

MENG

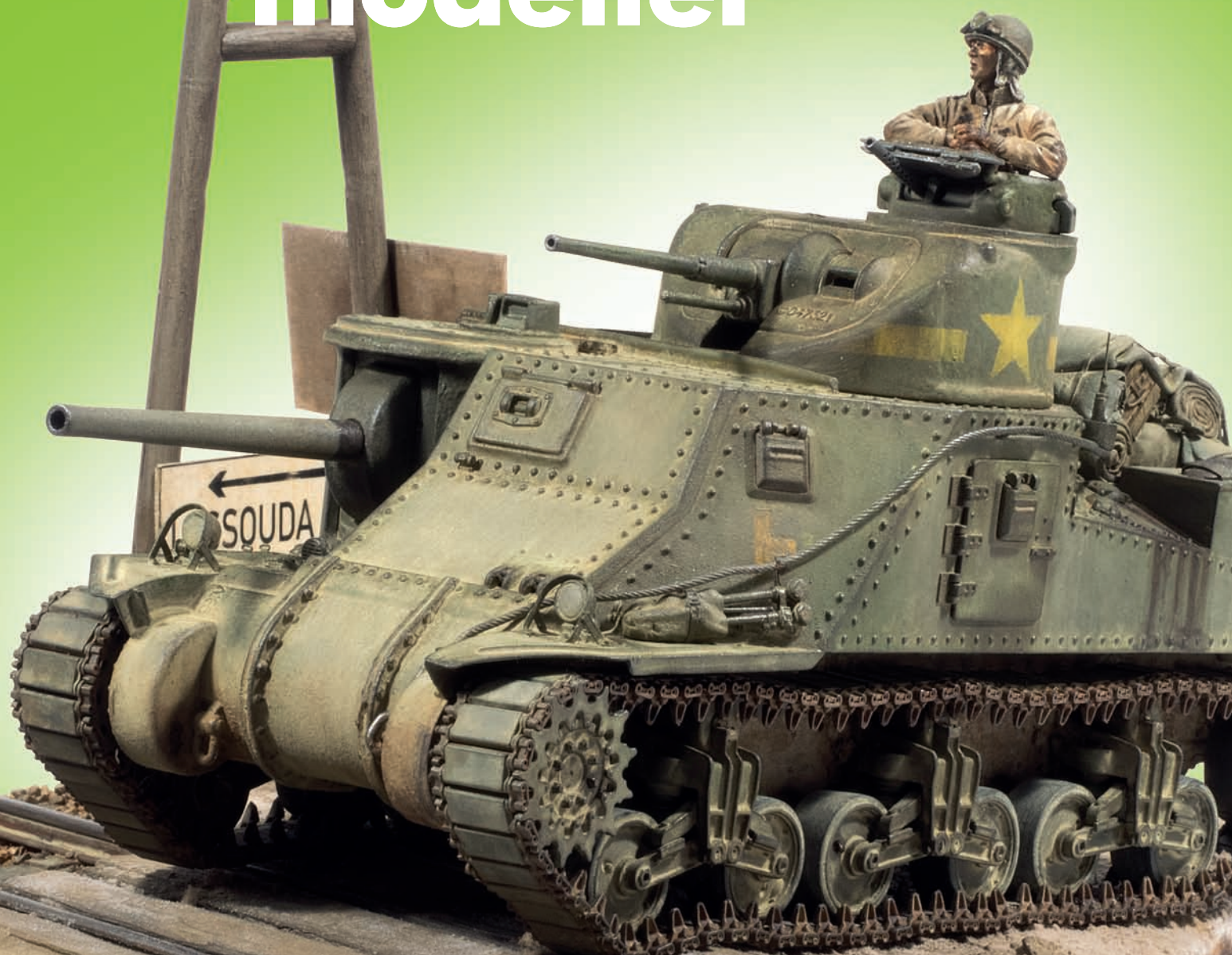


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LEE-WAY

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COUGAR

Domingo Hernández Martin takes the new 1:35 6x6 Cougar MRAP from Meng for a test drive

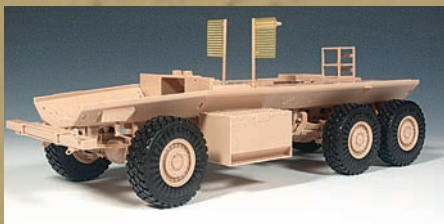
The Cougar MRAP (Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected) has been developed from South African Defence Force designs for vehicles that are able to withstand mine and IED attack with a 'V' shaped chassis designed to deflect the blast out and away from the vehicle. Developed in 2004 in response to the IED threat to troops in Iraq the Cougar has been extremely effective and a modified version known as Mastif has also been adopted by British forces.

We asked Domingo to tackle the new Meng kit to see how it assembled and to bring it to life with one of his great paint finishes with some useful tips and techniques on how to replicate his stunning looking model.

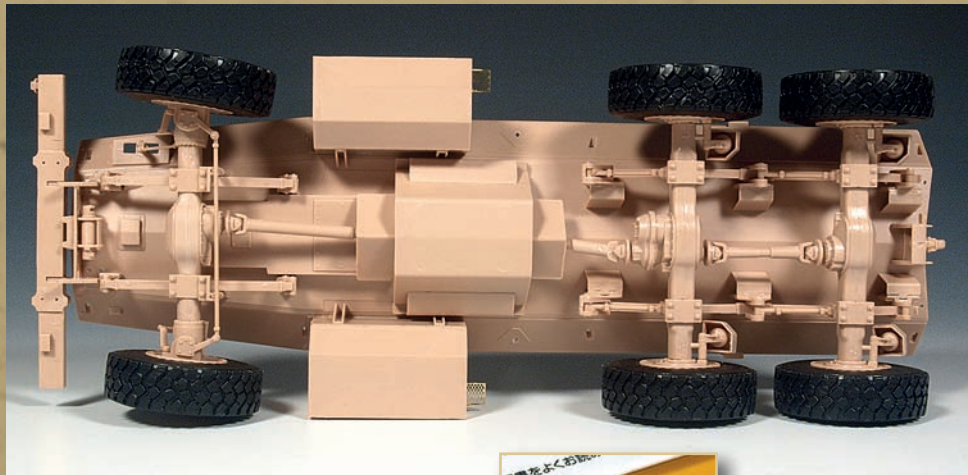




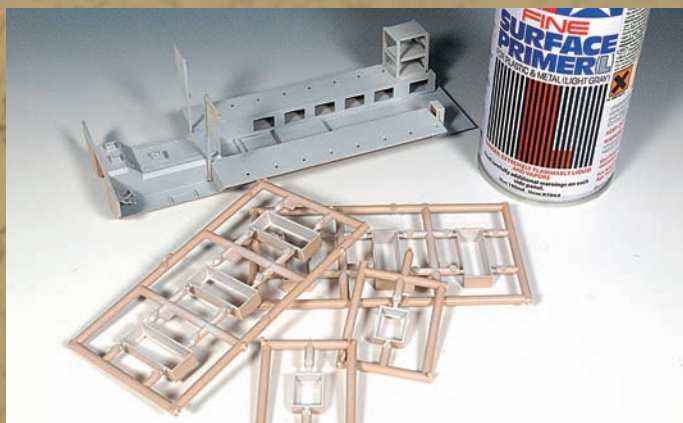
BUILD



Starting work on assembling the Cougar I could not help being impressed with its unquestionable quality. Construction is pleasingly simple and straight forward with excellent levels of detail. I started with the lower hull, building the 3 axes and the corresponding wheels with the kit allowing the front wheels to be turned if desired.



The bottom of the chassis looks very complicated but in reality is very simple to build. Some of the interior details are very well represented by photoetch, I did however have some problems with the fit of the radio racks and I found it necessary to make some adjustments with Evergreen plastic.



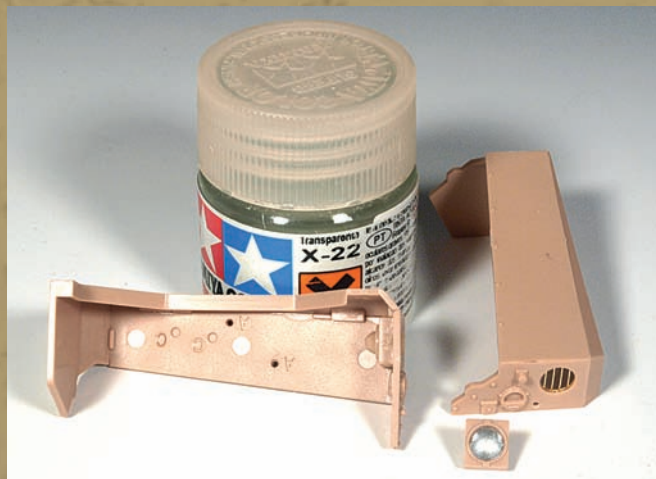
The interior will need to be painted before moving ahead with the rest of the construction so I started by priming the interior parts before painting them.



All vehicle interior lights were painted with Ammo clear acrylic paints.

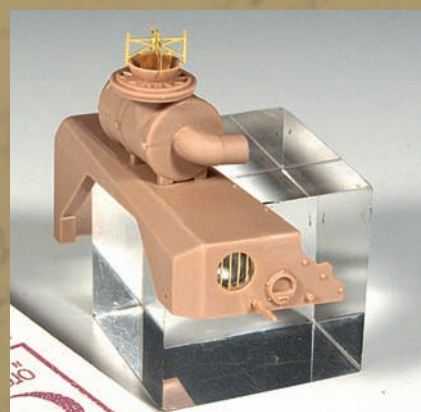


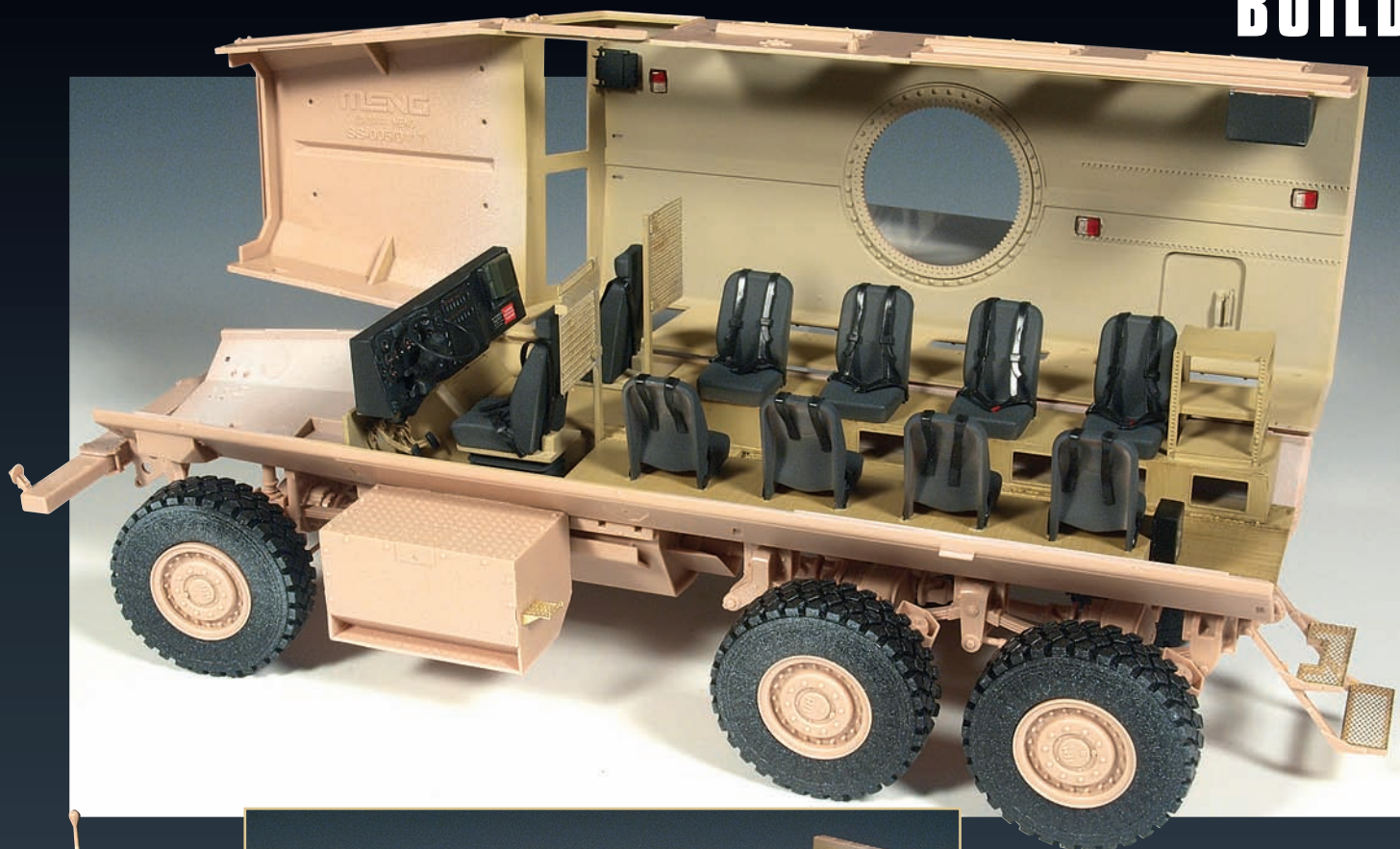
One element that has great detail is the instrument panel, after applying a base coat of black, I applied the decals and finished with a drop of gloss varnish. The rest of the details were painted with a brush using tones of grey used to pick out the switch details across the instrument panel.



Above To fix the lenses and clear parts I used Tamiya gloss varnish X-22, in this case after painting aluminium inside the fitting to give a reflective appearance.

Right The fenders were reworked slightly by softening the sharp edges and adding some slight dents for a less pristine appearance.





Above Almost ready to close up the interior and you can see the flexible plastic seatbelts on the crew seats.



Left The Meng kit comes together perfectly with exact alignment between the top and bottom. A very simple tip is to glue one side so that they are perfectly aligned and after it has completely dried, glue the other. This will avoid having to use putty to fill gaps. In this photo you can see a perfect fit of both parts.

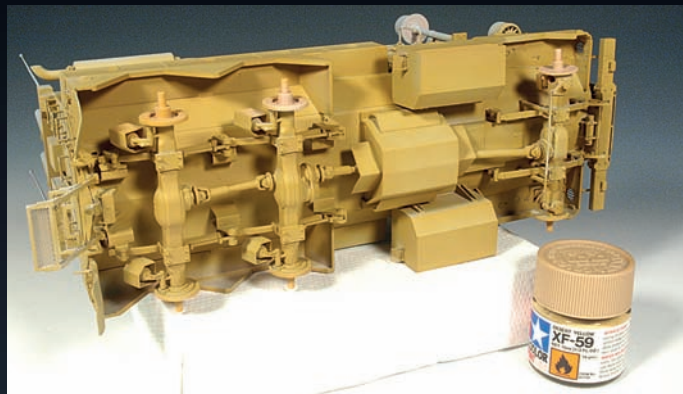
Below The completed model prepared for painting, with many delicate parts in position for the photo. Antennas were modified to remove them without breaking them by adding a of wire pin at their base. Coloured clear window parts mean they simply need masking with no need to paint them.



COLOUR



I do not usually have predetermined painting procedure but I began by priming the model, testing for the first time the primer from Ammo which I found provided an excellent base.



I started painting the lower hull of the model with Tamiya XF-59 Desert Sand which allowed me to shade the paint in that area of shadow.



I also applied the same colour over the top of the model to create the dark shadow areas under the final colour.



Before going further, I focused on the exhaust muffer, a very visible and characteristic feature of these vehicles.



I sprayed the exhaust with Tamiya XF-16 Flat Aluminium after masking the rest of the area.



After letting it dry I polished it slightly as the grain of the paint is quite thick.



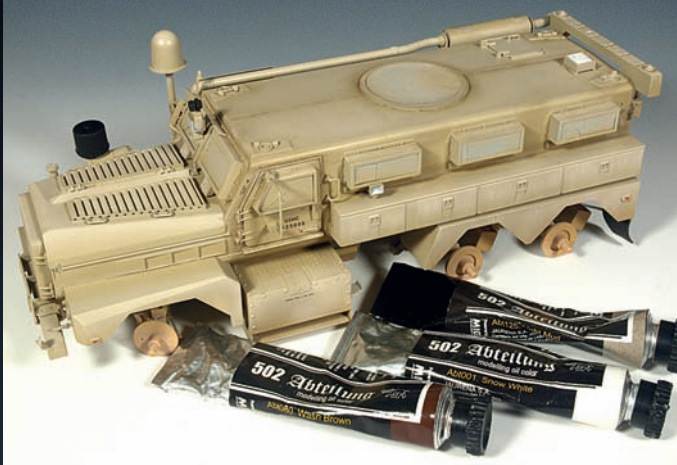
With Lifecolor Tensocrom 'Fuel' transparent acrylic I added the pink markings that can be seen in some photos.



Using hairspray technique I added the chipped paint finish over the muffer.



The rest of the model was clarified by spraying Desert Sand Buff with Tamiya XF-57 and XF-2 White using shading to break up the large surfaces.



I began the process of weathering by applying oil washes in the dark recesses and wear zones and small amounts of Mud Wash Brown faded with a dry flat brush and areas of more highlight with Snow White paint.



While waiting for the oils to dry, I applied some patches of Tensocrom White Oxide from Lifecolor to fade selected areas.



