# NEVER BRING A STRYKER TO A TANK FIGHT

James King | 05.02.17

Any armchair Patton will tell you that it's not a good idea to use a Stryker formation against a tank formation. But in a recent article for the Modern War Institute, Capt. Andrew Gregory argues that adding a 30-millimeter cannon to the Stryker would make it a more lethal weapon system—an upgrade he says is made necessary by changes in the contemporary operating environment. While he notes that the up-gunned Stryker still *shouldn't* be used to directly engage armored formations, his argument is short of convincing. The reality is the Stryker was not designed to trade shots at distance with an enemy armored force, and by adding a 30-millimeter cannon it will only create a false

sense of security and encourage commanders to do just that.

**What is a Stryker?**

The Stryker is an eight-wheeled armored vehicle that, along with the black beret, was an initiative brought forth by former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki. Initially called the interim armored vehicle it was intended to be a bridge between the combat vehicles of the time and a future combat system that never came to fruition. The Army made a clear distinction from the M2 Bradley, which is designated an Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) by designating the Stryker's most common variant as an Infantry Carrier Vehicle (ICV).

The difference between an IFV and an ICV seems subtle at first, but their use in doctrine could not be further apart. The Bradley was designed to fight through to an objective, only dismounting its small number of infantry once it arrived. Infantry, however, is not the priority with the Bradley. This made it a good vehicle to fight alongside M1 Abrams Tanks. The Stryker on the other hand has a different job entirely.

As Capt. Gregory notes, by doctrine the Stryker was intended to be used as an armored troop transport—a formation centered around the Infantry squad. A Stryker formation would dismount its infantry one terrain feature away from the objective. The dismounted infantry would then assault the objective with the vehicles they left behind providing supporting fires from either their MK-19 grenade launchers or .50-caliber machine guns. These objectives are intended to be ones that light infantry would be traditionally tasked with. Nowhere in the doctrine does it discuss Strykers matching up with enemy armored forces. The greatest tragedy for a Stryker formation is a destroyed Stryker with its squad still in the back, which is exactly what would happen when put up against a tank.

Stryker formations became popular during the war in Iraq as commanders began to understand their usefulness in counterinsurgency operations. Being wheeled, the Stryker could move more quietly than the Bradley and dismount



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more troops (nine, compared to the six carried by a standard Bradley), overwhelming the objective and surprising those inside. The demand for Stryker formations began to outstrip supply, causing the Army to transition several armored brigades into Stryker brigades.

**Why Adding the 30-millimeter Cannon Won't Help**

Capt. Gregory identifies many arguments against adding a 30-millimeter cannon to a Stryker and attempts to shoot each one of them down. Many of the arguments he uses in support of the more lethal variant—that Strykers are outgunned by their near-peer counterparts, that doctrine wouldn't have to change very much, and that anti-tank systems have proliferated among both state and non-state actors—unwittingly prove the opposite of what he is trying to convey.

First, Strykers are outgunned by the enemy. As stated in doctrine, the Stryker is not designed to maneuver against other combat vehicles. Many have tried during rotations at the National Training Center and were quickly destroyed by the opposing force. The fact that a Stryker is outgunned by a Russian BTR or a Chinese Type 90/92 matters little if the Stryker is employed correctly and not maneuvered on the battlefield like an Abrams or Bradley.

Second, doctrine wouldn't need to be changed much. Capt. Gregory is right. In fact, if the 30-millimeter cannon were to be added to the Stryker, doctrine shouldn't be changed at all. The vehicle should still be used to move light infantry forces close to an objective. The problem is with the second part of his argument. Gregory states, "Denying the SBCT [Stryker brigade combat team] formation increased lethality due to an unwillingness to trust our tactical leaders to employ the platform correctly, betrays the trust we place in those leaders to fight and win wars."

On a fundamental level this is correct: we should trust our tactical leaders to properly employ their weapon systems. The problem is we already use the Stryker improperly. During rotation after rotation at the National Training Center, SBCTs are put up against large enemy armored formations. These formations consistently do poorly in

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offensive operations against enemy tank formations unless they are augmented with tanks of their own or attack helicopters.

