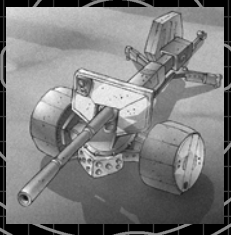
HEAVY GEAR®



Northern Vehicle Compendium 2 — Behind the Scenes

On the modern battlefield, it is vital to have tanks and artillery to support the advance of infantry and to batter down enemy fortifications. Despite the presence of Gears on Terra Nova, tanks and artillery still have their place. Some might argue that in four thousand years, there should not be a need for such obsolete pieces of equipment anymore; the current trends in military technology would seem to agree with them. We beg to differ nonetheless. Technological progression is not linear. The story of Terra Nova might be set in the far future, but anyone familiar with the background of Heavy Gear will quickly realize that Humanity has suffered several setbacks, both social and technological, and has not maintained the level of growth enjoyed by 20th century humans on Earth.

The greatest "problem" with Terra Nova is the initial balkanization of people and resources which followed the departure of Earth's corporations. This plunged the planet into a chaos from which it took time to emerge. By the time solid leagues and alliances were formed, the surviving Terranovans' weapons technology had been severely neglected and much had to be re-learned. Furthermore, there are about 250 million people on the planet, which is fewer individuals than there are currently in the USA. To make matters worse, Terranovans are not united under one flag, but rather fight with each other. Sadly, military research takes a great deal of money, something which a 50-million league like the Southern Republic can afford, but only to a certain extent. Smaller leagues (Western Frontier Protectorate, Humanist Alliance) cannot do it as easily.

So what happens? Low-tech solutions. Good old fashioned tanks and artillery pieces. They're not perfect, not by any stretch of the imagination, but they're all Terranovans have got. It is not because a story is set in the future that every combat vehicle is a hovertank with ultra-fast, powerful and accurate laser cannons. We'd like to think reality hinges on time-tested principles of physics and economics, not wishful thinking.

This is not to say that the vehicles within these pages are low-tech, quite the contrary. Between the Aller and M1A1 Abrams, we'll put our money on the first. Check it out.

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SWORDS OF FAITH

DREAM POD 9

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Produced and Published by

DREAM POD 9

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Dream Pod 9 can be reached through the internet. Check out our web site at www.dp9.com. We can also be reached through the newsgroups rec.games.mecha and alt.games.dp9. Your feedback is welcome.

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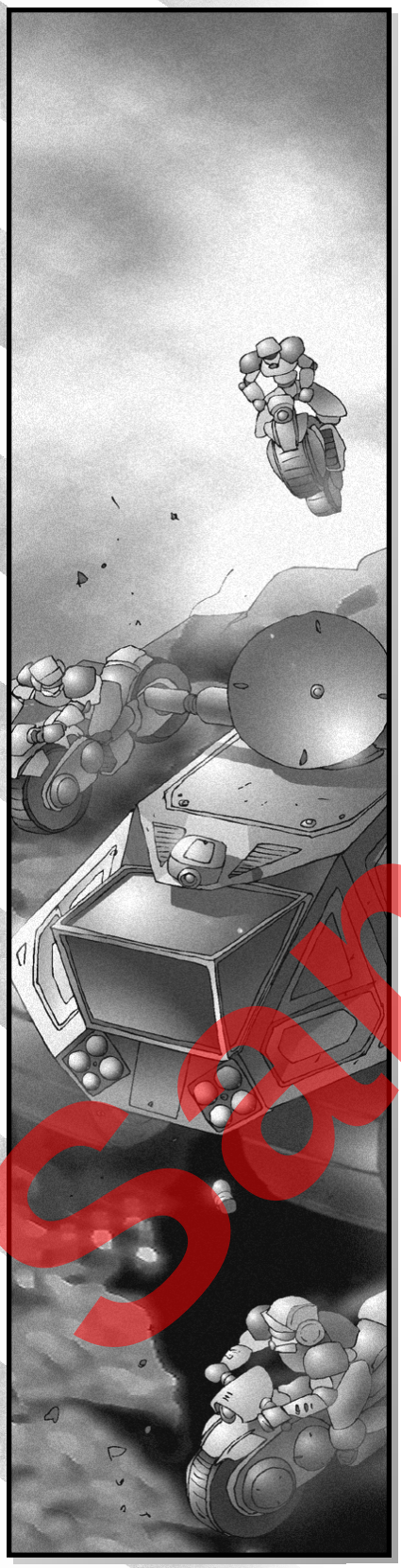
RABBITS IN THE HOLE



"Enemy units at two hundred meters!"

Colonel Selene Münschtradler, commander of the legendary Roving Guns, did not like surprises. She was sitting in the command chair of a Murdock command vehicle racing over the dunes of the Barrington Basin. From there, thanks to a massive array of computer-assisted communications and electronic equipment, she had a constant link with her regiment as it attacked a Southern MILICIA position. There should not be enemy units at two hundred meters. Certainly not with out her knowing.

"Get me an ID, Lieutenant Marsh!"

"Ma'am," snapped her systems operator as he aimed the Murdock's sensors. The desert winds were high and the Roving Guns were using the cover to attack. It made identifying the enemy difficult, however. "Small units, maybe infantry."

Münschtradler moved swiftly to sit beside the driver in the cabin and used the night vision scope to search the sands for her enemy. In a burst of speed she saw them, a small group of desert bikes — Jackrabbits it looked like — darting over the dunes.

"Go evasive!" Münschtradler grabbed the commands of the Murdock's top-mounted grenade launcher and began to lay down a pattern of fire. Unfortunately, the fast desert bikes easily darted through and drove toward them. Only the Colonel's cycles of experiences allowed her to not jump at the first muffled explosion. A hand grenade thrown by one of the Southern bikers, exploding on contact with the Murdock.

"No damage," reported the systems operator, "but we can't take too many more of those hits. If they nail the wheels, we're in real trouble."

"Keep dodging them, but get moving over the ridge to the north. Lieutenant, patch me through Red Squadron." As she barked orders, Münschtradler operated her grenade launcher, trying to get a solid lock on the nimble combat bikes. It took only a few seconds before the lieutenant signaled at her — she had the comm. She spoke swiftly into her headset. "Red Squadron, close on way point epsilon. We are under attack by motorcycle infantry."

The Colonel changed tactics and simply lay down cover fire, hoping to keep the Jackrabbits away from the Murdock. The grenade launcher spewed out more rounds, and she thought maybe one of the attackers took a hit. She couldn't be sure — the curtain of sand greatly hindered the visibility and it might just have veered off. A grenade blew a few meters to the left of the vehicle, immediately drawing her attention away. They were flanking the Murdock and matching its speed.

