

MENG



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MAY / JUNE 2014 · £6.50 UK \$14.95
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MENG BEHAVING BRADLEY
PART ONE of our M2A3 Bradley Build

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You may have noticed our new look cover and that's because MENG and AFV Modeller are delighted to announce an exciting new collaboration with MENG becoming the exclusive title sponsor of AFV Modeller and AIR Modeller Magazines. This will mean more in depth coverage of the exciting new Meng releases and interesting modelling activities organized by both parties. We begin this by looking at the new Bradley kit from Meng with photos of the real vehicle as well.

Meng AFV Modeller is published Bimonthly by
AFV Modeller Ltd
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Northumberland
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ISSN 1747-4183



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U.S. INFANTRY FIGHTING VEHICLE WITH 'BUSK III' UPGRADE KIT

As far back as 1967 the seed was sown for the development of a replacement for the M113. No longer was an Armoured Personnel Carrier sufficient with the arrival of the Russian BMP-1, an Infantry Fighting Vehicle should not only carry and protect troops, but should be able to engage hard and soft targets and keep pace with tank operations. Finally in 1980 the new IFV was named after the five-star General Omar Bradley and the first production models were delivered in May of the following year with sixty per month produced to replace the M113. Now I'm no expert or engineer, but a few fundamental issues that came to light with the M113 appear unchanged (and were addressed to a degree - think back to

the rear mounted fuel cells on late M113s), namely internal fuel and ammunition storage. Also the use of aluminium armour hasn't proven the safest defence hence the continued upgrades in external add-on protection, the ultimate being the latest Bradley Urban Survivability Kits (BUSK) depicted by the kit. Also on-board the A3 version is the latest vision and sighting technology with improved safety seating and fire control safety systems. Bradley's M242 25mm 'Bushmaster' chain gun has a dual feed mechanism, ammo choice at the flick of a switch and a rate of two hundred rounds per minute in multiple shot mode means the M2A3 can, and has, successfully engaged enemy tanks.

Failing that, there's TOW Anti-tank missile system with a range of four kilometres with protective armoured hatches to allow the crew to reload in hostile situations. It's no wonder the Bradley has long been a popular project with modellers of modern machinery, Tamiya and Academy providing various kits in 1:35 with a wealth of aftermarket upgrades available to bring the standards of detail up to contemporary levels that many modellers strive for. So what if you could pack everything you could want to build the latest M2A3 into one box? Full interior, engine compartment, working suspension and track links, photoetch...you would need a pretty big box... and here it is.



MENG 1:35 M2A3 BRADLEY





We've been increasingly impressed with Meng's products and approach to the hobby, so much so you'll have noticed they're now our official sponsor here at AFV modeller, but I think it's safe to say the Bradley is their most ambitious and spectacular production to date. This is THE kit of the Bradley in 1:35, perhaps one of the most comprehensive and attractive 1:35 kits ever? Sure there are lots of 'full interior' kits on the market with all the bells and whistles but absolutely everything about this kit has been handled with the same level of detail and quality, from the outer box through to the flexible seat belts.

A kit with so many parts of a complex nature usually terrifies me! I'm the first to admit I like to get to the painting stage as quickly as possible. I figured the project would be broken into building and painting combined with the full internal detail.

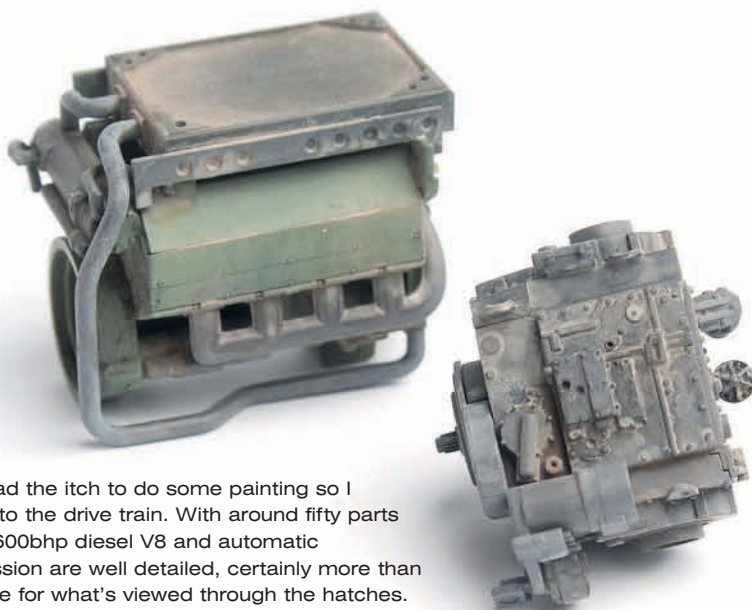
BIG OL' BOX O' BITS

The size of the box is surprising, around twice the depth you'd normally expect but with twenty sprues plus tracks, upper and lower hulls, photoetch and accessories it needs to be. What at first looked to be a bit of a gimmick (thinking back to Matchbox kits of the '70s) are coloured sprues. This has actually proved very useful due to the large number of sprues when working, the engine bay is largely grey and the interior parts in a very closely matched green. The clear parts have been moulded with a very pleasing tint of blue/green.

Assembly starts, as you'd expect, with the lower hull and running gear. Wheels are fitted via poly-caps giving a solid fix whilst being able to rotate. The single piece 'tub' provides a sound base with alignments being a key point at later stages of the build. The working suspension is crying out to be articulated on some rough terrain or rubble; fit is excellent and assembly swift.

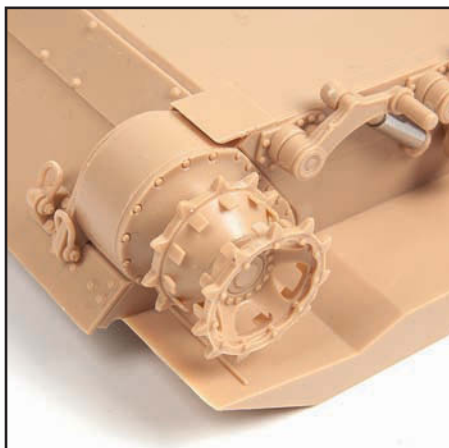
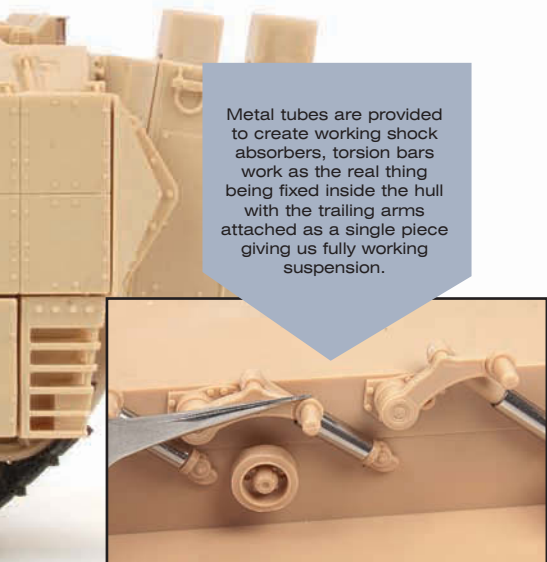


The separate motor units have a detailed bell housing and splined input shaft, good news if you fancy creating a maintenance scene. After an airbrushed basecoat of AK704 dark grey and AK705 Graugrün (which I found a good match to the interior green) I used a graphite powder to buff the grey to a subtle metallic sheen followed by 'Warm White' wash from Mig Productions and various dark and dust coloured pin-washes. The photos I'd gathered from the 'net showed quite heavy dust in the engine bay which I've used AK pigment powders to replicate.



Next I had the itch to do some painting so I jumped to the drive train. With around fifty parts the big 600bhp diesel V8 and automatic transmission are well detailed, certainly more than adequate for what's viewed through the hatches.

Metal tubes are provided to create working shock absorbers, torsion bars work as the real thing being fixed inside the hull with the trailing arms attached as a single piece giving us fully working suspension.



Individual link tracks click together and remain workable

AN INSIDE JOB...

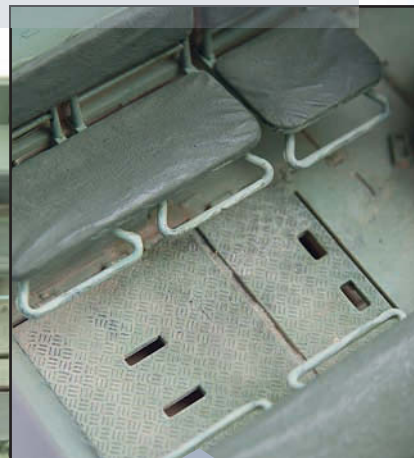


With the engine and gearbox set aside, it was time for some more painting. I'd left the interior in sub-components to make the airbrushing of the base colour easier, namely the driver's compartment wall, air intake unit and turret basket surround. The fit is so good very little cement is needed for final fitting. As with the drive-train units, restraint is the key with wear and tear. I limited myself to some dark washes to add depth and contrast along with some highlights brushed with a lighter mix of the green. Detail painting is quite limited to some black and grey units with the light fittings in white and fire extinguishers adding a touch of colour.

A dusty floor and engine bay appear quite common from the photos I had to hand so a simple application of pigment powder (AK's North Africa Dust) went into the nooks and crannies with a fine brush. On the floor areas where the crew would be active I've scratched the powder away in places with a damp cocktail stick, enhancing the lived-in look in the rear I rubbed over the floor tread-plate with a finger and added some restrained paint wear with a soft pencil here and there. To get a slight cracked and creased look to the seats (as you see with these heavy modern vinyl coverings) I used the thick paint from inside the lid of a bottle of Lifecolor UA530 and applied it in one heavy coat with a stippling action. Once dry,

there's an effect of fine cracking which is enhanced with a slight sheen achieved by first rubbing a finger across your forehead and then buffing across the seats. So there's some 'sweat' gone into the model but so far no 'tears' and probably 'blood' at some point as I've just put a fresh scalpel blade in... Another effect I found to work well was on the vision blocks which looking at reference have a particular purple/red appearance. An old tin of Humbrol enamel I keep in reserve for red tail lights did the trick once painted on the reverse of the periscope clear parts. The colour is number '30' a gloss burgundy, worth digging around your old paint box for, I'm not sure if it's still available.

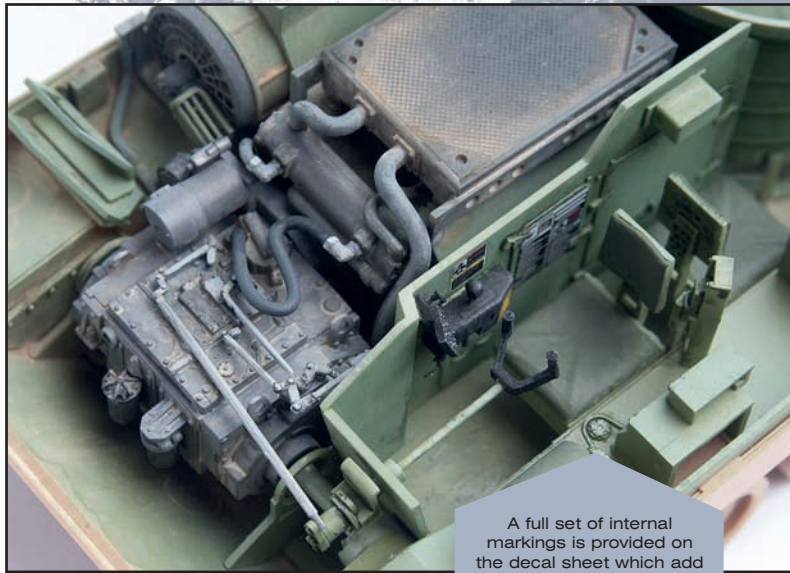
I was looking forward to fitting the engine and gearbox, I'd suggest fitting everything dry as it's a fiddle to line everything up. Once you're happy with the alignment a few dots of liquid cement is all it takes. Steering arms, gear selectors and various pieces of plumbing are added next adding to the busy appearance of the engine bay. As with any kit or aftermarket engine more wiring and pipework could be added if you have good reference, it really depends on your finished display; you could in theory leave out all of the internals from this kit if showing your Bradley all buttoned-up...but what a waste! With all of the decals applied to the interior it was getting close to closing time...



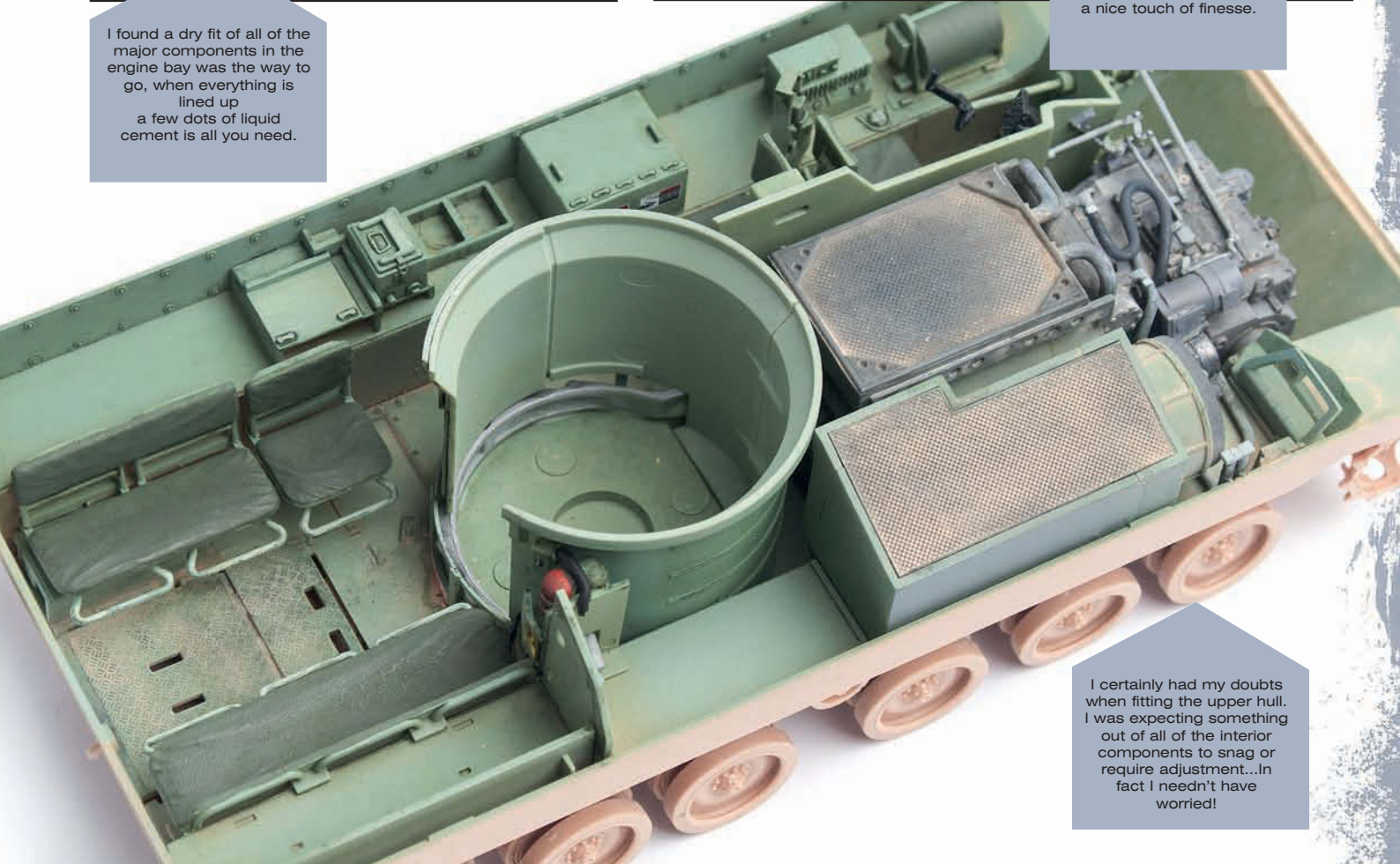
Further texture was added to the seat covers with thick acrylic colour and a quick buff with a finger. The anti-blast floor plate could also be finished in grey for a little more interest.



I found a dry fit of all of the major components in the engine bay was the way to go, when everything is lined up a few dots of liquid cement is all you need.



A full set of internal markings is provided on the decal sheet which add a nice touch of finesse.



I certainly had my doubts when fitting the upper hull. I was expecting something out of all of the interior components to snag or require adjustment...In fact I needn't have worried!



A small, but commendable little detail with the kit are the flexible, soft plastic seat belts. These are fixed to the hull roof before joining to the lower hull and can be positioned with a natural looking drape around the seating. I fully expected to have to make a few tweaks here and there when finally fixing the hull top into position, there's a lot of interior parts, bulkheads etc but thankfully a nice reassuring push-fit was all it took with very little cement required. With the excellent design, fit and instructions don't be put off this kit by the amount of parts and complexed detail. It may look like one for the advanced modeller but anyone with a grasp of the basics should be able to produce something to be proud of with this kit in a reasonable time scale.



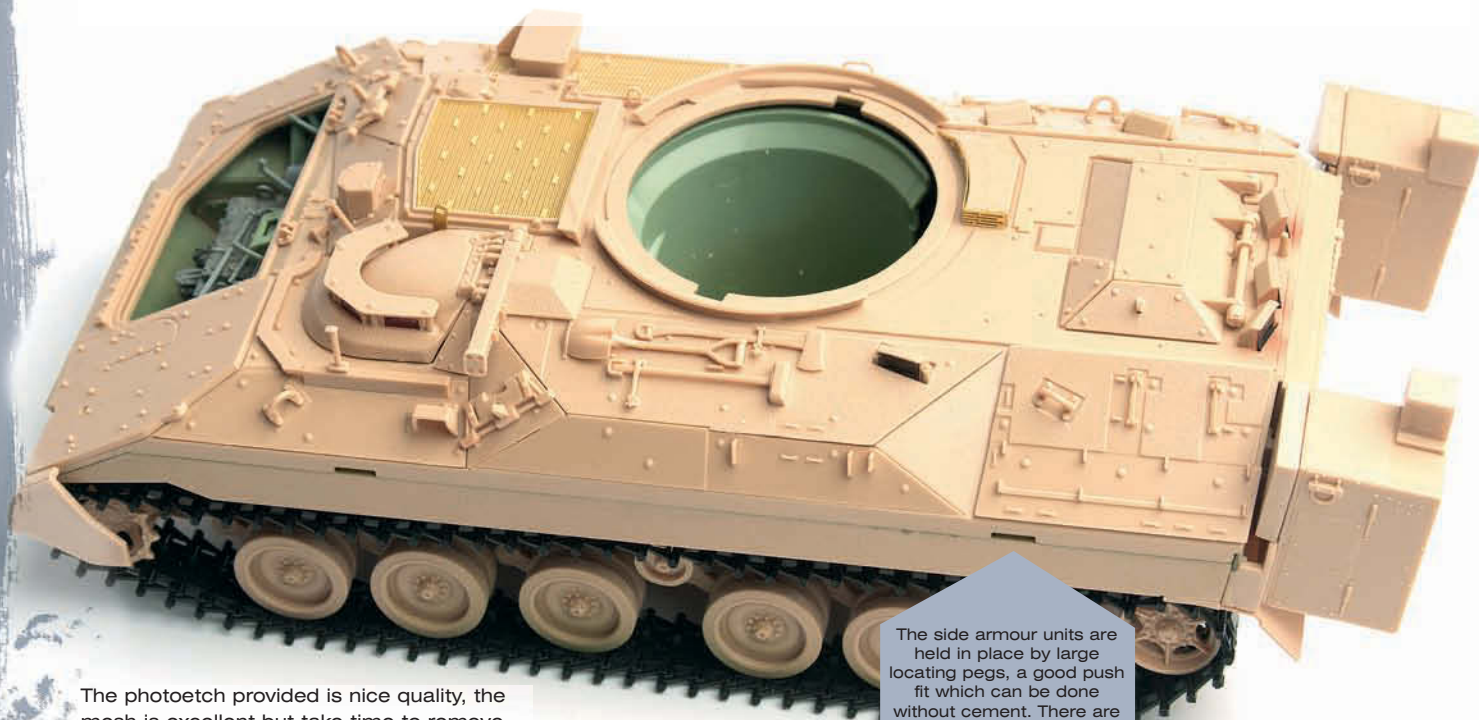
With the upper hull in place the complex shapes of the armour and hatches progresses quite swiftly with the layers of armour accurately replicated showing some very sharp bolt detail. Starting up front, the engine bay hatch can be posed open with the optional struts. The driver's hatch can be left to open or close with a clever cam



on the hinge which holds an accurate open position with full internal detail and delicate cast texture. The rear compartment roof hatch also has a very pleasing hinge set up to allow free movement and show off the interior work. Tools and fittings are delicate and like many of the finely detailed components need careful removal from the

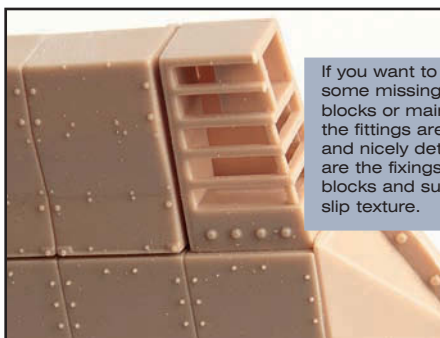


sprues, the styrene is a nice quality and cleans up well where necessary. I found where the small 'nodes' were added to edges of components to avoid any marks on the parts themselves, it was preferable to clean these up before removing the part, the sprue able to safely hold the parts more safely than my sausage-like fingers!

