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Subject: Re: Pointfix poll. Bug or Balance?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Sun, 20 Dec 2009 08:15:23 GMT

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Toggle Spoiler1. ARGUMENT FROM CODE

This is the formula for calculating points.

$\text{vehicledamagemultiplier} * \text{rawdamage} * \text{warheadmultiplier} / \text{warheadmultiplier}$

If you know anything about maths it's not hard to see the problem here. The same variable is multiplied into the equation and then immediately divided again. This is, quite simply, nonsense. It's clearly a mistake.

It should be:

$\text{vehicledamagemultiplier} * \text{rawdamage} * \text{warheadmultiplier}$

^ The pointsfix is a simple alteration of the formula into the formula above.

The missing warhead-multiplier is why certain weapons get extraordinary points for doing unremarkable damage. With the bug fixed, the following two statements become true:

1. points gained for attacking vehicles are directly based on how much damage is done, and the cost of the target. Makes no difference what weapon you use to attack it.
2. points gained for repairing vehicles is half what the enemy gets for attacking them (exactly like structures)

## 2. ARGUMENT FROM INCONSISTENCY

there are essentially three different types of target in this game that can be attacked normally. infantry, vehicles, and structures.

-WITHOUT THE POINTSFIX-

vs green health buildings: points = damage

vs red/yellow health buildings: points = damage

vs green health vehicles: points does not = damage

vs red/yellow health buildings: points = damage

vs green health infantry: points = damage

vs red/yellow health buildings: points = damage

why on earth should this one out of six be different? what sense does this make?

with a building, you get a set amount of points for killing it no matter you use to kill it.

you get 750 points for killing a powerplant (assuming it isn't repaired) whether you nuke it, get a tech in there, hammer it to dust with an arty, or roast it with a flamer.

you get 35 points for killing a technician (again assuming he isn't 'repaired'). Doesn't matter how you killed him, whether you run him over, shoot him in the face with a sniper rifle or med tank shell, or pistol him.

and the same is true for red/yellow health vehicles. when a med is over half dead, you get points for how much damage you're doing to it, regardless of what weapon you're using to do that damage.

so anyone who challenges the assertion that the pointsfix is the intended points system must answer these two questions.

1. why vehicles? why not infantry and not buildings?
2. why only when the vehicles have green health? why not when they have red/yellow health?

### 3. ARGUMENT FROM INSURMOUNTABLE PROBABILITY

after the pointsfix was implemented and when we were testing it, i noticed something interesting. here are the killpoints you earn for blowing up a vehicle, assuming they aren't being repaired.

Mammoth Tank: 150  
Harvester: 100  
Apache/Orca: 90  
Stealth Tank: 90  
Medium Tank: 80  
Flame Tank: 80  
Chinook: 70  
Light Tank: 60  
APC: 50  
MRLS: 45  
Artillery: 45  
Hummvee: 35  
Buggy: 30

do you notice anything about these figures? if you don't, let me make another list. this one is how much each vehicle costs.

Mammoth Tank: 1500  
Harvester: n/a  
Apache/Orca: 900  
Stealth Tank: 900  
Medium Tank: 800  
Flame Tank: 800  
Chinook: 700  
Light Tank: 600  
APC: 500  
MRLS: 450  
Artillery: 450  
Hummvee: 350  
Buggy: 300

when a vehicle is killed, it yields points to the tune of 10% the vehicle's cost. give or take one point for rounding, this is also true for infantry (except free infantry, for obvious reasons, and also the Nod Rocket Soldier due to an unrelated coding mistake) - eg a tib sydney (150) gives 15 points upon death, a hotwire (350) yields 35 points.

not only this, but the kill-bonus also follows the same pattern as tanks. 50% of the points are gained for bringing your target to the brink of death, and the other 50% for the actual kill.

now, here's the point. I noticed this AFTER the pointsfix was identified and coded. nobody noticed

these figures until the testing period, when it was used on the jelly server, n00bstories, blackintel, and spoonysrv. let's put aside all other arguments for the pointsfix being the true intended pointsystem for a moment.

to believe that the pointsfix was unintended, you HAVE to believe that all these numbers magically lining up into 10% of the vehicle cost is a complete coincidence. stop and think about this for a moment. EVERY vehicle in the game suddenly has its kill-points set to 10% of its cost, the same ratio as infantry have always been, AND vehicles now follow the same 50-50 ratio between damage and the kill bonus. Think how improbable this must be if it were an accident. The odds against it must be absolutely enormous.

#### 4. ARGUMENT FROM BALANCE

Quite simply, why should one get points when one is not doing damage? Shooting a heavy tank with a ramjet or an auto rifle achieves nothing.

With the pointsbug fixed, every method of gaining points is something which demonstrably helps your situation in the here and now. Damaging the enemy, repairing an ally, or disarming c4 and beacons. That is all.

Look at maps like Walls Flying. It is a simple matter to get some ramjets on the wall. They can strip any enemy vehicle in the field for huge points - and they can do it in almost complete safety, and they can scarcely miss no matter how good or bad the sniper happens to be. So we have an automatic method of gaining huge amounts of points despite no skill, no teamwork, no risk, no venture into enemy territory, and no actual achievement. Alarm bells ringing yet? It becomes rather unwise to move out with vehicles at all. What sense does this make? How can anyone think this is good for balance? Westwood were no fools. They did make some oversights, but they would never have chosen to do something as stupid as this.

Another example. Field. It has been a common thing for GDI teams to "let the WF die" when Nod pounds it with artillery. Common sense would seem to indicate that GDI deserves to lose a game like this. If they can't kill a few Nod vehicles, Nod is clearly the better team. They either have better tank skills or they have better teamwork, or both. So why should GDI get the victory just because they decided to let a building go and then camp in base? Many games like that have been won without the Nod base taking a scratch; without GDI even holding the field for more than a couple of minutes. Good balance?

In a nutshell, the points bug penalises offensive play, and rewards defensive play in some rather odd ways. Players involved with the beta test, such as Crimson and Spotelmo, have testified to the fact that the designers definitely wanted to promote aggressive play.

It also means that individual score is incorrect too, which will have a negative impact on the official ladder (on top of the negative impact of the 'wrong' team winning). Players who achieved less may earn higher scores and thereby more rank.

#### 5. ARGUMENT FROM WESTWOOD

no matter how high all the evidence piles up, quite a few people looked at it all and said it didn't prove anything (makes me laugh, to be honest). they said they would never believe it unless someone from westwood said it. (bit like a creationist saying he won't believe evolution is true until he hears it from god)

A while ago, Tom "LordMot" Spencer-Smith appeared on the official Renegade forums to say hi to the community and promote his new game. He was the online lead for Renegade; in other words, he was in charge of beta testing Renegade (and Sole Survivor)

I asked him about the pointsfix, i.e. whether Westwood intended it, blah blah.

<http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v284/MaidenTy1/lordmot1.jpg>  
<http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v284/MaidenTy1/lordmot4.jpg>  
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<http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v284/MaidenTy1/lordmot3.jpg>

This completely corresponds with everything myself, Crimson and BlackIntel have been saying. It wasn't intended, it was a mistake that wasn't noticed in time.

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