From the corner of her eye, she detected movement to her right, something jumping at her. It was one of the bikes, which had just bounced off a dune and was headed straight for her position in the Murdock's cockpit. Its front wheel crashed through the side window and impacted against her face, breaking half the bones and sending her straight into a coma. The bike bounced off the cabin, then span out of control before crashing into the sand.

The Murdock was nearing the peak of a hill when three Jaguars with red-painted heads leaped above the hilltop, guns blazing. "You're clear, Murdock. We'll handle it from here." Jeysers of sand sprang closer around the pursuers as the Gears' hits became more accurate. The remaining two Jackrabbits veered off and quickly vanished into the sandstorm.

Just then the on-board computer finally came back on line. "Way Epsilon Reached," it intoned — too little and too late.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Terra Nova Vehicle Compendium series aims at providing a set of quick reference manuals for students of military history on Terra Nova. This second volume of the Northern Vehicle Compendium contains all the basic tank and artillery vehicle chassis and variants which previously appeared in such publications as the now out-of-print Northern Field Guides and the highly popular Tactical Support series. The only models listed here are those that are common to several leagues, city-states or other paramilitary organizations. In some cases, only certain leagues still use a given model or variant, but they are all widely available throughout the hemisphere. Vehicles which were designed and used only by certain leagues will be examined at a later date in other manuals.

While meticulous care was taken to ensure that these volumes are accurate and up-to-date, the ever-changing nature of the vehicles and the secrecy of military-related designs makes this task Herculean at best. We ask the reader to keep in mind that much of the information within these pages was provided by the manufacturers themselves and reflects generic, minimally trained Gears. Depending on indivdual machines and maintenance records, field performance might differ from what is published here. Since the last edition, some specifications and statistics may have been modified to reflect newer, more accurate information. Our editors are hard at work revising these statistics on a constant basis, ensuring that you get nothing but the most accurate information available on these war machines.

The present volume, like its predecessors, covers some of the manufacturers which are involved in the design and production of combat vehicles. While these companies are listed in a book dedicated to tanks and artillery vehicles, we do not imply that they are limited to the production of the latter but rather that they have either specialized in that field or have greatly contributed to it. In this particular case, we focus on Noveren Materials, Brok Enterprises, Hartmore Motor Company and Riley Weapons Systems.

This book also covers a number of vehicles which are presented by category: personnel carriers, tanks, specialized vehicles, single infantry vehicles and artillery pieces. More specifically, we provide full specifications for the Badger and its variants (Rabid Badger, Badger Cavalry Fighting Vehicle and Medevac Badger), the Camel (and its Stinger variant), the Aller (plus the Verder, the Hardy Aller and the Naval Support Aller), the Klemm (including the Jaxon, the Tyburr, the Baxter, the Bandit Klemm and the Stormhammer), the Behemoth (and the Behemoth Ammo-Loader), the Murdock (and its variant, the Seeker), the Antelope (plus the Spotter Antelope), the Wallaby (with one of its variants, the Sneak Wallaby) and the generic Field Artillery gun.

We also include at the end of the book a series of technical data sheets that can be used during tactical play. The chassis presented within are accompanied by several of the more popular variants. Each vehicle is fully detailed both in terms of background and game statistics. Lastly, we provide a clear and concise recognition chart for all vehicles within these pages. It contains carefully detailed illustrations to scale which are regularly used by foot soldiers and various combatants to identify the enemy they are fighting at a glance and to determine what his weaknesses are.

1.1.1 CHASSIS AND VARIANTS

For the reader's convenience, the vehicles in this book have been divided into two general categories: chassis and variants. For the purposes of the game and its background, there is no practical difference between the two. The division has been made purely to maximize the page content of this book and to indicate the origins of each vehicle. Both categories feature vehicles that are in full-fledged production (unless specified otherwise) or have been permanently modified into their current configuration.

A chassis is the basic production model of a certain vehicle type, often the first one of a series of derivative designs. The Aller Main Battle Tank is a prime example of this. Chassis are often mass produced and easily recognizable in shape and function; they also form the core of the armies. Because chassis are so common, three full pages have been dedicated to each one, alonw with a listing of their full gaming statistics. Variants based on a particular chassis will use this set of game statistics as a base for their own, through a set of modifications. The full explanation of the various sub-sections of the chassis section can be found in the Northern Vehicle Compendium 1.

Variants are vehicles derived from a basic chassis. In general,variants involve small modifications to the mass-produced chassis to answer a specific need. They can differ in terms of operational role, performance, equipment or weapon payload, but they tend to share the same basic structure as the design on which they are based. Variants can either originate from the factory or the field — unless specified otherwise, no distinction is made within this book. To save on space, the statistics of each variant are given only as modificationsto the statistics of the original chassis. For instance, the Naval Support Aller's statistics are given as modifications to the game statistics of the Aller. The Threat Values supplied have been calculated after the modifications were applied to the basic game statistics.

Unlike Gears, tanks and most artillery vehicles do not follow a strict identification code. The tradition for the Gears is exceptionally restrictive in comparison to other ground vehicles, often due to more modern code attribution procedures that were not in place when tanks and armored personnel carriers were first developed on Terra Nova. In general, Gears receive their identification code from the group which commissioned its design whereas tanks, APCs, all-terrain vehicles and bikes receive their ID code from the engineers and designers which worked on them. As a result, the codes for the vehicles within this book are the result of internal choices rather than a coherent identification system.

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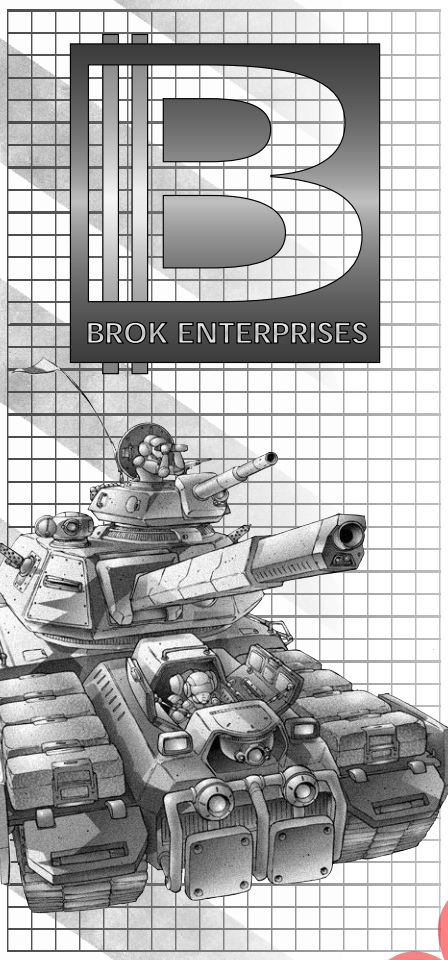
1.2 BROK ENTERPRISES



47 cycles ago, at the age of 32, Emil Brok decided that he'd had enough of working in a factory; he wanted to be his own boss. Using everything he owned as collateral along with a great deal of luck, Emil convinced his bank to finance a large loan for the purchase of Killian Enterprises, the company Emil had worked for since he was 18. The majority stockholder, at the time was Darlene Killian, who had inherited her husband's company a cycle earlier when he had passed away. Uninterested in running the company herself (something Brok had inadvertently discovered), she was quite content to sell it to Emil for what some experts described as a pittance.