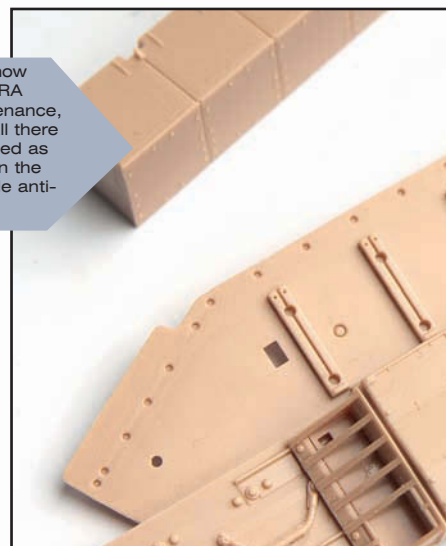


The photoetch provided is nice quality, the mesh is excellent but take time to remove the holding tabs accurately as the fit into the frames is perfect and any excess around the edge hinders this. MENG have made a successful attempt at the anti-slip areas which is very fine and should respond well to careful painting. Before the fenders and BUSK armour can be finally placed the tracks need adding. I was really impressed by the design of the tracks. Two links are joined by a small sprue on the hidden edge and simply click together remaining fully workable and pretty robust. With no pin marks to clean up around half an hour sees the eighty links to complete one side assembled. The instructions suggest the track and idler be joined and added but I found the drive sprocket also removed with the track attached was easier, all of the wheels are attached with soft poly-caps and free to rotate helping the fitting. The side armour is built up in layers as per the actual vehicle and can be left as separate units to aid painting. This will also help if you want to show missing sections or different armour configurations.

The side armour units are held in place by large locating pegs, a good push fit which can be done without cement. There are some hidden ejector pin marks on the inside, be sure to clean these flush to obtain a tight fit.



If you want to show some missing ERA blocks or maintenance, the fittings are all there and nicely detailed as are the fixings on the blocks and subtle anti-slip texture.

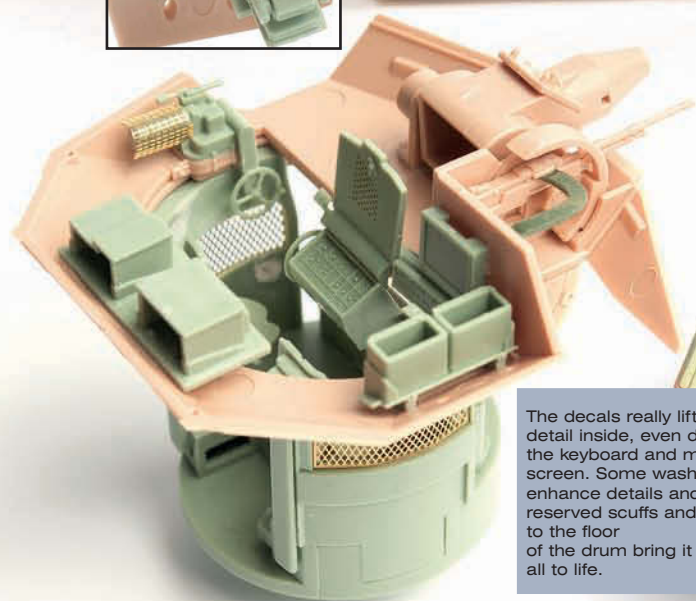




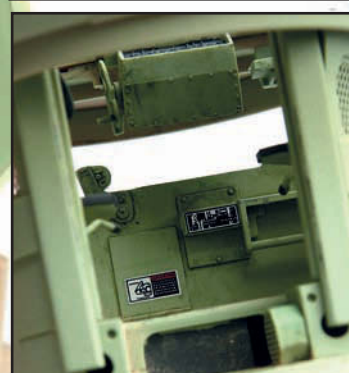
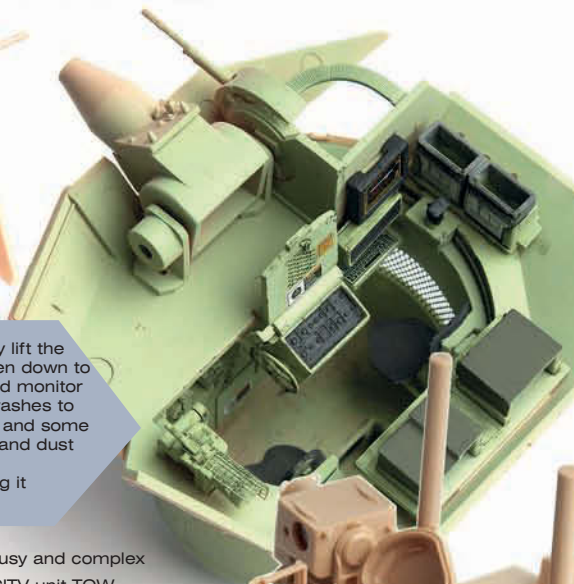
The tail gate can be opened and closed with a reassuring 'click' from the clever hinges and fasteners. The rear hatch is built-up in layers for accuracy. Air-Con units have excellent depth of detail with multiple photoetch parts.

TIME FOR THE TURRET...

And you'll need plenty of time! this is a complicated beast as you'd expect, with again, full internal detail with nothing simplified. Some lovely touches include a flexible ammo feed to allow the gun to elevate up and down and etched mesh for the drum. Everything goes together beautifully, the only extra work was a few ejector marks on the inside of the drum to which I dropped some Mr Dissolved Putty into. It really feels a shame to hide any of the work which is inevitable on armoured vehicle interiors...but it's satisfying to know it's all there!



The decals really lift the detail inside, even down to the keyboard and monitor screen. Some washes to enhance details and some reserved scuffs and dust to the floor of the drum bring it all to life.



The turret exterior is as busy and complex as it gets! The hatches, CITV unit TOW launcher and gun are all positionable and fully detailed. Note the flexible mantlet cover and beautifully detailed frames of the commander's protection screens.

I'm really going to stick my neck-out here and say that this is certainly one of the most impressive kits I've ever built, the quality and detail straight out of the box is staggering... I can't wait to get some paint on it...



**NEXT
ISSUE
PAINTING**

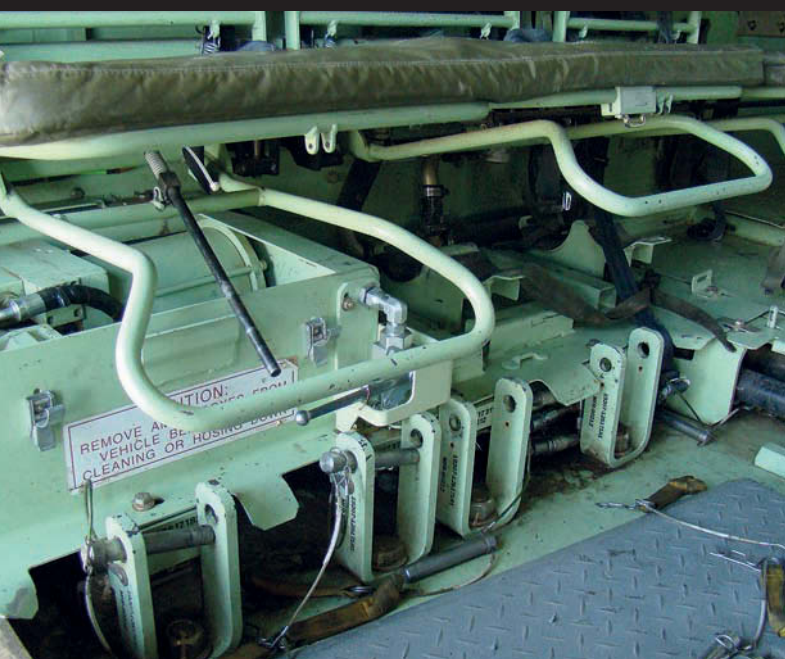


M2A3 BRADLEY

IN
DETAIL

In this first part of a 'Walk Around' the M2A3 we'll have a look at the interior and engine components for those looking to super-detail the new MENG kit.

A view under the passenger seats on the left side with the floor plate removed, note the fixing pins ▼



Note the metallic silver padded vinyl sleeve (presumably housing wiring and plumbing) This runs under the turret basket ▼





View towards the right rear corner, note the improvised hanging grab-handle and the anodized finish on the armour bolts and washers



Complex wiring to the monitor on the right of the turret basket door



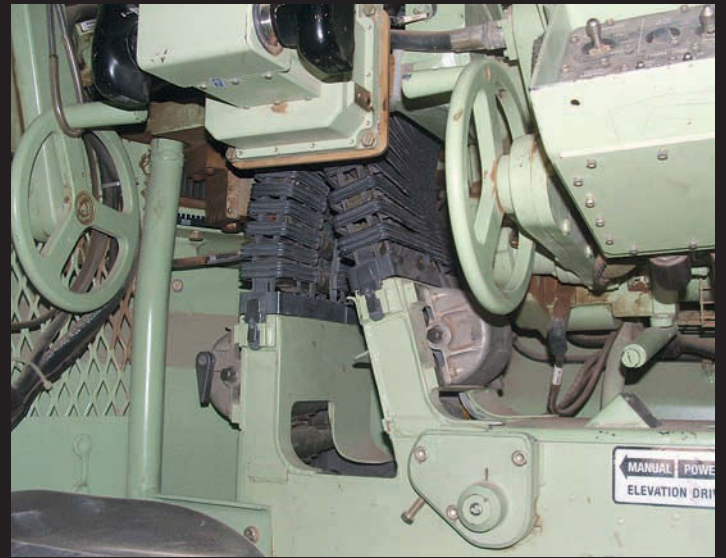
View of the tight space leading to the drivers compartment



The roof hatch viewed from the passenger compartment. Note the external colour finish, the heavy rubber bump strip / seal and the handle detail.



A view around the turret showing the high-tech 25mm M242 Bushmaster 'Chain Gun' system (referring to the roller chain that drives the bolt back and forth) Note the toothed turret ring and travel lock.



▲ The driver's view with high-tech monitor and controls

The panels removed to the right of the driver exposing the engine bay—a noisy place to be I imagine!

Views to either side of the driver. Note the folding seat back to allow access to the rear of the vehicle and the height adjuster at the left rear corner of the seat base.



M2A3 BRADLEY IN DETAIL

Diesel power! The Cummings VTA-903T produces 600 bhp from it's eight cylinders with the help of intercooled turbocharged induction.

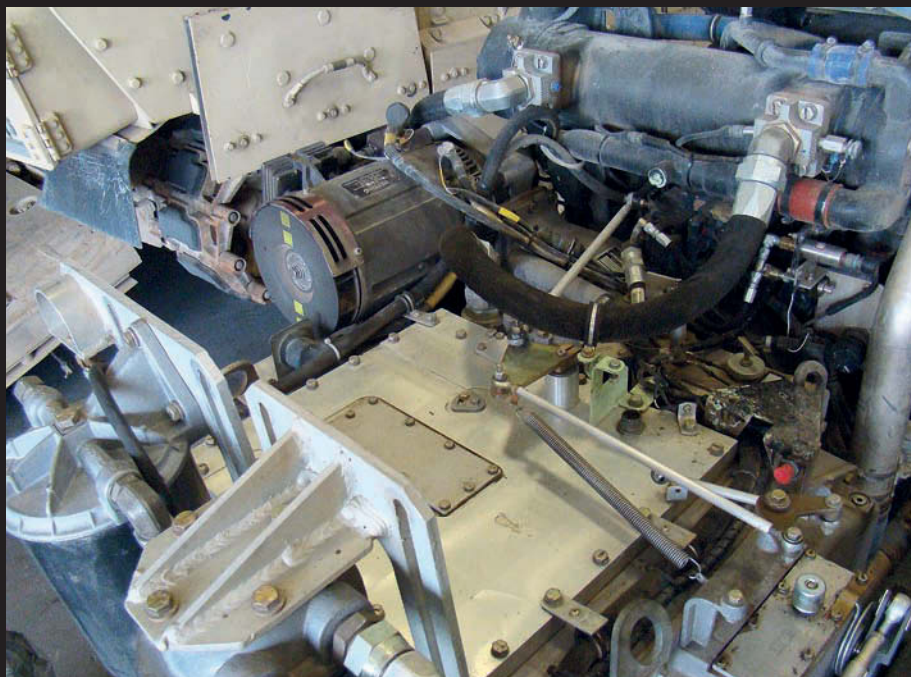
Note the finish on the manifolds and the heat wrap encasing the pipework to the turbo unit.
Much of the engine is hidden when installed due to the top-mounted cooler.



Close-up of the turbocharger unit to the rear of the engine



Details of the automatic transmission. Note the sliding brackets that mount the filter cartridges which can be extended up to allow access when fitted in the vehicle





1:72 SYRIAN T-72 model 1975

The T-72 tank was developed in the late 1960s and first entered service with the Russian army in the early 1970s. Since then it has been developed into many different variants and it is still used by many countries today, including Russia. The best small-scale kit is Revell's M1 export version (Model 1982). This is equivalent in most respects to the Russian T-72A and is used by many Middle-Eastern countries. I'd previously built one as used in Libyan service after seeing footage of these during the Libyan civil war in 2011. More recently the uprising in Syria generated a lot of news coverage and several T-72 variants can now be seen in photos and on film footage. Prior to this there had been very little information available on the T-72 in Syrian service. With the new information available I decided to build one of the earlier export versions, the Model 1975.

modelled by Alex Clark





The kit

Overall, the Revell kit is quite good with some excellent upper hull detail. The turret is probably the weakest part of the kit, being poorly shaped for any version of the T-72. The tracks are

hard plastic link and length and are reasonably done, but the guide teeth are much too short and really need replacing.

Lower Hull

The kit's bow plate is correct for an export version, having fewer engineering equipment attachment points than Russian versions. However the relief on the engineering blade that is situated below these is too shallow so I replaced the whole plate and cast a resin copy. I actually made a Russian version of this with the extra attachment points in order to use these for other builds but then removed these on the resin copy. The hull sides lack some detail - not a problem with the kit version that has side skirts fitted but noticeable for the earlier versions. I added this missing detail, including triangular, bolted mounts for the return rollers and the mud scrapers that fit just behind the sprockets. The outer road-wheels are good and the kit even includes early and late types, but the inner ones are completely smooth with no detail whatsoever. Although mostly hidden on the finished model, the front and rear ones can be seen to some degree. To fix this I took

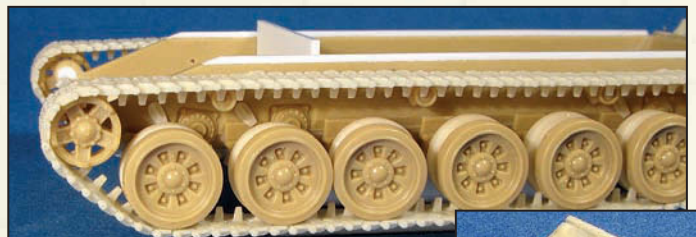
an outer wheel and modified it to fit the suspension axles. I then cast copies in resin. For previous T-72 models I'd improved the kit's link and length track by taking a single link and replacing the guide tooth with a taller one. I'd also drilled the track pin ends out and thinned the overly thick track edges. I cast a pile of single links and to save a bit of assembly time some 4 link segments. Although a tedious job, along with the clean-up and assembly, I felt it worthwhile. This approach also gave better definition between each link as the length sections provided in the kit don't represent this particularly well.

Upper Hull

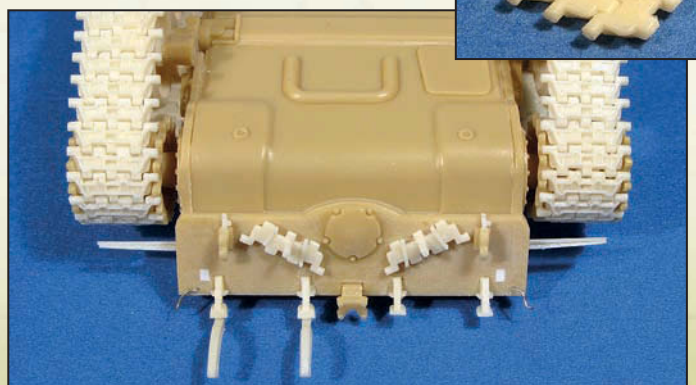
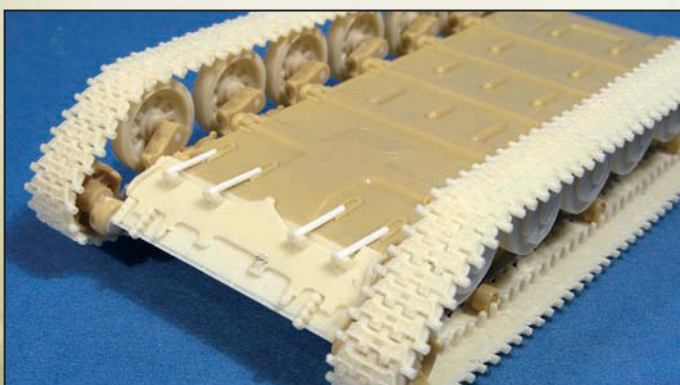
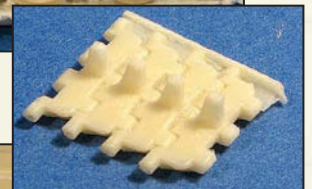
The Revell upper hull is provided as a single piece and does have a lot of well represented detail. This is probably the best part of the kit, but can still benefit from some tweaks. A number of fuel cells sit along the right side fender. Along the left side are some

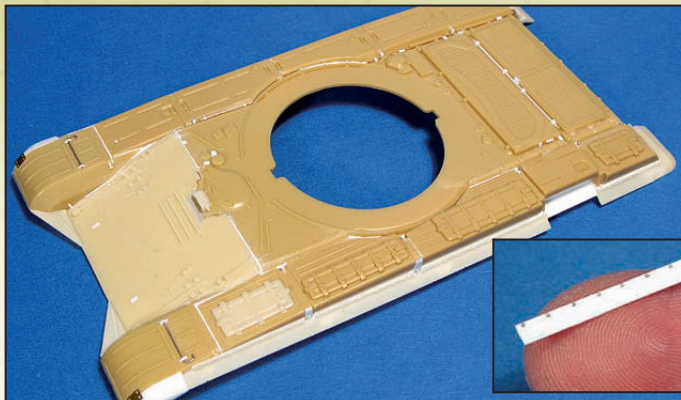


The kit's inner road wheels (left) are smooth with no detail at all. I modified an outer wheel and cast copies (right). After modifying one of the kit's single track links to more accurately depict the guide teeth, I cast a mix of single links and lengths of 4 link sections.



The assembled lower hull. I'd replaced the bow plate with better relief on the engineering blade. The four rods that attach via hinges to the hull can also be seen here.





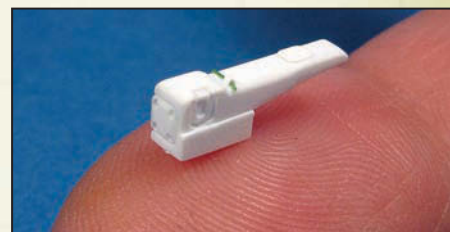
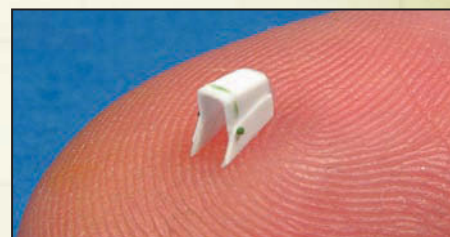
The Revell M1 upper hull modified to represent the earlier type. The M1 has a layer of applique armour on the glacis that shouldn't be present on the earlier versions, along with some other small differences. I replaced the whole glacis with a scratch-built version and cast a resin copy. I planned on building



several models of early T-72 variants, so I decided to have several copies of the hull professionally cast. Seen here is one of those copies with the smaller details added.

stowage boxes (also referred to as zip boxes). The top edges on these are a little sharp so I rounded them off. The straps that attach these to the fenders lack end detail so I added this too. For later versions that include the side skirts, the sides of the fuel cells and zip boxes are mostly hidden. As these areas are visible on this version, I improved these areas too (the sides are flat and don't represent the fact that the fuel cells and zip boxes sit on top of the fenders). I also removed the up-armoured glacis and replaced it with a version without the appliqué armour. The last major bit of work for the upper hull involved adding the thin mud flaps that run along the hull sides. I made these from plastic strip, with bolt detail created using a rivet / bolt tool called "The Nutter".

This tool includes various sized metal punches that are used to punch out the bolts from thick metal foil. Although I've cast a number of parts myself, I don't have the facilities to get high quality casts of items as large as the hull. So I turned to a professional casting service to make a number of copies for both this and future projects, Gwylan Models, <http://www.gwylanmodels.co.uk> This version the vehicle was fitted with hinged "Gill" armour. These being small rectangular panels that swing out and an angle to prematurely detonate shaped-charge (or hollow-charge) projectiles. These were probably found to be ineffective as subsequent versions of the T-72 can all be found with full length side skirts instead. I scratch-built the hinges and supports and



Left The various turret fittings along with the modified turret. I took a resin copy I'd previously cast of a corrected T-72A / M1 turret and further modified it to represent the early type.