During defensive operations, however, these same Stryker formations do fairly well. Units that use their engineers to properly dig in their vehicles, and their Javelin teams, are able to hold off armored formations for a short period of time. But once they get out of these survivability positions and go back on the offensive the tide shifts quickly back to the armor.

The issue is not that Strykers are not sufficiently powerful to slug it out with tanks, but that Stryker unit commanders are encouraged to treat their formations like tank formations at the training centers. Stryker commanders are told to use their cavalry to fight for information just like an armored brigade would, only to find that without the heavily armored Bradley, in no time at all they no longer have a cavalry squadron. Instead of being encouraged to use their infantry to their advantage, they are told to move in formation, resulting in Strykers taking on T-80s with .50-caliber machine guns. Not even in a MILES environment will that math work.

Another indicator that trusting leaders to use the Stryker as it was intended even if it has a 30-millimeter cannon is foolhardy is the reason we are talking about adding the gun in the first place. After Russia moved on Ukraine, NATO allies and other eastern European countries looked to America for help. The US military found itself in a sticky situation. It no longer had the large armored formations stationed throughout Europe that it did to deter a Soviet invasion during the Cold War.

That threat was supposed to be long gone, so the Army had slowly shifted armored forces back to the United States. After the Ukraine crisis began, the United States found it only had an airborne brigade and a Stryker brigade left on the continent to deter the invasion of another eastern European country by a Russian military heavy with armor. Instead of bringing forward an armored brigade to replace the Stryker brigade to beef up deterrence capabilities, the US military has done exactly what Capt. Gregory asks us to

trust leaders not to do: put Strykers on the front line, potentially up against Russia's top-of-the-line tank formations.

**The Real Problem**

Putting Strykers up against armored formations, even with a 30-millimeter cannon, brings to light the real problem with the Stryker. It has thin skin. This is where Capt. Gregory's argument that anti-tank capabilities have proliferated among both state and non-state actors since the Stryker's introduction comes into play, but not in the way he intends. Currently, Stryker armor, hard steel augmented with ceramic panels, is only capable of protecting against direct fire from a 14.5-millimeter machine gun and fragments from indirect fire systems. This is easily defeated by most of the armored vehicles in the Russian inventory and a far cry from the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, which has a reactive armor package that protects against multiple anti-armor munitions. You could put an Abrams main gun on a Stryker and it still wouldn't change the fact that both the vehicle and the infantry squad sitting in the back are vulnerable to anything bigger than a machine gun.

**A Better Solution in Europe**

Adding a larger weapon system to the Stryker will not improve the vehicle so much as accentuate its vulnerabilities by tempting leaders to break from doctrine and use Stryker formations against heavy armor. Armored formations will make quick work of the lightly armored Infantry Carrier Vehicles. A more effective solution would be to pull the Stryker formation from the front line, return it to the United States and replace it with an armored brigade combat team that can be used as a more appropriate deterrent against Russian armor, thus returning the Stryker to its follow and support role.

If you want to fight a tank, bring a tank.

Maj. James King is currently serving as the executive officer for a military intelligence battalion in San Antonio, Texas. While serving over twenty years in the National Guard, Army Reserve, and Active Army, including almost ten years in Stryker brigades, Maj. King has held multiple leadership positions in the military police, infantry, and intelligence fields, as well as deploying three times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He holds a BA in Sociology from the University of Washington, where he earned his commission through the ROTC program and a Master's Degree in Strategic Intelligence from American Military University. The opinions here are the author's own and do not reflect the policy of the US Army, Department of Defense, or any government agency.

Image credit: Sgt. Michael R. Holzworth, US Air Force

## 37 COMMENTS

### John cerra on 05.02.17 at 11:27 am

You are spot on with the fact that nobody reads FM 3-90. There are few who understand what type of missions are appropriate. However, you don't spend your tanks fighting other tanks in an attrition battle. You have to fight tanks with combined arms. Brigades are going to have to mix just like the old ad hoc regimental combat commands in ww2. This is how they achieved combined arms.

