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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

The Road to M8 AGS – Part 3: Lighter or Armored? Why not both?



(Photo by R.P. Hunnicutt)

Army vs Airborne: The Solution

Previously, the conflicting requirements demanded by the airborne troops and some opposing factions of the Army caused a noticeable debate. Airborne wanted a lighter and smaller vehicle that can be parachute dropped from C-130 while some factions in the Army wanted a heavier and more protected vehicle. FMC Corporation solved this issue by introducing three levels of protection for the vehicle. Level 1 protection with lighter armor is suitable for air transport and low-velocity air drop (LVAD). The weight could also be reduced to 35,500 pounds and the estimated combat weight is 38,300 pounds with additional crew and stowage after landing. Installing additional protection and applique armor would increase the roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) level 2 combat weight to about 42,300 pounds. Further improving the protection level was also possible by installing additional level 3 appliqué armor increasing the weight to an estimated 49,500 pounds.

Specification

The original turret of CCVL was modified by relocating the M240 7.62mm coaxial machine gun and removing the commander's independent thermal viewer as well as the hunter-killer fire control system.

Another submitted proposal included a weapon system to be installed at the commander's hatch. It could be either an M2 .50 calibre heavy machine gun, an M240 7.62mm machine gun or a 40mm Mk19 Grenade launcher. 16 smoke grenade launchers were also to be installed on the turret. Later on, the CCVL carried an XM35 105mm gun like other AGS contenders. The low recoil gun, originally designated as EX35, was developed by the Benet Laboratory at Watervliet Arsenal.



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Artist concept of FMC AGS
(Picture by R.P. Hunnicutt)

XM8

On 14 June 1992, The FMC Corporation was awarded the AGS contract and the system was designated as XM8. CCVL won the contract probably thanks to the three level of protection system since it could satisfy the needs of both Army and Airborne. This made the vehicle flexible and adaptable to various situations on the battlefield.



XM8 with Level 1 protection.
(Picture by R.P. Hunnicutt)

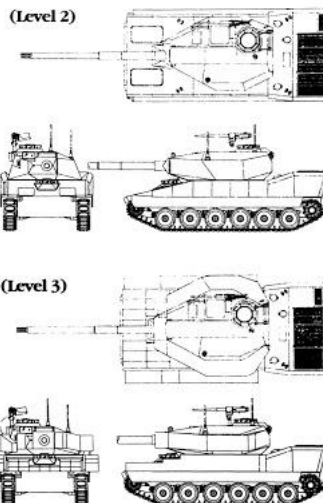


Illustration of XM8 Level 2 and 3.
(Picture by R.P. Hunnicutt)

[To be continued]

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