The front section of the gunner's main sight, again this differs in shape and size from that found on later turrets. Early T-72 versions had a stereoscopic / coincidence rangefinder that was removed on later turrets. I created one from plastic strip.

made some resin copies. For the panels themselves I considered using foil, with the strengthening ribs embossed through, but I wasn't happy with the effects so made them from thin plastic sheet instead. To reproduce the effects of the ribs I scribed lines on both sides of the panels and glued in sections of stretched sprue on the indents on one side

Turret

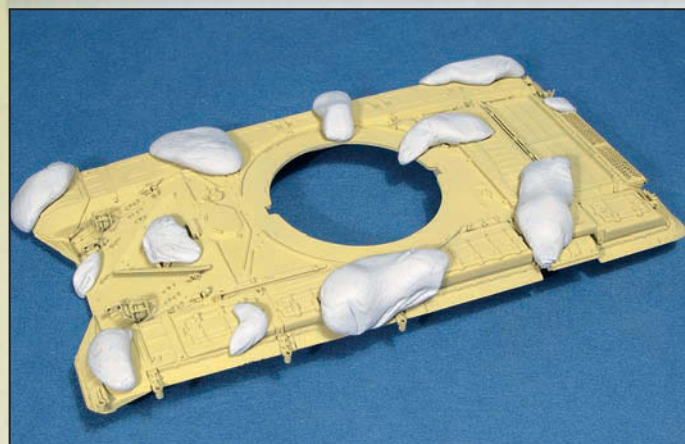
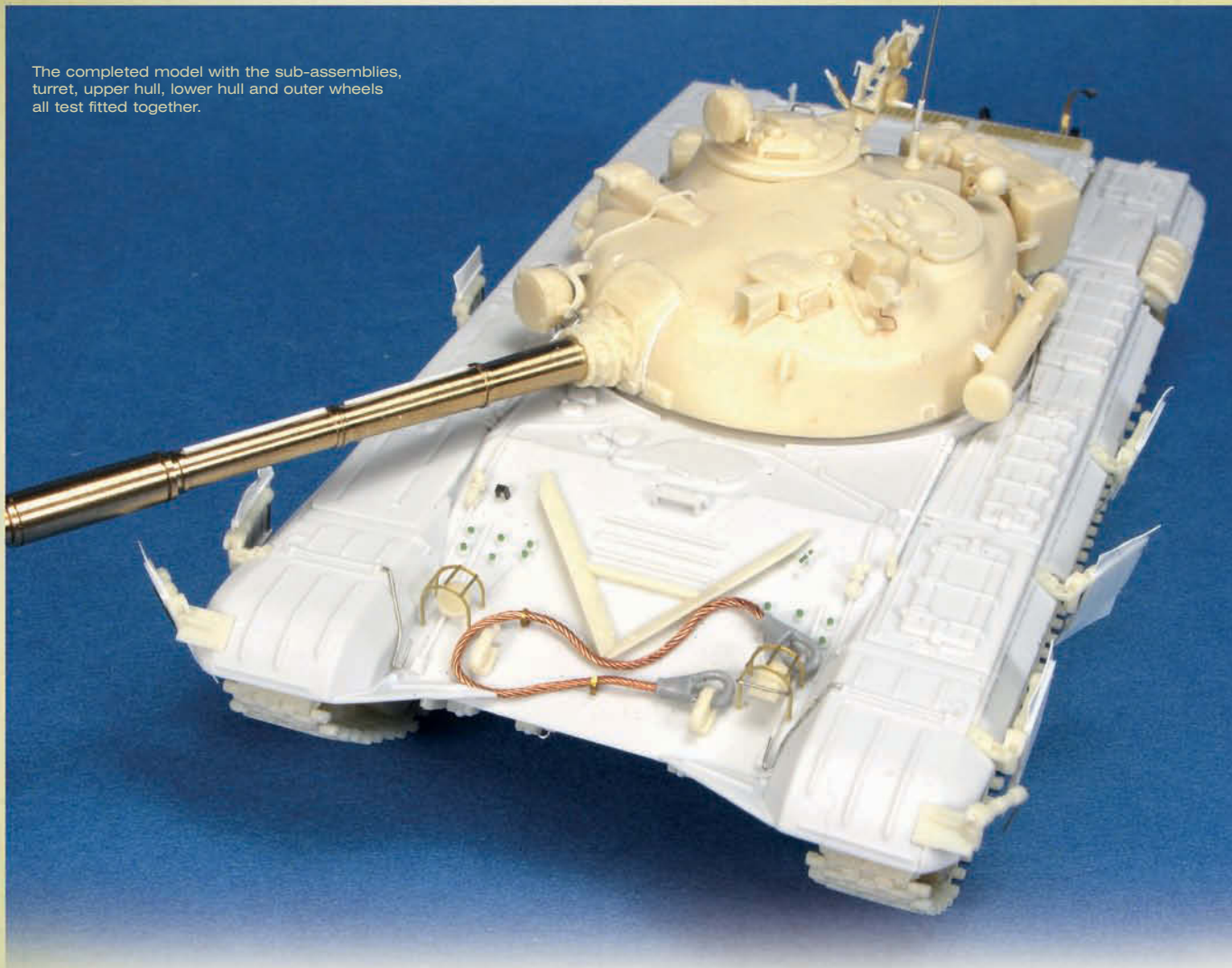
The turret requires the most attention due to it being both a different version and having some major inaccuracies in its shape. The rear should be more pointed in both plan and profile view, with a slight incline down towards the turret ring (rather than perfectly vertical as in the kit). I'd made generic improvements to the M1 turret to account for these, and previously cast resin copies. I took one of these and reshaped the front to model the earlier version. The main difference is that the front needs to slope at more of an angle, giving it a more streamlined appearance. I also made some other improvements, such as opening up the

gunner's sight and various periscopes. The kit gun barrel is slightly too short and thin in diameter so I used a turned metal replacement from a Russian company, Zedval <http://www.model-point.ru>. This is spot on in all dimensions and looks much better than the plastic version. It also meant I avoided the quite fiddly cleanup of the plastic version.

Final Details

To complete the build I worked on the smaller items such as the IR turret light, stowage boxes, and machine gun with its mount amongst other things. As I ended up improving many of these parts, I cast copies of them in resin. I also used a few items from photo-etched sets, notably the glacis headlight guards from an Extratech set. These would be fiddly to make from scratch and the etched parts are well done although I trimmed them slightly as they sit a bit too tall.

The completed model with the sub-assemblies, turret, upper hull, lower hull and outer wheels all test fitted together.



I painted the desert yellow colour using a mix of Tamiya White (XF-2), Buff (XF-57), and Yellow (XF-3) in a 6 : 3 : 1 ratio. This was over an initial base coat of Humbrol light grey enamel.



I masked the areas that were to remain in the desert yellow colour with Blu-Tac household putty. The green is a mix of Dark Green (XF-73) and Nato Green (XF-67) in a 2: 1 ratio.

Painting and Weathering

Syrian T-72s come in a variety of schemes. Many are green, usually with additional camouflage colours. For the early version I was modelling I'd seen some with a light desert yellow applied in disruptive patterns. The nature of these patterns seemed to vary from vehicle to vehicle.

I applied an enamel base coat first by spraying a couple of thin coats of Humbrol Light grey enamel (64). Over this I sprayed a mix of Tamiya acrylics, White (XF-2), Buff (XF-57), and Yellow (XF-3) in a 6 : 3 : 1 ratio. Once dry I masked this with Blu-Tac and sprayed over the green colour mixed from Dark Green (XF-73) and Nato Green (XF-67) in a 2: 1 ratio. After removing the Blu-Tac I painted the markings on the hull front and rear using some stencils I hand cut out of thin plastic. The white Arabic turret numerals are from a generic set of Archer Dry Transfers. To add some wear and tear I

added some green chips and scratches using a fine brush.

Following this I sprayed Klear acrylic floor varnish over the entire model to seal the marking and give a tough, shiny surface for the next stages.

I created some depth and a slightly grimy look to the finish by applying a wash of Humbrol Dark Earth (29). I used this fairly concentrated and applied it to small areas at a time. Once touch-dry I used a clean brush dipped in thinners to remove any excess and to work the wash into the corners. I then set this to one side to thoroughly dry before moving on.

At this stage the model still looks quite flat so I mixed a wash of Humbrol Satin Black and applied it as a pin wash around all the small details to create depth and shadow. As with the overall wash, I kept a clean brush to hand to help removed any excess paint.



I painted the hull markings using some hand cut plastic stencils. I then painted green chips and scratches over the desert yellow using a fine brush.



A moderately thick wash of Humbrol Dark Earth was applied to a section of the model at a time. As soon as it was touch dry I worked it into the edges and crevices using a clean brush dipped in thinner.



I mixed a dilute wash of Humbrol Satin Black and applied this with a fine brush around all the details.

Some photos I'd found online showed the lower hull quite muddy and I reproduced this using Tamiya diorama texture paint applied with an old brush. This dries quickly with a nice to-scale gritty effect.

I created a dilute mix of Humbrol Dark Earth, lighted with a little Pale Stone and lightly airbrushed this over selected horizontal areas of the model. Once done I immediately flooded these areas



I used Tamiya diorama texture paint to give a muddy finish to the lower hull and running gear.

with pure thinner resulting in a slightly dusty appearance. I enhanced the dusty, grimy finish by flicking dilute Humbrol mixes around most areas of the vehicle. I used a variety of colours for this, ranging from a very dark brown to pure white. Keeping it dilute ensures the effect isn't overly strong and unrealistic. To create dark, fresh scratches I used a very sharp black pencil. I kept this effect to a minimum to avoid overdoing it and along with some very fine scratches I ran it along sharp edges, such as



A dilute mix of Humbrol Dark Earth and Pale Stone was lightly airbrushed over horizontal areas of the model. As soon as it was touch-dry I flooded the area with pure thinner.



I flicked dilute mixes of a number of colours over the model. These ranged from pure white to dark brown. It's important to keep this step subtle otherwise it can spoil the finish.



A sharp black pencil is good for adding fresh scratches and wear to the edges.



Another step that should be done in moderation is the addition of fuel and oil stains. A mix of gloss enamel varnish, black enamel and a small amount of Burnt Umber oil paints is good for this. Fresh spills are best done with a concentrated mix whereas faded older ones can be done with a more dilute mix.

around the crew hatches and where differently angled armour plates joined.

Fuel and oil spills and stains can be represented using a mix of gloss enamel varnish, black enamel and a small amount of Burnt Umber oil paints. This gives a nicely translucent, shiny mix. I sparingly applied this around the fuel tank filler caps and around

some of the wheels hubs. Diluting it to varying degrees gives some control over how fresh the effect is.

The weathering was nearly complete by the end of this stage but I do tend to revisit certain steps again, particularly applying further pin washes. After this I painted up all the small details and assembled the smaller sub-assemblies to complete the model.





MAN with a dream



Radek Pituch talks to Roberto Aguilera about his extraordinary scale model collection

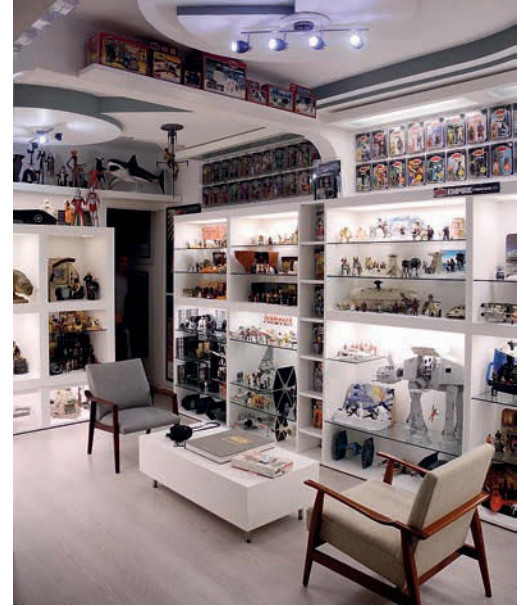
It was early 2013 when after logging into my Face Book profile I noticed a message from a unknown contact in Mexico City. His name was Roberto Aguilera and he went on to invite me to visit him on the other side of the globe (I live in Warsaw, Poland), bring my models and spend some time with him in the city. I was rather surprised and suspicious of this tempting offer, but some quick enquiries with my friends David Parker and Adam Wilder reassured me as both had visited Roberto recently. Time passed and couple of months later, in November 2013, I was flying to Paris to get from there to Mexico City, carrying a custom-made box containing 3 of my most recent dioramas (yes, it's possible) having had sent the first one via international mail in a secured box. After a 13 hour flight, early in the morning, I arrived at Aeropuerto Benito Juarez in Mexico City D.F. where Robert was already waiting to greet me. During the next few days I was able to fully enjoy the warm sunny weather, good food and Roberto's company sightseeing in the city. We also visited Roberto's Gallery which is housed in a separate apartment and where he keeps his collections of Star Wars, (which he is a huge fan of), and of course,



This is an example of team work: Adam Wilder's uparmored M4A1, figures painted by Sang Eon Lee and base done by Per Olav Lund.



Mike Rinaldi's D9 Caterpillar dozer and Murat Oztul's Lanz Bulldog.



The Star Wars collection, here you can find a large number of figures, models and many other items SW related items.

what interests us here the most – scale models, most of them being of WW2 era. In his remarkable collection he has managed to gather so far examples of work from such names as Adam Wilder, Beto Barba, Brett Green, Darryl Dancik, David Parker, Man Jin Kim, Miguel Jimenez, Mike Rinaldi, Murat Oztul, M Workshop artists i.e. Chef Lim, Per Olav Lund, Sang Eon Lee, Staf Snyers and Tony Greenland. Latest addition to the collection are the works I brought with me from Poland. During my stay in Mexico I convinced Roberto to do an interview with him, here are some parts of the interview that in full version should be soon available on youtube.

By profession Roberto is a film director, with 20 year long career, working with many companies from North America, Mexico and Europe. Modelling is his passion for many years now but just recently he had this idea to assemble a collection of the most

exquisite models from around the world.

"Everything started because I found a model on ebay from a very well known modeller, Mike Rinaldi, which he was selling on ebay, a Panzer IV E, a desert one, the one from the Lifecolor box art..."

Roberto turns back and shows me the model now standing on a base made by Per Olav Lund accompanied with figures painted by Man Jin Kim, that were used for the Alpine Miniatures boxart.

"I was surprised by the quality of the work so I purchased the model – says Roberto – and it was the starting point. In the beginning I was thinking of collecting only few pieces because I had so many science-fiction models and I wanted some military, like 10 nice tanks. Then I went to Euromilitaire and saw Staf's (Staf Snyers) 3.7 Panther (Bergepanther with 37mm Flak) and I was just amazed by the model and I said to myself I



Staf Snyer's winterized PzKpfw II Ausf. L "Luchs"



Roberto's Schwimmwagen accompanying Rinaldi's Tiger II Ausf. B



This is the diorama I asked Roberto to show me for a closer inspection, it was also done together with several talented people i.e. Mike Rinaldi (the panzer), Per Olav Lund (the base) and Man Jin Kim (the figures)



Sit back, relax and watch the details.

have to have that one! I admire the artistry – modellers are artists in many ways, tears fall from my eyes when I see this and I'm not exaggerating, this is the truth."

Later on Roberto invited Staf Snyers to become a judge in the annual IPMS Mexico show.

"At that point I realized that I can buy more models. By now I have pretty much most works done by Michael Rinaldi, I also acquired Spencer Pollard's works among them the Workshop diorama but I haven't got them yet here. I decided to set up this place" – Roberto takes a look around in the room where we're sitting that shelves filled up with various models from different artists from around the globe – *"and now I feel responsible for the people and their works that they bring here."* -*Robert had a dream* – says Roberto laughing – *after the response of the community I said to myself, you know what Robert, this is all about sharing, and life's all about sharing and love is about sharing too, about not being selfish. I want to turn this gallery into a modeling museum, the first one ever, and I will do this. This is very nice to have this collection at home but I want to share. I'm proud to being able to collect all this. I have pretty much all works from David Parker, Brett Green, Adam Wilder, Mig Jimenez, the guys from M Workshop and Radek Pituch* – Roberto turns to me and smiles. - *I also have most of the works of Staf Snyers, Per Olav Lund, Sang Eon Lee, all the Alpine Miniatures boxart, also done by Man Jin*



David Parker's classic, and one of my personal all time favorites, the mighty Tiger I portrayed as a vehicle of the sPzAbt. 503 Operating during operation Zitadelle.

Left hand side section of the WW 2 scale models room



Kim. It's all very nice to have it here, but it's not what I want it to be, it's about sharing with everybody, it's about setting up a Museum, I was thinking that New York would be the place because NY has a lot of visitors. I will keep on building this collection, Roger Hurkmans is coming in March 2014, than later that year Ivan Cocker, they are both bringing their collections. Then Franck Oudin (Contributor to Air Modeller) he's bringing some planes since I'm planning to expand this collection to planes. I'm also planning to acquire works from some Spanish Modellers and Japanese Modellers too. I want this collection to grow up to a point where I can say ok I have 10 times more than I have here now. Then I will gather all the information about the modelers, all the profile pictures, reference materials. In the museum when the people will walk in they will see the flags from each country where the modelers come from. I want to place a room there where people will be able to follow the whole process of model making, because people not familiar with the hobby don't know what it is – when you see a finished model most people think it comes like this. People don't have a clue. So we will show them not only the process of building and painting a model but also the whole industrial process that is involved in creating the kits. I also want to show where modelers find the inspiration from their works to show people how it works. I just have a dream of a great modelling museum that we don't have now because I've seen modelers just passing away, they do incredible work and they die, many times their families don't know what to do with their work, they just throw the models away!"



This is Staf Snyers' extremely beautiful Jagdpanther in 1:35 scale.

Roberto posing next to one of his dioramas!





There is still room for more works in the Gallery, here are mine!



David Parker's 1:16 Tiger II Ausf. B



The best of the best, van Goghs of modeling – the works of Adam Wilder and Mig Jimenez,

I also asked Roberto about other eras, are they of interest and does he want to include them in the museum?

"We will begin this museum with World War II – says Roberto - and hopefully we will expand it to Medieval, Napoleonic era, Ancient times, whatever, even modern warfare too. We'll probably get there very soon but now I'm concentrated on World War II subject because it's very, very extended. - People outside think these are just toys and I want to elevate it to art level."

In the last words of the interview I asked Roberto to give a message to the

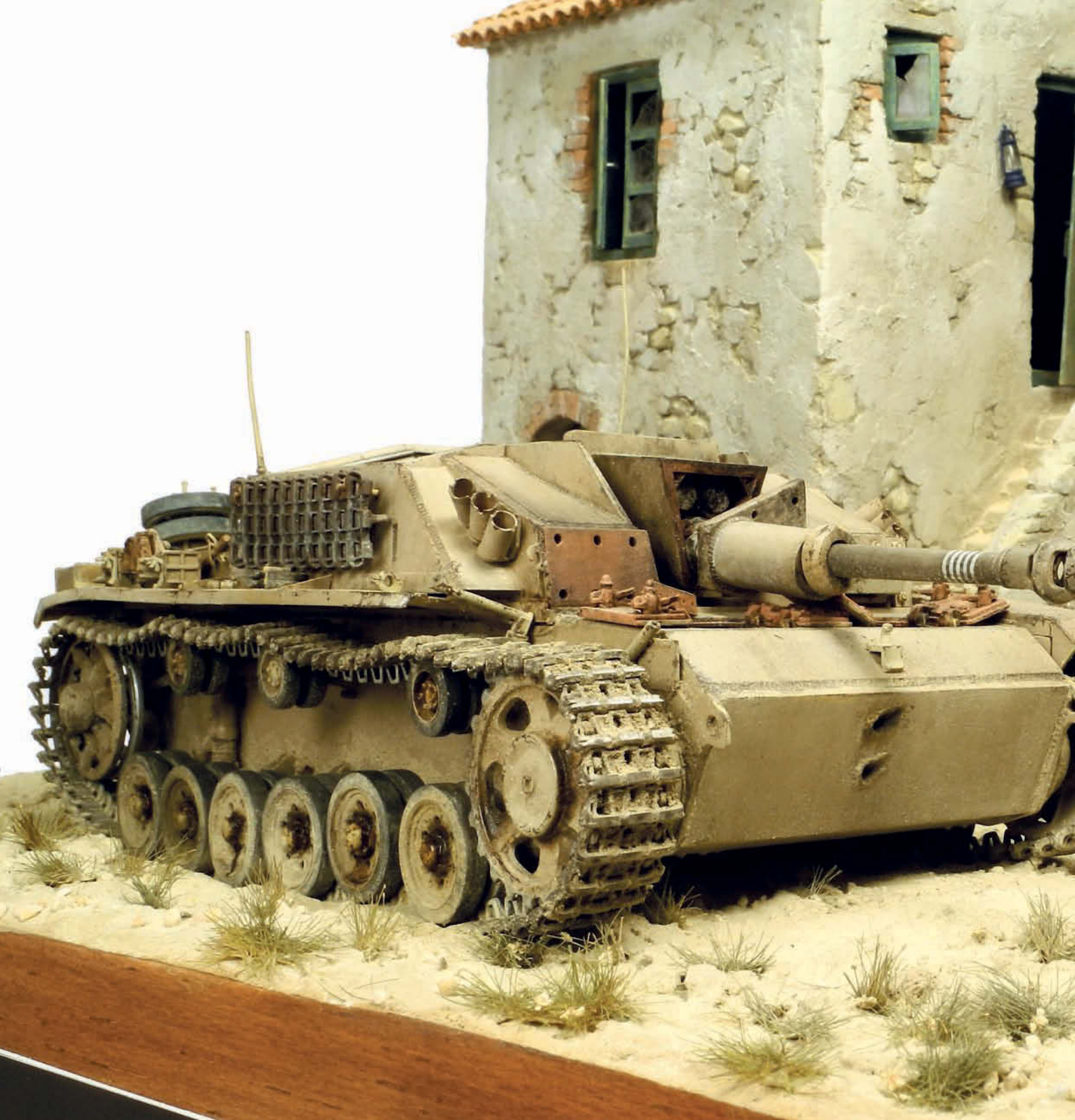
community and so he did:

"I would like to invite you to participate in this endeavor which is time-consuming but delightful as well – Roberto smiles – not to mention the investment you have to put to make this real."

The collection now totals around 100 pieces including figures. After reading this article I hope you can understand why I choose the title.

Roberto is not only a collector that builds a gallery of internationally renowned modellers' works that he's going to turn into a Museum of Modelling Art. He is also an active IPMS Mexico member, giving the

modelling society in Mexico the opportunity to meet with the most talented people from around the globe in the hobby and to take part in their lectures. Having the support of his friends I am sure he can achieve his goal in a few years and that one day we will all be travelling to see the first ever modeling Museum. For me my stay in Mexico was an unforgettable experience. Seeing all those astounding works in one place gives you the impression there's nothing more a modeller can dream of, just to sit back, sipping a drink and enjoying surely the most impressive collection of models in the World.