REPLY

### LTC James Blanton on 05.02.17 at 1:25 pm

The Stryker Brigades were originally created as a medium force. The bridge between a forced entry or early entry force, like the Rangers and 82nd and the heavy force. The Stryker Brigades were designed to be air transportable by C130s and provide these light forces more combat power. The true power of a Stryker Brigade is the flexibility and adaptability at the Company and Battalion level. A Stryker Company has not only a full company of light infantry, armored transports with heavy weapons, but snipers, mortars and AT systems; no other infantry company in the Army has as much combat power as a Stryker company. The .50cal and MK 19 were never meant to be precision weapons. They are area suppression weapons that allow dismounted infantry to maneuver out of contact while prepping the objective. NTC was never the right environment for Stryker Brigades, which is why the first certification for the first Stryker Brigade was conducted at JRTC. Stryker Brigades are light infantry brigades with armored transports. The real problem is where we predict the next war being fought and how we see that fight happening; a task which the United States Army has done poorly at. The military

must be able to support combat operations along the entire spectrum, we cannot afford to tailor our force for low intensity conflict or high intensity conflict (yes out of date terms, but applicable). We need to get back to how our maneuver units were originally designed to be fought, integrate them into joint operations, across multiple domains and prepare for all possibilities. The Stryker is just one tool in that kit bag, we don't need to make it into the multi-tool we attempted to do with

need to make it into the multi-tool we attempted to do with the Bradley.

REPLY

### SSG Joe Davis on 01.11.20 at 11:12 pm

Sir,
We need to go back further then that. The Bradley was outgunned and outclassed even during the hunter-killer concepts of the early and late 1990's. The Russians made a tank support vehicle capable of supporting tanks in all environments. This is the BMP-T Terminator. It essentially is an AA vehicle mounted on a tank chassis. A beautiful design created from the Chechan conflict. Hmm, we have seen this before with the German SS units of the second world war. It has twin 30mm cannons and four AT launchers as well as two machine grenade launchers. If mobility and ease of transport is our concept, why is the US going back to two Sherman's for every one Pershing concept of World War Two? We lost so many crew members during the second world war. Yet, our Pershing heavy tank destroyed even the famed T-34 during the Korean conflict. We need a mobile support, highly deployable WEAPONS platform. Are we too affraid to pull an idea from the Russians. I mean, they use a pencil instead of an expensive space pen. Does getting our rear ends handed to us at NTC not say we need to change concepts? We blame young aggressive commanders. Strykers alone is DANGEROUS. What ever happened to hunter-killer teams, combine arms, air-ground warfare. Why have we turned away from concepts that worked. We annihilated the Iraqi's in the first gulf war in two days. Now we wonder how we'll deal with an equally rated Iran and the same old Russia? This is very sad and embarrassing.

REPLY

### pRAYERBORNE on 05.02.17 at 2:50 pm

I'm a dumbass, knuckle-dragging MP NCO, and _I_ know sending Strykers toe-to-toe with armor is insane. Hell, why not send US with up-armored HMMWVs and ASVs? We've at least

send US, with up-armored HMMWVs and ASVs? We've at least got Mk19s up, which would give us a firepower edge over the Stryker. I mean, we'd still DIE in a very short time, of course, but only 3-4 of us per vehicle, instead of a dozen!

REPLY

**Dan Rosenthal** on 05.02.17 at 4:58 pm

There's so much wrong with this analysis I don't even know where to begin.

First of all, any MAJ who claims the Bradley is "heavily armored" should never ever be promoted to LTC. Period. It's not, and every applicable criticism of the Stryker's thin skin vulnerability is likewise applicable to the M2/M3 series of vehicles — including the ways to mitigate it (e.g. hard-kill/soft-kill measures, uparmoring and using ERA/NERA, etc.)

Second, the author fundamentally misunderstands the capabilities and employment of the BTR-80. The BTR-80 does *not* "outgun" the Stryker, as it's armed only with a 14.7mm (e.g. .50 cal) machine gun. It's the BTR-80A that has the same class of 30mm cannon that the Dragoon Stryker would have. Of course, the good Major ignores the obvious question — if there's no benefit to upgunning your ICVs, how come that's exactly what the Soviets (later Russians) did with the BTR family, despite having a Bradley-like equivalent in the BMP series? The answer is obvious — because motorized/mechanized infantry doctrine dictates that you *will* need to maneuver your ICVs near other enemy forces, and as such considers the vehicle as a support by fire element. You can't simply hand-wave the problem away by saying "Oh, our Strykers will never come anywhere near the enemy" if a) doctrine already calls for them to be used as screening elements e.g. cavalry, and b) common sense dictates that you

dictate where the engagement takes place (especially in a cavalry unit tasked with fixing an elusive enemy in place.)

