

been clever and have sent an imp to the rostrum on the market you have tripled this value. And again, you know everything two rounds before the sales hassle starts.

After all this players check if there is an imp left in the living quarters twiddling his thumbs; he should be dispatched quickly to clean the cages. Should there be nothing to clean up there they should prove their value and go and acquire some gold. And with this we have arrived in the final phase of the round. Small cuddly pets turn into teenagers, the food in the living quarters turns bad a little bit or a big bit. Meat for instance, can only be kept for two rounds; vegetables can be used over three rounds. And finally, the imps return home from shopping and the next round can start. During the game players have scored points and at the end of the game their boards are scored again as in a show. If you then have won the most prestige you win the game-

This game impresses with the illustrations of the little pets, most players have the impression that they achieved something and the points are more or less a minor matter. By the way, my favorite animal is the Liffard. And yours?

Monika.Dillingerova@spielen.at

INFORMATION

Designer: Vlaada Chvátil

Artist: David Cochard

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Heidelberger 2011

www.hds-fantasy.de

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
12+

TIME:
90+

EVALUATION

Deficiency game with card management
For experts
Version: de
Rules: cz de en es fr pl
In-game text: no

Comments:

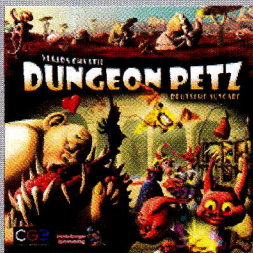
Detailed enchanting board * Witty, cute topic * Good combination of mechanisms

Compares to:

Worker placement and deficiency games, first game with the topic and combination of mechanisms

Other editions:

English at Z-Man Games



THE FAMOUS NAPOLEONIC BATTLE

WATERLOO

A VERY PERSONAL RE-CREATION



A lot of war games on the decisive battle of Waterloo have been designed and published in the past, ranging from strategic games (from the very famous WAR AND PEACE or NAPOLEON from Avalon Hill) to operational games (the best known being SPI's NAPOLEON LAST BATTLES) to very detailed actions inside this Napoleonic campaign or limited to one of the three days of the battle. But Martin Wallace decided to approach it with his own style.

If you are, like me, an "old hand war gamer" you will be shocked when opening the box for the first time: instead of the traditional cardboard pre-cut counters you will find some colored "wooden" figures (for infantry, artillery, cavalry and leaders).

Aaaaaarrggggghhhh! Sacrilege!!!! What did this damned Wallace dare????

I was horrified but buying Waterloo I made an "investment" and I had at least to try it a couple of times, just to see the approach that Martin did this time (I own ALL the games from this designer and, in general, I am more than satisfied for the money I spent !!!).

Well, the result is that I until today I played more than a dozen games with different opponents (some very expert war gamers and some standard board gamers: all of them were "obliged" to play even if, generally, their first reaction was exactly the same that mine) and I have to confess that I like the game: even if the approach to the battle may have only 2-3 directions (attack on the right, on the center or on the left) the follow up is very different in each game, so you wish to go back to the battlefield to try some different tactics. Not a perfect war-game, I have to clarify this point immediately, but an interesting game for expert players. A final note before turning to the game's description: you absolutely need to download the Errata, Clarifications and FAQ from the Net in order to simplify your study of the rules.

What you get for your money is a standard, sturdy and well done Warfrog/Treefrog box that includes one mounted map of the Waterloo area (from Plancenoit to Mont St. Jean, passing through the "myth-

ical" farms of La Belle Alliance and La Haye Sainte or the fortified Hougomont) divided in areas. On each area are depicted the icons of the combat units that will start the game there, so the set-up is really very easy and quick. The terrain includes open ground, low ground (that reduces the line of sight of the guns), woods, villages, river, strongholds, etc.

Combat units (52 French and 58 Allied) are represented by wooden colored pieces: Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery and Leaders.

Pietro Cremona

A very interesting strategy game and a nice war-game for expert players

The French Army is colored in Blue (or Heavy blue for the Guard units) and the Allies are colored in Red (British), Orange (Dutch), Green (Germans) and Black/Grey (Prussians).

