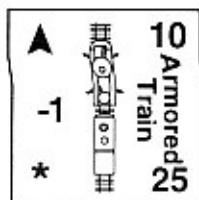


Armored Trains

SCENARIOS AND VARIANTS

In Landships!

BY STEVE RAWLING



Editors Note: This is the first of a series of articles on expanding your Landships! game using the optional pieces included in the box. The format will typically take the form of brief introduction, some rules, and then some scenarios using the new pieces. By all means, write to let us know if we're "on track" with this sort of stuff. Special thanks to Bruce Bonneveir and Eric Lyons for helping out.

The lineage of the armored train goes back to 1862 and the American Civil War. Outside the gates of Richmond, Confederate forces mounted a single cannon with a gun shield on an open topped flat car, pushed by an engine. The weapon was effective in frightening McClellan, though its potential destructive power was low. Armored trains were largely ignored in the following three decades but once more came into their own during the Second Boer War (1899-1902). The British used them to great effect in patrolling the vast open spaces of South Africa (despite Winston Churchill denigrating them in his memoirs - perhaps because he was captured in one!). By the time of the Great War, armored trains were firmly established in every Great Power's arsenal. Indeed, were it not for their fatal limitation of only being able to operate where rail lines were present, armored trains might well have become the "landships" of popular imagination. Naturally we couldn't resist including them in our game. Rules for the armored train counter are presented here for the first time.

General Rule: Armored trains are considered simply to be large Vehicles for most rules purposes. They have a facing indicator printed on the counter. The position of an armored train is simulated on the map through use of the armored train counter. Because armored trains varied wildly in equipment, armament and protection, a separate display is used to track the status of each armored train. Each armored train consists of an engine plus one to five rail cars, so photocopy the display on page 8 to string together the larger trains..

Movement: Armored trains move during the Vehicle Movement Phase. They may only move along roads that are designated as "tracks" in the scenario special rules. Armored trains may not change facing except to

follow the natural course of the track (no spinning in place!) but do not pay any extra MPs cost to do so. Armored trains may go into reverse and travel along the track in exactly the same manner. Any armored train that reverses direction from one turn to the next may only move one half its printed Movement Allowance that turn. A train that loses its engine may not move at all. Trains may never leave the "tracks" and enter other terrain types. Trains never suffer Break Downs.

Layout and Design: Using the display, players will note each armored train consists of an engine and a number of cars, each with boxes printed on them. The display is kept hidden by the owning player, until the train is spotted by one of the opposing player's units. One rail car on the display must be selected to be the engine, and only one crew counter may be placed on it, no Weapon Units or platoons may be placed on the engine. Otherwise, each rail car has three holding boxes printed on it. A player may place up to one ART or AA or AT gun plus a crew, or up to three MG platoons, or one infantry platoon, or any combination thereof, per rail car. AT Rifles and Flamethrowers may be carried as well. Note that end cars and center cars on the display have different fields of fire. Field of fire restrictions must be observed at all times, including the MG/infantry platoons stacked on board. All Weapon Units are considered to be on 360 degree mounts when on the train, they may fire in any direction permitted by the field of fire arcs without the +1/+2 penalty for firing outside the covered arc. Note that AA Guns have full 360 degree fire arcs when firing at aircraft, regardless of the indicated fire arc restrictions.

Protection: Each armored train is given a protection rating in each scenario of +1 to +3, reflecting the degree of protection afforded to SAFA, Barrage, and ATFA attacks. The defender may add the protection rating as a die roll modifier on the SACRT, BCRT or ATCRT, but does not receive any additional benefits due to the terrain the train is in.

Combat: During the Offensive or Defensive Fire Phases, players may fire any on board Weapon Units or MG/infantry platoons the

train possesses. All on board Weapon Units and MG/infantry platoons possess a direct fire Weapons Range of 10 (if their normal WR is less than 10), due to the higher platform they're on (optionally, WUs with a printed WR of 10 may fire up to 12 instead). Players may not conduct indirect fire Barrage Attacks using on board ART guns, but may conduct AA attacks at any range up to their AA weapon's printed WR.