It doesn't seem to me that the author has paid any attention to the rapid proliferation of modern ATGMs among non-state actors; one need only look at Syria where forces on all sides (FSA, SDF, SAA, IS, HTS, etc.) are killing late-model MBTs with TOW-2s. Konkurs. Kornets. Metvs. and other ATGMs — often at

max or near max range, usually against an unsuspecting enemy “behind” their lines. The author’s proposed employment of Strykers would do nothing to solve this problem; nor any serious problem faced on todays battlefields. Replacing SBCTs with ABCTs wouldn’t solve this either. Great — you’ve got decent frontal protection against ATGM threats now — at the expense of sacrificing combined arms capability. You weren’t planning on sending that armored brigade into an urban environment unsupported by infantry, were you? And how are you planning on maneuvering that infantry support into position? I’ll wait.....

Finally, it is beyond bizarre logic to suggest that upgunning a Stryker is unfeasible because it’s lack of armor makes it incapable of engaging MBTs. I mean, that’s the crux of the point of this article, and the author gives it barely any notice. If he had, he’d have to address that regardless of friendly armament, enemy armor can destroy a Stryker *or* a Bradley essentially at will — even the Bradley’s ERA isn’t going to stop an APFSDS round from an 125mm main gun penetrating several hundred mm of RHA equivalent. The Bradley has an effective counter to this — it’s own ATGMs with which to engage and destroy an enemy (which even itself is not guaranteed or even likely to kill an MBT frontally). Putting 30mm cannons on a Stryker isn’t going to allow it to frontally engage and destroy an MBT either, but it will allow it to defend itself meaningfully against BTR, BMP, BRDM, and similar threats.

Probably most disappointing at all is that in a West Point affiliated article, not much detail is spent on the leadership failings involved. The author basically agrees that it’s OK to not trust officers to employ weapons systems as designed because.... we’re already making that mistake? So because we’re doing it wrong already, that means we can’t fix it? What kind of leadership example does that set?

If the problem is that battalion and brigade commanders are treating their Strykers as if they were Bradleys (or Abrams), and using them for frontal assaults against enemy armor assets or entrenched positions; that is a tactical and leadership failing on their part; not on behalf of the weapon system. It suggests an intrinsic problem with training and doctrine, as well as individual responsibility — yet that is entirely handwaved and blamed on the system.

All around, a disappointing article.

REPLY

**A. L. DeCelle** on 05.02.17 at 11:34 pm

Mr. Rosanthal, I find that several of your observations had merit, however your personal attacks on the author is unprofessional. The personal attacks on the author undermines the credibility of your arguments. Furthermore your tone does not contribute to an environment of open discussion and debate.

REPLY

**Dan Rosenthal** on 05.03.17 at 3:16 pm

Sorry, that's a weak argument. First, I'm not concerned with being "professional". This is an internet comment, on a poorly written article that exists as a response to someone else's article. We're not testifying on the Senate floor here. I've spent my entire life as a "professional" in government service; I've earned the right to call out a bad argument for what it is.

Meanwhile, if you're agreeing that my observations have merit, but it's merely the tone that you dislike, and you're willing to discount or discredit otherwise merited points purely based on your dislike for my style of delivery.... that's a problem with your biases, not mine.

