



**Moscow 1812**

**There and Back Again**

A highly unofficial campaign setting for Sharp Practice 2



## Moscow 1812 - There and Back Again



*Christian Wilhelm von Faber du Faur served in the Grande Armée during the invasion as a lieutenant of a Württemberg regiment in the 25th Division, III Corps. He painted many chilling recollections of the campaign.*

## Refighting the Invasion of Russia Using Sharp Practice 2

This book started with our interest in using Sharp Practice 2 to fight skirmishes between French and Russians during the ill-fated invasion of Russia. With the rulebook and official army lists in hand we played a few games, and found out two things.

First, just like Chain of Command, we love the core mechanics of SP2. However, we wanted to adjust a few details to suit our own wargaming tastes, and also to encourage tactics resembling the stories we've read from battles in Russia. Secondly, the published lists did not really suit the armies we were planning, and we were not completely satisfied with how they represented these two colliding empires at this campaign.

This sourcebook is the result of our experiments with these issues. It covers a bit of information that might be helpful for someone new to the period in general, and to the invasion of Russia specifically. Included are also two new army lists, one for Russia and one for France, but you can use the French list for

many of France's allies as well. Finally, there are also a few house rules that we use when playing this conflict. This campaign setting is far from complete. You will notice gaps in the army lists ("where's the Guard!?"), but hopefully we'll be able to keep adding to this project as our collections grow.

Feel free to use any or all our ideas, but please keep in mind that they are intended to be used together. This means that we cannot guarantee that a certain combination of them, if you pick and choose, might end up badly balanced. Also don't hesitate to contact us if you try out our suggestions and either liked them or if you found some horrible flaws.

Until then, please enjoy this book. Do not be alarmed by the early morning mist, or the frosty dew in the grass, as we steadily continue our march towards the towering domes of the Sacred City of Moscow.

- Kriget Kommer

*This book is not in any way associated with TooFatLardies, the owners of Sharp Practice 2. It is a fan-made sourcebook made by the Kriget Kommer wargaming club. You need a copy of the Sharp Practice 2 rulebook to play a game using these lists.*

*Cover page: Many soldiers on both sides froze to death in night bivouacs when winter arrived (Vasily Vereshchagin)*

## *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia*



*A French column during the freezing winter march back from Moscow*

# Chapter 1: Napoleon's Invasion of Russia

## 1812: A Broken Alliance

Napoleon's invasion of Russia was in many ways an unwanted consequence of the overarching struggle between France and Britain.

Russia, a member of the fifth coalition against France, was defeated in 1807 at the battle of Friedland. However, by all accounts the Tsar Alexander and Emperor Napoleon hit it off during negotiations. The Tilsit treaty that ended the war was surprisingly lenient for the Russian Empire. Other regional powers faced harsher conditions for surrender than Russia, now an ally of the French Empire.

There was, however, a hitch that would doom this friendship and cause a new war just a few years down the road. Britain and her allies had repeatedly formed anti-French coalitions, yet those had all failed. Their initial attacks, aimed at swiftly ending Revolutionary France, were pushed back. Instead, the Republic turned a desperate battle for survival into an escalating

conquest of her neighbours. However, Britain's naval supremacy and the Channel made France's attempts to bring the troublesome islanders to heel just as fruitless as Britain's efforts to topple the French Empire on land.

Napoleon realized that the rich British merchant fleets meant that they would never stop funding any attempts to cause trouble for him. He enforced a strict policy for all of France's more or less willing allies: *absolutely no trade with the Anglo-Saxons!* This boycott would have disastrous results for many countries that lived on the thriving trade of raw materials to the ever-increasing industries of the British Isles.

Few countries were as economically hurt by this trade embargo as Russia. Officially at war with the United Kingdom since the treaty of 1807, they took up secret negotiations with their enemy. While officially still at war, actual hostilities between the countries ended and an increasingly overt trade of goods returned.

Russia's refusal to respect the trade embargo threatened the legitimacy of Napoleon's efforts to starve out



## *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia*

the English economy, but a second issue made Franco-Russian relations go from cold to frozen. And, as these things usually go, it was the question of the existence and allegiance of Poland.

Both Russia and France wanted influence over Poland. France wanted a semi-independent Poland loyal to the Emperor, acting as a buffer state. Russia wanted Poland as their own vassal, but the Poles feared they would go for a full annexation if given the chance.

It became increasingly obvious that these two matters would not be settled by diplomacy. Just five years after the treaty of Tilsit, Napoleon concentrated his Grande Armée on the border to Russia to show Europe once and for all who was the ruler of the continent.

Drawing upon all the alliances available to him, the Grande Armée consisted of both willing members and those bullied into submitting to France's will. It was an unprecedented invasion force in both size and number of represented nations: up towards 650 000 men, more than half of them French allies. Poland and the various German members of the Rhine Confederation formed large parts of the army. They were joined by Austrians, Italians, Swiss, Portugese, Spanish as the columns crossed the Neman River in June 24, 1812. Many other kingdoms and duchies also provided manpower for the invasion, making it a truly cosmopolitan army.

### **The March Into Russia**

Napoleon's plan was to quickly reach a decisive battle. He expected the numerically superior and strategically more flexible French army to smash the Tsar's army, forcing him to sue for peace. The Russians realized the peril of such a battle, and the initial phase of the war saw three months of slow Russian retreat, and they burned the land and stripped it of supplies in a classic scorched earth strategy.