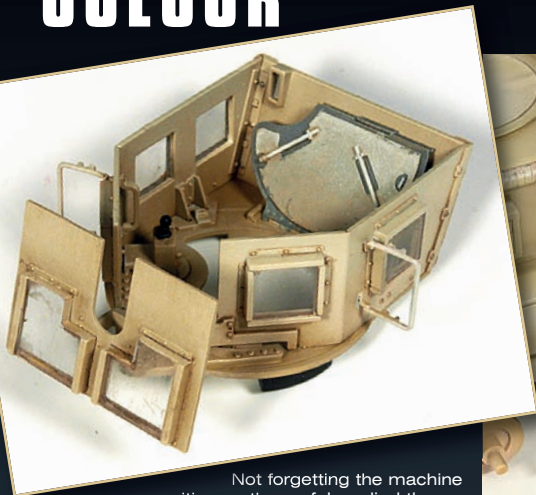
Unless some dust is added on these parts the exhaust is nearly finished.



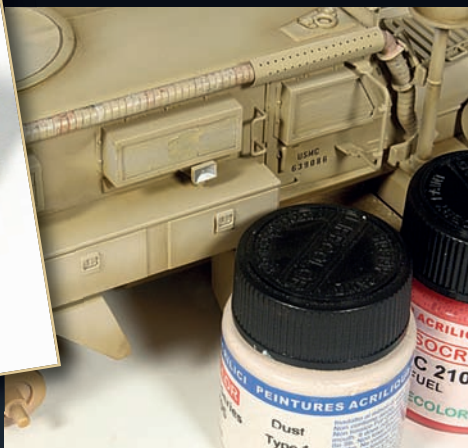
Above The effects of shading on the model can be seen in this photo. **Left** One of the things I did to customize the model was to replace the door glass with a temporary repair armour plate painted with rusty colours and textured with a sponge.



COLOUR



Not forgetting the machine gun position on the roof, I applied the same colours as the rest of the model except the inner hatch brush painted in grey and buff.



The rest of the exhaust system was also painted with the Tensocrom colours.



The micro chipping marks I applied with Vallejo German Camo Black splashing it with a brush. Keep in mind that subsequent processes will cover many of them and make them more integrated.



One of the hardest things the modeller has to simulate the dust of the desert on a vehicle without it seeming unreal. I used the rainmarks effects product from Ammo, which is lighter than the model colour.



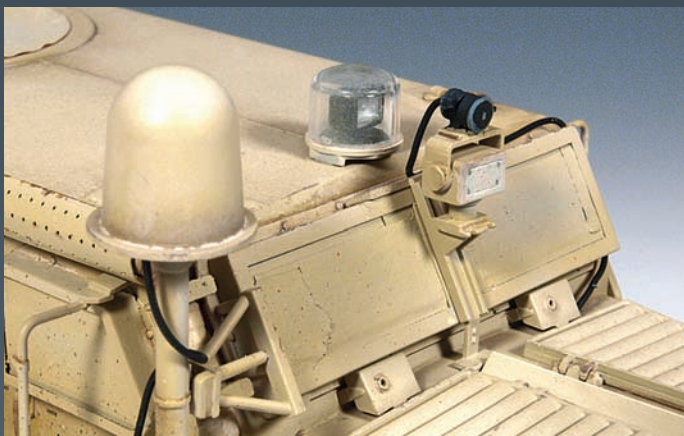
After applying it across the surface, I used a sponge to unify it and give the effect of raindrops on the dust.



The finished effect can be seen in this photo and it was then allowed to dry. You can build up this technique with additional layers until you get the effect you want.



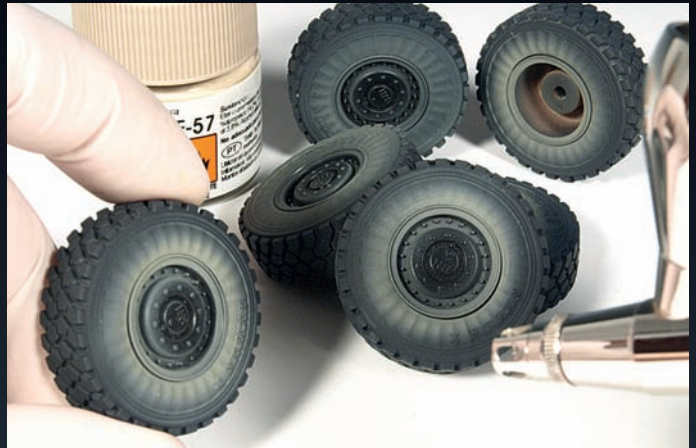
In some specific areas I applied some of Tamiya XF-55 Deck to break the symmetry of the spots.



I took advantage of letting the model dry for a couple of days by starting to work on the wheels. The tires come with an excellent surface texture but must be treated a bit to grip the paint. They were washed thoroughly with water and a drop of detergent and after priming the wheels, I painted the rims with Gaia 002 Gloss Black.



The rubber was painted with Tamiya XF-1 Flat Black and drops of XF-15 Flat Flesh.



A light coat of Tamiya XF-57 Buff was sprayed around the rims on both sides of the wheels.



Using North Africa Dust, European Earth and pigment fixer from Ammo I added dirt and dust trying not make all wheels the same.



On the lower part of the model I began to apply the same pigments as used on the wheels with a large brush.



To fix it I used a syringe to add a few drops of Tamiya X-20 acrylic thinners.



To avoid monotony I used various colours applied by spattering them using a stick and a long brush.



The final details are few washes in the corners, transmission with Engine Grime and Fresh Engine Oil.



I added some wiring systems to the vehicle for realism and break up the monochrome sand scheme.

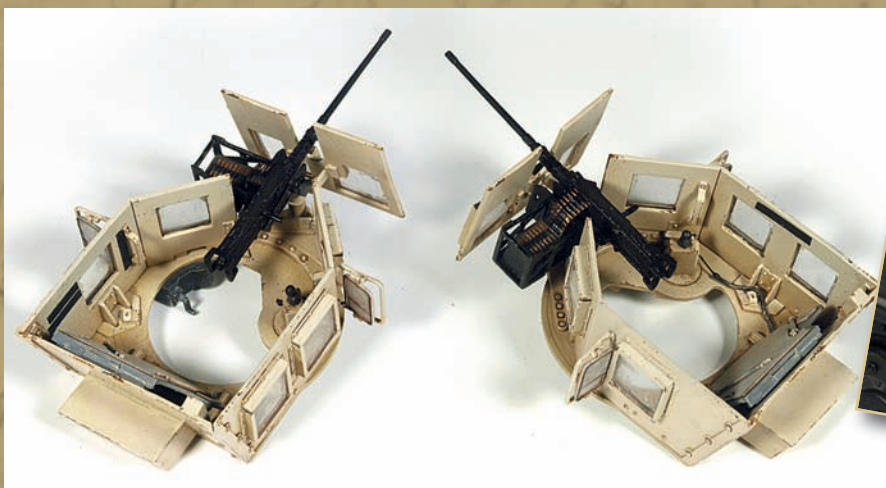
COUGAR



The windows are always a bit delicate to deal with using dust, so after masking, I applied Matt Base from Tamiya with airbrush leaving a thin layer that is easily treatable.



Another detail to add interest, in this case at the back is a sign cut to size and placed with some masking tape painted grey to simulate duct tape.



The turret completed with all elements in place. The machine gun was finished with semi-Gloss Black and some graphite effects on the edges.

The direction indicators are painted using Tamiya X-26 Clear Orange. A detail of duct tape on the front fender of the model to repair a small collision, was made with masking tape painted with Vallejo Oily Steel.





This kit was a pleasure to work on and it provides the choice to build the Cougar 6x6 as I modelled or the Cougar 6x6 HEV, which carries the spare wheels on each side of the body. The truth is that I built the model out of the box and it has been designed with some clever features to make it easier to build and paint, to enjoy and have fun! I was happy to overlook the very slightly long bonnet and I think the overall finished look of the Cougar captures the look of the real vehicle.



Cougar JERRV in service in Afghanistan. The JERRV is the Joint EOD Rapid Reaction Vehicle.



COUGAR IN DETAIL

Photos by Patrick Winnepenninckx & Ralph Zwilling



Cougar HEV on exercise mounting a L134A1 40mm Grenade Machine Gun



Another view of the Cougar JERRV, note the towing strap stowed on the bumper.





Pink heat rings around the exhaust muffler are a common feature of the Cougar.





Cougar HEV: HEV stands for Heavy Engineer Vehicle.





Views of the spare wheel mounting.



Details of the 40mm Grenade MG turret on the Cougar HEV.



M3 LEE

FABIO SACCHI

**takes on the challenge
of the 1:35 Academy kit**

M3 Lee Medium Tank

At the beginning of WWII, the U.S. Army's situation in terms of armoured forces was extremely poor both in number and in quality. Only after German victories using new tank warfare doctrines did the U.S. Army start an urgent tank development program. The first medium tank was mostly an "interim" solution based on a less than satisfactory M2A1 design, but armed

with a 75mm gun in the casemate and a 37mm gun in turret, an old concept that was still employed in the French Char B1Bis and in the less powerful Italian M11/39. The Design was far from optimal but it was relatively easy to build. The primary objective was not to have the best medium tank in the world, but have a lot of "reasonable" operational tanks. During its relatively short production life, it underwent several modifications and was the test bed for alternative power





units which were then exploited in its successor: the M4 Sherman. By 1943 the M3 was obsolete as a combat tank but was still used with good results in the PTO, while in Europe it was employed for training or converted in M31 recovery vehicles.

The model

I always wanted to make an M3 lee but realistically the Tamiya kit was too incorrect to bring it to an acceptable level, at least for my expectations. We need also to remember that it is a strange combination of parts of an M3 and a diesel powered M3A2, so not good! For a period, a Canadian Company, Armoured Brigade Models, marketed a full resin kit which was considered top notch. Unfortunately the Internet and e-commerce were not at the level they are today and I missed out on buying one.

Finally Academy announced and released an M3 kit, but, as often happens with Academy, it turned out to be a mixed bag. Actually, the first production run was plagued by incorrect bogey heights. Even if this issue was later corrected, still the detail and finesse are not the best.

Apart from the bogies, major faults of this

kit are the engine deck (1mm too short) and the turret gun axis is off by 2mm making the gun barrel sit awkwardly too low. The Good news is that the overall casemate dimensions are quite good, though a challenge to assemble due to the multiple part design. The lower hull measures respectably well too.

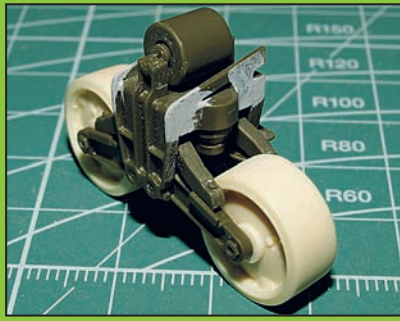
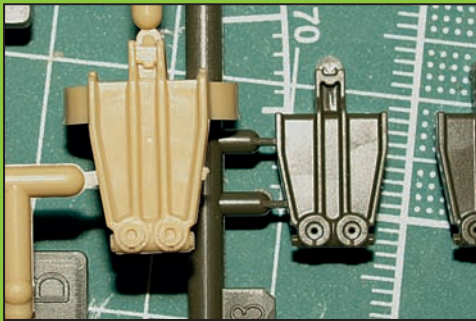
I thought the kit was worth a try, and thanks to some aftermarket help, actually turned into a really fun project.

The subject

I do like Olive Drab very much, and the infinity of shades (yes far more than 50!) you can replicate, so my choice was a U.S. operated tank in North Africa.

Yes, its true that U.S. Marines used them too in the Pacific but they were M3A2 with the diesel powerplant, and this would have meant additional surgery.

I opted for a battered M3 of 1st A.D. soon after the Kasserine disaster. It would have been a mid production M3 with stamped wheels, longer M2A1 75mm gun, "quickfix" fishtail exhaust kit and more efficient external air cleaners.



Project ingredients

My kit was an initial batch with the wrong bogies, I therefore bought a set of TASCA Early Bogies, a Passion Model M2A1 75mm barrel for the Sherman together with an Armorscale 37mm M7 Gun, some 0.30 barrels and initial Stamped Wheels from Formations.

Tracks are a problem. M3s wore T41 track which is not available in any aftermarket catalogue...well, almost. Model Kasten T51 tracks are moulded with rubber pads with the same thickness on both sides...so they became an ideal choice to substitute the stiff rubber bands. Nowadays Bronco's T51 set would give the same result as well as Dragon T41 in DS styrene.

Some photoetched pieces from scrap box increased some of the finer details also.

As I was planning a fair amount of improvements, I decided to divide the project in subassemblies so that I could tackle one challenge a time: Lower Hull, Upper Hull, Turret and Running Gear.

Lower Hull

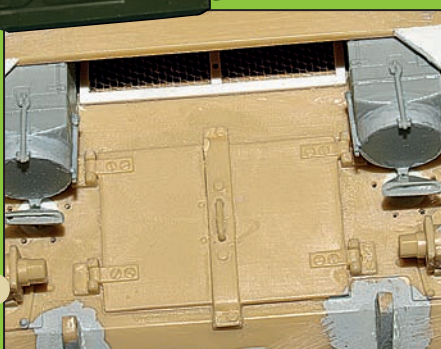
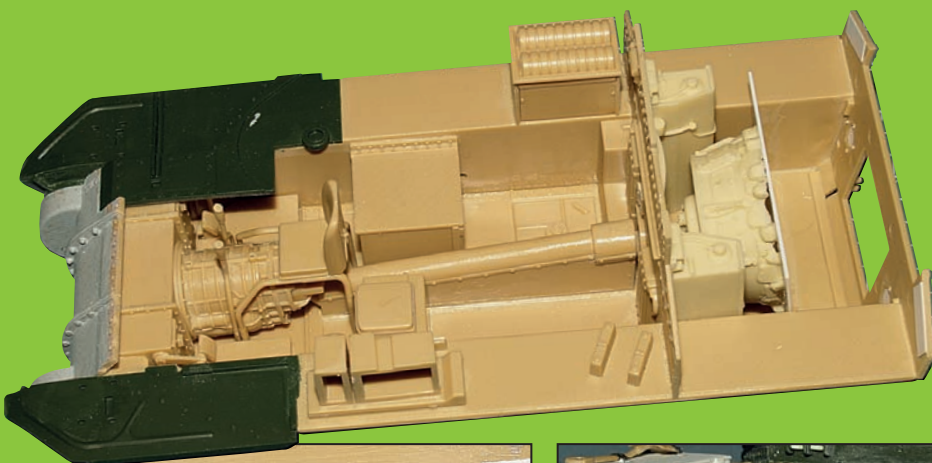
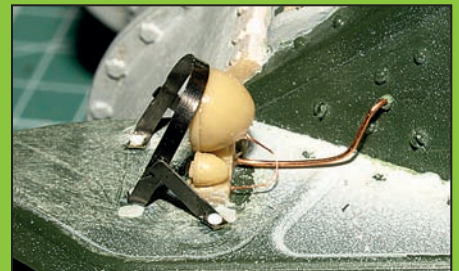
Dimensionally we are ok, give or take a fraction of millimetre. Areas of improvement here are the front transmission cover and rear wall. The three piece transmission cover is pretty basic but useable. Instead of following the instructions, I built it completely, including the upper bolted flange which was, by the way, part of the casting process. Some

care is needed in gluing the sections of bolts as an unwanted recess is left at the base. I sparingly used Mr Dissolved Putty to fill the recess, taking care not to ruin any bolt detail. Flanges are in reality two lips held together by the bolts. Just to enhance the fact it would be good to scribe a line in the centre. Then it's time to recreate the rough casting appearance of the parts. I use Mr Surfacer 500 stippled with a stiff brush. Should it look too rough as after waiting at least a day, Mr Surfacer 500 tends to shrink and level. If it is still too rough, it is simple enough to paint the surface with Tamiya Green Cap adhesive to smooth down the effect. During this treatment ensure that all seam lines between the cover and the flange also disappear. Remember to reproduce two small notches on the top of flange that corresponds with the two hull 0.30 Cals.

Once I was happy with the tranny cover, I took care of the rear wall. Academy's kit is designed to mount the "pepperpot" type exhausts. Soon after entering service, it was realised that they were overheating the rear engine wall. A quick-fix solution was designed by substituting them with simple fishtail exhausts pointing downwards. To reproduce this mod, the raised moulded details around the original exhausts needs to be carved away and 6 symmetrical holes of 0.30mm diameter need to be drilled where fixing bolts were originally in

place. Fishtails were modified by using an M4 exhaust system. An additional modification was the external square-type air cleaners, I borrowed these from a Dragon kit, but they will be fixed to some side wall extensions on the upper engine deck...more on this later.

As I planned to change the moulded engine air intake with a photoetched mesh, looking inside it would simply look empty, I therefore adapted some fuel tanks and a portion of an engine from Verlinden set dedicated to the M4. This was all painted prior to closing the hull. With the lower hull ready it was time to focus on the upper hull.



Upper Hull

As said before, the upper hull dimensions are ok, some bolt heads are missing for my subject, but this is not a mistake per-se but most likely details from different production plants. Here, the advice is to carefully check photos to correctly reproduce these elements. What was driving me crazy was the gluing sequence of the parts composing the upper hull. There are seven pieces that need to fit together perfectly. A fraction of a millimetre mistake in the first joint and by the end all seven pieces will not fit anymore! I started with both sides kept in place with Gunze extra thin cement. It dries so quickly that it will be hard to move out of position during curing. Once the alignment is checked and correct, all other parts will fit with no major issues. I was lucky: all 3 frontal parts went together pretty well without the need for filler but it was a

different story with the rear casemate wall. After several dry-runs and some trimming, I ended up with a fair amount of filler on the joint with the roof. The left hand side of the rear wall bolting is wrong. Instead of rivets, this plate was fixed with round head screws, this is to allow an easy dismounting of the 75mm gun. The gun casemate was a cast part, for this reason I treated the surface with Mr Surfacer 500 continuing on the gun shield. In addition, its shape (a full circle) is not 100% correct. With photos of the real thing it is possible to detect a "flat" area around the gun rotor shield and the presence of two counter-sunk bolts per part.

