

The Battle of Herbsthausen, 5th May, 1645

Toward the close of 1644 the French, under Conde and Turenne, had been beaten twice by Mercy's Bavarian army. At Freiburg, in August, Conde had lost over 4,000 men compared to Bavarian losses of 1,000. The Bavarians, however, lost the strategic initiative and retreated, losing many towns with little resistance. Both sides settled down to rebuild but this was not a simple task. Turenne's infantry had almost ceased to exist after Tuttlingen and Freiburg. On his part, Mercy had been ordered to send much of his cavalry back to Bohemia.

Early in 1645 Turenne took the initiative. He invaded Baden-Wurtemberg and quickly captured 5 towns. The local Bavarian-Imperial forces were soon in retreat but Mercy did not panic. He withdrew steadily, pulling Turenne deeper into Swabia. Eventually, Turenne found himself unable to provide enough supplies for his army and he was forced to spread his troops across several locations. This is what Mercy had been waiting for, and now he took his chance. On May 4th French outposts reported that Mercy was less than 2 miles away.

Turenne had been caught by surprise. Aiming to buy time, he chose a blocking position near the village of Herbsthausen. He sent Rosen with 3,000 infantry to secure the right flank. He took the left with 3,000 cavalry. His artillery was too far away to take part in the coming battle. Turenne planned to attack the right of Mercy's army as it advanced. Given the weak state of his infantry, Rosen's role was to hold the enemy left, preventing it from attacking Turenne.

Mercy had around 10,000 men and 9 guns. He made his dispositions in two lines with cavalry on both flanks, the infantry and the artillery in the centre. Then he attacked. He aimed to pin Turenne and push through Rosen to shatter the communications between the various parts of Turenne's army.

The battle commenced with a short artillery attack on Rosen's position which disordered his inexperienced infantry. As Mercy advanced Turenne successfully launched his attack; but Rosen's infantry melted away. Turenne's wing was then flanked and driven off the battlefield.

The battle was a disaster for the French. Turenne's army almost ceased to exist. Including the retreat, the French lost 4 generals, 3000 infantry, 1400 cavalry and 10 guns. Mercy's strategy of mis-information and controlled withdrawal had delivered a stunning success.

Game time Start at 7:00 am **Game length** 12 turns

Total engaged	No. of Brigades	Horse	Foot	Guns
French	10	3,000	3,000	-
Imperialist	16	4,500	5,500	9