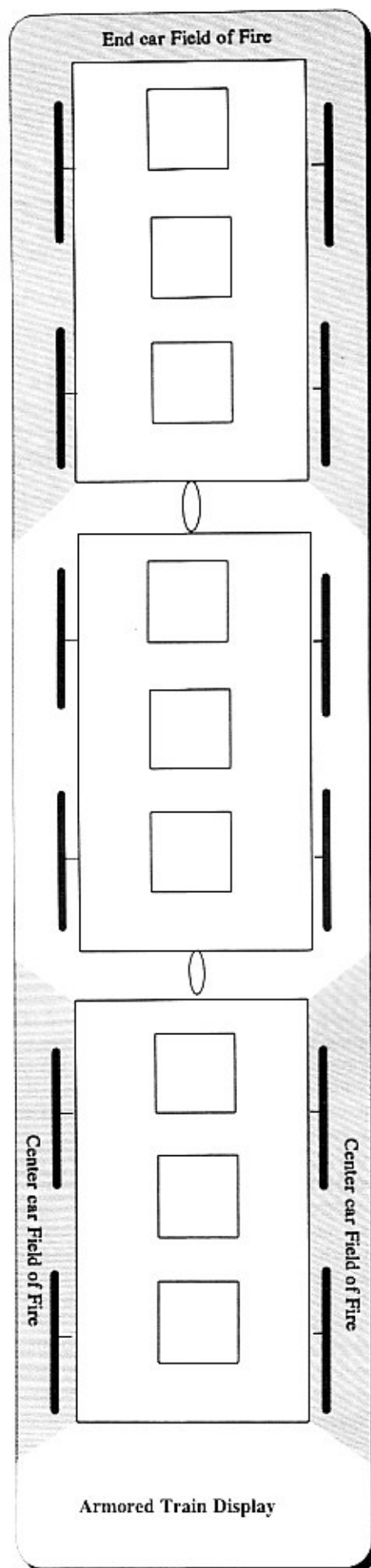
SAFA and Barrage Attacks vs. armored trains are handled in the normal manner (combine all SAFA values into one total) except each crew and platoon undergoes a separate roll on the SACRT (using the train's protection rating as a modifier) to see if it is Hit. If Hit, it undergoes the normal check to see if it is Pinned or Eliminated. Crews and platoons may not fire if Pinned. The train may not move if the engine Crew is Pinned. Units forced to Retreat off a train are Eliminated instead.

AFTA Attacks against trains may be made as well. AFTAs are randomly targeted against one of the rail cars on the train, roll a 6 sided die to determine which car is hit. AFTAs against armored trains receive a -1 die roll modifier due to the size of the rail cars while the protection rating of the train is treated as a positive die roll modifier. If a Hit is scored, all Weapon Units and Crews on that rail car are Eliminated (platoons are unharmed). If a Hit is scored on the engine, the crew is Eliminated and the train may no longer move.

Players may Barrage Attack rail lines in hopes of cutting them. This is accomplished in the same manner as cutting Wire, and has the same chance of success. Trains may not enter a hex with a cut rail line.

Armored trains may not initiate Close Assault Combat but may be attacked by enemy units using Close Assault. The train and any infantry platoons all count towards the unit total, Weapon Units and Crews and MG platoons (no matter how many) do not count for Close Assault Combat purposes.

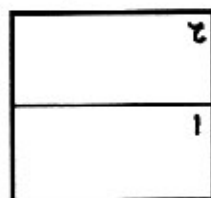
Air units may attempt to bomb trains, treat them as tanks (an "E" result is required to eliminate them).



Miscellaneous: Trains may discharge their passenger platoons (but not their on-board Weapons Units), but may never pick them (or any other units) up during the course of a scenario unless specially allowed to do so by the scenario rules.

Scenario 19.23: "Seizing the Dead Man"

On March 6th, 1916, the Germans renewed their efforts to seize the hill known as "Mort Homme" (Dead Man), the key to unflanking the French left at Verdun. The attack itself was planned as a flank attack. The new German VI Reserve Corps would launch a diversionary frontal assault to pin down the defenders on Mort Homme while the German 77th Brigade crossed the Meuse River to take them in the flank. Defending the Meuse was a poorly led French division, the 67th. After an incredibly heavy barrage, German troops under General von Zwehl jumped off in a snowstorm. Little did the French know the wily von Zwehl had also smuggled a small armored train close in to the front as "insurance" for his boys in the assault.