Over the following cycles, Emil Brok has taken few risks with the company. Recently, however, as his children, Jon and Fala begin to shoulder larger roles in the management of the company, Brok Enterprises has taken a few contracts that have catapulted the company to a position as one of the most important companies in the North.

One of Brok Enterprises' more lucrative ventures was the production of several key components of the Aller Main Battle Tank. In TN 1912, when BattleCorp's contract for the complete production of the Aller ended, Emil's daughter, Fala, convinced her father to bid for the contract. Brok Enterprises' reputation for reliable, good quality workmanship won them the contract to manufactuer the tank powerhouse over Norlight Industries, to the surprise of everyone, Emil included. As well, a few cycles ago, when Northco chose to subcontracted the components of the Bricklayer, Fala again convinced her father to bid on the production of some of the Bricklayer's components. Once more, Brok Enterprises was awarded the contract, this time for the production of the Bricklayer's crane assembly.

Until that point, Emil had thought that he would pass Brok Enterprises down to his older son Jon, but Fala's initiative and sound business sense have made him realize that his daughter could also run the company. Since then, Emil has begun grooming both of his children to one day take over the reins of the company, which has led to a great deal of speculation and concern. Fala is without question the more ambitious of the two, while Jon, on the other hand, is as conservative as his father. Jon feels that the company should proceed in the tried and true path that it has forged over the past half century. He openly criticizes his younger sister as a gambling fool who will drag the company down if she ever gets her way. This debate has raised a fair amount of concern among the employees as they see an uncertain future. It would cause more concern to learn that Emil plans on giving each of his children 50% of his controlling share upon his retirement.

Manufacturer Description

Legal Appellation:	Brok Enterprises Inc.
Headquarters:	The Brok Plant, Livingstone, Northern Lights Confederacy
Directing Executive:	CEO Emil Brok
Major Products:	Aller Main Battle Tank, heavy machinery and robotic tools

1.2.1 ORGANIZATION

Brok Enterprises is quickly becoming a major contender in the North. When it was awarded the contract for the Aller, Emil began a branch company, Brok Motors, whose sole purpose is the construction of the Aller. This new status as a conglomeration could expand as Fala continues to encourage her father to research the potential of producing their own construction Gear that could replace the Bricklayer as the standard engineering Gear of the North. Regardless of Brok Enterprises' size and status, Emil continues to be a blue collar boss. He is often found on the factory floor talking and joking with the staff, resulting in his staff being well taken care of, highly paid and given full benefits packages.

Jon and Fala, Emil's children, take a very active role in the management of the company. Jon Brok, who expected for a long time to inherit the company upon his father's retirement, has very bitter feelings towards his sister. He feels she should leave the business to the men. This has prompted the angry Fala to take an ever-increasing part in the company's development.

1.2.2 AREA OF EXPERTISE

Brok Enterprises produces a wide range of heavy machinery and tools used in numerous applications, mostly civilian in nature. They do, however produce the largest and most prominent tanks used by the armies of the North, the Aller. For a few cycles, the production lines had to adjust to the increased demands required of them to properly develop and manufacture the huge tank, causing a noticeable reduction in the construction of Brok's mainstay of products. Presently, Brok's only Gear-based product is the crane assembly for the Bricklayer construction Gear, but there are rumors that Fala has already begun the design process for a competitor to the Bricklayer, a Gear believed to be more efficient and cost effective. There have also been discussions within Brok Enterprises of getting further involved in the automotive business, but Emil Brok himself has dubious feelings about what he considers an already overcrowded market. His competitors and other personalities in the industry are anxiously waiting to see what happens when he retires. Many experts feel that Brok Enterprises' incredible luck might end with Emil's retirement. Several others believe that its string of luck will end only if Jon inherits the company, arguing that only Fala can continue to make the company prosperous.

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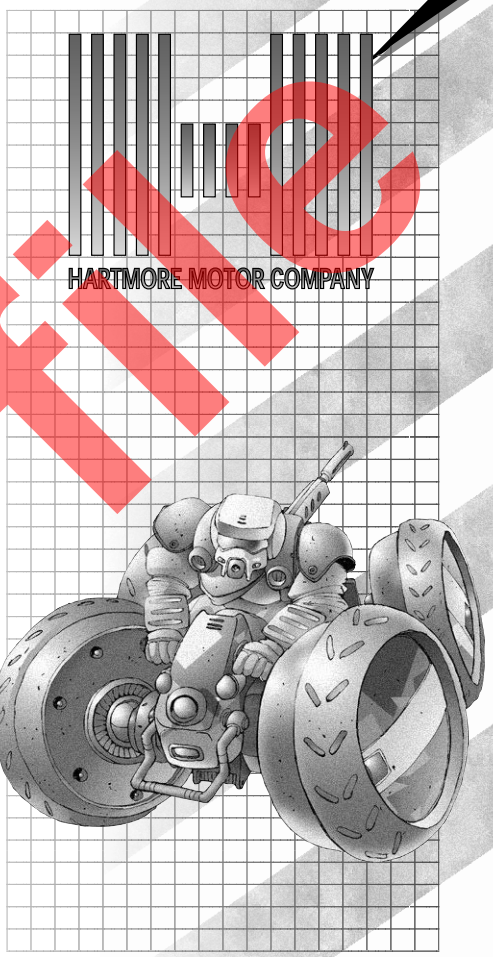
1.3 HARTMORE MOTOR COMPANY

Hartmore Motor Co. of Kenema is one of the largest producers of commercial vehicles and engines on Terra Nova. Founded in TN 1779 by Filson J. Hartmore III, HMC produced a variety of engines for use in heavy industry, including several of the more powerful V-engines of the time. HMC also produced the rugged Wolf all-terrain vehicle, a popular truck used by many explorers and, for a time, the Northern military. As demand for the vehicles increased, HMC's production lines (and their demand for their own heavy engines) grew to accommodate them. Hartmore made a series of risky investments during the early 1800's, the payoffs of which allowed him to expand both production lines, not to mention market newer and different vehicles, including the RockProwler and Monty off-road vehicles and the King Tortoise heavy transport vehicle. In TN 1820, he consolidated his engine and vehicle lines into a massive complex located in the southernmost section Kenema.