REPLY

**Leonardo Rivera** on 07.18.19 at 3:25 am

A. L. DeCellr: Well said.

REPLY

**John** on 11.13.19 at 1:17 am

I agree with all, except that the 14.5mm is actually more powerfull than the 12.7 (twice the pennetration) so a 14.5mm armed vehicle has a range advantage going agains a NATO .50 armed APC:

REPLY

### Matthew McCormack on 05.12.17 at 1:17 am

My understanding of MAJ King's analysis was that the problem you two have identified – that Stryker Brigades are performing poorly at NTC when used against MBTs – will not be fixed by additional firepower. He is assessing that adding the 30mm cannon will be touted as the solution to the ICV v. tank problem, thereby not achieve the desired endstate for the force. The fact that the author may have underestimated the Bradley or overestimated the BTR or not given proper consideration to modern ATGM is all besides the point that MAJ King was trying to make. The addition of a larger main gun on a Stryker will make it no more effective against heavy armor than would painting it a more attractive shade of green. In fact, any attempt to class the Stryker against BTRs and BMPs is precisely what MAJ King is trying to avoid here – why employ a force in a head-to-head ICV fight when tanks are better suited? The goal is to employ the Stryker as a counter to light infantry or as an urban assault force, and leave near-peer threats to the Abrams.

Would an extra 30mm gun draw a huge sigh of relief from most SBCT commanders and crew? I'm sure it would. But in a budget constrained environment, we need to trim the fat and identify what is absolutely

necessary to achieve the mission. The mission of Strykers should be to screen larger forces, rapidly clear urban areas, or overrun light infantry formations. In these roles, the 30mm cannon is superfluous, in my (admittedly inexperienced) opinion.

REPLY

**Joseph Dickey** on 11.18.18 at 12:40 am

Agree completely.

REPLY

**ES-DTX** on 04.21.19 at 12:28 pm

Maybe part of the problem is that the Stryker Brigade shouldn't be used as Cavalry but instead as an Infantry Brigade. It doesn't have the firepower or protection to be used as Calvary. If you want a wheeled force to be used as Calvary then you need a new heavier platform with thicker armor. There are multiple such vehicles on the market right now.

REPLY

**Rick Randall** on 05.02.19 at 9:46 am

Concur. Stryker is *not* a realistic "armored cav" vehicle, and never will be. It is an APC, not an IFV — basically a wheeled M113 in terms of role and nature.

While we definitely needed a "battle taxi" (whether Stryker, an upgraded M113, or something else altogether) to augment the assault punch (but weak dismount load) of a heavy IFV like Bradley, trying to use Strykers as if they were Bradleys is a losing solution.

IIRC, the Germans had (or used to have) a more useful Cold War situation. About a 1:2 mix of "heavy" (small dismount squads in more heavily armed and armored IFVs like Marder) versus "medium" (full size squads is more lightly armed and armored APCs like M113) Panzergrenadier formations at the brigade or division level. Heavy force punches a hole (primarily fighting mounted, but having the capacity to dismount for local security), and the mediums exploit and occupy with their full size dismount elements.

dismount elements.

REPLY

**Richard A Randall** on 05.02.19 at 9:47 am

EDIT: ..."the Germans *have* (or used to have)..."

REPLY

**JLR** on 05.27.19 at 8:43 pm

Concur on all points. Well said, Sir.

REPLY

**SSG Joe Davis** on 02.03.21 at 3:35 pm

Look into the BTR -90M's. They are equipped with the 30mm. Also, as stated above, my comment mentions the BMPT. Twin 30mm cannons. One HE, the other AP. Rates of fire up to 800rpm. We are surely outgunned by not even tanks!

REPLY

**Josh** on 05.02.17 at 5:08 pm

Sir, I have to respectfully disagree.
When directly matched up, Stryker platform against tank, the Stryker loses, agreed. However, the source of an SBCT's combat power is not the Stryker, or even adding a cannon. The Javelin is the SBCT's primary AT weapon and what makes it a lethal force. The SBCT's capabilities (and limitations) allow it to

move at the speed of an ABCT, but fight at the speed of an IBCT. It is about employing the brigade correctly. The SBCT won't win against a tank formation in a mounted fight in open terrain, yes. But that is not employing the SBCT according to its strengths. The SBCT will win when it fights within/around restricted terrain, with an appropriate mobile strike force (1 BN) supported by the MGS and ATGM, and employing the 27 authorized Javelins per maneuver BN. A SBCT defense can

never be an area defense. It must be a delay, trading space for time, to allow the strike force to finish the enemy.
1SBCT, 4ID is an example. It beat Blackhorse in NTC rotation 15-10 because it fought using that concept. Its successes since activation in 2014, to include that NTC rotation, has led it to be selected to pilot the Army's Reconnaissance & Security Brigade excursion. The SBCT is a lethal formation and can win, but only when employed in accordance with its strengths.
As an engineer in my SBCT's FTX and NTC rotation, I never dug Stryker defilade positions in the defense; they are not considered critical assets in building a defense. My dozers focused on ATDs and my buckets dug as many Javelin positions as possible to allow for primary, alternate, subsequent, and supplementary firing positions.

