

## The battle of Pultusk 26<sup>th</sup> December 1806

### Umpire Briefing

Pultusk is one of those battles that is a real test for wargamers and wargames rules. On the face of it, the French are hopelessly outnumbered. And yet in the real battle they were able to stay on the attack for most of the battle, hiding their real strength from the Russians.

The setup is quite easy. All troops start on blinds. The Russians may deploy anywhere within their zone, and are on *Hold* orders. Lannes' corps may deploy anywhere in their zone, and may deploy 2 dummy blinds. They may have any orders.

The game begins at 11am. At 2pm (move 12), d'Aultanne's division arrives on the road from Golymin, next to Mosin. If the Russians have troops in or around Mosin, allow d'Aultanne the choice to deviate, and arrive in the woods behind the French lines. This will delay him 2 moves. D'Aultanne commands himself, and therefore can do whatever he likes with his troops. He is not obliged to follow Lannes' orders, but protocol would mean that he would attempt to comply, whilst keeping some regard for the lives of his men (i.e. he is not obliged to carry out suicidal assaults).

Note the Russian command structure- Bennigsen does command the army and a division, and there are no brigades in the divisional structure. This is to represent the crippling command and control problems in the Russian army of the campaign. The forces themselves are scaled to approx. 1:70.

*Special rule:* the terrain and roads are waterlogged (the French have only managed to bring up a small amount of artillery). Therefore, all artillery will move at half normal speed.

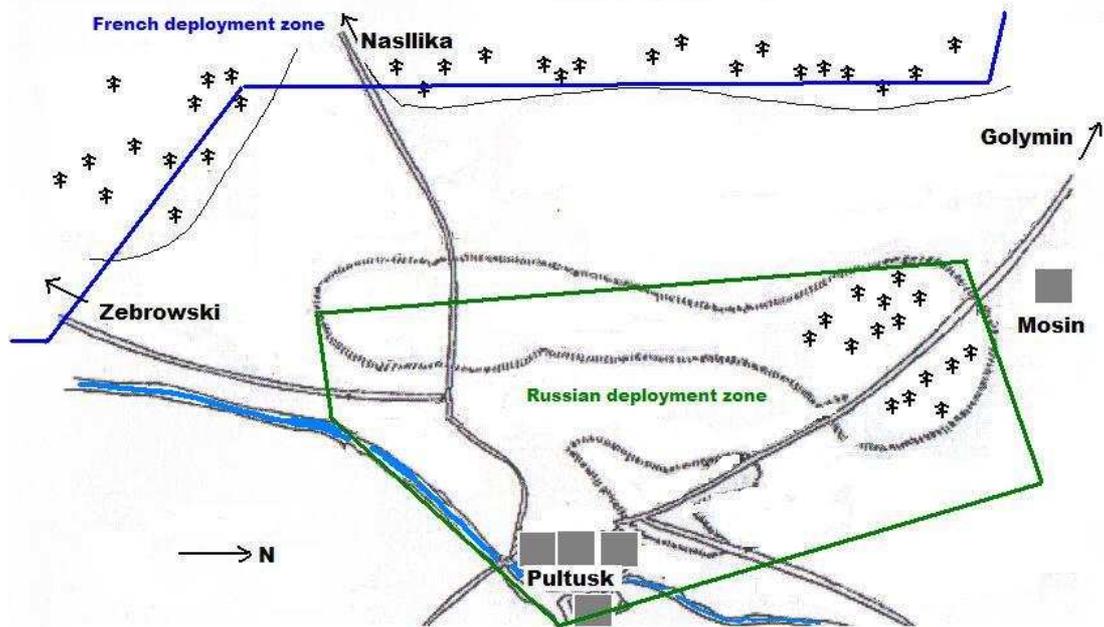
Victory conditions:

This game is best played without telling the players what the victory conditions are. It is great to see the truth slowing dawning on both sides. However, if you do have a set of competitive players, you can try these (and I'd still try to avoid telling the players what they are until the end of the game)

Russian Major Victory	drive the French from the table before 2pm
Russian Minor Victory	have 50% of the French units routed or permanently shaken before 2pm
French Minor Victory	inflict more casualties than you receive
French Major Victory	take and hold the Mosin heights until 2pm

### The Battlefield

The game should be played on a 7' by 5' table to fit the map shown. The river is not fordable. Mosin is a village with defence factor +1, Pultusk is a significant built up area, of 4 zones, each with defence factor +2.



