



Tactica:

Armored Regiments

by Spectrar Ghost

Introduction:

What is an Armored Regiment?

The hammer of the Imperial Guard, Armored Regiments will alternately dismantle their foes at range and obliterate them at close quarters, before grinding the bodies of the dead under their unstoppable treads. Their armor and firepower make them difficult foes to effectively come to terms with, but their quality is offset by lack of numbers and poor performance in CC. This makes them less forgiving of mistakes, especially in Engagements.

I define an Armored Regiment to be any Imperial Guard whose main offensive power is in the form of Tank and Superheavy Tank formations. They will also have few or no non-mechanized support formations such as Recon, Artillery, or Infantry. The Minervan Legion from Epic: Raiders and the Ulani Tank Regiment of EpicUK are lists purpose built as Armored Regiments, but the Steel Legion is also perfectly capable of deploying as an Armored Regiment.

Units and Roles

Battle Tanks

The IG uses the ubiquitous Leman Russ as their MBT. There are many variants of Russ, and several variants have multiple patterns based on Forgeworld of origin. All Leman Russ variants have 4+ RA except the Ulani Conqueror, which has 5+ RA. This means many armies will have insufficient AT fire to effectively deal with multiple tank formations through shooting alone. Tank companies are particularly vulnerable to Disrupt and MW Barrages, and massed MW or TK fire, however. Their ranged fire also degrades quickly in the presence of BMs, due to low numbers.

Leman Russ Variants can be broadly divided into three categories: Main Battle Tanks (MBTs), Close Support Tanks (CSTs), and Specialists. Tanks from each category are easily mixed with other tanks from the same role, but are rarely useful in a formation mixed between categories. Specialists tend to be most useful in units composed of single tank types, as singletons within a formation will add too little to a formations capabilities, and tend to detract from flexibility.

MBTs are characterized by a high powered dual role (AP/AT or MW) primary armament with 60cm range or greater, allowing them to engage an enemy formation from beyond the range of most weapons short of other MBTs, Superheavies, and Artillery. They must also have the

ability to hold their own in FF, and have multiple secondary weapons systems (sponsons). Note these last two are related, as no Russ variant without sponsons has a FF better than 5+. This makes the Leman Russ, Vanquisher, and Ulani Executioner MBTs. The Minervan Ryza-pattern Executioner has no sponson weapons, and FF5+, and so is a specialist.



MBTs of the 23rd Minervan Tank Legion's 4th Assault Company

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CSTs have a shorter ranged ($\leq 45\text{cm}$) primary armament, optimized for infantry hunting and Firefights, and also has multiple secondaries. In game terms, they will have FF3+ due to the nature of their armament. Both the Steel Legion/Ulani Ryza-pattern and the Minervan Acacia-pattern Demolishers, and the Exterminator, are CSTs.

Specialist Tanks fall outside of the above two categories. They generally have fewer, but more specialized, weapons systems, and the associated decrease in FF, and may have other abilities not found in most Russ variants. They also tend to be comparatively rare. The Minervan Executioner is a specialist armor hunter. The Ulani Tank Destroyer and the Minervan Acacius-pattern Tank Destroyer are Titan Hunters. The Thunderer is a siege tank. The Ulani Conqueror and Minervan Mars-pattern Conqueror are fast assault/breakthrough exploitation tanks.



Superheavy Tanks

Superheavy Tanks have similar strengths and weaknesses to Battle Tanks, but magnified. A 4+RA, 3DC WE is correspondingly tougher to take down than a Russ, but suffers even more greatly from lack of numbers. It is vulnerable to the same types of ranged fire as a battle tank. It does take multiple blast markers to suppress each tank, however, so although the total weight of fire is less than a corresponding tank company, the rate of degradation is less. It is also weak in CC, though the ability of WEs to split fire between CC and FF mitigates this somewhat.

SHTs can be divided along the same lines as their smaller cousins. The standard Stygies VI-pattern Baneblades from the Steel Legion and Ulani, and the upgunned Mars-pattern Baneblades from the Minervans are MBTs. They are capable of taking on any target at ranges out to 75cm, and have multiple secondaries and FF4+. The Stormhammer and Stormsword are CSTs. The Stormhammer has FF3+ and a short ranged, AP oriented load out, while the Stormsword has only FF4+, but has the awesome 45cm 3BP, Disrupt, Ignore Cover main gun, as well as other AP weapons perfect for urban combat. The specialist SHTs are optimized for tank hunting. Both Stormblade variants (Ulani and the Minervan Lucius-pattern) are optimized

for hunting heavy armor and light WE foes. The Ulani variant has FF4+ and thus straddles the line between MBT and Specialist. The Shadowsword is a Titan hunter.

Artillery

Artillery will play a secondary role in an armored Regiment, but an important one. Artillery is unrestricted by LOS issues, and can go where your tanks cannot reach in time. Use it to take out threats to your tanks, particularly for counter battery fire. Prepping assaults and neutralizing smaller formations are also excellent uses, allowing you to gain in static combat resolution and activations respectively.