The French supply lines stretched dangerously long, while the Napoleon's Field Marshals repeatedly failed to corner the Russians. Among countless skirmishes were some major battles, like when the Russian army made a failed stand at Smolensk, but there was always room and time for the Russian army to retreat in good order. The daunting pursuit continued all summer.



*The 23rd was one of the few French Dragoon regiments sent to Russia to fight in Grouchy's III Cavalry Corps (Richard Knötel)*

This came to an end when Napoleon approached the gates of Moscow. Tsar Alexander was under mounding pressure from his aristocracy - noblemen who had seen their lands be sacked and burned by both sides. Would their palaces in Moscow be looted as well? Moscow also had an immense symbolic value as the ancient centre of Russia, and Alexander decided that it was time to make a stand. He would force his commanders to confront Napoleon head on, and save Moscow.

On the road to Moscow, on 7 September by the village of Borodino just 70 miles west of the city, the two armies clashed in what would become the bloodiest day of all the Napoleonic Wars.

The Russians were badly mauled and retreated, but the French failed to pursue them. Napoleon had not dared to commit his Guard in case there would be a follow-up battle, and the French command failed to realize just how shaken the Russian army was when it pulled back from the battlefield. The Russian army slipped away again to lick their wounds, but the road to Moscow was now wide open.

## *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia*



*Marshal Michel Ney leading the French forces outside Kaunas, present day Lithuania, during the last days of the retreat (Auguste Raffet)*

### The Disastrous Retreat

With Moscow under his control, Napoleon waited for the Tsar to hand in his surrender. But with the field army still intact, the Russians would indeed pay a heavy toll, but not the one Napoleon expected: hidden agents inside the city set fire to Moscow, fires that lasted for days and only left a charred husk for the supposed conqueror. Without any sources of winter supplies, there was no way for Napoleon to win the war. As the temperatures rapidly dropped, the French had to begin the long agonizing march back to safe lands.

The journey back was incredibly gruesome. The weakened Russian army managed to block the French from following a new route back to friendly territory, so they had to return along the path that had been systematically burned and pillaged just months before. The Russian army was too weakened to defeat the French army on a battlefield, and instead began their campaign of harrying the retreating invaders.

Without rations and proper winter gear, cohesion deteriorated. Both sides fought desperate skirmishes as the cold weather set in, whipping both the pursuers

and their prey. The final desperate battle was fought at the crossing at Berezina River in the end of November, when tens of thousands of men drowned in the icy waters as they shoved their way across makeshift pontoon bridges. A tiny sliver of the Grand Armée finally reached safety, but the Empire was already crumbling. Napoleon would never again harness the military might that he had set in motion that summer.

### Skirmishes in the East

The Russian strategy from the very onset of the war was to withhold from Napoleon a massive, decisive battle. Instead the French invaders were forced on a long gruelling march where heat, cold, illness, desertion and lack of supplies became Napoleon's enemies. On the road towards Moscow daily skirmishes took their toll, as the retreating Russian army grasped every chance to harass their enemies. This give you plenty of room to make up scenarios for a skirmish game like Sharp Practice, be it Cossack raids on the French supply line, a clash between scouting cavalry, angry farmers defending their livestock from raiders or a group of engineers hurriedly dismantling a bridge as enemy columns rush their defenses.



## Chapter 2: Choosing Sides

If this is your first foray into Napoleonic skirmish gaming, or if you collect armies that are not involved in this campaign (basically British!), you should begin by considering which army to collect. Sharp Practice is a good entry point for Napoleonic as you can concentrate on a relatively small force, and go from there.

We asked the two main guilty parties in the making of this setting booklet to try to sway you towards the French camp (Jonas) or the Russian (Shirly), and to explain some of the main draws of the two sides of this conflict.



*French Chasseur à Cheval of the Imperial Guard on patrol in Russia (Wojciech Kossak)*

### The French Invaders: Jonas' Take

First of all, the French are always a very solid starting point if you are new to Napoleonic wargaming. You have a staggering amount of manufacturers selling miniatures in all scales, covering even the more

obscure troop types. You are free to choose between plastics and metal miniatures according to your preferences (and wallet). On top of that you have a wealth of written material about your army readily available in books and on websites— the answers to most questions are a quick online search away.

At the same time the Grande Armée is a deep subject with tons of intricate details, encouraging you to keep on researching it. It's simply an army that is fun and rewarding to collect, welcoming you into its richly uniformed arms with a bonanza of great miniatures.

A special treat for a French player in 1812 is that unlike most of those pesky wars against all those coalitions, you are now the "alliance"! For a French player there's no other campaign where you have a greater smorgasbord of troops at your disposal. If a normal French force is ridiculously spoiled for choices, 1812 takes the cake. The extensive list of regiments and nationalities crossing the Neman river gives you a perfect excuse to dip into allied forces. You can trust on the support of Poland and German states like Bavaria, Westphalia, Saxony or Württemberg, or the less often noticed Italians, Swiss or Croats. Even the Austrians were involved, though they took their own (shorter) route.

Simply put, the 1812 campaign is the perfect excuse to paint up a unit or three of some other nationality that you don't see yourself making an entire army.

As for your actual French troops, the invasion is at a convenient crossroads between uniforms. The Bardin reform of 1812, with its simpler style, had only been very partially enforced. Are your line infantry units in 1809 uniforms and your cavalry in later uniforms? No need to worry: the logistical nightmare of supplying more than half a million troops using 19th century technology means that you can play relatively fast and loose with your uniforms, and not have to feel too naughty.

