30mm deep, allowing two 4-man ranks on an infantry base, which represents 300-500 men. Cavalry are 3 per base representing 125-200 men. A single artillery model with crew represents a battery of 6-9 guns. Beyond the aesthetics, the overall unit footprint rather than figure headcount matters for gameplay. In 15mm scale the footprint for infantry and cavalry units is 8cmx6cm for 4-base "small" units, while small artillery units have 2 bases and are as deep as necessary. "Large" units with 50% more bases are sometimes available. Large infantry or cavalry units can either present a wider fighting frontage or deploy deeper, and they also enjoy more resilience by ignoring the first hit from firing or combat before determining the result.' The battlefield creation and deployment system is built on prior FoG offerings. It is complete and suitable for competitive play, of course, but I like the FoG approach enough to use a relaxed version as my preference for filling in scenario details and for other games.' Glossary

of terms.' How to use the rules for multi-corps battles, how to create historically-based army lists and orders of battle for historical scenarios, specific unit conversion information, and how to play with miniatures based for other systems (so I don't see rebasing as a big issue).' Design philosophy, mostly an explanation of command structure and the historical, tactical and organizational background for the choice of regimental-level basic units.' You can create army lists and scenarios based on your historical knowledge, but the book includes 8 sample army lists that can be used for inspiration or to build armies using the points system as a guide to relative values. These lists fall within the 1810-1813 timeframe (Anglo-Portuguese, Austrian, French Infantry Corps (both 1812 and 1813), Prussian, Russian, and Spanish).' Orders of battle for both sides at Plancenoit (1815) and Sacile (1809) as examples of conversion of units for historical scenarios.' A 3-page index.' 4 pages of playsheets for quick reference. The rulebook is being followed by two army list books (June and September) providing numerous lists covering major and minor states. These will be detailed on a year-by-year and region-by-region basis where appropriate—a useful resource even for users of other rules. Slitherine's Field of Glory forums are as usual active and will provide quick responses for questions as well as historical, scenario, FAQ, errata, and other information. A player-made Excel army-builder worksheet is already available and I expect more player aids. The FoG(N) free quickstart download scenario with "Lite" rules that I tried needed an overhaul for completeness and clarity—while it does illustrate some mechanisms it is not yet easy to use. Rules errata includes a couple dozen corrections, virtually all clean-up typos and clarifications, and a further clarification FAQ is promised to address the usual odd cases and phrasing open to reasonable (or unreasonable) misinterpretation. I wish it had been perfect to start, but given the rulebook's broad scope and Slitherine's good forum support and issue clean-up I don't think it fair to knock the rating down a level. Some gamers denounce points systems for their inherent imperfections, but where use is optional I think the issue is whether points offer any value as a gauge of relative strengths. Prior FoG rules show considerable diligence and skill in points balancing for more difficult historical periods than Napoleonics, which has similar armies and extensive historical evidence of comparative performance. Easing my concern about the classic Napoleonics risks of Super Guard syndrome or Neapolitan despair, I was heartened by a tester reporting his "French Imperial Guard (coming in at a tiddly 8 units) have been annihilated, sadly repeatedly, by larger 'average' armies who have managed to avoid or delay the 'point of decision' until their numbers have been bought to bear" while his relatively low-grade Westphalians have been quite successful. A musket ball respects neither Élan nor Training. Winning with high quality troops when outnumbered should demand more skill and experience.

