



A Journey through Tabletop Rules Napoleonic Miniature Wargames



V1.3 - All assessments are subjective and should in no way diminish the work and talent of the authors. My respect for every one of them.

At first I give my type of ranking for the rule systems, followed by a summary for each rule book discussed so far. Rankings are presented in three variations: Starter, Competitive Player, Simulation Game.

1.1 Starting with Napoleonic Wargaming

For me there are two ways to go at the moment. One is a broad road, the other a romantic trail. Try **Black Powder (Warlord Games)** and you will easily find other players, most using 28mm Figures. But with Epic Battles a smaller 12+mm standard will arise. Changing the rule system can get a bit daunting in the long run because of scale and basing but this is the fastest and safest way to go.

The other option would be **Absolute Emperor (Osprey)**. A cheap rule system which can easily be tested with counters instead of miniature to start. A lot of mechanics introduced here can be found in other more complex rules and getting into other games will get much easier.

The first road will open possibilities to play in a lot of clubs and participate in competitions. Following the smaller trail will lead you more towards the world of battle simulation and possibly fewer companions on your way. But you can always head back or take a junction. A world lies before you to take.

1.2 Competitive / Casual Gaming Option

I do not find a cardinal rating appropriate and so only use an ordinal illustration of my thoughts. The reasons for the ratings can be found mostly in the detail section. But the number one **Black Powder** has in my opinion the highest player base around – at least in Germany – and this is a major advantage.

1. Black Powder (Warlord Games)
2. Absolute Emperor (Osprey)
3. Shadow of the Eagles (Partizan Press)
4. Napoleon's Wars
5. Snappy Nappy (On Military Matters)
6. Shako 2 (Quantum Printing)
7. Lasalle (Honour)
8. Bataille Empire (ONYX Editions)

1.3 Simulation Games

Here Bataille Empire and Lasalle are close competitors with distance to its pursuers. A matter of taste which of them you prefer. Likewise number 3 and 4 lie close together in ranking.

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2. The Rule Systems

Absolute Emperor by Boyd Bruce (Osprey)

Miniatures: every scale, 28mm in origin

Basing: no rebasing necessary, 40mm square infantry and 50mm for cavalry in origin

Comments: + easy and cheap rule set
+ less need for a large amount of miniatures

Bataille Empire by Hervé Caille (ONYX Editions)

Miniatures: every scale

Basing: basing of your choice, multiple examples

Comments: + more complex, in depth rules
+ distinguishes 4 to 5 attributes for troops

Black Powder by Rick Priestley and Jervis Johnson (Warlord Games)

Miniatures: every scale, 28mm or epic scale 12+mm

Basing: open to most, 40mm square infantry and 50mm for cavalry recommended

Comments: + common rule set, higher player base
+ easy adaptable rules
- more generic, add-ons / house rules needed for more historical flavor

Lasalle by Sam A. Mustafa (Honour)

Miniatures: every scale

Basing: all bases same width or close as possible

Comments: + more complex, in depth rules,
+ clear presentation

Napoleon's Wars by Terry Mahon

Miniatures: every scale

Basing: all bases same width or close as possible, 40mm width recommended

Comments: + easy and fast casual game, + no dice, only playing cards
- mediocre presentation + beer and pretzels game

Shako II by Arty Conliffe Bruce (Quantum Printing)

Miniatures: every scale

Basing: no rebasing necessary, different examples of basing given

Comments: + old school game focussing on moral
+ command system requires battle plan and sending orders to subordinate commanders

Shadow of the Eagles by Keith Flint (Partizan Press)

Miniatures: every scale, 25-30mm in origin

Basing: no rebasing necessary, examples of two types of basing

Comments: + written for standard 6x4 tables
+ easy to learn, a lot of examples of play
- infantry in lines are privileged a bit, cavalry is weaker as usual

Snappy Nappy by Russ Lockwood (On Military Matters)

Miniatures: every scale

Basing: width of all stands near equal, "official" sizes: 40x20mm infantry and 40x40mm for cavalry.

Comments: + easy and fast rule system
+ basic rules for multiplayer and multitable games included
+ less need for a large amount of miniatures
- easy and fast means to renounce depth a bit