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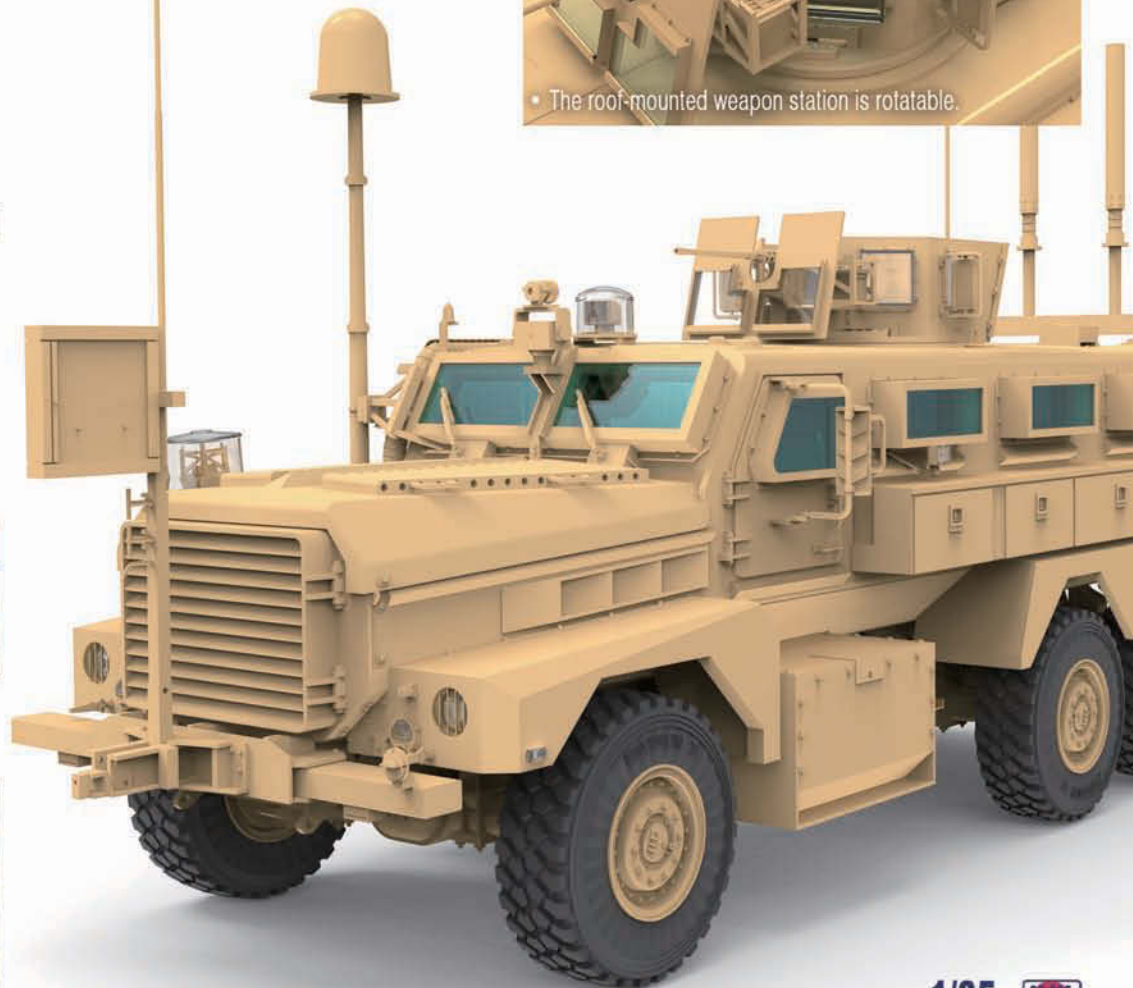
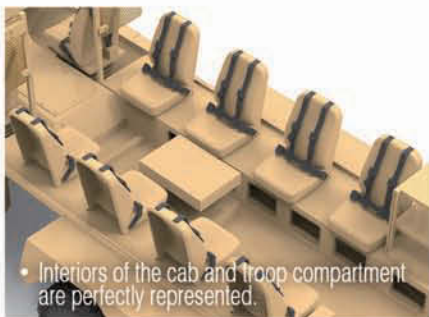
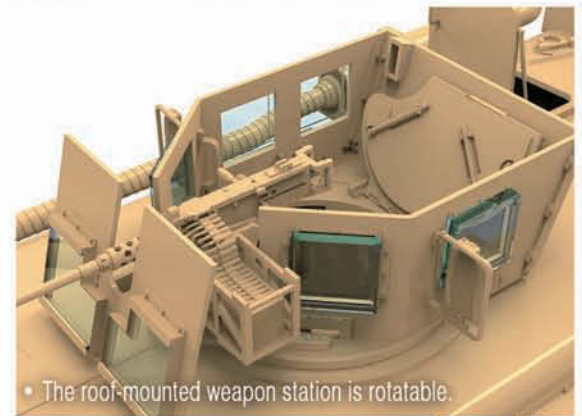
modeller



OVER THE TOP

RESICAST'S 1:35 HOLT GUN TRACTOR & HOWITZER

U.S. COUGAR 6×6 MRAP VEHICLE



1/35
SCALE

MENG

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Seasonal Good Wishes to our Readers from everyone at AFV Modeller!

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



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AMX-30B2

Kristof Pulinckx gets busy with the French desert-stormer

Two years after their first version, we can now welcome the brand new AMX30B2 from MENG. This desert version is in my opinion much more appealing than their initial release, not only because of the colour scheme but also for the weathering potential. The kit shares a great number of parts with the first version but we have plenty of new parts, both plastic and photoetch to explore.



MENG 1:35 3

Meng's new kit...

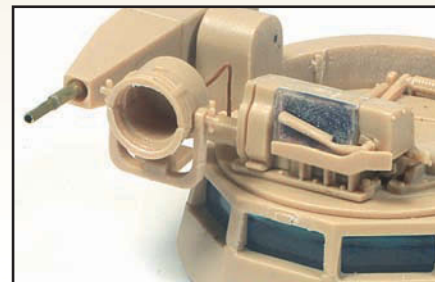
We start assembling, as usual, with the suspension and wheels. Thanks to an innovative design the suspension system, the torsion bars stay movable after assembly. Between the two halves of the wheels a poly cap need to be inserted. This makes it possible to easily remove the wheels anytime you need; this will be handy especially in the painting and weathering stages. Moving further up to the hull I added the separate hull side panels and a missing weld seams made from Magic Sculp. The exhausts and jerry cans consist of two halves, this leaves us with seams that needs to be filled with superglue and sanded smooth. There is an option of open or closed exhaust pipe covers. I decided to leave one in the open position, the opening is treated with a burr to make it perfectly round and a bit thinner. The screens over the exhaust are in photo-etch and Meng include a handy template to bend the screen into the right shape and angle.

Both the exhausts and screens are left off for easier painting later. The construction of the hull is pretty straight forward and is finished off with some additional wring to the headlights according the reference photos.

The turret has a casting seam running on both sides that needs to be removed before we start building it. This is easily done with abrasive paper, taking care to not damage the moulded on details. Next the two halves of the turret are firmly glued and the seam filled with superglue and sanded smooth. Because the turret is cast in reality, a casting texture is added by dabbing on Mister Surfacer 500 with a stiff brush. The barrel is also made of two parts resulting in more seams to fill. This is done with great care because at the end the barrel needs to be perfectly round. The tie-downs on the turret are moulded on, so for more detail they are replaced by new ones made of thin metal wire.

The rest of the turret is assembled

according the instructions and caused no issues. Finally the workable tracks are assembled. Before you can start you need to clean up all the parts and again Meng came to the rescue with the same jig used earlier for the exhaust screens. This contains a section with pins designed to easily assemble the tracks. The tracks consist of 80 links each just as mentioned in the instructions. Wiring for the searchlight an thermal sight are prepared but left aside until after painting.



The machinegun on the commander's cupola is rebuilt using hollow tubes from Albion Alloys.



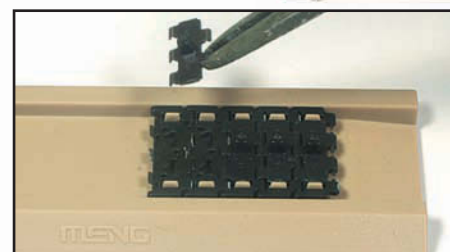
I discarded the spare track parts shown in the instructions favouring the actual links, luckily spares are provided. Clamps are made from plastic strip.



The wheel are attached with a blade to cut some chunks out of the rubber for a used, combat appearance.



The working suspension is perfect for modellers who want to place this model in a diorama or vignette.



The assembly jig makes the construction of the workable tracks quick and easy.



The track pads were attached with an electric burr to simulate desert wear and tear.



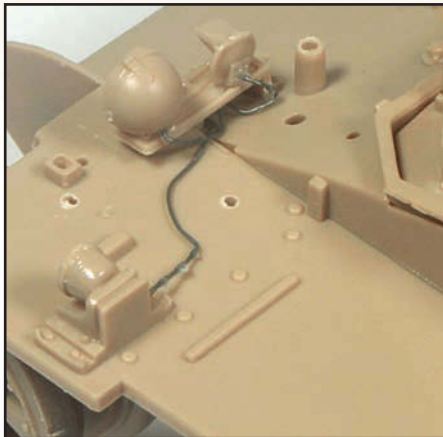
An unwanted seam is filled with Magic Sculp that is sculpted into a weld seam with the point of a knife.



A quick twist with a burr sweetens up the exhaust outlet, the seam running the length of the muffler also needed attention.



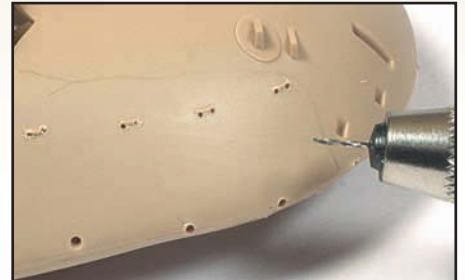
Meng include a jig to bend the PE mesh guards at the perfect angle.



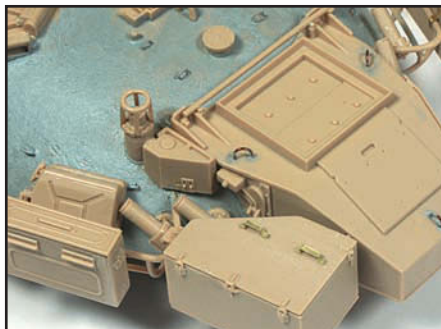
Some wiring was added using photo references.



The barrel is made of two large parts that need to be perfectly glued together. The seams are filled with superglue and sanded smooth.

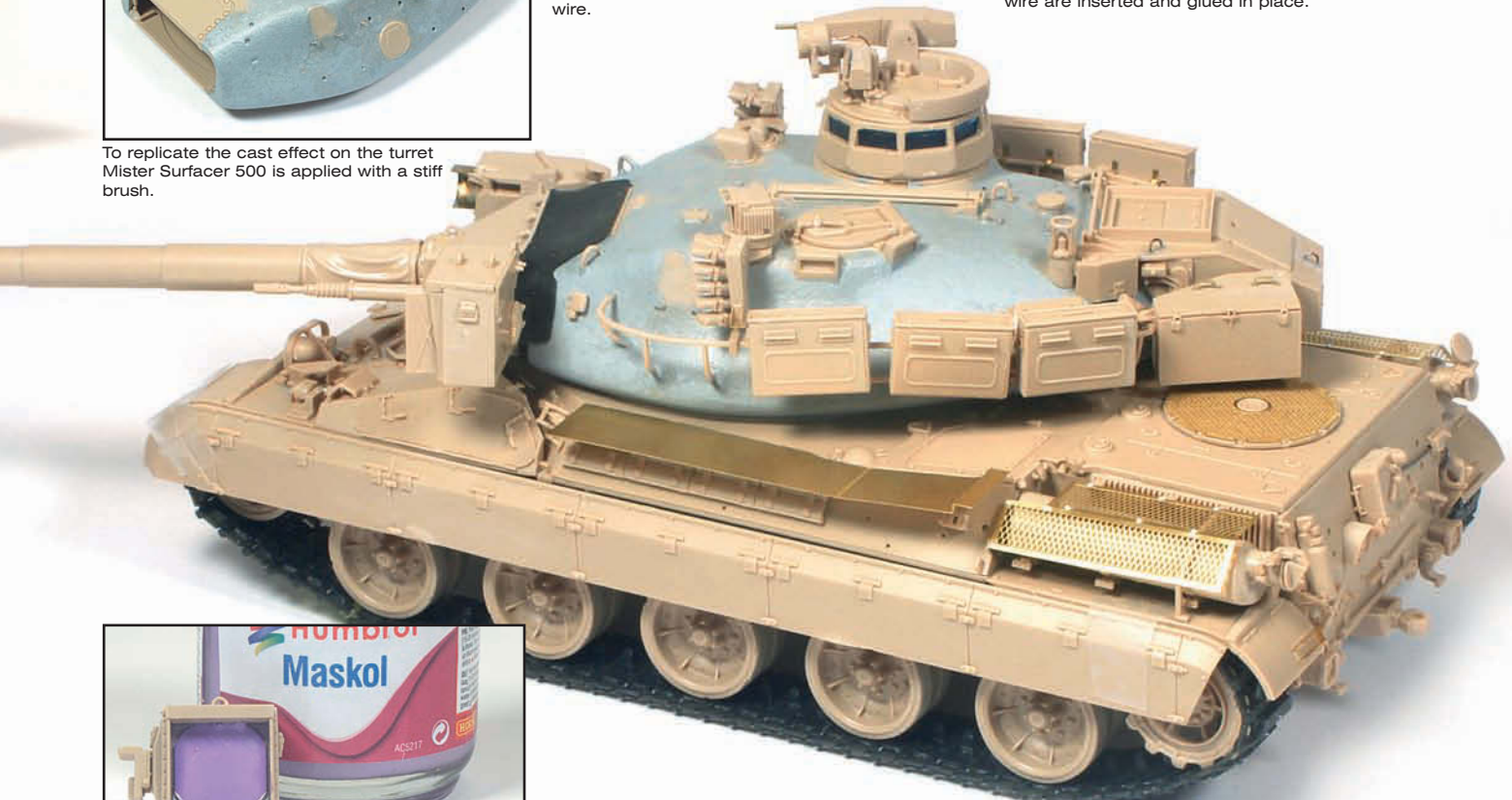


To replicate the cast effect on the turret Mister Surfacers 500 is applied with a stiff brush.



Hooks and handles are replaced by photo-etch items from the spares box or replaced with metal wire.

The moulded on tie-downs are cut off, and holes are drilled where new tie-downs made from metal wire are inserted and glued in place.



With the interior of the search lamp painted with Valejo steel, the clear lens is added and masked prior to base colours.

On with the paint...

The airbrush is filled with Iraqi Sand from AK Interactive. This acrylic paint comes from the Iraq and Afghanistan paint set, but it matches the colour we need perfectly. After the basecoat, some white is added to the base colour and the model is sprayed in a cloud pattern to create some depth and shadows. The camouflage

colour is mixed from Nato Brown from AK with our base colour and applied according to the example on the instructions. This brown colour is deliberately made lighter, and in my opinion, more to scale. The tracks are airbrushed with Dark Tracks from AK Interactive and after spraying the base colour the rubber on the wheels are

painted with Rubber Tires also from AK. Both paints come from the tracks and wheel colour set from AK. Finally the whole model is given a light coat of Gloss Varnish so we end up with a light satin sheen and a smoother surface, perfect for weathering.



The base coat of the model is sprayed on with Iraqi Army Sand from AK Interactive.



White is added to the base coat and the model is sprayed in a cloud pattern to achieve some depth and shadows.



The brown camouflage is mixed from NATO Brown From AK Interactive and our base coat colour Iraqi Army Sand.



The tracks are sprayed with Dark Tracks from AK, this is not black but a dark grey.



Another AK colour, Rubber Tires, was brush painted. As with the tracks, pure black doesn't look correct.

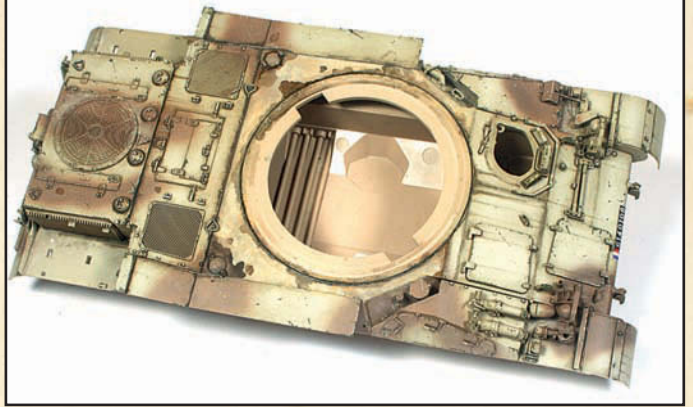
Desert damaged...

Before I started weathering I applied the decals, having carefully trimmed the decals to remove the transparent carrier film. Weathering starts by applying a wash over the whole model making sure all the details are outlined. This changes the look of the model dramatically. Next I used a fine pointed brush and started chipping, first in a slightly lighter tone than the base coat. This represents the lighter wear on the paintjob. This was followed by round two of chipping. This time I used NATO Green from AK going over the earlier

applied light chips to create a nice effect of depth. On the hull around the opening for the turret I applied a mixture of European Earth and North Africa Dust pigments and fixed them in place with White Spirit. When dry, this dusty granular surface is perfect to create stains from fuel and water. These effects are done using appropriate streaking and wet effects. Finally again the pigments are brought back to the bench to treat the lower hull, wheels and tracks. The same colour mixture mentioned before is mixed with White Spirit and applied to

create a sandy and dusty look. On the front and back of the model this mix is splattered on with a blast through a wet paintbrush with the airbrush. When dry a very light and diluted enamel wash for DAK vehicles is applied over the pigments to gain some more depth. The outside of the tracks is drybrushed with Rubber Tires from AK to achieve some contrast. While the inner side of the tracks are metalized with a graphite artist's pencil to mimic the polished steel caused by the friction of the wheels.





A surface treated with pigments is perfect to apply effects of spilled fuel, oil and water. To create these effects Fuel Stain, Fresh Engine oil and Wet effects from the range of AK-Interactive was used.



The exhausts are washed with a rusty wash first and chipped with rusty and green colors



European Earth and North Africa Dust pigments are mixed with White Spirit and brushed on the tracks to obtain a dusty look...



...and on the lower hull with a heavier build-up.



At the front and back this mixture is splattered on by blasts of air through a loaded paintbrush.



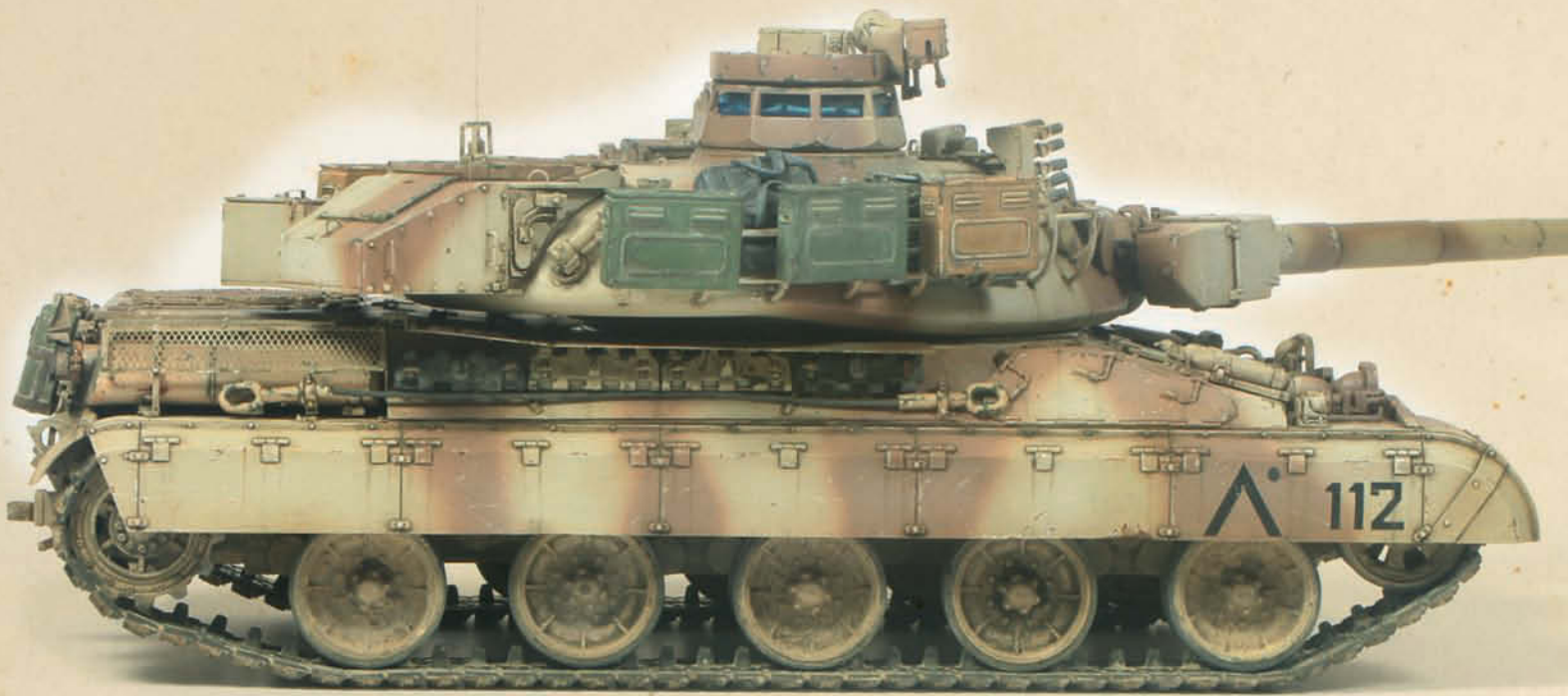
The More extensive chipping with green is done in areas subject to wear and tear and where the crew mounts the vehicle.



