

An old idea from “back on the farm...”:

# Improving Class III Scout Resupply

by First Lieutenant Michael L. Yaeger

Providing logistical support for the task force scout platoon, especially the problem of resupplying it with fuel, has continued to spark an often-heated debate. Usually, the controversy centers on who should take the responsibility. Personally, I feel it should be someone who will give it the attention it deserves — after all, the scouts are the eyes and ears of the TF commander. But my focus here is on how this support is provided, not who does it.

I discovered the problem while on active duty with 3-66 Armor of the 2d Armored Division during an NTC rotation in 1993. I was an augmentee assigned as assistant HHC executive officer, where I learned first-hand what works and doesn't work when resupplying scouts.

While it was fairly easy to get water, food, parts, and mail to the scouts, problems arose when it came to delivering fuel. The HEMTT fueler is a superb transport vehicle, but not always practical for these reasons:

- It is often hard to keep HEMTTs forward long enough to rotate all of the scouts back from their positions for fueling. Problems occur because the HEMTT needs to get back to refuel its tank.
- It is impossible to travel around the battlefield unnoticed with a fuel HEMTT following your HMMWV.
- Obviously, I found that service station or tailgate resupply, in their pure forms, are usually impossible for the scouts.
- The scouts require much more flexibility, considering that they may be in multiple locations at once, or forward of the LD and unable to rally for a true LOGPAC.

This got me to thinking, why not refuel the vehicles from a small fuel tank, like we did back on the farm? When doing field work on our family farm in Montana, we always had enough fuel for the tractor or other equipment because we had a small fuel storage and pumping unit in the back of our pickup truck. I applied this principle to the scouts. The idea is not to make the scouts carry their own fuel, but rather to make the job easier and more tacti-

cally sound for whomever is responsible for their resupply.

I figured out how much weight the standard M998 HMMWV (no overload springs) could carry, and where a fuel tank could fit. The result was a 2 ft x 2 ft x 6 ft tank that fits where the back seats are. The design provides for 21 cubic feet of fuel storage, space for other POL storage, and a manual hand pump (no wiring). Most of the materials for the prototype tank are available through our current LOG system, but the tank itself would probably have to be fabricated from locally purchased sheet metal. It would just be a matter of assembling the parts on the tank and painting the whole thing green. I can only estimate the empty weight of the assembled fuel tank, but I would think about 250 to 300 lbs. This would still leave about 800 lbs for other cargo and gear, assuming no alteration is made to the HMMWV suspension. In addition to its compact size and simplicity, four people could easily remove the empty tank. Thus, the vehicle would be available for other duties. Just drain the last little bit of fuel into the HMMWV that is carrying the tank.

**Situation:** TF 1-10 is preparing to go on the offense. Scouts are screening 3km forward of LD/PL SNOW in two sections of five. They topped off with CLASS I, III, and V before moving out, but now need water and fuel. The scout resupply OIC/NCOIC coordinated with the scout platoon sergeant for two logistics resupply packages, one behind each of the two sections. The designated HMMWV is loaded with water jugs, extra MREs, new batteries, chemlights, parts for one of the scout HMMWVs, and a fuel tank filled with 155 gallons of diesel fuel. While this is not enough to fill every vehicle, it does give the LOGPAC enough to top off each HMMWV with 15 gallons.

**Mission:** The supply HMMWV will move forward of LD/PL SNOW to LRPs 1 and 2 to conduct LOGPAC for the TF scout platoon. It will then move back to AA RIVER in preparation for future LOGPAC operations.

