
Mechanics of Bounding First Fire

Description



This article is born out of a recent game. In the game, my opponent took a Bounding First Fire shot with the AAMG on his M36 GMC and moved on to a new hex. Reaching the new hex, he attempted to shoot the MA. Of course, we can't do this. He and I spent some time reviewing the rules so he could play it properly in the future. While conversing, I took notes as I thought the discussion would make for a good post here. Without further ado, let's dive in.

A Brief Examination of the Rules

The applicable rules for this discussion are D3.3, D3.32, D3.5, and D3.51. Let's look at them in some more detail. When reading the examples, some may find it helpful to review my previous article "[Infantry Target Type and Critical Hits](#)" as it gives background on how I personally announce my shots.

First, let's look at D3.3. Here we learn a vehicle's shot in the MPh is called Bounding First Fire (B1F). This seems to be pretty obvious, but it has ramifications missed by some. In my recent game, my opponent wanted to shoot in the MPh. He announced his ITT shot as an 8 +2 to Hit. I asked him why not +4 and he replied only Case B applied since he had not moved to a new hex. I pointed out Case B specifically applies in the AFPh, not the MPh. We then looked at D3.3 to see it was a B1F shot. Lastly, I showed him the Case C choices, pointing out how C through C³ are all applicable to B1F. Once I showed him, he agreed it was all rather obvious.

Next, we'll look at D3.32. The important bit is this: *"if the vehicle did not exhaust its Multiple ROF during its MPh, and did not fire any other weapons (including PRC) during its MPh, it may fire that Multiple ROF weapon (only) again once (C5.3) during its AFPh*

.” From this we learn, if the AFV fires any weapons other than a ROF capable weapon, they may not use the ROF in AFPh. This puts the decision on the ATTACKING player to decide if they will use the MG’s or forgo them for another ROF shot in AFPh. Given a vehicle cannot place an Acquisition in B1F, waiting to shoot the MA in AFPh to place Acquisition is not a bad option. You may say “but I don’t want to give up my MGs. Now what?”

For that answer, we hop down to D3.5. First, it tells us a vehicle’s armaments are limited to one fire attack per player turn unless it’s the vehicle’s MA with a specific multi-ROF capability. It further states mandatory Fire Grouping applies. It then goes on to state a vehicle must fire all of its weapons/PRC from the same hex or forfeit their non-CC attack opportunities for that phase.. A vehicle may fire its weapons multiple times and in multiple Locations under two circumstances: if conducting multiple Overruns; a MA which maintains ROF.

The last relevant rule is in the exception at the very bottom of D3.51. It repeats the options for shooting from multiple hexes first noted in D3.5. Noticeably, it is even more succinct about an MA’s eligibility to fire from a different hex if it gets ROF.

This is a lot of complexity to break down so let’s look at some examples.

Examples

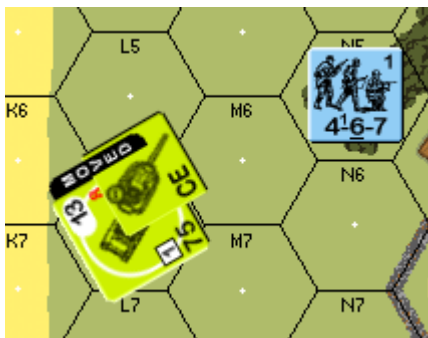


Figure 1

Ex 1: This M4 has moved to L6 and Stops, having spent 5 MP’s. It now wants to fire its weapons at the German Infantry. A standard M4 Sherman has 2/4/4 MGs under the turret counter. It elects to fire them all. The IFT shot is a 4+1 since the MG firepower is halved in B1F. After shooting the MG’s, the AFV is marked with a B1F counter. Recognizing he couldn’t fire the MA in AFPh, the American player decides to shoot the MA as well. A +4 TH DRM applies [+2 Case B, +2 Case C, +1 Case Q, -1 Case L]. Assume the American AFV

makes an Original TH DR of 1,4 giving a Final TH of a 9 which misses. The Sherman does have ROF even though it would be marked with a Bounding Fire Counter.

Ex 2: Refer again to Figure 1. In this example, the Sherman instead fires it's MA first. Again, it rolls an Original TH DR of 1,4. This is still a miss. This time, the American commander has some considerations to give before simply shooting the MG's. Is there a reason to wait and shoot the MA in AFPh, perhaps to gain Acquisition? If he opts to shoot the MA in AFPh he would forgo any opportunities with the MG's. He could elect to shoot the MG's as B1F, but he must do so from his current Location despite maintaining ROF on the MA. If he shoots the MG's, he may fire the MA again from this Location or any other reachable Locations as B1F during the MPh.

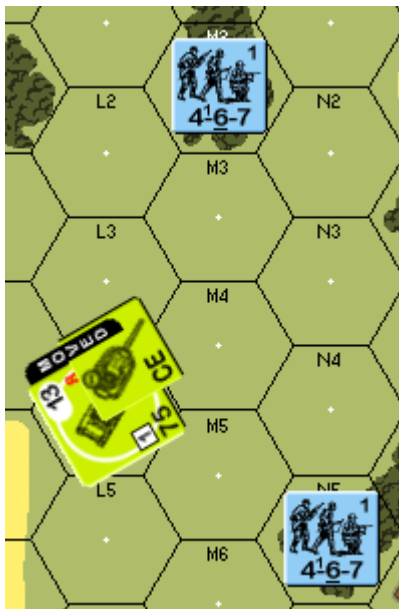


Figure 2

Ex 3: Note in example 1 the Sherman maintained ROF. The MG's cannot fire again since they limited to one attack per player turn (D3.5). The MA can fire again but it too, has limited options. Per D3.32, a vehicle which has fired only it's MA and maintained ROF may fire that MA only in AFPh. Since the MG's have fired, that is not an option. What could the Sherman do? Well, if it has remaining MP's, it may elect to delay 1 MP and shoot again at the N5 squad depicted in Ex 1. Since it may move to another Location and shoot the ROF weapon only, it could elect to move on and shoot from a second Location. Assume it elects to move on.

In L4, it fires the MA at the 4-6-7 in M2. This time the total DRMs are +5. An attack on the ITT would need an Original DR of ≤ 3 to hit. If the Sherman gets ROF on this shot, it



Ex 4: For this example, refer to Figure 1. For this, assume instead the Sherman did not get ROF on the MA. The Sherman does have one more trick up his sleeve should the American player be desperate enough: Intensive Fire (IF). Unlike ROF, IF is restricted to the original hex per Q&A. As such, the AFV could not move and elect to fire from L4 as it did in example 2. It may only IF from L5.



In order to shoot the MA from a second hex, it must shoot from the first hex and maintain ROF. Q&A further supports this. To properly do this, the Sherman would have to shoot the MA from M7—probably at the broken unit—and hoped to maintain ROF. If it did so, it could then move to M5 and attempt to shoot the Panther in the rear. The Sherman's Gun Duel DRM are halved. This is indicated by the white ROF background. It would win any potential Gun Duel with the Panther. For more information on Gun Duels, see my previous article "[Making Sense of Gun Duels.](#)"



Conclusion

One of the greatest strengths of vehicles is their ability to shoot and move. Clearly this is too complex a topic to cover all options in a short 3 pages. There is enough presented here to form a solid foundation for mobile warfare. From these short examples, I hope I conveyed the capabilities and limitations of AFV combat and how to properly execute B1F shots. Just keep in mind, this has been a discussion of the mechanics of B1F shots and not the tactics.

As always, I hope this article helps in some small way. If you have questions, corrections, or suggestions for another article, let me know in the comments below. Until next time. — jim