Another incorrect detail on the cast gun casemate are the 5 bolts for fixing the sandshield. I reshaped the area and added a 0.40mm strip creating the lip on which the bolts were replaced.

After all these tweaks a final job was to add some bolt heads or rivet heads to detail the version I wanted to depict. One rivet has to be added on the left sidewall and additional 5 on the right side. Again, these modifications are NOT kit errors but simply production variations.

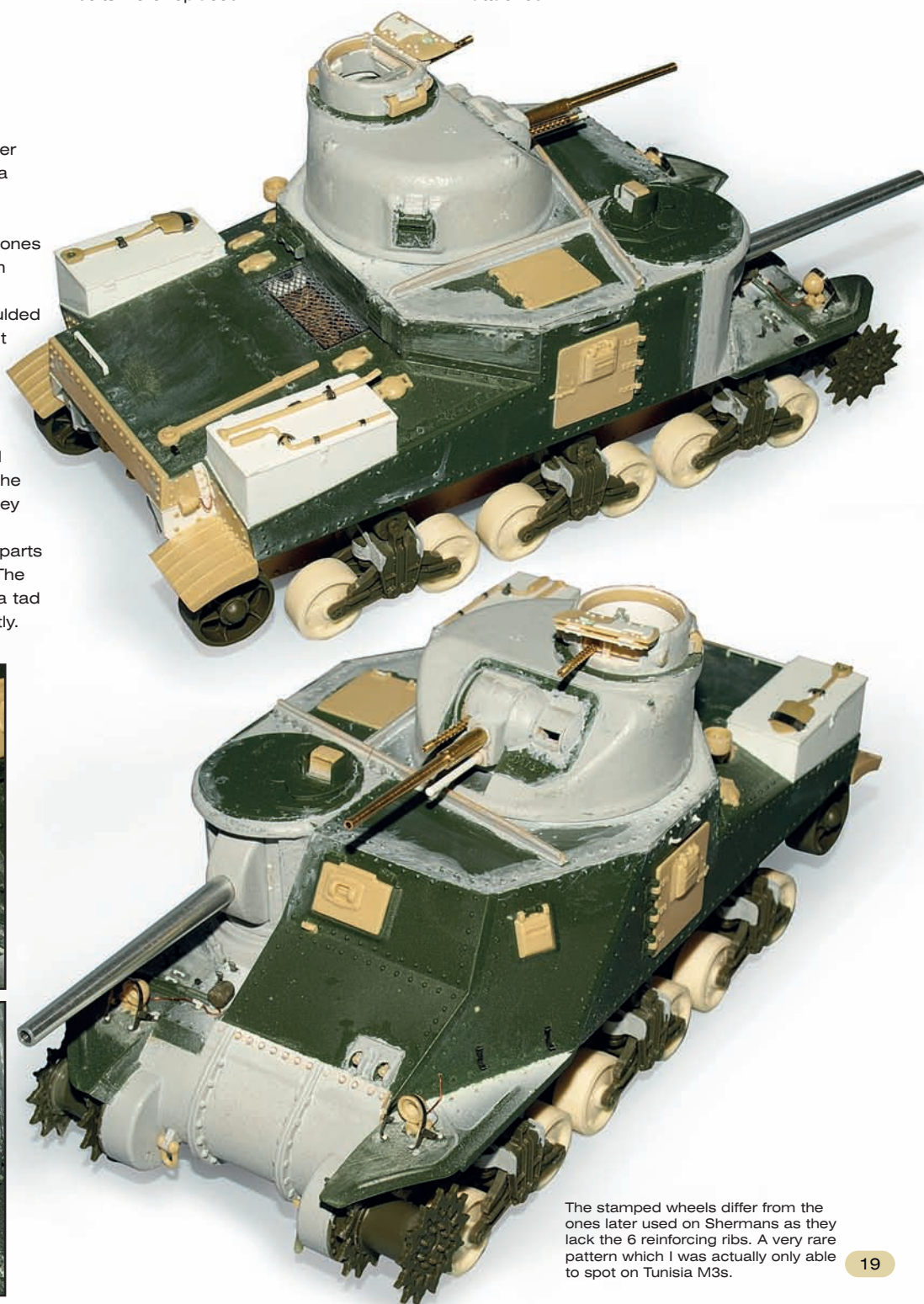
I also changed the six bolts fixing the gun casemate to the roof reinforcing bar with Bronco castle nuts, which are much better defined.

I turned then to the engine deck area. As I've said, it's 1mm short but I did not want rebuild it entirely so I opted for cosmetic improvements. This includes a thinning down of the rear plate and reconstructing the rear joints with plastic strip. Being a mid/late model, I had to recreate the steel extensions at the rear engine deck where the new external air filters were then attached.

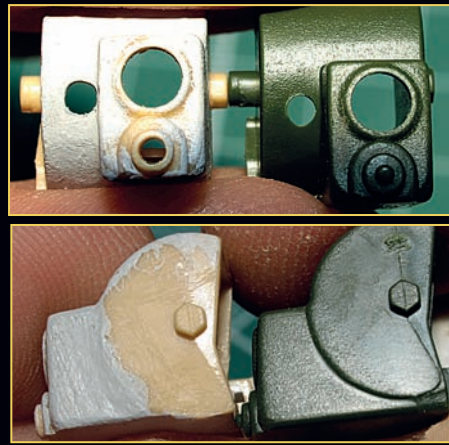
These extensions were welded to the original armour plates, so some heat-stretched styrene was applied and later worked with Tamiya thin cement and a blade to reproduce the weld beads. Some major work is needed here to scratchbuild the toolboxes, Academy ones are simply fantasy. This was done with sturdy 1mm plastic card.

A last touch was to drill away the moulded engine air intake grill and I substitute it with an Eduard one I recovered from the spares box. With that, most of upper hull was complete.

Just after having shown the photos of the complete build, a modelling friend advised me about a glaring kit error: the rear mudguards are far too long as they protrude from the rear wall instead of ending flush. I therefore removed the parts and shortened them by about 3mm. The vertical profile needs to be reshaped a tad but once reinstalled they fitted perfectly.



The stamped wheels differ from the ones later used on Shermans as they lack the 6 reinforcing ribs. A very rare pattern which I was actually only able to spot on Tunisia M3s.

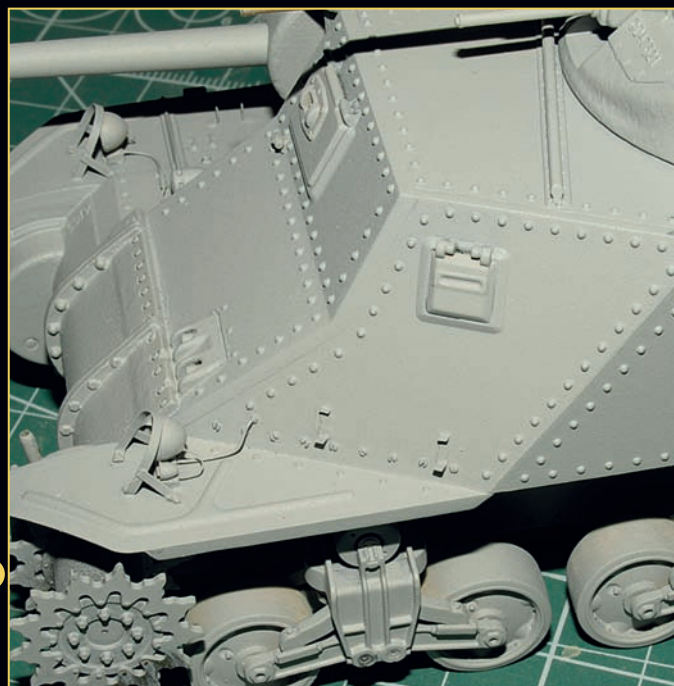
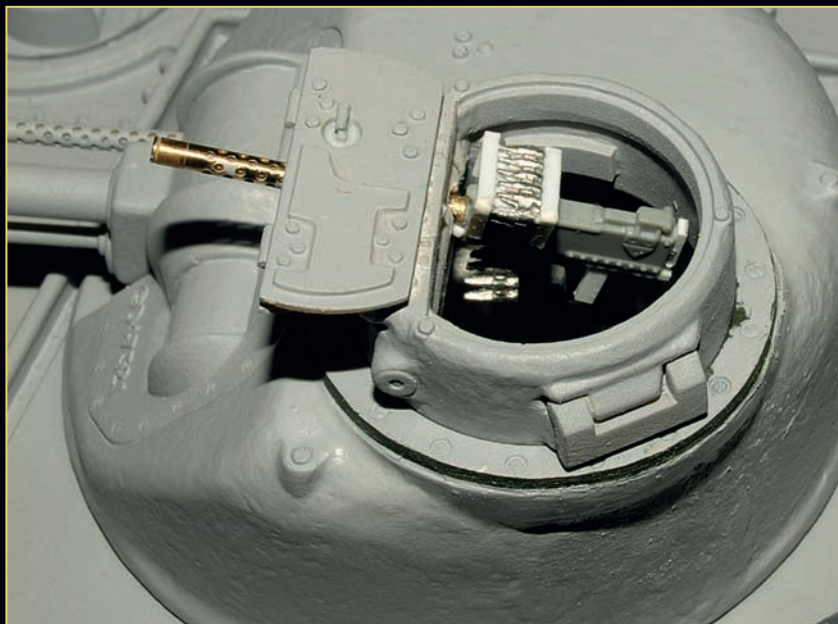


Turret

Turret dimensions are pretty good. Curiously enough ACADEMY decided to depict a vertical cast reinforcement, which unfortunately was not present on most of the Tunisia M3s, but they overlooked the cast reinforcement at the left hand front and the tilt support for turret visor is simply missing.

I sanded away the cast rib and added the front reinforcement made with some epoxy putty further textured with Mr Surfacer 500. With a piece of styrene strip I then added the missing visor tilt support. Now it's time to tackle the major issue: the incorrect gun axle height. The surgery is rather simple, cutting away the gun armour extension and re-gluing it 2.5mm higher, by

doing this a small gap on the top of armour case needs to be filled with epoxy putty. This will improve the final look and it will align the gun with the aiming sight correctly. I finally detailed the twin-fold hatch by adding some bolts and the protective pads.



Painting and weathering

I start always with a coat of primer, very useful to spot small inaccuracies, especially with the number of modifications applied to this kit. After that I airbrushed the areas on the turret and on the hull where the yellow (Gaiantes Sunshine Yellow) markings sit. On this I applied the masks for stars, lines and the tactical sign over which I applied a dark coat of Gunze Olive Drab 2 lacquer. I applied the highlights by mixing increasing quantities of Gaiantes Light Green to the base colour. Lacquers spray well, unfortunately in the meantime I've developed an allergy to lacquer thinner and can't use them anymore. At least 2 to 3 days is needed for a perfectly dry finish. I then painted tools with acrylics from Lifecolor. With the model now ready with it's first coat of colour and highlights, I applied some dots of oil colours and faded them with a flat brush lightly (and I really mean lightly) moistened with quick drying petroleum from the Windsor & Newton range. It has the advantage of helping oils to dry pretty flat. Later a pin wash was applied to highlight the details.



achieved by careful drybrushing oil paints; Olive Green, and, in deeper shaded areas, Paynes Grey and Cassel Earth. Add these effects gradually, this will avoid something overdone and also it will help you to focus more on some areas than others avoiding a very monotone appearance. Fuel streaks are made by mixing Lifecolor Oil effect and Kerosene from their Tensocrom colours range. Once dry, the stains were enhanced with red oil colour. Oils leaks are also reproduced with Lifecolor Oil effect.

There is a rather comprehensive number of photos of M3s in Tunisia and all of them share a rather battered look and dust, dust and more dust. I wanted to reproduce this dusty look but avoid the flat and dull appearance which is normally associated with dust effects. I decided therefore to use Humbrol enamels and Oils. Far more controllable than pigments and easy to "erase" in case of mistakes.

One tip: Work within areas, do not attempt to cover the whole tank in one go. Enamel tones used in order were Desert Sand, Khaki, Brown Bess and Khaki Drab. I applied the enamels in a 60/40 ratio (60 thinner/40 colour), let them dry for 20-30 minutes and then blend everything with a flat brush moistened with thinner. Leave at least one day drying time between each tone, this will avoid the colours mixing instead of building in layers. At the end of dust application its time for scuffing. Dust tends to be scuffed away by crew movement around the vehicle. Scuffing and the associated slight "shine" is



You may notice that tracks look rather loose, on M3s and M4s they should be very tight. Very true, but photos in Tunisia during the Kasserine battles, show instead loose tracks. This was due to a long march the 1st Armor Div. had to undertake to reach the front which heavily wore the tracks and didn't allow the crews maintenance time.





The tanker is a modified Rosengrandt sculpting and masterfully painted and "weathered" by my friend Fabio Mosca.

The base is a squared piece of light polystyrene covered with a thin layer of Celluclay. Celluclay is able to deliver a nice texture and I avoided the tendency to crack by adding a few drops of white glue into the mix. It will also improve the adherence to polystyrene. The South Tunisian narrow gauge railway was created from modified RPM parts.





Robert Doepp describes
his completely
scratchbuilt 1:10 model

Part One



1:10



"Roll over Beethoven"

Panther commander of the Pz.Brig. 105, Stolberg, September 1944

When I introduced a few images of the unpainted model in a well known social network one comment was: "Oh I'm sorry, did I blow up your tank? Let me play the violin for you". I was a bit shocked by this interpretation of the scene, which I of course had not had in mind. I was fascinated instead by the contrast between the cultured delicacy of the fragile violin and the tough aggression of the tank, a complete opposite to anything cultured. So contrast was the main theme for me when I was working on this project, which obviously open to differing interpretations.

I have tried to emphasize my interpretation by integrating a small speaker into the wooden base to play an extract of Beethoven's violin concert in D Major, opus 61, which is interrupted by the sound of a "Panther" tank, several battle noises including a Stuka raid and Hitler's declaration of war against Poland.

This is of course a very different approach to the "Roll over Beethoven" theme than the original Chuck Berry song!

The Original

The model is based on a wartime photograph. Unfortunately I could neither find out any details about its origin nor who may hold the copyright. Taken with heavy backlight it is rather small and of poor quality. The tanker looks down towards the photographer standing beside the vehicle.

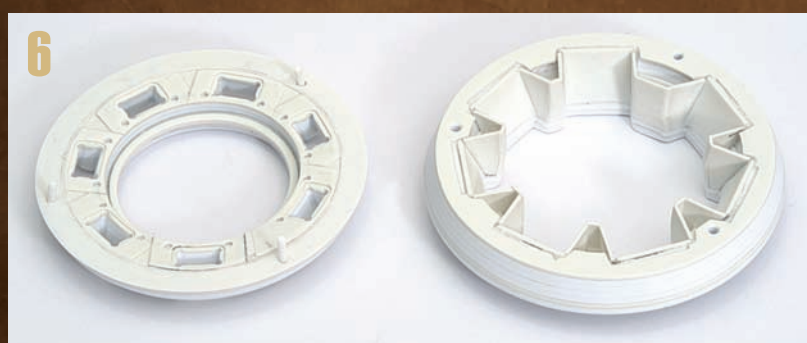
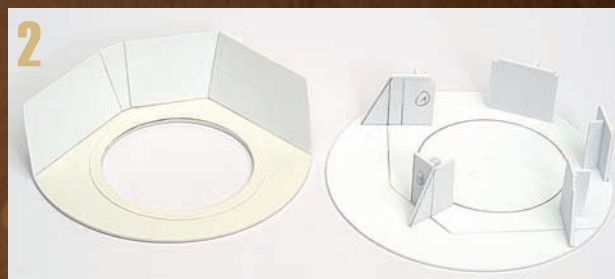
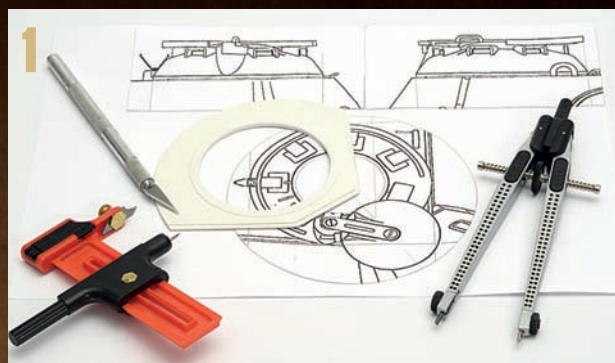
I was pretty sure that it would be wise to make my figure look straight at the eye level of the observer instead. Besides the poor quality of the photo prevented me from trying to exactly reproduce this particular soldier. Nevertheless I have adopted the grin seen in the picture, some of the main characteristics of the face and the basic posture as well as the uniform he presumably wore. The Panther shown had an extremely rough zimmerit pattern, which Ron Hayes convinced me was an MNH manufactured vehicle from between July and September 1944. Consequently I depicted the interior details that a late war Panther Ausf. G would have shown, in particular the late style periscope mounts

produced since July 1944 (Panzer Tracts, 5-169) and the late style layout of the turret roof including a newly designed mount for the scissors periscope, electrical cables mounted in metal tubing, the commanders small lamp mounted directly to the copula and a simplified mount for the Panzerkasten 21 (commanders intercom box). Unfortunately it is not totally clear when these internal changes were introduced. At least the October produced MAN example well documented in spectacular new book "Nürnberg's Panzer Factory" by MacDougall/Neely showed all of them (p.181). In addition most likely the famous disc-pattern camouflage was employed at MNH for the camouflage of this Panther. The lack of quality in the photo frustrated me, because it made some guess work necessary. But fortunately this also makes it hard to disprove the assumptions that I have made!