Shorter ranged Artillery like Bombards and Griffons cannot fulfill all those roles, and lacks utility in an Armored Regiment. Manticores and Basilisks are preferred, due to their greater range. Basilisks are excellent in company strength, whereas Manticores are best broken down into Batteries. This is because each Manticore battery can fire a barrage almost as effective as a Basilisk company, (due to Disrupt, the BMs pile up faster, though hits are fewer overall), but can only do so every other turn. Therefore, multiple small formations are more useful than a company.

Recon

Every army needs Reconnaissance, and in Armored Regiments the role is fulfilled by Salamanders and Sentinels, depending on the list. Uses are similar, though the Salamander has a couple extra tricks up its sleeve. Scout screens are effective to cordon off areas of the board, forcing the enemy to use activations to remove them. This lessens the activation disadvantage most Armored Regiments will face. They are also excellent to screen your fragile Artillery from Teleport attacks: more on this in the section on deployment. Minervan Salamanders also have the ability to make a Turn 3 run for the enemy Blitz, with a 105cm March move.

Infantry

Unmounted, it has its uses. Garrisoning on TNH is the main one. Mech. Infantry and Valkyrie Mounted Stormtroopers have a high move rate and are good in FF. They



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are good substitutes for CSTs in lists that can't take many. I do take an RHQ in my Steel Legion lists for the SC, but at sub-5k levels, that's all the infantry I buy.

Specialist Units

Same deal as specialist tanks. They have few, highly specialized, weapon systems. Hydras, Deathstrikes and Vultures are most worthy of notice. Hydras are a must, whether organic to your companies or in batteries. Vultures are essentially one shot tank hunters. They can do real damage once, and then become mobile objective grabbers. The Deathstrike is like a Vulture writ large, but without the speed and secondary weapons. Both Vultures and Deathstrikes are in niches well covered by other options in an Armored Regiment, and are on my "leave at home" list, largely due to their one shot nature.

Force Composition

An Armored Regiment will of course consist of mostly tanks. But what kind of tanks, how many, and in what proportions? Just as concentrating on tanks reduces your opponent's options, concentrating your tanks together increases their effectiveness more. Grouping your formations into larger "Combat Commands" (CCs) that operate together will help to achieve this concentration. CCs have the advantage of being able to split up when it is advantageous, but can concentrate firepower when necessary to take down hard targets.

Matching two formations with dissimilar roles will provide flexibility in your CCs. I suggest one MBT Company, and one CST or otherwise engage-oriented formation. The MBTs are in company strength to have a hard core to the CC no matter what engage formation is taken, and to have the firepower at range to matter. The engage-oriented formation can be a CST formation, platoon or company sized, or a Mechanized Infantry formation. A second MBT formation is also a useful counterpart when CST and Infantry are not available.

Whether CCs are composed of Superheavies, Battle Tanks, Mechanized Infantry, or a mix is up to you, but as the commands are expected to operate in concert, they are likely to be tied to the slowest speed in the group.

You can usually take two Combat commands in a 3k list; expect them to cost about 1000pt apiece. One artillery company or two batteries, a Recon formation or two, and a WE hunting SHT if it fits, and you're set at 3k.

Example force: Minervan Legion 3000pt

Tank Company - 875

- 1 Vanquisher with Supreme Commander, 1 Vanquisher with Commissar, 8 Lemman Russ, 2 Hydra

Tank Platoon - 350

- 1 Demolisher with Commissar
- 5 Exterminators

Superheavy Tank Company - 500

- 1 Baneblade with Commissar, 2 Baneblade

Superheavy Tank Company - 500

- 1 Stormhammer with Commissar, 2 Stormhammer

Hydra Flak Battery - 150

- 3 Hydra

Artillery Battery - 250

- 1 Manticore with Commissar, 2 Manticore

Artillery Battery - 250

- 1 Manticore with Commissar, 2 Manticore

Salamander Scout Platoon - 125

- 1 Salamander Command
- 3 Salamander Scout

The Tank Company and Tank platoon form Combat Command A (CCA). The two Superheavy Companies and Flak Battery form CCB. The Artillery and Salamanders form a Support Command.



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Deployment

Objectives

Armored forces are often used to attack single points in an enemy line in overwhelming force. The focal point of the attack is the *schwerpunkt*. Attacking a small area means you will have local numerical superiority, despite overall numerical inferiority. You have a limited number of activations to use, and they must each count.

Place at least one of your Take and Hold objectives as close to your opponent's blitz as possible. This will allow you to define a clear *schwerpunkt* and concentrate your forces accordingly during play. Your own Blitz will be held by your Artillery. Place it out of LOS of the enemy of possible.