“JERRY GOT HIS!”

KO'd StuG III Ausf.G, 26 Pz.Div., Battle for Cassino, Italy, 1944

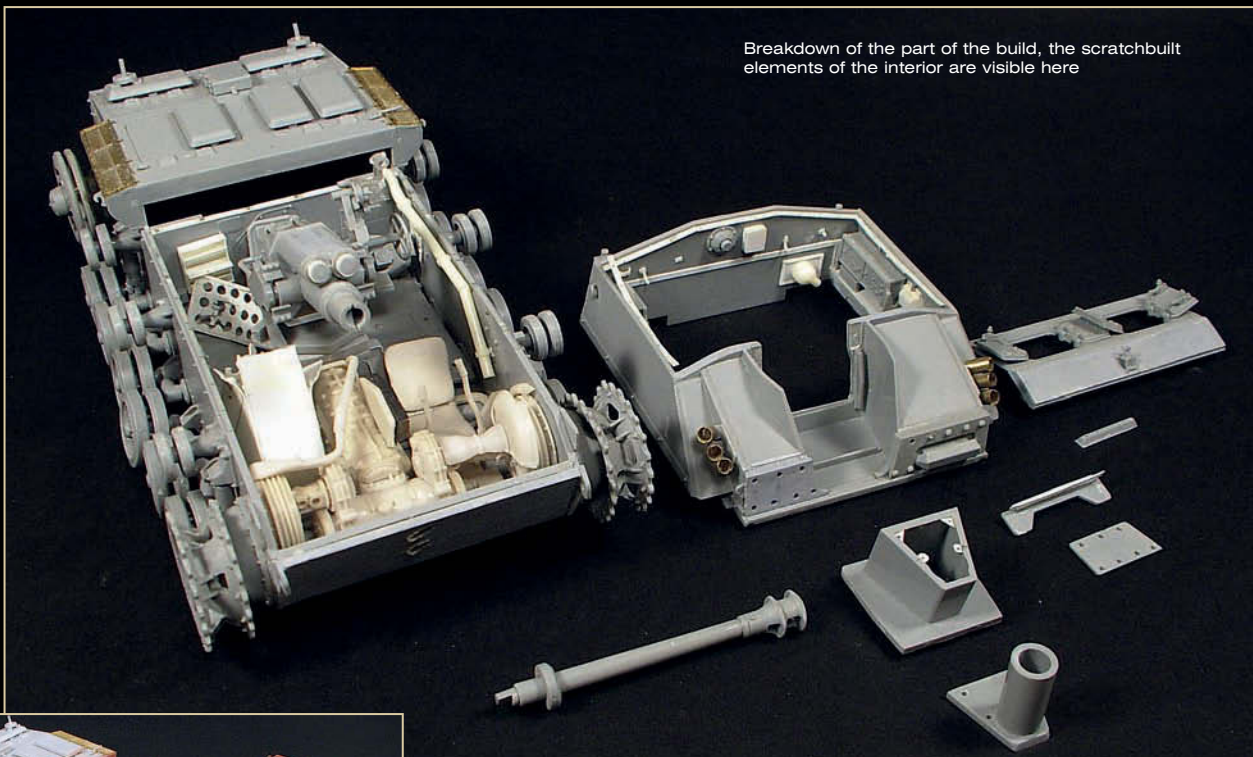
Modelled by **Radek Pituch**

The Battle for Cassino, and the important strategic area in the Gustav Line lasted from mid-January to late May 1944. In May the Allies transferred the 8th Army to take part in the expected final attack on the Cassino area. There were 14 allied Divisions Committed for the attack. As we know the famous Abbey of Monte Cassino was held by the elite 1. Falschirmjäger Division but it got orders to fall back before the Abbey was bombed to ruins. Before all this happened General von Vietinghoff ordered two German divisions, 26th Panzer and 29th Panzer Grenadier to break off contact with advancing British 8th Army and to pull back to the Northern area, towards Rome. The 26th Panzer Division was stationed in Cassino area and it was the only German armoured unit to be committed in the battles in May in this area.

I found my inspiration photo of a destroyed StuG III Ausf.G in a Militaria volume about the StuG III/40 family. It was described as being taken after the Cassino battles in May. When I started to dig for more information I realized that the most probable unit operating with StuGs in that area would be the 26th Panzer Division. It was my starting point and having the photo as inspiration I planned the scenery of my diorama in an abandoned vineyard. I wanted to show the StuG as it was slowly advancing in the shelter of buildings when it broke down and the crew had to sabotage it's gun, finally being spotted by allied tank crews it took two direct hits on the glacis plate that penetrated it causing an internal explosion of the ammunition. The most visible damage to the vehicle were the blown off collar on the mantlet, blown off right appliqué armour from the superstructure and damaged suspension. Careful study of the photo revealed that the vehicle sits close to the ground, having it's torsion bars most likely broken. Further analysis of the photo shows that there is light visible through the bolt holes in the superstructure so most likely the whole roof of the fighting compartment was blown off too. It was even more probable because the vehicles ammunition storage was located on the right hand side of the gearbox and judging by the hit marks on the glacis at least one of the rounds penetrated deeper into the fighting compartment causing the ammunition cook off. Having all this in mind I decided to put it in slightly changed scenery.



STUG

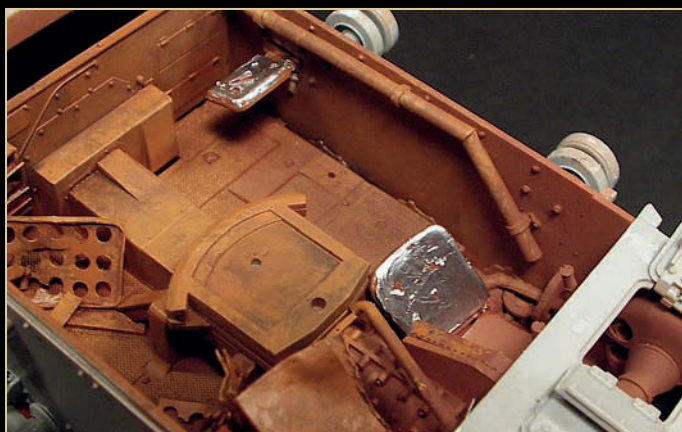


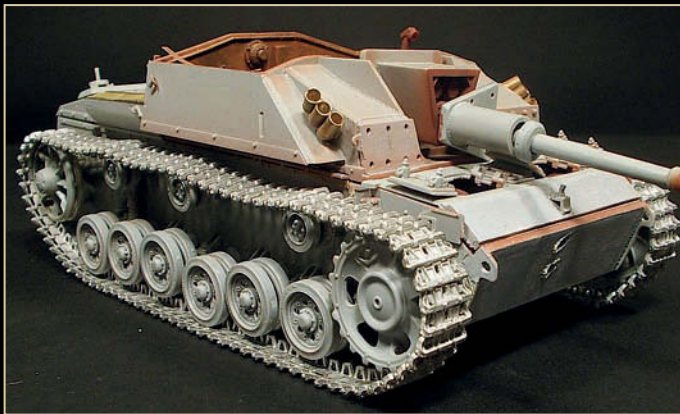
Breakdown of the part of the build, the scratchbuilt elements of the interior are visible here



For the model of the Stug I decided to go for the Dragon offering – Stug III G early version. The most important change was to convert the bow of the vehicle to the later solid 80mm plates instead of the early style 50mm+30mm appliqué. This was done with sheet styrene. The next important thing was to convert the superstructure front by drilling holes for the appliqué armour plate that was blown off. The gun of the model offers nearly a complete recreation of the 7.5 cm StuK 40 gun

but I needed to add details to the recuperators because these were visible due to the damage inflicted to the box style mantlet cover. I also wanted the gun to be fully recoiled representing the damage inflicted by the crew after the breakdown of the vehicle - a common practice was to drain the liquid from the recuperators and fire a round so the gun couldn't return to it's correct position rendering it useless. The Dragon kit offers a basic interior so I was forced to use some aftermarket.





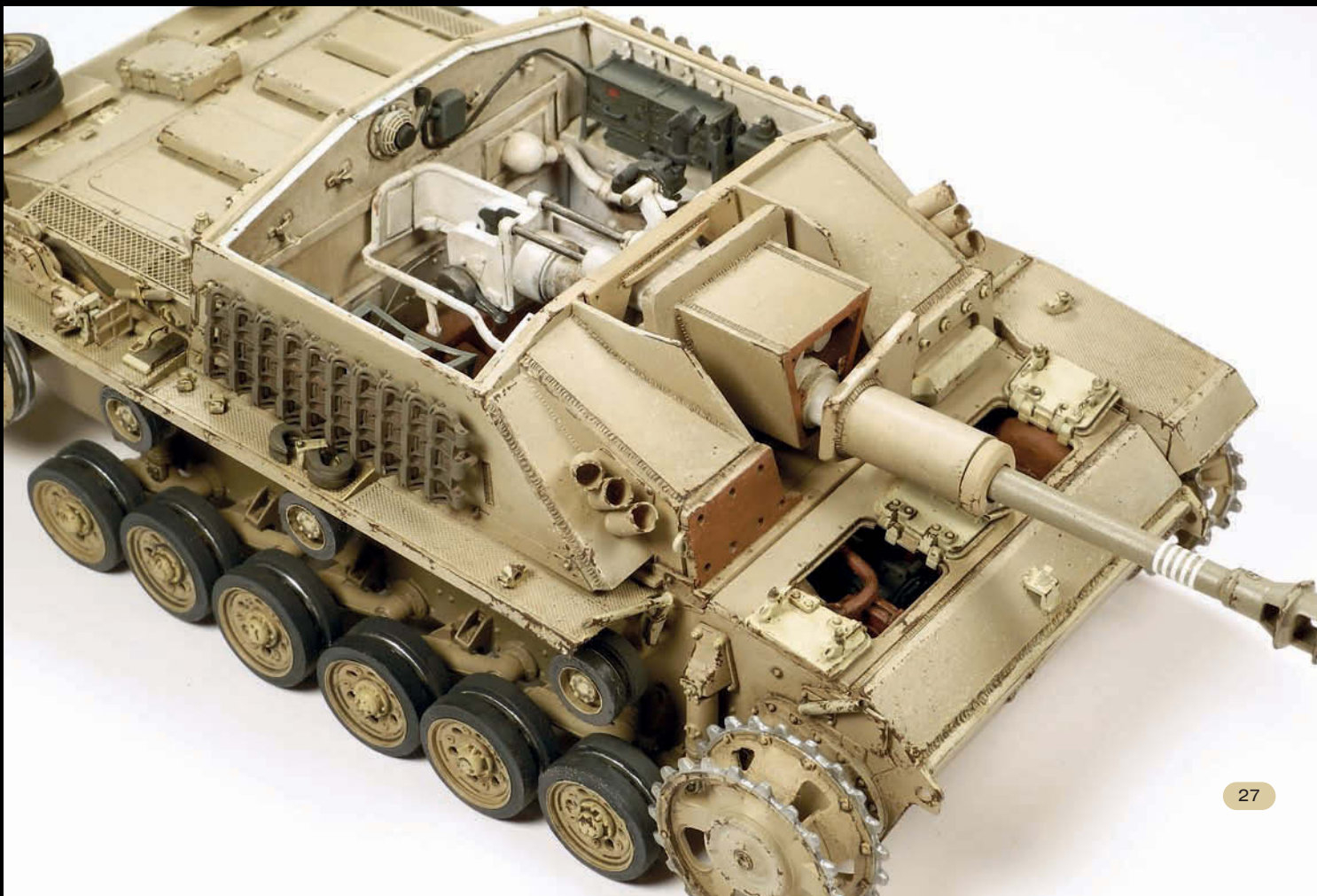
I choose CMK's resin Driver's and fighting compartment sets. These are nice but still need much attention when you want to build a vehicle with destroyed interior. The blown up ammunition stowage bins were scratchbuilt from sheet plastic as well as the housing for the damaged radio. After having the vehicle built I proceeded with painting. This was done with Tamiya paints. I started by covering the interior in red primer colours then applying hairspray and white flat paint all over it. When it was dry I gently started removing the white paint with a stiff brush soaked in warm water. For the tracks I used Friul set ATL 04 (hollow horn), the early type of 40 cm tracks used in that period on German Pz IV/Pz III/StuG vehicles. These were blackened with the new Uschi van der Rosten blackening liquid agent. These were then weathered with a mixture of light sand pigments composed of Vallejo range pigments with addition of water and plaster. One of the features of my StuG was additional armour of the

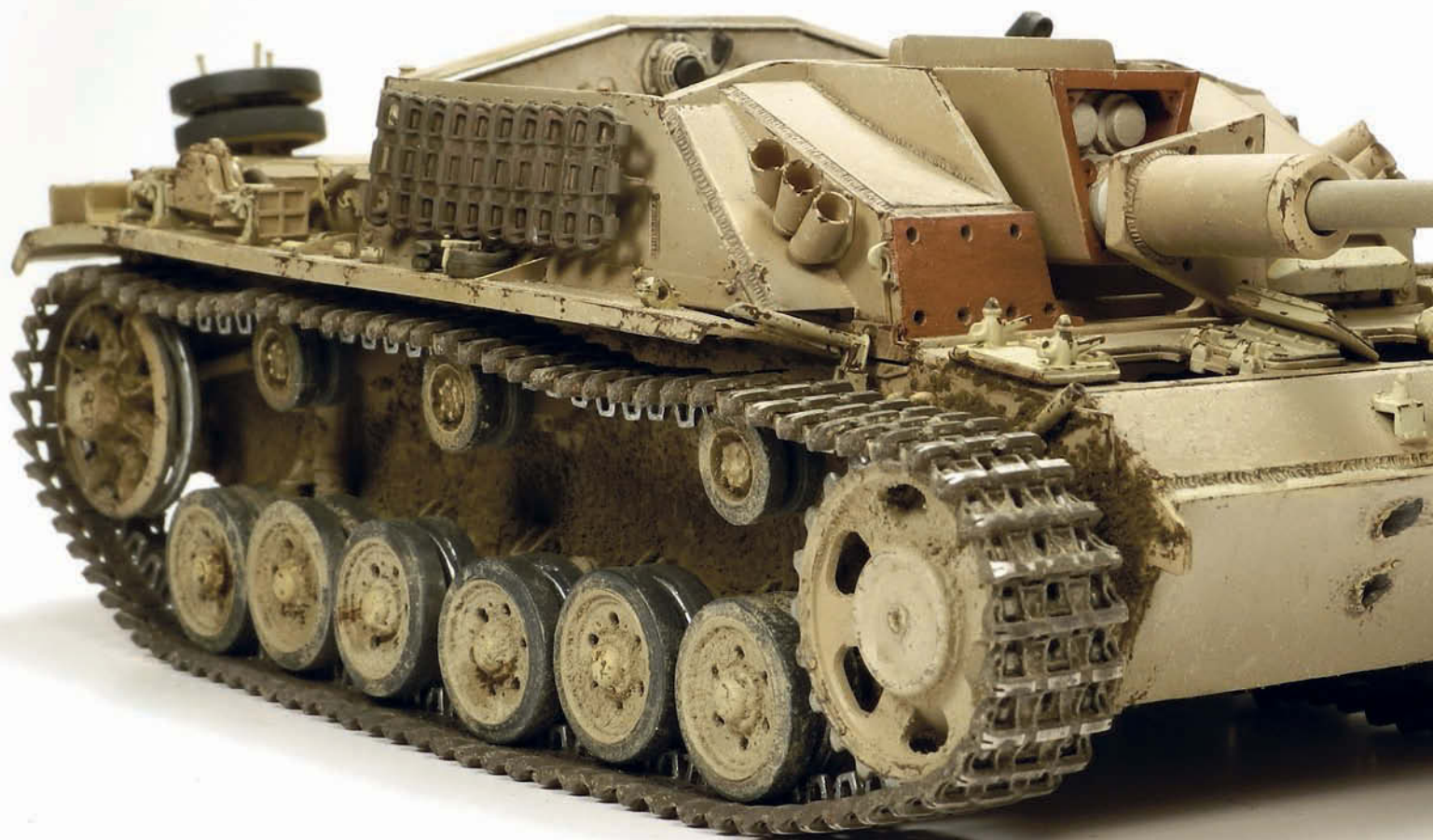


superstructure sides being made of added track lengths. These were weathered with Vallejo paints – light mud colour from the Panzer Aces range. The decals – only german national Balkenkreuz, were applied with the Micro Set and Sol solutions. The vehicle depicted on the wartime photograph has a monotone paint scheme of dunkelgelb, typical for German vehicles operating in Italy. It is not an easy thing to do to create a interesting look on a vehicle painted only in one colour. To remedy this I used the Colour Modulation process.



Highlighting and shading different panels and surfaces of the model in different shades of the same base colour creates a interesting overall look to the vehicle. Adding further filters help to tone down the paintjob but still leaves much diversity in the shades of the base colour. For German vehicles I mostly paint them using Tamiya Buff for the basis, modifying it using Deck Tan and JGDSF Brown colours when it comes to highlighting and shading. This model was no exception to this method.



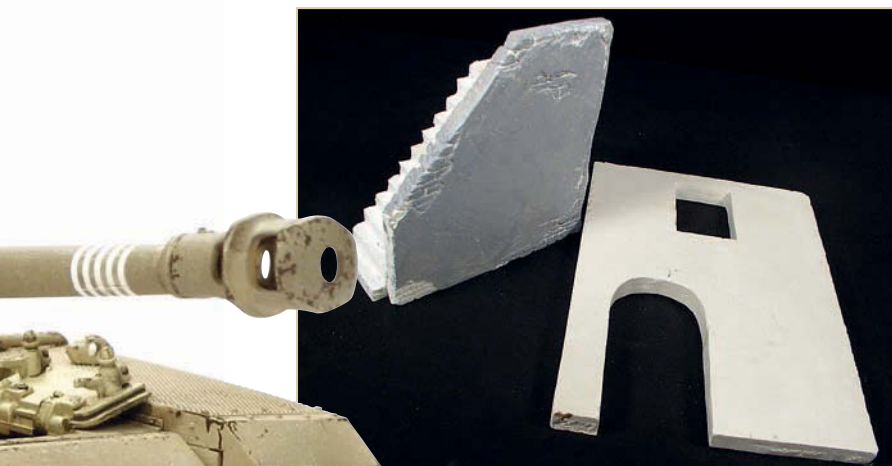


FIGURES



Having the overall layout of the scene prepared I started on the figures. These were sculpted using Magic Sculp. The wartime photo shows two British troopers in casual uniforms. The leaning one seems to be wearing tropical clothes while the other is outfitted with a standard battledress. Both figures are now available in resin from the Adalbertus range. I used the castings for my dio. Both figures were painted using acrylics from Vallejo.





The building was to be one of the most important parts of the whole build. As usual in my projects I wanted originality. That was the reason I decided to scratchbuild my own. First I cast plaster plates and then when it was still soft I carved windows and doorways in it. The idea was to build a typical one floor Italian farm house – ‘casolare’ as the Italians call it. Distinctive features of these buildings are the use of sandstone as the basis for the walls with addition of bricks around the doorways and windows to reinforce these areas. I carved the stonewalls in the prefabricated castings and bricks here and there in random places (mostly around the holes for windows and doors). For this purpose I used a thick sewing needle. To add 3D effect to the stone walls I gently carved them further with a sharp blade. Then to join the sidewalls I drilled holes in the edges of the castings, glued plastic rods into them and joined the walls together with wood glue. To create the stucco I mixed some plaster along with water and applied it with a spatula. I repeated the process to give a more scruffy surface. Then using different thickness balsa wood I created roof trusses. The stairway was created using plaster for the side wall and foam board plates for the stairs. I cut them unevenly to represent a well used look. They were then covered with acrylic plastic putty to add texture and hide the texture of the foam. The door and window frames were made using balsa as well. The doors and windows itself were made using thin plastic strips. Finally to reinforce the structure of the stucco applied to both the building and the small cellar I sprayed a layer of Tamiya deck tan colour. The roof tiles are from Model Victoria. The building was now ready for further painting.

BUILDINGS



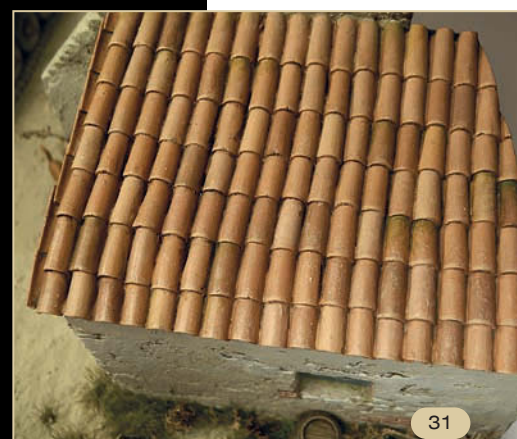


The side and rear of the building was covered with plastic sheet that was painted flat black later on to blank the back. The rafters for the roof tiles were made using balsa wood.





The Doors were made of thinned balsa strips and painted with a brush.



The house was painted with a mix of deck tan and buff paint lightened with flat white. This was done both with airbrush and paintbrush, the process was repeated many times until achieving a satisfactory effect. For the groundwork I mixed pigments of light sand colour (Vallejo light ochre, green earth and titanium white) together with plaster. This was the first layer that was later covered again with pigments only and fixed with pigment fixer. I wanted to achieve a scorched and burnt by the sun effect of a hot Summer day. To add some diversity to the colours I glued some grass tufts too. The tufts were made using a simple method. First, with a toothpick, I applied some wood glue onto plastic card. then, using tweezers I started applying tufts of static grass to each spot of wood glue. While the glue was drying you can shape the tufts as you desire. When dried I painted the whole thing with an airbrush using a khaki green colour. After the paint was dry I simply detached the tufts from the plastic card (wood glue doesn't stick permanently to plastic but it lets you to work with it on it in a comfortable way).



Above Applying tufts of static grass with tweezers onto dots of white glue, I shaped them later on to make them more pointy and green paint was then sprayed over the tufts.

