

The Battle Of Torgau

November 3, 1760

by Chuck Hamack and Erik Engling

The campaigning season of 1760 saw Frederick desperately attempting to counterattack each of the allied armies as they continued to concentrate on Prussia. By October, his forces were largely exhausted as he responded to yet another thrust by the Austrians. However, Daun did not link up with either the Reichsarmee forces or incorporate Loudon's 30,000 troops into his army before assaulting Frederick. Once again the Austrians became lethargic and deployed their army west of the fortress of Torgau on one of Prince Henry's old encampments. Frederick pushed his tired troops forward, splitting his army in two to attempt an envelopment of Daun's army.

At noon on November 3, 1760 despite sleet and wind, Frederick attempted to coordinate a dual attack of his split forces by launching his grenadiers against the Austrian northern column and artillery while awaiting Zieten's attack in the Austrian rear. Frederick's grenadier battalions were massacred by the Austrian heavy batteries. An Austrian counterattack on the remaining grenadiers resulted in Frederick's musketeers being deployed and these too were repulsed by Daun's forces (the general being wounded in the process). Frederick followed with another musketeer attack on the Austrian center which was defeated by Arenberg, while Holstein's cavalry made a frontal charge against Buccow's cuirassiers. O'Donnell countercharged and pushed the Prussian cavalry back. Frederick's main army was effectively spent after these assaults.

Meanwhile, by early afternoon Zieten's force was slowly deploying further to the west and south of Daun's main position, encountering only some desultory Austrian artillery fire. Zieten finally began his attack at 1600 hours and captured the town of Suptitz. Lacy continued to watch and did not intervene to stop the Prussian southern column. The Prussian infantry found a causeway west of Suptitz on Daun's left flank and crashed into his position. The Austrian response to Zieten's attack was slow and uncoordinated as a result of Daun having relinquished command earlier to have his wound treated. The battle ended as darkness fell over the battlefield and the Austrian army withdrew towards Dresden.

Frederick's forces were wrecked, having lost nearly 20,000 men and Daun's army fared little better with 16,000 casualties. Daun retreated to Dresden and Frederick had successfully defeated the Austrians again, but was unable to follow up the battle with any meaningful pursuit. Both armies dispersed into winter quarters, ending the campaigning season.

The Scenario:

The weather is overcast (periodically sleeting) and windy. Start on Turn 3. Basic Length is 6 turns.

Terrain notes: Torgau is a fortress and is represented by 3 town bases. All other towns are one base. All Woods are rough terrain.

Map Scale: 1:100 (The top of the map is North)

Free Deployment Rules:

Prussians North or Southwest of the Dotted line.

Austrians East or Southeast of the Dotted line.

Historical Deployment Rules:

Frederick's army deployed rapidly, mistaking Zieten's artillery skirmishing with Lacy as the full blown attack. Frederick's army arrives piecemeal, reflecting his throwing infantry attacks against Daun's center. The Advance Guard will arrive on Turn 3, Hulsens force arrives on Turn 4, and Holstein's cavalry arrives on Turn 5 at the locations indicated on the map.