In TN 1836 HMC entered a design competition, the prize of which was an exclusive production contract for the Walker Armored Combat System. More than thirty designs were entered, including HMC's Mammoth prototype. A disastrous ammo explosion in the grueling endurance trials crippled the prototype, but the Mammoth team managed to restore their salvaged machine and triumphed in the end. Filson J. Hartmore III died only days after hearing the news, reportedly content with his company's future. The new strider had just completed its first mass-production run in time to see action in the War of the Alliance. During this time, HMC also leased its production facilities out to other companies to allow for the increased wartime demand for military vehicles, parts, and equipment. In TN 1901, Hartmore founded the Kenema Polytechnic Institute, which remains the largest college of its kind in operation today.

HMC engines are known for their ruggedness and ease of repair, and are widely used by companies across the hemisphere. Many of the largest heavy-duty vehicles today, including Northco's Behemoth Gear transport and Brok Motor's Aller main battle tank, use HMC-made gas turbines.

HMC has also taken care to maintain its Mammoth line and is currently bidding to produce a close-fire-support model of the Thunderhammer Strider. Hartmore Motor Co.'s only current worry is growing civil concern about its proving grounds north of Kenema. While the noise of cannon fire is well muted by distance and barriers, the company must still transport its machines through the city streets, and the tread of Mammoth, Damocles, and Thunderhammer feet is not at all music to Keneman ears.



Manufacturer Description

Legal Appellation:	Hartmore Motor
Company Headquarters:	HMC Design & Assembly Center, Kenema, Northern Lights Confederacy
Directing Executive:	Executive Director Maximilian Hartmore
Major Products:	Striders, Off-Road Vehicles Heavy-Duty V-Engines and Gasoline Turbines

1.3.1 ORGANIZATION

Hartmore Motor Company is organized according to its three main production lines. Each Production Line is governed by a series of Foremen, with the Head Foreman of each line reporting to the HMC Board of Directors and its head, Director Hartmore. Heavy Line Number One is used for military products, namely HMC's Mammoth strider. At full wartime production, Number One was producing about 250 striders per cycle: two-thirds were standard Mammoths and the remaining were Assault variants. Heavy Line Number Two manufactures HMC's industrial engines anywhere from 200 to over 1,000 per cycle. Heavy Line Number Three produces HMC's six different commercial vehicles, and their associated spare parts. Executive Director Maximilian Hartmore, at 99 cycles, is feeling his advanced age, and popular belief is that he will soon step down in favor of Heavy Line Number Two's Head Foreman, his eldest son Avery.

1.3.2. AREA OF EXPERTISE

Hartmore Motor Company's flagship may be its Mammoth production line, but in truth its other two divisions make up the bulk of the company's income. The Mammoth, however, has given Hartmore Motor Company a high profile and has allowed it to gain a good reputation with the Northern Guard high command. Executives in the company want to put this reputation to good use and have repeatedly tried to convince Maximilian Hartmore that the company should seek further military contracts. So far, however, the Executive Director has been reluctant, stating that getting further involved with the construction of military weapons might reflect poorly on HMC image and reputation.

Heavy Line Number Two produces in excess of one thousand engines per year, mostly for commercial use, ranging in size from small ethanol-driven lawnmower engines to the mammoth gas turbines for large vehicles and factory lines.Heavy Line Number Three, which produces HMC's popular off-road vehicles, consistently pulls in the highest profits of every quarter, with Line Number Two close behind. Annette Kale, Head Foreman of Heavy Line Number One, is reportedly resentful of the other two Lines' success and seeks to improve her revenues, namely by recruiting Gear and tank engineers. The scuttlebutt from "around the Line" says that she will have some kind of new hybrid on the proving grounds soon.

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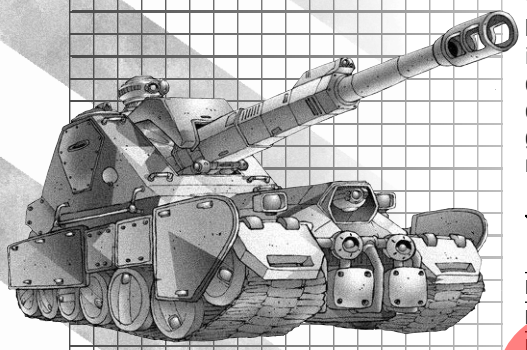
1.4 NOVEREN MATERIALS



In TN 1826, Noveren Ventures founded its subsidiary, Noveren Materials, after the purchase of several small but successful corporations. By combining the engineering pools of these various corporations, Noveren was able to delve into the world of synthetic alloys and metallurgy, ultimately culminating in the invention of durasteel, which would become the durasheet armor that protects most modern Gears. With heavy industry across Terra Nova on the rise, Noveren Ventures was only too eager to offer the services of its subsidiary to any or all who could pay. Within twenty cycles, Noveren Materials was providing composite materials and alloys to over thirty Northern corporations, including the industrial giant Northco. As Noveren Materials grew, Noveren Ventures found itself fielding less and less business for its other subsidiaries, including its weapons-production wing, Northern Arms, until it ultimately decided to close this and two other subsidiaries down for good. Mechanical engineers under Noveren Arms were soon replaced by chemical engineers working for Noveren Materials.

In TN 1674, Northco-owned Elementech approached Noveren Materials for an alloy for its durable Hunter frame, which Noveren was only too happy to provide. Noveren Materials now provides an even dozen different composite materials and alloys for almost every aspect of Gear production. The War of the Alliance proved to be a boon to Noveren as well, providing it with an opportunity to supply an untapped Southern clientele. Even though it was then considered "unpatriotic" to do so, Noveren accepted lucrative contracts from several Mekong-based companies over Northern ones during the reconstruction period immediately following the War. While the arrangements were temporary, they nonetheless gave the South a taste of Noveren's efficiency and quality. Currently, Noveren only accepts a few non-military contracts from Southern companies. Non-military or not, the engineers working on these contracts are kept under close scrutiny by Norlight Intelligence, and the Northern government is actively discouraging any business contact with the South.

