

RNZAC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER #206 February 2021

Meetings Happy Hour: Thursday 4 March 2022 at 1700 hrs at the Papanui RSA.

Whose is it?



Admin & Log

RNZAC Association Subscriptions for 2021/22 are now due - (\$30.00)

Subscriptions for the RNZAC Association are now due for the 2021/22 year and must be paid by the 30th September 2022. The subscription amount was confirmed at \$30.00 by the AGM at Cambrai last November.

It is preferable that subscriptions be paid by internet banking direct to the RNZAC Association: Account number: 03 0566 0209452 001. (Please include your surname and initials in the details field.)

Your prompt payment of the subscription helps the Association to maintain the RNZAC Association Website and to support important projects like the RNZAC History Project. Your continued support of the RNZAC Association is much appreciated.

Mike Sheppard, Treasurer, RNZAC Association

Correspondence

The Association received Season's Greetings from the Governor General, Rt. Hon. Dame Cindy Kiro and her husband Dr Richard Davies.

From Ron Cone and Bruce Tweedy, mention has been made that former NZ Scots member Trevor Agnew received a Queen's Service Medal (QSM) in the New Year's Honours list. The QSM has been awarded to Trevor for services to children's literacy and historical research. Trevor was a teacher for nearly 40 years and has contributed widely as a freelance writer and reviewer.

Answer: Ukraine T-84 Oplot-M

The T-84 Oplot-M is Ukraine's latest Main Battle Tank. While it contains many advanced features, the Oplot is in many ways simply a highly advanced version of the T-80U main battle tank, one of the most lethal tanks the Soviet Union produced.

The T-84 is a product of the Ukrainian Kharkiv Morozov Machine Design Bureau (KhKBM). With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the designers at KhKBM realised that it would be good for business if they rolled advanced features into their own "new" tank. The T-80UD already was an export success, with sales to Pakistan.

The process of creating the "new" T-84 began with the upgrading of the 6TD engine. The original 6TD-1 as installed on the T-80UD had a horsepower of around 1000. The 6TD-2 upped this to 1200 hp, allowing the tank to retain its mobility with the increased weight of additional modules. A welded turret was incorporated, which gives better protection, greater upgrade potential of the armour and increased survivability. The Shtora Active Protection Systems (APS) was also fitted.

The first T-84 "Oplot" rolled off the assembly line in the spring of 1995. These changes added two tons of weight to the design, bringing it up to forty-eight tons. However, this basic T-84 design was not adopted by any other nation. So KhKBM continued improving the design.

Due to a lack of supply from Russia, various plants were retooled and Ukraine began producing its own KBA-3 125 mm tank gun. In addition, a domestic "Nozh" Explosive Reactive Armour was produced, which improved effectiveness against kinetic energy projectiles and HEAT warheads. A new "Warta" APS with the same capabilities but new sensors was added. Other changes included the addition of an auxiliary power unit, changes to the side screens to improve protection, new radio-navigation equipment, and new "shoes" for the tracks to reduce wear on road surfaces.

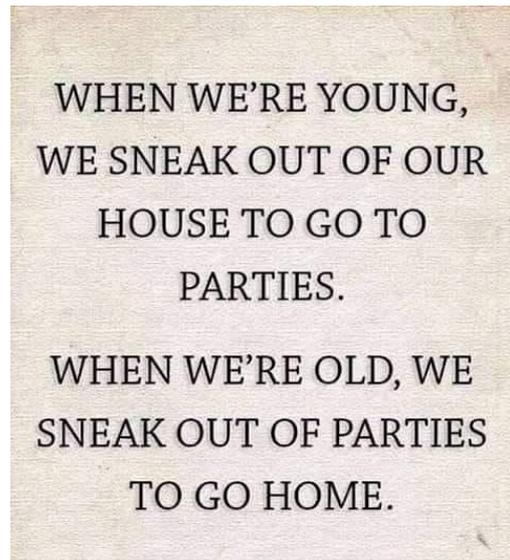
Ten of these "new" T-84Us were acquired by the Ukrainian military in 2000. In the mid-2000s, KhKBM developed a modernisation kit for the T-84Us. This improved protection by installing a newer "Nozh-2"/"Duplet" ERA with improved resistance to all threat types. It also added the massive PKN-6 stabilized thermal commander sight to the tank. Due to the size of the PKN-6, the commander's machine gun was moved. The engine was also changed to the 6TD-2E, a more ecological version that produces less toxic exhaust. Some changes were made to the ammunition storage as well, with some rounds being stored in the turret bustle with blowout panels to protect against ammunition cookoff.

The order to modernize all Oplots in Ukrainian service was given in May 2009. However a lack of funds delayed this upgrade and only one tank has been seen with this package. The BM Oplot upgrade package adds another three tons, bringing the weight up to fifty-one tons.

A rough comparative evaluation of the Oplot's combat qualities versus its Russian counterparts can be found in Malaysian tank trials in the 2000s. A basic variant of the T-84

performed at around the same level as Russia's export T-90S. The BM Oplot would be a rough equivalent for any tank Russia can field but the new T-14 "Armata" almost definitely surpasses it. Unfortunately the small number of BM Oplots in service renders its advantages irrelevant. The T-84U's poor performance at Strong Europe 2018 may also cast doubt on the quality of Ukrainian sights versus modern Western tanks.

Humour





**Cop: You were going fast.
Me: I was just trying to keep
up with traffic.
Cop: There isn't any.
Me: I know! That's how far
behind I am.**

**Just failed my driving
test. When the examiner
asked me "what sign
would you expect to see
down a narrow country
road?" Apparently
'fresh eggs for sale'
wasn't the answer...**

Reminders;

RNZAC Association Web site: www.rnzac.co.nz
Contributions to this newsletter are gratefully accepted.
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Mike Smith, Editor