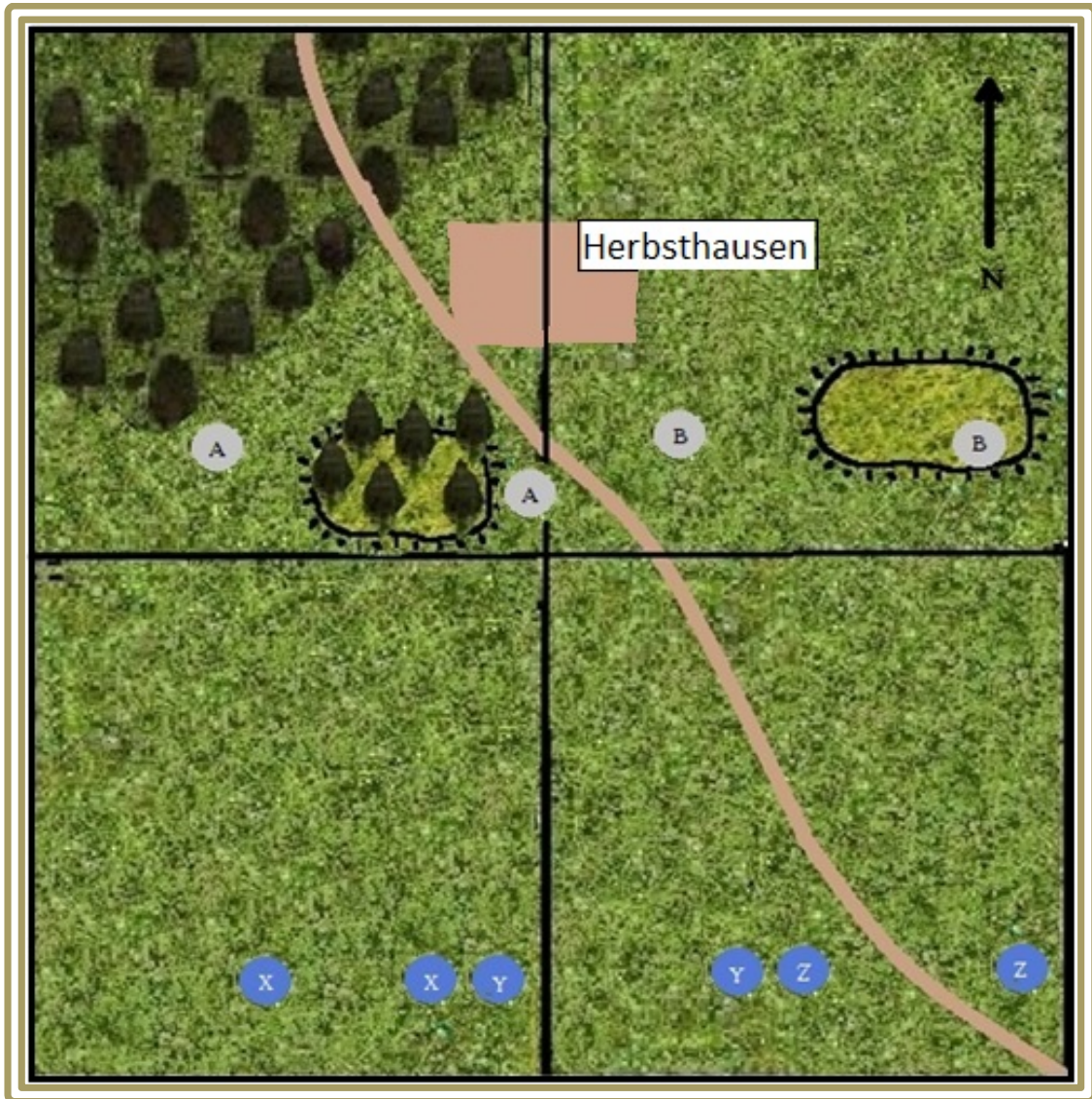
Objectives:

The Imperialists' primary aim is to break the Will of the French army and force it to retreat. This would be a major victory.

Their secondary aim is to exit at least 5 brigades off the table to the North, which would be a minor victory.

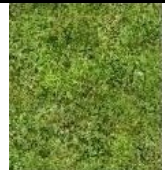


The primary French aim is to stop the Imperialist force exiting to the North. Less than 3 Imperialist brigades exiting would be a major victory. If 8, or more, brigades exit then it would be a major defeat.

A secondary aim is to break the Will of the Imperialist army and force it to retreat. This would also be a major victory.



The table for this battle is 4' x 4'. Each square is 2' x 2'.

Terrain key:

				
Level 0	Level 1	Road	Built up area	Woods

Imperialist Army: Franz von Mercy

Left		Centre		Right	
<u>Werth</u>		<u>Mercy</u>		<u>Kolb</u>	
Fleckenstein CR	T	Gil de Haas IR	T	Cosalky CR	T
Lapierre CR	T	Mercy IR	T	Gayling CR	T
Sporck CR	T	Rouyer IR	T	Salis CR	T
Werth CR	T	Wahl IR	T	Schoh DR	T
		<i>Artillery</i>	T		
		<i>Artillery</i>	T		
<u>Ruischenberg</u>					
		Gold IR	T		
		Hasslang IR	T		
		Miehr IR	T		
		Winterscheid IR	T		
		Kolb CR	T		
		<i>Artillery</i>	T		

Deploys: Werth X - X, Mercy Y - Y, Kolb Z - Z,
Ruischenberg - behind Mercy

French Army: Vicomte de Turenne

Left		Right			
<u>Turenne</u>		<u>Rosen</u>			
Baden CR	T	Aubeterre IR	T	Bernhold IR	T
Betz CR	T	Hattstein IR	T	Schmidtberg IR	T
Kanoffsky CR	T			Rosen CR	T
Turenne CR	T				
Wittgenstein CR	T				

Deploys: Rosen A - A, Turenne B - B