

TRAINING NOTES



Bradley NET

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The Bradley Fighting Vehicle represents the single most challenging weapon system the Infantry has ever fielded. It has a two-man, stabilized turret that serves as the platform for its three weapon systems — a 25mm Bushmaster chain gun, a 7.62mm M240C coaxial machinegun, and a two-tube TOW launcher.

In addition to its greatly increased firepower, the Bradley is also superior to its predecessor, the M113, in mobility and armor protection. All of these differences work together to make the Bradley a true fighting vehicle for its squad, which consists of a squad leader (Bradley commander), a gunner, a driver, and a seven-man dismount team. And this, in turn, presents a training challenge to the Infantry squad leader, who must now think in terms of both squad training and weapon system proficiency.

To help a unit make the transition from the M113 to the Bradley, an eight-week company new equipment training (NET) program has been established. A NET team will provide transition training in vehicle hardware, gunnery, and tactics to all units that are being equipped with the Bradley.

On 28 March 1983, the 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry, 2d Armored Division, became the first unit to undergo NET on the Bradley, and other units will follow as they receive their vehicles. There are many things that these units can do in advance to prepare for NET and make it more efficient.

In planning its preparatory training, a unit must realize that it faces a training management problem never before experienced by an Infantry squad. In addition to training the squad as a whole, the unit has to devise a training program that will provide training for the seven-man dismount team while maintaining the gunnery skills of the commander and the gunner. The squad leader, too, must be trained in two roles: besides maintaining proficiency in his traditional role, he also must be trained to assume the duties and responsibilities of commanding a highly sophisticated vehicle.

Critics have suggested that these dual roles could threaten squad integrity. To the contrary, it might be suggested that this situation provides an opportunity to develop the assistant squad leader into both a Bradley

commander and a dismount team leader. On the battlefield, the squad leader will often be forced to decide which of his roles he must play at any given time. This means that the assistant squad leader has to be cross-trained to take over the remaining position, whichever it may be.

SQUAD LEADER

In addition to the many leadership skills a mechanized infantry squad leader must have, a Bradley vehicle commander must be proficient in land navigation, mounted formations, range estimation, target identification, fire commands, and tactics. And because the squad leader commands the Bradley from his position in the turret, he must perfect his gunnery skills right along with the gunner. Therefore, he must practice target discipline to make the vehicle's weapons as effective as possible, and he must practice fire discipline as well to control the rapid fire of the 25mm main gun and to conserve the limited number of TOW missiles aboard the Bradley.

TEWTs and CPXs conducted ac-

According to standard NATO threat scenarios can be used to sharpen the squad leader's skills. Again, any training the squad leader receives, the assistant squad leader should also receive.

THE GUNNER

It is not easy to select gunners to operate a weapon system that in no way resembles any other weapon system used by U.S. Infantrymen. But a common sense approach to the selection process is to use some of the same indicators leaders have always

Potential gunners and commanders should become familiar with this manual before NET starts.

Target identification, range estimation, and Threat vehicle identification are some of the critical gunnery skills that will be taught during NET.

THE DRIVER

Driver selection should not be a problem from a technical standpoint. Soldiers who have been trained as M113 drivers can quickly become proficient on the Bradley because it is easier to drive than the M113. It must

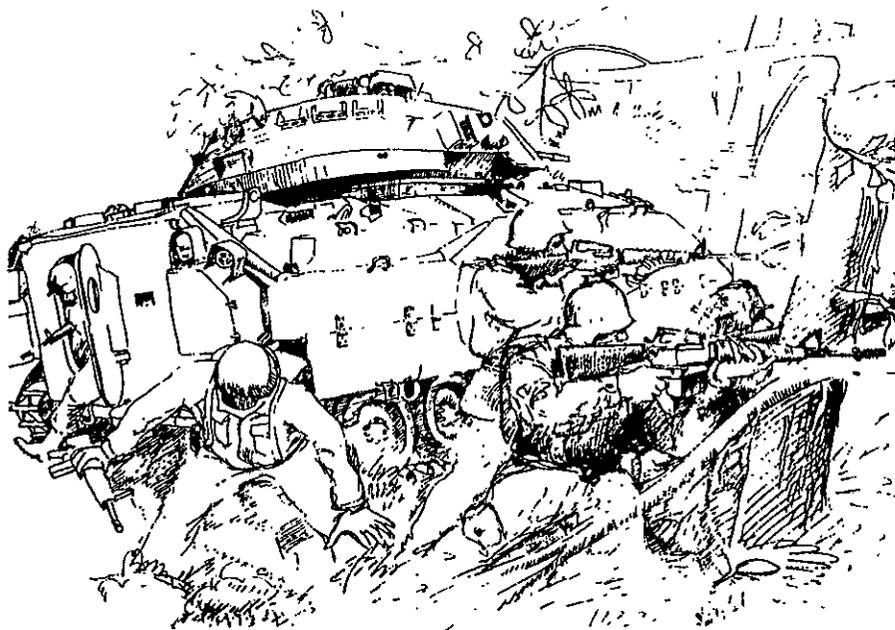
members of the squad, trainers must also consider training for the unit as a whole.

Several months before the start of NET, the NET team will provide the unit with a diagnostic test that has been designed to identify any weaknesses the soldiers might have in performing the 11B tasks that will be used during NET. These include such tasks as Threat vehicle identification, radio procedures, visual signals, and range estimation. The tests should be administered early enough to allow the normal BTMS cycle to schedule training to correct the weak areas before NET starts.

During the dismounted phases of NET, the Bradley squad will carry its TOE squad weapons aboard the Bradley and will employ them during dismounted operations. Accordingly, any training on squad weapons and dismounted techniques that the soldiers can be given beforehand will be valuable.

In addition to FM 23-1, other basic references for the NET program are FM 7-7J, The Mechanized Infantry Platoon and Squad (BIFV); FM 7-11M/TG (Draft), Trainer's Guide; and FMs 11M10, 20, 30, 40, Soldier's Manuals. Trainers should become familiar with all of these manuals before NET.

Units that take this advice and prepare themselves accordingly should be ready for their NET when the time comes. The NET team will coordinate its activities closely with each unit well in advance to make sure that its training and its transition to the Bradley go smoothly.



used to recommend a soldier for increased responsibility or for promotion — skill qualification scores, physical conditioning, GT scores, and EIB awards.

Farther along in the selection process, it might be helpful to arrange some turret time for the Bradley gunner candidates with a sister tank battalion. A soldier's performance on turret manipulation exercises can give a trainer an indication of his potential for gunnery.

Well in advance of NET, each unit will receive FM 23-1, Infantry and Cavalry Fighting Vehicle Gunnery, the primary reference used by NET trainers during gunnery training.

be noted, though, that the Bradley driver, as an integral part of the vehicle team, must also be a thinker — always looking ahead for defilade positions and covered routes. In short, he is a valuable member of the team, and his actions (or indications) may well determine the squad's success.

Because a Bradley driver has to know how to use terrain properly, it is important for him to sharpen his terrain driving skills before NET.

THE UNIT

After considering these individual



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