Map Set Up: Maps 1 and 2
Game Length: 12 turns

Germans (1st Player): Set up second

Any 25 infantry platoons (no more than half may be 4-6-5s) and any 6 MG platoons (no more than half may be 4-9-5s) plus two FOs set up anywhere east of the river line. A total of 15 off board artillery modules are available throughout the game (no smoke or gas).

German Reinforcements: On turn 2, an armored train becomes available and may enter along any road hex along the east edge of the map. The train possesses two 77mm ART guns plus crews, three 4-9-5 MG platoons and an engine crew and so requires a minimum of 4 cars. Its protection rating is +2.

French (2nd Player): Set up first

Any 16 infantry platoons and any 3 MG platoons set up west of, but within 4 hexes of, the river. No units selected may have Fire Values greater than 3 or MR greater than 4.

French Reinforcements:

On Turn 5, eight infantry platoons (of any value) and two MG platoons (of any value) plus two FOs may appear along the west edge of the map, or along the south edge, west of the river. Ten total off board artillery modules become available for the rest of the game.

Special Rules: All road hexes east of the river are considered to be rail hexes instead. The armored train may exit the east edge of the map and reappear at a different road hex the next turn. All bridges are destroyed at the start of the game. It's considered to be snowing the first 10 game turns so reduce all Spotting Ranges by 2. French artillery had particularly bad fuses during this engagement, increase all French BCRT die rolls by +1. The trench lines running along the west edge of the map do not exist, instead the first row is considered a hill slope hex so the area to the west of the trench is all considered high ground (use the higher elevation increased visibility optional rule). The strongpoints printed on the map do exist.

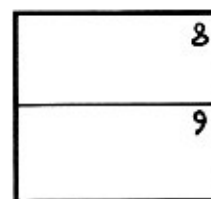
Victory Conditions: The German player wins by exiting 10 platoons off the west edge of the map, otherwise it's a French win.

Aftermath: The opening barrage stunned the defenders, severing all communications with the rear. Crossing the Meuse at Brabant and Champneuville, the Germans quickly pocketed the defenders, helped immeasurably by direct fire support from the armored train. French artillery observers soon spotted the tell tale smoke from the train and zeroed in, forcing it to withdraw. But many French shells fail to go off in the soft snowy ground. Much territory was taken that day along with 3,000 French prisoners, but not the vital Mort Homme, due to the diversionary frontal attack degenerating into an utter fiasco.

Scenario 19.24: "The Red Train"

Towards the end of the war, the French 3rd Company, 303rd Tank Regiment, comprised of FT-17s was secretly transferred to Rumania in hopes of getting the Rumanians to re-enter the war. The war ended before Rumania could decide and by December 1918 the tank company found itself in southern Russia, fighting against the new Bolshevik menace. The unit was plagued by maintenance problems and poor morale (who wants to get killed after the "War to End All Wars" is over?). On March 21st, 1919, the company attacked, along with White Russian Army units, against the Bolshevik's 1st Zadnie-provskiy Division. Little did the tankers suspect the Reds were backed up by an armored train.

Map Set Up: Use Maps 6 and 8
Game Length: 12 turns



(cont'd on page 17)

(cont'd from page 8)

Allies (1st Player): Use the Allied pieces: Set up second
No units at start.

Allied Reinforcements: On Turn 1, 18 infantry platoons of any type, plus 6 cavalry platoons of any type, along with one FO enter anywhere along the south edge of the map. Fifteen FT-17 tanks (all tanks are MG armed except for three which have 37mm guns - use FT-17s with the Char 2C's backprinted on them to designate which are which) also may enter anywhere along the south edge of the map but must be divided into three groups of five. Each group cannot enter closer than 5 hexes from each other (no restriction on tanks within the group however). Three artillery modules are available throughout the first five game turns (no smoke or gas may be used). One Sopwith Salamander (CS) is available at start.

On Turn 5, another 3 artillery modules become available for the rest of the game (no smoke or gas attacks).