As a French player you have all necessary tools at your disposal. You have a lot of different types of cavalry that can help you keep the Cossacks busy and



## Choosing Sides

exploit any exposed Russian infantrymen. Your infantry range from cheap cannon fodder that can pour massive volleys on your enemies to elite infantrymen that can get stuck in with the hardest opposition—learn how use each in a way that suits their strength and weaknesses! Finally, you have great skirmishing troops in your voltigeurs, who can both tie up the Russians in prolonged skirmishers or provide invaluable cover as screens for your line infantry. Never leave your bivouac without them if possible!

### The Russians: Shirty's Take

For me, as a bit of a Russophile, it did not take long to pick sides when we started looking at collecting Napoleonic armies. The main contender was the French with their impeccable uniforms, riveting stories, Napoleon himself, The Revolution, and the simple fact that they were the only country with any progressive political ideas in all this turmoil. Too bad

they were beaten by the reactionaries at the end! Napoleon - why could you not keep your fingers out of the Russian jar?

Apart from my interest in Russia and the East I am also mesmerized by the scope of the Russia campaign. All the people who perished, the total madness of the project and the infighting in the Russian high command, the scorched earth withdrawal, the many chances Napoleon had to trap the Russian field armies, the inconclusive and seemingly pointless bloody battles fought and the allied winter retreat. All this, under the leadership of a truly incompetent Tsar who proved to be a worthless ruler given any circumstances.

There are many sources for a Russian player to find inspiration. I would recommend you to read some of the first hand accounts, of which there are actually quite many, and *War and Peace*. To be honest, watch the 8 hour 1966 movie instead - I actually really prefer it to the book which is quite sleazy and forgoing



*Attack of the Russian Litovski Lejb-Guard regiment from 5th corp (1st army) at the battle of Borodino. The regiment lost 973 of 1740 men that day. (N.S. Samokish)*



## Choosing Sides

towards the Russian ruling class.

Against the vast coalition of the French and Allied Grande Armé stood the Russian Imperial army, which is more interesting to collect than some give it credit for. The army itself is a much more coherent force than that of her enemies, but it still holds a lot of variation and painting opportunities. The Imperial army had gone through a lot of modernization to finally be able to take on the French and come out on the winning side. This includes a very uniform(!) look of the line infantry, jägers, and to some extent guard infantry, including the elite companies of grenadiers and carabinieri. There are differences, they are relatively subtle.

A nice perk of collecting 1812 Russians is that you can really battle anyone. You'll be able to make historical match-ups against most nationalities, including: Prussians, Ottomans, Swedes, Persians, many different flavours of Germans, Italians, Poles, Portugese, Austrians, Danes, and French (of course French!). You can take on all of them with you conscripted serfs! Make your truly imperialist Empire fight ALL your neighbors, and more.

From a wargaming perspective, the Russians have all the troop types you expect when you fight a Napoleonic battle. There's the line infantry including grenadiers in their tall plumes, light infantry in the form of jäger regiments, stout guard regiments and cavalry consisting of cuirassiers, hussars in many very striking

uniforms and Uhlan lancers. But one unique asset of the Russians make them stick out, and we are of course talking about the Cossacks. You can field them in many different types and they stand out from the rank and file of the regular army. Perfect for skirmish action in the Sharp Practice style!

In addition to the Cossacks, the Russians also made extensive use of militia, sometimes even armed with pikes when muskets or training was in short supply. So it is viable, particularly for skirmish wargaming, to make a Russian force based on Cossacks or militia. But they can also supplement your ordinary troopers well, and add an extra flavor compared to the normally ranked up and uniform look of a battlefield. I enjoy the idea of a coherent force of regulars, supplemented by irregular troops, and that is how I tried to build my own force. In gameplay terms they give you many ways to mess with your opponent through speed and movable deployment points, meaning that you can surprise and outflank your opponent just like the Cossacks did so many times in the real campaign.

A minor yet delightful detail for the uniform aficionado is that the Russians carried all shako ornaments into battle, so you never need to hide any bling with shako covers! And, after all, who else (except Persians!) can field mounted warriors with bows and chainmail during the Napoleonic wars?



*Ermolov's counterattack at Borodino to retake Raevsky's battery (Sasonov)*



## Chapter 3: Army Lists for the Invasion of Russia 1812

When we started out planning this campaign setting, we decided to make our own army lists for it. While there are lists that could cover the period, we found some gaps in them for units that we wanted to play with, and in some cases we had a different idea about how we wanted to represent a unit on our tabletop.