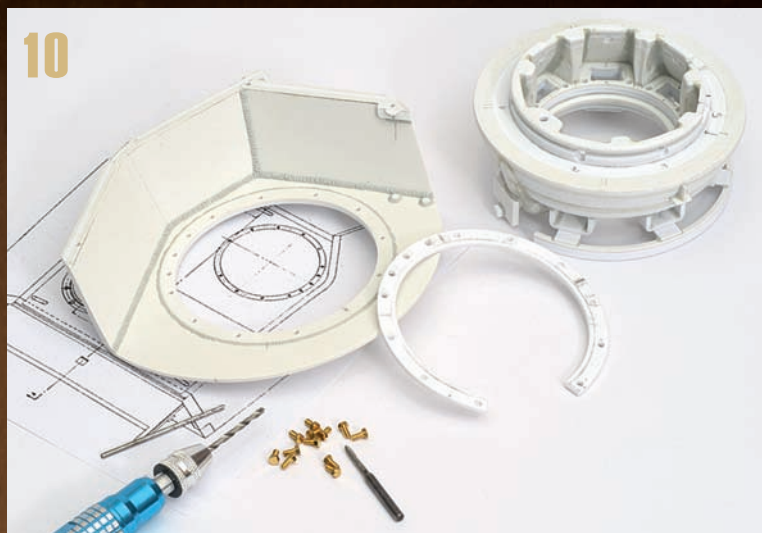
Construction:

I decided not to base my project on any commercially available kit but to take on the challenge of making figure and tank section completely from scratch. I chose a new scale for me: 1:10. Its a popular scale for bust modelling and it offered me the opportunity for a high level of detail.

I started on the tank with some scaled up copies of the plans from Jentz/Doyle's "Panzer Tracts" to establish the necessary dimensions of the planned circular cut out section of Panther starting by making the turret roof armour plate (Pic 1). Because the special zimmerit pattern was one of the most striking aspects of the tank the upper sections of the side and back armour plates were to be done as well. To fix the sidewalls exact angles I made a frame of the exact dimensions, which could later on be adapted to hold the completed turret section (Pic 2).

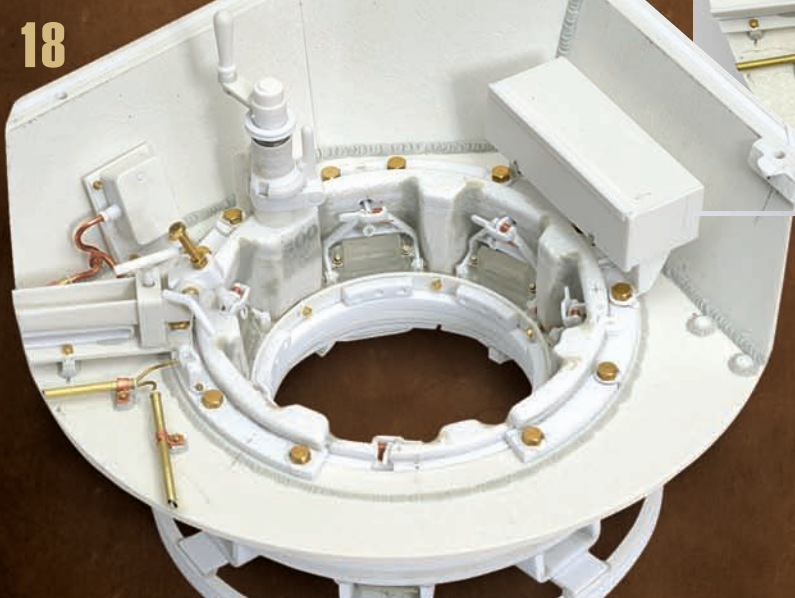
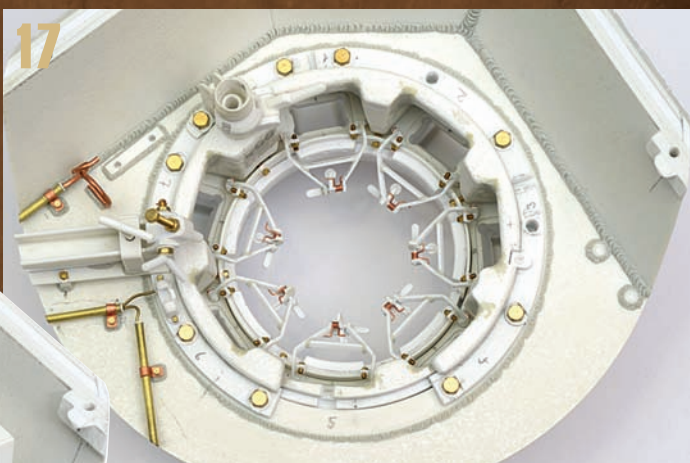


Next I started to make the cupola, which was completely made from circular discs of plastic card of differing thickness, which I cut out slightly oversize and then, filed and sanded it smooth after gluing them together. The late style Panther copula protruded from the turret and therefore protected the commanders head with thick cast armour surrounding its seven periscopes. This characteristic makes the model's periscope slots difficult to reach from the inside. So these had to be done before the copulas lower end was glued (Pics 3-5). Weld



beads were added and textured with home made tools (Pic 9). For the first time I used a tap drill to make screw threads for many fixings, which did not make sense in every single case but made them helpfully removeable in others - and it was a nice new experience (Pic 10). In addition it offered the opportunity to make the late style periscope mounts a working system (Pic 11). The

periscopes themselves were cast from clear material from a plastic master (Pic 13) using epoxy-resin E45GA from the German Breddermann company (Pic 14). Very thin self-adhesive sections of mirror foil were added afterwards for extra realism (Pic 15). Brass tube was used to add the wiring to the turret roof (Pic 16) and the completed turret interior is show in Pic 18.



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Constructing the Figure

To keep the figure from interfering with the tank cupola the turret was completely finished before I started and figure sculpting. The work started with a basic 'skeleton' made from plastic tube, which established the basic dimensions (Pic 20). My next task was to make the violin as the figure's head and left hand had to be exactly fitted around the violin. (Pics 21-23). Head and hands had to be finished at an early stage of the sculpting with frequent test fitting required (Pics 24-25). The detachable head allowed me to work on this separately gradually building up the features as this sequence shows (Pics 26-30). Afterwards sculpting followed the usual path starting from a simplified 'naked' body and building up the details, adding to the more and more detailed uniform. (Pics 33-36). Elements like the headphones, throat mic and weapon were constructed from plastic card.

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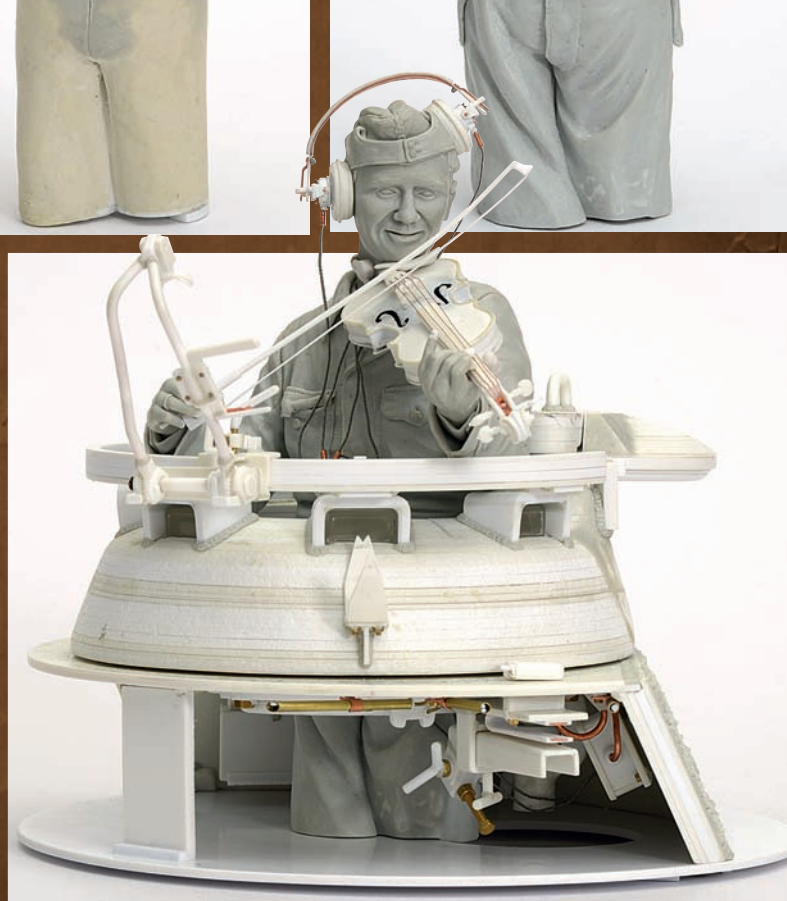


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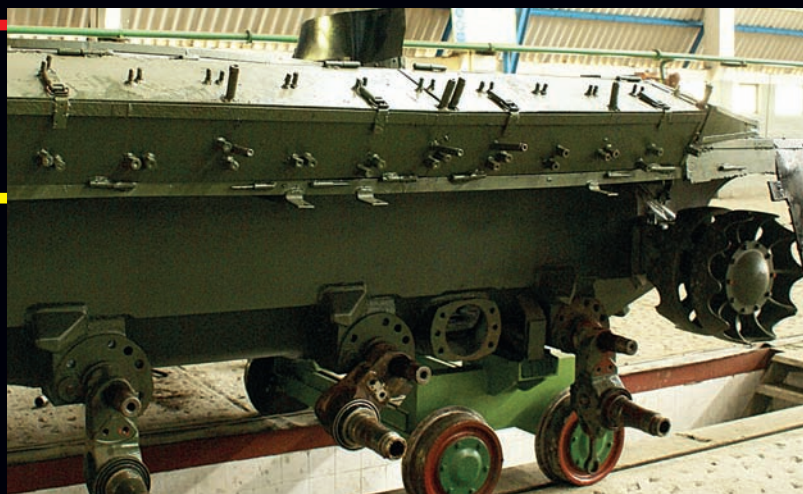
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Part of a massive Soviet style military facility, and possibly built during the Soviet influence we find this T-55 turret sitting on a tuning stand. These were used in training and fine tuning of turrets before they are fitted to their hulls. The turret is almost brand new.



One of the most fascinating projects I could see was an attempt to convert T-55 and T-62 hulls to form a kind of a new heavy tank concept. The earlier attempts at protecting the T-55 tanks saw the installation of new boxes on the fenders. The second version being built here shows a totally new approach. This very early T-62 has had its side fender totally removed, and a new platform

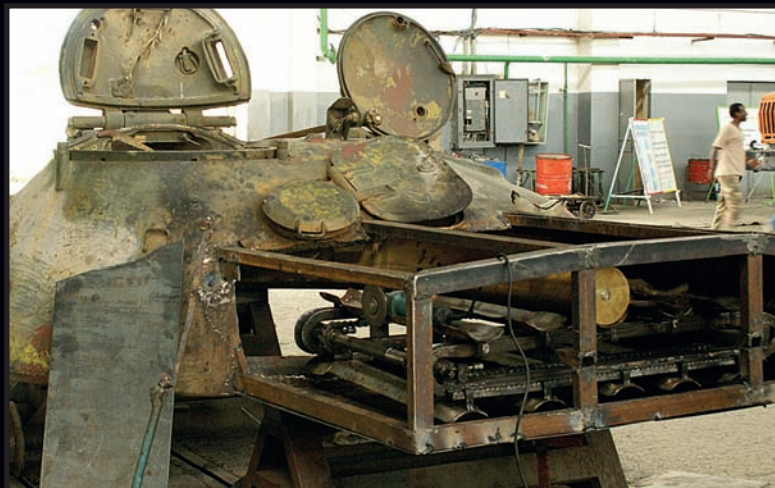
installed. The fender received a metal frame on which a new metal box construction was built. The new construction houses a new form of the fuel cells, is continuous, and is shaped in an angle so as to protect the turret base. The various fixture points will then receive reactive armour bricks which will be mated to become a forward facing V shape. The intended shape is supposed



Reactive armor bricks receiving a fresh coat of paint. Note that all bricks have been numbered and are devoid of their explosive charge.

to deflect incoming RPG projectiles and explodes the warhead away from the main fighting compartment. The conversion will increase the overall height of the T-62 hull and will cause the turret to be sitting within the now raised superstructure. However, the main gun will not be able to fire at 0 angle when rotated and must always be adjusted to +8 degrees on left and right positions. Surely





a concern for the crew when in action.

An early T-62 turret with the distinctive rounded shape and the simplified loaders hatch is also being converted to be mated to the new hull. The turret has been soldiering for a long time and has received no less than 3 sure hits or kills in its past. Countless weld marks can be visible at various locations. All side rails and attachment points have been removed,

and welded over for unknown reasons. The camouflage pattern is reminiscent of the early '80s when the communist Derg was ruling the country. I could only wonder when seeing this T-62 turret is the validity of the project! Why would anybody want to cut open a T-62 turret and try to install an external auto loader carousel? The extra stowage place given with the new autoloader is surely negated when considering the fully

exposed ammunition configuration. By any standards an explosive upgrade...

The sheer size of the new carousel will make any maintenance in the engine bay a challenge to the mechanics. I could not confirm it, but I have serious doubts that the turret would actually be traversable once mated to the new hull with its raised sides...

ETHIOPIAN tank refurbishment facility by Moustafa Assad



A spare late model T-55 hull sits idle ready for a future upgrade project.



A completed T-55 tank has seen refurbishment and has received the first pattern of side boxes which lacked the reactive armour package. The side fenders are a late addition and are still unpainted.



Another late model T-55 hull sits idle with a large stock of brand



The German Leopard 2 main battle tank series are my favourite modern tanks, this is my excuse for collecting all the kits available; Tamiya, Italeri, Revell and Hobby boss. Kits include the basic A4, A5 and A6.

Tamiya's Leopard 2A6 is not a new tooling, but based on an earlier listing (No.35242) Leopard 2A5 with the longer L55 gun barrel, transparent lights, two crew figures and road signs. The difference between the appearance of the two models is really only the gun barrel. Even though this model is already ten years old, in my opinion it's the most accurate. It continues also the Tamiya tradition of being easy to assemble.

To add more details, I used Voyager's Leopard 2A5 upgrade set containing seven photoetch frets, although it is one of Voyager's first products the design is very user-friendly with spares of some

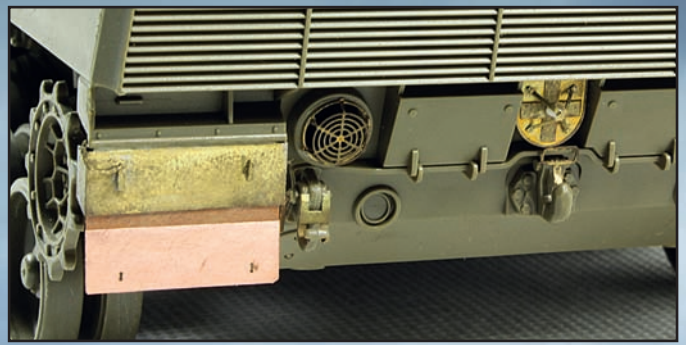
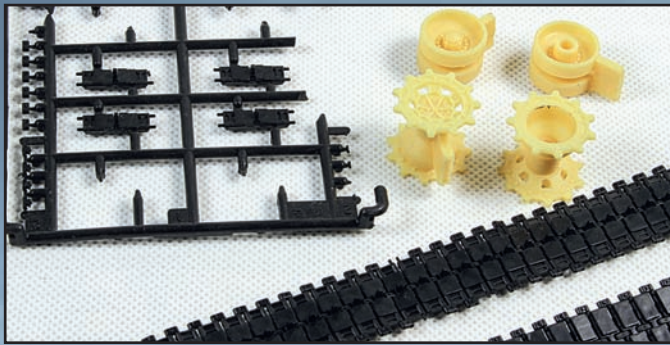
of the smallest parts included which is always welcome! Although the kit's rubber track has good detail I purchased the Trumpeter workable track links which have more finesse. Each track link consists of four parts in a resilient styrene, the sprue connection is designed on the hidden side helping with clean-up time. With patience, assembly work is not complicated, the set also includes two resin drive sprockets and idler wheel, but with the shape and detail as-per the kit parts I opted not to use them.

With my PE and tracks ready it was time to make a detail-rich Leopard 2A6!

