

## Is Miltank a Good Pokemon?

Miltank is a very interesting Pokemon that is often overlooked, especially as it was Gym Leader Whitney's signature Pokemon from Gold, Silver, and Crystal. The problem with the Milk Cow Pokemon in its first incarnation was that it was extremely gimmicky, depending on a move called Milk Drink to continuously heal itself.

The Cow Pokemon's signature held item, Moo Moo Milk, exists in Pokemon to this day, acting as a cheap, superior alternative to Super Potions, healing 100 HP for just 500 Poke dollars each. Ironically, the move Milk Drink doesn't require it as a held item for the move to work, which naturally makes Milk Drink an excellent recovery move.

## How Good was Miltank in Pokemon Gold, Silver, and Crystal?

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Pokemon games, Miltank was an annoying Pokemon because it could heal itself so easily. It would also Growl to lower opponent's attack and use Defense Curl to raise its own defense, already a very good 105 base stat. Stomp is a decent Normal-type move. But, other than that, it only learned Rollout and Body Slam at later levels. Whitney's Miltank relied on Rollout, a Rock-type move that attacks for up to five turns, growing stronger each time unless it misses. If you were facing Whitney's Miltank and you couldn't get it to miss before the second or third Rollout hit, she'd probably sweep most of your team.

The upside of Miltank, like many Normal-type Pokemon is that she can learn some pretty nice stuff by TM, even in Gold and Silver. Back then, moves were considered physical or special based on their type, a split that didn't happen until Diamond and Pearl. Still, she learned good enough moves by level up to be a very solid competitive Pokemon. Back then, there were no double battles, so she often would serve as a "Cleric," coming out and walling physical attackers. She would run Heal Bell, Milk Drink, Growl, and Body Slam. Heal Bell is the last move Miltank learned by level up and it removes status conditions from *all of your party's members*.

What made Miltank better than Blissey, though, a very popular Pokemon to this day? Miltank's superior Speed, Physical Defense, and Attack made Body Slam a solid attacking move. It had 85 base power, which with the same type attack bonus of 50%, made it a 127 base power move. Growl cut the opposing Pokemon's attack by so much that Miltank's constant Milk Drink spam made it one of the better defensive Pokemon of its day. It also helped that Leftovers, which heals 1/16th of the Pokemon's HP at the end of each turn, already existed.

The downside to Miltank, of course, is that Special Attackers weren't affected by Growl at all. Miltank's Special Defense isn't terrible, a base 70 stat. She could still hold her own, but she would likely switch out soon as a Pokemon she couldn't counter emerged. Also, putting her to sleep would probably be the end of her, too. Heal Bell is wonderful, even for Miltank herself, but not if she's Asleep and unable to use it.

It also bears mentioning that despite being a Dairy Cow, Miltank is far from slow, with a base 100 Speed Stat. Heck, she has the same base speed as Charizard, Entei, Tentacruel, Typhlosion, and Zapdos! That's a heck of a thing to speed tie with! Interestingly, the only physical attacker faster than

Miltank that was competitively relevant in GSC was Tauros! Somehow, this has become a forgotten fact. Of course, power creep has buried Miltank over the years, but in Generation 2, Miltank was a heck of a Pokemon who played an important role in both competitive play and on in-game teams.

## **How Good was Miltank in Pokemon Ruby, Sapphire, and Emerald?**

In Ruby and Sapphire, Miltank was still quite relevant, although her move set varied somewhat. Curse and Psych Up were TM moves that existed before, but with many new Pokemon to contend with, Miltank often turned to these new moves to power up. With Curse, Miltank's Body Slam hit harder than ever, losing only Growl to this new move.

Alternatively, Psych Up could copy opponent's stat changes, such as Dragon Dance or Swords Dance, and hit hard with Earthquake rather than Body Slam. Yes, Miltank could learn Earthquake and Curse before, but now, to keep up with over 100 new Pokemon, she needed to pull out all the stops.

You could also use Thunder Wave and Seismic Toss on Miltank, moves that Blissey often uses to this day. Of course, why would you with a solid 80 base attack stat?