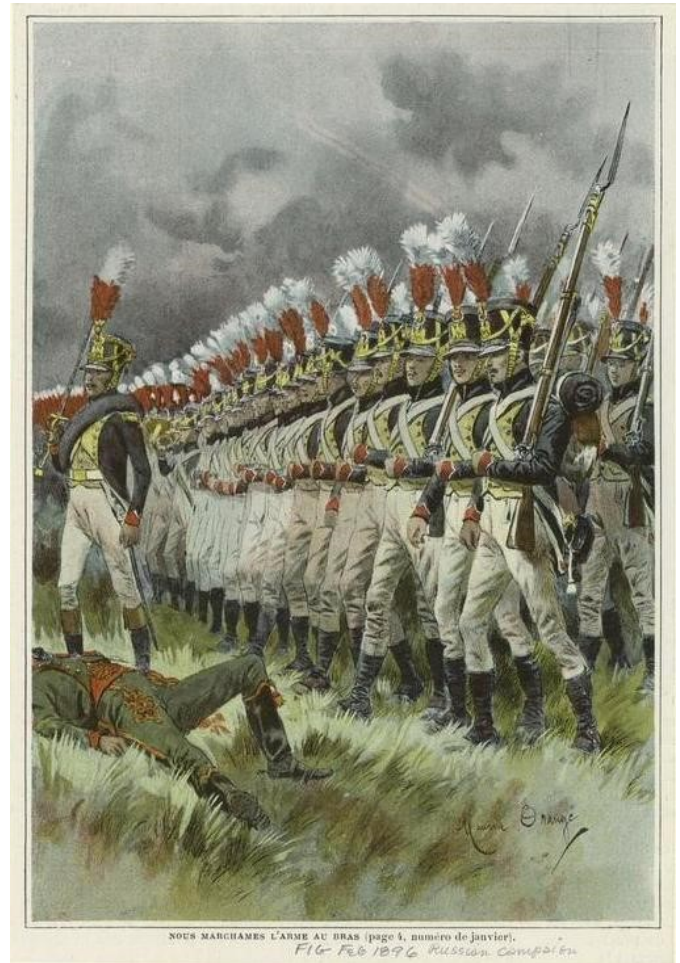
Instead of trying to make new lists that would be balanced against the official lists, we made two lists, one French and one Russian, and focused on balancing them against each other. In some cases we emphasize certain differences between units to make for what we hope will be interesting choices when making your force and when marshalling it across the table. This means that some things in these lists might look and play a little bit different from the official lists. That is completely intentional and again, they are made with the purpose of being pitted against each other.

When making these lists we have not used the official points calculator. Instead they units were compared with each other, while still trying to give both the French and Russian army lists some aspects where they are slightly superior than the other.

### Notes on the French list

Why make a new French army list for the invasion of Russia, when there is a list in the rulebook that covers the year 1812? My main reason is that that I find the (Peninsular) 1812 list to be written to represent the kind of backwater garrisons of second rate regiments that were far more prevalent in the outskirts of the French sphere of influence. The line infantry in the list are all rated as Conscripts & Volunteers, which definitely is a suitable description of *some* of the companies marching into Russia, but far from all of them.

Large parts of the French army, and many of the troops supplied by her allies, were battle hardened veterans of several harsh campaigns. There was certainly a case of attrition due to losses in 1808-09, but the core of the army was still one of the most successful



*Marching into battle in tight lines (Maurice Henri Orange)*

land armies of the time. Instead I wanted an army list that allowed me to represent both the many freshly recruited men that bolstered this enormous expedition, and also the hardened regiments that performed well in horrendous battle conditions like those at Borodino.

The solution to this is twofold. First off, you will find two versions of some entries. For example, there's a veteran version of Fusiliers as well as one representing freshly recruited troopers.

### Line Versus Light Infantry

Secondly, we've added a slightly ahistorical twist: the French light infantry entries are a notch better than their line infantry counterparts. At the beginning of the Napoleonic era, the light infantry was expected to perform more aggressively on the battlefield and

## *Army Lists*

received more training in both rapid manouvering and musketry. The difference between these two types of infantry would have been largely erased by 1812, even though the light infantry themselves would probably not like to admit this. However, my idea is that you can use the Light infantry entries for your Line infantry miniatures if you want to have the battle-hardened core of the Iron Marshal Davout's forces, or

use the Line infantry statlines for Light infantry as well if you want to tone down your troops a bit.

Many of the Allied nations going into Russia had more or less adjusted to the French model, and can be fielded using this list.

### **...With a Little Help From My Friends**

Keep in mind that the invasion of Russia was one of the most multinational military operations in the history of Europe. This means that almost any Napoleonic army, except for the British, could be used when playing against the Russians in this campaign setting.

About half of the roughly half a million men who entered Russia were "French", but that includes soldiers from annexed Dutch, German, Italian and Belgian territory.

A large portion of the army, around 100 000 men, were Poles. As solid allies of Napoleon due to the constant threats from their neighbours, they formed a corps of their own.

The third major bulk of the army were the various Germans: some longstanding supporters like Bavaria, others recently brought into the fold by force. Bavaria, Saxony, Westphalia and Württemberg brought almost 100 000 men in total, but regiments were also sent from Baden, Berg, Hesse and the smaller members of the Rhine Confederation.

Austria contributed with more than 30 000 bayonets, also formed into their own corps. It operated more or less independently. Their corps managed to stay out of most of the major battles, supposedly from a kind of mutual understanding with the Russians, but did see their fair share of skirmishes.

Finally, a slew of countries supplied men that went into the bigger corps. They were Italians, Swiss, Spanish, Croats, Portugese, Illyrians and Neapolitans and more, giving a French player a perfect excuse to paint up a few new units.



# The Grande Armée

## Line Infantry

*Infanterie de ligne* formed the largest part of the French Napoleonic army. Most of the Line infantry were Fusiliers, members of the center companies of a French battalion. Here they would receive the training necessary to fight as ranked infantry, and if they performed well they could advance into the ranks of the veteran flank companies.

The first flank company consists of Voltigeurs, chosen from men suitable for skirmishing. They were supposed to be short, nimble and good at sharpshooting and also expected to take personal initiative as necessary to be effective skirmishers.