LEOPARD 2A6

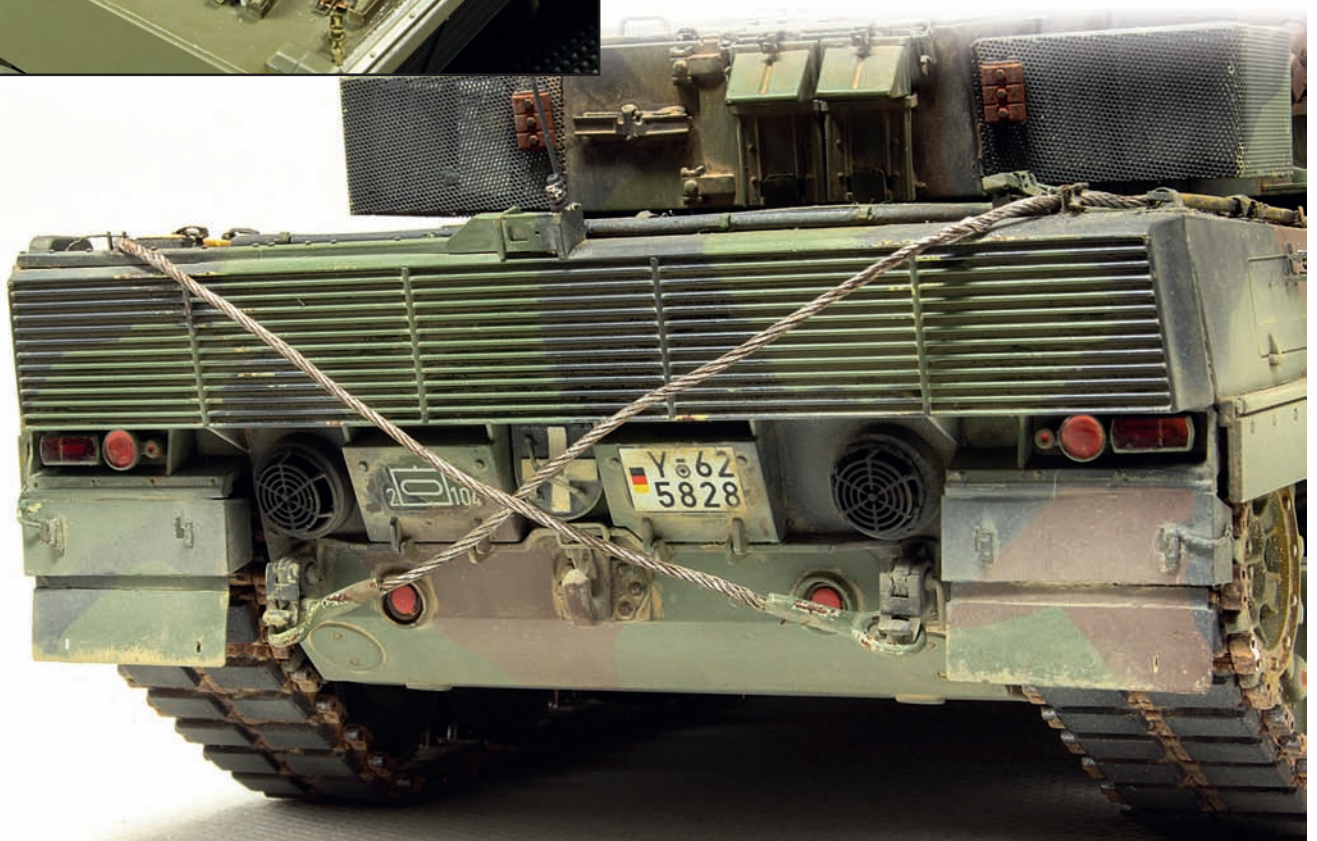
Jian Geo details
Tamiya's classic 1:35 kit

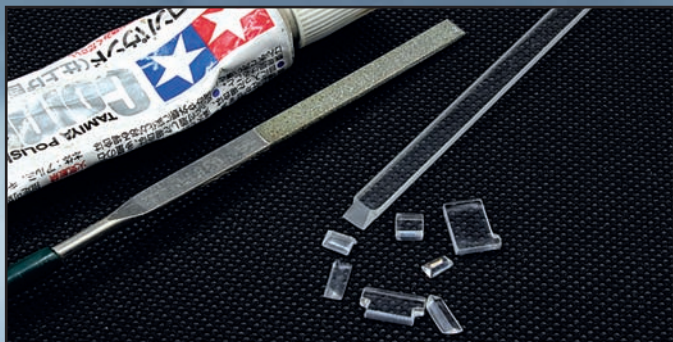




Tamiya's kit assembled very well with not too many errors to fix and no filler required. My only modification was to enlarge the holes which mount the suspension arms so that you can manually adjust the height of each road wheel (only required if you're mounting onto uneven groundwork). On the rear engine deck I added weld beads with stretched sprue around the cooling fan housings and on the side skirts and hull side connecting point I made new accurately shaped pieces from plastic card (see picture above).

Voyager use various thicknesses of brass in their upgrade set which does look beautiful, but this beautiful detail only comes with some demanding intricate work resulting in tired eyes and fingers at times! This becomes all the more frustrating when discovering parts are of the wrong dimensions, such as the loader's cupola. At many points I had to convince myself all of this photoetch work would be worth the extra effort, especially when I ruined the engine fan mesh using too much adhesive meaning I had to buy some replacements.





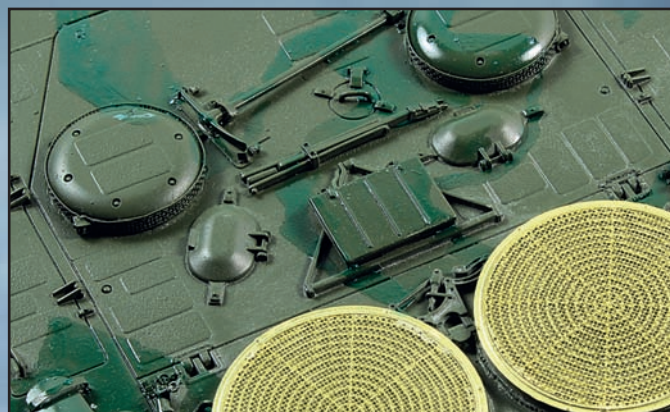
Periscopes and sighting optics are an important visual effect of modern armour models. Tamiya provides a thin plastic transparent panel, too thin to properly reflect transparent green or clear blue. The Leopard 2A6 periscopes are large and easily made with 2mm acrylic. Shaped with a file and sanded with 800,1500 and 2000



paper and finally polished with Tamiya polishing compound. The edges were painted clear green for the vision blocks. In the same way, I transformed the panoramic and Gunner's sight with clear red and clear blue, again along the edges of the parts. Once in place, the light reflection of these transparent parts shows

a hint of colour, looking very neat and adding a certain 'glint' of realism to the finished model. With the periscopes put aside for fitting later I primed the areas of brass with Tamiya Metal Primer then an overall coat of Mr Surfacer 1000 which was left to dry.



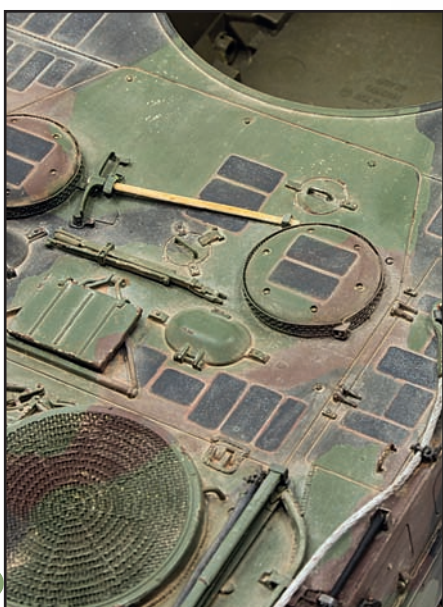


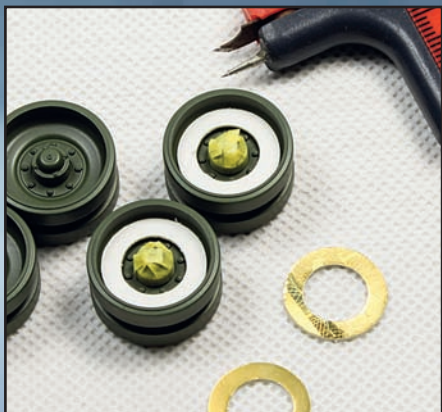
Collecting images from the internet I found a variety in the tones of greens and browns used and decided to copy the brighter hues to give my Leopard 2A6 some lively colour. Although the real tank's camouflage is soft edged, it is so fine that it looks like a hard edged pattern which I thought would look more realistic in 1:35. Using Gunze Mr. Masking Sol R and Silly Putty I created the masks I needed to airbrush the camouflage. I chose the Gunze NATO camouflage set adding a little brighter vibrance; TC10 NATO Green with C44 Tan and C4 Yellow, TC11 NATO Brown with C43 Wood Brown and TC12 NATO Black with C62 White. The NATO Green was not the first colour applied; because I wanted to create scratches later, Gunze C-21 Middle Stone and Vallejo 70.978 covered the side skirts and then Gunze GX-100 Super Clear

to provide a strong barrier. NATO Green base colour covered the entire model and once dry, Mr. Masking Sol R was applied with a No.0 brush to define the edges of the brown then black. This method is suitable for use on a flat surface. Convex or complex shapes were best masked first with Silly Putty then edges completed with Mr. Masking Sol R. The standard camouflage pattern for the A6 was followed and it was satisfying to remove the messy looking masking to reveal the smooth three-tone paintwork. The turret and the hull are covered by anti-slip sections, the hull areas being different to the turret. The hull has anti-slip mats which are separately attached to the metal surface for maintenance reasons. Some can be inconsistent with the surrounding metal colours and have a residue of

adhesive which I replicated with a fine brush and Vallejo 70950 Black mixed with Vallejo 71039 Hull Red and 70977 Desert Yellow.

Decals were applied onto locally sprayed gloss varnish to minimise any edges or silvering. Tamiya offers a total of four vehicle identification numbers : Munster Armour School / 2nd company, 104th panzer battalion/3rd Company, 403rd Panzer Battalion and 5th Company, 203rd Panzer Battalion, I chose the 2nd company, 104th panzer battalion. Further internet studies show the Leopard actually belongs to the first 102 Armoured Brigade, 13th Panzergrenadier Division. Mr Mask Softener was applied to the decals to bed them down around details and a final coat of matt varnish gives a uniform finish.





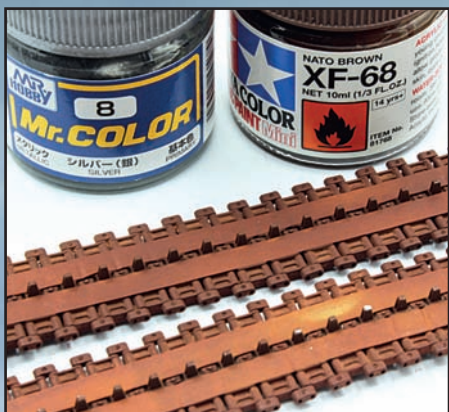
The Leopard's roadwheels have a very particular look which I was keen to accurately reproduce. Starting with my base colour NATO green I created my own masks using card and a cutting compass. The central ring first received an airbrushed coat of Vallejo silver which provides a strong contrast against the green. More masks were cut to allow me to airbrush the tyres, both the black and silver could of course be brush painted but I feel the extra effort to spray the colours is worth it.

The anodised finish of the silver ring was achieved with oil paint washes with the bolt detail highlighted with a black wash. The bolts were picked out with pure silver and some chipping through to the primer around the rims was carefully picked out with a fine brush. Further interest is added with the rusted bare metal sprocket ring and the red lube points. Two of the roadwheels of my subject Leopard appeared in an overall green, again, added visual interest.

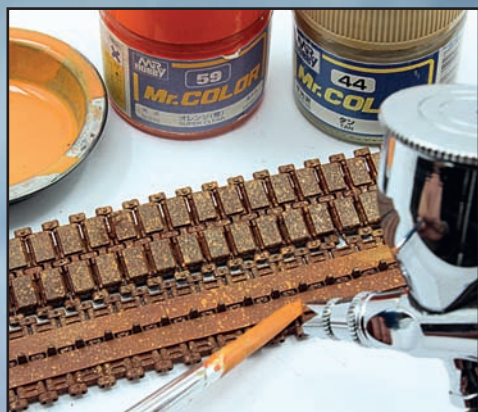




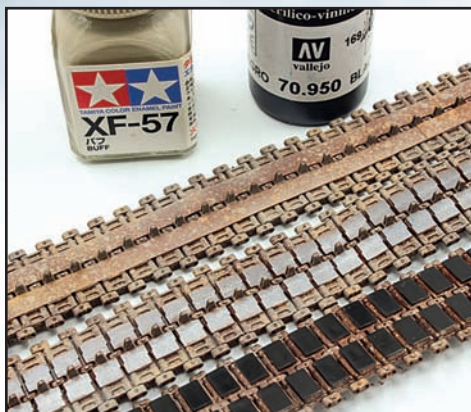
The first stage of colouring the tracks was a base-coat of Gunze black with a touch of silver to add a metallic sheen. This was airbrushed and allowed plenty of time to dry.



The inner face of the tracks was first masked with tape along the areas where the roadwheels make contact and then given an airbrushed coat of Tamiya NATO brown. Again, a tiny amount of silver was added.



Using a technique learned from modeller Adam Wilder I added brighter speckles of fresh oxidation by loading a paintbrush with a heavily diluted mix and blowing through the bristles with the airbrush resulting in a random splattered texture.



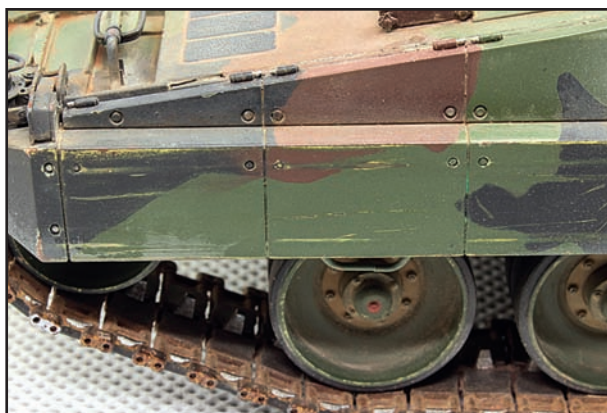
A light coating of Tamiya buff added a dusty feel and toned down the contrast of the brighter rust. The exterior of the track pads were now picked out in Vallejo black.



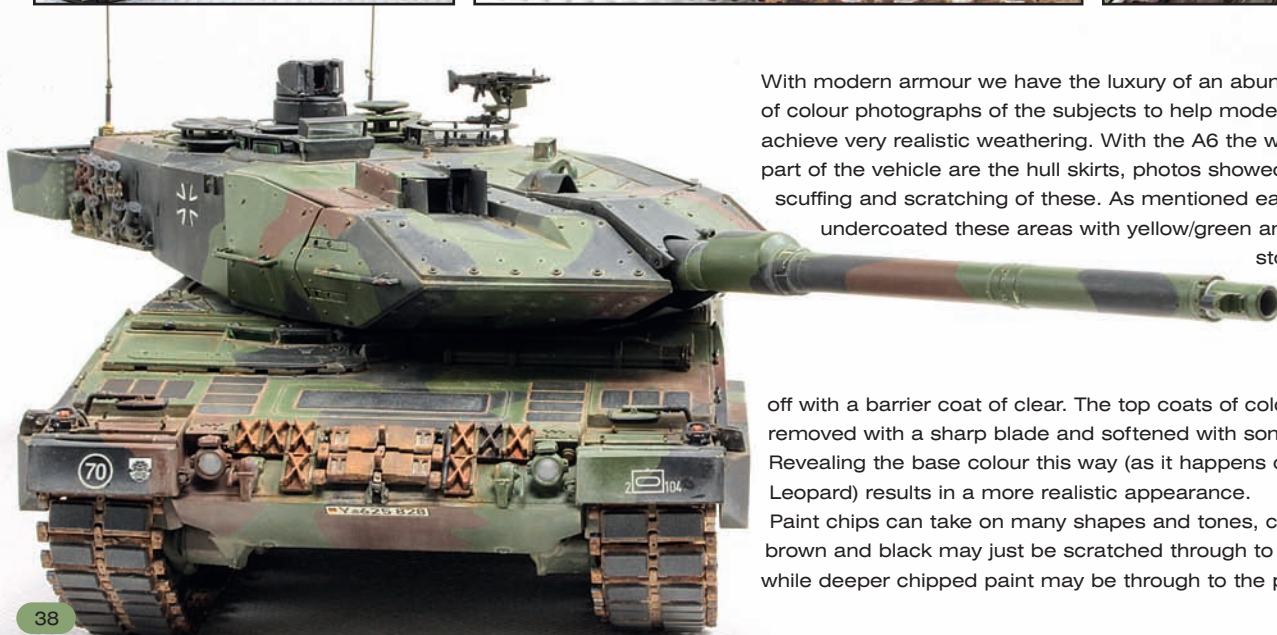
Gentle dry-brushing of Tamiya Titanium Silver adds to the metallic effect of the inner face of the track. This colour was also used to pick out some of the track connectors suggesting new fittings.



A final touch was some dried-on mud and dust done with small applications of pigment powders. The tracks were now ready to mount onto the running gear.