The ring with the vision blocks is painted with transparent Blue from Vallejo.

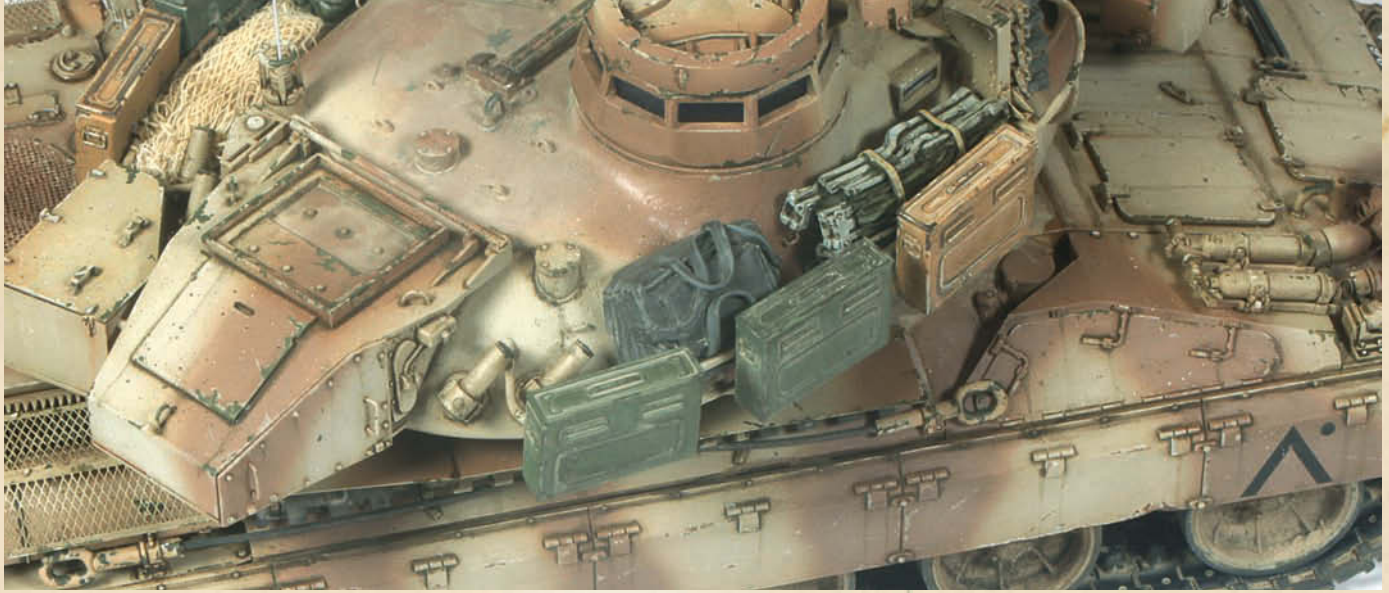
Varying the colours of the stowage containers around the turret adds interest.





AMX-30B2





Final finishing...

Wheels and tracks can now carefully be mounted on the model, take care to not leave a fingerprints in the areas treated with pigments. All the tools and accessories that we left off for individual and easier painting are prepared and glued onto the model. Most stowage comes from the spares box while the camouflage net is made from bandage coloured by soaking it in a heavily diluted sand beige acrylic paint. This is added to the model before the paint has thoroughly dried, allowing it to sit naturally. An antenna is made from metal wire and painted light grey. This is another very nice, well detailed and easy to build model from Meng. More of this please Mr MENG!



AMX-30B

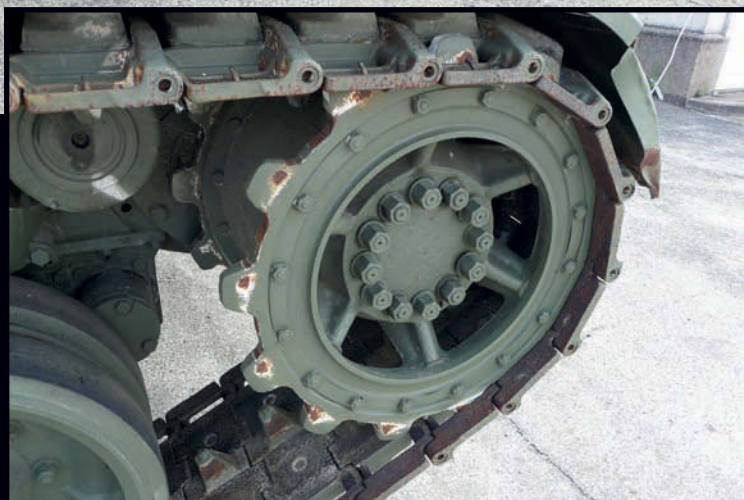
photographed by Zack Sex



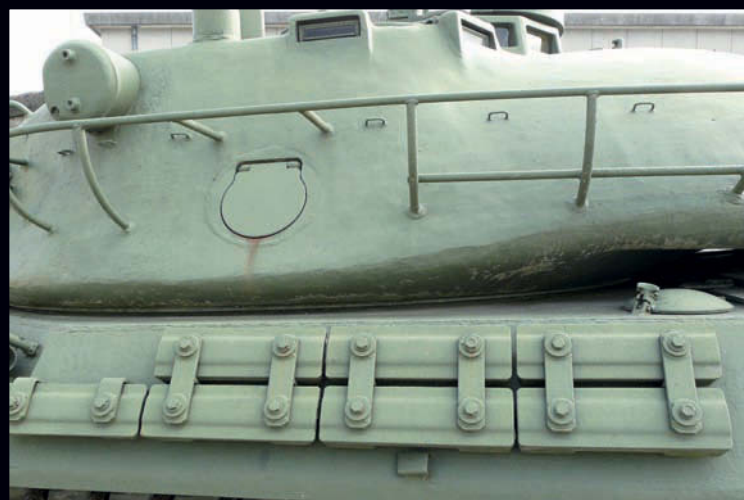
The new Meng kit depicts the AMX30-B2 and the AMX-30B is also available. This vehicle is an AMX-30B identifiable by the rangefinder sights on each side of the turret and the unarmoured cupola MG mount. The rangefinder mounts are plated over on the B2



The running gear remained the same on both versions of the AMX-30



Below Tie down loops are spaced along the turret to secure stowage in the basket framework.





**IN
DETAIL**



Front headlamp mounts feature the traditional French yellow headlamp bulbs.



Fire extinguishers have been removed from these bow racks.





The Driver's hatch and periscopes

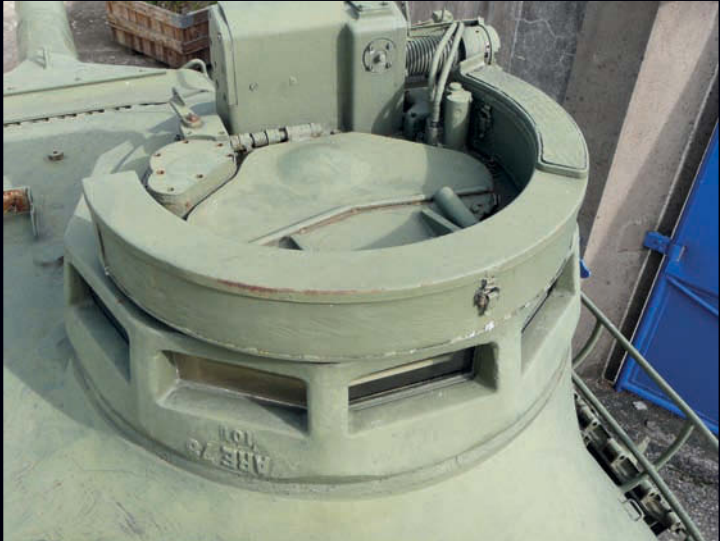


The mantlet cover and casting number on the turret roof.



Views of the cupola and MG mount, notice the casting numbers on the front face of the uppermost periscope mount.

Below The loader's hatch and periscope mount





The rangefinder sight and detachable brush guard seen from above.



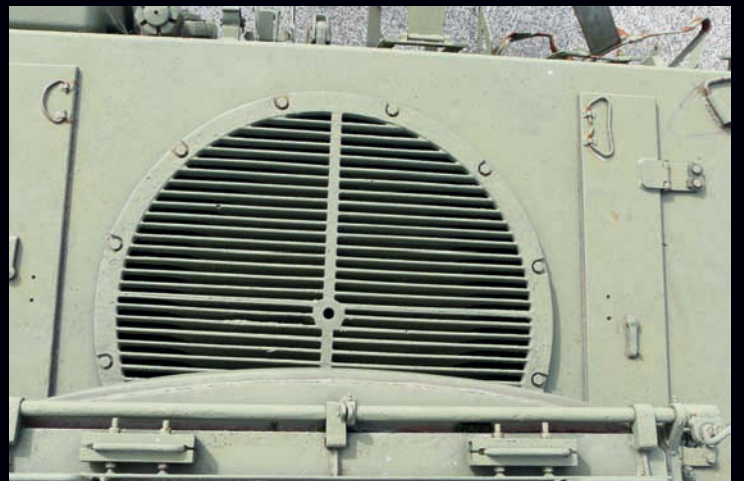
The rear of the turret showing the casting number and tie down loops.



The NBC pack mounted at the back of the turret.



The smoke grenade launchers fitted to each side of the NBC pack.



Views of the engine deck grilles.



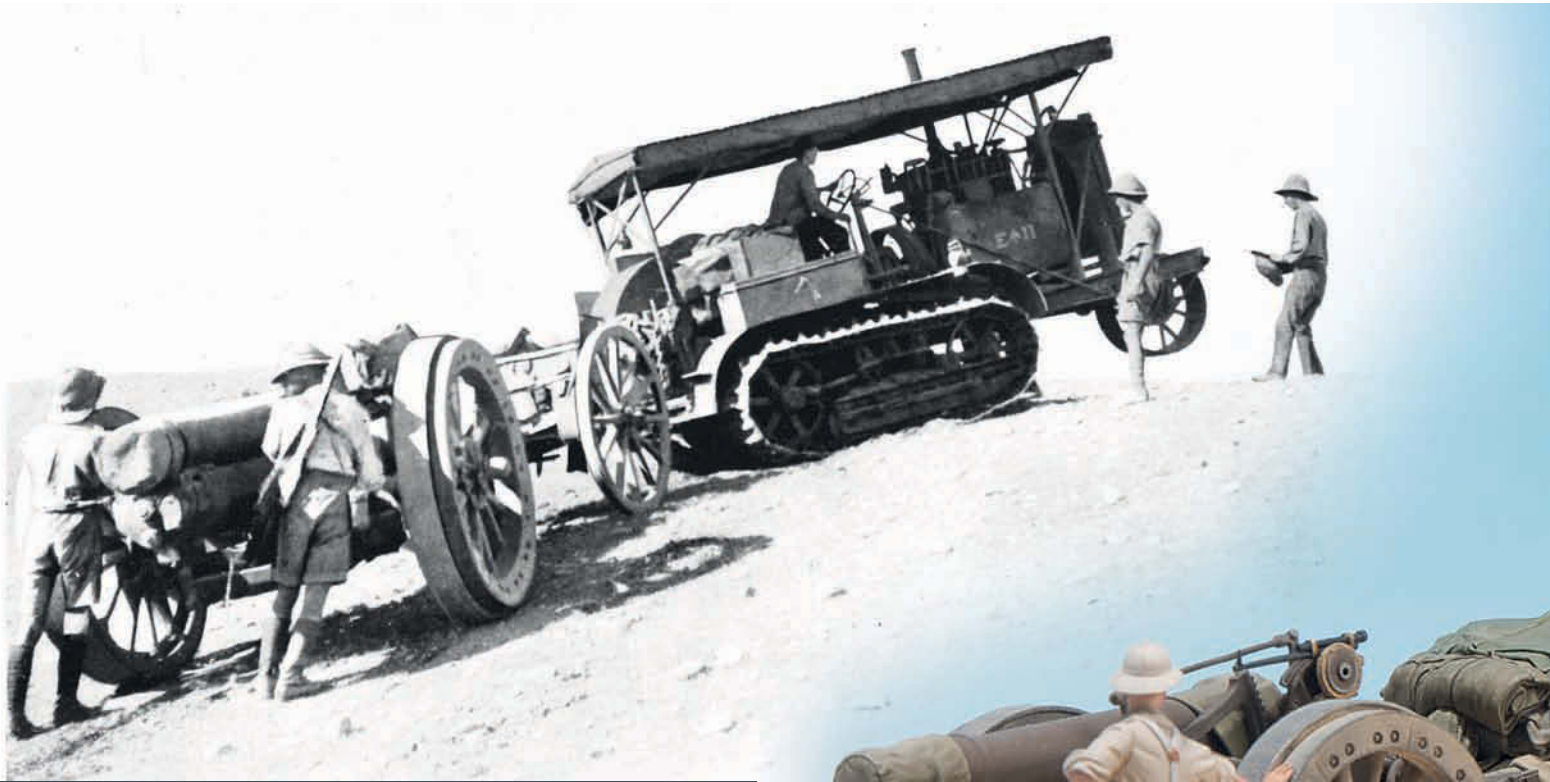


The infantry phone box on the rear right corner remains but all the other stowage has been removed.



Still carrying its Gulf War Camouflage this AMX-30B has been adapted to carry a mine roller which might explain the non-standard system of lights mounted on the rear of the hull. The pink tone of the exhaust mufflers is also interesting.





IN-DEPTH REVIEW
OUT OF THE BOX BUILD



OVER THE TOP

RESICAST'S 1:35 HOLT GUN TRACTOR & HOWITZER



MODELLED BY DAVID PARKER

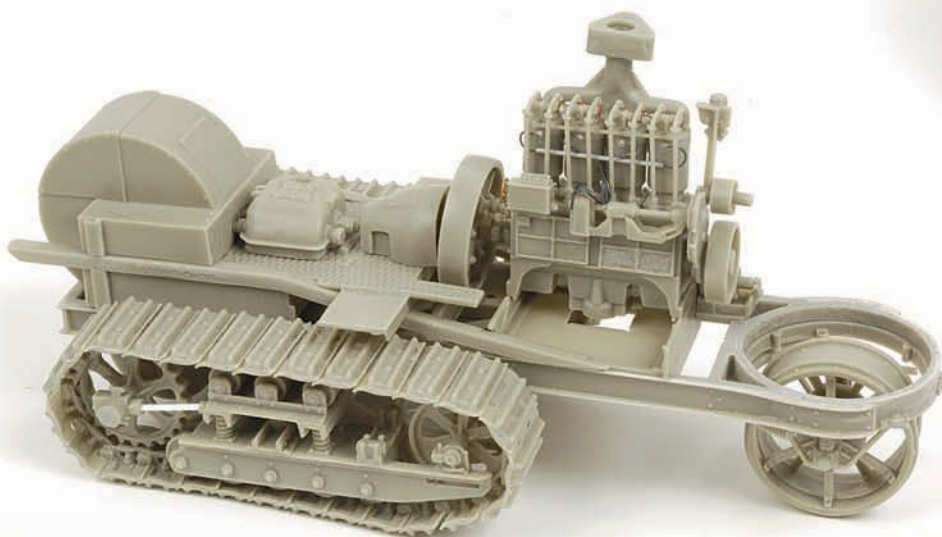
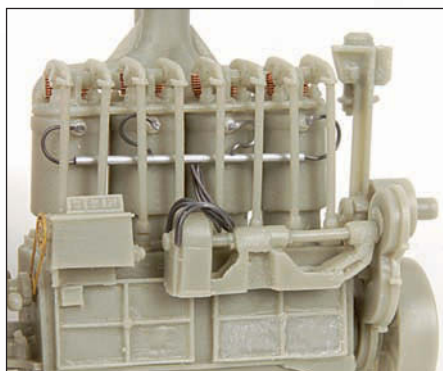
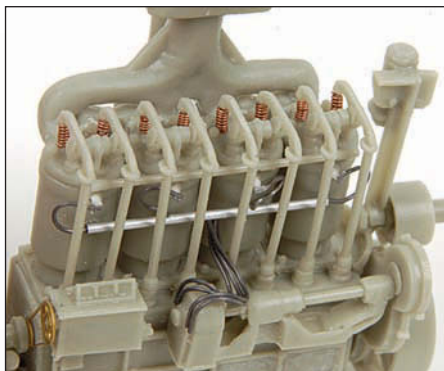
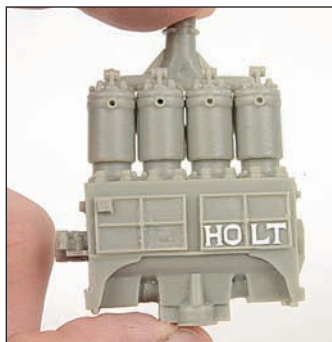
Surely one of those subjects which modellers could scarcely have dreamed of seeing released in kit form, the Holt Tractor has long been a favourite subject for the ambitious scratch builder. It is then, fitting that in the Centenary anniversary year of the outbreak of World War One there is at last a kit of this significant vehicle. The Holt Tractor saw extensive use as a gun tractor for heavy artillery on the western front although they can be seen towing a wide variety of weapons and they also saw action in the Middle East in the Mesopotamian campaign. Indeed it was an archive image of the vehicle in this campaign, cresting a desert ridge which inspired me to try and recreate this. Without copying every detail of the original picture I wanted to capture the essence of the scene and most especially that nose wheel in mid air!

CONSTRUCTION

A first glance the Holt looks like one of the most complex vehicles that you can think of to assemble but thanks to some well thought out parts the exact opposite is true. The tracked running gear looks complex but I found to my surprise that I had the whole thing assembled complete with the click together tracks surprisingly quickly and effortlessly. There are a few areas where you need to take care, and you need to add some struts to the underside from plastic card but it is all very straight forward.

With the basic chassis assembled I moved on to the engine where there is scope for some additional detail. I began by adding the Holt logo to the side of the engine block using letters that I cut from 10 thou plastic. I also detailed the tappets with new springs made from coiled copper wire and added spark plugs from plastic rod. The wiring system connecting them to the distributor was made from lead wire connected through some Albion Alloys aluminium tube.