**TROOP CLASSIFICATIONS:** Rules take various approaches to differentiating troops based on behavior and performance, ranging from unitary combat values and detailed lists of modifiers to sets of idiosyncratic unit-specific special rules, all intended to evoke the distinctive characteristics of the protagonist armies and their important tactical interactions as the rules author sees them. Field of Glory Napoleonics army lists each include special rules for the overall organization of the corps covered by that list for the applicable time frames and regions (e.g., the 1812 French Army in Spain differed considerably from the one invading Russia, and the post-disaster French army of 1813 was even more different). The lists also define each available type of unit by name or description, combat arm, troop type, Élan, Training, unit size(s) in bases, points cost per base, maximum bases allowed, and (if applicable) the minimum bases required in order to provide the proper "shape" to the army. There are also often historical restrictions on which units may serve together. A unit can be reinforced by up to 2 attachments of appropriate types from Corps or Division assets. Infantry might be eligible for any of the 4 options: specialist Skirmisher companies, an artillery battery, a cavalry squadron or two, or a special officer (cavalry and artillery can get an officer or artillery). Attachments reinforce unit capabilities for specific missions, and also allow custom tailoring of units to fit specific historical orders of battle (OOBs). Less flexible forces must assign attachments to units in their OOB, while some more flexible armies or divisions can often wait until they see the battlefield. The combination of army lists with army restrictions, the range of player choice of troops and leaders, organization of divisions, and selection and use of attachments means that two armies of the same nation, region and date are liable to differ substantially in composition and strategy while sharing common characteristics. British doctrine, training, experience (including better leveling of muskets), and ample use of Attachments (especially Skirmishers including Rifle components) translates to Peninsular armies that tend to include a high proportion of Veteran British and allied units with a firepower superiority over their opponents that enables them to effectively counter-punch against attackers who stand halted and Disordered or Wavering by fire. Russian infantry divisions always have substantial artillery, and horse artillery is even available in a large unit, so with Reformed late wars infantry and ample Jaeger formations the Russians can generate a lot of firepower while also enjoying Cavalry choices ranging from veteran Cuirassiers to nimble Cossacks. Similarities in the basic organization and weaponry of armies mean that minor variations in troop types, training, doctrine and skill of Napoleonic become more significant in providing a tactical edge. Each combat arm (infantry, cavalry and artillery) is divided into heavy and lighter types as well as subtypes (such as Rifle Light Infantry; Shock Heavy Cavalry; Lancer Light Cavalry; Foot or Horse Artillery; or specialized artillery including mortars, howitzers and rockets). Infantry are categorized as Reformed or Unreformed, reflecting whether at the list date that army had effectively transitioned from traditional linear tactics to improved tactical systems making flexible use of new drill and maneuver methods and skirmisher tactics, including proficient light companies integrated in line battalions. Reformed units or skirmisher

attachments can push skirmishers well forward and extends infantry firepower into Medium Range. Troops are also classified based on Training and experience (Veteran, Drilled or Conscript) and their Élan or fighting spirit (Superior, Average or Poor). Some elite units can also qualify for special "Guard" designation (Guards are more disciplined and resilient in adversity). This system allows nuanced troop classification, such as patriotic levies filled with fierce fighting spirit but short on training and experience (French Superior Conscripts), veterans whose enthusiasm for combat has been tempered by experience but who have become disciplined and proficient soldiers (British Average Veterans), or even poorly motivated minor state Guard units (Neapolitan Poor Drilled Guards). The most formidable troops are of course the rare Superior Veteran Guards (such as the Old Guard at its best). Veteran troops are better shots and more likely to withstand Cohesion Tests, while Superior troops are more eager in Combat and making Complex Move Tests.

**COMPLEX MOVE TESTS AND COHESION TESTS:** These are the two common tests, each passed if the score on any of the dice rolled equals or exceeds the required number. A Complex Move Test rolls one dice, is always voluntary, and has a cost. It can be taken only if the unit's Division Commander uses one or more (depending on circumstances) of his limited Command Points ("CPs") for the turn or there is an eligible Commander personally leading the unit, in which case its first CMT is free. Passing score is 5-6; 4-6 if personally led by a Commander. Guard, Superior and Poor units get re-rolls. A passed CMT enables the unit to do something beyond what it is normally allowed or required to do, such as make a Difficult Move, take a Second Move, declare or avoid declaring Assaults on certain adversaries, Intercept some enemy Assaults, charge home in the Assault despite being checked by Defensive Fire, prepare defenses in a built-up area, and other actions described in the Complex Move Table. Failing the test just means you can't take the desired course of action. Carefully focused use of the limited number of CPs available to take CMTs is a key element of successful generalship. Think of Cohesion Tests (CTs) as morale checks-taken involuntarily for units facing certain adverse events or voluntarily in the Recover Phase in an attempt to restore lost cohesion. In a CT, the number of dice you roll varies based on Training from 3 for Veterans down to 1 for Conscripts and is subject to one possible +1 and one possible -1 modifier. The minimum passing dice score varies from 4 to 6 depending on the test reason, but is usually 5. I should explain that there are 4 cohesion levels: Steady-Disordered-Wavering-Broken. Disordered troops remain largely combat-effective. Wavering units can still fight at reduced effectiveness but may break under Assault or close range shooting. Broken troops run and remove themselves from the field unless quickly rallied by a Commander. If successfully rallied to Wavering, Broken troops become Spent, meaning they always take at least Disordered penalties for fighting and are unenthusiastic about Assaulting. Fresh Cavalry can also be Spent by heavy Firing hits or taking a hit in Combat, so Spend them carefully! Cohesion losses accumulate in battle, and CTs to recover troops become more important and more difficult choices as battle progresses.