Noveren Ventures CEO Horst Kleidenheim scoffs at recent allegations of espionage and "disloyalty to Norlight interests," insisting his company is "only doing good business and to hell with government bureaucrats who say otherwise." Noveren Materials Director Joskun Briggs has been assured of the continued support of his superiors. Briggs continually refers to Noveren Materials' contribution to environmental safety in his rebuffs of the government's allegations. The Noveren Materials Center at Livingstone boasts pollution-free runoff, and is currently the subject of several environmental studies.

Manufacturer Description

Legal Appellation:	Noveren Materials, a Subsidiary of Noveren Ventures, Unlimited.
Headquarters:	Noveren Materials Center, Livingstone, Northern Lights Confederacy
Directing Executive:	Enterprise Director Joskun Briggs
Major Products:	Industrial-Grade Alloys and Composite Materials

1.4.1 ORGANIZATION

The Noveren Materials Center in Livingstone houses not only the company's administrative offices, but also its extensive research and development labs. In TN 1899, the structure was nearly gutted by an explosion from within. A lengthy investigation immediately ensued, but the cause of the explosion never surfaced. Miraculously, the main computer core had been removed only days before for an overhaul, and, as a result, many cycles worth of research survived. The building has since been rebuilt and security there is at a constant state of alert. The NMC tower is surrounded by several outbuildings containing facilities for synthesizing alloys and materials to order. In terms of corporate hierarchy, Noveren Materials is almost a separate company in itself. The company's structure is based on seniority, although it is possible through outstanding achievement to ascend the ranks rather quickly. Director Briggs himself is not a former chemist, as is most of the Executive Board, but instead a former Accounts Supervisor.

1.4.2. AREA OF EXPERTISE

The Noveren Materials Center houses one of the most comprehensive and complex metallurgical/chemical labs on Terra Nova. Research on advanced composites and new alloys takes place almost around the clock, with teams of engineers working late into the night only to be replaced by fresh men and women in the morning. It was this incredible drive that led to the conversion of durasteel to durasheet armor inside of a single season. The company executives pride themselves on not only having a very dynamic and stimulating working environment, but also on providing reknowned specialists with top research equipment in their respective fields of expertise. As a whole, Noveren specializes in the research and manufacturing of new materials, either for civilian or military use. Noveren also continues the development of the composite alloy Argyderium, which the company projects will succeed durasheet armor within a decade. Noveren Materials laboratories also pioneered their own environmental cleanup procedures, which resulted in the manufacturing plant's ninety-nine percent pollution-free runoff. The engineers at Noveren are also rumored to be on the verge of perfecting some form of supple metal, presumably called "metal rubber," which could be used to manufacture more resistant tires for armored personnel carriers and most other military vehicles.

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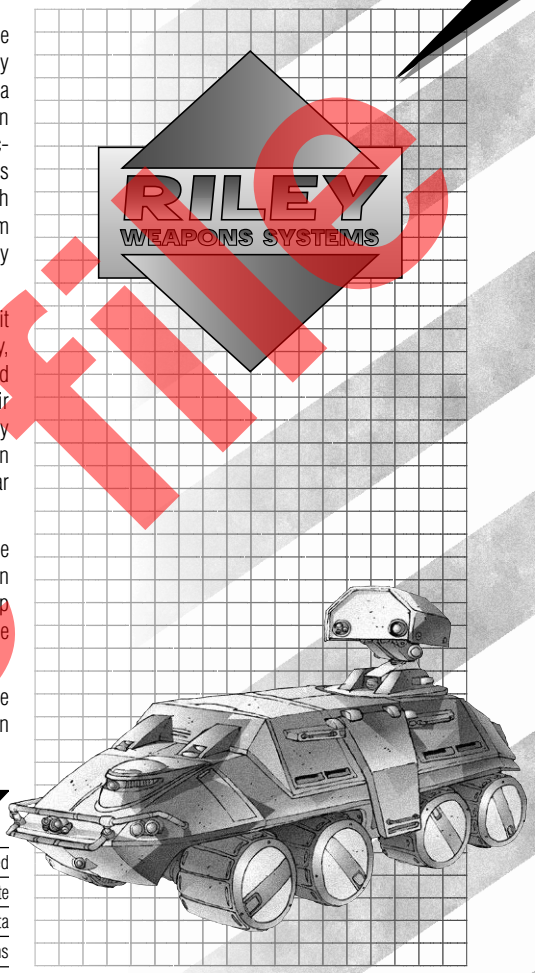
1.5 RILEY WEAPONS SYSTEMS

Riley Weapons Systems of Fort William was founded in TN 1763 by Riley Haakon. Riley himself had experience in the area of weapons production, having been an upper-level technician for Northco for over thirty cycles. Riley had been engaging in independent contracting for several cycles, which Northco did not approve of, and as a result he and several others were suspended without pay. The men decided to use their expertise for their own profit and left the company altogether. They then pooled their capital together and bought out a small manufacturing plant at the edge of Fort William's corporate area. Later that same cycle, Riley Weapons Systems was producing rugged, reliable autocannons. Amazingly enough, Northco was one of Riley's first clients, although some say the whole thing was a scam created by Northco executives to give the engineers the creative freedom they needed, and the Riley Weapons Systems was, in fact, just another of Northco's subsidiary. To this day, Riley Weapons Systems fights against this stigma.

As the arming of Terra Nova's two hemispheres began to escalate, Riley found itself with more business than it knew what to do with . Several other companies, including Shaian Mechanics and Hartmore Motor Company, were using Riley-made weapons for their vehicle designs, and company revenues soared. Riley soon branched into other types of weapons, refining a series of mortar designs brought with them from the design tables of their former employers. By the time the powerful Grizzly lumbered off the assembly lines at Northco's Rapid City facility, it carried with it a powerful and accurate Riley-made guided mortar. Riley's production lines, already in full swing when CEF forces invaded Terra Nova, increased their output tenfold, producing not only vehicular weapons, but also a series of automatic rifles and heavy anti-armor weapons for infantry.

Near the end of the War, several of Riley's experimental weapons systems made it into the field, including the now widely-used M25 "Pack Gun" and the devastating M88-5RA1 Ram Accelerator Cannon. The huge cannon used exploding in-barrel gases to propel massive solid projectiles, with three times the force of a landship railgun. Only five of the awesome weapons were ever produced, and the remaining one currently adorns the main gate to Riley's facilities in Fort William.

