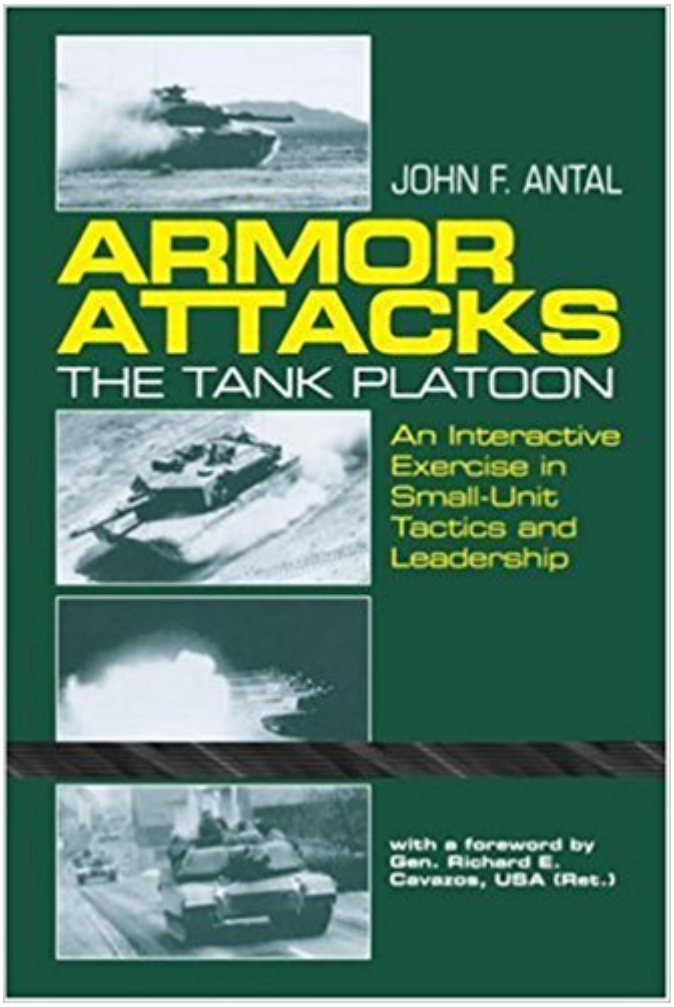
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Armor Attacks: The Tank Platoon - An Interactive Exercise In Small-Unit Tactics And Leadership



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Synopsis

You’re in charge of the battle outcome as an M1 Abrams tank platoon leader in this exciting, interactive work.

Book Information

Paperback: 338 pages

Publisher: Presidio Press; 1st edition (June 1, 1991)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0891413839

ISBN-13: 978-0891413837

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #250,369 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 inÃ Â Books > History > Military > Weapons & Warfare > Conventional > Armored Vehicles #467 inÃ Â Books > History > Military > Strategy #9179 inÃ Â Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering

Customer Reviews

During the 1960’s, programmed instruction was voguish in commercial and institutional as well as educational circles. Antal, a major in the US Army, makes a martial equivalent of this technique the centerpiece of a gimmicky text that’s as much manual as novel. Following detailed briefings on the Abrams tank and allied matters, the author introduces young Second Lieutenant Sam Jaeger. Posted to the Middle East, where America is engaged in desert warfare with an unidentified foe, Jaeger is given command of an armor platoon that’s a key element in a battalion opposed by a motorized rifle division. In due course, our hero’s outfit is assigned to attack hostile forces whose position is uncertain, and Jaeger must draft operational orders for his troops. At this point, Antal’s narrative begins to fragment, taking on the character of a decision tree. At various stages, readers must exercise one of the several options open to the rookie officer and proceed to the sections disclosing the outcomes of their joint decision. Those who pick the correct passages through the author’s tactical thicket are rewarded by the intelligence that their choices as proxies helped Jaeger win the day and earn a battlefield promotion to captain, plus a Silver Star. By contrast, failure to show initiative and to heed a superior’s intent results not only in suppositious death or capture but also an invitation to try again. As Antal makes abundantly clear in his twisty, hard-boiled plotlines, armed conflict can prove terribly unforgiving of mistakes. A professionally correct bang-you’re-dead

exercise whose appeal seems limited to armchair strategists, gaming buffs, and, possibly, the Soldier of Fortune crowd. The didactic drill includes realistic maps, diagrams, tables, and line drawings throughout. -- Copyright Ã Â©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

great book

Required reading for junior military officers or anyone wanting a taste of what command is like.This and Harold Coyle’s Team Yankee are the two best depictions of modern armored warfare I’ve found.

For those of you who enjoy war games, but want something with a little more detail, a little more realistic, for one player and does not involve downloading a game into a computer, this is the book for you. I really enjoyed the story and the feeling of truly being in control of the battlefield. Think Choose Your Own Adventures but for adults. And I won the first read.