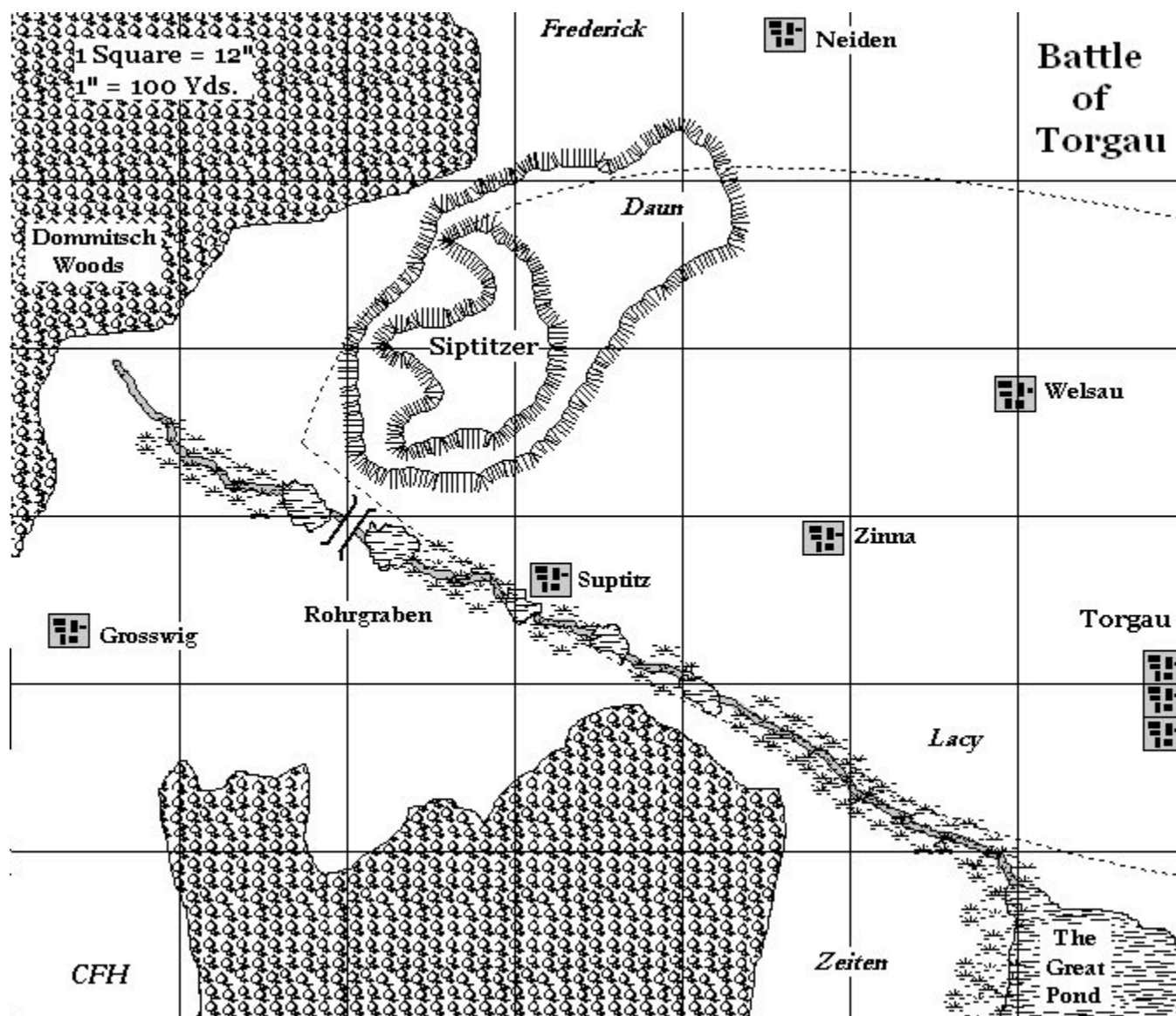
Special Scenario Rules:

Frederick split his army into two parts, one under his personal command and the other under Zieten. To reflect this, treat each as separate armies where Zieten will operate as GOOD for command purposes even though he commands a force. This will require a separate break point for each command. Frederick's Break Point will be 6 and Zieten's Break Point will be 5. Nonetheless, only the Frederick player rolls for the Prussian initiative, and makes the decisions regarding the choice of movement order.

Should Daun become a casualty during the fighting, command will fall to Lacy. For this battle only, Lacy as Army Command will be rated as Poor.

The Causeway behind Daun's western position was a dam area that was undefended by the Austrians. No Austrian unit may deploy within 4 BW of the Causeway and may not move toward it until one Prussian infantry unit has crossed the position moving toward the Austrian line.