CEO Cameron Jacosta is also in the process of re-negotiating her company's service contract with Northco. The current agreement favors the industrial mammoth too much and does not providing enough for fluctuations in the common market.



Manufacturer Description

Legal Appellation:	Riley Weapons Systems, Incorporated
Headquarters:	RWS Assemblies and Proving Grounds, Fort William, Western Frontier Protectorate
Directing Executive:	Cameron Jacosta
Major Products:	Military Weaponry, Ammunition (Various types), Targeting/Tracking Systems

1.5.1 ORGANIZATION

All of Riley Weapons Systems' facilities are contained within a single fortified site located at the edge of the Fort William industrial zone. Administration, design and production divisions are housed in large concrete structures which also serve as buffers for the sound and shock waves generated on the testing grounds. The weapons proving grounds are at center of the compound and contain sufficient facilities for the testing of even the most powerful of conventional weapons (Riley does not deal in nuclear devices). The engineers have the luxury of seeing their designs in operation, resulting in innovations on the testing grounds.

Riley's system of advancement is based upon the ability and merit of the individual. The company's policy of providing necessary training for advancement has produced a talented corps of technicians and engineers, and is perhaps the reason for its current success. The system also instills intense company loyalty; attempts by competitors to buy out the contracts of Riley employees tend not to succeed.

1.5.2. AREA OF EXPERTISE

Riley Weapons Systems produces many of the weapons in use by the Northern Guard today, including the popular B-300 medium-class bazooka, the GM-60L mortar and the M-25 Pack Gun. The praises of these weapons have been sung by technicians and soldiers alike, making the Riley Weapons label synonymous with ruggedness and reliability, not to mention ease of repair and maintenance. Riley also produces ammunition for all these weapons, including a variety of special-ordinance rounds for field guns and rocket launchers. Much of the ammunition is not contained on the main compound, but instead shipped to secure military depots, or otherwise directly to the distributor or client company (Northco receives an estimated 2,000 tonnes per season). Of late, Riley has been producing a series of guidance system upgrades for its anti-aircraft and heavy anti-landship missiles in conjunction with Hyperion Werks, although the bulk of the research is being done at the Riley Weapons facility in Fort William. There are rumors within and without the walls of Riley weapon systems that the company might soon invest in satellite and communication technologies. This is corroborated by the large (and unusual) quantity of electronic components which the company has purchased from its regular suppliers, but CEO Cameron Jacosta remains silent about the whole matter.

Sample file

REMEMBER WHEN

In the decades that followed, Ron Sanchez never had any trouble answering the inevitable question. "Where were you," someone would ask, "when Hutchison died?"

For most Norlights — and many other Terranovans — that first day of Autumn in 1935, when Second Follower Thor Hutchison was assassinated, was a signpost in their lives. They remember the trideo show they were watching or the cawfee they were drinking when they heard the news.

Sanchez was a captain in the Norlight Armed Forces then and in command of a squadron of Aller Main Battle Tanks. They had been deployed in the Karaq Wastes to reinforce Norlight forces around the city-state of Massada. As always, the desert was hot and dusty, and Sanchez was less than thrilled to be going into another stand-off with the enemy. A convoy of MILICIA light armor — Huns and other light tanks for the most part — was moving through a dried river bed to the northwest and Sanchez was just supposed to observe.

His whole squadron was just over the lip of a ridge, in what tankers called "hull down" position. Only the turrets of the tanks, each bearing a massive THOR railgun and other arms, peaked out of cover — and even they were covered with thermal camouflage tarps. This type of situation was hard on morale; they had the snakes cold, but they couldn't do anything about it except report to base on a regular basis. This particular column of tanks was moving to support a sizable MILICIA task force threatening Massada, the holiest city in the Revisionist faith, and all they could do was watch. Politicians in Valeria were still deluding themselves with hopes for diplomacy and economic sanctions. They were making "official protests" and "strongly worded statements" while the MILICIA got ready for war. It was stupid and it was going to get some good Northern troops killed, he knew.

Sanchez kept his eyes on his command console, using sensors to keep track of both the enemy and his own forces. He didn't want anyone to act out of turn. Still more Southern cavalry units crept into view.

"Merrick," he said to the gunner sitting below him, "get a bead on that strider." The main gun swiveled slightly in response, targeting the Long Fang Naga artillery strider that had just come into view. With its twin field guns, both capable of indirect fire, the "chicken walker" was the worst long range threat so far.

A flashing light on the command console caught Sanchez' eye. A satellite communication from brigade command. He thought it might finally be an okay to engage and tapped the display.

"Be advised of death by assassination of Rev. T. Hutchison in Sorrento," it read in shinning green letters. "All units to report in to brigade command post for defensive redeployment orders—"

Sanchez stopped reading then, overcome with a wave of emotion. That was it. The bloody snakes were moving in on Massada and they had killed the Second Follower. Was nothing sacred to them? Were they even human? And the politicians were calling for a "defensive redeployment." What the Prophet was that? Were they just going to sit there and take this?

"Permission to fire," he whispered.

When Merrick didn't respond, he spoke louder and opened his general communication channel. "All units open fire. Take them out, ladies."

Sanchez would always remember the sight of the Naga being ripped asunder by the shockwave of a round from the THOR cannon. He could almost feel the shock among the Southerners.

Sanchez would always remember when he drew first blood.

sample file

2.1 BACKGROUND

During the last ten centuries, tanks and artillery vehicles have almost invariably dominated the battlefield, and only during the last 150 cycles have they been challenged by the more modern and versatile Gears. In the North, after the formation of the Norlight Confederacy in TN 1525, the Norlight government formed the first of the northern leagues' armed forces and gathered — through force or by simply purchasing them — as many of the abandoned Earth combat vehicles as they could until it could manufacture its own. It was not before TN 1529 that the newly formed league began producing the NBT-04 Athenian, a home-grown design that would spawn dozens of variants and derivative models over the following century. In TN 1558, its design was still valid and made it a good force on the battlefield, but the Norlight Armed Forces had begun replacing it with the VK-77 Spartan, a faster and better-armed model. It was not before TN 1641 that the Athenian was officially retired and put into museums or recycled for spare parts.

The Spartan lasted until the late 1600s, when the introduction of new ceramics yielded improved and lighter armor materials. In TN 1687, the Western Frontier Protectorate introduced a new tank on the battlefield, the CFT-05a Charon, equipped with twin field guns, linked snub cannons and anti-infantry machineguns, and capable of excellent speeds. The Charon was the WFP's answer to the United Mercantile Federation's new battlefield invention, the Hunter Gear. While the new tank fared adequately against this new and more mobile opponent, it also convinced the WFP government that it too needed its own Gears. The Charon survived twenty cycles on the battlefield, then was retired.

