

Dadi&Piombo

Review: *Et Sans Resultat!*

(2nd edition)

by Riccardo Bixio

The Napoleonic epic inspired an impressive quantity of boardgames and miniature wargames. It's not difficult to find rules to refight the main battles of that period, and the lack of a dominating ruleset may confound new players starting collecting their Napoleonic armies.

In that bunch of rules, some may remain unnoticed, regardless their merit. *Et Sans Resultat!* is a notable example (ESR from now on).

This set of rules has been published in its first edition in 2015 by The Wargaming Company LLC. Its author is David M. Ensteness, at his first work in the wargame world.

His declared aim was to enable players to replay in a fast and easy way the big battles of the Napoleonic era. The second edition, published the following year,

ESR The Complete Second Edition Player's Guide: 185 pages full color \$60, £48
The Essential ESR Second Edition Player's Guide: 90 pages full color \$40, £32

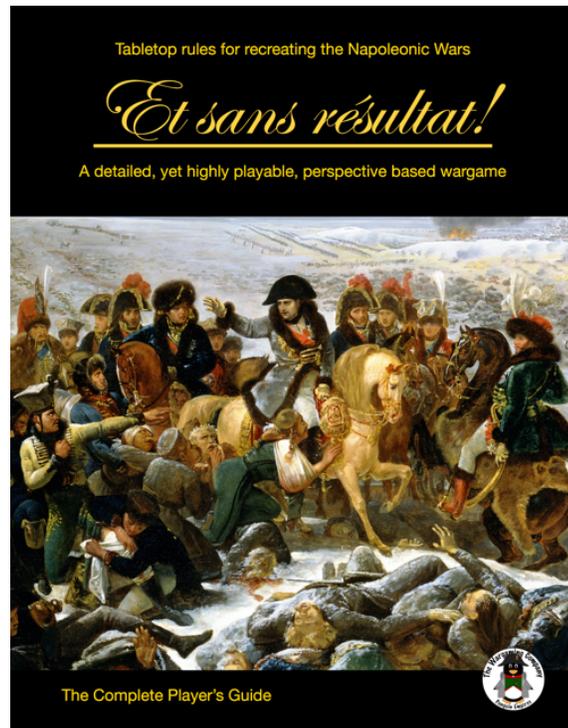
Expansions (and number of uniforms contained)
Roll up that Map, 1805 in Germany: 650+ \$60 USD 48£

Master of the World, 1812 in Russia: 800+ \$60/£48

We shall meet in Vienna, 1813 in Germany: 1500+ \$60/£48

Publisher's Website:

<http://thewargamingcompany.com/>



streamlines the processes of the game reducing the number of markers on the table, thus making the game even more fast to learn and play and the table cleaner.

The game is ascribed to the grand tactic scope; each player takes the role of a Corp Commander. The scale is variable, according the terrain size, going from 1 inch = 50 yards, to 1 inch=200 yards. This ruleset enables the players to use any size of miniatures from 6 mm to 28 mm.

The command system is the core of this ruleset, reaching a compromise between simplicity and realism rarely met in other rulesets. The author, rather interestingly, keeps the battalion as base unit, represented by a single base. Players don't control directly each battalion, resolving every small action and formation change, all these features are abstracted. The players feel as they're the Corps d'Armee commander, and



take only the decision such a commander would take.

In the turn structure, the orders are of the utmost importance. Starting from our commander, they're assigned to whole divisions (sometimes brigades). Orders are conservative and object related. Our formations require clearly stated orders to act correctly ("maneuver toward that hill", "assault a specific village"). They won't require a new input every turn: each turn they'll keep trying to obey your order... even if you've changed your mind. It's possible, of course, to change your plan, but you could discover that aborting an attack order in the midst of the attack could be a difficult affair. This simulates the confusion in command increased by the proximity to the enemies, the losses, and in general the battle chaos.

The combat, which includes the shooting, as well as skirmish and artillery component, is resolved in a simple way, with few modifiers to apply. The main aim is to increase enemy formations' fatigue, until they start to waver and retreat. In this great set of rules, you have the feeling of being really involved in the great strategic decisions, rather than choosing the most suitable formation between line, column and square. The main concept is the fatigue accumulated by our troops and of course the enemy's, simulated at division level. Even the use of reserves is stimulated not by special rules, but from meeting the real needs during the progression of the battle.

Of course, the game is most appreciable and gives its best during multiplayer battles, with multiple corps per side, each commanded by a different player. This adds an additional layer of strategy, even if the number of players (and miniatures) needed may restrict these kinds of games to few clubs. The duration of the games is in line with other rules, between 4 to 8 hours, depending the size of the battle.

In conclusion, my opinion is that this ruleset enables to emulate in an almost perfect way the role of the Corp Commander, more worried about drawing a plan and managing reserves, than

deciding when that battalion has to form square. If you're looking for this, I really suggest you to give ESR a try. You will be surprised by the ease with which it can achieve the real feeling of being a Napoleonic commander.

To be really enjoyed, I would recommend a group of at least 4-6 players, and a reasonable collection of miniatures. The players should be quite relaxed, since the games, even if simple, move at quite a slow pace, especially in the first turns, due to the slow deployment and approach maneuvers typical of the grand tactics of the period.

Two editions of the book are available: one "Essential", containing only the rules, and a "Complete" one with additional rules to create scenarios, units' rating by nationality and different countries armies' organization. From Italy the easiest way to buy a copy is from Magister Militum (<http://www.magistermilitum.com>). The Essential version price is \$40 USD (32£) and the Complete version is sold at \$60 USD (48£).

In 2016 have been published two expansion books. Each contains numerous orders of battle for the campaigns of 1805 and 1812. A book about 1813 campaign is to be published early next year, so you may be able to purchase it when you're reading this article. Each book also contains a campaign game to link your games together without the need of an umpire. More books are to follow to cover the entire Napoleonic adventure.