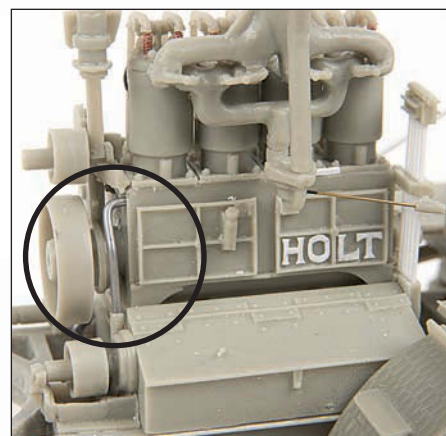
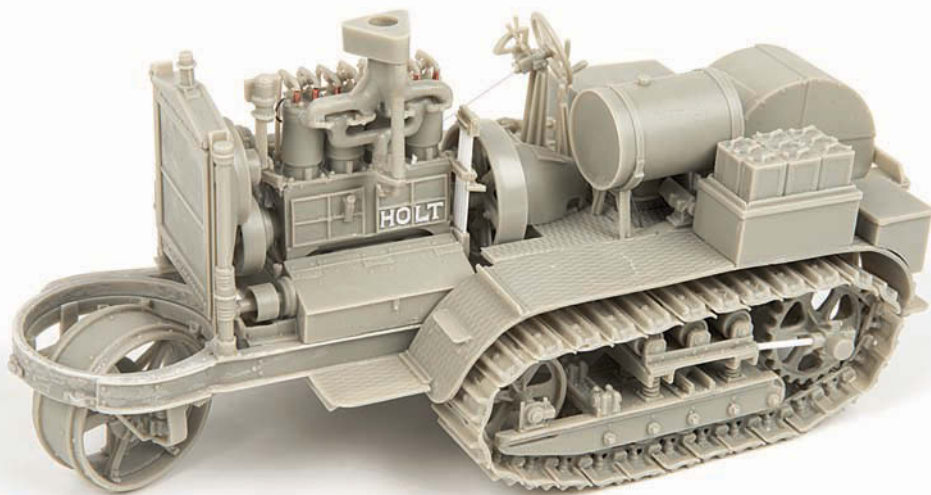
I would recommend not fixing the large flywheel at the back of the engine to assist in its painting and in fact I also left the entire engine as a separate sub-assembly for the same reason. This means that the fan belt would not



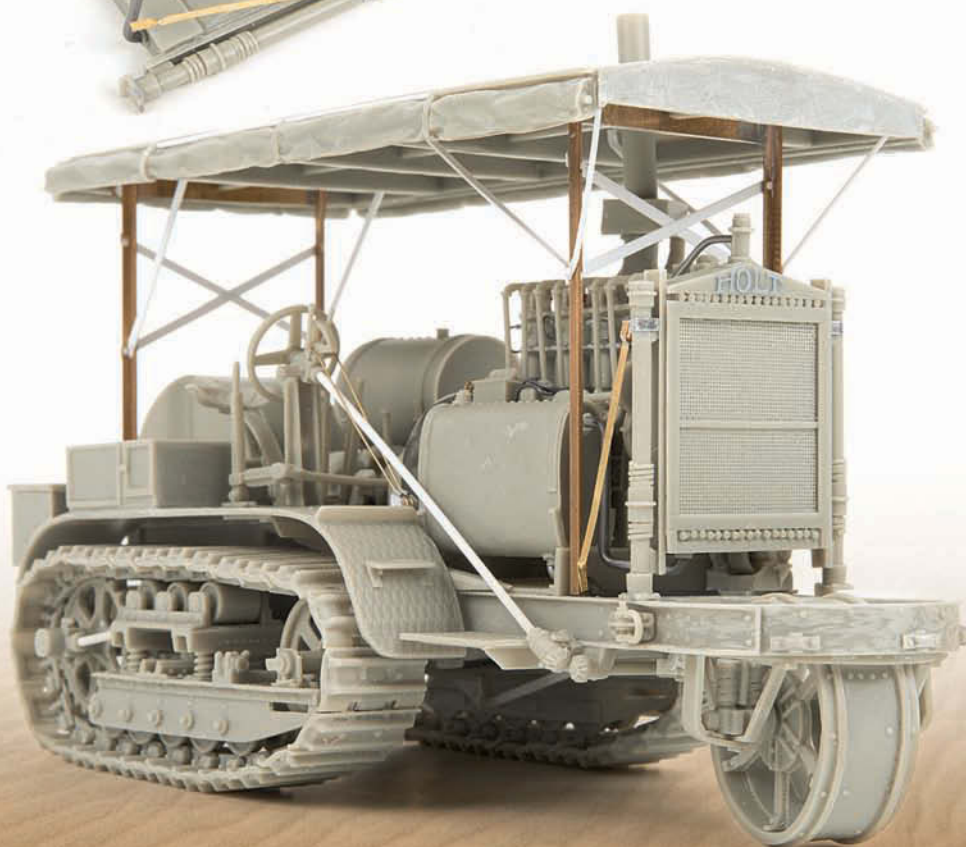
be added until the engine was finally mounted. I would also recommend not fixing the radiator fan as I had to trim the blades on mine in order to allow the radiator to sit correctly. Assembly moves on quite quickly once the detailed work on the engine is out of the way. The track guards locate with some big tabs and the stowage boxes are then added although the rearmost ones will need a little filling along where they sit on the guards. The cylindrical oil tank which sits opposite the driver benefits from a small pipe added to the fitting on the underside and take care with the legs - I mixed mine up and then had to modify them to get the tank to locate correctly. Moving on to the big radiator at the front of the tractor I started by adding the Holt logo to the top which I did using Mr Surfacer which was painted on in several layers to build up a 3 dimensional effect. When it had dried I very lightly sanded the letters to give a flat front and used a scalpel to tidy up the edges of the individual letters. The kit does supply



decals for this but I prefer the true 3D effect this gives. I needed to add the pipework which connects the radiator to the water tank and to the engine. I used some suitable diameter lead solder for this as it is so easy to bend. I guessed at the route of the pipe running from the bottom of the water tank to the water pump and I added another pipe to connect the water pump to the engine block. Another addition was the pair of bracing strips which secure the radiator. These were fabricated from brass strip which were taken from old photoetched frets. I soldered a U shaped bracket to the top and twisted the other end to mount to the chassis. The completed radiator assembly was left as a

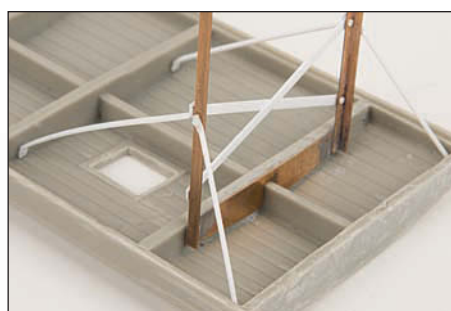


Above New legs for the canopy on the left and the kit legs on the right.

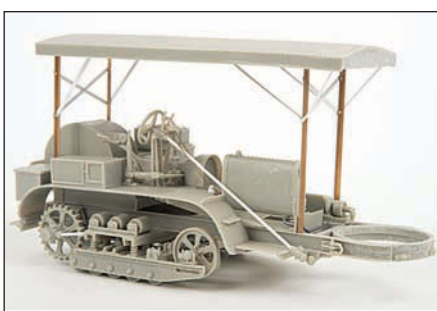


separate piece to allow the engine to be removed and for the fan belt to be added later.

With the chassis almost complete it was on to the canopy and the kit comes with photoetched parts to make the four support legs. Having folded the 90° bend in the legs I felt that they looked too wide when compared to photos of the real vehicle so I replaced them with some Albion Alloys 2mm brass L section. I soldered these to the original curved roof section from the photoetch (with some difficulty)



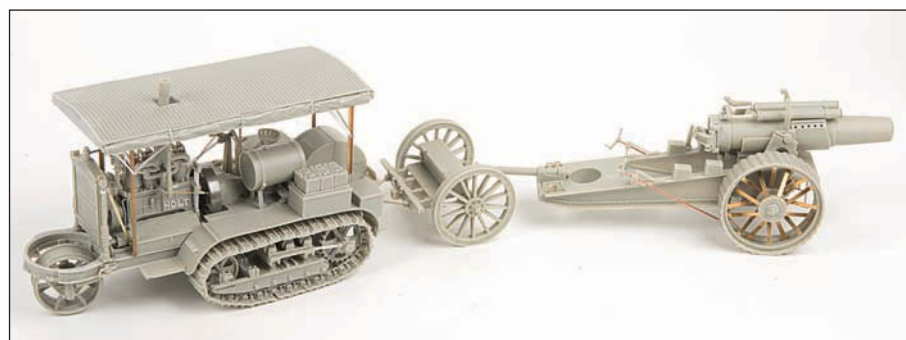
Above The new canopy legs showing how they attach to the underside of the canopy and test fitting the roof in position onto the chassis.



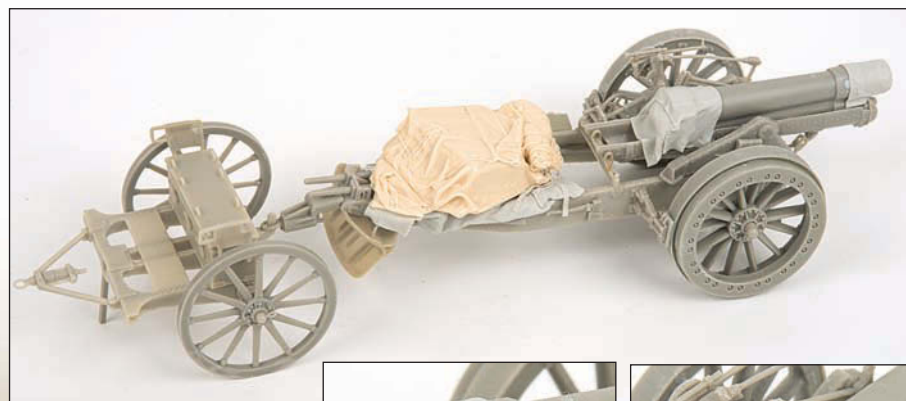
With the new legs fitted I checked the overall position of the roof to make sure the legs would locate properly and that everything was straight and level. I used plastic strip to add the cross bracing which was also a little thinner than the original kit versions. On the front corners I used plastic rod to make the braces as these seemed to match the style of at least one archive picture. Hexagonal bolts were made using the RP Tools punch and die and added to the structure.

Big Guns

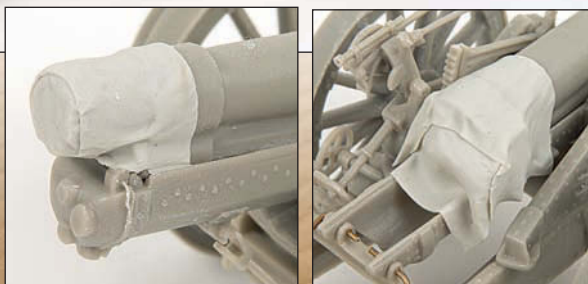
Our sample kit came with the mighty 8" howitzer, as it is a towing combination that features in many archive pictures. (The Tractor is also available as a stand alone kit.) For all its impressive bulk the howitzer was ridiculously easy to assemble and even the complex-looking wheels were simple thanks to some clever kit design. At this point I had come across some archive pictures showing the Holt Tractor operating in Mesopotamia and towing a 6" howitzer which is also available in the Resicast range, so this was substituted in order to recreate the scene. The new gun and limber were already assembled as they were ex-display models which happily saved me some time. I added the protective sleeves to the muzzle and the breach using rolled out sheets of Magic Sculp. To recreate the pile of stowage on the gun trails I used a set of resin stowage from the Blast Models range, originally designed for the M20 Scout Car. Some more sheets of Magic Sculp draped over the trails allowed the resin part to bed into position convincingly for a quick yet effective result.



Above The mighty 8" Howitzer that is supplied as a set with the Tractor and frequently seen in this combination in pictures of the Western Front.

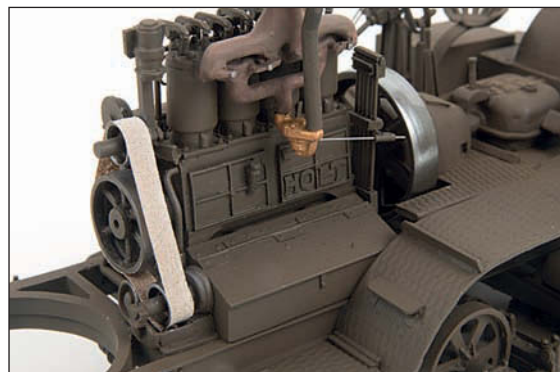


Above I could find no evidence of the 8" Howitzer in service in the Middle East campaigns and the Resicast 6" Howitzer matched the archive picture. To replicate the look of the photo I added stowage to the gun trail and covers for the muzzle and breach made from Magic Sculp.

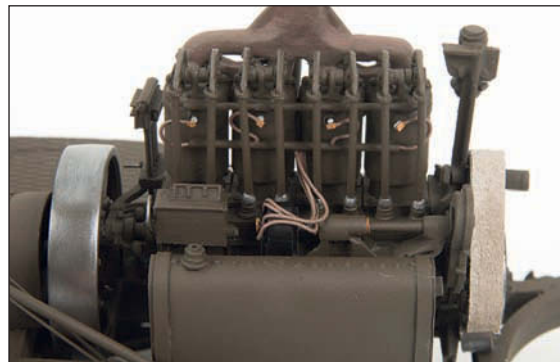




The tractor and gun in their base colours showing the difference in tone and the sub-assemblies for the tractor. **Below** Work underway on painting the tarpaulins on the Howitzer.



Above The medical tape fan belt is installed. **Below** The details of the engine were painted before it was installed.



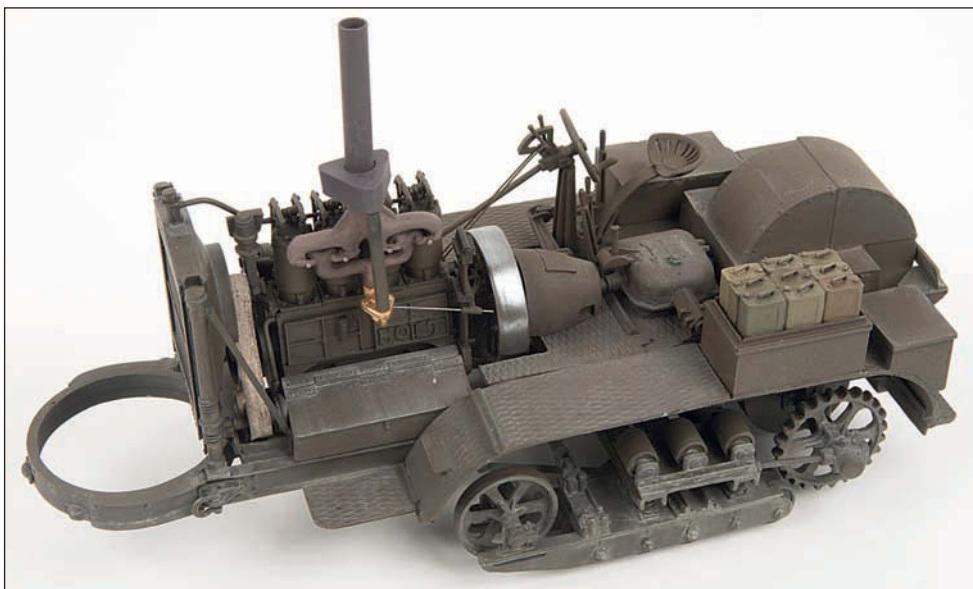
PAINTING

I began by spraying an overall primer coat of Lifecolor Matt Black over both the tractor and the gun because of all the recesses and shadow areas. I then used the new AK Interactive British WW1 colours, using the base colour for the gun and shadow colour for the tractor to avoid a too uniform finish. The engine details like the spark plug leads and the exhaust system were painted so that the engine could be installed and the fan belt fitted. To make the belt I used some self-adhesive medical tape which has a textured finish and this was painted an off white and then weathered for a used look. I then was able to install the radiator but the front wheel and roof remained separate.

A wash of dusty oil colours was applied to very little effect - not sure why? Instead I moved over to acrylic washes and I used Lifecolor East Europe Dust UA 911 which comes with a matched pigment PG112 in the Lifecolor Dust boxed set. I sprayed this over the underside of the chassis and the lower surfaces of the tractor and the gun. Washes of the same colour were then applied concentrating on areas where dust would settle.



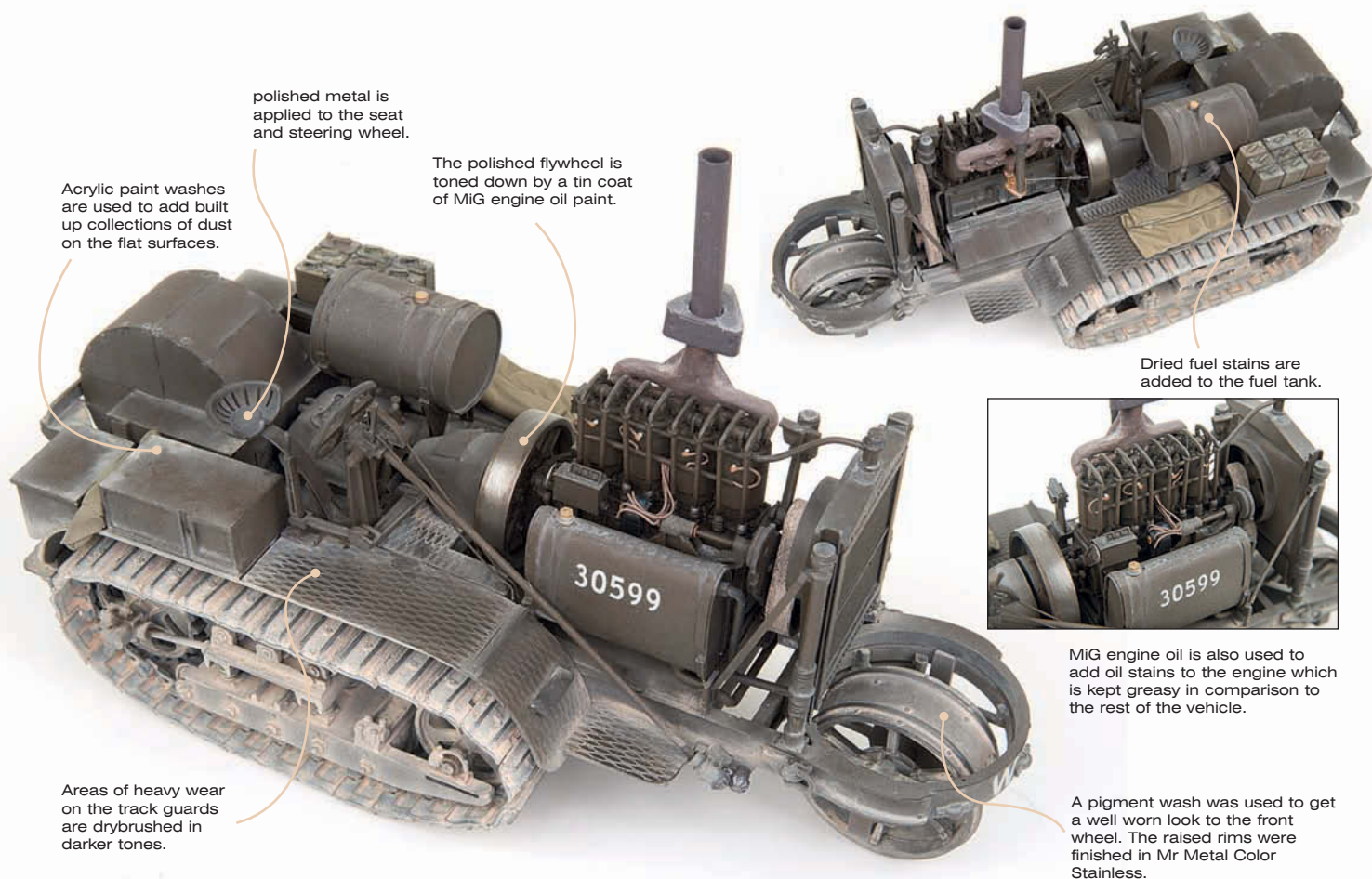
Tracks were painted in a very dark grey before having a wash of Lifecolor PG 112 pigments applied. Once dry a stiff brush was used to remove the excess to give this look.



Above Here the initial oil wash has been applied and the rack of oil cans have been finished in different shades of green. The engine flywheel was polished and then sprayed with Alclad steel.

Below Somewhat out of sequence I added the few decals to the kit to add some interest. The lower chassis had been airbrushed and acrylic washes have been applied.





I carried on building up the layers of dust focussing on the horizontal surfaces and I used some concentrated areas of drybrushing to lift out the detail in areas like the track guards. The driver's seat and steering wheel were polished using Uschi van der Rosten metallic powder and other areas like the footsteps and steering gears were also given a metallic finish. The engine is very prone to leaking oil so I kept the cylinders and the top of the crank case looking suitably greasy rather than dusty.

FIGURES

it was time to think about figures to replicate the ones in the archive picture. This shows five figures but with time limited I wanted to convey the same sort of feel with fewer figures. Fitting a driver into the controls also looked daunting so instead I decided to have the driver standing, discussing the options for crossing the sand dune. The height of the roof meant that he would need to lean out of the vehicle to do this. I dug out a pair of Afrika Korps figures from the MK35 range along with a leaning civilian figure from the same range. The Afrika Korps figures both had shorts and bare legs which I needed although both had their shorts reworked to depict the longer and fuller style of the period. Hornet heads were added along with the excellent Resicast Pith helmets and I used some of the Hornet hands to get the poses I needed. The stance of the driver had to be adjusted to allow for the slope of the vehicle, something I forgot initially. The new sculpting was done with Magic Sculp.



Pigment washes made by mixing them with white spirits were applied to the wheels and lower carriage.

Mr Metal Color Brass was used for the gun sight parts and the stowage buckles.

Mr Metal Color Iron was used to give the dull metal finish to the wheel rims.

A stiff brush can be used to remove the excess and soften the finish look of the pigment wash.

The completed stowage adds a touch of colour to the uniform colour of the gun.

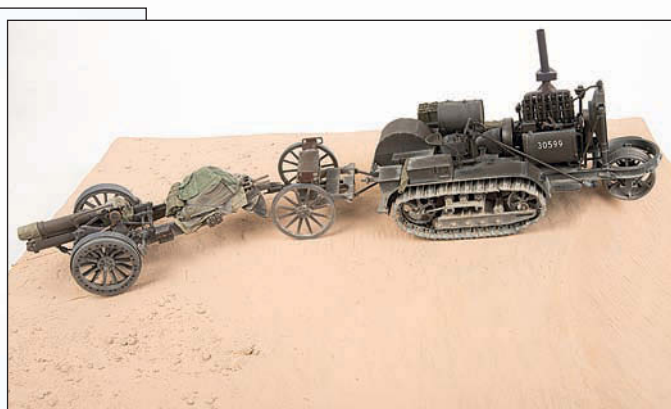
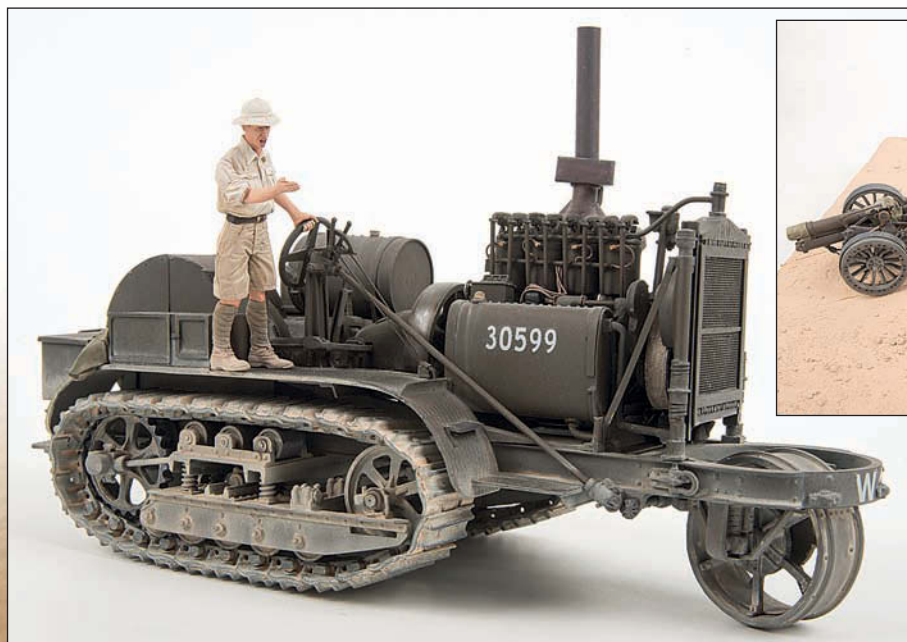


BASE CONSTRUCTION

The overall length of the tractor and gun is around 40cm so quite a large base was required to recreate the scene so I used sheets of 2.5cm deep expanded polystyrene to make my base with two flat 47cm x 30cm sheets glued together. I then cut 12 strips which were cut to the shape of the slope and glued together in rows across the width of the base. A long bladed knife was then used to make adjustments

to the curves and to a natural looking shape. To make the rippled face of the dune I used Plastirol clay which was spread out over the polystyrene and then rubber-tipped brushes were used to sculpt the ripple pattern. My first attempt with horizontal ripples was I felt unconvincing so I removed it before it set and repeated the whole process. This time I felt the vertical lines were more successful but getting a realistic look is not easy. The top surface

was treated in a more traditional way using a plaster filler which was mixed with fine sand and micro balloons to enhance the texture and it was smoothed out with a brush while still wet. Track, wheel marks and footprints in the sand were pressed into the surface before it dried. A selection of grit and cat litter was used to the eroded area of the dune. The base was then painted with the same Lifecolor East Europe Dust UA 911 as the vehicles.