In the 18th century, with Gears as opponents, the older, less mobile tanks or artillery pieces were becoming quickly obsolete. A great deal of resources were invested into Gears, making their technology and inherent flexibility more appealing than tanks. Most of the time, Gears were cheaper, more versatile and faster than artillery vehicles, and their sheer size and appearance had a daunting effect on enemy morale which tanks did not have. Adding insult to injury, more than half the Northern cavalry regiments suffered heavy casualties during the St. Vincent's War while Gear units fared much better. For the next fifty cycles, due to a lack of political will more than from deficient technology, tanks fell out of fashion.

It was not until 1775, with the introduction of the AS-22 Morten by the WFP that the Gears' supremacy on the battlefield was challenged. The Morten, also dubbed "Gear Hunter," had been specifically designed to hunt down Gears and protect other vehicles against them. Armed with light anti-aircraft cannons and light autocannons, they established a defense perimeter around friendly tanks which Gears found hard to penetrate. This brought an about-face in the government and re-established the tanks as a necessary weapon on the battlefield. The Morten was so successful that it remained in service until the mid-1800s, when it was finally retired. It remains to this date one of the most successful tanks and a landmark in military history.

About the Author

This new addition to the *Fort William Military Review Vehicle Guide* aims at providing readers with accurate information on the tanks and artillery vehicles currently by the Northern Guard. Citizens should be advised that this material was carefully tested and edited, and the greatest care was taken in obtaining precise information. While it would have been easier to vaunt only the merits of all vehicles, the author and editors of this book felt it was vital to take a honest look at the flaws as well, if only to ensure that future generations have access to an unbiased recording.

Writer Gaül Estebàn (see picture at right), son of War of the Alliance hero Major Gaül Maria, spent five cycles in the cavalry corps of the Western Frontier Protectorate Army and participated in several minor conflicts in the Badlands. Now a full-fledged citizen and a self-described tank-lover, he has dedicated much of his life to writing military history novels or hard-core military science fiction. His exclusive publisher, Antioch Publishing, was kind enough to allow Mr. Gaül to write this book while on their retinue. We wish to express our gratitude to Antioch for their contribution to this work.

Gaül Estebàn's experience as a tank pilot has inspired much of his writing, and proved an invaluable asset. He worked on the present volume for two full cycles before being satisfied with the results. He dutifully maintained his survey of the industry even after delivering the manuscript, as a preventive measure for sudden specs modifications. Thanks to his vigilance, recent changes in vehicle technology, availability and performance were incorporated mere weeks before the publication of this book.

Not pictured at right are several contributors whose efforts should be mentioned: veteran illustrators Bilo Naurman and Berban Slaine, and talented newcomer Valet Manuel-Karl; designers Valet Peter and Fertan Jan Francys, whose talent gave this book its graphic quality; editors and consultants Veyman Marcus, Carteran Jon and Boyle Phyllip.

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2.2 TTM-8/20 BADGER APC

The Badger is typical of the Armored Personnel Carriers used by the armies of the Confederated Northern City-States. It was first introduced in the CNCS in TN 1799 as a replacement to the Mongoose line, which had become too obsolete on the battlefield to be reliable. Its sturdy eight-wheeled design can transport up to twenty fully equipped troopers to battle through almost any terrain. The Badger is powered by four axial electric engines connected to banks of superconducting batteries. A front-mounted ceramic IC engine constantly recharges them and can also be used for extra power. This gives the Badger greater autonomy, allowing it to travel through the Badlands desert without having to worry about being jammed in the sand or having no heated shelter during the night. The driver and passenger sections have been specially reinforced to withstand greater damage and to protect its crew. This has had a positive impact on morale, and soldiers who have to spend any amount of time in Badgers are grateful for the extra protection.

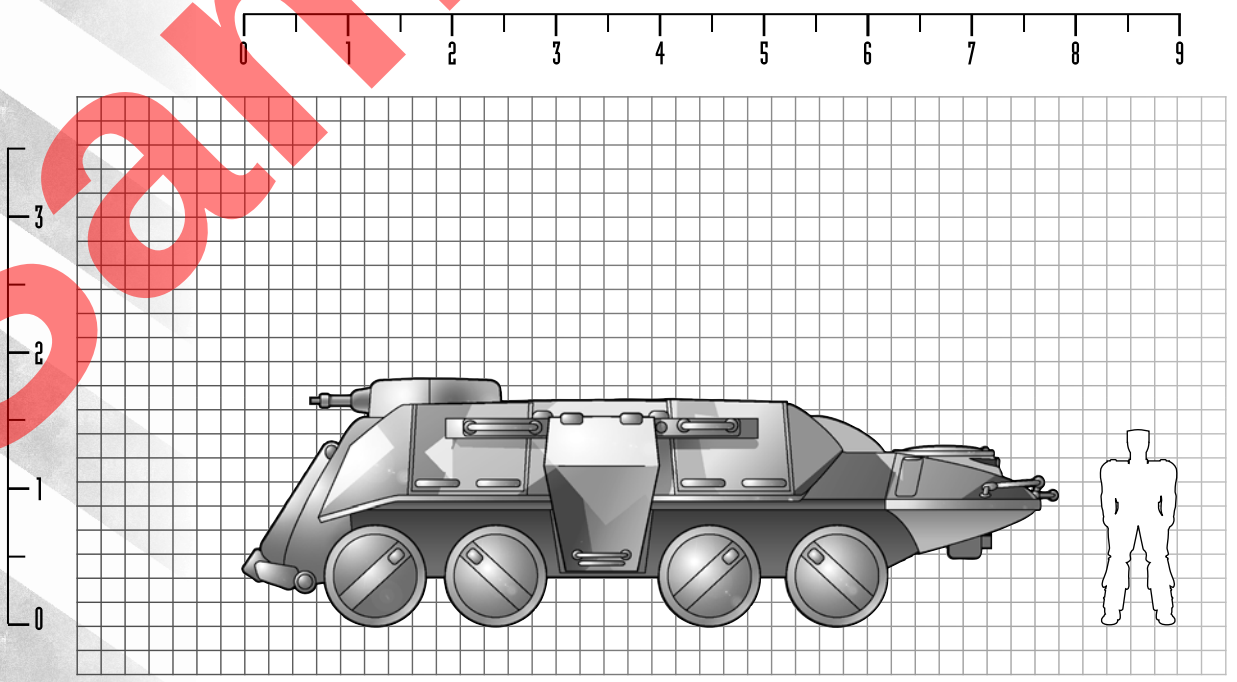
The Badger is crewed by two men: one driver, and one gunner for the turred-mounted M56 autocannons. The initial problems with the suspension were resolved in the 1820s and the Badger's design was left alone since then. Its speed, good armor and reliable armament have made it a staple of all northern infantry regiments. One of the Badger's only flaws is its vulnerable fire control system, which is part of the autocannon turret. Due to weight considerations, it could not be armored sufficiently to protect it against damage. Still, since the Badger is not meant to enter heavy combat, this was deemed a minor flaw and ignored by the engineers. The Badger has survived almost a century of use with only a few modifications, and its efficiency and affordability is unmatched by other APCs. At little over 80,000 marks, the Badger is the most reliable personnel carrier in the North. Over the long decades of use, several variants have been designed, the most successful of which were the Mark III "Pintle," featuring four pintle-mounted 7 mm assault rifles, and the Mark IV "Stealth," coated with radar-absorbing paint and equipped with a low-end ECM pod.