There are two ways to field them in this list, in line formation where they provide a deadlier volley than the Fusiliers, and as Skirmishers where they provide a valuable screen for the rest of your troops.

The second flank company are the Grenadiers, veterans of many battles and chosen among the tallest and most resolute of the battalion. Fresh regiments were not allowed to form Grenadier companies until they had fought enough campaigns to have enough veterans. These tough troops are well suited for laying down crashing volleys at close quarter and charging the stunned Russians with bayonets.



*General Delzon was killed leading the vanguard at the battle of Maloyaroslavets (Alexander Averyanov)*

Line Infantry, Freshly Recruited Fusiliers					Type	Conscripts & Volunteers
Points Value	4	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	No	-	2	-	Pas de Charge

Line Infantry, Veteran Fusiliers					Type	Regulars
Points Value	6	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	3	2	2	Pas de Charge

## The French Army

Line Infantry, Voltigeurs in Line Formation					Type	Regulars
Points Value	8	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	2	2	2	Pas de Charge, Sharp Practice

Line Infantry, Voltigeur Skirmishers					Type	Skirmishers
Points Value	7	Weapon	Musket		Size	6
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	-	-	2	-	Sharp Practice

Line Infantry, Grenadiers					Type	Regulars
Points Value	8	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	Yes	2	2	2	Pas de Charge, Aggressive

### Light Infantry

*Infanterie légère* were supposed to be more adept at both skirmishing and advancing on the enemy. Their training in rapidly attacking meant that they were often sent first into combat or to assault fortified positions. In return, their superior status initially allowed even the center companies to carry markings of elite troops, including wearing epaulettes on their shoulders and the (mostly ceremonial) small *briquet* sabre. By 1812 they had been ordered to remove these distinguishing traits, but there were plenty of proud officers who neglected to heed those calls, so as a player you have a very good excuse to choose the style you prefer.

Other distinguishing traits of the light infantry were the use of blue trousers or breeches, tall plumes as well as Hessian boots. Again, the 1812 uniform regulation vastly simplified their dress, making it much more similar to the Line infantry.



*Light infantry in distinctive blue uniforms (Victor Huen)*

The light infantry companies was organized in the same fashion as the line infantry, with the center companies being called chasseurs. Just like the line infantry they had a flank company of voltigeurs, but their equivalent of grenadiers were called carabiniers.

Light Infantry, freshly recruited Chasseurs					Type	Conscripts & Volunteers
Points Value	5	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	No	3	2	-	Pas de Charge

Light Infantry, veteran Chasseurs					Type	Regulars
Points Value	7	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	3	1	2	Pas de Charge



## The French Army

Light Infantry, Voltigeurs in Line Formation					Type	Regulars
Points Value	8	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	2	1	2	Pas de Charge, Sharp Practice

Light Infantry, Voltigeur Skirmishers					Type	Light Infantry
Points Value	8	Weapon	Musket		Size	6
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	-	-	1	-	Sharp Practice

Light Infantry, Carabiniers					Type	Elite
Points Value	11	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	Yes	2	1	2	Pas de Charge, Aggressive, Sharp Practice

## Dismounted Dragoons

Dragoons were trained to dismount to fight in difficult terrain. The invasion of Russia also posed a huge logistical nightmare when it came to horses, as they died in droves due to mistreatment, hard marches, freak storms, starvation, and eating unripe crops from the fields the army passed through. With the horses dropping faster than poor cavalry troopers, a lot of them would sooner or later have to accept their fate as infantrymen in nicer uniforms.

While this campaign did not see entire dragoon regiments deployed as "wooden swords", that is as regular infantry without any horses at all, the horse deficiency gives you a suitable excuse for fielding dismounted dragoons.



*A dismounted dragoon with infantry backpack, shoes and gaiters (Richard Knötel)*

Dismounted Dragoon Skirmishers					Type	Skirmishers
Points Value	5	Weapon	Musketoon and Sabre		Size	6
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	-	-	2	-	

Dismounted Dragoon Fighting as Line Infantry					Type	Regular
Points Value	6	Weapon	Musketoon and Sabre		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	3	2	2	Pas de Charge

# The French Army

## Cavalry

The French cavalry was in many ways in a worse shape than the infantry in 1812. Fresh recruits could be found in France, and the numerous client kingdoms across Europe swelled the ranks. But the continent's horse breeders were straining under the immense appetite for horses from the wars during the previous decade. To make matters worse, several of the best cavalry veterans and leaders were already lost in battle, or stationed elsewhere.

However, compared to the more desperate times to follow when an estimated 175 000 horses were lost in Russia, the French cavalry was still a sharp weapon to be feared. The battle of Borodino saw Saxon, Polish and French cavalry charge and claim a fortified artillery redoubt, a unique feat for cavalry marking the high point of an end of an era where French cavalry remained undefeated in combats larger than regiment scale.

As a French player you will find that the cavalry of France and her allies provide you with an unequalled variety of options for both light and heavy cavalry, where this list only covers the more common types of regiments.

### Light Cavalry

The light cavalry were the eyes of the French army on campaign. While their primary function was not to



*French Hussars of the 9th regiment (Victor Huen)*

spearhead assaults into the heart of the enemy army, they would be prepared to attack formations that were caught off guard or isolated.

The chasseurs-a-cheval were the most numerous regiments, while the hotheaded hussars (with their more expensive uniform) performed similar duties. By 1812 several chasseur regiments had been turned into lancers, inspired by the success of the Polish uhlans.