With modern armour we have the luxury of an abundance of colour photographs of the subjects to help modellers achieve very realistic weathering. With the A6 the widest part of the vehicle are the hull skirts, photos showed scuffing and scratching of these. As mentioned earlier I'd undercoated these areas with yellow/green and middle stone topped

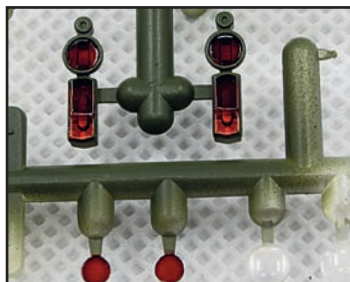


off with a barrier coat of clear. The top coats of colour can be easily removed with a sharp blade and softened with some thinner. Revealing the base colour this way (as it happens on the actual Leopard) results in a more realistic appearance. Paint chips can take on many shapes and tones, camo colours of brown and black may just be scratched through to the base green while deeper chipped paint may be through to the primer or bare



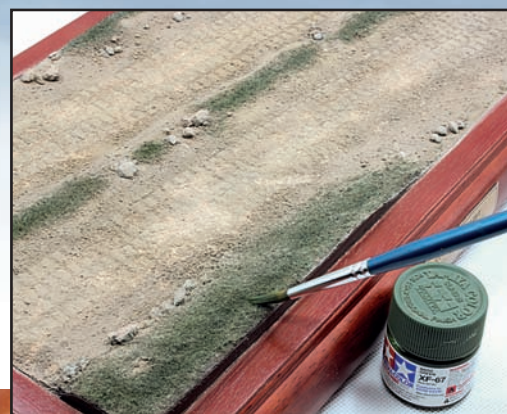
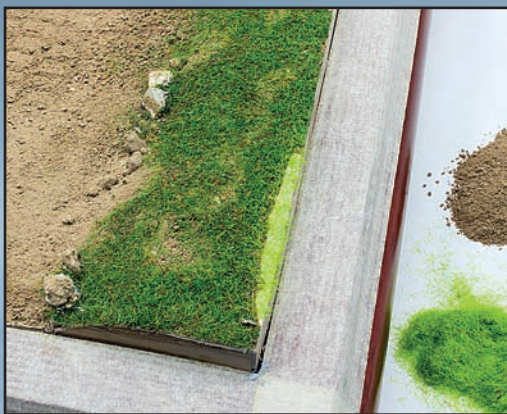
metal which may rust a little. Vallejo 70978 Dark Yellow, 70951 White and 70977 Desert Yellow, applied with a 00 brush replicate the tones of primer while brown rust tones were mixed with Vallejo Red Brown and Hull Red. Again, studying closely your reference images and replicating the damage and where it's most likely to occur will make for a realistic finish.

MIG oil colours 080 Wash Brown, 155 German three-tone fading, 092 German Ochre and 165 Faded UN White were used to make heavily diluted filter colours which harmonised the three camouflage tones. Rather than use the usual dark washes to highlight details, my reference showed accumulated light dust in the recesses and around fixings. Tamiya's XF-57 Buff was used as a diluted wash further worked with clean turpentine using a flat brush for larger areas and a small brush to create streaks and rain marks. More dirt and dust was applied with a flat brush and MIG P232 Dry Mud and P028 Europe Dust allowing it to collect around details. A final application of dust was airbrushed concentrating on the lower and rear hull. In contrast to the dry dust, some grease and oil stains on the rear hull were added with Gunze GX109 Clear Brown.



The vehicle crew figures are based on the kit parts with some modifications and extra detailing.

The kit provides clear moulded lamp lenses. Mr Color Silver No.8 provides the reflector and Tamiya clear orange and red gives a realistic sparkle, and after masking, the base green was airbrushed. Reference shots show the lights and number plates are wiped clean by the crews which all adds interest to the finished model.

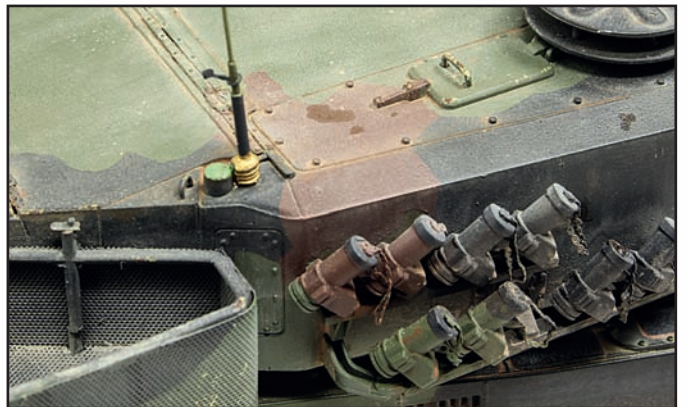


The base was created from a polystyrene sheet with a covering of DAS Pronto air-dry clay to form the shape of the dirt-track road. PVA glue was used to fix the texture made from fine grit and railway modelling grass. The kit's 'rubber band' tracks were used to form the patterns of the Leopard's footprints in the earth. Tamiya XF-57 Buff, XF-60 Dark Yellow, XF-59 Desert Yellow and XF-1 white were airbrushed over the entire groundwork creating light and shade with XF-67 dry-brushed to give a more realistic shade to the grass.

Final thoughts

With the photoetch, individual track links and extra detailing my Leopard 2A6 was a lengthy project. The Tamiya kit still can look very nice built straight from the box but the extra work takes the detail to a more satisfying level.





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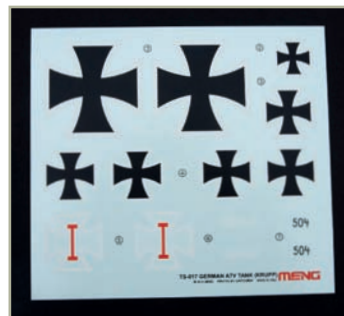
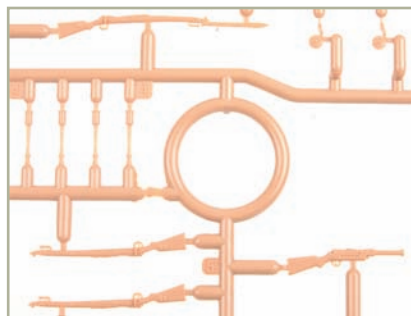
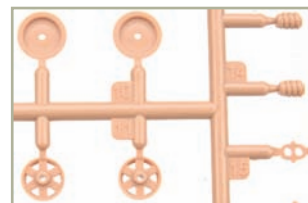
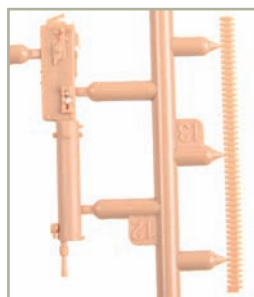
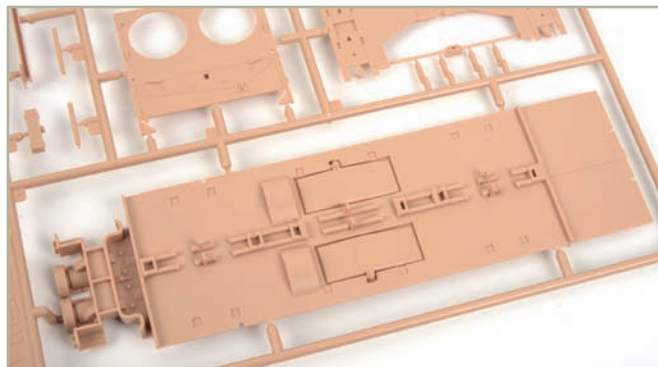
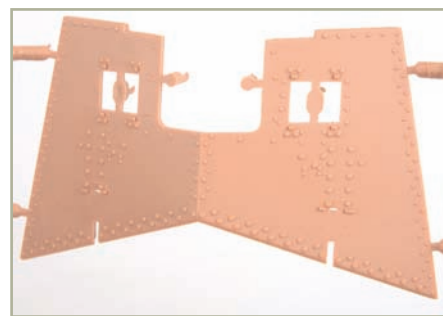
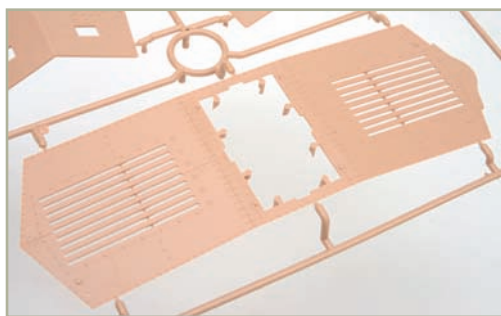
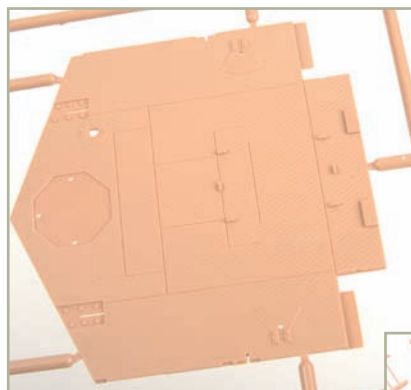
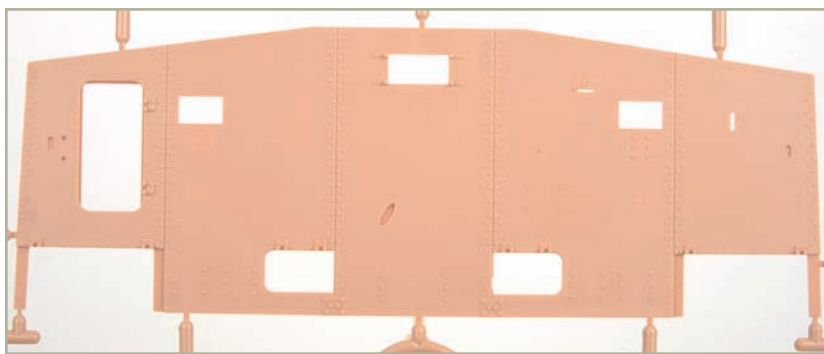
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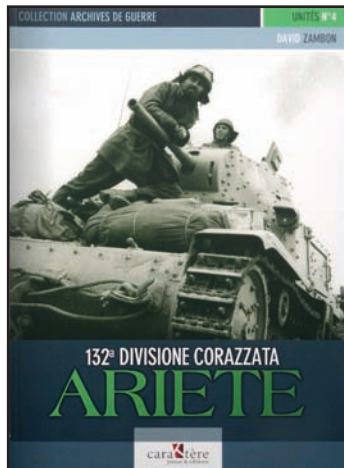
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MENG 1:35 A7V Tank (Krupp)

The World War One kit bonanza continues and Meng have joined the party with this very welcome release of the German A7V tank, a subject that has long been in demand by modellers. The kit itself is everything we have become familiar with from Meng kits and offers a remarkably detailed replica of the vehicle with a virtually fully detailed interior provided. The twin motors are not provided probably as their central location under the raised driver's platform and flanked by radiators means that they cannot be seen. The modified Holt tractor running gear is all replicated with three individual bogie units which are mounted on a surprisingly detailed floor plate with final drive housings. Tracks are comprised of two parts per link, the pad and the interlocking rails on the inside which snap together. With the chassis assembled its on to the interior and the very detailed Driver's compartment with big padded armchair style seats and assorted levers and pedals. Below this platform the radiators are mounted and they come with

photoetched brass mesh covers. The 57mm main gun is fully detailed to the point of being a stand alone model in its own right and there are also some superbly moulded Maxim machine guns, with ammunition belts and ammunition boxes. Gunner's seats, an ammunition bin for the gun and a rifle rack all add to the busy look of the interior. The four parts that form the box-shaped superstructure have excellent rivet detail moulded on both interior and exterior surfaces. All the doors, hatches and inspection covers are moulded individually to allow the interior detail to be seen and the same goes for the visors on the raised driving 'cupola' and its roof hatch. Nylon rope is provided to make the tow ropes stowed on the vehicle roof and a single marking scheme for "Schnuck" is provided on the decal sheet. Its hard not to be impressed with the interior detail provided in the kit and which will allow maximum flexibility depending on whether you want to show it off or not. Look out for our full build review coming in Issue 83!

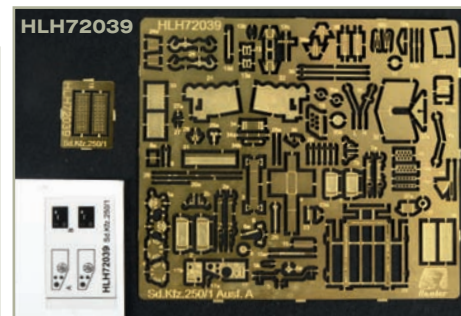
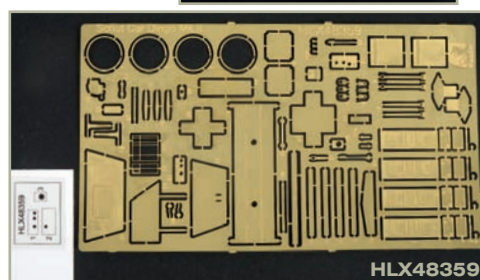
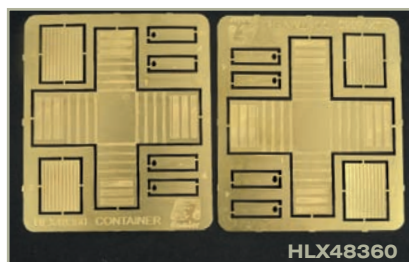
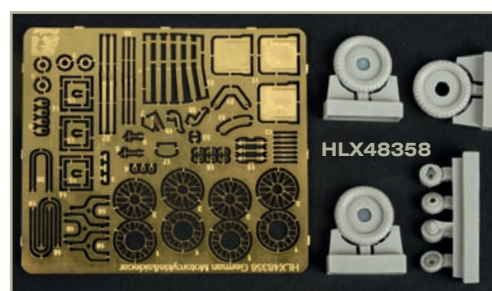
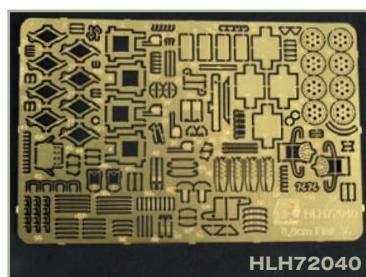


132a Divisione Corazzata Ariete

By David Zambon
Published by Caraktere
Softback format, 127 pages, French text
ISBN 978 2 916403 05 2
www.caraktere.com

Number Four in Caraktere's 'Units' series gives us a superb collection of shots from the Italian unit fighting in Africa, in common with other publications from our French friends many images are fresh from their own resources. The photos are accompanied by some top-quality colour plates of soft-skins and armour including the AB41, M13 and M14 along with some of the more obscure subjects which are available as superb resin kits from Italy's Brach and Model Victoria. Even if you struggle to read French, there's

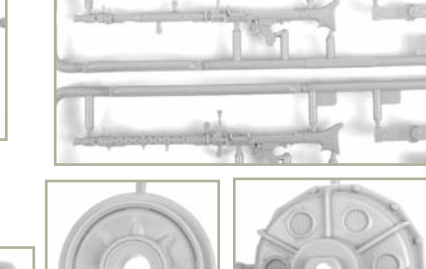
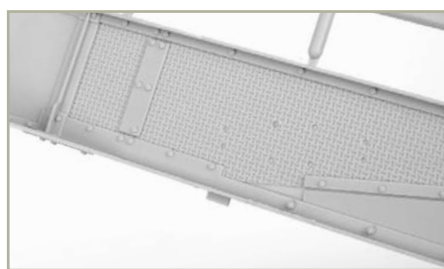
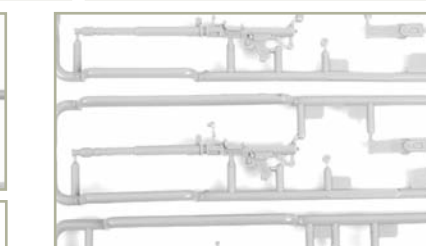
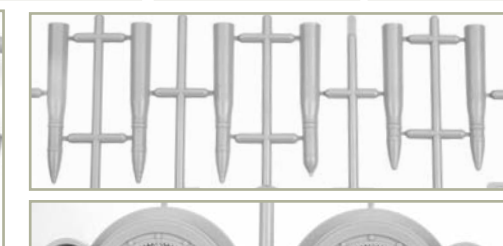
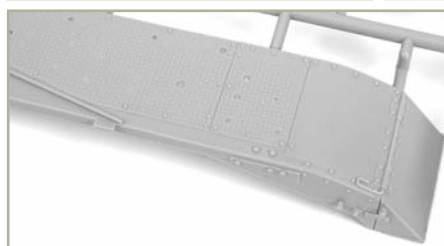
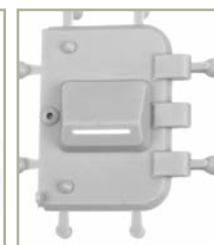
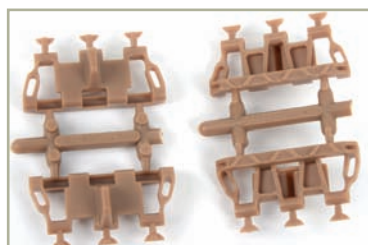
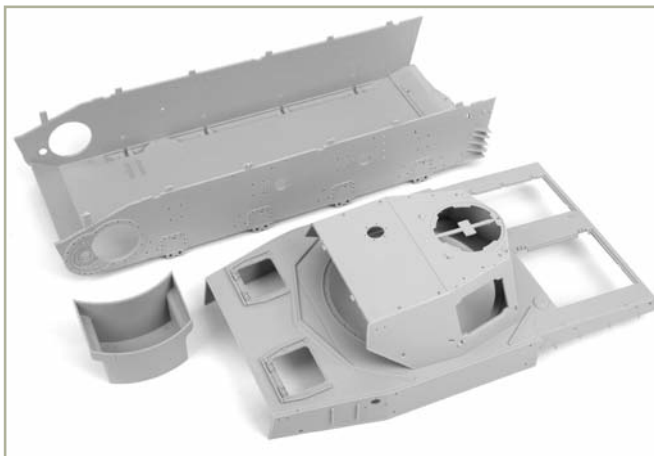
enough visual information in the form of diagrams and maps to outline the action and help place the images making this a very worthwhile addition to the library of any enthusiast of the Italian army of the period, or in fact anyone with an interest in the North African campaign with a selection of KO'd British armour on show. Another high quality publication from Caraktere who do have some of their releases available in English also, take a look over at their website www.caraktere.com