Bolsheviks (2nd Player): Use the Central Powers pieces. Set up first:

15 infantry platoons (no more than 5 may have a FV of 4 or more) plus 3 MG platoons (of any type) set up in the specially designated trench hexes on Map 6. No more than one unit may start per trench hex. Ten Wire counters and one FO may be placed anywhere on the Map 6. Three artillery modules are available throughout the game (no smoke or gas may be used). An armored train may be hidden (write down the hex number) in any town hex of Al Rami on Map 8. Keep it off the map until spotted. The train possesses one 77mm ART and 37mm AT gun plus crews, three 4-9-5 MG platoons, plus two infantry platoons (of any type) plus an engine crew (a minimum of 5 cars is required to hold all this). Protection rating is +3.

Bolshevik Reinforcements: On Turn 3, five cavalry and one cavalry MG platoon enter from the east side of Map 6, north of the trench line.

Special Rules: The road hexes on Map 6 stretching from hex 4025 to 7025 are considered to be trench hexes instead. In addition, the town of Al Rami on Map 8 does not possess any trench or minefield hexes. Instead treat the trench hexes of Al Rami as additional town hexes. The strongpoints do exist for game purposes. Treat all terrain effects modifiers cumulatively (for example hex 5025 on Map 6 is now a trench/woods hex).

The road on Map 8, stretching from hex 4617 to 7068 is considered to be a rail line. The Red player may also secretly designate either the easternmost or westernmost trench line

"Il sait tout; il fait tout; il peut tout!"

- Abbe Siyès on Napoleon

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running north to south through Al Rami as a rail spur, allowing the train to operate along it. For facing purposes, treat the trenches making up this rail spur as facing it such a way to directly connect the adjacent hexes.

EXAMPLE: If the train were in hex 5910, it could only face in directions 1/4 or 2/5 (as indicated by the the artillery scatter diagram).

Red infantry and MG platoons only are subject to tank fright in this scenario (see the special rules in Landships! Scenario 17.5).

Due to poor morale, all tanks crews are subject to the German Tank Crew rules (see Module 15.0 in Landships). In addition, the FT-17 breakdown modifier is decreased to 0 in this scenario.

Victory Conditions: Either player wins by solely occupying the town of Al Rami on Map 8 with his units by game end. Otherwise, compare the number of vehicles and platoons from each side (train and its passengers count as 1 unit). If either side has two or more than the other, it wins. Any other result is a draw.

Aftermath: This action was probably the Renault FT-17's first encounter with an enemy armored vehicle and the Renault's came off second best. The tank attack, supported by the ragged White Russian Army units, started well enough. The defenders lacked any sort of AT weapons and naturally broke. Once the tanks encountered the train, the tables turned and the Bolsheviks were left in control of the battlefield, with five FT-17 hulks littering the countryside. The Reds managed to salvage four of these and created their own tank platoon, which along with two sections of armored cars became the Red Army's "Special Purpose Armored Troop".

Next article: We'll look at some more realistic trench and terrain rules that really give the defense its proper edge.



As the stench and horror of World War I trench warfare mounts, both sides seek the breakthrough weapon; immense week-long artillery barrages, flame-throwers, air-power, even poison gas. All are tried and found wanting, and the bloodletting continues. Finally, the most awesome weapon of all is designed in secret and rushed to the front, a machine that will crush the barbed wire, bridge the trenches, and spit death in every direction - the Landship!

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Landships! \$36.00

"Run, the Devil

LANDSHIPS ERRATA

Is Coming!"

BY PERRY MOORE

The Box

Yes, the date on the back of the box is wrong! The first tank attack occurred Sept. 15th, 1916. The date is noted correctly in the scenarios and historical commentary.

The Map

On Map #1, the trench line from hexes 3607 to 4005 are missing their brown overprint. These are considered trench hexes for all intents and purposes.

The Charts

1. (Correction) The wording on the Communications Check box does not match Rule 5.11c. The rule is correct (an FO is "in communications" on a roll of 4-6).

2. (Clarification) The -1 on the FOT for the French in 1914-15 is not a misprint. Instead it symbolizes the élan of the French 75mm ("Miss 75") gun crews who were trained to literally start firing before they deployed. Naturally these crews were all dead (or at least less enthusiastic by 1916).