You also have the usual mix of wooden cubes (mainly to mark the "hits"), round markers (for the actions) and flat squares of the Wallace's gaming storage: 8 black tiles, numbered 2 to 5, will be used to define the length of each player's turn. Four 6 sided dice complete the game pieces.

The turn sequence is the following:

- (1) - Select the appropriate number of action discs: they are used to give "orders" to your combat units, ranging from MOVE (green disc), STRATEGIC MOVE (green or purple), ARTILLERY FIRE (green) ASSAULT (red or green), CHANGE FORMATION (green) and RALLY (green). The number of discs of each color is determined by nationality and turn
- (2) - Prussian entry: after turn 3 the Allies must check for the number and type of Prussian reinforcement that will enter the battlefield
- (3) - Skirmish fire: all the Infantry units that are in an area fire at the enemy units in an adjacent area.
- (4) - Action rounds starts (see the following detailed description)
- (5) - Both players may change formation to their units, and then a check is made to see if Victory is achieved and the turn end.

Infantry and Artillery units may start the turn in a "mobile" position (the wooden

units is upright) or in "defensive" position (the unit is on its side). The mobile formation allows the units to move, fire and assault, while the defensive one is a static formation that gives you advantages when you are attacked. Cavalry starts always upright and is putted on a side only when fatigued but at then they cannot change formation anymore and will remain "down" until the end of the game, with some limitations to their potential, of course.

Some terrain features allows the defender to be even stronger: woods, for example, block the cavalry charges, while the three strongholds (Hougomont, Papelotte and La Haye Sainte) are in Allied hands at the beginning and very difficult nuts to crack for the French Army.

The French, in effect have the initiative and the task of attack to dislodge the Allies and oblige them to retreat, possibly with heavy losses. The Allied must therefore pay the higher attention to the reinforcement of their strongholds and to

immediately retreat the most damaged units before they rout. It is mainly a battle of attrition and the victory conditions reflect this: the battle is won by the French if they reach Mont St. Jean with one or more units or if they inflict 13 or more casualties to the enemy, while the Allies win they reach Resume (at the back of the French lines) or they inflict 16 or more casualties. Reaching the two "targets" is almost impossible, so you have to inflict the most hits possible to the enemy, trying to take or to maintain the best defensive areas: 90% of the battles I played were won routing the enemy units.