Left The driver is installed and the hand has been painted so at last the canopy can be fitted.

Above The base has a coat of paint and the vehicles which are still to be completed are tested in position.



The stones were painted in assorted tones but nothing too dissimilar to the colour of the sand. I felt that the rippled sand needed some additional definition so I airbrushed some darker shadows into the recesses using the Iwata Custom Micron that I had been testing and the fine line this allowed proved ideal to trace the pattern of the ripples.

FINAL TOUCHES

With the base completed and the vehicles looking uniformly dusty it just remained to add a tow chain hanging off the back of the tractor and to fit the fragile headlamp mount to the radiator support. I decided to leave the lamp in brass rather than camouflage colours to add a little interest.





This was a really fun project which despite the complexity of the tractor design, proved to be refreshingly simple to build thanks to the clever kit design. To find such an inspirational image with its wheel in mid air and to be able to recreate this only added to the enjoyment. The challenge of finding suitable figures for this neglected campaign also proved easier than I feared and I hope it shows that it can be quite easy to adapt commercial figures to your needs. My thanks to Graham at Resicast for all his assistance and for allowing me to pinch his display model of the 6" Howitzer. Thanks also to George Moore who mastered the kit for his advice.

www.resicast.com



fourplay

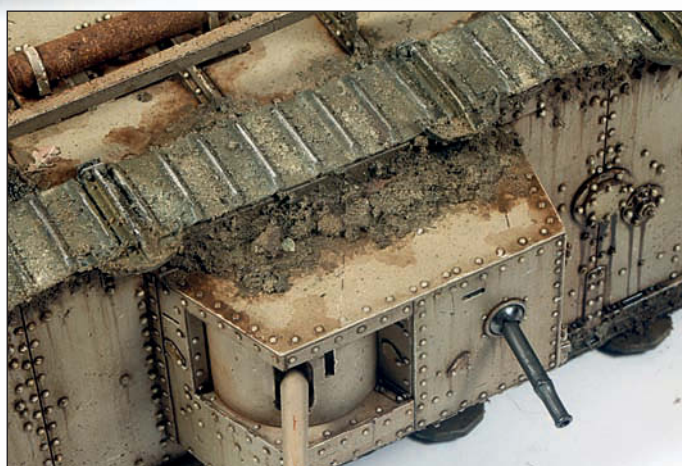
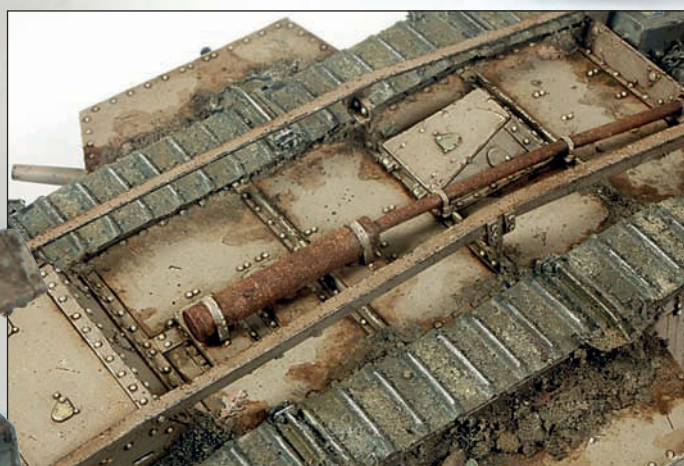


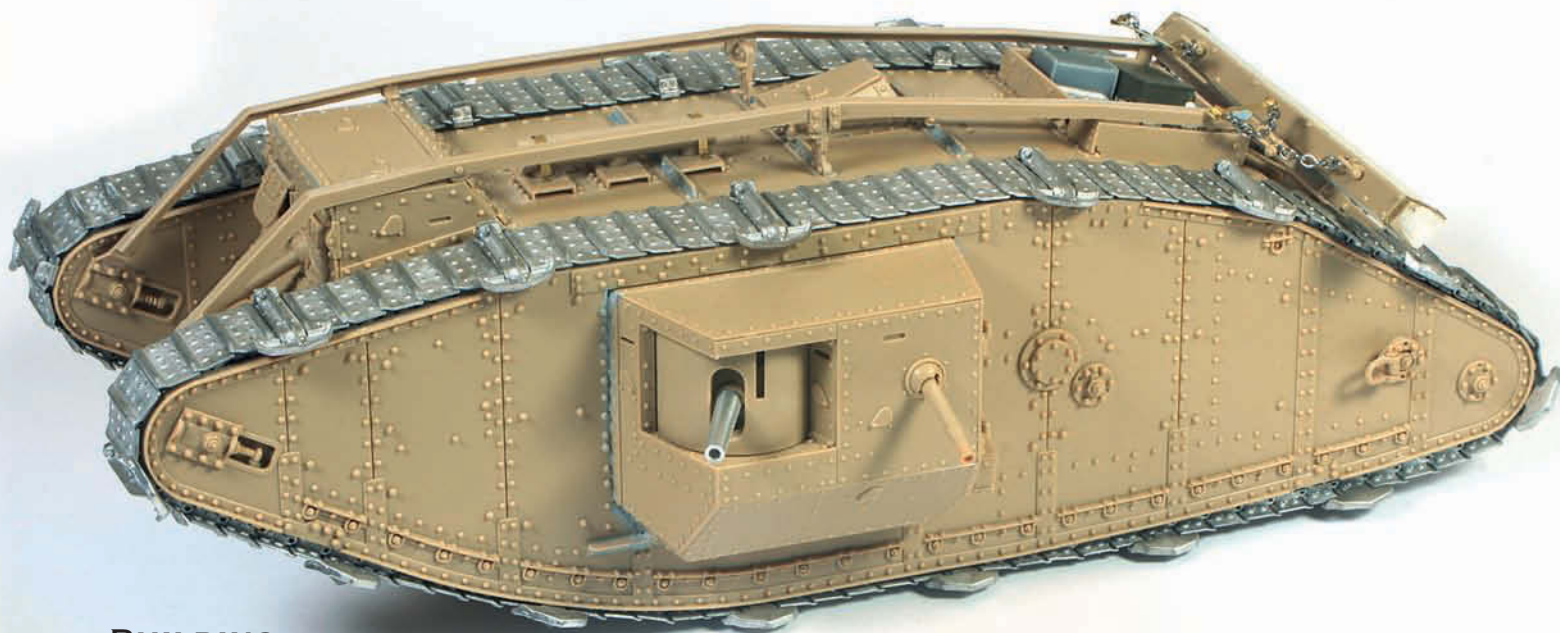
I've always been a fan of WWI armour and was just waiting for a decent kit to arrive on the market.

The Mark IV was high on my wish list, and with the recent releases by both Tamiya and Takom suddenly I had a choice of high quality kits. But which one to build?

After reading several reviews on the internet I opted for the Takom 'male' kit as it appeared that the details are slightly better than the Tamiya one, although the construction is a little more demanding than Tamiya.

KRISTOF PULINCKX BUILDS TAKOM'S MARK IV MALE





BUILDING

The construction starts with the assembly of the main hull. Most parts have bevelled edges and care is needed when cutting the parts from the sprue in order not to damage these. A very important step in the construction is the dry fitting of all the parts before gluing them together to make sure everything is lined up perfectly. Some putty is needed to fill some minor seam gaps that should not be present if we look at our reference pictures.

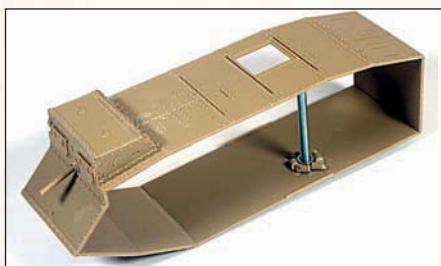
With the hull complete it's time to move over to the rhomboid track sections. These rather large parts contain the drive chains and the wheels and drive sprockets and will be connected together by a large number of inner panels for the mud channels and sprocket covers. But before gluing the rhomboid sections together all

the road wheels need to be installed. These were cut from the sprues and cleaned up just with a hobby knife as they will be totally invisible once the tracks are on. With the large number of wheels, it is tricky to fit the large rhomboid sections together and care and attention is needed so that everything stays in the right place.

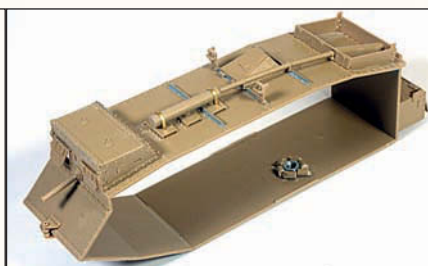
The kit tracks are spread over no less than five big sprues and each track link is made up of five parts with 92 individual links on each side, meaning 920 pieces have to be assembled to make the tracks! This was a bit too much for me, so I opted to use the Friul model white metal tracks instead. These are far easier to assemble and won't need endless hours of assembly time. Because it looks more impressive I

also opted to install the grousers spuds also from Friulmodel on the tracks. When completed the Friul tracks only have one problem: they won't fit the kit!

The drive sprockets from the kit won't fit the Friul tracks, this can be solved by either using the drive sprockets included in the Friulmodel set or you can just cut off the teeth from the drive sprockets. I choose the latter option. Furthermore the inner sides of the Friul tracks are too wide to fit perfectly over and round the rhomboid sections. This is easily solved by scraping away the thin plastic lip on the inner side of the rhomboid sections. This may sound harder than it really is, as it only took me about 10 minutes to alter the kit's parts in order to fit the Friul tracks properly.



The parts of the hull need to be carefully glued together to make sure it's all perfectly aligned. The large screw is also installed to be able to attach the model to a wooden base in a later stage.



Some putty is needed to fill some gaps on the upper part of the hull. The photo-etch parts on the exhaust come with the kit.



The Friul tracks won't fit the drive sprocket of the kit so the teeth were removed.



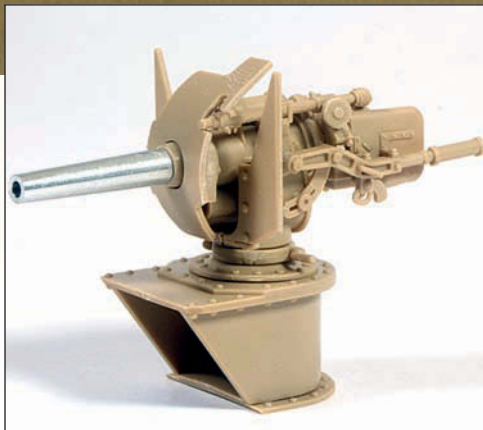
A large number of wheels needs to be assembled. Because they will be invisible on the finished model not much time was spent on cleaning up. Being lazy or gaining time, you decide!



All wheels in place. Follow the instructions in order to install the wheels to avoid mistakes as there are two types of wheels. The drive chain is a nice touch but invisible once the model is complete.

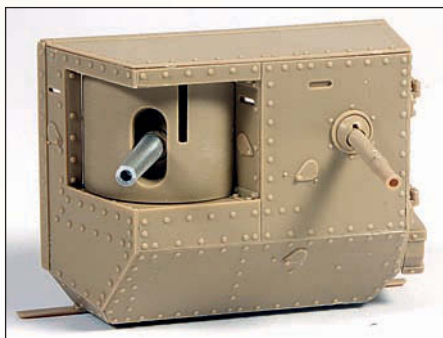


Gluing the hull to the rhomboid sections caused no problems. Just make sure the fit is tight and let the glue dry thoroughly before continuing.



The two guns are very well detailed with the metal barrel included in the kit.

The most demanding part of the construction is the assembly of the sponsons. These consist of a number of parts with bevelled edges and great care is needed in gluing these parts together so they are perfectly aligned. The gun is very complete with a breech block and main sight. And a nice touch is the turned metal barrel that is included in the kit. Although the guns are held in place with a polycap so they stay movable I chose to glue them firmly in place.



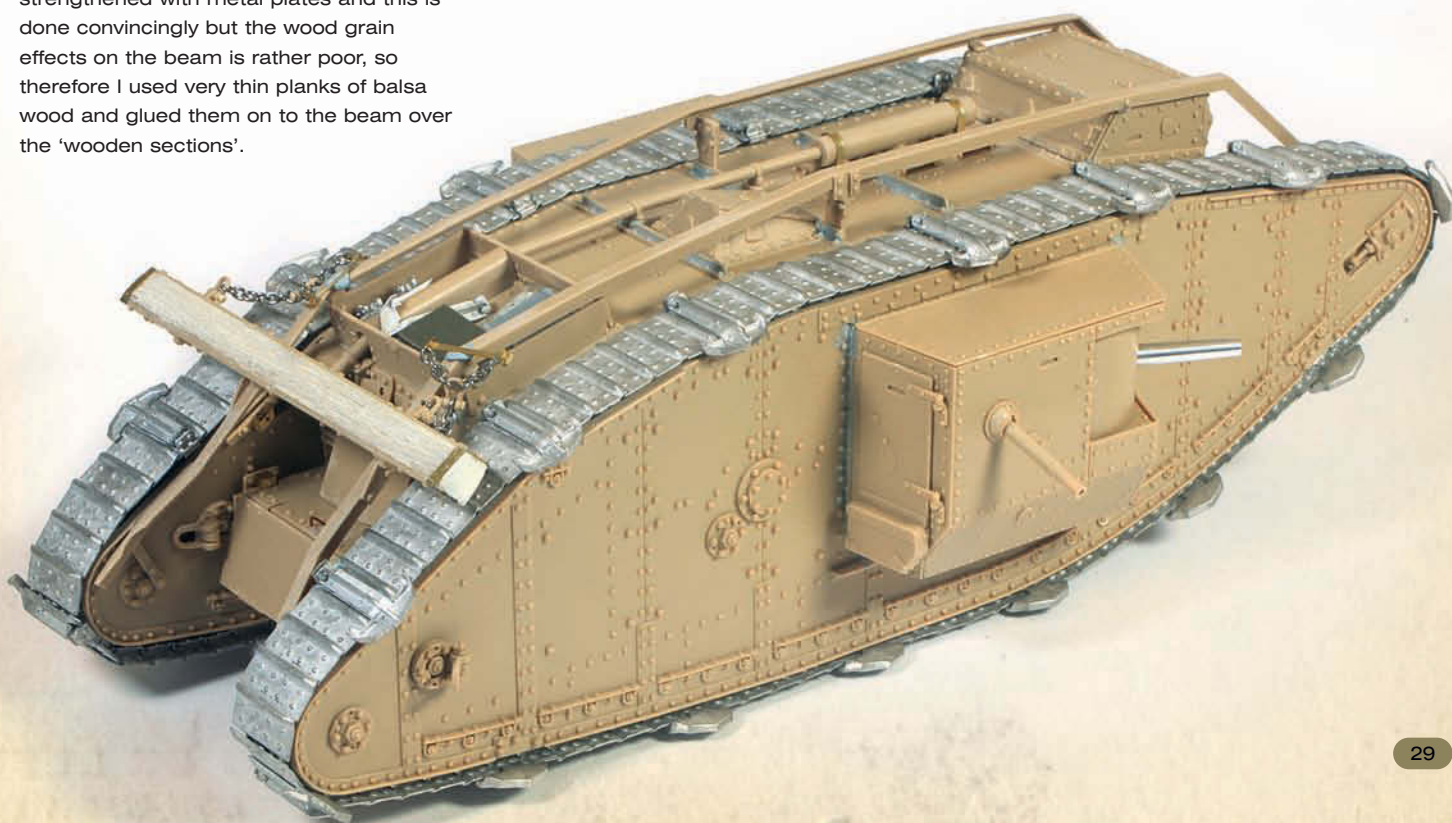
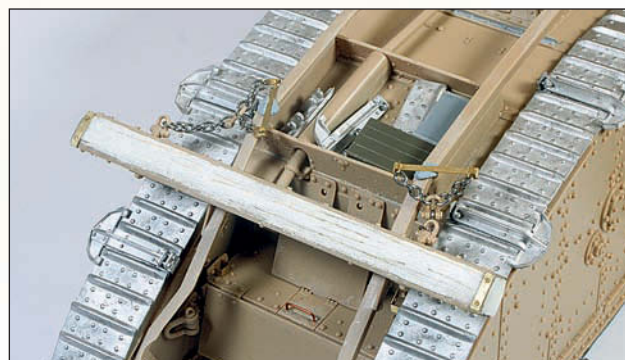
The left hand side sponson prior to installation. The machine gun mounted in a ball mount is well detailed and need only some minor cleaning up to remove the moulding seam.



The Friul tracks are assembled the traditional way and look the part. Much easier and less time-consuming than trying to assemble the ones included in the kit.

With all the subassemblies ready they are carefully glued together with superglue to have an instant fit. This caused no problems as I spent a lot of time on dry fitting and adjusting parts where needed. Finally the un-ditching beam needs to be made. Some photo-etch parts and metal chains are included for maximum details. But the beam itself needs more attention. The wooden beam is in real life strengthened with metal plates and this is done convincingly but the wood grain effects on the beam is rather poor, so therefore I used very thin planks of balsa wood and glued them on to the beam over the 'wooden sections'.

The un-ditching beam is more or less a disappointment. There's no wood grain texture provided. So I opted to use very thin sheets of Balsa wood to improve the beam and give a realistic appearance.





The model was pre-shaded with Tamiya XF-52 Flat Earth.



XF-55 Deck Tan was mixed with the Flat Earth used for pre shading and airbrushed in thin layers



Although the lines aren't perfect because of the difficulty masking over the rivets most of these imperfections will disappear at the weathering stages.



Using Archer dry rub decals, a random serial number is applied.

PAINTING

The model was first pre-shaded with Tamiya XF-52 Flat Earth, then the whole model was sprayed with a mixture of Tamiya XF-52 Flat Earth and XF-55 Deck Tan in various thin layers making sure the pre-shading effects were still visible. Finally I added more Deck tan to the base coat and the model was sprayed in a cloud pattern to give even more depth to the paint work. A thin layer of X-22 Clear also from Tamiya was applied to protect the paintjob for the upcoming weathering stages, but first the typical red and white markings were sprayed on after some careful masking. For the vehicle number Archer dry decals are used and the tracks are base coated with Tamiya NATO Black.

Below I always work in sections when it comes to weathering a model. I tried out several colours and techniques on the right hand side until I'm happy with the result. Weathering the rest of the model will then be pretty straight forward as I know which colours and techniques to use.



WEATHERING

Before the weathering starts I applied some filters with Sap Green, Yellow Ochre and Burnt Sienna oil paints. I concentrated on certain panels or parts to make them stand out from the rest of the model. But care needs to be taken that you only do this very subtly to achieve the best effects. Next I outlined the details of the model with AK interactive Streaking Grime and Wash for German Vehicles in Dark Yellow. These enamel paints were deluded a bit with some White Spirit so they flow better in and around details. Small details and especially the rivets (and there are plenty !) are highlighted with various sand yellowish paints from the AK range. Light scratches and chipping was also carried out with these colours. The heavier chips and scratches are painted on with rusty and

dark brown colours from Vallejo, sometimes mixed together for some difference in tone and to create variation. Streaks and dirt stains are carefully painted on with Streaking Grime, Wash for German Vehicles in Dark yellow and Dark Mud from AK Interactive. If I was not happy with the result the streaks were removed or altered with a flat brush and some White Spirits.

The previously used dark brown colours were mixed with the Wet Fluids Effects from AK to paint on the wet muddy stains. Make sure the paints are thin enough to paint on the desired effects. The exhaust is completely sponge chipped with various rusty Humbrol enamel colours in different layers, starting with the darker colours first and working through to the lighter colours,

allowing some drying time between each layer.