Hauler

Hauler can always be relied on for something different and produce some very sensible upgrades in several scales. Photoetch in 1:72 is not for the fainthearted but will enhance any braille-scale miniature; HLH72038 is a set of tiny valve hand wheels, HLH72039 is a comprehensive detail set for the MK72 Sd.Kfz. 250/1 and HLH72040 will look superb on Revell's Flak 36. Hauler are saviours to the quarter-scale modeller and there's more in 1:48 with HLX48358 for Tamiya's German sidecar combo

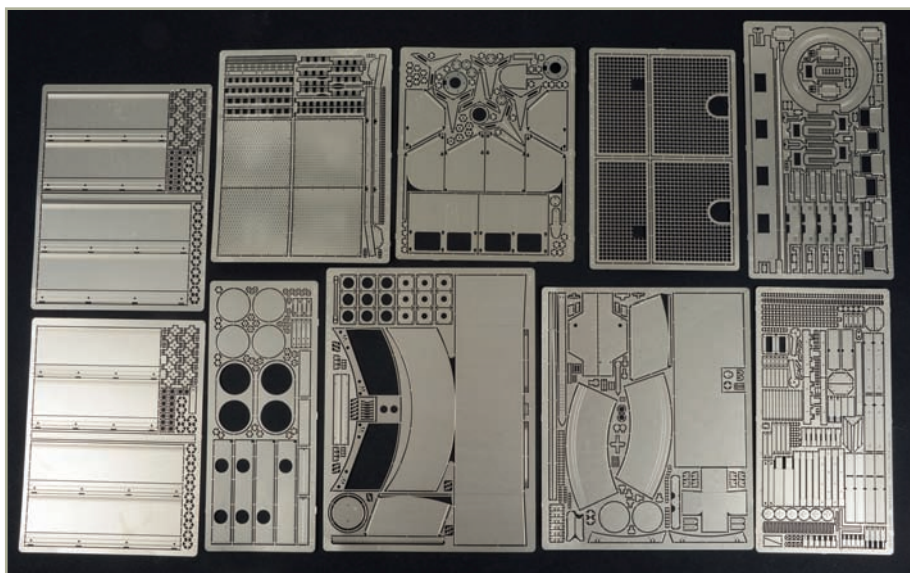
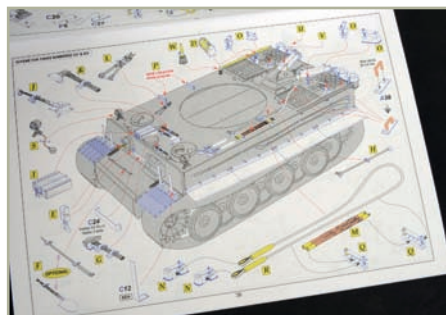
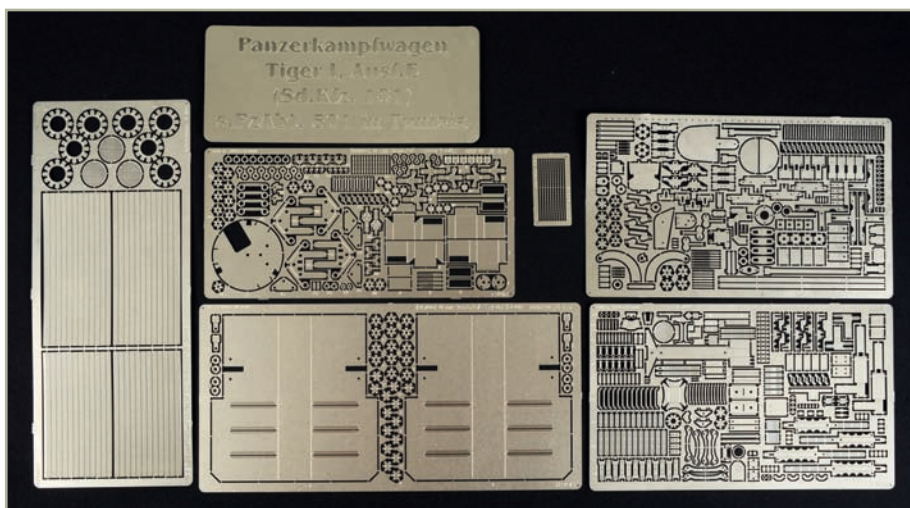
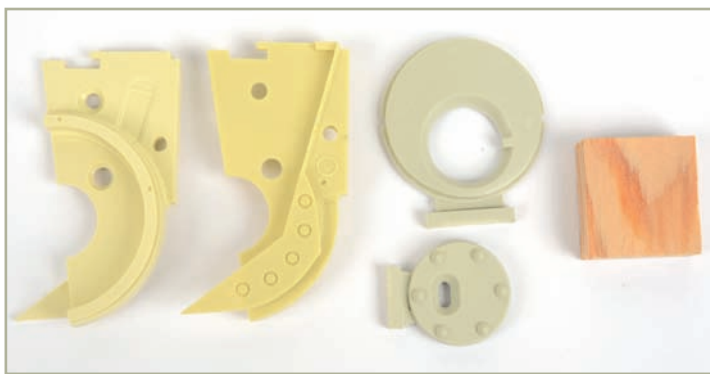
with resin wheel rims and tyres included, HLX48359 is for another Tamiya kit, the Dingo Mk.II and finally in forty-eighth HLX48360 'Steel Containers' which appear to be a more modern warehouse/pallet type affair. A couple of 1:35 diorama accessories with HLU35080 a set of resin cast barrels and milk churns (four of each) and HLU35081 which is a resin solid fuel burning stove. All quality throughout as you'd expect from Hauler, www.hauler.cz



Trumpeter 1:16 Panzer IV Ausf.H

Here is a release that has been keenly anticipated and now at last it has arrived in its suit case-sized box with carrying handle packed with plastic, 7 photoetched frets, aluminium gun barrel, copper tow ropes and miniature mudflap springs. As with Trumpeter's other 1:16 tank kits there is a fully detailed interior and the kit provides a number of optional parts like a choice of idler design, return roller design and four different machine guns. It is immediately apparent that this kit is a big improvement on for example the King Tiger. The level of finesse is superb with accurately rendered weld beads, even present on the underside of the turret and flush screw heads replicated along with tiny castellated nuts. This time there are clear moulded periscopes and all the vehicle tools are provided with photoetched clasps or separate thinly moulded fittings for the more complex brackets. The individual link tracks look superb and come with plastic pins to connect them. The suspension brackets have casting numbers and the separate black plastic (not vinyl) tires have manufacturers name (deliberately misspelt) and size moulded on. A full set of schurzen is provided in plastic with a nice scale thickness as are

the support brackets for the whole system. Other pleasing touches are the four MG 34s, two without shoulder stocks to mount inside the tank and a choice of armoured barrel sleeve or regular perforated sleeve for the AA cupola mount. Inside the tank the quality continues although there are one or two parts that are missing. The hull floor escape hatch is moulded on the outside of the hull but missing inside. The radio transformer rack behind the radio operator is not included but a photoetched radio rack is provided happily. There are some missing details in the engine bay, like the connections between the engine and exhaust muffler and no MG ammunition sacks are provided. One other area that looks like it may be improved is the Gunner's sight. A full mix of ammunition is provided with separate etched base plates and there is even the turret floor mounted ammunition crate. Decal sheets offer a choice of four schemes and stencilled markings for the shells along with instrument dials. Overall this is a simply stunning kit and well worth every penny. Stand by for some extensive coverage in future issues!



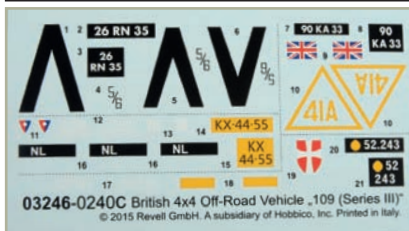
Aber

We begin our look at the latest Aber releases with their magnificent 1:16 boxed set 'Exclusive Edition' 16 K02 which is a combined conversion/upgrade set to convert the Tamiya Tiger 1 to one of the s.Pz.Abt. 501 vehicles serving in Tunisia. This is a big box of bits with multiple turned brass, resin and photoetched parts provided for what is truly a de-luxe upgrade set. 501 vehicles were distinguished by their unique treadplate front mudflaps, headlamp brackets, slotted exhaust covers and rear track link racks, all of which are provided in the set. There are new resin sections for the front of the hull to give the correct profile and a resin part to plug the turret escape hatch and to model the early pistol port configuration. Beautifully machined metal parts are provided for a complete replacement gun barrel, Smoke grenade launchers with grenades, covers for the launchers and even decals for the grenades. There is a new fire extinguisher with decals, machine guns for hull and turret, front hatch hinges and tow hooks and machined parts to create the binocular driver's visor openings. There are also parts to assist in converting the Fiefel air filter boxes including jigs to shape the curved parts. Gun

cleaning rods combine brass parts with wooden shafts. Braided metal tow cables come with brass eyes and turned brass collars. There are a total of seventeen photoetched frets, many of which have been carried over from Aber's original Tiger 1 upgrade but there are also quite a few new parts. Aside from all the expected tool clasps and tow rope clasps the set gives you the new front mudflaps, replacement fenders, full front hatch mechanisms, engine deck screens, Fiefel hoses, rear mudguards, exhaust covers, turret bin, parts to detail the crew headphones and uniform insignia and even a bucket to hang off the back. It is without doubt a very comprehensive set and not something suited to the novice modeller. To get the best out of this you need to be very comfortable in working with photoetched parts but at this scale these details are very visible and the work pays off in the finished results. Stunning detail for those who demand the very best from their large scale modelling and you cannot help but be impressed with the scope and quality of this superb package. www.aber.net.pl for details of this and the rest of the Aber range.

ABER 1:35 Gun Barrels

We have three new barrel sets from Aber in their usual style with precision machined aluminium and brass parts along with photoetch where appropriate. 35 L-93 is a barrel for the 40mm Bofors Anti-aircraft Gun. Along with the barrel itself it provides the prominent recoil spring which is a nice touch. Set 35 L-137 is a U.S. 76mm M1A2 barrel as mounted on the later Shermans and M-18 Hellcat. The superb single piece muzzle brake is threaded to screw onto the end of the barrel with its separate collar. The last set 35 L-157 is a German 75mm KwK 37 as mounted on the Panzer III Ausf N, Panzer IV Ausf A-F1 and Stug III Ausf A-E. The set come with a choice of two patterns of collar, one plain and one with locking screws. for details of these and the rest of the range visit www.aber.net.pl



Revell 1:35 Series III (109" / LWB)

If you have the Italeri Long Wheel Base landy, then you already have this kit. Revell's re-box looks unchanged and comes in a nice pale grey with some good moulding offering a build as simple as the Land Rover itself with separate body panels mounting to a single piece floor / chassis. Being an older tooling we've got a little flash here and there with a few knock-out pin marks to take care of but no big deal. The canvass cover is a good starting point for some more work on the texture perhaps and the flat glazing would be better replaced with some acetate sheet for a better

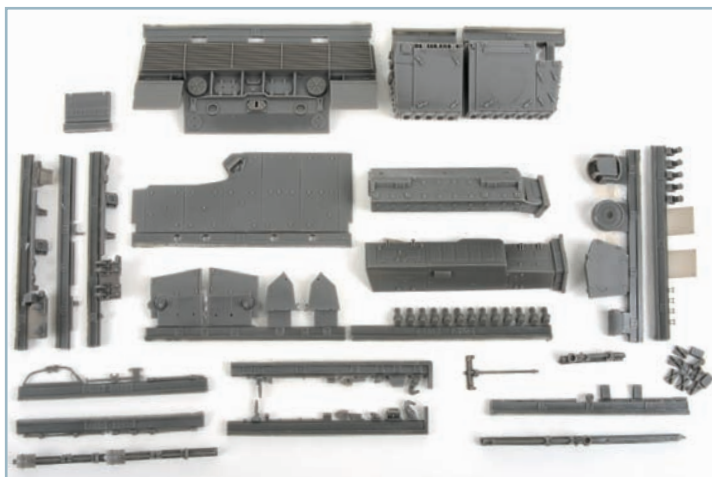
scale appearance. If you're improving this kit a set of resin wheels would be a good investment, the old-school split mouldings just don't have the tread detail. Conversion and diorama potential with the Land Rover is ripe, anywhere in the World from the early 70s to present day they've been put through their paces. It seems such a shame that there days are numbered, the Defender being the last of the breed. A good base kit which will still detail-up nicely. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For details visit www.revell.de/en



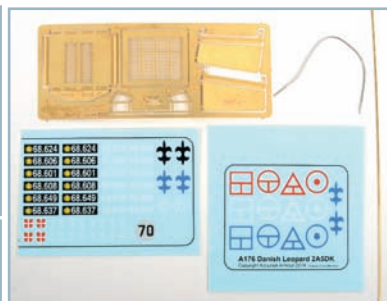
MK35

France's MK35 certainly come up with some great off-beat figures in 1:35 to spark the imagination, here's a few new releases to inspire a vignette or diorama. A French movie camera man in Tanker's gear is depicted with F249, F247 is a nicely sculpted U.S figure who looks like he's been souvenir hunting with a German helmet and also a puppy to look after! MK35 always deliver excellent civilian figures as demonstrated here, these two would suit any Western European scene from

either World War. F248 is an older gent with some belongings bundled together (easily converted into carrying a multitude of objects) and very nicely sculpted he is too. My favourite has to be the young woman negotiating her way around a honking goose, F250, she's sporting a large brimmed hat and guarding closely a basket of vegetables. Great stuff as usual from MK, find out more about their range at www.mk35.com.



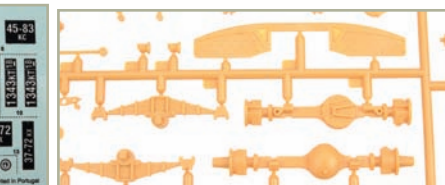
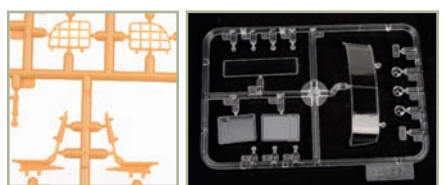
Partly assembled model



Accurate Armour 1:35 Danish Leopard 2A5DK Conversion Sets (for Tamiya or Hobby Boss kits)

A couple of smashing conversions to adapt either the Tamiya or the Hobby Boss Leopard 2A5 kits to the version operated by the Danes. These vehicles feature redesigned bow armour similar to the Swedish STRV 122, completely redesigned rear turret and a remodelled auxiliary power unit built into the rear corner of the hull as well as other smaller changes like turret top stowage bins and new smoke grenades. Certainly not an easy set of modifications to make so it is great to see Accurate Armour providing this set and the quality is really top notch too. The set provides all the resin conversion parts required and its quite a collection! The new parts for the rear of the turret are crisply detailed and the set provides optional track grousers to mount on the rails running around the sides of the boxes. In the Tamiya version there is a complete replacement rear hull panel which marries perfectly to the kit and

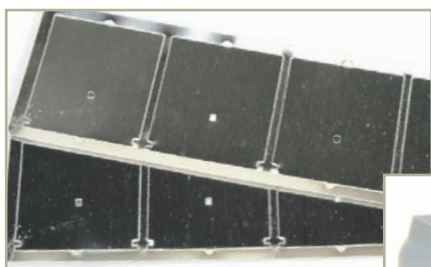
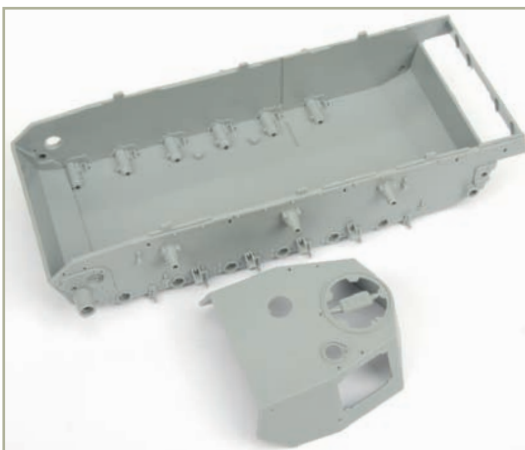
the new bow armour sits atop the kit parts but you will need to sand off the base kit anti-slip panels before fitting it. Fitting the new APU to the hull requires you to cut away the corner of the hull in order to fit the new part, and careful measuring allowed me to do this without any problems. Similarly you have to chop off the back of the turret and blank off the opening in order to add the new boxes but it is nothing very difficult to achieve. New vehicle tools with detailed clasps are provided and there is a jig to assist in shaping the front headlamp guards. A small photoetch fret provides grilles for the air conditioning unit, front mudflaps and guard cages. Two decal sheets provides a choice of unit markings and generic markings. This will save a lot of work if you want to model the Danish Leopard with its attractive bright green camouflage - highly recommended. www.accurate-armour.com



Revell 1:35 ZIL-131

If you're a fan of typical no-nonsense Russian design then these ZIL trucks will surely appeal. They've been around since the late sixties and in true Russian fashion didn't change a great deal being used in their masses throughout the former Communist states. Revell have re-boxed several ICM kits recently and this is what we have here, five sprues in ICM's usual tan coloured styrene, a clear sprue and some vinyl tyres. Typically of Eastern European kits, there's no 'big chunks' in the box, all of the structures being built up from separate panels including the chassis rails (probably very similar to the actual vehicle). This will make for some careful alignment during assembly. We can't vouch for the fit of the parts but the moulding and detail is very good with excellent chassis and engine. With a lot of finer parts this

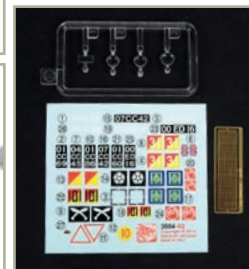
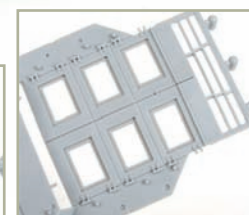
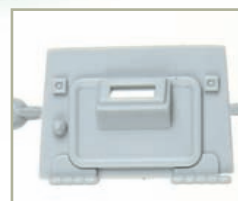
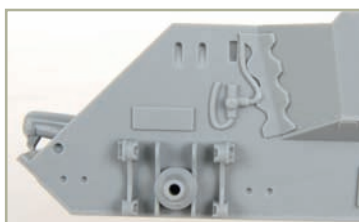
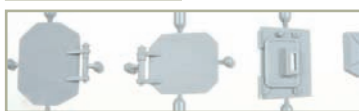
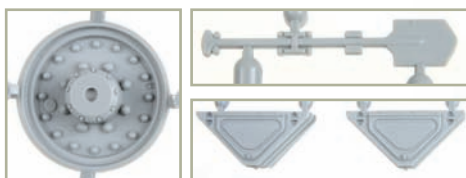
won't be a quick build but should look very nice straight out of the box. Thankfully there's no over-scale wood grain effect on the cargo bed and if you want some inspiration to produce your own canvass cover look no further than our Merc truck feature in this issue. Some of you might shun the tyres in favour of some aftermarket resin wheels as the detail is limited with the soft vinyl moulding, we looked at some beauties last issue from DEF which come with a front grille upgrade. This is a very nice kit with great potential for conversions and being boxed by Revell will make it more readily available and very affordable. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For details visit www.revell.de/en



Dragon 1:35 Pz.Kpfw. III (FL) Ausf.M with schürzen

If your pile of DML Panzer III kits is almost as tall as you are, this could be the one you need to reach the required height! This is a later PzIII with the overhang to the rear deck and the wading exhaust muffer, this kit also comes with pre-cut metal armour skirts and the DS one piece tracks which aren't to everyone's taste but will speed up assembly and have to be admired for their detail. A unique small sprue contains some up-armoured plate parts and of course the flame throwing tube which is very nicely moulded in a single piece including the small igniter. We can't

speak highly enough of these Panzer IIIs from Dragon which must rank as some of the best from the brand and also amongst the most detailed German armour kits available, the tooling showing no signs of age and beautiful sharp, crisp detail throughout. As usual all of the access hatches can be posed open but there's no detail behind the mantlet so it will be up to the modeller to source reference if you want to show turret internals. Two Eastern front markings are offered to complete another multi-media kit which will produce a stunning model straight from the box.