If you are an armor or cav officer or senior NCO and you haven’t read this, you need to get your copy. It is a must have for your collection.

Pretty good lessons to be learned about decision making for young Junior Leadership. Could use more explanations to explain the results of poor decision making.

Armor Attacks is an attempt to help people who are not in the military understand some of what a tank commander faces in the modern battlefield. the author took on this mission and decided to convey it via a semi-interactive set of exercises. This book is divided into 88 short chapters. At the end of each chapter, you are directed to go to another chapter, or asked to make a choice which sends you to different chapter, or asked to throw some dice and go to a new chapter based on the dice throw. In other words, this takes the format of those old "make your own adventure" books.While going through the scenarios, you are supposedly learning more about the craft of a tank platoon commander. At the conclusion of each scenario, there are some guidelines for you to consider - especially when you blow it and end up dead!While entertaining and somewhat innovative, the book itself left me feeling a bit flat. There are really only two scenarios played out. In the first one, your platoon is performing a flank attack on an enemy formation; in the other, you are given a counter-reconnaisance mission to help forestall an enemy attack. If you glide through the

two scenarios successfully, you are promoted to Captain, and given command of a tank company. If you do not succeed, you most likely die.Given those outcomes, I would have wanted to have some good guidelines on how I should react and act presented as material that I can read before being asked to make life and death decisions. Unfortunately, that’s not the way the book is set up. Any feedback on what you should have done comes after the denounement; i.e. after you’re dead! So, it’s not very helpful.The other negative comment is that I eventually found the correct path to succeed and get promoted, and then realized that the most critical decision point was not of my own making! It was a dice roll! That explained my frustration as I made the right choices time and time again and ended up being defeated by the luck of the draw. I suppose the author’s idea was to show how much of war is decided by pure dumb luck, but in a training manual, it seemed to play too big of a role.In addition to the main thrust of the book, there are several appendices full of anciallry information like organization charts, data on the composition of the tanks discussed and their main systems, and various other additional data that is probably meant to fill in gaps in knowledge to those who seek it.My overall assessment is that this is not a good way to teach someone how a tank commander should act nor does it offer a good story of tank tactics; instead it is a terribly tortured set of two scenarios whose successful outcome is completely unbelievable. (the protagonist is promoted to Captain after two successful scenarios whose total elapsed time is three days!!)The good things about this book that elevated its rating is that the writing style is crisp and believable and that the scenarios themselves are rather engaging. This armchair "quarterback" - so to speak - was very amused and engaged by the tank tactics that were described.

This is the third Antal book I’ve enjoyed, after reading (or rather, interacting with) Infantry Combat and reading "Proud Legions."This book was written just before the Gulf War, so I found it interesting that Antal picked the Middle East as the theater of war for a fictional future conflict with an unidentified enemy.The book plays out much like the old "Choose Your Own Adventure" series that I enjoyed as a grade-schooler, where you have to make choices that lead to branching stories.In this particular adventure, you are 2LT Jaeger, a young tank platoon commander in charge of 4 M1 Abrams tanks. You are the junior platoon leader in the company, and are initially assigned a reserve role in your first mission.As the other elements of your company come under fire, you are asked to make decisions which can either save the day or kill you and all under your command. Certainly I enjoy this more from the comfort of my living room reading chair, rather than the turret of a tank in combat! If, however, you do end up making a fatal mistake, Antal writes in some helpful advice on what you did wrong, and invites you to try again.Having already familiarized myself with Antal’s work

when reading "Infantry Combat", I passed through the book fairly easily, and was somewhat disappointed at its brevity. There were only two basic missions, unlike "Infantry Combat," which was a little more involved and took you through an entire campaign consisting of several branching possibilities that still led to victory.All in all, though, it was a fun read, and I recommend it to those who enjoy being armchair generals, like me.

John Antal’s book takes the reader into a fictional world of modern mechanized warfare, that is based on real life lessons learned at the U.S.Army’s National training Center. In his fictional portrail of armor warfare, Antal presents the reader with a litany of problems and solutions that many a field commander has actually seen in fighting the great game at NTC. As the reader is lead through the narrative of the story ,he is asked to make key judgments based on the ’guidlines’ of modern military strategy as presented by operations manual FM-100-5. Each of the problems were problems that commanders in the field faced at NTC, and the ’correct’ solutions that the he tries to lead you to make, are those that actually worked in the field. Antal does not try to impart any new knowledge, however, he does present lessons learned in a new and exciting manner. He draws the reader into the novel, and allows them to discover the correct answers for themselves. This is a remarkably effective method of teaching lifes lessons. I for one read this book over two years ago and its lesson stand out as well as any I have learned in my 9 year career in the Army.

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