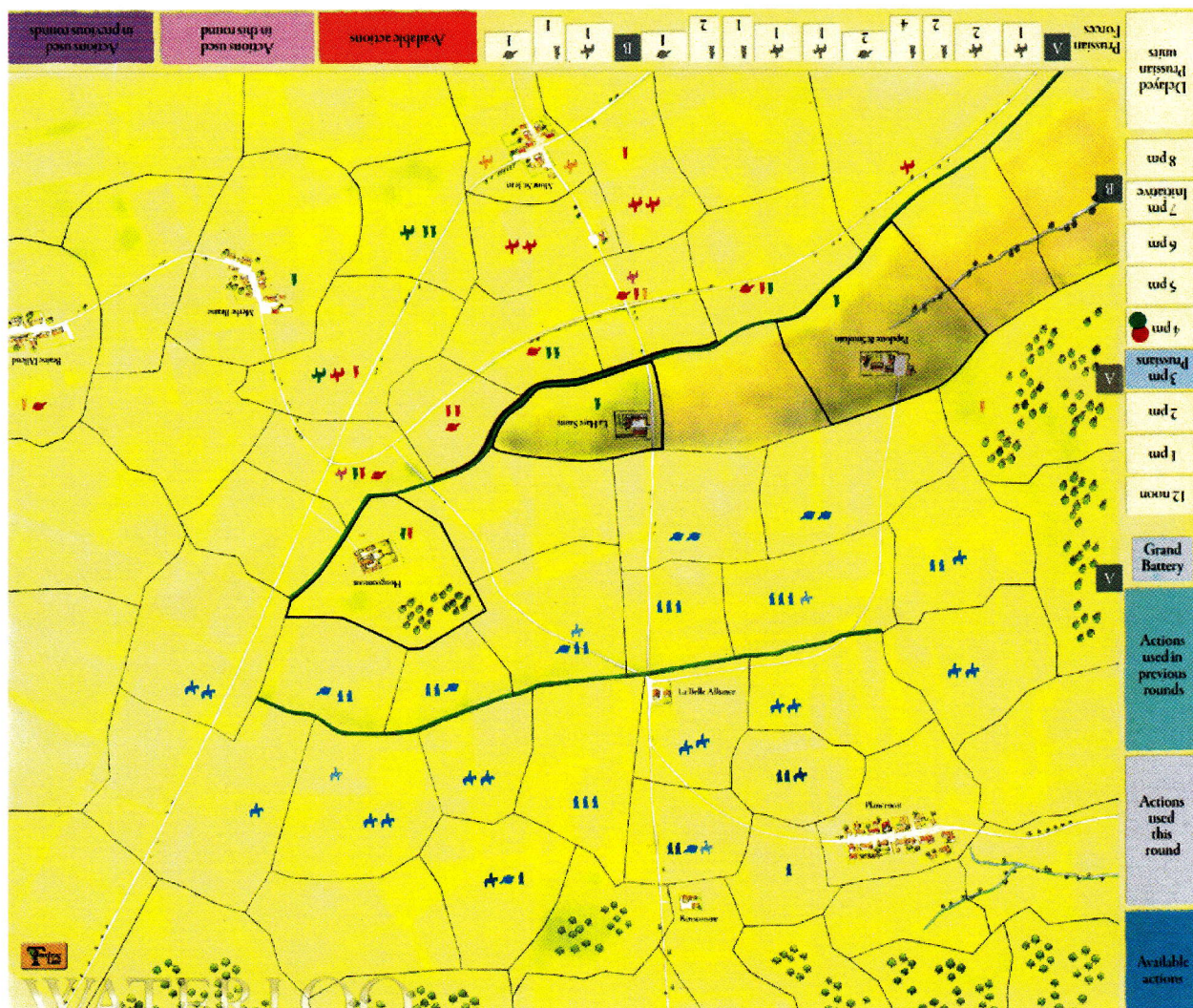
The turn starts with the first round of the active player: the non-active player randomly takes one black tile from a bag and the number printed on the tile (that must be kept secret) states the number of actions that the other player may use. The active player now starts giving "orders" (i.e. using the colored wooden discs) to the units of one area or to one leader : the difference is that each leader may pass that order to the units of two adjacent

areas, thus giving you more possibilities (then they are considered "spent" and cannot be used for the rest of the round). If some of your units advance in an area occupied by the enemy a combat follows.

Combats are by far the most "complicated" part of the game, at least initially for non-war gamers: you need to read carefully the rules and double check all the combat tables. Fortunately, Wallace produced some very clear (and useful) player's aid sheets and after a first test-game you will never go back to the rules.

Usually a combat starts with artillery bombing the enemy area: the effect of the fire may be ZERO, ONE or TWO damages (following Artillery Fire Table and the distance of the firing unit from the target). Each "damage" is fixed with a small wooden cube (red for the Allies, black for the Prussians and blue for the French): if a unit reaches 6 cubes (damages) it routs and is eliminated.

After or instead of the artillery fire you



may simply assault the enemy with infantry and/or cavalry: this is where you will spend most of your first game learning time, going often to the rules for reference. Once you have tested a few combats things will proceed easily, but this is like real battles: a somewhat confuse mix of actions, with smoke that hinder the battlefield, units that attack and counter-attack, etc. So let's have a deeper look at it.

