

Sherman Crab Flail Tank: The Ultimate Guide to the New Vanguard 139

Prepare to embark on an extraordinary journey through the pages of the New Vanguard 139 and immerse yourself in the captivating world of the Sherman Crab Flail Tank. Published by Osprey Publishing, this comprehensive guide offers an unparalleled exploration of this remarkable armored vehicle that played a pivotal role in World War II.

The Sherman Crab Flail Tank, a unique and formidable weapon, was meticulously designed to clear paths through treacherous minefields. Its innovative flailing mechanism, featuring heavy chains attached to a rotating drum, effectively detonated mines, paving the way for Allied troops to advance safely.



Sherman Crab Flail Tank (New Vanguard Book 139)

by David Fletcher

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 9951 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 48 pages

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Historical Context

The development of the Sherman Crab Flail Tank was driven by the urgent need to overcome the devastating impact of landmines on Allied operations during World War II. In the face of heavily mined battlefields, traditional methods of mine clearance proved inadequate, leading to significant casualties and hindered troop movements.

In response to this critical challenge, the British Army initiated the development of specialized flail tanks. The Sherman Crab emerged as the most successful and widely produced variant, combining the robust chassis of the Sherman tank with the innovative flail mechanism. Its debut on the battlefields of Normandy in 1944 marked a turning point in the war.

Design and Features

The Sherman Crab Flail Tank showcased a remarkable fusion of engineering ingenuity and combat effectiveness. Its design was meticulously crafted to withstand the rigors of battlefield conditions and maximize its mine-clearing capabilities:

- **Sherman Chassis:** The Crab utilized the reliable and versatile chassis of the Sherman tank, renowned for its mobility and durability.
- **Flail Mechanism:** The tank's defining feature was its flail mechanism, consisting of 48 heavy chains flailing at high speed. These chains were attached to a rotating drum mounted at the front of the tank, effectively detonating mines in its path.
- **Armor and Protection:** The Crab's armor provided protection for its crew against enemy fire, while additional armor plates were added to shield the flail mechanism from damage.
- **Crew:** The tank was operated by a crew of four: commander, driver, gunner, and flail operator.

Combat Performance

The Sherman Crab Flail Tank proved its worth in countless combat operations throughout World War II. Its ability to clear minefields with speed

and efficiency transformed the course of battles and saved countless lives:

- **D-Day Landings:** The Crab played a crucial role in the D-Day landings, clearing paths through the heavily mined Omaha Beach.
- **Operation Market Garden:** During Operation Market Garden, the Crab's flailing capabilities were instrumental in securing vital bridges and roads.
- **Normandy Breakout:** The tank's effectiveness in clearing minefields facilitated the Allied breakout from Normandy.

Legacy and Impact

The Sherman Crab Flail Tank left an indelible mark on the history of armored warfare. Its innovative design and combat performance revolutionized mine clearance tactics, paving the way for future developments in military engineering:

- **Continued Use:** The Crab remained in service with the British Army until the 1960s and saw action in subsequent conflicts, including the Korean War.
- **Inspiration for Future Designs:** The Crab's flail mechanism became a standard feature in future mine-clearing vehicles, including the Centurion AVRE.
- **Historical Significance:** The Sherman Crab Flail Tank stands as a testament to the ingenuity and determination of engineers and soldiers during World War II.

The Sherman Crab Flail Tank: The Ultimate Guide to the New Vanguard 139 is an essential resource for anyone interested in the history, design, and combat performance of this remarkable armored vehicle. Through its comprehensive analysis, gripping battlefield accounts, and stunning visuals, this guide provides a captivating glimpse into the world of the Sherman Crab Flail Tank and its enduring legacy.

Whether you're a military historian, modeler, or simply fascinated by the ingenuity of wartime engineering, this book offers a wealth of knowledge and inspiration. Embark on a journey through the pages of the New Vanguard 139 and discover the extraordinary story of the Sherman Crab Flail Tank, a symbol of courage, innovation, and the indomitable spirit of those who fought in World War II.



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