Garrisons

You won't have many. If you are playing an army with a commonly used Teleporting unit or Air Assault elements, you will want to use one of your Recon units to screen your Artillery. Others can be set up as you wish. Your primary options are as a scout screen, denying an area to enemy ground troops and forcing him to use activations, or as a mobile reserve to claim Crossfire or Objectives.

Setup

Your Artillery should be set up next to your Blitz. This will allow it to function as a blitz guard, freeing up your mobile elements. Use the Recon formation (if you set one aside) to screen the Artillery from Teleporters and Air Assault. Remember, you cannot teleport into a unit's ZoC, and an air assault can only enter the ZoC of the formation it is assaulting. Situate your Scouts around the Artillery such that they are outside of 5cm of the Arty, (to prevent intermingling) but their ZoC overlaps the artillery completely. This will mean any Teleport or Air Assault will need to have the Recon formation removed in order to strike the Artillery in an Engage.

Combat commands should be set up within 15cm, but outside of 5cm. of each other. This assures mutual support while preventing intermingling. They should also be entirely under their air cover, whoever is providing it. Fi-

nally, each CC should ideally have it's own corridor to the *schwerpunkt* in order not to get bunched up.



Tactics

Combat Commands

These are your workhorses. Keep them moving, and keep them engaged. Maintain contact.

The MBT Tank Company in the previous post will do 6.66 AP or 7.33 AT hits at ranges between 45cm and 75cm on sustain. Alternatively, it will do 6.33 AT Doubling from 85cm or 8.33 AP doubling from 70cm. Inside of 65cm it will do 10.33 AT advancing, and inside of 50cm it will do 14.33 AP hits on the advance. This is a long winded way of saying that it is rarely better to wait for the enemy to come to you, and that if you have an enemy formation within 2 ½ feet of you, you can take it on. Get up there and get your secondaries in range! Try to bring the company within 30cm, but outside CC engage range, of the opposing formation if possible. This will allow you to bring up your CST formation up with its added firepower, and set up for an engage next turn. Your opponent then has the option of attempting to clip a tank company (unlikely), engaging in FF (poor idea, especially with supporting fire), or retreating, and starting the cycle over. A full on engage of the above Battle Tank Combat Command, with all units in support range, would do 11.33 FF hits. The SHT Command would drop over a dozen hits in FF, not including the Hydras. Few formations would be in good shape after that kind of damage, even less so after taking ranged fire the turn before.

Support Commands

These will consist of WE hunters and Artillery, as well as Recon. Artillery's priorities should be 1) counter battery, 2) neutralizing minor units to let the CCs concentrate on more important targets, and 3) Hitting broken formations, especially BTS, in that order. Recon will generally have screening duties, whether protecting the Arty, per-

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forming area denial, or screening tank formations. WE hunters have fairly self explanatory roles.

Facing an Armored Regiment – or, what to watch out for

Armored Regiments can shrug off a lot of fire, and return even more. They are excellent in Firefight, and generally will have good to very good Artillery. They are almost exclusively AV, and so the majority of weapons in the game will be ineffective against them. With this going for them, how does one beat an Armored Regiment? Like any army, Armored Regiments have their weaknesses to be exploited.

First, most Leman Russ variants cost over 50pts apiece, with a median around 65pt, and some topping a hundred. So unit for unit, and often activation for activation, they tend to be outnumbered. They will need to take the initiative away from the enemy and keep it in order to offset this. An Armored Regiment must use Artillery to neutralize (note this has a different meaning here than destroy) enemy activations, balancing the activation race. If they fail to do this, or have their Artillery neutralized in turn, they loose a lot of tactical options.

A tank company is very susceptible to degradation through picking up BMs. Shooting them and taking out a single tank reduces their available firepower by a third (9 units-2bm=7 unsuppressed). Taking out two reduces their firepower by half (8units-3bm=5 unsuppressed). This can be used to blunt the attack at range, allowing better results when they hit home. For this reason, Disrupt weaponry in particular is devastating to the combat effectiveness of armored units, even if the equipment remains relatively unscathed.

Finally, armor is poor in CC. Each tank you can put in BtB has its strength in engage cut in three. If you can hit them with a specialist CC formation, they'll hurt. Even formations that simply outnumber them should go for BtB, as they get FF shots the tanks will be denied. Superheavies are less vulnerable to being contacted in engage, as they can freely split their CC/FF fire, as long as they use at least 1 CC attack if in BtB. This still reduces a Baneblade's firepower by nearly a quarter, though.

Conclusion

Armored Regiments are hard as nails. They throw out ridiculous amounts of fire and are brutal opponents in Firefight. A tank heavy army is one of the hardest to deal with, simply due to a general dearth of AT fire. Make sure you make contact quickly, and maintain it. Don't give the opponent a breather. Do these and you will come to love the Armored Regiment as I have.

May your idlers always be properly tensioned.

Any advice/typos/conversation is appreciated. Tactics section needs to be fleshed out, perhaps, but understanding how the categories of tank interact and remembering to concentrate instead of disperse is most of the battle.
Discuss