**SET-UP:** Players can use all or part of the complete terrain set-up and deployment rules. Flank marches are provided for as in the prior FoG rules, but a player can also station reserves off-table designated to come in during the battle (on the left, right or center base edge), presumably as part of a trap.

**FLOW OF PLAY:** The players each take turns as "Active" player, following the Sequence of Play (outlined in more detail below). The Firing Phase precedes Movement, which I like in horse and musket games because it better reflects the tactical circumstances, including the defender's first-fire advantage. Firing and Close Combat procedures are streamlined with Hit Dice translating directly to outcomes. Outcomes can include cohesion losses, halts, retirements, and pursuits. There is no rostering or casualty tracking, just indicating each unit's cohesion level (measuring its combat readiness) with a mutually agreed marker and there is no removal or replacement of bases except to visually indicate "Spent" status or the presence of Attachments. Turns can move along with pleasing speed if the non-Active player spends time thinking about his next turn in advance in addition to taking care of his Assault reactions, Firing, and Combat Outcomes. Non-Active Player planning is important because his Commander movement in the Active player's Recovery Phase helps set up his intended CP allocations, Assault declarations and Movement in his coming turn, where success can hinge on making the right CP decisions.

**VICTORY CRITERIA:** I am not a fan of rigid numerical victory conditions, but the book's suggested formula is not bad. Under it a side is defeated when Army Combat Value points lost due to Broken and Spent units reaches a threshold. Thresholds are reduced if the opponent's own loss is sufficiently smaller. There are then 4 possible levels of victory including a draw, each based on the relative margin of victory. A nice twist is that the victory level is modified one level in the player's favor if he has 2 more units of fresh (not Spent) Cavalry than the opponent does. Although it does not directly affect victory calculations, each side has a Line of Communications marker (wagons, or maybe a mini-diorama) on its base edge touching a road leading off (if any). While the LOC is enemy-occupied, all units of its side require a score 1 higher than normal to pass their Cohesion Tests. This makes the army considerably more brittle, and the immediate impact means players will usually protect their LOC.

**COMMAND AND CONTROL:** The fluid and articulated new way of war first adopted by France in this era gave more scope for able leaders to have a decisive grand tactical effect than did the formal linear system it was replacing, particularly as opposing armies caught up and became more nearly equal in capabilities. Meeting the challenge of using Commanders and their Command Points effectively is critical to success in the game. Army leadership is represented by Corps and Division Commanders (and Brigadiers available as officer Attachments for units as allowed in the army list). Army Commanders may be added in a large multi-Corps battle. Commanders have two critical roles. The first is using their