REPLY

**SSG Joe Davis** on 02.03.21 at 3:37 pm

Javelins have NO armor vs artillery and NO maneuverability vs tanks. A terrible table thought concept. Period. We soldiers have been asking for better equipment for decades. Now I go to Poland this deployment in a damned Stryker. Old discussion and sure enough, my government does not provide. I'll be dead within minutes. Poof!

REPLY

**Dave** on 05.02.17 at 5:19 pm

The counter arguments being presented here are cursory and at best anecdotal reasons why upgrading (up-gunning) is a bad idea. Does increasing the firepower reduce the mobility of the Stryker (tactical or operational)? No. Does it reduce the protection package for the crew/ dismounts? No. Does it enable a Stryker to engage tanks. No, but it does allow the Stryker to engage soft targets and other ICVs effectively past the max effective weapon ranges of the Mk 19 and the infamous .50 cal.

The Canadian Army fields similar types of AFVs as the Stryker, known as LAV III and a substantially upgraded version of the Stryker known as the LAV 6.0. Both these platforms mount a

25mm chain gun (M242, same as the Bradley) as well as a coax 7.62mm MG. In numerous occasions at NTC the ability to have an effect on target past 1800m proved the value of a medium calibre weapon mounted on an AFV. These are force multiplying assets that are flexible for commanders. We don't shoot tanks in IFV/ICV but we can deny the ability of the enemy to dismount his personnel up close and personal. We can destroy other IFV/ICV (I.e. The BTR family) and still provide support to dismounted infantry in the fire base.

REPLY

### Rick Randall on 05.02.19 at 9:51 am

You don't think increasing the weight of the vehicle by 10%, and placing ALL of that increase above the CG – almost all of it as high as physically possible – doesn't impact mobility? Not on a flat paved road at moderate speeds, no... so, as long as we can arrange to fight only on autobahns and can avoid jinking, we'll be fine...

REPLY

### Ernestas on 09.27.20 at 10:34 am

Doubtful. This turret will add 1 additional ton to vehicle weight give or take if we remove .50 cal and replace it with 30 mm. Stryker is a wheeled vehicle, it inherently has poor mobility in off road scenarios and in scenarios where road conditions are excellent, greater ground pressure won't matter much.

An example, French study found no mobility decrease when they had put ERA armor on

AMX-30B2. Additional ton of weight had no observable impact on vehicle's mobility.

REPLY

### Jim Horn on 05.02.17 at 9:01 pm

When we attacked the Iraqi Revolutionary Guard in 2003 we

When we attacked the Iraqi Revolutionary Guard in 2003 we Never Planned to match Bradley's against T-72s, but it happened nonetheless. The enemy has a vote. When we were lucky, we had the time to engage them with TOW-2Bs, even better when we had time to dismount a fire team with Javelins. But when we had neither the time or luxury of either, the 25mm AP rounds were effective enough to buy us time to maneuver behind cover and either dismount a Javelin team or call forward the M1s. In one instance, we fired enough 25mm rounds into the tank that it eventually blew up; I would have greatly appreciated a 30mm (or anything that could rapidly engage and destroy).

Thank you for writing the article and putting not only thought towards tactical armored vehicles but to have the guts to put pen to paper with your name attached.