On the tabletop they provide you with fast troops to threaten deployment points or objectives. Keep in mind that a well timed charge fuelled by Tally Ho! hurts, especially against unloaded or flanked targets. But don't expect them to survive rushing headlong into the Russian bayonets.

Chasseurs-a-cheval					Type	Scouting Cavalry
Points Value	4	Weapon	Sabre, Carbine		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	-	-	-	1	-	In hand

Hussars					Type	Scouting Cavalry
Points Value	5	Weapon	Sabre		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	-	-	-	1	-	In hand, Tally Ho!, Tactical

Lancers (Cheveau-Légèrs Lanciers)					Type	Scouting Cavalry/Lancers
Points Value	6	Weapon	Lance		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	-	-	-	1	-	In hand, Tally Ho!



## The French Army

### Heavy Cavalry

Dragoons and cuirassiers made up the bulk of the French heavy cavalry. With long straight sabres and larger horses they were there to plunge into the enemy and turn a wavering combat into a rout.

Many dragoon regiments had been stationed in Spain before the invasion of Russia, where the difficult terrain suited their training to dismount and fight as infantry when needed. Many regiments stayed there, which meant that a large part of the heavy cavalry going into Russia were French or German Cuirassiers.

The dragoons were equipped and trained for ranged combat, both mounted and dismounted. In 1812 the cuirassiers were also supposed to be issued carbines and ammunition, but in practice they did their best to "forget" this distraction to their main function of charging into *mêlée*.

In Sharp Practice you can expect your heavy cavalry to defeat any Russian light cavalry at equal numbers, and pose a threat to any infantry that are foolish enough to end their turn within charge range with unloaded muskets. Be warned that even the heaviest of armoured horsemen will have a hard time if they run into squares.



*Cuirassiers formed the backbone of French heavy cavalry in Russia, as many Dragoons were left to fight in Spain (Horace Vernet)*

The losses in the Russian campaign were possibly heavier on these regiments than the infantry, as they repeatedly had to clash with both Russian skirmishing cavalry and as a rearguard during the long retreat towards safety. The carabiniers, once the pride of the cavalry and temporary escort for Napoleon himself, never recovered and were a mere shadow of their former selves in following battles.

<b>Dragoons</b>					Type	Dragoons
Points Value	6	Weapon	Sabre, Musketoon		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	-	-	2	-	In hand, Tally Ho!
<b>Cuirassiers</b>					Type	Impact Cavalry
Points Value	7	Weapon	Sabre, Cuirass		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	-	-	-	2	-	Cuirass, In hand, Tally Ho!
<b>Horse Carabiniers</b>					Type	Impact Cavalry
Points Value	7	Weapon	Sabre, Carbine, Cuirass		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	-	-	2	-	In hand, Tally Ho!

## The French Army

### Artillery

The French artillery were the most advanced throughout the period, and played a big role in larger battles in Russia, like Borodino. Each infantry division would have foot and horse batteries attached to them, tasked with quickly providing the troops with supporting fire.

Napoleon, himself an artillery officer, knew how to use guns better than any other leader in Europe at the time. The Artillery Corps took pride in their special connection to their *petit caporal*. They were well drilled to take initiative themselves, and to find the right position from where to wreak maximum carnage.

### NAPOLEON'S ARTILLERY

While artillery units normally have to deploy in contact with a Deployment Point, a unit with **Napoleon's Artillery** can deploy up to 6" from the Deployment Point.

Artillery				Type	Artillery	
Points Value	6/7/9	Weapon	Light/Medium/Heavy Gun		Size	5
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	Yes	-	2	-	Napoleon's Artillery



*Retreating artillery in the snow (Wojciech Kossak)*



## Defenders of the Tsar

### Jägers

The Jägers were the light infantry of the Russian army. They differ from the rest of the army primarily by wearing black leather belts instead of white, and by not having regimental or battalion colours.

Each infantry division was made up of one brigade of Jägers and two of Line infantry. So not counting the Grenadier or Guard divisions, one third of the Russian army were Jägers. They were supposed to be somewhat elite, but in practice their deployment, tactics and effectiveness differed little from the Line infantry. The Jägers may have had a slightly better morale and more training in skirmish tactics.

The Russian skirmish tactics were more static than that of the French, and left less room for the individual Jäger to take any initiative during combat. The Jäger skirmishers would spread out, but still in a tightly controlled formation. The entry for Jäger Skirmishers represents them operating in this fashion.

Each Jäger battalion had an elite company that was made up of one platoon of Carabinieris and one of Strelski. This leaves the Russians with more or less half the number of elite company troops compared to the French battalions.

One of the reasons I chose Jägers for my Sharp Practice force is that I think they are often overlooked, and it is always fun to make something a little different when it comes to wargaming. They also feel more likely to be sent away on special missions, as they are more suited to be sent out into rough terrain and on more independent actions. These are the sort of scenarios that Sharp Practice lends itself to perfectly.



Russian Jägers in 1812 (Nikolai Zaretsky)

<b>Jägers</b>					Type	Regulars
Points Value	5	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	No	3	2	2	Stoic Serfs

<b>Jäger Conscripts</b>					Type	Conscripts & Volunteers
Points Value	4	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	No	3	2	-	Stoic Serfs

<b>Jäger Skirmishers</b>					Type	Irregular Skirmishers
Points Value	4	Weapon	Musket		Size	6
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	No	-	-	-	-	

# The Russian Army

## Carabinieri

This is the heavy infantry of the Jägers, the equivalent to Line infantry Grenadiers. Their platoons are made up by the bigger and more aggressive men, recruited from the ranks and donning tall black plumes. With the exception of the Guard, this is as elite and impres-

sive a Russian 1812 soldier with musket gets, which is a good reason to get some for your force. They come with the Aggressive characteristic which means that they are perfectly suited to march on your opponent with leveled bayonets. Remember - the bayonet is your best friend!