own Command Points or those delegated to them by their superiors to enable subordinate units to take and pass CMTs in order to enhance their ability to accomplish their missions. At the end of each friendly turn, each Division Commander or above has his pool replenished to a total of 1-3 CPs (based on whether he is Competent, Skilled or Exceptional). CPs can be thought of as command focus and Aides de Camp being sent down to assist at the unit level during the next turn of both players. They are critical for Assaults and agile maneuvering, and a skilled player will be sure to send them where they will be most needed. CPs can be concentrated for an attack by having two Divisions attack in depth side-by-side and closely assisted by the Corps commander and his CPs. It costs an extra CP for a Commander to send a CP outside his command range. This and the other Commander benefits below encourage units in a Division to stay in proximity. The second critical role is during the player's Recovery Phase. One of the Commander's subordinate units in 4 MU range may take a Cohesion Test to either rally if it is broken or recover cohesion if it is Disordered or Wavering. Leaders are the only way to recover units (other than custom scenario rules). A Commander personally leading a unit can also provide a unit with a free CMT, increase its Élan for Combat re-roll purposes, and add a dice to Cohesion Tests if he is Charismatic. He can also move a group of units in a contiguous group together as a "brigade group" to most efficiently use CPs. However, if leading a unit he faces risk of loss from heavy Firing or Combat hits and his command range is halved (further reduced to zero if his unit is in Combat). Brigadiers (officer Attachments) lack CPs, but provide a first CMT and recovery attempt to the unit they lead plus an Élan Combat re-roll bonus. They are good for detached operations or commanding a good mobile reserve.

1. **COMMAND POINT ALLOCATION PHASE:** Active Army and Corps commanders delegate CP down the chain of command (usually by placing ADC markers next to the recipient). As the demands of battle increase, any CP that ends up unused by a Commander is probably a lost opportunity elsewhere.
2. **ASSAULT PHASE:** Steady or Disordered units may declare or attempt Assaults. Some defender reactions require a CT. Interceptions, Countercharges and pre-Combat Outcomes occur. Eligible Defensive Fire may be performed at 2 MU (Close Range) and hits may repulse the assault or at least halt it unless a CMT is passed. Close to contact.
3. **FIRING PHASE:** Firing is generally directly to front, with potential close range support from unengaged neighbors. Active player fire and results are performed; then Non-Active. Unit size, type, Attachments, Cohesion, and factors like terrain, snow or rain determine the number of dice rolled, and a few +/- Points of Advantage determine minimum scores to hit. Hits translate directly to results-lost Cohesion, halts, or retirements. Shooting alone can't break a unit beyond close range, only make it retire. Ranges are short (formed infantry volleys) 2MU, medium (skirmisher screen and canister fire) 6 MU, and long (artillery only) 16 MU. Assaulted artillery might CT to stand and fire, otherwise abandon the guns for the shelter of nearby troops or sometimes limber and retire. Terrain features, rain and snow affect firing.
4. **MOVEMENT PHASE:** Any listed Simple Move (e.g., normal Reformed infantry move 6MU) can be done without command intervention, but other moves (including a Second Move) require passing a CMT. Divisional Commanders also have the ability to move and second move 2-4 units as a single ad hoc "brigade group." Relaxed wheeling, sidestepping, and interpenetration (passage of lines) rules are little things but make the player's life easier and reflect that the units are multi-battalion formations. Since the game does not have battalions as maneuver units, there are no "battalion ballet" issues.
5. **COMBAT PHASE:** Close Combat is more fluid than prior Field of Glory rules-rarely do opponents lock in combat beyond the initial turn. Combat procedure is like Firing, except that there are re-rolls based on Élan and Guard status. Hits translate to Cohesion losses. Napoleon said that in war the moral is to the physical as 3 is to 1, and in the game Combat is indeed decided by Cohesion rather than directly by damage done. If both sides hold Steady they fight on, but Disordered or worse troops may give way, those with lower Cohesion levels first, and the Active player wins a "tie"). What this means is that you really want to at least Disorder the enemy before Assaulting, so that if you too are Disordered by Defensive Fire on the way in you need only do as well as them in Combat to take the ground, and if the opponent is knocked down to Wavering but you are better off then you may be able to pursue to catch them. Wavering troops that retire are likely to move so fast that they end facing away and vulnerable. Pursuers that make a fresh contact can break or disperse a vulnerable opponent on contact or engage in a second Combat in the same or next Combat Phase. Infantry in square facing cavalry, however, may Waver but will not yield until they break, so if they stand this triggers special pass-through rules for Cavalry. The special rules for fighting in buildings, fortifications, obstacles, rivers, streams, bridges, and fords also provide for a similarly stubborn defence.
6. **RECOVERY PHASE:** Routing is simple: a unit broken can rout once and gets just one chance for a Commander to rally it, which occurs in its next Recovery Phase. Unless rallied, the broken unit is removed. Successful rallying leaves it Spent and Wavering, and it may recover further. Spent units are not out of the fight but need gentle handling. Abandoned gun crews are similar in getting a single chance to test to rejoin the guns as soon as pre-conditions are met. Before rallying and recovering, each side in this phase may move its commanders up to 4 MU to better position themselves for recovery and next turn. The heavier the fighting, the more cohesion losses and breaks will occur, and recovery strategy and priorities must be a part of the battle plan. Once the armies become seriously engaged it is not long before the erosion of cohesion outstrips the number of Commanders and you face sharp choices. Things fall apart, the center cannot hold, so do you try to shore it up by steadying your large front-line infantry brigade? Or recover the Spent and Wavering Cuirassiers that were forced to retire to the second line, since once Disordered they can again threaten the