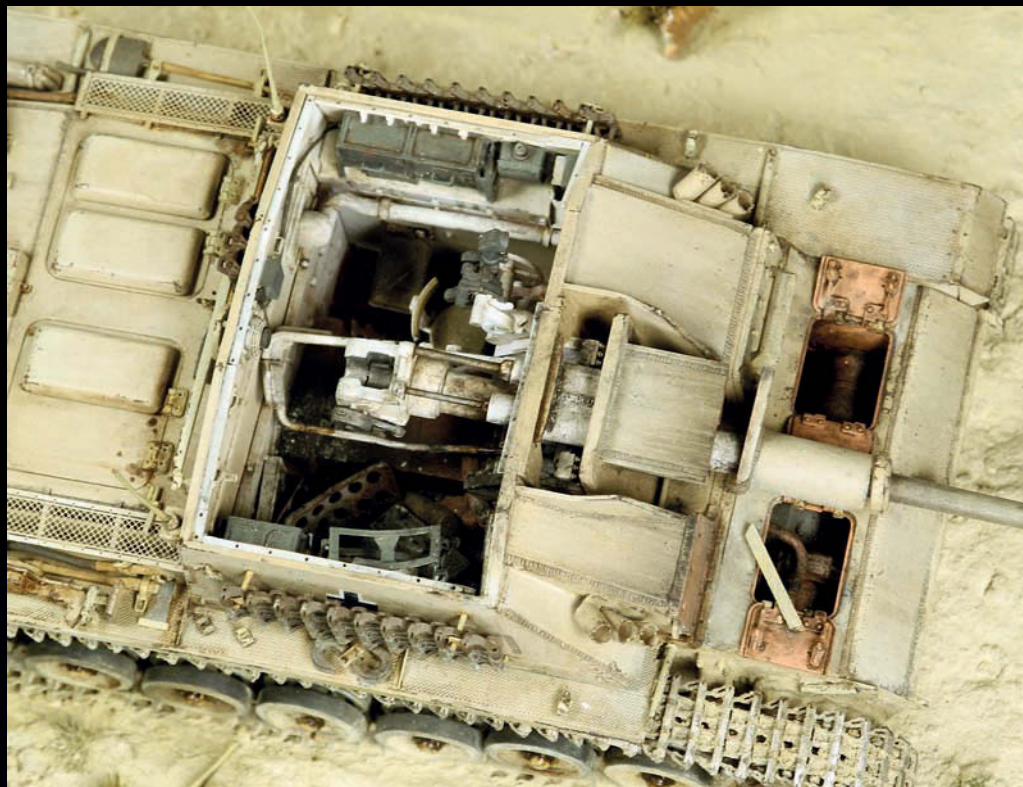




Above Some litter lying around the cellar.



Below Pigments used for colouring the groundwork.



Since I like Italy I wanted to build a scene from the combat there for a long time. The archive photo gave me inspiration and motivation to start this project. This was also a good exercise in painting a scene in different shades of the same colour too and to depict the famous StuG assault gun which I haven't built before. My thanks goes to Model Victoria and Uschi van der Rosten for providing me with their products for this build.



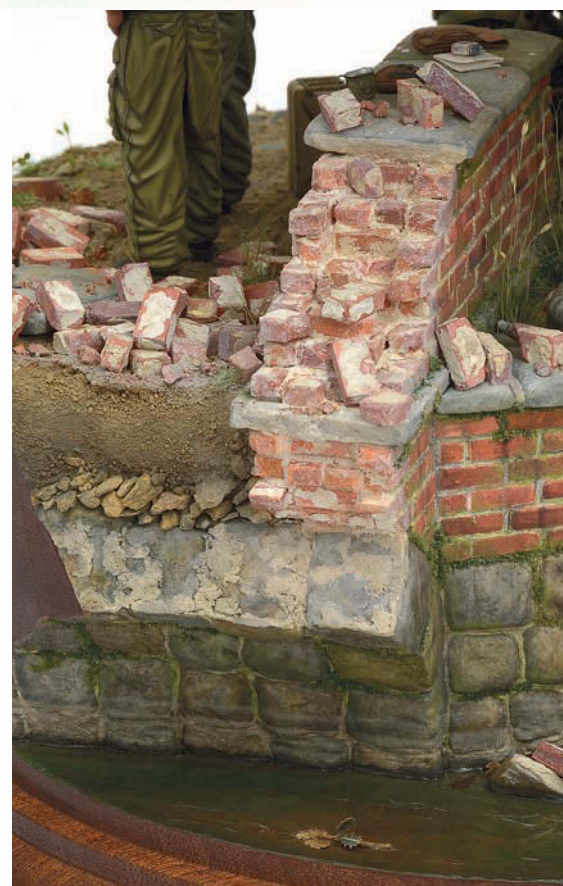
Tasca's 1:24 Zündapp KS 750 m.
BW43 ("Kriegselefant")

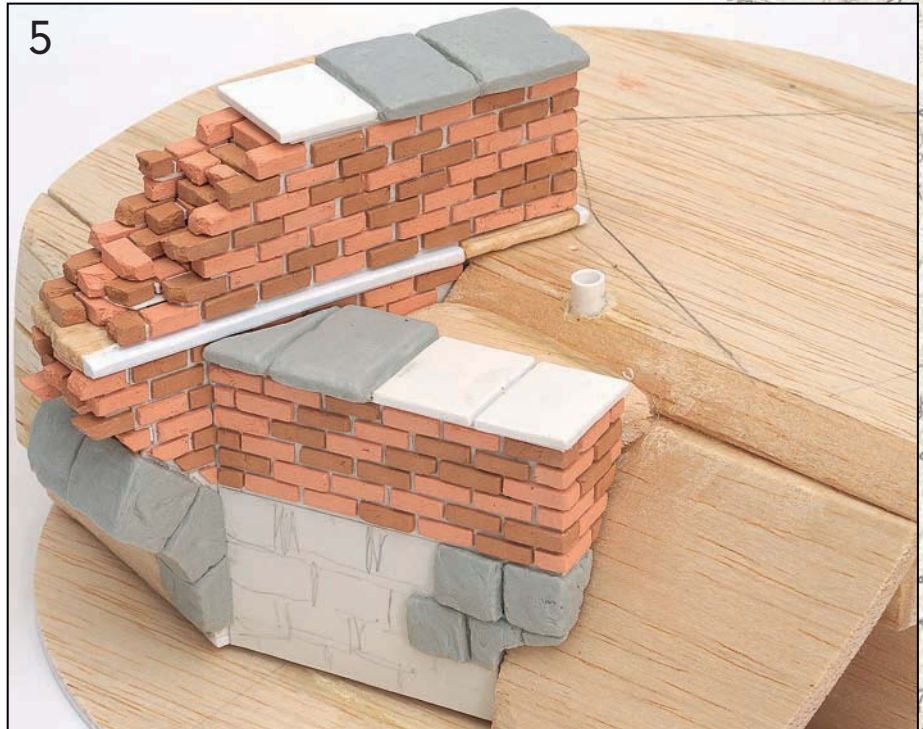
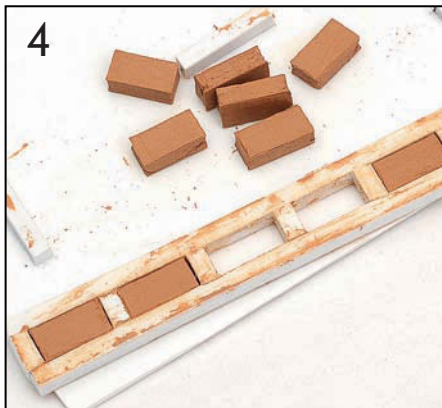
PART FOUR ● Modelled by Robert Doepp

Diorama: The Trapped Elephant

I was deeply impressed by Jean Paul Pallud's great book on the German retreat from Normandy showing the atmosphere amongst the German soldiers when trying to escape from the Falaise pocket. Obviously combat units increasingly disintegrated and the retreat turned into the escape of more or less organized small groups of soldiers. One aspect was a fascinating mixture between a rather composed impression and the lack of commitment represented by the often non-standard and mixed up uniform-style on the one hand and the ever present fear of the Allied air threat on the other. This atmosphere I have tried to depict with the basic idea of my little diorama: A destroyed minor bridge makes some soldiers search desperately for an alternative way to escape from the pocket.

Beside this main idea my ambitiousness was fired by two technical aspects: Firstly to make a convincing tree and secondly to create a completely flat outer surface of the turned wooden base socket.





Bridge Section and Base

To be sure about the dimensions of the scene and at the same time of the handmade wooden base that I would have to order I started with a rough construction from Balsa-wood. My aim was to keep the bridge section removable for as long as possible in order to be able to work on it separately. That is why I chose to make a basic construction from square Balsa-wood and plastic card, which could be exactly adapted to the prepared base and was at the same time stiff enough to be handled alone. Home made brick sections from air drying natural clay were glued to the brick-wall parts while the sections of natural stone were represented by Magic Sculp.

Pic 1&2: Balsa wood was used to create the basic structure of the base and faced with plastic card for the brickwork areas.

Pic 3: I glued plastic frames of varying thickness to pieces of plastic card and pressed the clay into it with a hobby knife.

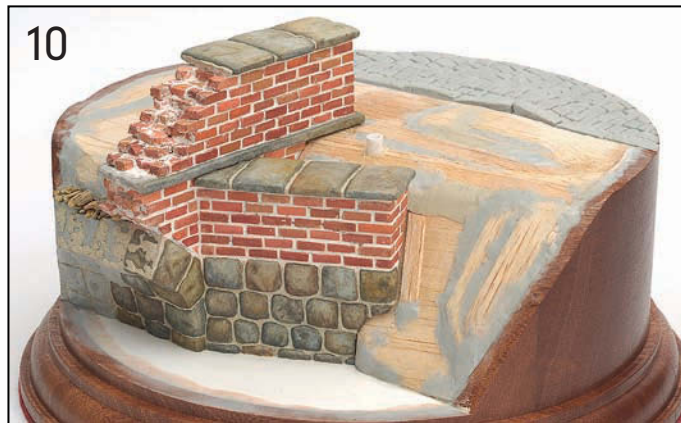
Pic 4: While it was rather easy to make the flat brick representations it proved impossible to press the air out of the thick frame I had made for the complete bricks. So I made another version and did not glue it to the plastic backing card so I could turn it around before the material had dried completely and add clay from the other side as well.

Pic 5&6: The grouting on the natural stone sections was done with Andrea Sculp which already had a perfect colour.

Pic 7: The natural clay bricks already had varying shades but this could be enhanced easily by using thin wash applications of enamels.

Pic 8: The raw hollowed base was at first roughly adapted to the prepared base. I had ordered the base from a friendly wood turner with the edges to be as thin as possible to simplify the adaption work.





I was aware that it would be necessary to glue the bridge section as soon as it came to adapting the edge of the wooden base. On the one hand working on the bridge section would be significantly complicated afterwards, which encouraged me to push it near to completion before gluing it, whilst on the other hand the delicate finish had to be protected while working on the base.

Pic 9: I used plaster as grouting for the brick areas and some retouching of the bricks was required. Magic Sculpt was used for the stone areas and coloured with transparent layers of thinned enamels of varying mixtures.

Pic 10: Once the bridge section had been glued the rest of the stone covered area was added along with the cobble stone street (also made from Magic Sculpt).

Pic 11: The cobble stones were painted with enamels and again plaster was used for the grouting. This step had to be done as late as the wooden bases edges were sealed. "Water" application was prepared as well.

Pic 12: Before I could start with the groundwork the position of the motorcycle and the figures was fixed by pressing them into small portions of Magic Sculpt. Copper rods were added for extra strength.



Pic 13&14: For the same reason I had to be sure about the trees position and therefore prepared a tree stump from Magic Sculpt applied to a plastic tube/rod structure.

Pic 15&16: While I used plaster to smooth the balsa wood landscape I dropped the plan to use it for the final groundwork as well. The plaster's advantage of extremely fine grain is offset by the lack of colouration. Instead I tinted the plaster and added sand of varying grain with a material called "stone paste", which is actually a mixture of white lime and sand. This meant I avoided the need to paint the ground, especially in the sandy areas around the partly shattered bricks.



17



18



19



Water

While I tried to fix the dioramas dimensions I thought of several opportunities to represent the water. Of course it would have been a nice addition to make it from clear material of adequate thickness. But to work with my little scene the water had definitely to be deep enough not permit crossing without a bridge, it would have pushed the height of the base out of the limits of a balanced appearance. So I decided to choose a flat solution.

Pic 17&18: Making the vegetation started with grass of varying lengths and colour. The longest versions were cut from pre-coloured large decorating paint brushes made of natural hair.

Pic 19: As late as groundwork and basic vegetation were done I weathered the bridge section and the cobble stone street. Instead of the heavy "washes" and numerous "dry-brushing" runs I once had been used to I tried to preserve the original colours and only applied subtle local washings from varying enamel tones.

Pic 20: To give the idea of depth and reddish rubble shining through the deep water I employed oils, which were applied wet-on-wet to create irregular smooth transitions.

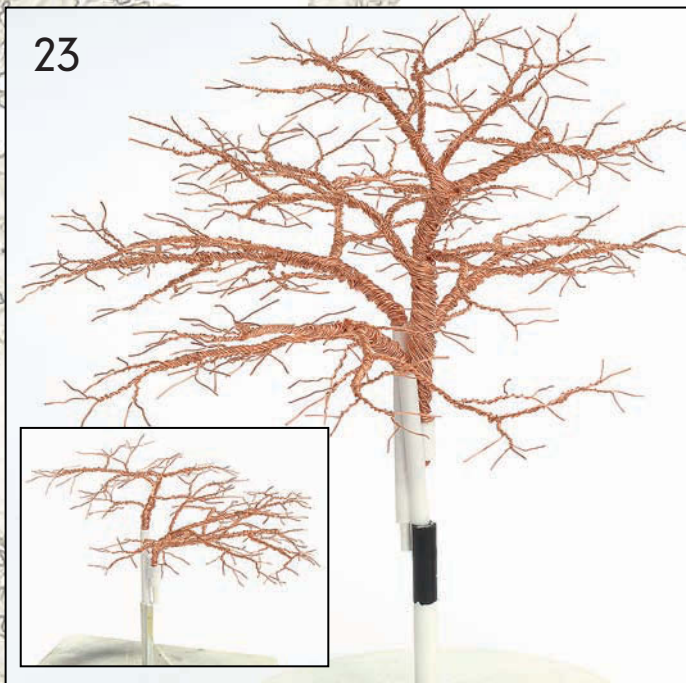
Pic 21: The "water effects" from Noch can be manipulated to an uneven wavy surface for at least 20 minutes. A few leaves and dead branches were added to float on the water and collect around the large bits of rubble lying close to the waters edge.

20



21





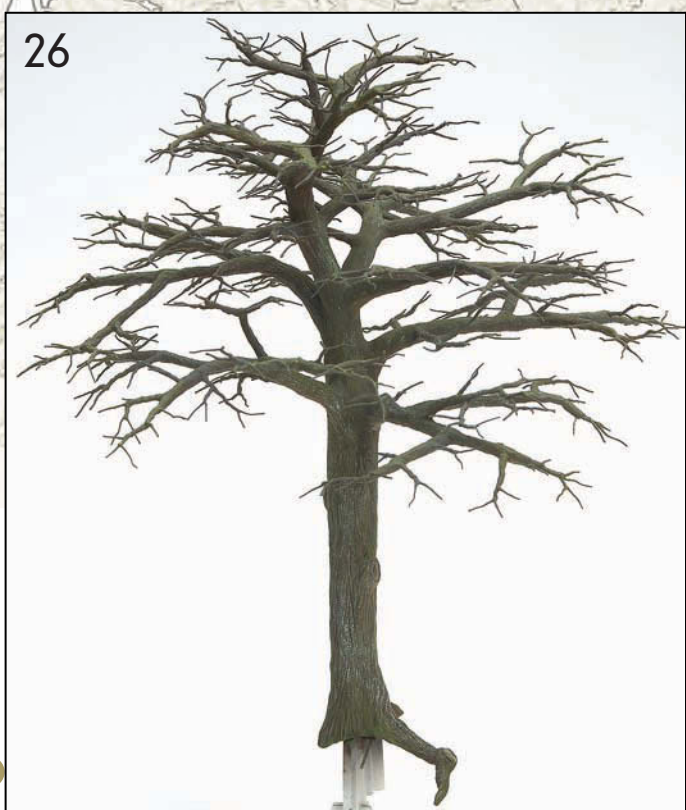
Pic 22: The photo shows approximately the amount of copper wire, which was used to make the tree. 0.8mm wire was employed for the basic structure. This was refined with 0.4mm wire and later on with 0.25mm. The latter was taken from an electric cable.

Pic 23 & 24: The increasingly complex structure becomes more and more difficult to work on. To minimize this effect I made two main subunits, which were kept separated until the thicker branches were covered with Magic Sculp.

Pic 25: In order to create smooth transitions to the Magic Sculp and hide the drilled structure of the delicate outer branches these were treated with brush applied thinned putty.

Pic 26: Starting from a medium grey layer of Tamiya acrylics the tree was weathered in particular with several "washes" from enamels. The light-green type of moss(?) was dabbed on with oils and a sponge.

Pic 26: The flat leaves were shaped on the mouse-pad by the help of a rounded party stick. The image shows the content of the first package of leaves I used. Unfortunately the packages content extremely varied in quality, colour and number.



Expensive Adventure: The Tree

I had little experience with vegetation and making a tree in particular. But I had done a single branch once to add it to a 1:35 scale "Tiger" as additional camouflage. I had used "Plus Model" oak leaves glued to a structure from copper wire and found the result rather convincing except for the leaves appearing to be too large. I thought that this technique maybe would in the larger scale and give an even more satisfying result.

The problems started when Plus Model changed the production methods of their leaves along with the overall quality while I had already added a few hundred leaves to my tree, planning to order more packages as soon as I would be able to estimate the



28



29



30



31

Pic 28-30: A cat playing with its helpless prey serves as an allegory for the hopeless situation of the German soldiers against Allied superiority in the Falaise pocket. The cat was made from Magic Sculp applied to a structure from copper wire and painted with oils.

Pic 31&32: Due to the extraordinary scale all additional equipment had to be made from scratch. A 1/35 scale canteen was used for the jar.

Pic 33: The captured pack of American cigarettes was painted with oils. This proved really challenging even though I had done the same job in 1/16 scale before.



32



33



necessary amount. In particular the new type of leaves did not show the fine lines on one side, which I was after to create a more refined impression.

In the end I had to order remaining stock of the old type leaves from just all over the world and I was finally saved by the discovery that "Model Scene" had produced just the same things for railroad models (and changed production likewise). Fortunately the German supplier "Langmesser-Modellwelt" convinced the Model Scene company to reproduce the required leaves of the structured type.

In addition I had to beg several friends for their remaining items as well. I am very grateful that they supported me with additional leaves. Finally I had used about 29 packages with about 3300 leaves coming from Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Japan, Australia, England, Russia, Czech Republic, Austria, Belgium, ...did I forget any country? Oh yes: ...and Germany. Fortunately I have no clear idea about the cost anymore!

Several lengthy periods of waiting were caused by the lack of leaves. This on the one hand was frustrating but on the other it gave me the time to work on the details of the scene: I made the allegorical cat and mouse, added more bricks and rubble, a can and additional plants to the vegetation including a dead branch. The frustration eventually turned into the satisfaction of a more refined finished result.

Acknowledgement

I am very grateful for the support of (in alphabetical order): Paul Alderton, Hansi Gieseler, Heiner Sander, Shigehito Takeuchi, Norman Uschkureit.



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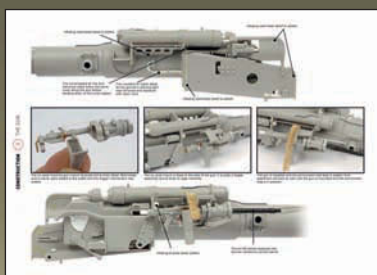




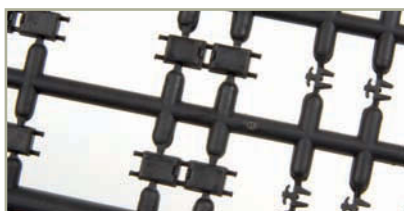
The step by step story of David Parker's remarkable award-winning 1:16 scale replica. Bringing together the three and a half year coverage from AFV Modeller with additional unpublished material and combining archive photographs with walkaround photography of the real vehicle in over 300 pages for the ultimate guide to modelling the King Tiger.