## **How Good was Miltank in Diamond and Pearl?**

By Generation 4, Miltank started to become power crept out of the competitive game. However, she was still relevant in lower tiers. In Generation 3, Pokemon gained abilities, and Miltank had two useful ones. The first is Thick Fat, which halves the damage of incoming Fire and Ice type moves, an ability many useful Pokemon have. The trouble is, by Generation 4, many moves went from being Physical to Special, meaning you had to predict move-sets much more accurately in order to switch in Miltank at the right time. Still, many Miltank still ran Thick Fat.

Another relevant ability in competitive play for Miltank was Scrappy, which is a fantastic ability which allows her to hit Ghost types with Normal-type and Fighting-type moves. Spiritomb and Mismagius were big threats in the Diamond and Pearl era, so having Miltank be able to deal substantial damage to them was a huge plus.

Hilariously, Miltank could even be a sweeper, thanks to Curse. Some Miltank ran Rock Slide or even Stealth Rock, taking on a more utility role on some teams. Alternatively, she could run Earthquake and Double-Edge. With the addition of Life Orb as a held item, she could hit even harder. Plus, thanks to access to Hammer Arm, which she could learn as an egg move, she could take down even Registeel and Steelix.

Unfortunately, by the time Black and White rolled around, Miltank's competitive edge began to disappear. She's hung around since as a Stealth Rock and Toxic setter whose Speed tier still makes her somewhat viable, but only in the lower rungs of competitive play. Miltank even survived the Pokedex-gate, when Sword and Shield omitted many Pokemon in order to release on time, returning in the Isle of Armor DLC. By the 8<sup>th</sup> generation, though, Miltank has become pretty much forgotten, even while gaining some new moves that take advantage of her high Attack stat. Until, that is, we revisited the fourth generation in the form of remakes.

## How Good is Miltank in Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl?

In the Generation 4 remakes, Miltank gains all of the new moves like High Horsepower and Play Rough she gained more recently. Like many mons in the remakes, Miltank lost the use of Toxic, forcing players to have to consider Miltank as a more offensive-oriented Pokemon. She does still learn Hammer Arm and Curse as egg moves, as well.

When Hidden Abilities were revealed in Generation 5, Miltank gained Sap Sipper, which allows her to switch in on Grass-moves, not only nullifying them but also raising her attack by one stage. Still, Thick Fat is as relevant as ever, plus a Scrappy set with Hammer Arm, Body Slam, and Curse is still viable if your team needs the Ghost-type coverage.

Despite Miltank essentially becoming an untiered competitive Pokemon in Sword and Shield, Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl look much more like the original Generation 4 games, albeit with new held items, abilities, and moves that didn't exist back in 2006. This, of course, means that Miltank can still hold her own. High Horsepower is a heck of a move that she learns by level up, and if she sets up, the powerful Ground-type move can tear through quite a few teams.

It wouldn't be at all surprising to see Miltank regain her stature as a useful utility Pokemon, especially since she can still set up Stealth Rock, still use Milk Drink, and still hit fairly hard with Body Slam. Some players will prefer an Impish nature, boosting her already solid defense at the cost of the Special Attack she never uses. But, it's not impossible to see a Jolly nature boosting her Speed at the cost of Special Attack. A max Speed Miltank is going to be overlooked, more often than not, because who's going to be looking for her to use High Horsepower?

Going forward, Miltank will have to be considered a good Pokemon that is going to often get overlooked. She's simply not exciting, and with all of the flashy Ultra Beasts and dozens of Legendaries the past few generations have dumped on the game, it's not hard to see Miltank getting lost in the Pokedex shuffle. As of this writing in almost December 2021, there are 898 distinct Pokemon species, with a couple more from Pokemon Arceus Legends being revealed already.

It's likely that we will be seeing Miltank transition into a more defensive role going forward, with a Careful nature bulking up her Special Defense at the cost of her underwhelming Special Attack. A set

of Stealth Rock, Milk Drink, Thunder Wave, and Body Slam is likely, with Heal Bell an option if you don't need the hazard setter. That being said, some high-profile tournament player will have to champion Miltank for her to see much play in the top tiers of competitive play. The good news is, she still has Brilliant Diamond and Shining Pearl to prove her worth, and she'll always have her glory days.

Entering Generation 9 with Scarlet and Violet, Miltank may be a C-tier Pokemon at best. Nevertheless, she is a darn good Pokemon. Plus, her shiny is blue. Who doesn't want a blue Cow Pokemon in their collection?

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