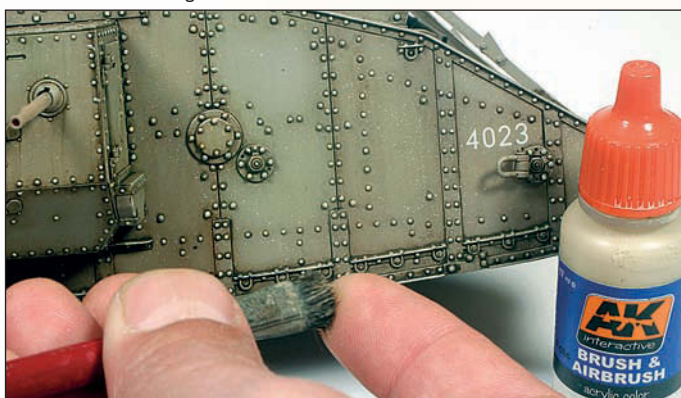
The tracks are covered with a layer of mixed pigments slurry with added thinners to give them a dirty dusty appearance. When dry the tracks are mounted on the model and the contact areas of the tracks are polished with Dark Steel pigment from AK Interactive with the use of a cotton bud. This results in a nice realistic metal shine. Finally a layer of dry mud is applied with the use of Tamiya's Diorama texture paints. The soil Effect Dark Earth and the Grit effect Light Sand are mixed together and applied in a dabbing manner. These texture paint are acrylic and dry fast. This allows you to build up several layers in a short amount of time.



The model was first outlined with AK Interactive Wash for German vehicles in Dark yellow and with Streaking Grime from the same brand. Sometimes these colours are mixed together for extra variation in tone.



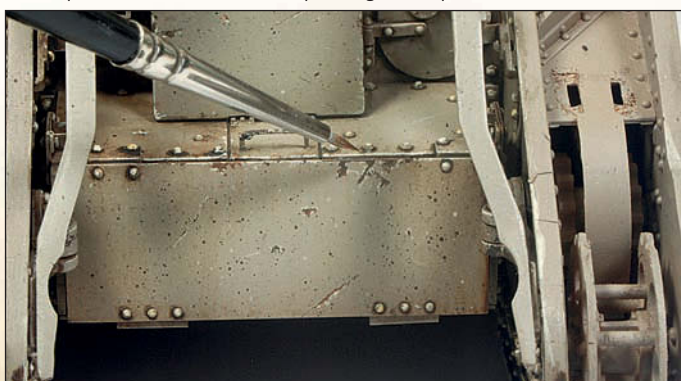
Small details such as the countless rivets are highlighted with various different sand colours from the AK Interactive paint range. Don't just use one color but use more different shades of sand yellow to avoid a monotone finish.



Small paint chips are applied by loading a brush with a light sand yellow colour and sprinkling on the paint by pulling back the hair of the brush. This technique is better known as the speckling technique.



Light superficial damage to the paint work is painted on with a fine brush and a light sand colour to represent light scratches and scuffmarks.



The standard chipping is carried out with Vallejo 822 German Camouflage Black, sometimes mixed with a rust colour. A three-dimensional effect is created by painting on a highlight underneath the darker chipping.



The streaks are painted on with several brown colours from the AK Interactive range. Here it's important to have some variation in length and wide of the streaks to achieve a more natural and realistic effect.



Dark Earth and European Earth pigments from AK are mixed with pigment fixer and applied as a wash over the tracks.



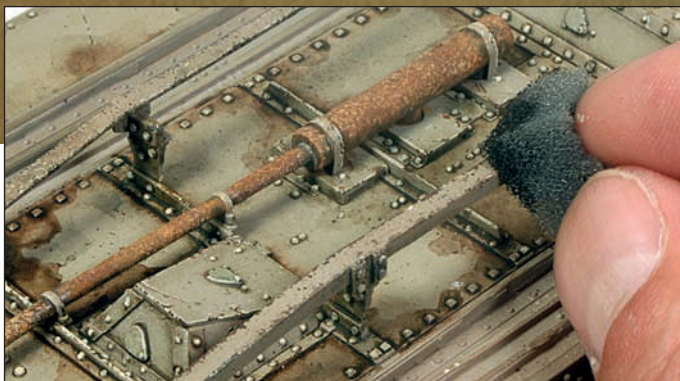
By mixing some dark brown colours with the wet fluid effects from AK interactive wet stains can be painted on where desired. Thin the paints thoroughly with white Spirit to achieve the transparent stains.



The barrels of the machineguns are hand painted in a dark grey, followed by a black wash with acrylic paints. Dark steel pigment from AK is polished on to give the machinegun a realistic metal finish.



The exhaust is sponge chipped with Humbrol 62 Matt Leather, 94 Matt Brown Yellow, 100 Red Brown and 113 Matt rust, starting always with the darker colours.



The railing for the un-ditching beam is also sponge chipped with Vallejo 822.



The contact areas of the tracks are also polished with AK Dark Steel pigment for a all natural metal look.

Below Tamiya texture paint is applied in several layers to create build up dry mud effects, not only on the tracks but also on top of the hull, sponsons and at the bottom of the model. This is an easy way to represent dry mud with great results.

FINISHING OFF

I looked for some accessories in the spares box, like an oil canister and a wooded crate. And together with some spare tracks, a chain and a grouser spud these were painted and weathered to match the rest of the model. Finally the un-ditching beam was installed which proved a bit tricky. Nevertheless I managed to install it properly but in the process I damaged some of the paintwork on the metal chains which needed some touching up.

CONCLUSION

The Takom Mark IV Male is a very nice kit and the assembly is straight forward. Care needs to be taken when removing parts from the sprues and the kit tracks from the kit looks like a nightmare to assemble but with some aftermarket tracks the results are excellent.







FIELD-MOD BTR-D+ZU-23 FIREPOWER

The BTR-D (Bronetransportyor Desanta) armoured transporter of the Russian Airborne, (object 925) was made by using key parts and components of BMD-1 (Boyevaya Mashina Desanta, combat vehicle of the Airborne) and entered service in 1974.

Airborne forces needed a light, spacious armoured transporter for military personnel in addition to the BMD-1. The capacity and dimensions were very limited during the development of BTR-D because of the size of the required cargo bay. BTR-Ds can be transported by aircraft and airdropped by parachute. The difference between BTR-D and BMD-1 is in the longer body (one road

wheel was added) and the armoured fighting compartment which can carry three crew and nine troopers. No turret was fitted to the vehicle in this guise, but there have been many field installations of the ZU-23 (Zenitnaya Ustanovka) anti-aircraft gun mounted on the BTR-D. It could be installed if necessary to provide cover with high fire-rate density, against ground targets the anti-aircraft gun was very effective. Such potent firepower had massive effect on the psychological state of the enemy in both Afghan and Chechen campaigns.

Modelled by Ignat Pomazkov

1:35

The BTR-D by Eastern Express is the only choice as a plastic kit, the quality leaves much to be desired, except for the general overall shapes of the body and road wheels. To refine the detail I looked to aftermarket supplier's products:

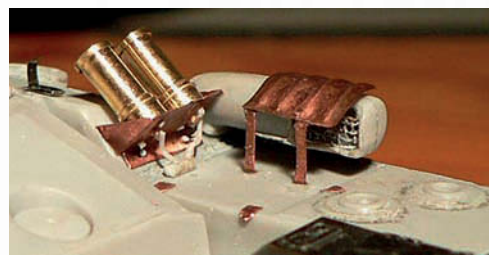
- Eduard PE BTR-D ? 35737
- Model Point PKT 7.62-mm Coaxial MG ? 3587
- Model Point MPD310 radio antenna pot (R-123)
- Model Point MPD302 Horn S-58
- Model Point MPD309 Smoke discharger system 902A/B 'Tucha'

- Elf Headlights
- Master Club MC135040CL BMD-1/BMD-2/BTR-D tracks.

Besides these sets I used a large amount of scratchbuilt details.

The roof hatches and forward hatches were re-shaped following reference pictures and new hinges made from brass stock. Once all the photoetch and aftermarket parts were added the model was primed in Brick-Red with ABRO spray primer (an American brand of automotive paints). Then it was base coloured evenly

in acrylic paint by Russia's 'Akan' brand 4BO(73020). After this, I added some colour modulation, by tinting the same acrylic paints from Akan. The BTR-D suits this technique due to its panelled shape, the large amounts of plain, flat surfaces could look lifeless without any modulation of the tones. The modulation was kept strong without any fear of the high contrast because the following washes and weathering would greatly reduce the effect to more realistic levels.



I didn't varnish the base colour preferring to leave the surface with a satin finish, it increases the adhesion of the oil colours. As a result you can adjust filters more locally and produce subtle blends between tones with more control than a varnished surface.

However, be careful while applying the tinted filters and washes because it's very easy to get it dirty and very difficult to erase its traces from a rough textured surface. It's the down side of working without varnishing. I worked on the dust and dirt along side the washes and filters so I knew how the tones would work in harmony on the finished model.

I started by applying dust by making thin layers with the airbrush. This procedure was done by a highly dissolved acrylic paint from Pactra which has a high opacity even in a very diluted state. I've alternated

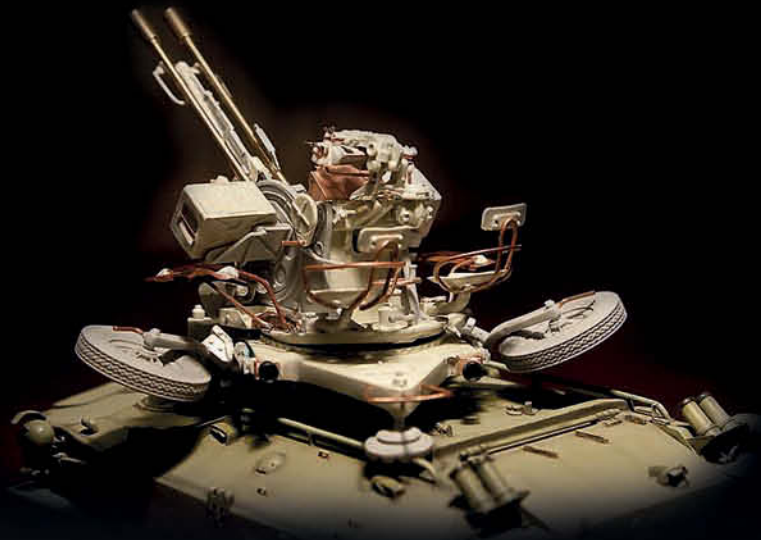
it with contrasting oil paint filters of dark-brown colours. It provided a volume to the dust. The main thing in this procedure is to let the filters become absolutely dry, that's why it is a very long process.

In parallel with the BTR-D weathering I started building the ZU-23. Improvements to the ZU-23 were only cosmetic but compulsory for a resin model (I used a Storm Miniatures kit). I changed grab rails, handles and anti-splash guards with my own parts from brass and stock styrene. Besides this, I modified the rear sight to match my reference photos.

The weathering process of BTR-D then continued by working on the running gear. Basic layers of dirt were applied with plaster filler, to give volume and texture, and Akan acrylic paints. Over this were

applied some extra layers of filler mixed with pigments from MIG Productions. I made splashes and splatters both by a mixture of pigments and simply neat acrylic paint. It's necessary to avoid using a single colour, the more colours - the more realism with wet and dry dirt built up in layers, note the clumps of grass and oily grease leaks, all these things enliven the model very much.

To enhance the feeling of the gun being added to the vehicle in the field, I've used different tones of green between the gun and the vehicle and kept a generally cleaner look but with some subtle wearing of the paint exposing the primer in high-contact areas.



Tactical designations were applied with dry MicroWorld rub-down decals, I suppose it's the second most realistic method after stencils. After rubbing them into position I made a few marks and damage to give a 'hand applied' look. After finishing the painting it's time to bring

the model to life with some stowage. I used different 'Tank' sets: ZU-23 shell and ammo boxes, canvas-roll, personal weapons, even paper leaves - everything is useful to give the appearance of a used vehicle. Take note of the toolboxes which are installed on the hull back. One of them

is painted in a different shade and has another number, that's because our BTR-D has a smart driver / mechanic who removed this box from another vehicle in the depot!





BTR-D+2U-23

This was an enjoyable project. Combining the two kits and the aftermarket parts has created a unique model with some interesting features and a wealth of colour tones and textures.





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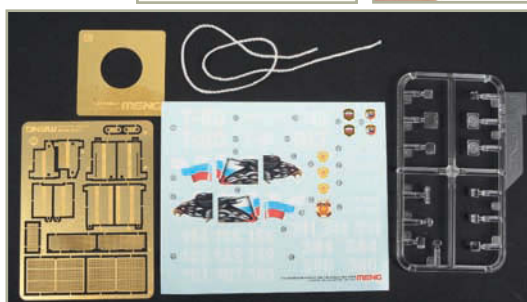
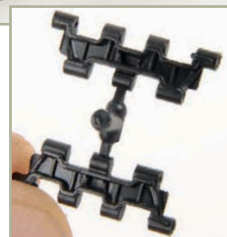
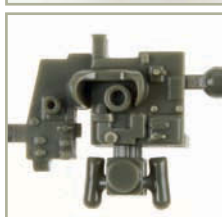
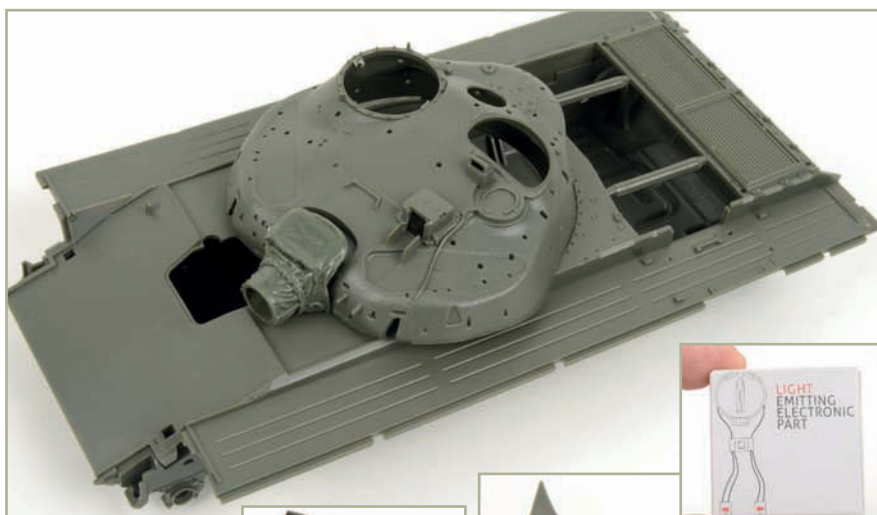
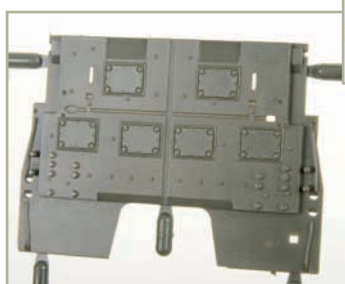
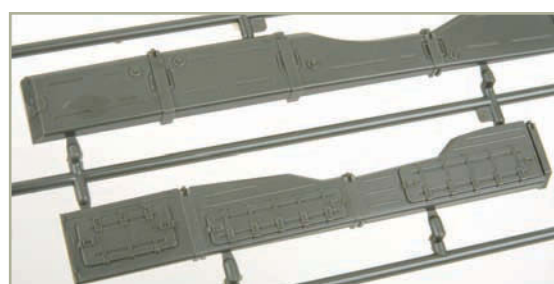
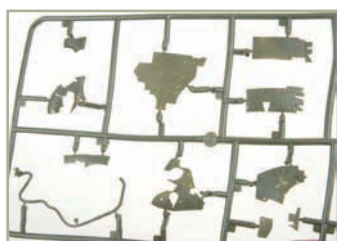
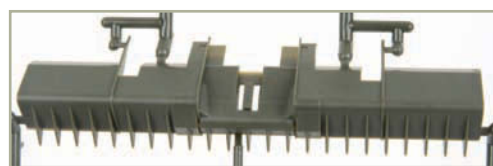
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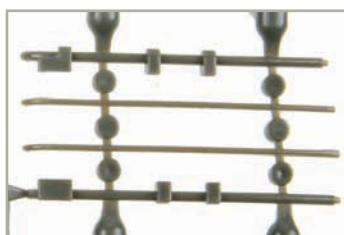
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MENG 1:35 T-90 with TBS-86 Tank Dozer

Building on the highly acclaimed previous T-90A release, here's a new kit to please the modern modeller. The key differences with this release are the obvious dozer blade attachment which can be made workable and is provided on an all-new sprue, another new sprue of Meng's soft, flexible plastic gives us the anti-radiation turret appliqué in superb detail. More new parts feature the tracks, which again are fully workable and assembled with the aid of a jig and separate pins which are pre-spaced on the sprues. Another feature is the LED circuit included to illuminate the IR lamps either side of the mantlet, something which can be omitted if you find it a gimmick as the wiring and switch are all hidden. We start with the same beautifully designed lower hull common to all Meng T-90 based kits with its working torsion bar suspension and detailed roadwheels which are wrapped in the new tracks which have excellent detail and no pin-marks to clean up. The upper hull

follows the previous kit with no engine provided this time but the same detailed rear deck with photoetched screens and superbly rendered auxiliary fuel drums (harking back to the days of the T-34!) The turret of the T-90 is a real piece of work which Meng have really done justice to, a real kit in itself with all that radiation armour and the seven piece gun barrel, AA MG cupola (workable) and myriad of storage boxes and ERA blocks the turret is certainly the most complex part of the build. Three options of markings are offered, even one plain green finish if you don't feel up to the three tone camo, if you do though the parade vehicle from the Kublinka Tanker's Day celebrations will look striking with the large eagle and Russian flag. Another stunning kit straight from the box, from the quality of the detail and moulding to the clear and precise instruction booklet, Meng again have left nothing to chance. Keep up to date with news at www.meng-model.com



MENG 1:35 Leopard 1A5

It is great to see that Meng have not finished with their rendition of the Leopard and this latest kit depicts the last of the round cast turret versions of the Leopard 1 which was still in service in the mid 1990's and was the pinnacle of development for this version. As you might expect the hull and many common fittings are carried over from the Previous 1A3/A4 release. However the wheels have been re-tooled along with the original exhaust grilles which are provided here along with the early pattern grilles. The turret is entirely new and beautifully rendered with separately moulded mounting lugs for the spaced armour, correct in scale main targetting gun sight on the turret roof and a choice of canvas mantlet covers for two different gun elevation positions. The turret basket is very finely moulded and cleverly designed with connecting spurs between the rails which you trim off once you have the basket assembled. The rubber coated spaced armour has been moulded in a flexible plastic which has accurately captured the surface finish and my experiments with these parts

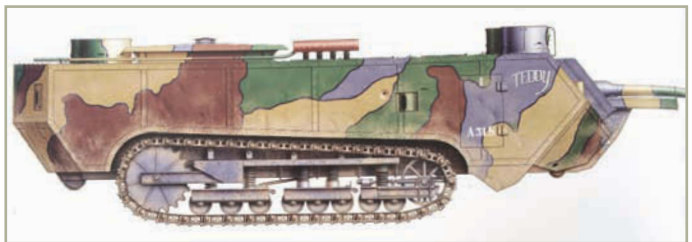
which I am mid way through assembling looks like they should work very well in conforming to the turret. Another pleasing touch is the detail shell port hatch which can be modelled open or closed but the spaced armour cover will have to be reworked if it is opened. The comes with the same photoetch as with the 1A3/4 and this time some pre-cut reflective stickers for the mirrors. Tracks are the working link pattern as released separately recently and come with separate grousers too. Markings are provided for three German schemes but there are some other turret numbers etc on the decal sheet that are not covered in the instructions for some welcome extra flexibility. Without doubt this is now the best model of the 1A5. True, there are a couple of solid moulded grab handles on the hull that would benefit from replacing and weld beads still to add to the rear deck edge but even so this is a step up for Leopard fans. Conversion into vehicles operated by numerous other countries also adds to the appeal of this excellent release.



AK Interactive Paint Sets

We have a flurry of new acrylic paint sets from AK Interactive with a definite WW1 theme and we begin with a five colour set of WW1 French Vehicle colours AK4050, ideal for those Ft-17 and St. Chamond kits. Similarly there is also a three colour set of British WW1 colours AK4040 - these are designed as a colour modulation set with base, shadow and highlighting shades, and these were used on the Holt Tractor build in this issue. WW1 Uniforms are next with sets for British AK3080, French AK3100 and German AK3090. Each of these contains three colours with a base colour and shadow and highlight colour for each. Moving to WWII subjects now and this six colour boxed set, Splittermuster Uniform Colours AK3040 provides a handy set of colours for painting German splinter pattern camouflage patterns with three

shades of the base colour along with two greens and a brown for the camouflage patterns. Finally there is a new type of metallic paint product called True Metal. This comes in a tube and has the consistency of an oil paint. It needs to be applied over a primer as it is not entirely opaque using a brush or soft fabric and it can be polished to a highly realistic metallic finish. I have been using the aluminium colour to good effect on an aircraft project and I would think that the steel would be ideal for roadwheel rims or track teeth. AK tell us that it can be diluted with white spirits and sprayed but we have not tried this and the fact that it is dissolved with white spirits means that acrylic weathering products will be needed when working over it. www.ak-interactive.com will have full details of these and the rest of the range.



WW1 The First Mechanized War

Published by AK Interactive
Softback format, 168 pages,
www.ak-interactive.com

This is a very high quality publication from AK Interactive which offers some excellent reference for anyone looking for a convenient single source guide to WW1 subjects. The book covers tanks and other armoured vehicles for each of the main combatants with some superb colour profiles and supporting archive images. Aircraft are also covered in a more abbreviated manner but with the same quality of profiles. There is a useful

section on WW1 vehicle camouflage colours with colour swatches and AK Interactive colour codes and also a look at the colours of the uniforms of British, French and German forces. The book concludes with a section of full page archive images covering vehicles, artillery and the odd aircraft too! A great little reference to assist in your next WW1 project.