Carabinieri					Type	Regular
Points Value	6	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	2	2	2	Stoic Serfs, Aggressive

## Strelski

These are the other half of the elite company's soldiers. They are the sharpshooters and skirmishers of the Russian army, the equivalent to the French Voltigeurs. Strelski means "rifleman" - which in Russian indicates a superiority to "infantry".

There are only a few small small things that tell them apart from ordinary Jägers, the most obvious being the yellow (or yellow/blue) pompons.

The Russians were quite inferior to the French at skirmishing in general. However, since these are the Jäger strelski, their stats are on par with those of the French Line infantry Voltigeurs. In a list for Russian Line infantry, their Strelski should probably be rated as slightly less competent skirmishers.

If you want to give your French opponent an historical edge at the skirmishing you can choose to field fewer units of Strelski, as the Russians were unable to muster an equal amount of them compared to the French Voltigeurs.



Jäger Strelski					Type	Regulars
Points Value	6	Weapon	Musket		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	First Only	3	2	2	Stoic Serfs, Sharp Practice

Jäger Strelski Skirmishers					Type	Skirmishers
Points Value	7	Weapon	Musket		Size	6
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	No	-	2	-	Sharp Practice



## The Russian Army

### Cossacks

The Cossacks are a unique, fun and characterful part of a Russian force. They formed a constant thorn in the side of the Grand Armée, always ready to punish any scouting troops sent out to look for the retreating Russian Army or pillage for supplies.

In this list they come with a lot of extra rules that give you more tactical choices in how to deploy and use your units. This make Cossacks a good addition to your force, beyond their own actions on the table.

For a skirmish game the Cossacks are a natural fit, as they thematically suit many scenarios including scouting, raids, foraging and more. Contrary to common beliefs, the Cossacks were actually deployed in battle many times, including beating Napoleon's famed Polish Lancers in a big cavalry engagement at Mir in the opening of the war. So you should not in any way be ashamed of attacking with them! But choose your battles wisely, preferably charging into exposed flanks using your movable deployment and speed to get into the right position.

### Dismounted Cossacks

The Cossacks also dismounted when required to fight as skirmishers. These units are useful as a cheap source of Mobile DPs, but they can also give decent ranged support, especially if you find good terrain to hide



*Cossacks with lances were a dangerous foe for the French light cavalry*

them in. Keep in mind that they are not trained to stand up to regular infantry, so don't expect too much from them! Just like their mounted counterparts, their rag-tag look will add a nice contrast to the rest of your forces.

### COSSACK LANCERS

The Cossacks used the lance in mounted combat. They are considered to have the troop quality of Irregular Skirmishers in fisticuffs, but receive +1D6 for each Group fighting.

### COSSACK EVADE

Cossacks may evade as Skirmish troops (p. 32). Instead of 2D6, roll 1-3 D6 and add 6" for distance moved.

Mounted Cossacks					Type	Irregular Cavalry
Points Value	4	Weapon	Lance, musket and pistol		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
No Shock	No	No	-	1	-	Tactical, Plunderers, Mobile Deployment Point, Cossack Lancers, Cossack Evade

Dismounted Cossacks					Type	Irregular Skirmishers
Points Value	3	Weapon	Musket, Pistol		Size	6
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	No	No	-	3	-	No Bayonets, Plunderers, Poor Shots, Weedy Coves, Mobile Deployment Point

## The Russian Army

### Regular Cavalry

#### Hussars

Russian Hussars were mounted on smaller horses than their French counterparts but were still at least as dashing, courageous, and oblivious to the idea of self-preservation. Russian Hussars were often volunteers, recruited from military families with long traditions. These young men were enticed by this flashy arm of the light cavalry.

The Hussar regiments were the pride of the Russian cavalry. These units manifested the idea of the classical cavalryman of the Napoleonic wars, with elaborate, colorful uniforms and high *esprit de corps*. Four of the 12 Hussar regiments are considered among the best in the entire Russian cavalry:

The Grodno Hussars "were, as usual, brilliant in combat". The Loubny were "the scum of all vagabonds who were ripe for the gallows". They made for a splendid combat unit despite, or maybe even due to, the large number of criminals and foreigners. Finally, the Mariupol and Pavlograd Hussars were also rated at this highest tier of the Russian light cavalry.

In gameplay terms, there is simply no excuse to not field Hussars! This iconic unit adds a lot of flash to your force, as well as tactical options on the table. Below are two entries for Russian Hussars, as some regiments were equipped with lances for the 1812 campaign.

Hussars					Type	Scouting Cavalry
Points Value	5	Weapon	Sabre		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	No	No	-	2	-	Tally Ho!

Hussar lancers					Type	Scouting Cavalry/Lancers
Points Value	6	Weapon	Sabre, lance		Size	8
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	No	No	-	2	-	Tally Ho!

### Artillery

The Russian army amassed large numbers of artillery pieces. While their great batteries could not always match the French batteries, they were defended by fierce crews who put up some tremendous fights in hand-to-hand combat, swinging and stabbing with their ramrods from underneath their cannon if necessary.

