

Battle of Blenheim 1704

This is a tough battle for the French side. They are inferior in both unit and leader quality, have less Endeavour, and suffer from command structure penalties. However, if they can take the opportunity, disrupting the crossing of the Nebel stream by the allied army offers their best opportunity of delivering Marlborough an insurmountable bloody nose.

Unit ratios used:

1 infantry stand = 2 battalions

1 cavalry stand = 4 squadrons

1 artillery stand = 12 guns

French

COMMAND QUALITY: 6

ENDEAVOUR: 31

ONE THIRD LOSSES: 28

RIGHT: Blenheim village

Marquis de Clerembault (CE3): 8 infantry (3 CE4, 5 CE3), 3 dragoons (CE3), 2 artillery (CE3)

Army reserve (behind Blenheim), under Army Command (Tallard): 6 infantry (2 CE4, 4 CE3)

RIGHT CENTRE: Blenheim to Oberglau

Marshall Tallard – Army Commander (CE3)

Marquis de Montpeyroux (CE3): 9 Infantry (2 CE4, 7 CE3), 16 cavalry (3 CE5 – Gendarmerie & du Roi, 4 CE4, 11 CE3), 2 artillery (CE3)

LEFT CENTRE: (Oberglau and past it to the left)

Marshal Marsin (CE3) – Wing Commander

Oberglau garrison - **Marquis de Rosel (CE3):** 7 infantry (2 CE4, 5 CE3), 2 artillery (CE3)

Count d'Arco: 13 cavalry (4 CE4, 9 CE3)

LEFT: Lutzingen to woods on left

Prince Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria (CE3): 11 infantry (3 CE4, 8 CE3), 3 cavalry (CE3), 2 artillery (CE3)

Allies

COMMAND QUALITY: 22

ENDEAVOUR: 40

ONE THIRD LOSSES: 28

RIGHT

Prince Eugene (CE5) – Wing Commander

Anhalt-Dessau/von Scholten (CE4): 10 infantry (1 CE5, 3 CE4, 6 CE3), 2 artillery (CE3)

Prince Maximilian (CE4): 23 cavalry (4 CE5, 10 CE4, 9 CE3)

CENTRE

Duk of Marlborough (CE6) – Army Commander

Lt Gen Charles Churchill (CE5): 14 infantry (2 CE5, 6 CE4, 6 CE3), 2 artillery (CE3)

General Von Bulow (CE4): 17 cavalry (2 CE5, 8 CE4, 7 CE3)

LEFT – Advancing on Blenheim

Lt Gen Lord Cutts (CE5): 10 infantry (2 CE5, 6 CE4, 2 CE3, 4 cavalry (CE4), 2 artillery (CE3)

The Battlefield

The battle was fought on a 4 mile front, which equates to a 6' wide table. To allow for the woodland and edge of the Danube to be represented it is recommended an 8' wide table is used, with a 4' depth.

The Nebel stream was a notable obstacle, consisting of a steep-banked stream across the entire length of the battlefield, with areas of marshy ground along its banks. Tallard missed his opportunity to move forward and destroy the allied army as it crossed in piecemeal disorder, arrogantly stating: 'the more I let over, the more there are to kill.' Can the French, with their poor command structure, lower Endeavour and low CR-rated leaders, make the bold move Tallard refused?

As a notable obstacle, rules for crossing the stream are different to the standard 'rough ground' deduction within the main AGE rules. Instead, a unit moving to the bank stops and ends its move for that phase (Combat or Support). In the next available Combat or Support phase it will cross to the other bank and then advance 1 x D6" and must move that distance if possible (even if entering Engagement range but do not have to Closely Engage). At the end of the movement it is disordered. This produces a wonderfully chaotic crossing that takes time to complete and reform lines and order – the additional allied Endeavour and higher CR's will prove vital.



The table layout images from our game above show the game at the end of turn one. The French are as initially deployed. The left and centre of the allied army should be deployed with its leading lines 6" from the Nebel stream.

On the allied left, Cutts deploys with 2 lines of infantry/artillery and his cavalry behind. In the centre, the infantry are divided into two lines, and between these lines are two lines containing all the cavalry.

On the right, Eugene's army should be in four columns. Two infantry, and two cavalry. Their lead units should be deployed 12" from the stream. This means it will take the allied right 1-2 additional turns to get over the stream and fully deploy.

Further photos and video clips of the table can be viewed on the AGE mini site: <https://skyseergames.com/articles/>

Special Rules

To mimic the French delay in fully deploying, or even accepting the allies were going to attack, the 'limiting initial ability to move' rule applies to the French army during turns one and two.

The French army also suffers the 'inferior command structure' rule throughout the battle, to represent the disjointed chaos and clash of personalities.

Victory Conditions

The battle takes place in Summer, starting with the 0800 turn. Weather rules are not used.

The allied army must break the French by nightfall (10 pm). This means reducing their Endeavour to zero while not reaching zero themselves. Failure to do so is a French victory, as is the unlikely scenario where allied Endeavour reaches zero first.

The game will therefore consist of 10 daytime turns followed by a twilight turn to end the day. This is a single day battle, there is no 'new day of battle'.