Sovereign 2000

S2K are rapidly expanding their figure range, many of these are from the Hornet and Wolf ranges of the past which have always been held in high regard. Casting is very clean and sharp on these new German figures added to the range: S2KW018 Late War U-Boat crewman, S2KW057 U-Boat crewman with panzerfaust, S2KW059 German tanker in one piece overall, S2KW060 Afrika Korps tanker, S2KW061 German youth in greatcoat and S2KW062

Grenadier stood resting. Finally a set of resin springs for the bogies of 1:35 Bren carriers to make assembly easier. www.sovereign2000.co.uk has their full range of great value kits, accessories and figures



Stalingrad British Tank Corps World War 1

It is great when figure manufacturers release sets which will compliment vehicle releases and one of our favourite figure companies, Stalingrad have done just that with this five figure set of WW1 British Tank crew. Oozing character, these figures will work perfectly with the new Mark IV kits but with a selection of

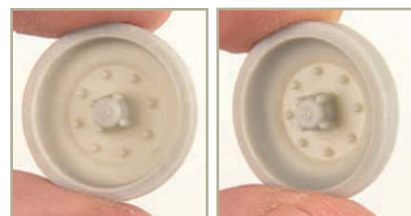
excellent casual poses they will easily adapt to other requirements too. Sculpting quality is top notch as you can see, making painting a real delight. Just brilliant! Full details of these and the rest of the range at www.stalingrad.diorama.com

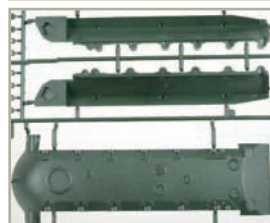
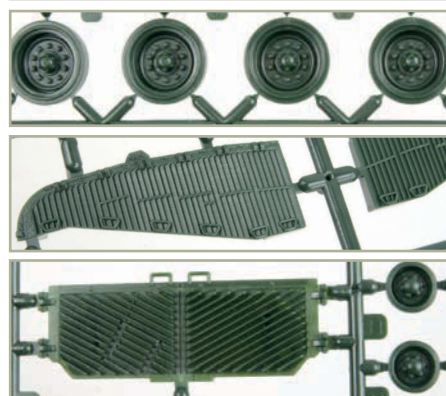


Leopard Workshop 1:35 Leopard 1 wheel sets

Leopard Workshop have revised their sets of replacement roadwheels for the Leopard 1 family these CAD designed wheels are designed to work with Italeri/Revell, Takom and Meng kits. Set LW001 and LW002 both contain roadwheels and idlers as illustrated and unlike all the plastic kit wheels these have fully detailed rear faces. LW001 are the

standard wheel where as type LW002 have a curved inner rim. The final set LW006 is a set of four spare wheels to assist in dressing your model. Clean up on all the wheels is minimal and as you can see quality is excellent. Check out the rest of the wheel range at <http://leopardclub.ca/workshop>

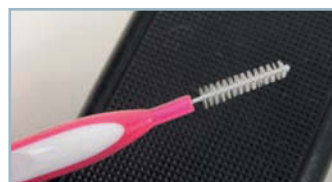
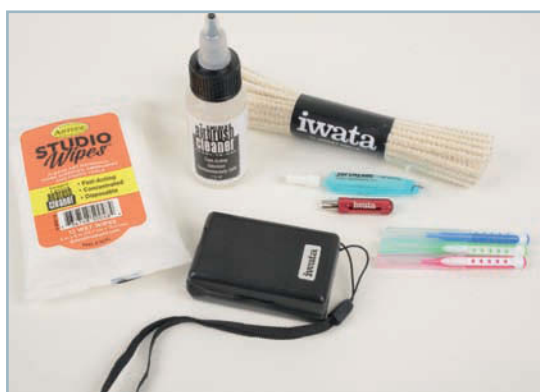




Revell 1:35 M48A2/A2C

Now this one sneaked in, we waited so long for a new kit of the M48 with Dragon coming to our rescue last year with a nice (although not perfect) kit of the 'A3 Patton, and now Revell with the slightly earlier M48A2. As I'm building (well, on and off...) the DML kit and have some reference on the bench (Hunnicutts bible on the Patton) the timing's right to cast an eye over this new tooling. First impressions are poor. Awful overdone cast texture and heavy sink marks in the chunky mouldings had me thinking this was maybe an old Esci kit from the 1980s, but no, a date marked on the hull bottom assures us this is a new kit. The hull has separate sides and separate suspension arms, bump stops etc and the road wheels are actually rather good- better than Dragon's offerings in general appearance. As with all kits of the marque, the mud slots are missing from the drive sprockets. The tracks are

typical old-school rubber bands which most modellers will look to replace (AFV Club's are excellent and inexpensive). Moving up the hull top there's still nothing strikes you that this is a new tooling with some heavy details and the vicious cast texture I mentioned although the general shapes and dimensions look fine. The turret includes correct features such as the low profile cupola and posable hatches but the canvas mantlet cover is very unconvincing. Markings supplied give good options, two German, two U.S. and surprisingly an Israeli M48 from the Six Day War of 1967. So although a new M48 kit is very welcome, this one leaves scope for some extra work and aftermarket parts and with Revell's budget prices this isn't out of the question. Sorry Revell, this could have been so much better - close, but no cigar. Revell kits are available at good hobby and toy retailers www.revell.eu



The Airbrush Company, Iwata Cleaning Mat, Airbrush Cleaning Kit & Airbrush Cleaner Spray

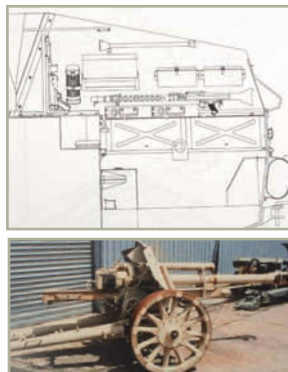
There is no point in investing in a precision high end airbrush if it is not kept clean. As we know keeping your brush clean is the secret to trouble-free operation but getting some of those small parts clean is no easy task. Fortunately Iwata have now put together a dedicated Airbrush cleaning kit and a specialist cleaning mat (available separately). The mat has a lipped edge to stop your nozzle rolling off the desk and getting eaten by the carpet and comes with a useful sectional drawing of the airbrush components. The boxed set contains a pack of cleaning wipes, a small bottle of cleaning fluid, a pack of pipe cleaners, an illuminated magnifying lens to inspect your nozzle and needle, a tube of needle lubricant,

a nozzle wrench and a set of three micro nylon cleaning brushes. The set also provides an illustrated guide on how to effectively clean and maintain your airbrush with useful tips on where and how to lubricate the mechanism as well as everyday cleaning methods. This is an excellent set which will be replacing my makeshift home made cleaning devices immediately. Finally in this collection of cleaning materials is the Medea Airbrush Cleaner in this handy spray handle bottle which can be used to clean out your spray booth or to shoot a jet of cleaning fluid into the intake of your airbrush! www.airbrushes.com

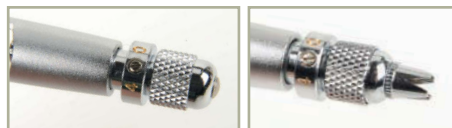


Nuts & Bolts Vol.33 Le.F.H. 18/2 'Wespe' 'Hummel-Wespe'

J. Baschin, M. Block, H. Tippmann
Published by Nuts & Bolts
Softback format, A4, 184 pages
www.nuts-bolts.de



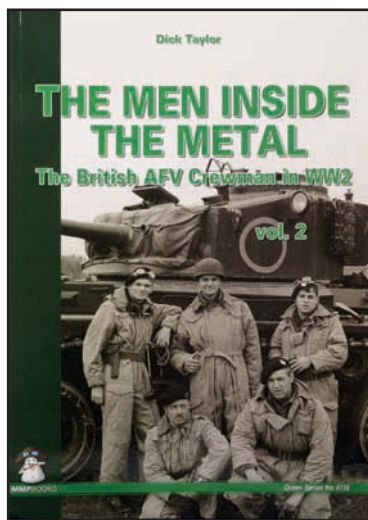
One of the most respected modelling references out there, Nuts & Bolts, continues their series with a look at the Wespe and the 10.5 cm Cannon. In an early volume N&B gave the Wespe a little coverage, but this is something special with their usual in-depth research that leaves nothing at all to chance. A fantastic selection of Wespe period images along with shots of the towed gun accompanied by detailed captions are presented with technical plans, colour profiles and 3D drawings, which as always, set the standards for accuracy. The usual format continues with a good walkaround section of various guns and vehicles in colour and a section devoted to modelling the subjects with acclaimed modeller Tony Greenland. If you're a collector of this series, this is another 'must have' for the serious German armour enthusiast. Time to dust-down the classic Tamiya kit that you're 'sure you have somewhere...'



The Airbrush Company, Iwata Custom Micron CM-C Plus

Iwata's Custom Micron airbrushes are very much the flagship models of the respected Iwata range and they have now been improved to make things that little bit better again! The new brushes have a redesigned taller, more comfortable square pattern trigger and there is also now a handy facility to store the crown cap (the protective tip of the brush that protects the needle) by screwing it into the end of the preset lock at the rear end of the brush. I mostly work without a crown cap on my brushes to avoid the build up of paint and unforeseen splatters that result, so a safe stowage place is most welcome. The example that we have been testing is the Custom Micron CM-C Plus which has a 0.23mm needle teamed up with a generous 9ml paint cup. The range includes three other models with different paint cup and nozzle combinations to suit different requirements. The brush has a Micro Air Control valve mounted under the cup which allows for very fine regulation of the air pressure rather than having to reach down to adjust your compressor you can quickly make adjustments as you work. As soon as you hold the airbrush to know that this is a serious piece of kit with a precision feel to all the controls and a very smooth trigger action, offering just the right balance of

resistance as you pull back on the trigger. I wanted to see just how it performed with what would be an everyday paint for me rather than any specialist airbrush inks for example. I used some Mr Hobby Aqueous Hobby Colour for this, mixing a couple of colours and using just water to thin them. I was a little sceptical about how much better the CM-C Plus would be compared to my regular high end Iwata Hi-Line HP-BH but I could immediately feel the difference in the operation, the control I had and the finesse of the results I was getting. Without any doubt I could appreciate the difference between this and my regular brush and it ran consistently throughout the entire painting session. From the red metal presentation case to the anodised rear body this is a beautiful precision tool with results that reflect this. Obviously this is reflected in the price but for those of us who strive for the highest quality results after spending months of work constructing a model this is no doubt the sort of airbrush you would want to be able to utilise. Highly recommended. Full details of this and the rest of the Custom Micron range can be found at www.airbrushes.com



The Men Inside The Metal Vol.2

Dick Taylor

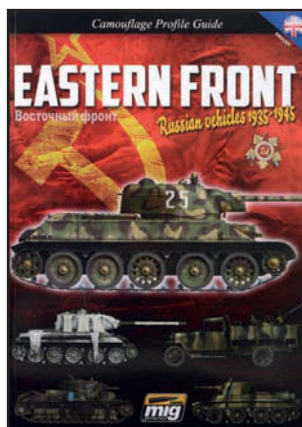
Published by Mushroom Models

Softback format, A4, 124 pages

ISBN 978 8363678289

www.mmpbooks.biz

This second volume continues and completes the detailed look at British and Commonwealth AFV crews throughout WWII, their uniforms, personal equipment and insignia of the regiments. The bulk of the book deals with each of the regiments with period black and white and contemporary colour shots and illustrations giving excellent markings reference for modellers of the subjects. A second chapter details the crews' lives and day to day responsibilities with some more great photographs of the crews going about their duties and training. A final chapter describes how it was to live on, and indeed in, an armoured vehicle with some nice views of 'behind the lines' life where a gun barrel also acts as a washing line! Some great ideas for a diorama or vignette with the wealth of kits available of British subjects making the job easier. A great modelling reference as usual from MMP, and good value for money.



Camouflage Profile Guide Eastern Front

Russian Vehicles 1935-45

Published by Ammo of Mig

Softback format, A4, 80 pages

ISBN 974 84 943198 0 8

www.migjimenez.com

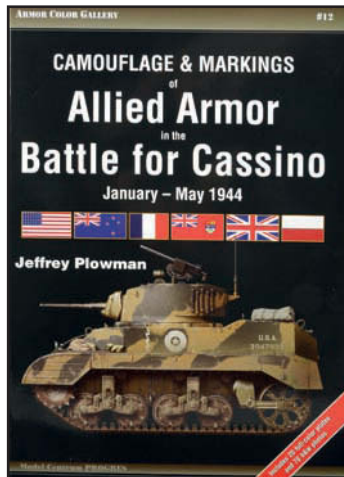
A comprehensive collection of high quality colour profiles in this very nicely produced book from Ammo providing some great inspiration for Russian modellers, from trucks to T-34s. Some great camo patterns and turret slogans are presented with some background information on the factory and field applied finishes. Detailed captions accompany each illustration, recommended to any WWII Russian modeller.



Ammo Paint sets

More handy compilation sets from Mig Jimenez's AMMO range of ready to airbrush scale effect colours. Set A.MIG 7108 should prove popular with German armour fans with six interior colours, Rotbraun, Cremeweiss, Gearbox green, Engine grey, Leather brown and crystal finish green for periscopes. 'Smart Sets' come as four main colours for particular subjects; No.8 is for Japanese armour of early WWII, No.10 is for ETO British vehicles in WWII and

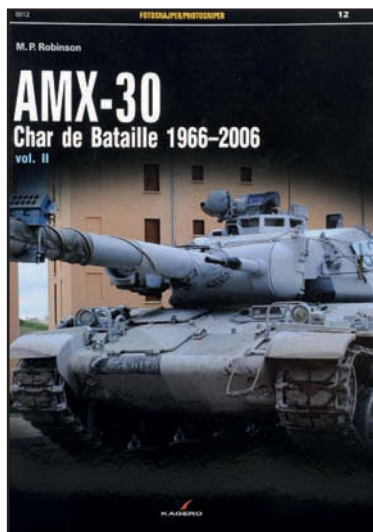
No.9 is a set of three colours for Soviet vehicles in Afghanistan 1979-89. We've yet to test these new 'washable' colours from AMMO but the idea is to represent improvised vehicle camouflage where the crew would mix local earth with water or fuel. The sand and dust colours are designed to remain workable after application by brush or airbrush to achieve the heavy wear effects. Keep up to date and shop at www.migjimenez.com.



Camouflage and markings of Allied Armor in the Battle for Cassino

Jeffrey Plowman
Published Model Centrum Progress
Softback format, A4, 56 pages
www.casematepublishing.co.uk

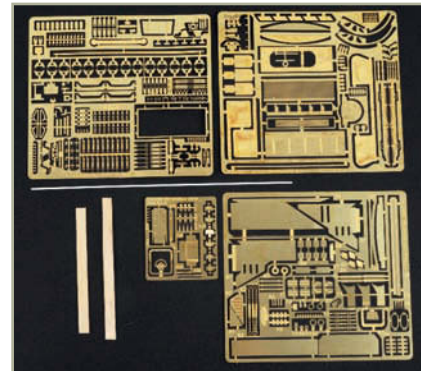
Covering the fierce fighting in Italy January to May in 1944, this recent release in the Armor Color Gallery offers a superb collection of quality period black and white images which are largely new to me and have you instantly starting on some 'virtual modelling'! American, British, Indian, Canadian, French, Kiwi and Polish armour all gets a look in split into chronological order of the battles and also the countries sections. Seven pages of beautiful quality colour profiles cover a good variety of vehicles with very inspiring finishes which make a nice change from the straight olive drab and greens. The captions to the photographs are excellent and great at-a-glance modelling reference. Expect to pay a little more than the usual light soft back but the content is value for money.



AMX-30 Char de Bataille 1966-2006 Vol.2

By M. P. Robinson
Published by Kagero
Softback format, 86 pages,
ISBN 978 83-64596-04-9
www.casematepublishing.co.uk

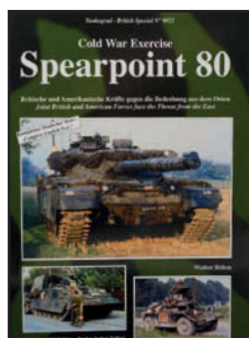
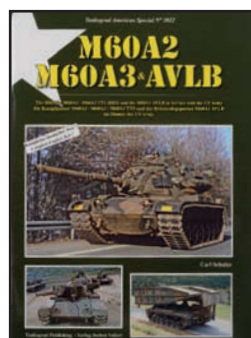
Volume two covers the modernisation of the AMX-30 and the photographic coverage is focussed on the B2 variant - making it an ideal reference for the new Meng kit. Delays in introducing the Leclerc MBT saw the service life of the AMX-30 continued and the tank remains in service today for training where it is used to play the role of opposition armour and carries some different camouflage schemes. This volume also offers a choice of eight different colour profiles including a scheme for the first Gulf War and another useful walkaround section which includes some interior views. Modellers who like a different look will appreciate the views of the Cypriot vehicles. The book is packed with photos of the vehicle with some great dirty examples for the modeller and this has to be the ultimate modelling reference for this vehicle.



Inside The Armour 1:35 Shilka ZSU-23-4 Upgrade Set

Designers and manufacturers of all manner of twiddly bits, ITA, have come up trumps for fans of the ZSU 23-4 Shilka. Long available from Italeri and Dragon, this set will be a huge leap in detail and accuracy. Mastered by Chris Meddings, his Shilka has picked up numerous accolades over this year so you can be sure of his knowledge of the subject. 500 PE parts, 32 resin parts, including new wheels with detail on both sides, styrene rod

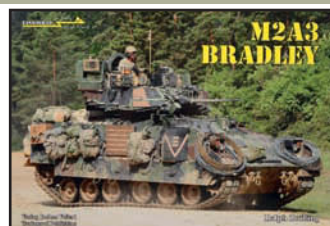
and even some scale wooden strips make for a very comprehensive upgrade which includes roadwheels and sprockets. ITA should be also commended for their excellent clear instruction plans. If you're going all-out there's some beautiful gun barrels on the market and Masterclub do some excellent resin tracks. Time to dig that old kit from the stash or trawl the internet or model shows www.insidethearmour.com



Tankograd, American Special 3022 and British Special 9022

More to please post-war modellers from Tankograd as they continue to provide quality, affordable reference. M60A2, M60A3 and AVLB covers the versions in service with the U.S. Army and is packed with colour and black and white images of M60s in the field with some very beaten and dirty subjects which would make great projects, decent kits and upgrades are available already and new kits reportedly on their way this will be an excellent source of information. Good walkaround shots are included of the bridgelayers and Marines operated M60s look particularly nice wearing their ERA blocks. Spearpoint 80 is a superb collection of

colour photographs from the major NATO exercise in 1980, there's something for everyone with Leopard, M113s, even Gama Goats but the main emphasis is on the British vehicles involved. Foxes, Ferrets, FV 432s, Scorpions and Chieftains all get a look-in and more besides all getting muddy and dirty, very obviously hard worked during the period providing some exciting prospective modelling! Both books are softback format in German and English language with 64 pages, both highly recommended and great value. Our samples kindly provided by Bookworld Wholesale <http://www.bookworldws.co.uk>



Tankograd, In Detail, Fast Track Series

A new series from Tankograd here aimed squarely at modellers in which they aim to provide large format photographic reference of topics generated by major kit releases. The quality of the colour shots in our two samples are excellent and produced in traditional 'walkaround' style covering the elements modellers usually want to push the level of detail. The mighty SLT 2 Mammut transporter is covered in No.2 in the series with some good background text and excellent selection of clear, large format shots in, under, and around this highly complex vehicle. No.3 is a great companion if you've got

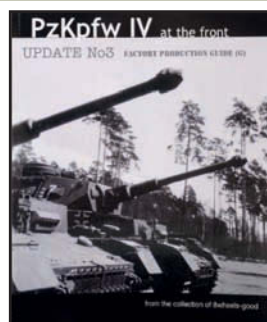
yourself one of Meng's M2A3 Bradleys, in contrast to our walkarounds of Bradleys a couple of issues back, these are in the three-tone camo and without the full quota of ERA armour from the BUSK package, and look superb! The photos were taken at an exercise in Hohenfels in May 2014 so ideal if you want to show your Bradley up-to-date with great stowage and weathering reference. Both books are slim at 40 pages each but this is reflected in the price, recommended to anyone with projects planned of these vehicles.



Collection Archives De Guerre

With so much to get through this issue lets take a look at these three releases together from French publisher Caraktère. As our first look at books from this publisher, first impressions are very good with a high quality feel and appearance, this series focuses on specific WWII units and divisions. The first has been available for a while now detailing 'Wiking' Division's action from Barbarossa through to their demise in Hungary with coverage of their pre-war formation and preparation. With the text in French there is enough

in the way of images to make these attractive reference books, some of the period photographs have been seen before but many are new to me and provide an excellent selection of vehicles and armour. Several pages of colour profiles provide more reference and inspiration with well researched captions proving very 'modeller friendly'. No.2 focusses on 7th Panzer Division and No.3 on U.S. 2nd Armoured Division 'Hell on Wheels' with contents all following suit with good selections of photographs and profiles.