REPLY

### Cpt GREGORY on 05.02.17 at 9:40 pm

Yes, indeed, don't bring a Stryker to a Tank fight. The article straw mans my article's thesis (https://mwi.usma.edu/lethality-upgrade-new-stryker-variant-needed-modern-battlefield/) and reverts to some tired arguments about the SBCT. The Army no longer maintains multiple divisions of armor, only 9 (soon to be 10) ABCTs. They're all tasked against contingencies (EUCOM, PACOM, CENTCOM) and once the first one is engaged in each theater, the readiness of follow on brigades is questionable. Insisting that the Stryker is not appropriate for use in more lethal environments ignores our actual force mixture and reduces the SBCT to IBCT level of capability. Of course, even with upgrades, the platform isn't appropriate for direct contact with other APCs. Yet the formation will encounter these threats, it will be forced to cover the gap between ABCT and IBCT, and it has to evolve accordingly. Wishing away a whole end of the spectrum of conflict (high intensity, combined arms maneuver against a peer foe) as the providence of only 10 active brigades is shortsighted and no congruent with leveraging our entire force mix against a problem set.

Great debate here though. Glad to see a mix of opinions and folks not just reverting to their 'heavy' or 'light' dogmas

REPLY

### Blue Spader on 05.05.17 at 1:08 am

Yep, don't bring a 'Swiss Army Knife' to a GUNfight, no matter how 'flexible' it is says this 'ol Bradley/M113 'Dragoon'....

REPLY

### Max on 05.03.17 at 9:09 pm

Bravo! I simply love the debate here. Good points on all sides, well made.

REPLY

### Kyle West on 05.06.17 at 3:33 pm

I'm ok with the Stryker in general as an ICV (with or without the 30mm), but not as a reconnaissance vehicle. Strykers in the screen line is suicide. In open terrain, dug into fighting positions or backed into hide positions with dense wood lines behind it offer no maneuverability. They will get crushed as soon as they move into the Open while displacing, or have no where to go as they can not maneuver into dense vegetation.

It was mentioned in comments above that the power of the styker is the Javelins that it carries. Give the reconnaissance formation RZRs and ATVs carrying javelins and you can kill tanks. The tanks can't kill what they can't find, and they can swarm and disappear with lightning speed.

REPLY

### SSG Joe Davis on 02.03.21 at 3:40 pm

I completely agree with you for reconnaissance being I'm a 19D. Scouts need their own scout vehicle.

REPLY

### John on 05.08.17 at 2:09 pm

The Stryker units need a big gun for the city fighting we do

The Stryker units need a big gun for the city fighting we do. Can't always combine tanks with the light units, but those light units need big guns sometimes. Need a building suppressed or destroyed? With a 30mm, no need to call in tanks or air support. The 30mm Stryker is already there. This vehicle completes the Styker Brigade capabilities and will save lives.

REPLY

### Tim reese on 05.08.17 at 4:16 pm

I applaud the great discussion. Proper employment of one's weapons systems is what tactical leaders are supposed to do. Having a 30mm direct fire weapon system on a Stryker that provides greater range, accuracy and lethality than an M2 or MK19 does not make it an Abrams tank – OK, check. BUT it does provide a Stryker leader with greater ability to support the operations of the SBCT's primary contribution to the fight – the dismounted infantry squad – with suppressive fire. It creates new tactical opportunities to enable those squads to close with and destroy the enemy. What leader would not want that increased capability? Care to lead a dismounted assault on a defensive force without having the enemy suppressed or defeated? AND the 30mm cannon provides the Stryker formation with greater ability to recon by fire, react to an ambush, or selectively engage targets that would otherwise not be defeated by the M2 or MK19. What leader would not want those capabilities either? Who would prefer a less capable weapon to a more capable weapon in a firefight? As we've all heard many Army leaders say, "We don't want any fair firefights!"

REPLY

### Matt on 07.13.17 at 8:13 am

How will upgrading the gun compromise other aspects of the Stryker? Will it take in one less man to make space for the additional ammo? Does the platform have space for minor innovations? Will other upgrades on the Stryker be more useful?

How much will the upgrade cost?

Will avoiding the upgrade mean more tanks will be available? What is expected from the next combat vehicle? Will avoiding it allow for the next combat vehicle to come much earlier?

Can combined arms cover well enough for its current weaknesses? Will upgrades on other platforms be more useful?

REPLY

**Eric** on 09.22.17 at 5:38 pm

It isn't an AFV, its a poor MRAP but an very well uparmored HMMWV.