#### BATTERY DEFENDERS

Russian artillery crew may not evade when attacked. The crew counts as having the troop quality level of Skirmishers in fisticuffs.

Artillery					Type	Artillery
Points Value	7	Weapon	Medium Gun		Size	5
Formation	First Fire	Controlled Volley	Crashing Volley	Step Out	Drill	Characteristics
Always	Yes	Yes	-	3	2	Battery Defenders, Stubborn





*The remaining tatters of the Grande Armée crossing the Berezina River (Wojciech Kossak)*

## Chapter 4: Optional Rules

Rules shape how you play a game. That's why different sets of rules, despite being draped in the same colour when it comes to aesthetics, can feel more or less "right". By that I mean that we feel that they represent the conflict that you set out to play in.

When we started out playing Sharp Practice 2, we felt that the rules tended to reward a play style that is more representative of the stories we've read from other conflicts than the Russian invasion. We quickly found ourselves preferring battles between larger forces than those recommended in the rulebook, but thankfully the game worked great with a few minor changes. These optional rules are adopted to either make the game work with larger forces, or to suit our own, highly subjective, idea of wargaming the invasion of Russia in 1812. So feel free to try them out, and discard any that you don't like.

### 1. Simplified Leader Activation

You can easily scale up Sharp Practice 2 and use forces bigger than 100 points. However, as the forces grow in size, you end up drawing more and more low level leader cards/chips. These leaders usually offer no tactical options for the player, merely removing a point of shock or two before you draw the next card, slowing the game down.

**Simplified Leader Activation** means that you don't put activation cards in the deck for any leader in a formation that is led by a higher level leader. Instead, the lower level leader gets to act when his superior officer is drawn. If the higher level leader is put out of action, either due to death or being temporarily knocked out, the lower level leader gets to act when the card is drawn. If one leader for any reason leave the formation without joining another formation, add an activation card for that leader to the deck.

*Example: Shirty has a formation of Jäger Strelski that is led by a level 3 leader and a level 1 leader. He only puts the leader card for the level 3 leader in the deck at the start of the game. When the level 3 leader is drawn, Shirty activates him and commands his formation forward. At the same time, he can use the Command Initiative of the lower ranking leader to remove a point of Shock.*

### 2. Bolstered Morale

When you play larger games, you'll notice that morale losses can lead to a game ending before any really decisive combat occurred. This might suit a Peninsular campaign, where forces are able to retreat when matched in strength, but can feel out of place in the life-or-death struggles in Russia that provided many of the most bitter clashes of the period.

## Optional Rules

To keep Morale from ending a game too abruptly, **Bolstered Morale** means that a player can not lose Morale from Morale Tests more than twice from Bad Things Happening to the same formation in the same turn.

We also recommend you to start with 2 or more extra points of Morale per side if you play games closer to 150 points per side.



*A retreating French Cuirassier (Kazimierz Polaski)*

### 3. Rise from the Ranks

Using small formations or independent units can be doubly punishing: They are liable to cause morale losses since they are more vulnerable than large formations, and at the same time you have to spend

more points to get enough leaders. This rule is intended to even out the odds a bit, and make small units a viable alternative.

When using **Rise from the Ranks**, every formation comes with a level 1 leader for free. If you field any single units of skirmishers or cavalry, they also get one free level 1 leader each. You can then either spend points to increase their levels, or buy additional leaders.

### 4. Not THAT Impressive

The ability to use four command cards to let a leader re-activate several units can get out of hand if you play with larger forces. A well placed high level leader can easily sway or even settle a battle through a single use of this ability, as he will likely be surrounded by several formations.

If you use the **Not THAT Impressive** rule, a leader can still be given a bonus activation using four command cards. However, that leader can only make a single formation or unit activate a second time this turn. He can still use any remaining Command Initiative to remove shock, direct fire etc.

### 5. Don't Run With Bayonets

When you increase the scope of your game and use more troops, there are some maneuvers that add more complexity than they add interesting tactical choices. We found that the game works just as fine for larger scale skirmishes if you simplify the movement rules by not allowing infantry to run (as in: add a D6 move but break formation and receive shock).

### 6. Endless Columns

When using the **Endless Columns** rule in a Dawns & Departures campaign, any new units that you finish painting after the start of the campaign can be added to your campaign force, for free. The unit or units start at the edge of that player's side of the campaign map.

*This is potentially a very powerful optional rule!* Make sure that your players have a mutual understanding to keep it reasonable, preferably with a Campaign Manager who can veto any abuse.



## Optional Rules



*"Return from Petrovsky Palace" by V. Vereschagin, shows Napoleon returning after staying at the Petrovsky Palace outside Moscow for three days while the fires consumed the city. The Russian population mourned and cursed both invaders and defenders: "How could they let him approach our white-stoned Moscow, our mother? Why did they not fight at the Poklonnaya hill and stop him?"*

This rule is meant to encourage the players to paint more miniatures, and not lose interest in painting since they won't be able to field their new recruits. If used well, you'll find that you end up with many new soldiers in your forces at the end of the campaign. Do not use this rule if you suspect a player to spray-coat a

bucket of soldiers white and declare the arrival of Furst Schwarzenberg's Austrian corps.

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The Sharp Practice 2 rulebook can be bought at:

[www.toofatlardies.co.uk](http://www.toofatlardies.co.uk)