The Rules

5.0 (Clarification) There are no practical game distinctions between the effects of on-board artillery and off-board modules. Both have a FS of 10, both may employ FOs to spot, etc. This is a simplification for game purposes and player are free to develop more elaborate artillery rules.

5.12 (Change) During the Joint Aircraft Phase, place the Aircraft directly on the target hex to be Barrage Attacked. As an Aircraft may Observe any hex with 2 of it, during the actual Barrage Phase place the impact marker on any hex within 2 of the Aircraft. The Barrage then takes place in that hex (subject to Scatter).

NOTE: This change prevents units from "walking" away to avoid the upcoming Barrage.

5.13 (Addition) Add bridge hexes to the terrain types Automatically Observed.

6.14(a) (Addition) To place a more meaningful penalty on Whippets that go out of control, add +2 to any SAFA attacks conducted by an out of control Whippet later that turn during the Offensive Fire Phase.

6.16 (Addition) Increase the German A7V's breakdown modifier to +0 in any scenario taking place in Sept. 1918 or later. This reflects increased reliability of the tank once certain modifications were made.

6.34 (Clarification) There is no minimum distance a cavalry unit may charge at. A charge may begin from a hex adjacent to the enemy.

6.35 (Addition) This rule applies when at least two cavalry troops exist to form a group.

7.15 (Clarification) Player may deploy Wire markers on top of their own trench hexes. In this case, Wire penalties are cumulative with Trench benefits.

NOTE: Players may wish to adopt this tactic to deny the enemy the full benefit of capturing a friendly trench line. When this tactic is chosen, the wire is assumed to be on both sides of the trench line, hence the penalty (those inside feel trapped!)

8.21 (Clarification) Spotting Ranges represent the distance that one unit may see another unit occupying a particular terrain type, not the range at which a unit may see out of a particular terrain type.

8.23 (Clarification) If either the firing or target unit is occupying the blocking terrain, the LOS is not blocked (assuming no other intervening blocking terrain between them). The LOS may be traced along the line forming the side of the of a single blocking terrain hex, but no along two or more or between two adjacent blocking terrain hexes.

Case 1 (Clarification) The restrictions on tracing a LOS through friendly units applies even if they are occupying a trench hex in front of the firing unit(s).

NOTE: This restriction is in the game to encourage proper tactics regarding flank attacks. Imagine a line of four enemy units along a row of hexes. If they were allowed to project as much fire to the flank as to their front, no flank attack could ever succeed. Player who wish to simulate British indirect fire MG tactics may allow British MG platoons (only) to fire through friendly units but the MG SACRT bonus (-1) is lost. The morale penalty still applies for coming under MG fire.

Case 6 (Addition) Players may not trace a LOS through a hex (and thus may not fire through) that is undergoing an indirect barrage attack that turn.

NOTE: This addition will allow players with lots of artillery to recreate the famous "Barrage Box" artillery tactic, shielding their units from enemy observation as they slog through no man's land.

9.2 and 9.3 (Clarification) If a unit suffers a second Pin result and cannot retreat (for any reason), it is Eliminated instead.

10.0 (Reiteration) Units do not unpin automatically if they are inside the three hex radius of a Gas marker.

12.1 (Clarification) Players may not deliberately target or conduct Barrage Attacks or SAFAs into or out of a hex that is locked in Close Assault Combat. Note that an indirect fire Barrage Attack may accidentally scatter into such a hex. Vehicles alone in a hex with enemy FTs, CTs or Vehicles may conduct SAFAs or ATFAs (at range 0) against them in place of the Close Assault Combat procedure.

12.22 (Change) Allow FT units with a MR of 5 to Close Assault Tanks but only in Town hexes.

The Scenarios

17.5 (Addition) Tank Fright is checked for in the German player's half of the turn as well as for any German units that remain in the tank's hex.

17.7 (Change) The scenario length is 14 turns, not 12. Also reinforcements cannot be delayed as to when they arrive, they must enter on the designated turn or they do not arrive at all.

17.12 (Change) Increase the scenario length to 12 turns.

17.14 (Correction) The two British 4-9-5 infantry platoons entering on Turn 1 should, of course, be 4-6-5s.

17.21 (Clarification) The German LK IIs are cannon armed in this scenario.