### **French Briefing- Marshal Jean Lannes**

Mon Dieu, the rain! Will it ever stop? And the Russians, will they ever stop either? Your troops are tired, half of your artillery is stuck miles behind on the “road”, and to cap it all, the Emperor has just given you orders to advance with all haste. Your objective is to capture the bridge at Pultusk, thus depriving the Russians of a crossing point, and forcing them to battle. Your reconnaissance this morning revealed a long line of Cossacks on the high ground before the town, with some regular cavalry. So it’s probably a rearguard and even if it’s more substantial than usual, you trounced their best troops at Austerlitz last year. So, what are you waiting for?

### **5th Corps D'Armée:**

#### **Marshal Jean Lannes (Bold/Able)**

#### **1st Division: General Louis Gabriel Suchet (Able)**

1st Brigade: General M. Claparede

17th Legere 2 bns                      B class                      SK3

2nd Brigade: General H. Reille

34th Ligne 3 bns                      B class                      SK2

40th Ligne 2 bns                      C class                      SK1

3rd Brigade: General D. Vedel

64th Ligne 2 bns                      C class                      SK1

88th Ligne 2 bns                      C class                      SK1

Artillery:

Foot battery                      8x6lb B class

Horse battery                      6x6lb B class                      Horse artillery



## **French Briefing II- General Marquis d'Aultanne**

In temporary command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of Davout's III Corps, and therefore at the head of some of the best soldiers on the planet, you have been charged with protecting the flank of Lannes' V Corps, advancing to the south. This morning you have followed a retreating Russian column along the muddy, waterlogged roads, overhauled it and captured a significant quantity of artillery and baggage. You decided to make camp early, when to the south you heard very disturbing sounds- massed artillery! Lannes' must be in a fight, and you decide to march to the sound of the guns....

### **3rd Division of III Corps: General Marquis d'Aultanne (Bold/Able)**

1st Brigade: General C. Petit

12th Ligne 1 bn                      B class                      SK2

21st Ligne 2 bns                      B class                      SK2

2nd Brigade: General N.H. Gautier

25th Ligne 1 bn                      B class                      SK2

85th Ligne 2 bns                      B class                      SK2

## **Russian Briefing- General Bennigsen**

That buffoon Kamenskoi! The French are spread out, at the end of their supply chain, and tired after 2 years of continuous fighting. We have concentrated our army, have superior artillery and cavalry, and what does the old fool do? Retreat, retreat, retreat. He is scared, and does not command the respect of the army any longer. Surely he will be replaced soon, and you intend to be the one to replace him. A victory- any victory- over the French (or a defeat that you can present as a victory!) will surely land you the job. Therefore, although your orders are to retreat, you have decided to make a stand at Pultusk. The terrain offers a good defensive position, and allows you the choice of retreating over the bridge at Pultusk, or marching north to the bridge at Golymin (your preferred choice, as this offers a more direct route to the rest of the army). You know that other Russian forces are retreating to the north of you, through Golymin. You also know that you are unlikely to face all the French army, as they are pushing to the north as well. However, Napoleon is rumoured to be close by, the French do concentrate their Corps very quickly, and you expect to face a strong and aggressive opponent.

### **First Russian Army**

**Commander: General of Cavalry Bennigsen                      (Poor)**

#### **5th Division (Bennigsen)**

Perm Musketeer Regiment                      2 btns                      B class                      SK0

Mohilev Musketeer Regiment                      2 btns                      C class                      SK0

Sievsk Musketeer Regiment                      2 btns                      D class                      SK0

23rd Jager Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK1
24th Jager Regiment	2 btns	D class	SK1
Heavy Foot Battery	12x12lb	C class	
Light Foot Battery	12x6lb	C class	
Horse Battery	12x6lb	C class	Horse Artillery

**2nd Division Lieutenant General Ostermann-Tolstoi (Solid)**

Petersburg Grenadier Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Pavlov Grenadier Regiment	2 btns	B class	SK0
Jeletz Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Polotsk Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Lithuania Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	D class	SK0
Heavy Foot Battery	12x12lb	C class	
Light Foot Battery	12x6lb	C class	

**6th Division ( Sedmaratzki) Major General Bagavout (Poor)**

Azov Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Nisov Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Ouglitz Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Revel Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Sofia Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	D class	SK0
3rd Jager Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK1
Light Foot Battery	12x6lb	C class	

**3rd Division Major General Barclay de Tolly (Able)**

Tauride Grenadier Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
Mourmansk Musketeer Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK0
20th Jager Regiment	2 btns	C class	SK1
21st Jager Regiment	2 btns	D class	SK1

**Cavalry Major General Koschin (Solid)**

Polish Uhlan Regiment	2 units	C class	Lancers
Hussar Regiment	2 units	C class	Light Cavalry
Dragoon Regiments	3 units	C class	Line Cavalry
Cossacks	3 units	D class	Cossacks
Horse Battery	6x6lb	C class	Horse Artillery