We left our Infantry units against the enemy artillery fire, right? Once they passed this "welcome" cavalry attack the opponent cavalry (if any), followed by the Infantry against Infantry. Damages are checked on the appropriate tables and tend to quickly rise on both sides: it is really VERY IMPORTANT to continuously verify the hits received by your units and distribute them in the best way possible for the MORALE CHECKS that usually follow a bad result. As it happened in the real battles of the period Morale is very important and if a unit cracks in the middle of the fight the result may be disastrous, with high losses and the strong possibility of a rout. Napoleon in effect lost the battle at Waterloo when his Imperial Guard started to retreat: the other units immediately cracked at the cry of "la Garde recule" (the Guard retreats) because it was a shock to see those cracked veterans (with the strongest morale of all Armies of that time) making a step backwards. The Morale Table shows that if a unit cumulated many losses (say 4-5 cubes) the Moral check (1D6 roll) becomes really dangerous (with 5 losses, for example, a roll of 1 to 5 means rout !!!). Fortunately, there are also positive factors (friend support, type of formation, defensive terrain, type of unit, etc.) that reduce the risk of the rout, but it is obvious that an exhausted unit (with 4-5 damages) should be immediately retreated behind the lines and substituted by a fresh one. Anyway the combat goes on with surviving cavalry attacking the enemy Infantry and Artillery (if any remain) and the final assault of Infantry to the poor guns still on the field.

I like this kind of combat and the way that Mr. Wallace handled it : once that you learned the different procedures the Player Aid is enough to handle every phase of the game and the turns proceed quickly one after the other but ... wait a minute: what about the black tile that the opponent took?

Well: this is another feature of the game they I like very much, despite the initial

negative feeling of my very first game. You never know how many actions you will play: your opponent could have drawn a mere "2" or a very interesting (for you) "5". After having completed each action you have to look at your opponent waiting for the verdict: end of the round or not? You may imagine the attitude of this sadist man: "Yes? No? Come on, May I go or not?" And a smile on his face will give you the bad answer ...

So we learned that each round has a random number of actions (determined by the black tile!).

Each game turn has a variable number of rounds: in each round you play some action disc, paying the higher attention to the GREEN ones. Once you finish your green action discs the opponent has the right of play a last round, then the turn is over.

At the start of turn 4 Prussians start to arrive on the battlefield, and the balance turns step by step on the Allies side. For that reason the French player must make a good aggressive initial plan and push forwards for the first three turns without losing too much time (and actions) in areas too far from the main front.

The stronghold are the key to victory : Hougomont is very difficult to take and against an expert player near impossible; La Haye Sainte should be attacked immediately, hoping for some good results that will help you to resist the immediate counterattack of the allies (that have artillery and good troops all around); Papelotte is much easier to crack in the first or second turn and will allow you to pour units on the left side of the Allied Army ... but this is exactly where the Prussians will arrive on turn 4 and the followings, so if you conquer Papelotte do not stop your attack and proceed turning left and trying to surround the allied units before turn 4.

French must expect a lot of damages on the first three turns (when they have to attack strong defensive areas) so keep fresh troops always available to substitute the most damaged ones and move the latter far on your rear. Starting with turn 3 you should be able to revenge your losses against allied troops in open ground: your infantry have an edge now and losses on the allied side will start to quickly increase, also because it becomes more difficult for them to alternate troops, so you may expect to see many damaged units flee the battlefield on the following rounds.

Allied have on their side the defensive terrain, at least initially: they should know that it will be impossible to stop the French everywhere, so they should use the initial rounds to reinforce the stronghold and to prepare the "reserves" to protect their fable side (the left wing). In the first turns you may also try to use quickly all your GREEN discs in order to stop the turn at the earliest and thus approaching the Prussian arrival.

In summary a good game (but only a "nice" war-game) that I am certain that will be appreciated by expert gamers, even if they never played a classic war-game.

But please be patient and test the game at least 2-3 times, because playing it only once will not give you good sensations (too many steps to follow): be certain that from the third game on you will surely appreciate all the subtleties of Mr. Wallace's Waterloo. And if your final advice will be positive, as I hope, remember that there is also a follow-up: the battle of GETTYSBURG!!! ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Martin Wallace

Artist: Peter Dennis

Price: auf Anfrage

Publisher: Treefrog Games 2009

www.treefroggames.com

PLAYERS:
2-3

AGE:
12+

TIME:
200+

EVALUATION

Historic CoSim
For experts
Version: multi
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:

Interesting choice of components *
Number of actions for each round is determined randomly * More for friends of the genre and experienced players

Compares to:

Basically all CoSims, but first game of its kind

Other editions:

Currently none