Vehicle Specifications

Code Name:	Badger APC	Production Code:	TTM-8/20
Production Type:	Mass Production	Cost:	80,250 marks
Manufacturer:	Shaian Mechanics	Use:	Wheeled Infantry Vehicle
Height:	2.37 meters	Length:	7.82 meters
Average Armor Thickness:	28 mm	Armor Material:	Ceramic Alloy
Standard Operational Weight:	12,627 kg	Primary Movement Mode:	Ground
Secondary Movement Mode:	N/A	Deployment Range:	560 km
Sensor Range:	2 km	Communication Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	Electric (x4) w/gas turbine	Horsepower:	300 hp (x4) + 150 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
M56 Autocannon (x2)	60



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SERVICE RECORD

Before the Badger entered service in TN 1799, the armored personnel carrier of choice had been the Mongoose. It could only carry ten infantry instead of twenty, but it was equipped with better sensors to avoid detection and could achieve greater speeds than any APC at the time (the Raccoon's record was clocked at 107 kph). When it fell out of grace in the latter half of the 18th century, mostly because the company that had created it in no longer existed and product support had become non-existent, Northern high command turned to the Badger for a replacement. Not only was the design slick, but it performed great services to the infantry regiments which used it, capable of transporting twice as many soldiers as the Mongoose. This proved invaluable during the pre-War North-South tensions, when continuous troop movements required the use of fast and capacious carriers. The Badger's great capabilities were further put to the test during the War of the Alliance, when the unpredictability of CEF troops deployment required a vehicle that would handle short response time and immediate counter-deployment. In the early days of the War, a good number of Badgers fell prey to the superior fighting skills of the GREL soldiers, but once the effect of surprise had passed, they handled them with great efficiency.

General Stats

Threat Value:	214
Offensive:	406
Defensive:	69
Miscellaneous:	169
Size:	8
Original Default Size:	6
Individual Lemon Dice:	3
Crew:	2
Bonus Actions:	1

Movement

Primary Movement Mode:	Ground
Combat Speed:	10
Top Speed:	20
Secondary Movement Mode:	N/A
Combat Speed:	-
Top Speed:	-
Maneuver:	-3

Electronics

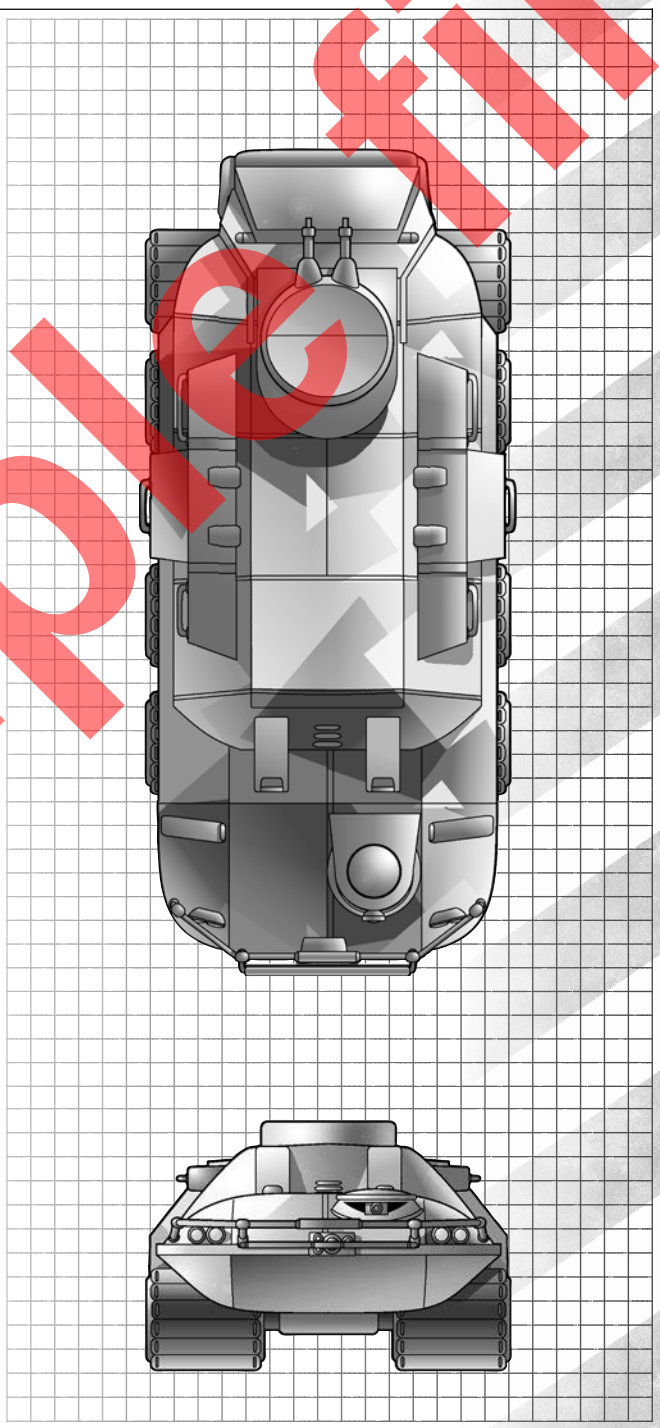
Sensors:	0
Communications:	0
Fire Control:	0

Armor

Light Damage:	12
Heavy Damage:	24
Overkill:	36

Vehicle Availability

Availability Threshold:	2
Maximum Number of Units in the Field:	5



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