

CHURCHILL 3" GUN CARRIER

DEVELOPMENT

In September 1941, rumours of new German heavy tanks in development led the General Staff to request the Tank Board to produce cruiser and infantry tanks mounting large-calibre high-velocity guns specifically for engaging heavy German tanks.

The Challenger cruiser tank ran into difficulties and only a small number saw service in 1944 and 1945, although the turret was fitted to the TOG 2* heavy tank. The A22 Churchill infantry tank was the obvious candidate for a heavily-armed infantry tank. Unfortunately the need to fit through rail tunnels meant that the turret ring on the Churchill was too small for a turret capable of mounting a bigger gun. The answer was to fit the gun in a limited-traverse mounting in the hull, resulting in the A22D.

While this had tactical disadvantages, the resulting tank could be built in short order. As the 17 pdr selected for the Challenger would not be available for some time, the old 3" anti-aircraft gun was selected instead. Plenty of these were available after having been replaced in anti-aircraft units by the new 3.7" gun.

Originally 100 vehicles were planned, but in December 1941 it was decided that most Churchill production should focus on tanks fitted with the new 6 pdr gun, and the order was reduced to 24. The first prototype was ready in February 1942 and the remainder of the first production run was finished in the middle of the year.

COMBAT SERVICE

With the arrival of the German Tiger tank in North Africa in late 1942, the General Staff revived the A22D program and sent the existing Gun Carriers to support the Churchill tanks of the Army Tank Brigade in Tunisia. Some battalions issued their Gun Carriers to a dedicated anti-tank troop in each squadron, others issued one to each troop to ensure that they would always be on hand when required.

DESIGN FEATURES

Fitting the OQF 3" anti-aircraft gun in a limited-traverse mounting on the Churchill infantry tank was a quick way to field a weapon capable of knocking out a Tiger heavy tank.

On hearing rumours that the German Tiger tanks were in the area, some infantry colonels actually refused to attack unless they had Gun Carriers in support.



OQF 3" anti-aircraft gun.

The 3" gun is a high-velocity anti-aircraft weapon similar to the German '88'. The Gun Carrier can destroy any German tank, while protected against all but the heaviest return fire by its heavy armour.

Anti-tank 11, Semi-indirect Fire, Front 8

GUN CARRIER TANK PLATOON

The tank battalions valued the firepower of the gun carriers, but lacked the combat experience to make the most of them.

Gun Carrier Tank Platoons are rated as: **Confident Trained**

REPLACING STANDARD EQUIPMENT

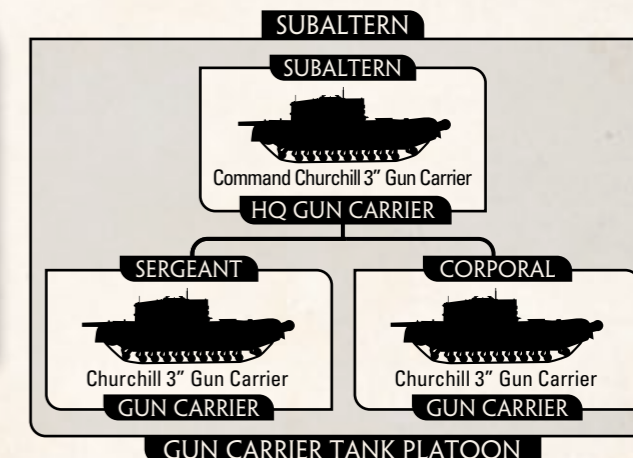
Any British company may replace any or all Infantry Tank Platoons equipped with Churchill tanks with Gun Carrier Tank Platoons.

PLATOON

3 Churchill 3" Gun Carriers.. 485 points
2 Churchill III and
1 Churchill 3" Gun Carrier . 415 points

If you elect to field a Gun Carrier Tank Platoon entirely equipped with Churchill 3" Gun Carriers, you may only field one Gun Carrier Tank Platoon.

3" Gun Carriers give Churchill tanks the ability to engage hard targets at long range while the tanks close and assault.



Name	Mobility	Front	Armour		Equipment and Notes
			Side	Top	
3" Gun Carrier	Slow Tank	8	7	2	AA MG, Protected ammo, Wide tracks.
Weapon	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	
OQF 3" gun	32*/80cm	2	11	3+	Hull mounted, Semi-indirect fire.

CHURCHILL 3" GUN CARRIER SPECIFICATIONS



Designation: Gun Carrier, 3", Mk I, Churchill
Crew: 5 (cdr, gnr, ldr, dvr, co-dvr)
Weight: 89,600lb/40,642kg
Length: 24'5"/7.44m
Height: 10'8"/3.25m
Width: 9'2.74m
Armament: 1x OQF 3" anti-aircraft gun,
1x Bren .303" machine-gun
Armour Thickness: 16mm to 102mm
Engine: Bedford twin-six petrol,
1294cu in/21 litre, 350hp
Suspension: Sprung bogies
Maximum Speed: 12.5mph/20km/h
Cross-country Speed: 8mph/13km/h
Road Radius: 90 miles/145km
Vertical Obstacle: 2'6"/0.76m
Trench Crossing: 10'/3.05m