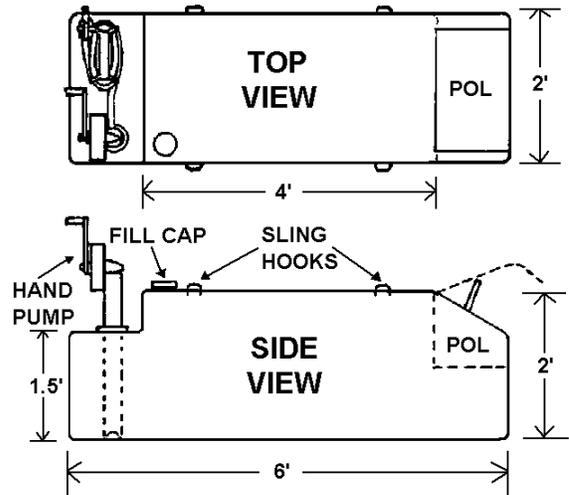
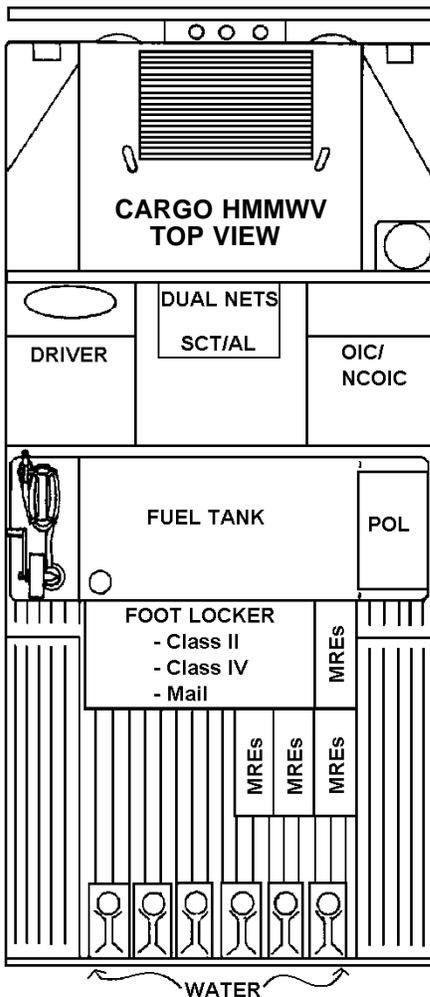
**Execution:** The supply HMMWV moves forward and crosses the LD, enroute to LRP 1. Once there, it fuels each vehicle in Alpha section as they

rotate back from their area of operation. When complete, the fuel HMMWV moves to LRP 2 and does the same with Bravo section. In addition to fueling, they exchange water cans, distribute parts, issue needed POL, issue MREs, and deliver other needed supplies. The HMMWV then returns to the AA, refuels, and prepares for future operations.

**AAR:** The scouts are now up on all classes of supply, without them having to return behind the LD. The HMMWV was able to get to them and back, unobserved by the enemy, which would have been impossible with a HEMTT fueler. The refueling operation did not require 5-gallon cans (30 cans would have been needed, space better used for other things). The fuel tank was emptied using a manual hand pump, which required no additional vehicle wiring, and the POL compartment allowed for clean storage of a standard POL basic load. The fuel was handled in bulk so there was less chance of contamination. Not using fuel cans saved time.

While this approach is not the only way to fuel scouts, I believe it does allow for greater flexibility for the TF commander when scouts are forward. If possible, the preferred method is to use the HEMTT, but it became apparent to me that, more often than not, the scouts are not around for normal LOGPAC and would use the smaller tank if it was available.

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**Figures**

1. 1 gal of fuel = 8 lbs. (approx)
2. 1 cu. ft. = 7.48 gal.
3. 21 cu. ft. x 7.48 gal. = 157.08 gal.
4. 157.08 gal. x 8 lbs. = 1256.64 lbs. (fuel)

**Capacities**

1. HMMWV weight (empty) = 5326.31 lbs.
2. HMMWV weight (max) = 7700.66 lbs.
3. Cargo weight (max) = 2374.35 lbs.
4. 155 gal. usable fuel (15 gal. for each scout vehicle).
5. 1.5 cu. ft. of POL storage space in end of tank.
6. Tank weight (empty) = 250 - 300 lbs. (approx).

**Parts**

1. Fuel hose . . . . . 15 feet
2. Fuel pump (manual) . . . . . hand crank
3. Nozzle . . . . . hand squeeze
4. Grounding cable . . . . . standard
5. Filler cap . . . . . 3 inch
6. Latches . . . . . buckle
7. Sheet metal . . . . . 16 gauge