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Takom 1:35 Leopard C2 Mexas

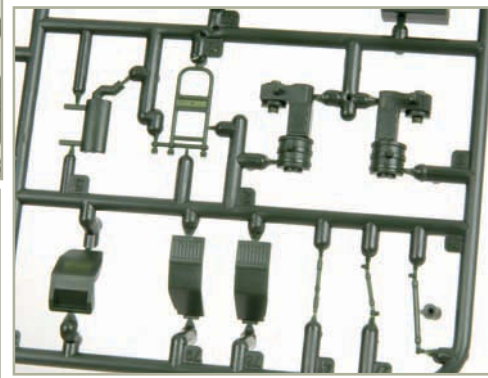
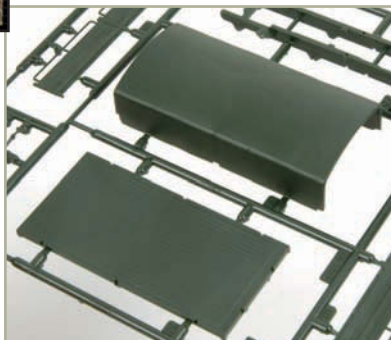
Another exciting subject choice by new boys Takom for their latest 1:35 scale release. Possibly the coolest-looking version of the Mk 1 Leopard the Canadian MEXAS upgraded C2 has seen active service in Afghanistan where it got very dusty and dirty making for instant modelling appeal. The kit is moulded in three colours of plastic if you include the tracks and the overall level of detail is right up with what we have seen with Takom's other releases. There is a small photoetched fret for the engine deck grilles, stowage rack grille periscope guards and other details. Working torsion bar suspension is provided and with most of the suspension parts moulded onto the hull assembly of the running gear is pleasingly quick. Moving to the hull and the rear exhaust grilles have been well handled but in common with most Leopard kits the hull is missing some weld detail, although the MEXAS armour will cover most of this the rear hull will need attention. Small handles on the engine deck are moulded as solid bars but these are an easy fix. The MEXAS panels assemble easily although it is worth dry fitting the turret ones to be sure you understand as the instructions are not totally clear. Areas of anti-slip are missing from the top of the

turret, turret bustle and plating on top of the hull MEXAS armour, but this is something I would rather add myself because the texture is especially fine. The kit allows you to model some of the turret panels removed and provides the mounting lugs on the turret but these are not the correct shape, but with the armour all in place this is not a real issue. The individual link track is made by Orochi and the separate teeth and softer plastic end connectors will allow for accurate articulation. The small decal sheet provides markings for four vehicles but you will need to check your references as they are a mix of vehicles or depict vehicles fitted with a dozer blade. Only scheme A is correct. A local Afghan figure is included depicted taking a quick 'selfie' on his phone. He is nice enough but I would have preferred a Canadian crewman. If all the fault finding sounds critical it's not meant to be because it's really very well done and as I am mid way through assembling it I can confirm that it falls together. A few tweaks and additional detail will pay dividends and then it's on to one of those great dusty paint finishes. Takom kits are available in the UK from Inside the Armour who kindly supplied our sample. www.insidethearmour.com



AFV Modeller 1:16 King Tiger Interior markings decals & Open Gurtsacks

Those who have taken on the challenge of building Trumpeter's 1:16 King Tiger will be aware that no markings are provided for the interior of the tank. Due to popular demand we have finally got around to putting together a small decal sheet to fix this. The sheet provides the various interior stencils with a choice of black or white for some of them where appropriate. Warning labels for the instrument panel and automatic fire extinguisher are included along with a dial for the gyrocompass and we have also included the labels for the signal flare cartridges. The set comes with a small photo-based positioning guide to help locate everything. Another addition is a set of open gurtsack ammo bags required for the hull and co-ax MG positions. Both can be ordered from our web shop at: www.mengafvmodeller.com



Revell 1:72 LKW 5t.mil gl

Adding to their range of modern German / NATO equipment in small scale Revell have released this 5ton 4x4 version of the MAN truck. The four dark green sprues appear to have hit a good balance of a simple build with good levels of detail, moulding is crisp as with all of Revell's recent tooling. A ladder-bar arrangement starts the build of the chassis with separate diffs and good detail all-round, the cab contains some basic details which would be more than adequate seen through the glazing. Clear parts are supplied as an acetate sheet which will need careful

cutting following the diagram - could be tricky but will look more to scale when in place. A rear tarpaulin cover is an optional part which has a bit of a rigid appearance and the wheels may have a few modellers waiting for some aftermarket resin parts to raise the detail levels and cure the problem of a join seam around the treads. A nice kit well up to the high standard of small scale Revell kits. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For details visit www.revell.de/en, @RevellGermany or [facebook.com/Revell](https://www.facebook.com/Revell)



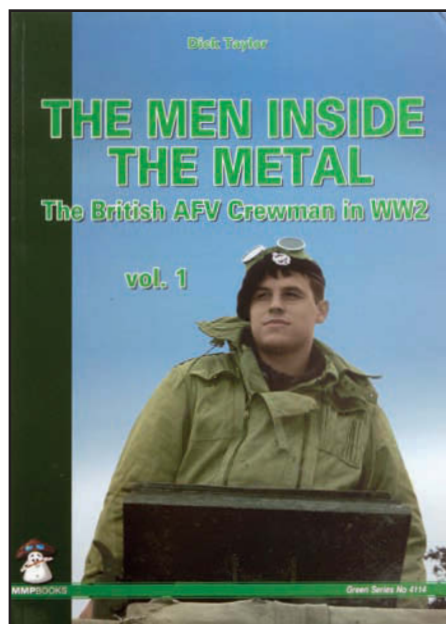
Als Panzermann in Afrika und Italien 1942-45

Panzer Regiment 8 und Schwere Panzer-Abt.508
By Axel Urbanke / Hans Becker Published by Luftfahrtverlag-Start
Hardback format, 248 pages German/English text
ISBN 978-3-941437-19-7 www.luftfahrtverlag-start.de

Just when you thought you had seen every archive image in existence along comes a superb publication like this with a massive selection of images including a good number of very impressive colour images. This substantial book draws exclusively from the photo archive of Panzerman Hans Becker who as a member of the Headquarter staff with various Panzer units in North Africa and later with Pz.Abt. 508 in Italy documented his frontline service. In fact during his time with 508 he was actually tasked with recording the battalions experiences. The book combines these excellent photographs with extracts from Hans Becker's diaries and letters and maps of the various engagements he documented to make a fascinating study. The book begins with a small section of pre-war and training photos and then onto shots of the journey to



Tobruk by the massive BV 222 flying boat. There are some excellent pictures of various vehicles in service and even the odd aircraft too. Hans Becker was a very accomplished photographer and the quality of the images is stunning with plenty of pin sharp detail for the modeller. After being wounded he was evacuated and reassigned to the newly formed Pz.Abt.508. Here there are some great images of Tiger 1 training turrets mounted on concrete pedestals, and the units new Tiger's being entrained to move to Italy. There are some excellent shots of the combat around Cisterna in wet and muddy conditions and plenty of other shots for Tiger fans. An all round stunning book packed with all sorts of modelling inspiration and highly recommended.



The Men Inside the Metal

The British AFV Crewman in WW2

By Dick Taylor

Published by Mushroom Model Publications

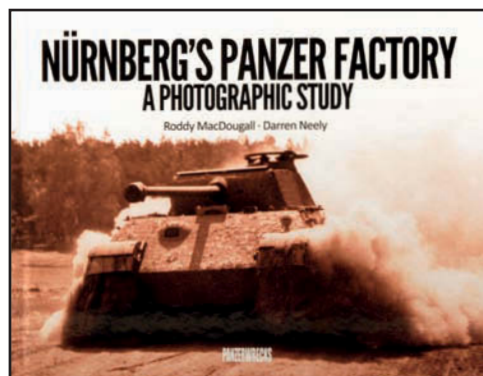
Softback format, 112 pages

ISBN 978-8389450-66-1

www.mmpbooks.biz

Essential reference for anyone with an interest in British WWII tank crew and something that has been long overdue. In this first volume the items of uniform are covered in considerable detail with footwear, headgear, and helmets. The uniform section deals with the battledress, shirts, jersey, greatcoat, overalls and Pixie Suit. The peculiarities of the desert campaign and the Far East are also examined. Chapter 2 looks at badges and insignia and chapter 3 covers personal equipment. This covers webbing and

side arms along with map cases and even the enamel mug! Goggles, gas masks and watches are also covered. The section on Radio equipment gives some great details on the headphones and intercom equipment and all the variations of small arms are also illustrated. The book interweaves photos of preserved equipment with illustrations, archive photos and first hand crew experiences to make a superb comprehensive modelling reference and an essential addition to your library - superb!



Nürnberg's Panzer Factory

By Roddy MacDougall & Darren Neely

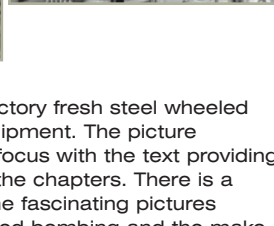
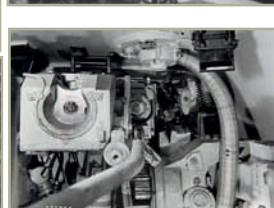
Published by Panzerwrecks

Hardback format 224 pages

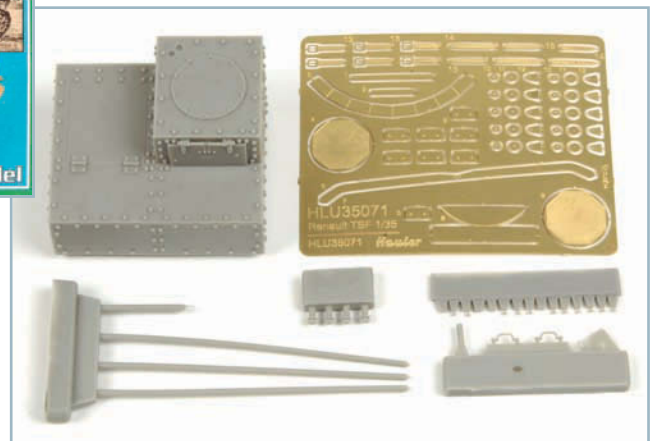
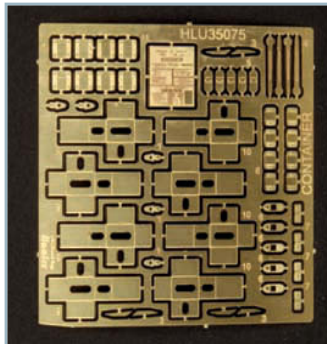
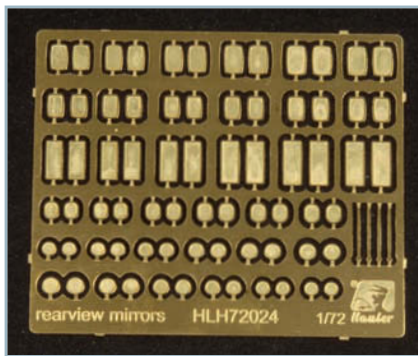
ISBN 978-1-908032-06-5

www.panzerwrecks.com

It's incredible that after almost seventy years information and photographs on the subject of Germany's armour can still be discovered, this new release from the Panzerwrecks guys is one of the most amazing collections of mostly unpublished shots you could wish to see. The M.A.N factory history is covered from its late 1930s truck production up to its wartime destruction. The majority of the photographs are by the factories official photographer so the quality is excellent and presented in large format the detail remains pin sharp. Prototype tanks are featured briefly but the main interest to modellers are the Panzer Is and IIs, Marders and the real jewels, the Panthers. Panther assembly, prototypes, testing and repairs are featured with a fantastic 14



page sequence of interior shots of a factory fresh steel wheeled Ausf G. and test vehicles for the IR equipment. The picture content of the book is rightly the main focus with the text providing detailed captions and introductions to the chapters. There is a useful map of the whole plant and some fascinating pictures showing the devastation caused by Allied bombing and the make shift repairs made to allow production to continue. Looking at the pictures it is easy to see why many of the planned Panther developments never materialised. Certainly one of the most exciting books on German armour we've seen in a long time, highly recommended to any German vehicle enthusiast and unmissable for Panther fans.



Hauler

A couple of handy generic sets for 1:72 modellers from Hauler are out now, HLH72024 are a mix of rear view mirrors for cars and soft-skins as is set HLH72025 containing a good selection of photoetched steering wheels which will add some nice delicate detail. In 1:35 is a set to detail Italeri's modern steel shipping container including clamps, locks and an ID plate.

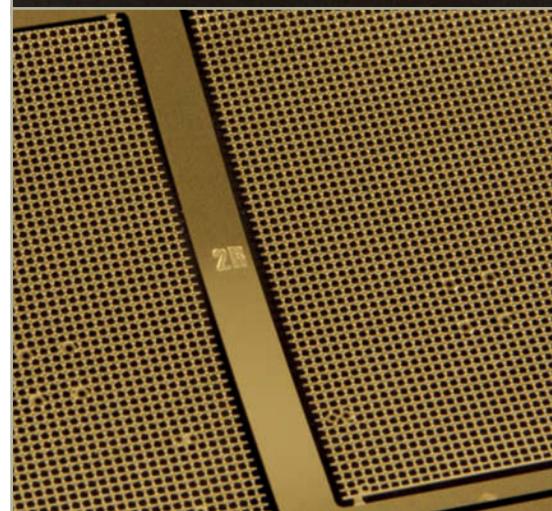
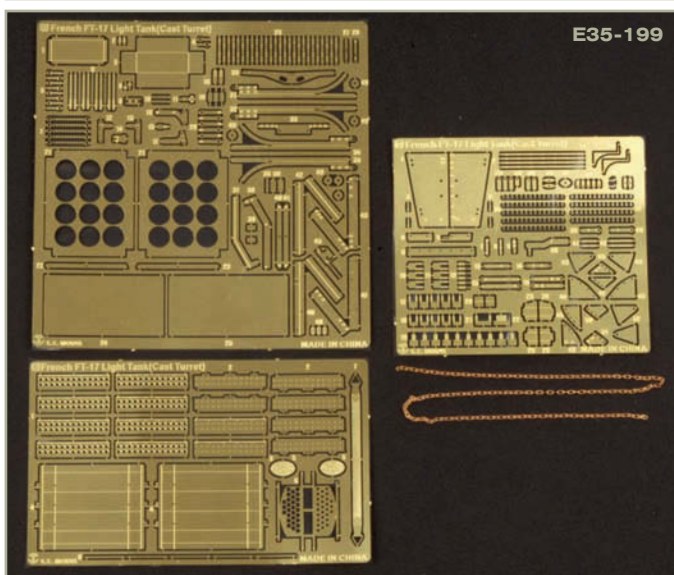
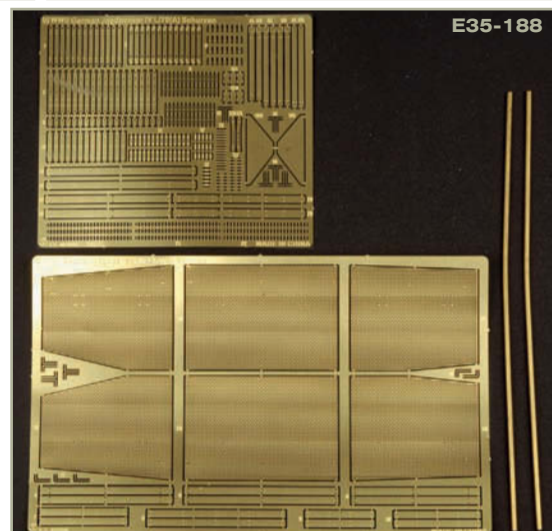
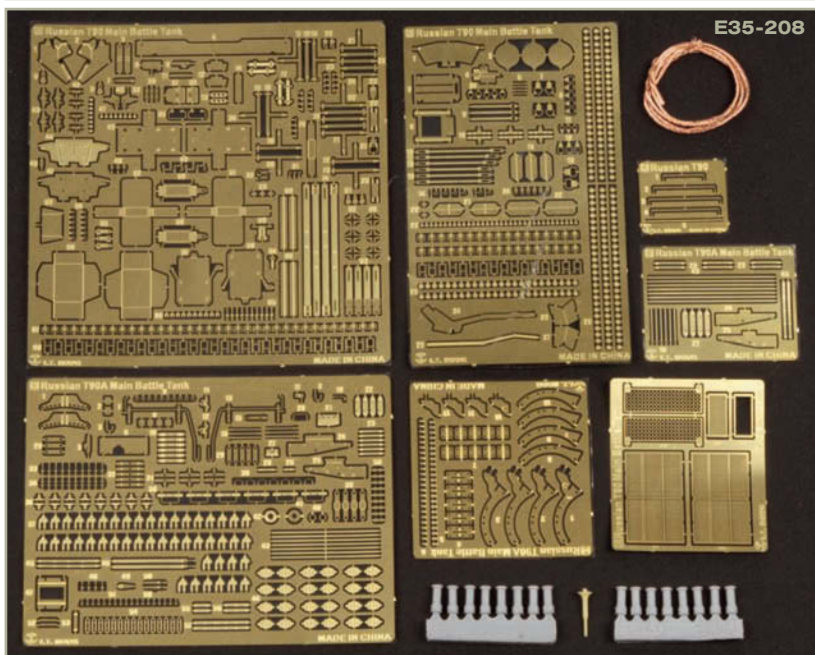
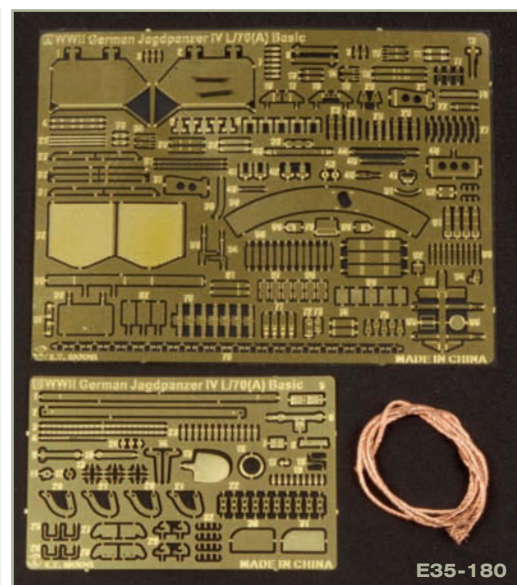
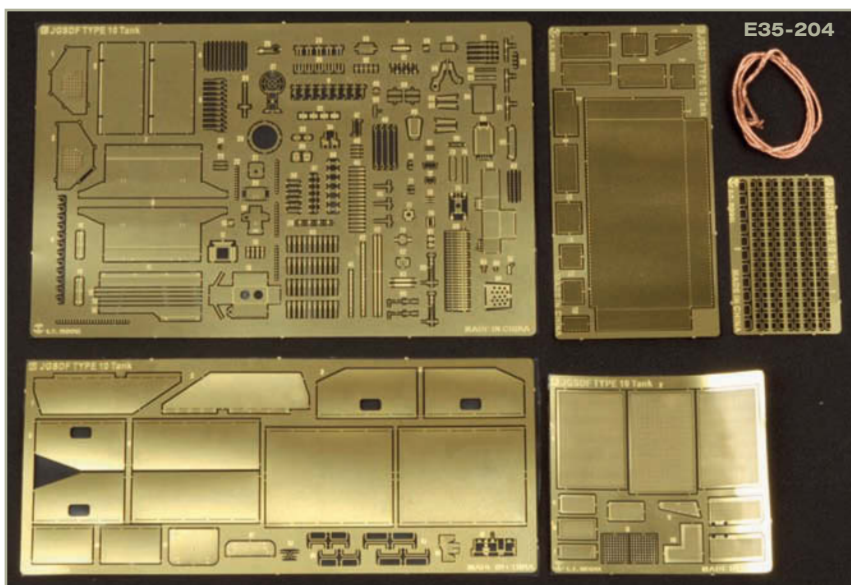
HLU35071 is a nice little 1:35 conversion for Meng's Renault FT-17 to create the TSF command vehicle consisting of some nicely cast resin (the main part being the box superstructure replacing the turret) and a photoetched fret, very nice yet very ugly at the same time! Its a simple little conversion on the Meng chassis and all you need to add are the antenna cables. www.hauler.cz



AMMO of Mig Jimenez - Acrylic Paints

Some dedicated boxed sets of colours and finishing effects from Ammo. The acrylic colours are ready to airbrush or brush in the familiar bottles with a 'dropper' nozzle. 7100 should prove very popular, as it is set of German colours 1939-45 (including RAL 9001 interior cream) and a good generic set 7112 'Tool colours' with wood and metal tones. 7113 is a great idea to feature six colours of Egyptian and Syrian vehicles from the Yom Kippur War to present day and it is great to see subjects like this getting

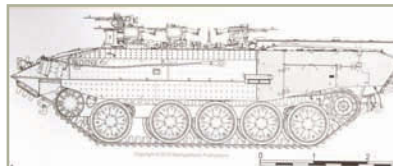
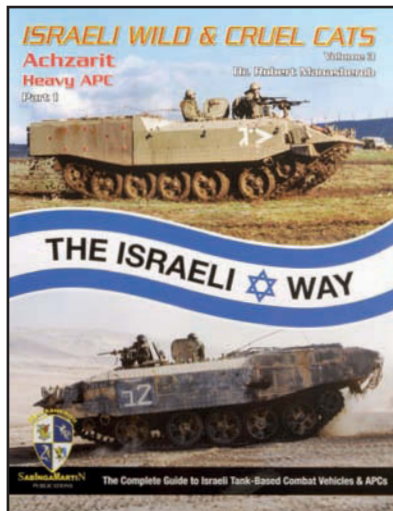
dedicated colour sets at last. In contrast 7115 offers the three main IDF sand grey and green colours. Colours are produced with a scaled effect to make them ready to use presumably in 1:35. Set 7401 'Summer Dust' is two jars of enamel wash and pigment powder, 7411 'Winter Camo' contains white acrylic, chipping fluid and streaking effect. Handy project sets. Keep up with the rapid rate of releases at www.migjimenez.com.