advancing enemy infantry? Or rally broken veterans before they disappear off the field? Success is uncertain-to give you an idea, Average Drilled troops need a 5-6 on either of two dice to recover cohesion (about 56% to pass). The Recovery Phase procedure is simple and fast, but resolving its dilemmas can be intense. CONCLUSION: Ask which Napoleonic rules are best and you'll get a lot of quick answers, but the first step is to decide WHO in the chain of command you want to be. If it's commanding a brigade or a division, a variety of good rules sets can provide a concrete minor tactical experience with battalions or even companies as the basic units. Far fewer rules focus on corps or army command. With brigades or divisions as basic units, one natural and practical course is to abstract tactical combat into relative combat values, but I want rules to represent the range of tactical interactions from attempts to drive the enemy back by assault through the extended firefights into which attacks often devolved. I liked Field of Glory's earlier rules for effectively representing the tactical and troop type interactions on my personal period "checklist," their completeness, and their thoughtful and testing-based design, but I was skeptical about what was possible in Napoleonic. I bought the rules after asking a friend who plays them and checking online discussions. It sounded promising, and with study and play I have been increasingly pleased. At the Corps level, I want a game where command decisions, maneuver, and fighting evoke the shape, look and feel of historical battle accounts. It's early still, but so far so good. Corps and division Attachments add to the history and fun, and accentuate both tactical and grand tactical levels. For me, the sense of corps command is enhanced rather than diminished by having the look-down to the tactical level. Through the battle haze, a real corps commander would see regiments forming their battalions into squares against cavalry threats or skirmishing in order to engage artillery, the fog of a pinning firefight raging on one sector of the front while the fate of an adjoining assault is revealed by the standards advancing or retiring, and he would think of these events all in terms of his big picture plans for divisions and brigades.

Field of Glory Napoleonic is being designed in an approachable and easy-to-learn manner to allow players to concentrate on realistic deployments and battlefield tactics of the early modern era. Our aim is to capture the atmosphere of battles ranging from the early wars of the French Republic through the rise of Bonaparte and the Grande Armee, to the Empire's last stand at Waterloo. This period is an ever-popular gaming period, and wargamers enjoy playing both historical battles and 'what-if' scenarios. FOGN will cater for both types of player, with a full point system allowing theoretical battles between balanced armies to be played out, as well as accommodating factual scenarios. The rulebook will maintain the same production values as previous FOG and FOGR releases and will be designed both to explain the game and be a reference guide when playing. To make the rules easier to follow, we will include examples, detailed descriptions and explanations of unusual situations in a similar way to our Ancients and Renaissance rulebooks.

"Here are the complete rules including explanations of how to play, diagrams of key points, photos of the miniatures during the game, and army lists, making this a fine addition to any wargamer's reference collection!"--The Midwest Book (July 2012) About the Author Written by Slitherine, one of the top wargaming companies in the country