PzKpfw IV at the front, Update No.3 Factory Production Guide (G)

Craig Ellis

Published by 8wheels-good

Softback format, 102 pages

ISBN 978-0-9563655-7-6

www.blurb.co.uk/user/store/8wheels-good



Another release in the Panzer IV series of books available from on-line 'print on demand' service, Blurb. This series is a great example of how publishing and printing technology can share the knowledge of someone with great enthusiasm for a subject. This update volume is as detailed as it gets, delving into the three factories that produced F2 to G and the various subtle differences in another unique look at the author's collection of Panzer IV images. We're shown details right down to the vehicle's chassis number highlighting production features, modelling gold if you're

looking for the ultimate in accuracy with a selection of tables and diagrams to collate the information into manageable visuals. Craig's text is very easily read and has a nice informal feel considering the in-depth subject matter! As always the photos are the focus with another superb selection, if Panzer IVs are your thing you may already be collecting this series and this is an addition you'll certainly not want to miss. Available from the Blurb website now. Thanks to 8wheels-good for our sample.



Superking Building Trumpeter's 1:16 King Tiger

By David Parker

Published by AFV Modeller Ltd

Hard or Softback format, 452 pages

ISBN 978-0-9555413-7-7 (hardback)

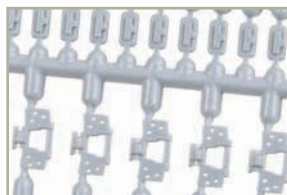
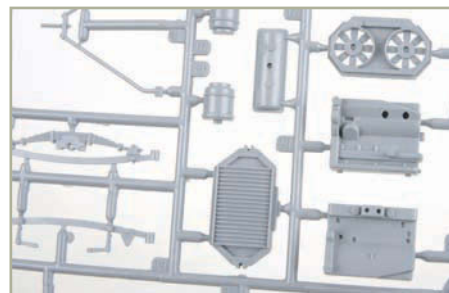
ISBN 978-0-9555413-6-0 (softback)

www.mengafvmodeller.com

In December 2008 a large parcel arrived and my sons were happy, anticipating a great Christmas surprise, but I had made myself a present in form of the Trumpeter kit 00906 Tiger II with Henschel turret in 1:16. David Parker started his fantastic series of articles in AFV-Modeller so I decided to postpone the project as I wanted to see how David continued the build in part 2 and the next 20 parts to follow. I could have started with my own build of the Tiger II (H) when David published the last article on his build, but I didn't. I was very impressed by David's work and my confidence was dented a little, not least because of the time it would take to finish the project, as my spare time is rather limited with publishing the Nuts & Bolts series of books.

Now two weeks ago I received David Parker's new book SUPERKING. This book begins with pages 6 - 255 in A4 landscape format all the 22 episodes, previously published in AFV-Modeller, but in a completely new layout with additional pictures showing the building, detailing and finishing process of the build. Additionally the book contains a "REFERENCE" part, which is subdivided into an "ARCHIVE" section with historical photos on pages 256 - 316 and "PRESERVED VEHICLES" with colour photos on pages 318 - 444 of Tiger II still in existence today. Here details are shown which cannot be seen on contemporary photos and which serve the modeller as a help for further detailing of the kit. Another new section is "APPENDIX" on the pages 446 - 452 with schematic diagrams of the wiring inside the tank, a timeline diagram showing the months of production changes and when which camouflage colour was factory applied and last but not least a chart showing the different add-on resin parts David had built for this tank and which can be bought via www.afvmodeller.com. On the one hand I'm glad to have waited with my build until this book came out, on the other hand David has set a huge benchmark. David, a great book, congratulations.

Heiner F. Duske



Zvezda 1:35 Sd.kfz 251/1 Ausf.B 'Stuka Zu Fuss'

Another version of Zvezda's early 251, this time we're packing the heavy rocket launchers which are provided on new sprues. The option is provided to show the mounting frames only or complete with the rockets in crates. It's some time since we've looked over this kit of the Ausf.B, the tooling is standing up well with some good detail and clean moulding throughout. Part design is similar to the DML and AFV Club later 251s with lots of careful alignment needed of the hull panels. Separate trailing arms are provided to mount the well detailed wheels, my only minor gripes being the holes in the outer wheels have a raised lip and the inners don't and should be vice-versa and the hub cents look very pronounced. Tracks are provided as individual links with separate

rubber blocks. A nicely detailed Maybach engine is included with posable hatches to display it should you wish. The interior is pretty comprehensive and the rear doors are also posable for a full view, I should say though that the interior is more akin to a later version the main visual difference being back rests to the rear seating (which could always be left off?) Rocket launchers are well detailed and look like they could be quite demanding to build due to the multi-part framework. A nice kit, not without a few niggles, but nothing major and the only modern tooled 'B' I can think of. Thanks to the Hobby Company who are Zvezda's UK importer and distributor.

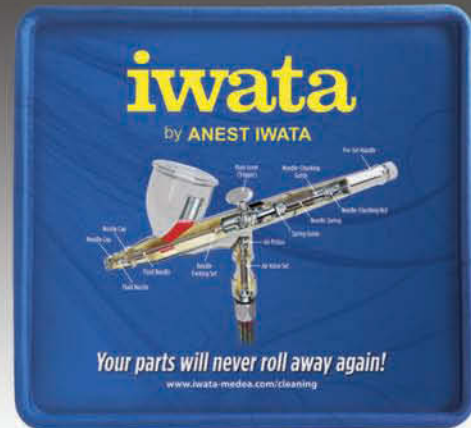


Tommy's War 1:32 Crossley Light Tender 20/25

The WWI interest has hit heady heights this year as you'd expect, and purveyors of fine resin models of the period, Tommy's War, have no signs of slowing down the releases. This full kit in 54mm/1:32 depicts an early version of the Crossley Light Tender 20/25 chosen by the new RFC and RAF which served Worldwide. The kit comprises of around fifty resin parts including a former for the spoked wheels and a sizeable photoetched fret providing delicate spoked wheels and mud-guards among the smaller details. A fully detailed chassis and drivetrain forms the base to add the quirky looking body to including an optional hood and canvass cover with internal details of the frame. An excellent instruction booklet has details of the decal placement of several RFC vehicles. An excellent companion to some of the Tommy's war figures or even better (as we know a lot of armour modellers are fans of the Wingnut Wings range of kits) a diorama of the period. www.tommyswar.com



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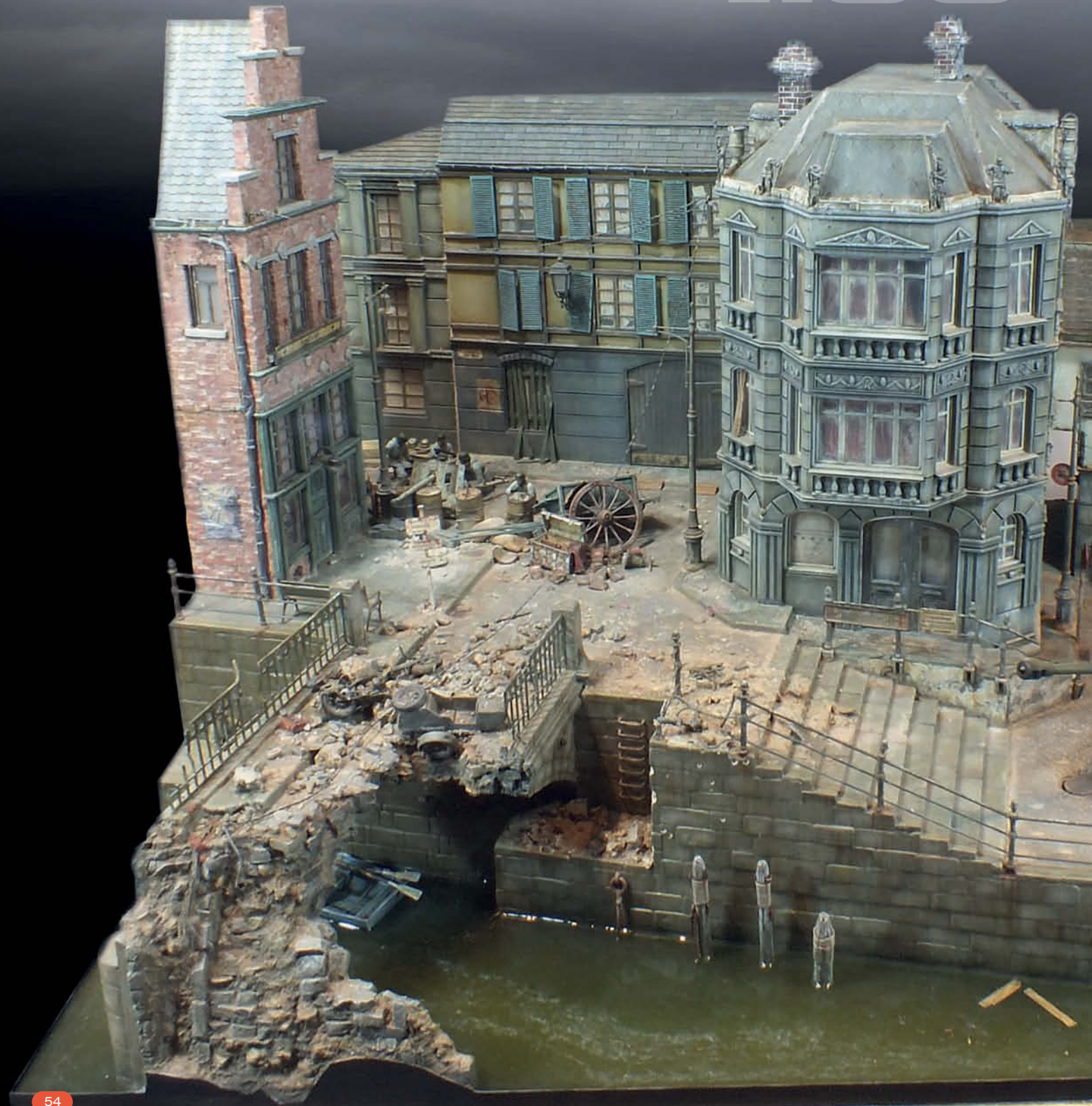
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THE MOUSE TRAP

Diego Cuenca Vidal's stunning scene of the desperate defence of Berlin

1:35





When you design a diorama, besides making all the vehicles, figures, buildings to the best of your abilities, it is important to create a credible scene. This scene has to guide the viewer's eye to its different features and it has to be attractive. The most difficult challenge is creating a composition to tie all of the elements seamlessly to each other. When everything goes to plan, a diorama can be one of the most rewarding projects in our hobby.



Perfect planning

I have tried to work to some basic principles for creating dioramas: Create different levels in the scene. The first and nearest to observer is the water of the river. The second and third levels are the cobbles that on the right side are lower than the other side. This increased level of the left side allows me to create the corner where the two soviet troops wait to attack and also allows me to build the hotel which exits in two streets on different levels, an interesting facet of the building. Try to create different roof levels for each building to avoid monotony. Place the building frontages at different distances from the observer which helps us give perspective to the diorama. The principal front of the hotel and the lateral façade of the pharmacy are the nearest. After that, we find the front of the house on the right (with

the tower), and the building facia located behind the Pak 38. It was important that the Pak 38 was placed as far as possible from the observer to give it depth in respect to the bridge and the stairs situated in front of the hotel, the two plausible routes of the Soviet attack. Finally, with the alley, the diorama has more depth in the right side leading the eye beyond the buildings.

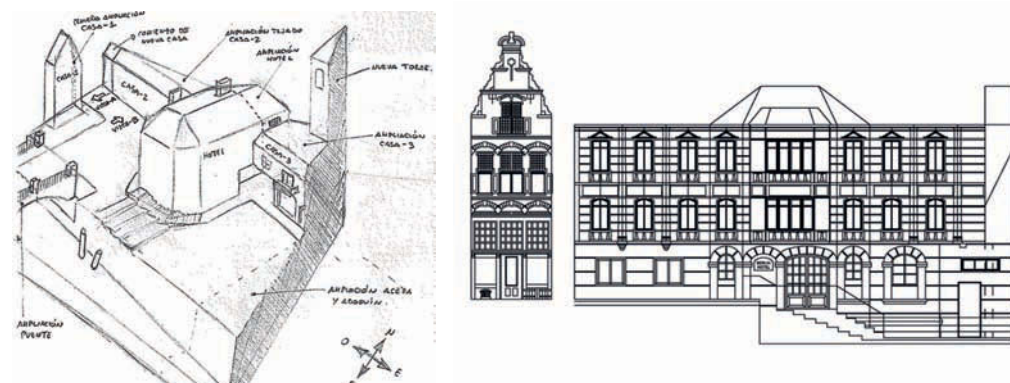
Alternate architectural styles and materials

The pharmacy is the oldest building in the diorama and it's made of bricks and part plaster rendering. Good reference is easily available of buildings and structures to represent the period and place you are modelling. The hotel is made of concrete, but it's very grand with it's classic

ornamentation, typical of Berlin.

The house on the right and the alley are also more modern structures, but contrast with the hotel in its wall finish. Nevertheless, the lower structures keep the same style of the hotel, the bricked openings suggest this has maybe been a shop now vacant (the red and white sunshade gives you a clue). The building on the left side provides a backdrop to the gun position with the interest of the wooden shutters and beams adding detail and colour.

Finally, the tower of a church, made of stone blocks and with a copper sheet roof, stands tall over the rest of the buildings providing the all important 'high point' of the composition.



When I thought about the design of the diorama I tried to create a particular atmosphere. These are the last days of the Third Reich. I wanted to create an image of overwhelming soviet superiority in the face of the last German effort to defend Berlin. On the other hand, the diorama, which took on a life of it's own, changed over time thanks to the advice of a lot of modelling friends. In the first draft, the diorama was 60 x 40 cms, but grew to 70 x 52 cms.

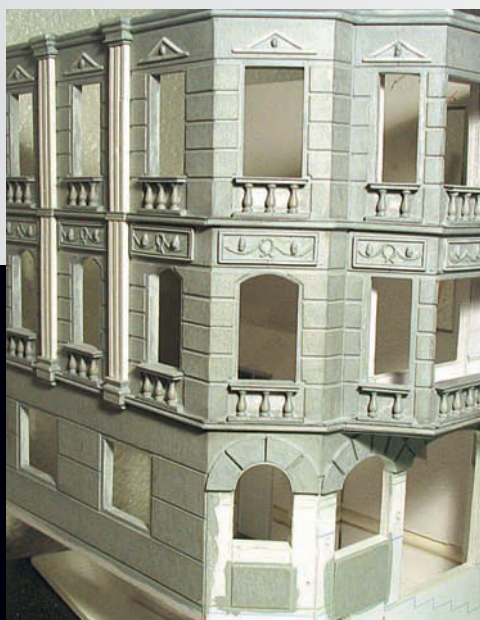
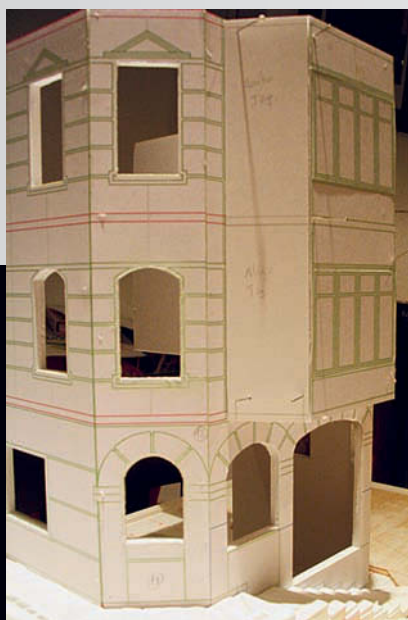
Both the design of the buildings and the streets were drawn on computer with AutoCAD. With this program I can amend designs easily. Also you can render the diorama in 3D to give an impression of the finished piece, although it's essential to make a real loose 'sketch' with cardboard etc. The last defensive visual is the position of the Pak 38 and its crew. The soviet onslaught arrives from the right side and from the front. In the right side, we find the JS-2 and the soviet infantryman gesturing

to his comrades out of picture. The soviet progress is also suggested by the two infantrymen that are disembarking a civilian rowing boat under the bridge to climb up to the street. The other attack line is the bridge. I decided not to destroy a section of the bridge, leaving room for the potential advance of the further Soviet infantry, adding to the desperate outlook of the gun crew. To emphasize the destruction, I placed the wrecked BMW R75 on the bridge.

For the Pak 38's position it is essential that bridge is not completely destroyed. This aspect explains that the Pak 38 needs to cover both the small passage of the bridge and the lateral access of the steps in front of the hotel, obviously the German Paratroopers still have not realized what is creeping up on them - the JS-2! An element I've used both to increase the three-dimensional aspect and to link parts of the diorama are the overhead cables. First I ran a wire from the BMW R75 to the hotel to highlight the motorcycle that is

half-buried by the rubble. Another cable connects the hotel with a post near the handrail of the bridge. This wire defines the JS-2 and suggests its continuity to the river. The others two wires (from the hotel to the pharmacy and the house behind the Pak 38) increase the 3D sensation around the pharmacy area.

With these elements, as simple as they are, we can add a visual link and further create depth leading the viewer's eye between the highlighted elements as if we were pointing a finger.



The Hotel

The main structure was made of foam core board of 5 mm thickness. Over this I glued the printed plans. The next step is to cut the apertures of doors and windows. For assembling the building I used PVA glue and pins that hold the structure temporarily. When the building is as large as this foam core strengthening blocks inside are essential.

When you cut the window openings you have to keep in mind they must be a little bigger than the window as you have to make the frame with plastic, this plastic has a thickness of about 0.5 - 1.0 mm. Next I covered the main structure with different materials to get the correct appearance. First I simulated the concrete slabs with cardboard (reversed sections of kit box lids) applying a layer of Tamiya putty and sanding with a fine grade abrasives. The second phase is to cover the edge of the foam core (the edge

of the windows and the doors) with "Evergreen" plastic strips. Finally I filled any gaps with Tamiya putty. The third step is to place all the decorative frames with balsa wood, plaster, plastic, etc, again applying putty on all surfaces to get similar textures on all elements of the elevation.

For the columns I have used two different materials: sculpted plaster from cast sheets and plastic round, half-round and "L" profiles.

Another very fancy element are the balustrades at the windows which are made from wooden forms used in naval modelling, you only have to find the correct size and you can obtain multiple parts of the same profile.



For the concrete frame on the lower levels I made my own moulds and cast them in plaster, better than plastic for larger features. I added other decorative elements of floral motifs etc in the style of Berlin in that period. Those elements are made with Evergreen plastic, Citadel putty and natural elements.

The next step is making the windows and the doors. I drew the principal lines of each type of window on a base and placed plastic strips with the help of pins. Once glued and set the frame was filled and sanded ready for producing resin copies. For the glass of the windows I have only used semi-transparent plastic sheet. This type of plastic allow us to see the newspaper or papers that you can glue behind the glass, but not allow us to see the internal structure of the building (you can apply a little 'dust' with the airbrush over the glass). The doors are made in the same way as the windows.

To make the curtains I had two versions: The first is to put it behind the semi-transparent plastic and the second is hanging without glass in the frame. For the first type wet paper with water and PVA glue and tie the middle with thread. For the second type (in the broken windows) I have made the curtains with "Citadel" putty and lead sheet.

The main structure of the interior scene is made of foam core covered with printed paper (walls), and plastic stock (skirting board and floor and furniture). For the roof I have added the tiles (thick paper), one by one, over a structure of foam core. For the joints of the different surfaces of the roof I cut lead sheet and finished with putty in the gaps. I made the chimneys from a plaster blocks sculpting the shapes into the surface. The round pieces over the chimney are made with lead sheet and the handle is made with copper wire. I added ornamental elements on the upper floor front using Greek soldiers in 1:72 scale as statues and concrete cups made of pieces of plastic. Some final details, such as battle damage and boarded windows were added and I was ready to paint.

All of the buildings are base coated with the main colour to seal the absorbant plaster and card. The usual methods of oil colour washes and a lot of subtle dry-brushing which works very well on buildings and groundwork. Airbrushing was also used extensively to create shadows and subtle tone changes to add depth to the detail.



The House and Alley Way

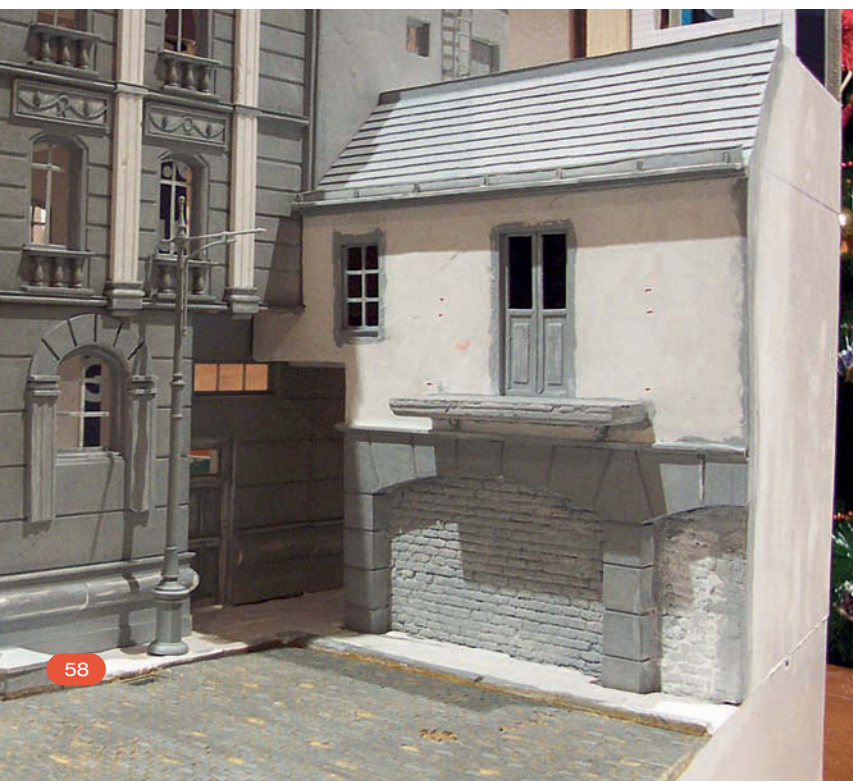
For this building I chose to change the finish of the walls. In the upper area the facade is plastered (the plaster giving a nice contrast against the hotel) while in the lower area the facade is made of concrete to connect with the hotel. For the base of the balcony (made of concrete) I made a wooden master to cast it in plaster. The handrail is made of lead wire, plastic strips and "Citadel" putty. On the roof of this house, as a little protection, I have added stone work that is protected from moisture

by sheet metal (lead sheet). The flat roof is easier to make than the tiled section (again, individual pieces). You only have to mix sand with water and PVA glue and spread over the plaster on the base structure of foam core board. Be careful with the shrinkage when drying.