E.T. Model

all the hatches, a new set of front hull doors, new tail skid and replacement tool box. Superb Renault manufacturer's name plates are also provided. More up to date machinery with E35-204 for Tamiya's recent JGSDF Type 10, a big set of five frets plus tow cable including some incredibly fine mesh intake screens, hatch latches, turret tie down loops, tool clasps, crew boom microphones and replacement rubber mudflaps and side skirts. Finally set E35-208 which is for Trumpeter's cast turret T90, a bumper set of five etch frets, resin smoke candles and antennae base. The etched parts give you new straps for all the fuel cells, mounting brackets and straps for the rear fuel drums, engine deck grilles, storage bin clasps, details for the machine gun and ring clamps for the gun barrel. Great quality as always, check out the massive range at www.etmodeller.com

E.T. are always busy and have sent some samples to suit some recent releases out on the market. Where tow cable is included, E.T. are now using a nice soft copper cable which has a nice scale appearance. E35-180 is for Dragon's L/70 (A) and E35-188 for the same vehicle providing a full set of the mesh 'Thoma' side skirts which would be a challenge to build (soldering would be a big advantage) but will look superb, the three dimensional weave effect of the mesh looks very good. E35-199 is designed to enhance Meng's lovely little FT-17 with plenty of fine external detail and complete new internal ammo stowage racks for cannon ammo and MG ammo. New latches and hinges are included for



Israeli Wild and Cruel Cats Vol.3 Achzarit Heavy APC

Dr Robert Manasherob
Published by SabingaMartin Publications
Sotback A4 format, 80 pages
ISBN 978 0 9841437 2 6
www.SabingaMartin.com

World-recognized expert on Israeli military vehicles (and modeller himself), Dr Robert Manasherob, brings us a third volume on IDF APCs namely the sleek looking Achzarit (a Hebrew word meaning 'Cruel Female') derived from T54 /55 chassis in true Israeli customisation to suit specific needs. The tried and tested format of 'The Israeli Way' series of reference books is adhered to with an introduction and development of the Achzarit , prototypes and production mark I (variant A and B) we have a wealth of previously unpublished colour and black and

white shots of both factory fresh and vehicles in action coupled with detailed 1:35 plans explaining production variants. A walk around section focuses on all the right areas (from a modelling perspective) in close-up detail and the icing on the cake are the excellent colour profiles including details of markings. A superb comprehensive reference for IDF enthusiasts which coincides nicely with Meng's release in 1:35. Our thanks to www.aviationbookcentre.com for our sample copy.



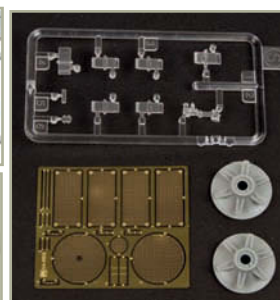
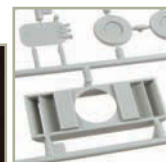
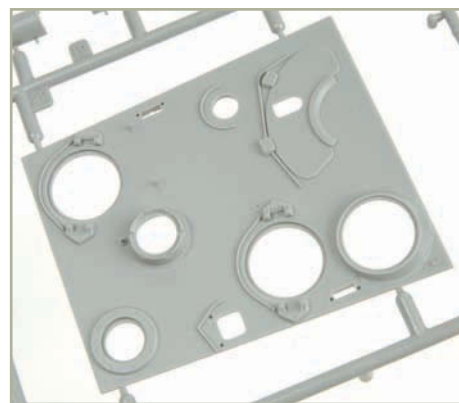
Sturmgeschütz III on the Battlefield 2

Mátýás Pánczél
Published by PeKo Publishing
Hardback landscape format, 112 pages
Polish / English Text
www.panzerwrecks.com

The second volume on StuG III is available now, the format remains the same which will please modellers as we've again fresh and inspirational images presented in large (full page) format covering all models from Bs to StuH.42 at the end of the War. Image quality varies but the majority are excellent (similar to the Panzerwrecks series) and StuGs serving on all fronts are shown both operational vehicles with the photos from German sources

and knocked out hulks from Allied archives (including the photo that inspired Radek's diorama that we have the pleasure of showing in this issue). Detailed photo captions and some introductory text are in dual language Polish / English. A great visual reference and very good value. Our thanks to Panzerwrecks who are the UK distributors.

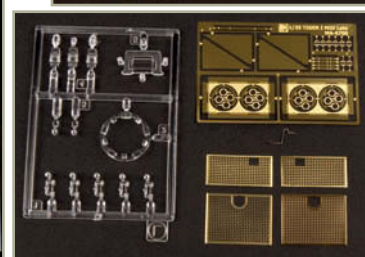
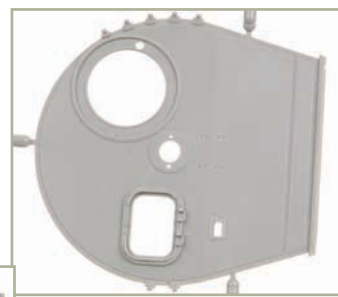




Dragon 1:35 Jagdpanther G2

The Jagdpanther ranks high on many German armour modeller's 'favourites' list so this recent release of the G2 version should prove popular with the proven track record of Dragon's G1 and Panther G providing a bulk of the parts. No cop-outs with accuracy from Dragon who have a completely new-tooled upper hull with amended angles and engine deck (along with smaller details, ball mount, tow cable brackets etc) suitable for the G2 version. Fantastic detail again throughout this kit, the finesse of moulding second to none including engine deck mesh screens on

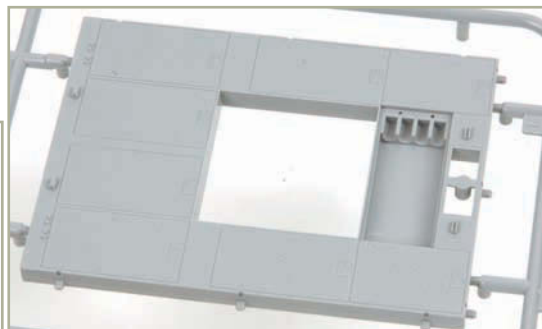
the photoetched fret and beautifully done weld beads and cast textures. Love 'em or hate 'em this one comes with DS tracks which will speed up assembly, in fact, the simple nature of the vehicle should prove quite a swift build from the box. Gun breech detail and simple 'plug-in' radiator and fan assemblies should prove sufficient when peeking through the hatches and holes leaving only the decision of which cool late war colour scheme to choose. Another lovely Dragon Panther to add to the wish list!



Dragon 1:35 Tiger 1 Mid-production

Another Tiger to add to Dragon's popular series of zimmerit coated vehicles, this one fills a gap and should prove extremely popular. As expected the kit relies heavily on previous releases but at first glance we look to have new roadwheels which are superb, a new upper hull plate and I think, the turret. The DS track is included in this release, along with the zimmerit finish this should prove a quicker build than our efforts in the past to produce this particular Tiger. The shape and definition of the zimmerit paste is really nice and beautifully moulded as is the whole kit showing what Dragon really are capable of, these Tigers are superbly detailed models built from the box with photoetched

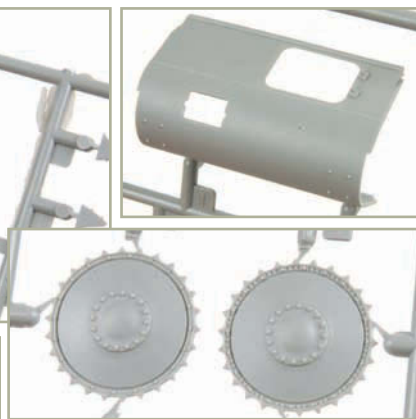
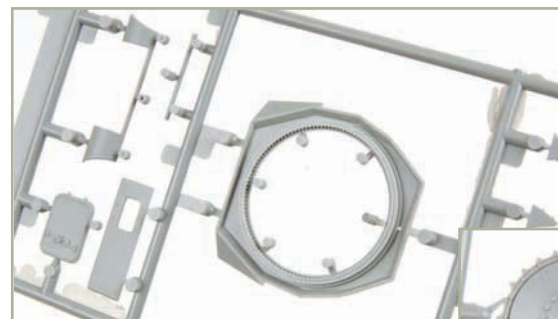
engine deck mesh and even a pre-formed metal conduit for the front lamp. In the past to build a Tiger to this kind of standard would take a tremendous amount of time not to mention money. Some well photographed vehicles are included in the eight schemes offered (all 1944) three from the Eastern front and three Pz.Abt.101 involved in the Normandy battles, spare track links and details of their placement are given for each option. So there may be sighs from many thinking 'another Tiger...' but if you can't get enough of the German 'big cats' this one is a must-have. Beautiful kit Dragon!



Dragon 1:35 PaK40/4 auf RSO mit Allwetterverdeck

Following on from the original release of this vehicle a few years back we've a new boxing from Dragon of the RSO PaK-ing a punch! As the 'Allwetterverdeck' on the box art suggests there is the inclusion this time of the tarpaulin cover, the main difference between the two kits. So starting with that, the large one piece moulding is well sculpted with a natural look although the roof section a little too crumpled for my liking. The moulded part also differs from the box-art in that it has both sides fastened down. Looking over the other sprues there's credit to Dragon for

including a new sprue of parts improving the brake drums, seating and the configuration of the floor with ammo storage. The PaK 40 is the later of DML's kits with a single piece barrel, a choice of muzzle brakes and nicely rendered gun shield. The delicate de-sprued Magic Track is still present as is Dragon's superbly detailed sharp moulding throughout the kit and the inclusion of two small photoetched frets promising a very detailed build from the box.

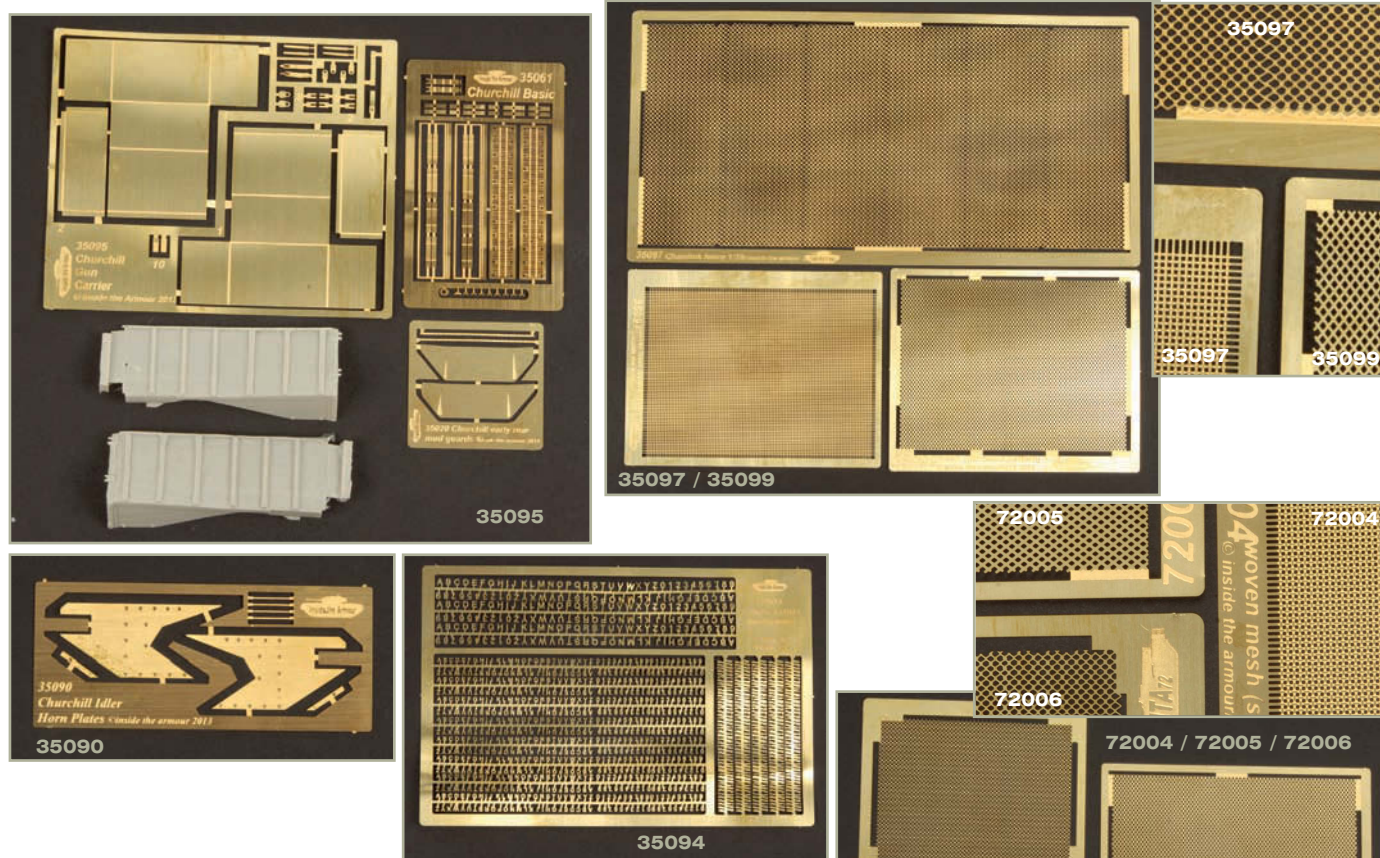


Dragon 1:35 Pz.Kpfw.II Ausf.A with Interior

Dragon add another Panzer II to the range with the early round-nosed Ausf.A with the bonus of a full interior (minus the engine bay). If you're familiar with Dragon kits you'll not be scared off by the monumental amount of parts crammed into the box as many aren't used with a compilation of sprues from previous Panzer IIs and their Marder II kit (providing much of the interior). So along with the grey sprues there's a clear sprue, a sizable photoetched fret, tiny de-sprued track links, some pre-formed metal grab handles and a decal sheet of six options featuring early dark grey vehicles. DML's precise delicate detail is present across the whole kit which

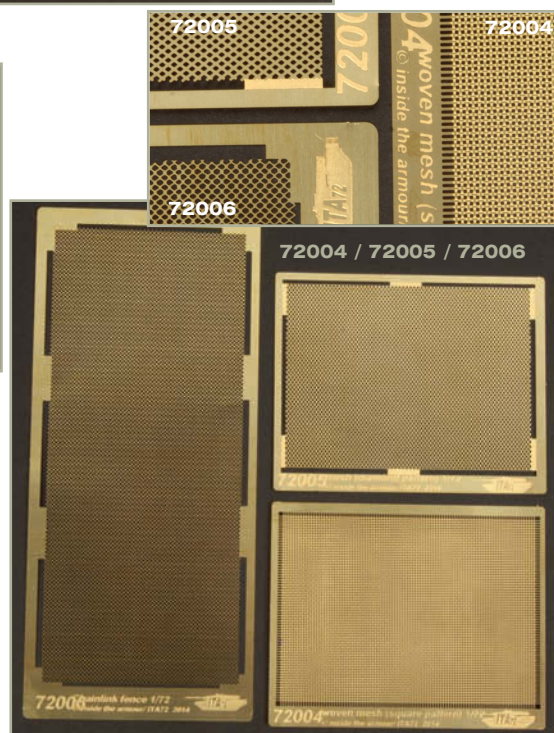
will really help the finished look of such a tiny vehicle, the detail is superb. The turret detail is very comprehensive with vision blocks and gun breech, toothed ring and MG34 which should all remain largely visible through the large roof hatches and with the vision blocks open some extra light will help (although the lower hull will be difficult to see still) A flick back through some of the Panzerwrecks volumes will give you some great diorama ideas for a KO'd Panzer II, this kit is the ideal candidate with all that interior detail! Another high quality kit from Dragon, our thanks to The Hobby Company for our Dragon samples.

new releases



Inside the Armour

Inside the Armour now offer the small scale detailer an expanding range with 'ITA72' some new releases are photoetched mesh sheets, 72004 square mesh, 72005 diamond mesh and 72006 chain link fence for dioramas. The same fine mesh is available in 1:35 with three new products. 35093 is another handy detailing fret of generic letters and numbers in various sizes (some minute!) suitable for foundry markings and manufacturer's marks. More specific new sets in 1:35 are 35090, a set of detailed idler horn plates for a quick fix to add the missing detail to your Churchill project in photoetch and 35095 is an upgrade for AFV Club's new Churchill Gun Carrier including fine detail and stowage boxes in photoetch and full upper front mudguards in resin. www.insidethearmour.com has more details and an on-line shop for their range of quality upgrades.



Stalingrad 1:35 Figures

The much respected range of 1:35 resin figures from Stalingrad and their sculptor Alexander Zelenkov is always worth keeping an eye on, the quality is amongst the best on the market with great historical atmosphere and accuracy. These three recent releases would look great together in an Eastern front scene depicting an MG34 team. S-3063 are the gunners themselves with a natural looking stance, assembly is a fiddle but everything eventually slots into place with excellent realism. S-3064 is an NCO peering through binoculars with a convincing lean with his weight on one leg. A final complement to the scene is S-3065 a crouching ammo carrier, can in one hand and rifle in the other. Personal equipment is all included and cast to the same high standards- superb figures always from Stalingrad. www.stalingrad.diorama.ru





Airfix 1:72 Diorama accessories

A new range from Airfix which is aimed probably at the wargamer market but will certainly be of interest to the small scale diorama modeller. These buildings are cast in a lightweight resin material and even include photoetched details such as window frames and clear glazing, with minimal assembly these buildings are pretty much ready to paint. Surface detail and casting is good but there

are some thick areas on the damaged areas which could be improved on easily and the surface can be scribed to add more finesse. The range in Airfix's latest catalogue is very good including bridges, churches and commercial buildings, some are stated as 1:76 but the difference appears minimal. A very speedy way to a large diorama, well worth a look www.airfix.com.



Master Box 1:35 'Jungle Patrol'

'Nam figures are always welcome additions to any range and MB produce some of the best injection moulded figure sets on the market. These four U.S. Army figures are offered with optional arms and heads allowing a variety of poses but all looking to be alerted by some movement and about to open fire. Moulding is very crisp with exceptionally good facial expressions and uniform details with loads of equipment and weapons (briar, M60, M16s, M1 and shotgun) options along with headgear leaving you plenty spare to clutter a vehicle with. A great set for any Jungle action scene.



Master Box 1:35 German Elite Infantry

Another imaginative set from MB with these Waffen SS troops happy in the fact that they're going to eat like kings tonight! A common generic German equipment sprue as we've seen before is impressive with a wide choice of weapons including MG 34s and 42s, PPSH, handguns, grenades and ammo boxes much of which can be used elsewhere. The detail and proportions are excellent throughout. The five figures work really well together and are reminiscent of a number of war-time photographs with the guy holding the chickens very well done, the gripping hands moulded to the unlucky bird's necks. A helmet of eggs and a discrepancy between the moulding and box art where the art shows a melon and the moulded piece is a cabbage, not to worry - sour kraut it is then! Another cracking set of figures to build a scene around. www.mbltd.info is the place to visit on-line



MK35 Militar's Kits 1:35 figures

Who better than the long running French manufacturer MK35 to tackle some French infantry? With not a great deal to choose from on the market these four French infantrymen in action should prove popular with anyone modelling the early-war period on the Western Front. F241, F242 and F244 are all running at a pace



where F243 appears a little less animated. All are weighed down with gear which is all nicely sculpted and moulded as are the uniforms including 'movement' with the greatcoats to good effect. Good characters to bring life to a diorama. www.mk35.com has more details.

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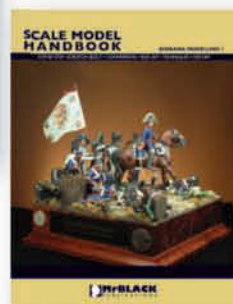
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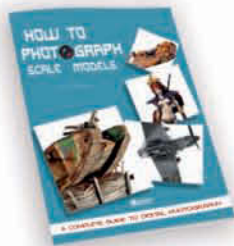
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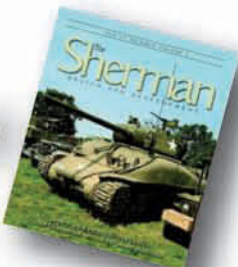
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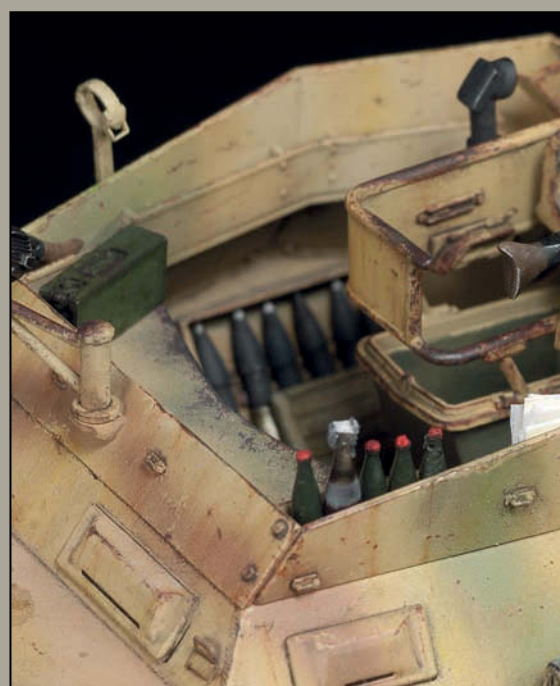
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SdKfz 234/3

Achtrad

Dragon's 1:35 kit modelled and described by
Antonio Martin Tello



The SdKfz 234 series of eight wheeled vehicles was the final incarnation of the family of heavy recon armoured cars developed by the Germans during WWII. They entered service in 1944 and were built in four versions, two "light" and two "heavy" regarding their armament. The SdKfz 234/1 and /2 (the famous "Puma") mounted 2 cm and 5 cm guns respectively, and the /3 and /4 carried 7.5 cm, short and long barrellled guns respectively. The mission of these latter two, especially of the SdKfz 234/3, was to support the /1 and /2 in their recon duties with their more powerful 7.5 cm guns, dealing with enemy infantry, machine gun nests, antitank emplacements or soft skins or light armoured enemy vehicles.

The 234 family has always been among my favourite vehicles. I love their modern and aggressive look, and all the four have been in my "to do" modelling list. Fortunately, Dragon models kitted all of the versions in the late 2000s making an excellent job. In fact, their series of the SdKfz 234 family are fantastic kits, plentiful of detail, (ah, this running gear...) and their construction runs relatively smoothly. The SdKfz 234/3 version (ref 6257) featured in this article is no an exception. The kit box is filled with parts, including a small photo etched sheet, a clear sprue, and some metallic parts, such as the width indicator poles. The interior provided is quite complete, despite it is not very visible once the model is done. Nevertheless, it has been pointed out that the batteries are missing, but, as I said, this is barely

noticeable in the finished model. The kit comes with a full set of "all terrain" wheels, and also includes several "civilian pattern" as a bonus, which I did not use in my model.