The Torgau Battlefield:



The First Army**Commander: Frederick (Great)**

Army Break Point: 11

Advanced Guard Stutterheim (-1)

3 x Grenadiers

2 x Heavy Artillery

Northern Column Hulsen (+1) V

1 x Grenadier

4 x Musketeers

1 x Fusilier

2 x Heavy Artillery

Northern Cavalry Holstein (+1) V

2 x Cuirassiers

1 x Dragoon

1 x Hussar

1 x Freikorps Cavalry

Southern Column Zieten * (+1) V

4 x Musketeers

1 x Fusilier

1 x Garrison Regiment

2 x Heavy Artillery

Southern Cavalry Kleist (0)

3 x Cuirassiers

1 x Hussar

2 x Freikorps Cavalry

Prussian Free Deployment Summary

4 x Grenadiers (48)

8 x Musketeers (80)

2 x Fusiliers (18)

1 x Garrison Regiment (6)

5 x Cuirassiers (55)

1 x Dragoon (10)

2 x Hussars (20)

3 x Freikorps Cavalry (9)

6 x Heavy Artillery (48)

Prussian Free Deployment Total: (294)**The Second Army****Commander: Daun (Average)**

Army Break Point: 12

Ring Wing Cavalry Ried (-1)

1 x Hussar (including Staff Dragoons)

1 x Musketeer (including Staff Infantry)

1 x Croat

Combined Divisions Arenberg (0)

5 x Musketeers

2 x Heavy Artillery

Division Sincere (-2)

1 x Grenadier

2 x Musketeers

Composite Division Wied (-1)

3 x Musketeers

Left Wing Cavalry Buccow (+1)

4 x Cuirassiers

1 x Dragoon

Left Wing Lacy * (0) V

4 x Musketeers

2 x Saxon Cuirassiers

1 x Saxon Chevauleger

1 x Dragoon

Advance Guard O'Donnell (0) V

1 x Grenadier

2 x Cuirassiers

1 x Hussar

1 x Heavy Artillery

Austrian Free Deployment Summary

2 x Grenadiers (20)

15 x Musketeers (120)

1 x Croat (5)

6 x Cuirassiers (60)

2 x Dragoons (18)

2 x Hussars (12)

2 x Saxon Cuirassiers (20)

1 x Saxon Chevauleger (10)

3 x Heavy Artillery (24)

Free Deployment Total: (289)

What Ifs?

Daun and Loudon:

Daun and Loudon could have combined forces rather than the latter remaining behind in Silesia with 30,000 troops. Assume that Loudon has combined with Daun as a reserve deployed just west of Torgau and has left part of his forces behind in Silesia as originally designed.

Reserve Corps Loudon * (+2) V

1 x Grenadier
 5 x Musketeers
 1 x Croats
 2 x Dragoons
 1 x Hussar
 1 x Heavy Artillery

The addition of Loudon's force will raise Daun's breakpoint from 12 to 16. Also, should Daun become a casualty, Loudon will take over instead of Lacy with the following rating: Loudon (Good)

Frederick and Zieten Combine for an attack from the Southwest:

Frederick had the option of using a feint to pin Daun's attention to the north and having one combined force attacking Daun's southern position near the Causeway and Suptitz. For this option, a cavalry screen force is made by withdrawing the dragoon and hussar units from Holstein and a hussar unit from Kleist. Combine this into a screening force as follows:

Light Cavalry Finkenstein (-1)

1 x Hussars
 1 x Dragoons

Finkenstein's cavalry will deploy on turn 1 in the North. Daun can not move the forces of Arenberg, Sincere, and O'Donnel until Turn 2.

All Prussian forces (minus Finkenstein) deploy on Turn 2 Southwest running parallel to the Causeway and Suptitz.

Northern Attack:

It was with great risk that Frederick split his forces in front of Daun's army and attacked the southern section with Zieten's forces. Assume Frederick does not split his army.

Frederick's whole army (Including Zeiten's Forces) deploys on Turn 1 (early morning) in the Northern sector. All forces are immediately deployed and can move.

Daun's army is deployed along a line from the Causeway, to Suptitz, and onto the southeast at the Great Torgau Pond all facing southwest. He also has deployed O'Donnel in front of Torgau facing west. On his turn, Daun is free to move his army northward to deploy against Frederick if he can reach the heights in time.