For the sunshade structure I have used lead wire and plastic. The drape is made with "Citadel" putty. The alley has the same concrete finish on both sides, except

in the upper right side which again is plaster render.

To emphasize the service door of the hotel I have placed three discarded boxes made of "Evergreen" styrene strip. All of the wood that I made with plastic I rubbed a wire brush across to imitate the wood grain.



The Pharmacy



For this building the main structure is made of 3 mm thick board. The bricks are made with brown cork and balsa wood was used for the frames and the beams.

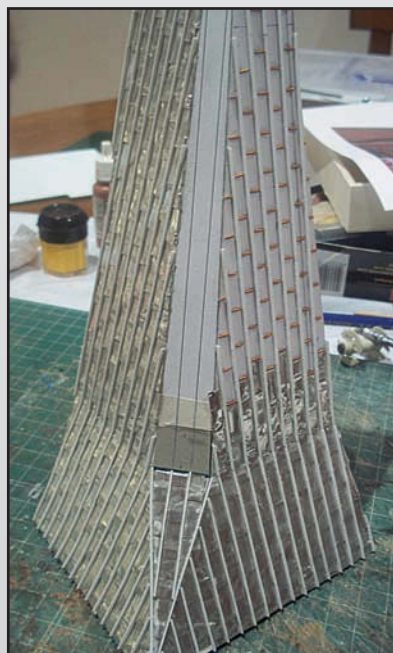
When the bricks were set in place, liquid plaster was added to the joints giving the appearance of mortar with the correct texture, the excess was wiped away with a cloth.

The tiles are made of poster paper and the gutters are made of tin sheet with the supports made of plastic card. The joint between the roof and the principal fascia is made with putty which also blends in all the other joints.

The door and most of the windows in this building are from "Miniart". The windows in the first floor are made with Evergreen strips again, filling any joints with putty.

The support of the lamp over the door is made of copper wire and the lampshade is made of tin sheet burnished over a hard former in the correct size to suit. Finally I cut the excess tin with a scissors. The light bulb is carved from transparent sprue.

The Pharmacy was painted with a heavily aged look and variation of tone across the bricks for realism.



The Church Tower

The stone work of the tower is sculpted into a 5mm thick piece of cast plaster. All of the blocks and the frame of the window was carved first with the window aperture cut last with a fine jigsaw blade and great care.

For the roof I have chosen a design typical of Berlin, very steep to get the highest point of the diorama. The main structure is made of foam core and I had to use AutoCAD again to achieve an accurate shape to work onto.

To cover the roof first I put vertical strips of plastic. After, the tiles are added one by one cut from tin sheet. Under each tile I have put a small copper rod to ensure constant spacing. A final blending with some Tamiya putty was needed before paint.

The window frames took a lot of work with some efforts confined to the bin! Lead wire is soft enough to achieve the curves of the frames with in-fills of plastic card and putty. The glass is from tracing paper with a wash of blue and black followed by gloss varnish.

The Backdrop Building



There are two buildings behind the Pak 38. Both have the main structure made with foam core and are covered with different materials. The larger house's first floor is faced with card board for a concrete effect and the rest of the floors with sandpaper and balsa. The six windows of the second and third floors are from "Miniart" as is the gate I only added a protective strip with tin sheet along the bottom edge for interest. The lamp post in the wall is from "Miniart" also with some added details. The gutters and the tiles are made in the same way as the other structures.

The style of the second house (the smaller one) is again a classic of the period in Berlin, the construction the same as the hotel.



The main structure of the bridge is made of foam core. Over this basic structure I worked on the dock area with plaster blocks and the stone of the bridge.



In the destroyed area of the bridge I followed a logical layering of the structure. The external skin is made of stone block, while the internal area is made of ordinary stone and mortar.



Various sizes of plaster blocks were cut and placed in a plastic tub with real stones. Shaking the tub resulted in realistic edges and surface textures to form the dock structure.



Forming the steps and creating the different levels is easily done with card and balsa which is easy to shape and keeps the weight of the diorama reasonable.



Copies were made of the railing posts in white metal which is soft and easily sanded and cleaned.



The rowing boat was made over a polystyrene former with ribs and planking in traditional boat modelling style, a scaled down version of the real thing. Internal detail was added when the former was removed.

Tamiya's JS-2

The kit builds nicely from the box with only three modifications. I made a weld seams around the turret with Citadel putty, a new lamp lens from clear resin and the fuel tanks which were made by burnishing metal foil over the kit parts enabling a more distressed appearance.

The usual painting techniques have been used to finish the JS-2 with the distinctive white turret band used at the time of the battle of Berlin. A generous dumping of rubble on the rear deck ties the JS into the scene along with the liberated wooden cases.



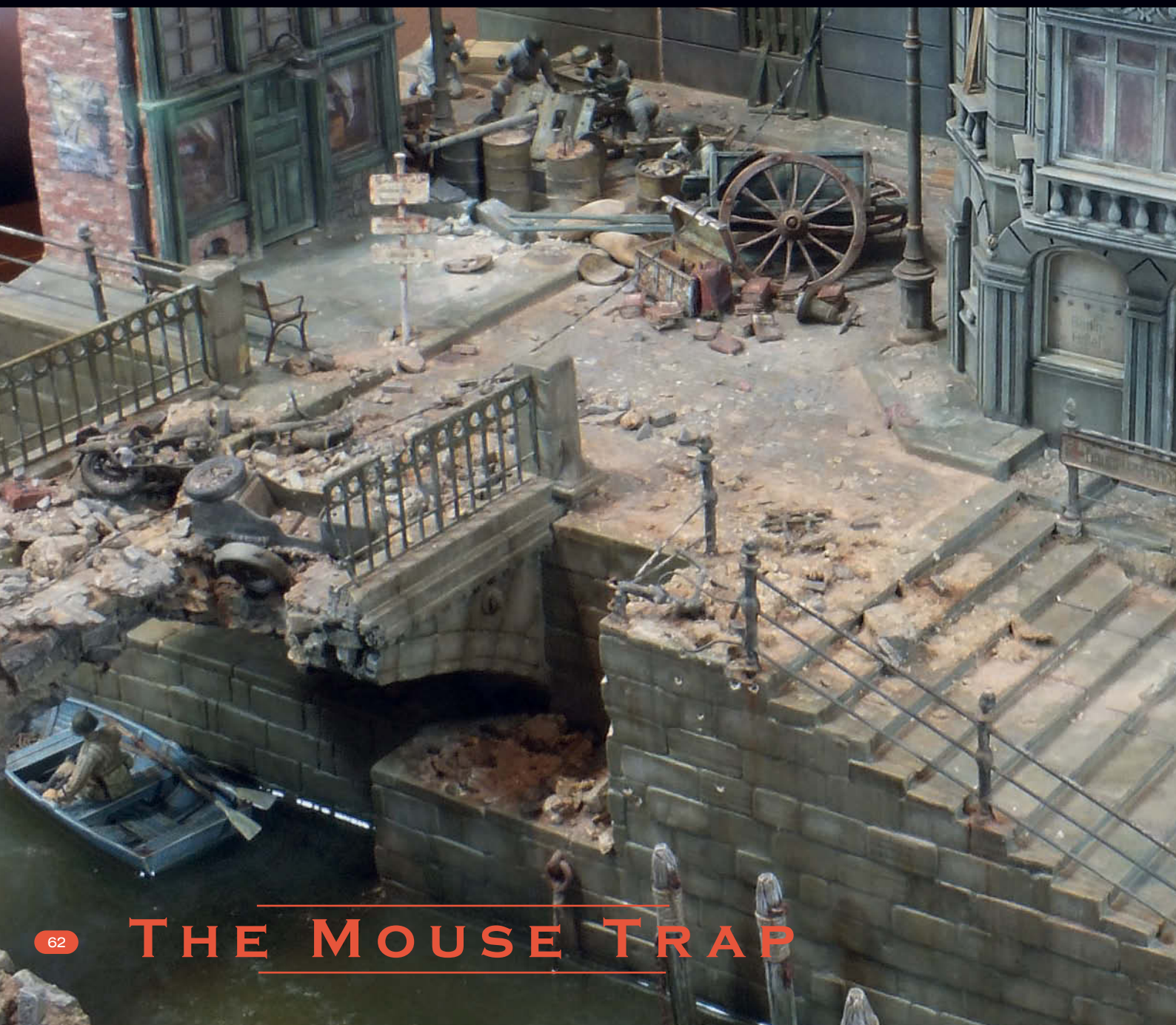
The water is clear resin poured in layers of 3 - 4 mm thickness and tinted with acrylics- Uniform Green, English Uniform Brown and black. The river bed has to be coloured with strong contrasts before the first layer of resin is poured and vegetation made from ground oregano is glued in place.

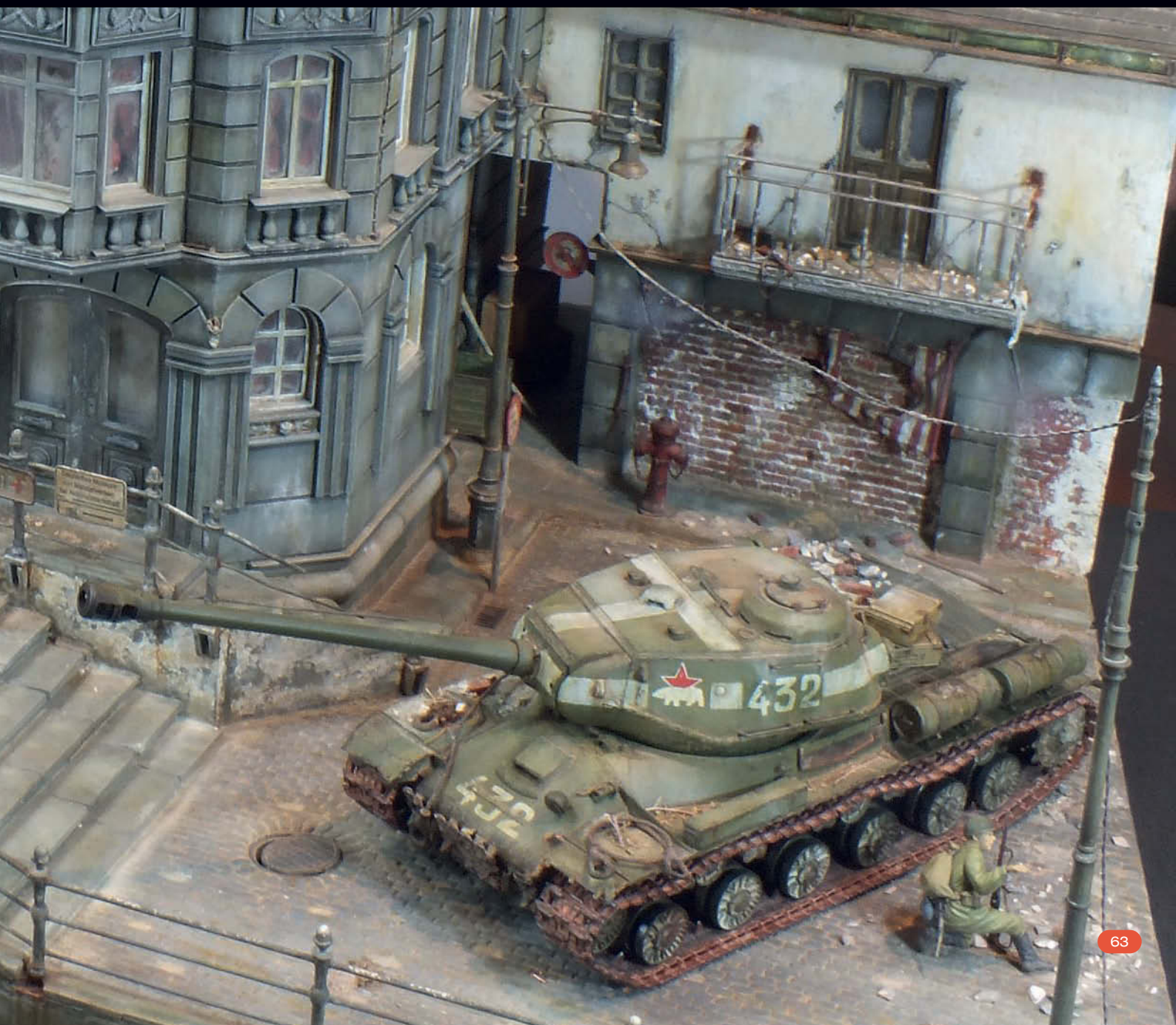


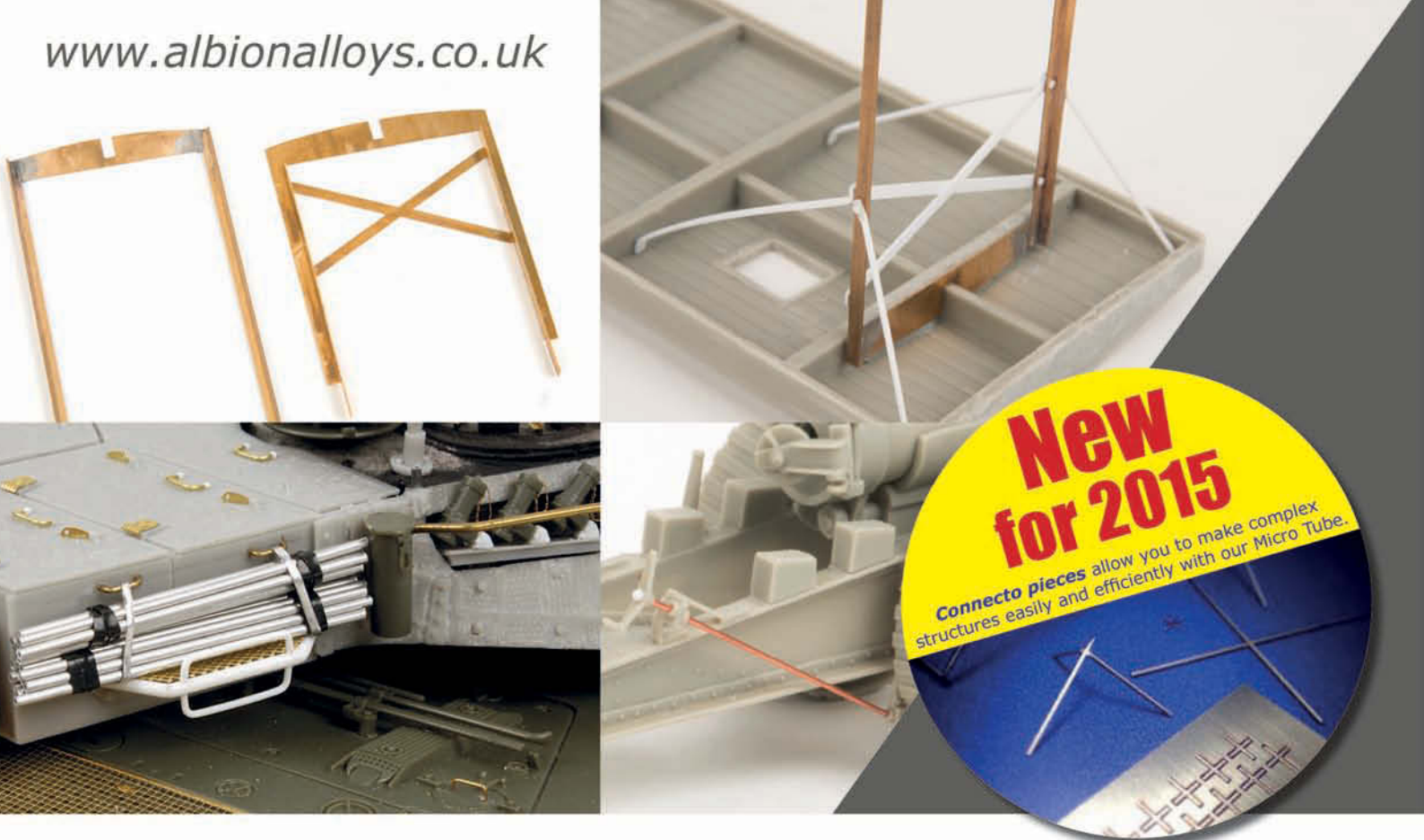
The cobbled streets provided a few options, the first, which was adding each stone individually proved too time-consuming with an uneven appearance which looked out of scale.

The best method I found was to roll out Das Pronto (air drying clay) to 3 - 4 mm thick, as if you were baking biscuits! This was cut and laid into the required areas and the cobble marked with a home made 'cutter' made from a wooden handle with a tip made from thin metal folded into a rectangle shape. Some faint guide lines were drawn onto the clay to ensure the cobble lined up realistically.

The pavements were carved into cast plaster sheets with man-hole covers from MiniArt. The MiniArt accessories sets proved invaluable for saving time scratch-building custom parts.







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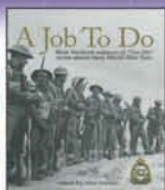
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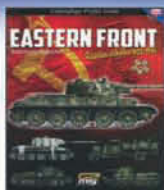
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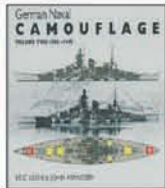
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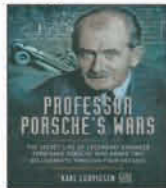
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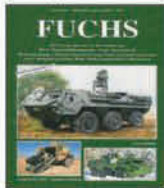
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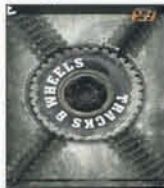
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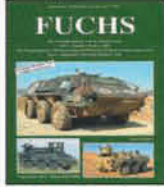
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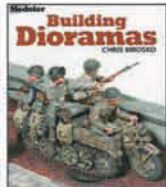
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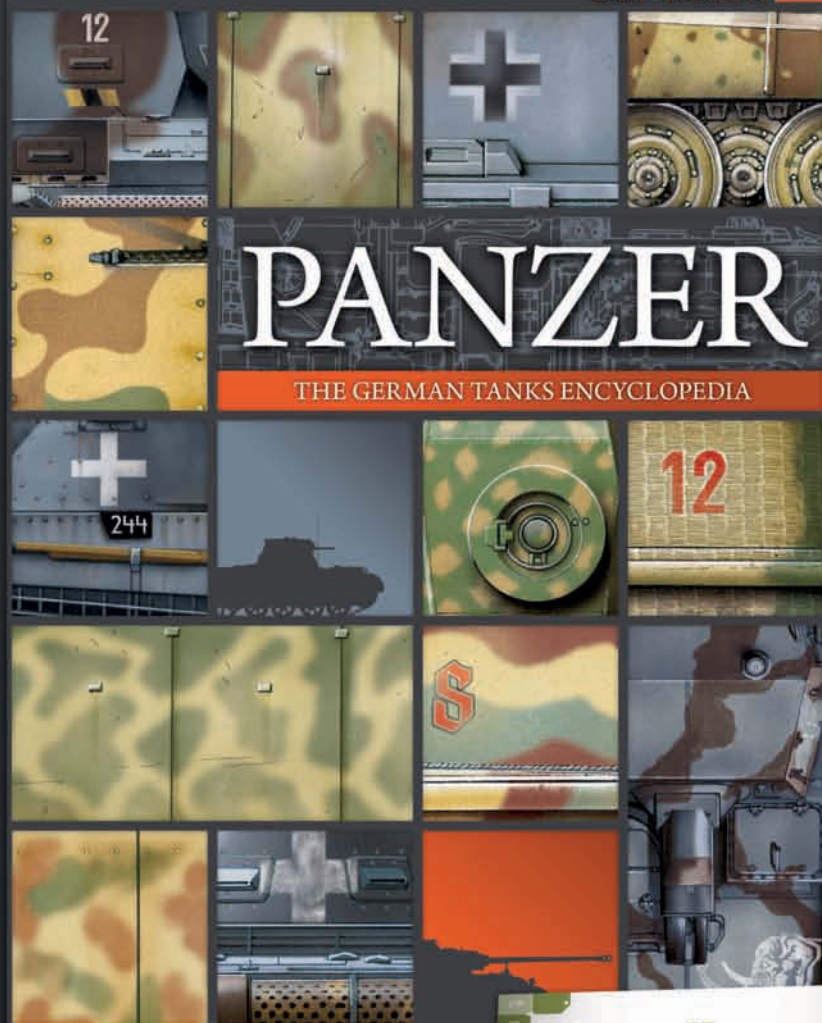
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