I built the kit more or less out from the box. The main extra work was the detailing of the tool's holders and clamps. These are form a very convenient set from Hauler. Photoetched leftovers were used here and there, especially in the jack holders, since the plastic ones supplied in the kit were too thick. Tie loops were added on the upper sides and rear, made of thin wire. In retrospective, I think that the jerrycan holders would have also benefitted from a replacement with some photoetched parts, but at the time I built the model I had not a source at hand for them and I did not want to complicate further the building process.





**“their series
of the SdKfz 234 family
are fantastic kits”**

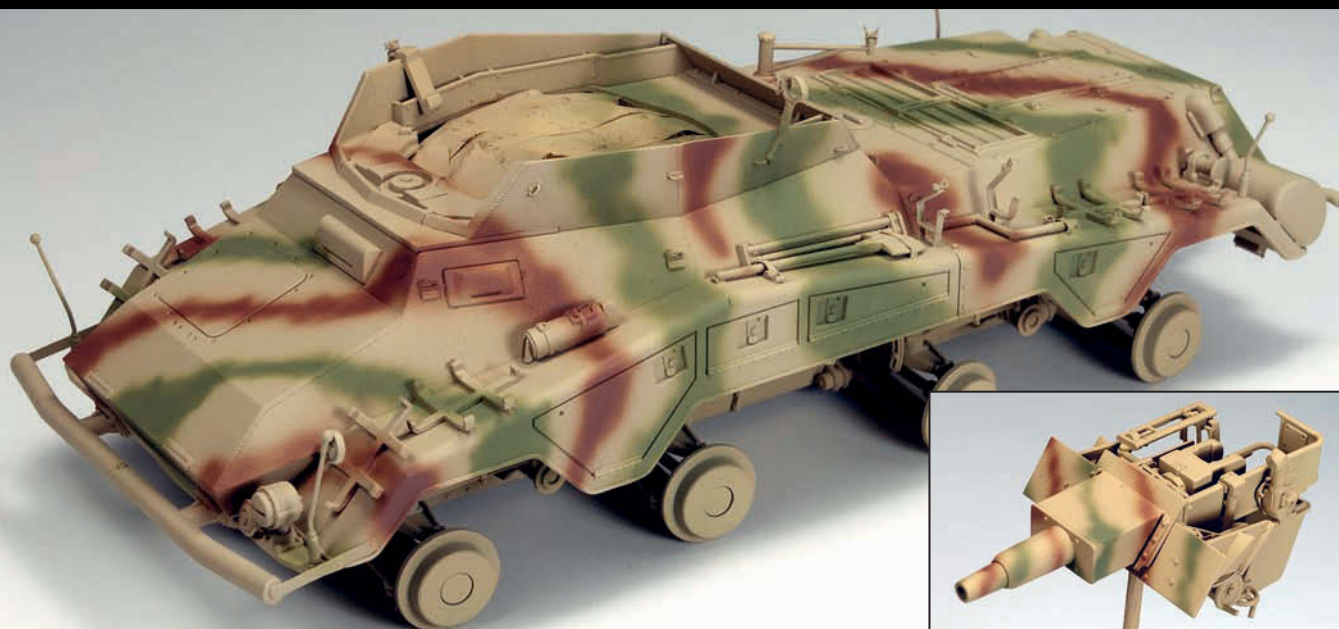
In this kind of vehicles, with a somewhat visible interior, it is necessary to paint this part before the two main halves of the body are glued together. For the airbrush work I used the good old Tamiya acrylics diluted with Gaianotes lacquer thinner. I painted the inner walls in mix of XF60 dark yellow and XF55 buff and the floor in a “red primer” tone obtained by mixing XF64 red brown and XF7 flat red. Steering wheels, pedals and levers were brush painted in black, and some details here and there in green (both Vallejo). Then, I applied the usual weathering procedure that will be described later for the exterior. Anyway, as I said before, not

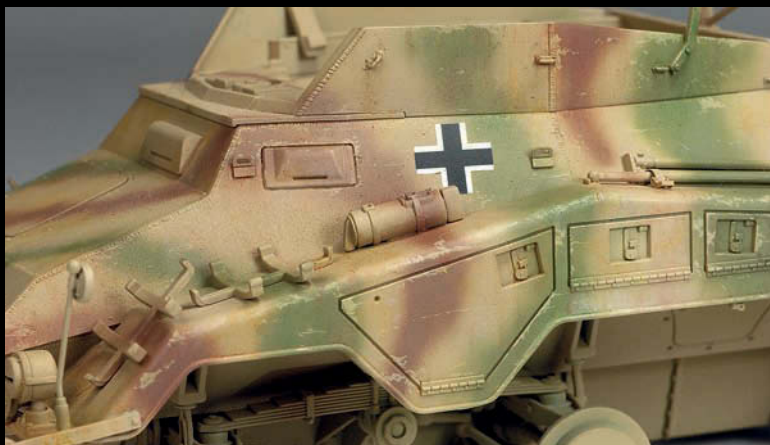
much of all this is visible once the model is completed.

With the interior painted, then I finished the assembly of the model, and moved to the painting. The scheme chosen for my model was a fairly common three tone camouflage, as it can frequently be seen in German vehicles during the Normandy campaign. Since I wanted to use the one of the decal options provided by Dragon in the box and mark my 234/3 as a 116. PzDiv. Vehicle, I just followed the instructions and took the profiles depicted in them as a guide. Before starting the painting, I closed the hull opening with

masking tape. The base coat colour was a mix of XF60 dark yellow and XF55 buff. Then, I airbrushed freehand the green (XF58 olive green + XF21 sky) and brown (XF64 red brown + base colour) stripes. Finally, I sealed this base with a coat of diluted X22 clear varnish.

As I said, the decals used are some of the supplied by Dragon in the box. They are of excellent quality and were fixed with the aid of Microsol and Microset liquids. Once dry, I applied some ochre and tan filters in order to start to integrate the camo colours and the decals.



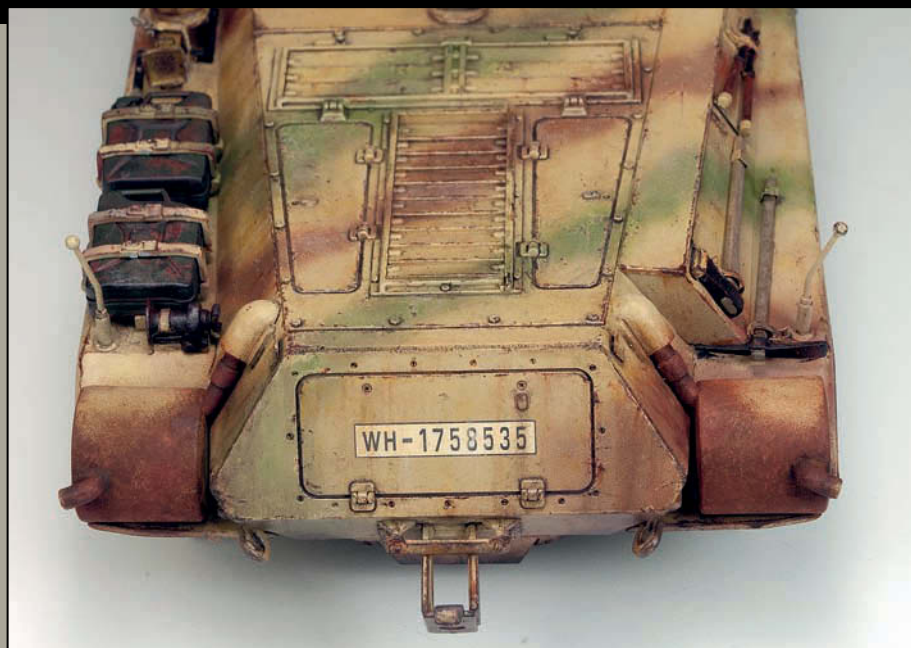


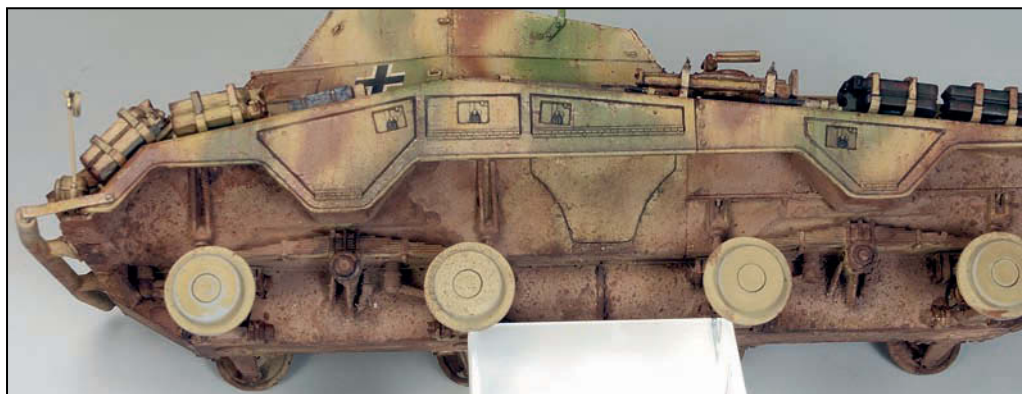
Oil pin washes add more tonal richness and add a faded look to the base coat, especially when using light tones or white. I used many colours and applied them randomly, in small dots, blending them randomly with the aid of some thinner.

The oil pin washes are an easy way to start the weathering of the model. They add more tonal richness and add a faded look to the base coat, especially when using light tones or white. I used many colours and applied them randomly, in small dots, blending them randomly with the aid of some thinner.

The chipping was made with a sharp small pencil and in three colours, trying to simulate the damage in the successive layers of paint: Superficial scratches in lightened dark yellow representing light damage in the camouflage and base colours, red primer scratches that revealed the primer coat, and dark brown chipping, representing deep scratches that exposed the metal. Most of the times, these scratches are painted one over the other, following the logical sequence. There were some areas where I wanted to represent a more severe damage, due to a more persistent rubbing. These are mainly the front bumper, the spare wheel holder, and the lower front and rear area. Here the dark brown colour was dry brushed or tapped with a hard bristle old brush.

Then I came back to the oils and painted some subtle streaks trying to simulate both grime and rust starting from the deeper chips. For this purpose I used a reddish brown colours, quite diluted and blended with thinner. In the more damaged areas (bumper, wheel holder...) I made a sort of diluted wash with this colour.





At this point, I also painted the tools and other details such as the fire extinguisher, padlocks or exhausts. For the rusty look of these latter, I used track rust pigment (AK085) fixed with track wash (AK083), both from AK Interactive, applied with a thin brush in a more or less random pattern, and slightly retouched later with tiny points of rust coloured pigments of different tones.

In order to enhance the details, a pinwash of dark wash (MIG Productions) was applied around the details and recessed lines. It is important to remove the excess of this dark wash from flat areas, in order not to darken the model. Finally, I dirtied the model with pigments. I used a couple of tones: Europe dust (P028) from MIG Productions and European earth (AK042) from AK Interactive. These were applied in the horizontal surfaces, where an

accumulation would be logical, and more heavily in the lower portions. The pigments were retouched with wet effects (MIG Productions) and earth effects (AK Interactive) in order to increase the intensity of the tones and create some effect of humidity in the dust. The wheels were treated in a similar way that the rest of the model, maybe with a little heavier weathering effects in some cases. The hubs were painted in the lightened mixture of dark yellow (see above, no camouflage) and the tyres in black. After some oil washes, I painted the chipping. I applied a dark pinwash, which is particularly suited here in order to highlight the different bolts. Finally, I dirtied them with pigments, and cleaned the threads by rubbing them with the finger. The wheels were ready to be installed in the model. The final touches were the addition of fuel and grease stains in the wheel hubs and engine deck, the



installation for the gun in its place, some transparent bottles from Plus Models, and footprints made with the Calibre 35 foot stamps, an aerial from RB... The 234/4 was done and ready for its scenic base.





“for the first time I
used the airbrush to
paint figures”



The figures- a most important feature of any vignette

To crew my SdKfz 234/3 I chose three resin figures from two top quality brands. The first one is from the Russian maker Evolution and is “German tank crewman #2” (ref 35071). When I saw it in the net, I was captivated by his casual pose and nice detail, and I was not disappointed when I finally had it in my hands, since it is superb.

The other two guys came from the US and are from Alpine, arguably the “standard setter” in the current world of 1/35 military resin figures. They are the reference 35101 “German Panzer Crew in summer” and, no surprise here, they are gorgeous. For the first time I used the airbrush to paint the figures. If you have an area that is only or mainly one colour

(the head, a shirt, the trousers...)

you paint the base colour, and then airbrush a lighter colour from above, and a darker colour from below. It is just as if you “paint the light”.

Afterwards, you retouch the figure with a brush as usual. “only brush” work, and it is also easier, since the light and shadows areas are naturally marked. Also, you can use your Vallejo or similar for the airbrush, diluting them with alcohol or their specific brand solvent, and so, for the subsequent brush work you can use the very same colour. Of course, for small details, or camouflaged clothes this approach does not work.

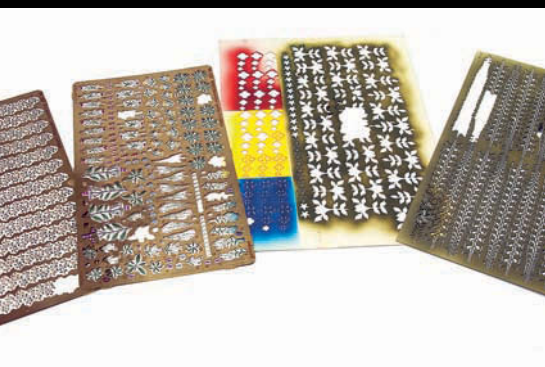


Normandy, August 1944...creating a moment in time

For the time-space location of my models, I usually decide first, and then, I build and paint the model in a suitable way to fit it. This time, the process was quite the opposite. As I said, I wanted to depict a more or less typical German vehicle from the Normandy campaign, and the best option given by Dragon in their decal sheet was a car from the Panzer-Aufklärungs-Abteilung 116, 116. Panzer Division, the famous "greyhound" division. Doing a little of research on this unit I found that it participated in Operation Lüttich, the big counter offensive launched by the Germans the 6th of August 1944 near Mortain with the aim to cut the advances of the allies in Brittany and re-take Avranches. The German forces eventually failed in their objectives and they were pushed back and nearly destroyed in the Falaise pocket a couple of weeks later, practically ending the battle for Normandy. Thus, my 234/4 would be located near

Mortain on August 6 or 7, 1944. A quick look via Google's street view allowed me to get an idea about the appearance of the countryside by the local "départementales" roads near this town, and I tried to recreate this look in my scene. The layout is simple, a portion of a local road, a small ditch, an embankment, a fence, plenty of green vegetation, flowers (remember, we are in August), a tree, a road sign... As usual, I started with the basic shape made with two pieces of insulating foam, a light and easy to cut material, glued together, with a classic diagonal composition. Then, I cut the excess foam "modelling" the embankment and the ditch. For the rough texture of the ground, I made a mixture of plaster, white glue,

sand and small pebbles and applied it on the embankment, and later, I added some small "stones" made of smashed chalk. The road pavement was made with thin coat of plaster, mixed with some white glue. When it dried, it cracked; this was not intentional, but I think the road looked more realistic this way, so I was lucky. Once dry, the ground was painted with suitable acrylic colours and received some dark brown (embankment) or grey (road) washes, and some pigments.



Over this basic ground I added two elements: The fence and the tree. The fence helps to close the background of the scene, while the tree, almost in a corner, enhances the vertical dimension of the diorama. The fence was made with balsa wood, and to give it an old and worn out look, I engraved it with a wire brush and dented the ends. I painted it in acrylics, applied a dark wash to enhance the texture and finally add a hint of green to simulate mould. For the tree, the trunk and basic branches came from a dry bonsai. On these branches, finer ones were simulated gluing wire and natural sticks, which were painted to match the overall tone of the trunk. At this point, the branches and trunk received a dark brown

wash. Then, the leaves were glued one by one. They are laser cut paper made by Kamizukuri from Japan which requires to be painted. The specific reference is "horse chestnut tree leaves" (ref A14), and I used four sheets, which represent more than 1200 leaves... Once glued to the tree, the leaves received some random washes of a couple of greens, and ochre.

I decided from the beginning that the vegetation has to play a very important role in the scene. Many times I see dioramas or vignettes in which the modeller has put a great deal of attention in the vehicles and figures but then the vegetation is not at the same level, being, unreal, repetitive or boring.

Here, I tried to make abundant, realistic and varied vegetation, with several kinds of bushes, weeds, flowers... even butterflies. In fact, is not so difficult, the main trick is the variety and dedication. I spent lots of hours planting weeds and flowers; lots. The list of material used includes some natural things, such as fine sticks of dry Mediterranean tape weed (*posidonia oceanica*), synthetic diorama stuff, laser cut leaves and flowers (Plus Models and Kamizukuri) and photo etched flowers and plants (and butterflies) (Eduard). The medium bushes were made from a skeleton of plaited wire, covered with putty and painted in a suitable greyish brown colour, and then I glued Kamizukuri leaves in the same way as for the big tree.

One of the elements that help to locate the place where the scene takes place is the road sign. It is a typical French "borne d'angle Michelin", a kind of sign made of concrete, very popular in the 1930s and 1940s and a symbol of the rural France of the time (http://panneauxenbeton.perso.sfr.fr/english_index.html). The sign is a resin reference from Plus Models (ref 392) with custom made signs. The base colour is a grey primer from AK interactive, which serves as a good concrete colour. On this base, I brushed "heavy chipping fluid" from AK Interactive (ref 089). Then, I applied a coat of acrylic white (Vallejo) once dry, I rubbed the paint with a hard bristle brush moistened in water.



The more you rub, the more distressed the white paint you get. Once happy with the look, I let all the paint to settle, and then I applied a wash of a brownish grey. I add the signs that also received a light wash and some chips, and put the element in place, where it received a hint of green to simulate mould.



I am certainly not a quick modeller, but this time the model itself has not been the most time-consuming part of the work. I spent lot of hours working in the ground, mainly in the vegetation, since I wanted to do my best here, and try to find out how far I could go. I recognize that sometimes it has been somewhat boring and repetitive, and, despite I am quite satisfied with the final result, in retrospective I think it was too much work. I still think that the use of suitable figures and the placement of a model in a good scenic setting add a considerable amount of value to the model itself, and thus, I will keep doing that in my future projects. However, I think that my groundwork will be much simpler, at least in the near future, and I will focus in the vehicle, that is really where we modellers have fun, don't we?.

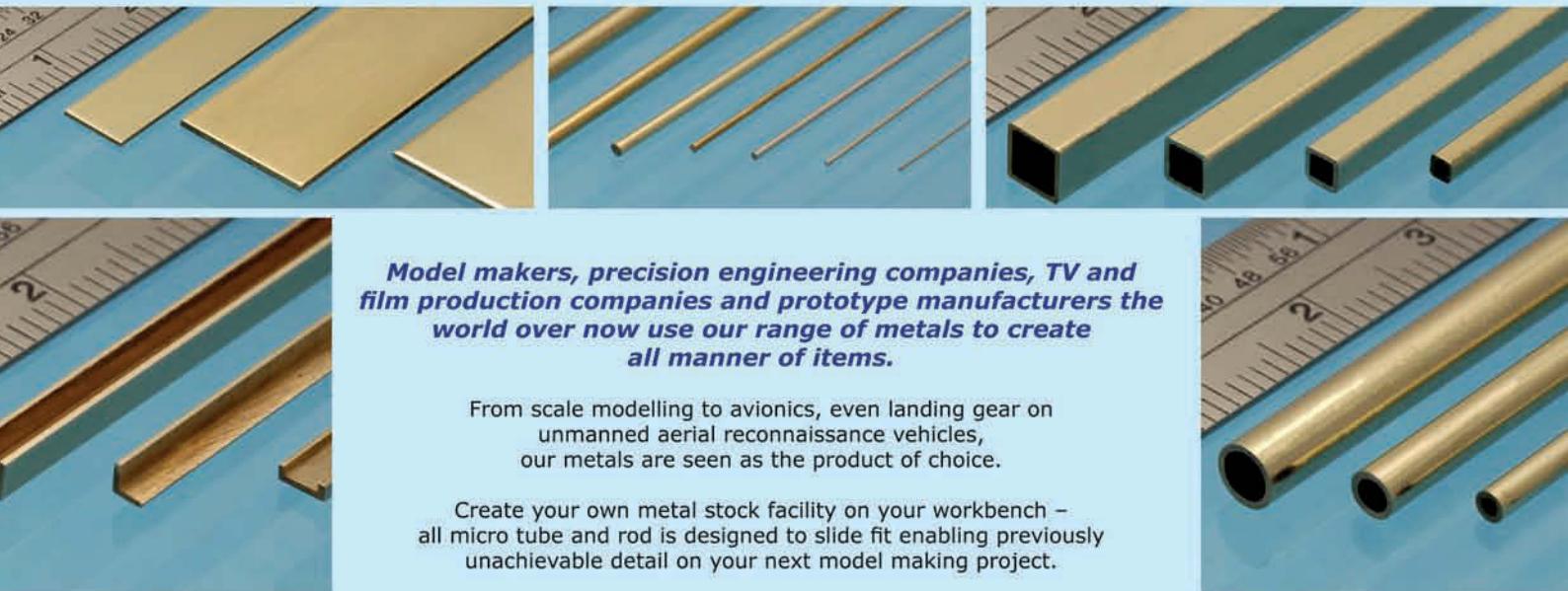




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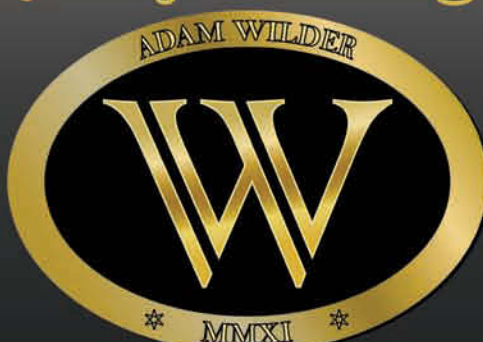
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