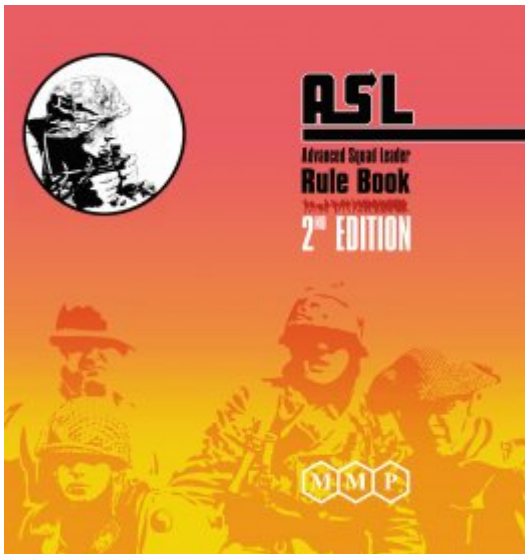

Half Squad Offensive Capabilities

Description



This article comes out of a game I played recently. It is an issue that has seriously plagued my game play for years. What exactly are a Half Squad's (HS) firing options? Since that game, I have dug into the rules and spoken with some friends to clear this up. I write this article to pass along what I learned and hopefully push this deep into my ASL subconscious. It is way past time I stopped struggling with this. This article is for me. Let's get started.

Rules Dive



I think my confusion originates with the rules. The applicable starting point is A7.352. That rule says *“A crew/HS/SMC that fires any SW/Gun loses its inherent FP until attacked/attacking in CC or the end of that Player Turn (whichever comes first) [EXC: 7.353].*

” For me, I see this and my mind says that if a HS fires a support weapon, it may not use its Inherent firepower again until Close Combat. Seems fairly straight forward but notice the exception at the end of that sentence.

A7.353 reads *“In both of the above cases, Subsequent First Fire (8.3), FPF (8.31), and Final Fire (8.4) vs adjacent units retain halved inherent FP for those attacks (regardless of how they were used during First Fire)—although use of full SW/Gun capability during such attacks can negate inherent FP in the normal manner. See the 8.41 EX.”* So the exception contradicts the rule. A HS possessing a MG can use its Inherent FP again as Subsequent First Fire subject to range restrictions, or as Final Fire against an adjacent target. Of course, a HS could opt to (and sometimes must) fire a possessed MG as Sustained Fire (A9.3) instead in those same situations.

Subsequent First Fire



Rule A8.3 covers Subsequent First Fire (SFF). Besides all the rules covering no closer target and MP/MFs spent, we have this passage: *“... Only Small Arms [EXC: MOL], MG, and IFE can be used as Subsequent First Fire...”* So a HS possessing an MG could opt to SFF that MG (as Sustained Fire). A HS possessing any other weapon can not use those SW as SFF/Final Fire.. Imagine a friendly HS in possession of an enemy radio. You would like to destroy the radio rather than risk possession transferring back to the original owner. If the HS fires in First Fire, it cannot use the Radio in SFF and may not destroy it.

This line of thought is further supported by the example accompanying rule A8.41. I urge you to look at that one to drive the point home.

Final Protective Fire



The last bit regards Final Protect Fire (FPF). Should an FPF situation arise, a HS is compelled to shoot any possessed (and usable) MG/IFE (A8.31). Should the MG be unusable for some reason, it cannot change Covered Arc because it fired earlier from a Woods/Building Location, the HS is instead compelled to use its Inherent FP.

Try to keep this in mind when being charged by a berserk unit or the target of a Human Wave/Banzai attack.

Last Observations

Heroes have the same fire opportunities as Crews/HS. Other SMC have no Inherent FP. In addition, other SMCs fire MGs as Area Fire, unlike a hero. SMC cannot Sustain Fire an MG (A9.3) so they cannot use an MG in a SFF/FPF/Final Fire situation.

Conclusion

Keep in mind the rules limit Crews in the same ways HS are. If your Crew shoots Inherent FP, both it and the possessed Gun\SW are marked with a First Fire counter. The Crew could then opt to fire a possessed Gun but it would be Intensive Fire. If the Gun is Overrun, it could attempt Overrun Prevention (C5.64) and would count as Intensive Fire. For more details on this, I urge you to check out Carl Noguiera's excellent article, *Crosstown Traffic*, in [ASL Journal 8](#).



For those reading this and thinking “this is what he writes about?!?!” I offer my apologies and beg for your indulgence. This article is for me (and perhaps the one other person out there who struggles with this rule). It is well past time this struggle ends. When learning, I find the act of writing something down helps to reinforce the lesson. This post is searing the lesson into my memory. I will return to The Basics of AFV Combat in ASL series in my next post. Thanks for your patience. – jim