It is meant for patrolling streets in LICs, and even considering taking it against a BTR 60 with its 14.5mm, much less the better armed ones, is "doing it wrong".

In a fight against armor, the enemy tanks should never even see the strykers, just the infantry inside as they engage them. The strykers hide in the back, probably not exposed in any way, and egress the grunts if needed.

But using it to "fight" is just doing it wrong.

After 5 years in OPFOR at NTC myself though, I will say its rare we got beat. We knew the terrain better, our miles was better bore sighted, we weren't in MOPP gear, and we fought every single month, instead of a couple times a year. BLUFOR isn't meant to win at NTC, its meant to learn to save lives later.

REPLY

**BSmitty** on 01.08.18 at 1:33 pm

How about bringing back the independent tank battalion?

We have 21 active brigade combat teams with no tanks (7 SBCT, 14 IBCT). If we had, say, five independent tank battalions, we could task organize them with some SBCTs and IBCTs, as the situation warrants.

An SBCT plus tank battalion should have a much better time

against Russian armor and on offense at NTC, especially with the 30mm turret.

REPLY

### Greg Pearce on 06.22.19 at 4:04 pm

What a false assessment! Strykers need the upgraded firepower in order to take on their counterparts that our potential enemies are currently fielding and that are in the works. Not to go up against MBT's. The author of this piece of trash is beyond ignorant and should stick to writing reviews of non-stick cookware.

REPLY

### Allen D on 04.28.20 at 2:57 pm

Author should have googled a M1134 Anti-Tank Guided Missile Vehicle. It’s some job is to destroy tanks.

REPLY

### Ernestas on 09.27.20 at 1:42 pm

USA have an outdated view on military vehicles. Times of APC acting as a battle taxi is long gone. In modern battlefield, presence of heavily armed vehicles is universal. Next gen vehicles are also extremely well armored. Take a look at Boomerang APC, it weights 34 tons and have optional 30 mm cannon. Our near peer adversary has superior APC platform in protection and depending on modification, firepower. Take a look at British Boxer. It has 30 cannon, anti tank missiles.

This is environment in which Stryker brigades will found themselves operating with. Anti tank missiles are great on the defensive, but they are bad at dealing with enemy armor on the offensive. What SBCT are to do when they will meet APC or IFV? Call the air support? Call the artillery? SBCT can't organically deal with threats on a battlefield and they need to call its own artillery attachment or air support. However in hot war such things are sub-optimal, because you risk losing a lot more valuable plane or getting counter barraged. Russia for example have whole battalions attached to their motorized

battalions. In order words, our near peer adversary has 18 pieces of SPGs which roughly matches our whole artillery regiments! How can you hope to beat enemy on the offensive with artillery when you are heavily outgunned yourself?

REPLY

### SSG Joe Davis on 02.03.21 at 3:45 pm

Why not only worry about armoring just a crew. Such as the titanium tub around an A-10 pilot. Tanks are armored everywhere. Why not just armor the crew?! Save weight and space. We talk about next Gen armored vehicles and have yet to MAKE or PRODUCE any. Russia's done a fantastic job. The Styker is a vehicle of Shineki's beret past. A rapidly deploying vehicle to anywhere in the world to get its @** handed to it. We need new generation vehicles and a replacement tank for the Abrams! Period! No argument!

REPLY

### D Rob on 02.11.21 at 12:37 am

I agree that an ABCT is a better solution for Europe than an SBCT. But the argument against 30mm is off the mark. I agree that the CTCs encourage silly engagements based on the limited maneuver space and an OPFOR that is going to drive a timeline. That said the suppression weapons on the ICV force any commander to maneuver into the MEL of nearly every threat weapon system to use them. A 30mm cannon and the optic package on the ICV dragoon enable Stryker companies to emplace SBFs out of enemy direct fire weapons. 30mm also prevents chance contact with enemy IFVs from being a one sided engagement. Upgunned strykers provide better options and improved firepower while still keeping the logistic footprint small in relation to an ABCT.

This also helps to overcome the lack of MGS vehicles in the formation compared to the original design. Each company was supposed to have a three MGS platoon. Instead the final formation had one platoon per battalion. That is a lot of lost firepower.

REPLY

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