

Periodic Blog #12

We are almost done with *La Bataille de Bautzen 1813*. There have only been a few changes needed in the special rules and the orders of battle, and those have been posted elsewhere on the website. When you are ready to play the game, always check the website for any additions or edits to the game. Also, should we add any new scenarios, they will be on the website.

As far as the availability of the game...as of the writing of this piece (November 22, 2019) we have 9 copies still left for sale. Purchase is available elsewhere on the website, which has had over 42,000 hits since December 2017. I also have one numbered copy of Wagram, which had been sent out but returned as a duplicate. Contact me directly if you are interested in purchase at my email (jgsoto9@msn.com).

Bautzen Counters Now On Sale

We will be selling counter sets to *La Bataille de Prusse 1806* starting now. Those will be selling for \$75 and can be purchased on the website. While there is no separate shipping charge, unfortunately, we can only sell to domestic United States customers only due to the high cost of international shipping. Also, we still have three sets of Wagram counters for sale with the same cost and rules as the *Prusse 1806* counters. Monte does a very nice job on the counters, and some game owners want to keep a mint copy of the counters to enhance the value of their game. We will see how many Bautzen counter sets might be available for purchase in January 2020.

Finally, thanks to all of our play testers including the crew that participated in the *Duel in the Desert* in Tempe in June. In addition, I did considerable play testing with Eric Holmgren at his home. He has a full dining room table, surrounded by his library of historic books and games, that set the right ambience for the numerous times we were able to get together. Now that I am retired from the hustle-bustle of regular employment, I am hopeful Eric and myself will be able to play even more often. He keeps me on my toes.

Wrapping up Bautzen means we will be starting our next project. While we have not finalized our decision about what that title will be, we are close, and I expect we should finalize by the New Year just what the title will be.

ME's Man Of The Moment: Remembering Duroc's Death

Bautzen proved to be the last major battle in the French campaign in the Spring of 1813. But that did not mean there was not additional dangerous activity between the Coalition and the French Imperial forces from the end of the

Bautzen and the commencement of the Armistice of Pläswitz on June 4, 1813. Between those two armies, there were over 100,000 casualties suffered by the combatants in the six or so weeks the Spring 1813 campaign entailed, yet there still could be some individual tragedy that, even more than two centuries later, can evoke an emotional response.



GÉRAUD-CHRISTOPHE-MICHEL DUROC

by Gros

The death of General Gérard-Christophe-Michel Duroc was one of those occasions. Duroc was the Grand Marshal of the Palace and one of Napoleon's few personal friends. Duroc first met General Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon in 1793 as a young artillery lieutenant. He joined Bonaparte as an aide de camp during the Italian campaign in 1796; joined Bonaparte in Egypt where Duroc was wounded two times; returned to France with Bonaparte with whom he served during the coup of 18 Brumaire and then at Marengo as the commander of an artillery regiment. He intermittently, between military assignments, fulfilled a number of diplomatic assignments serving in most of the European capitols. Of all of Napoleon's aides, Duroc had the most wide-ranging of diplomatic duties.

In 1805, Napoleon appointed him as Grand Marshal of the Palace, where he supervised the security of the Imperial Household with a staff of over 800 people. He also served bravely at Austerlitz, commanding the Grenadier Division after Oudinot was wounded. He, along with Lannes, was allowed to address the Emperor by the familiar *tu* when speaking with Napoleon.



The Death of Duroc from an Austrian engraving by Kampe

On May 22, 1813, the day following the Battle of Bautzen, Duroc was riding with Napoleon during the Battle of Reichenbach when the Imperial party came under an artillery attack. The initial cannonball just missed Napoleon, but the shot hit a tree and ricocheted into Engineers General Kirgener, killing him instantly. The shot took another bounce and disemboweled Duroc. It took Duroc over 12 hours to die. Dr. Larrey was summoned by Napoleon to tend to Duroc, but the famous surgeon could not do anything to assist Duroc in his final hours.

There is some controversy about what happened during these long, excruciating hours before Duroc finally expired. The controversial memoirs of Bourienne said Duroc would have been in too much pain to say anything that made any sense; but there is a mythology that grew up around Duroc's death. He had asked Napoleon to be a father to Duroc's daughter. Supporting that claim, Napoleon did financially provide for Duroc's family and bought the farm where Duroc died. The reports of Duroc's final hours indicate that Duroc sent Napoleon away because he did not want to have the Emperor see Duroc die. Whatever may have happened, it was clear Napoleon was distressed that his friend was dying. It has been reported that Napoleon left Duroc and retired to his quarters. He apparently did not speak the rest of the night.

Duroc seemed to be one of those multi-talented individuals that history finds at crucial moments in the time of a nation. Like Rapp; Bertrand; Sebastiani; and Caulaincourt; Duroc served France and Napoleon with brilliant performances and as always, frank advice. He is one of the great figures of the French Revolution and Empire. He is the perfect Man of the Moment.

Till next time when we will honor someone from the Coalition as our Man of the Moment...au revoir!