Dragon 1:35 Saladin Mk.2

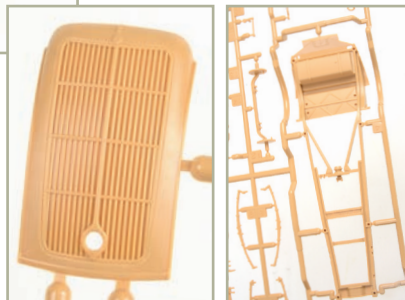
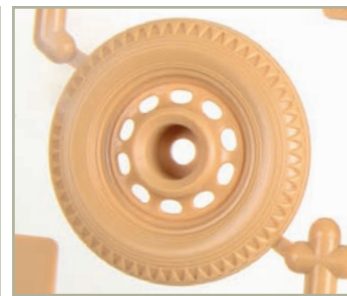
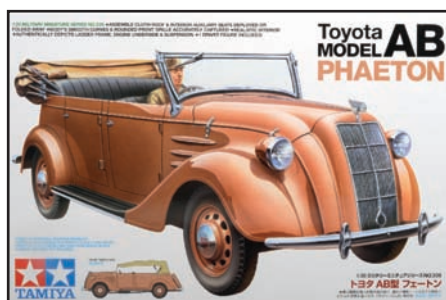
With their 'Black Label' sub-brand Dragon have been offering some obscure subjects with some equally obscure kit features, a real mixed bag in most cases. While not such an obscure subject, the Saladin six-wheeler is a good move from DML, we did have a vintage motorised offering from Tamiya but 50s and 60s British vehicles are thin on the ground as plastic kits. I was pleasantly surprised when lifting the lid as to how few sprues are inside (of course some of you will find this disappointing) with around a couple of hundred parts this should prove a quick build. As the other Black Label kits we've looked at there's a mixture of nice fine moulding and detail and some very simplified areas which will require some extra work. A few omissions we noticed straight-off

are the exhaust outlets, .30 cal and mount (as shown in Mr Volstad's excellent box art) and the inside face of the hatches are completely void of detail. If you do want to leave the hatches open more work will be required as there's no stepped lip around the openings. Some detail is clumpy and items such as the jerry can and tools are awful when referring to the actual items. The tyres are moulded in Dragon's softer 'DS' styrene and are pretty decent, being such a main feature (thinking back to our Saracen in the previous issue) many will be looking to resin replacements. Six colour schemes are offered on the decal sheet. A good kit, if not a great kit and a little pricey, but a very welcome vehicle subject long overdue as a modern styrene kit.



D-Day Miniature Studio

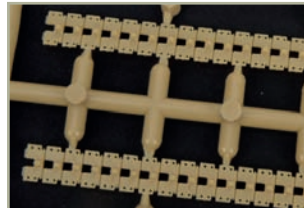
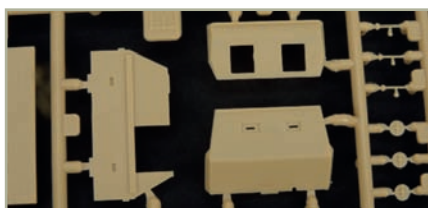
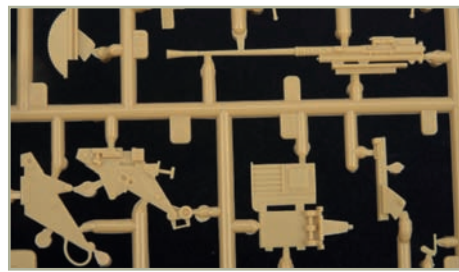
More fantastic figures from Poland's D-Day with four Waffen SS subjects from the popular Ardennes conflict which would make a lovely vignette project. 35025 is a tanker grabbing a bite to eat who would interact nicely with 35026, another tanker with a convincing relaxed pose. 35028 and 35029 are a pair designed to fit a captured U.S. Jeep with the officer's uniform particularly nicely done. First rate quality figures, check the range over at www.ddayminiaturestudio.com



Tamiya 1:35 Toyota Model AB

I remember a conversation with someone who has been involved in the kit industry for many years, in which they said that a massive percentage of Tamiya's kits are sold to their home market. That would explain several of their releases in the past and none more so than this 1930s Toyota with the majority of this soft-top AB version serving the Japanese military during WWII. There's still something special about opening a new Tamiya kit with the familiar packaging and the sand-coloured sprues reminding me of some of my favourite kits in the brand's heyday (FAMO, Wespe, Kubelwagen...) Tamiya's trademark simplicity and high quality moulding are immediate giving a cursory glance across the

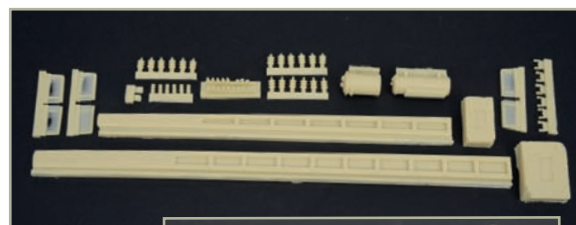
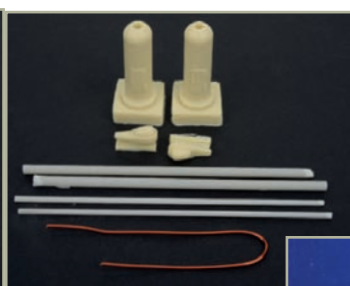
sprues, this is one of those kits which you could assemble in an evening. As you'd expect there's a clear sprue for the 'screens and lamps and a small decal sheet. A nice driver figure is also included and the highlight of the whole kit for me has to be the hood, either folded or erected the sculpting is beautiful, easily as good as the best resin versions available. Thankfully there's no heavy handed chrome plating leaving the modeller to use one of the effective paints now available or Bare Metal foil on the bumpers and hubcaps. Another lovely Tamiya kit but admittedly a very off-beat subject for many of us.



Revell 1:72 Sd.Kfz. 7/2

Revell continue to build on the neat small scale 8 tonne Sd.Kfz. 7 with the 7/2 version mounting the Flak 36, a great looking combination with the armoured cab. The additional trailer sits on top of the 'sonderanhänger' chassis which would carry the towed gun. Three sprues carry the parts for the half-track which shows some very nice detail and moulding from Revell with the wheels and chassis particularly impressive, maybe only the front tyres look a touch clumsy in small scale. The tracks are really well

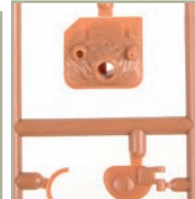
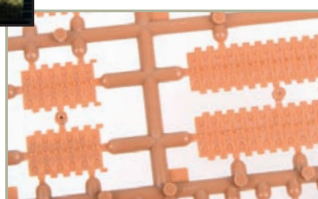
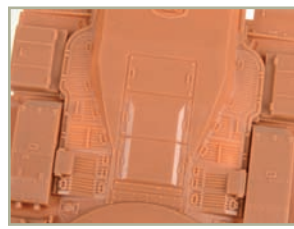
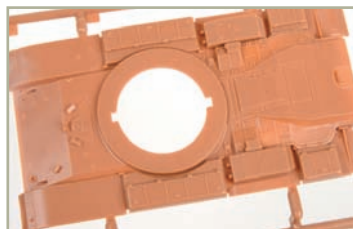
detailed and supplied in long lengths which Revell suggest using hot water to aid with their shaping. The 3.7 gun is also nicely rendered with nice hand wheels and superb ammo clips, this can be displayed with the wooden sides dropped 'in action' should you wish. Decals offer four very different schemes which rounds off another impressive small scale release from Revell. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For details visit www.revell.de/en



Verlinden Productions

More to populate a 1:35 urban diorama from Verlinden Productions. All include cleanly cast resin parts and all of the required tubing, plastic rod etc to complete these very detailed features. 2821 represents a fuel or water tank (fairly large at

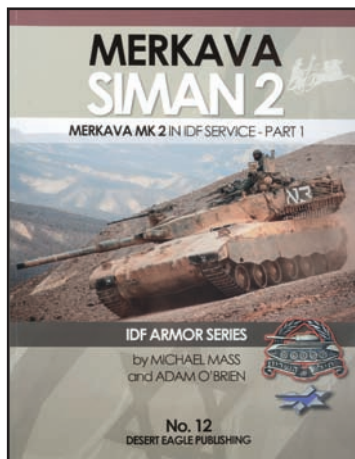
around 70mm length), 2822 which is a pair of concrete electricity posts of different heights and 2823 provides a pair of lamp posts suitable for post-war scenes (no pun intended). Historex are a Verlinden distributor in the UK or check out verlindenonline.com



Revell 1:72 M60A3

Although we tend to build larger scale armour, we're often impressed with Revell's new-tooled small scale kits. This original 2004 release of the M60A3 appears unchanged- a good thing though as this is a really nice little kit. Also available as the A1 version along with an Israeli and dozer conversion this kit pretty much resigned the old Esci offering to the swap meet pile. There's quite a lot of parts for a seventy-second vehicle which results in some good detail and features. The boat-like lower hull comes with separate trailing arms and shock absorbers and well detailed wheels. Tracks are link and length with decent detail but note the guide teeth are centred on the

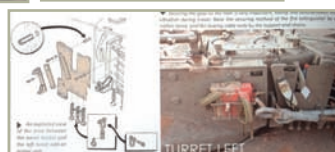
link and should actually sit at the joint, if this is a detail you couldn't live with you're probably a modeller who'd be looking to aftermarket tracks anyway. The single piece upper hull is a great moulding with some fine and sharp detail, as is the turret but maybe not so much the split two-part barrel which looks like it could take some time to prep. Decals are new with two three-tone camo and two plain green finishes offered. Still a really nice kit from Revell. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For details visit www.revell.de/en



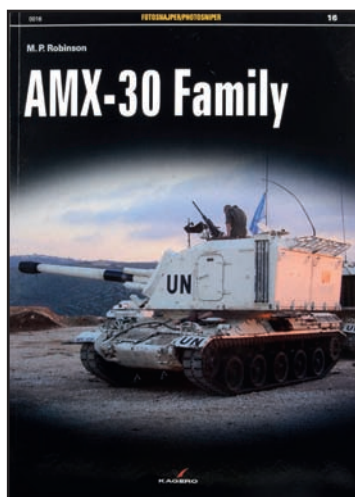
Merkava Siman 2

By Michael Mass & Adam O'Brien
Published by Desert Eagle Publishing
Softback Portrait format, 83 pages
ISBN 978-965-91635-8-8
www.deserteagle-publishing.com

This is one of those books that just immediately has you wanting to make a model of the vehicles inside it and it is packed with colour photos of the Merkava 2 in service with the IDF. The book begins with a helpful illustrated guide to all the different Merkava types and derivatives before moving straight into photos of the vehicle in combat and in action and showing a vast difference in finishes as a result of the environment. There are some absolutely filthy vehicles caked in dust and oil stains which would make superb subjects to model. Mud covered examples operating on the Golan heights offer another equally attractive challenge. Merkava crew are the subject of the next chapter providing



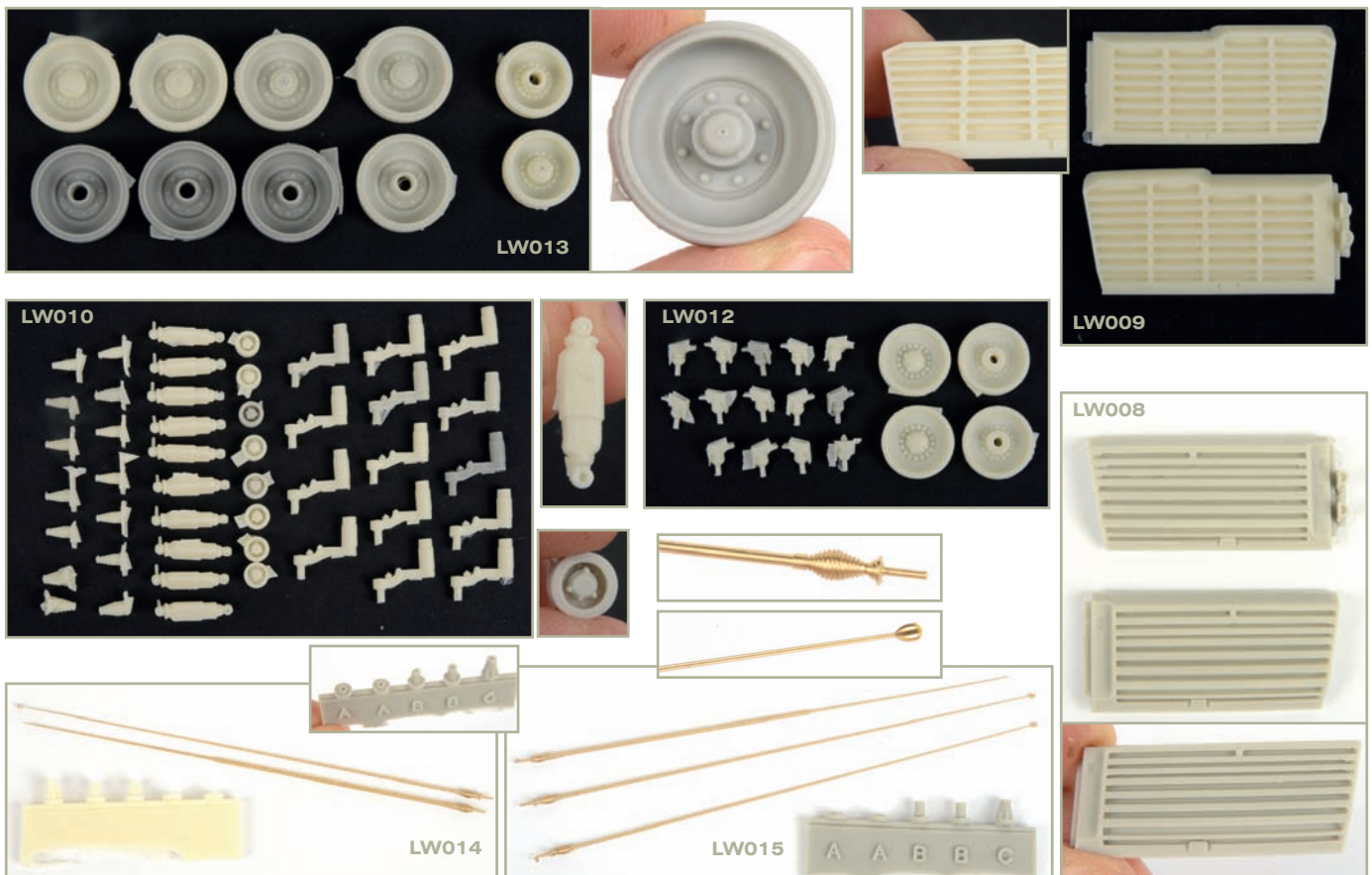
excellent reference for uniforms and some great relaxed poses like the bored-looking instructor slumped in his turret top-mounted seat. A detailed walkaround section is next with excellent reference pictures and diagrams. We especially liked the shots of the randomly stowed turret basket and the heavily worn paint on the turret roof. It's a very complete and detailed study of the vehicle which also includes a section on photos of the interior. The Nochri Mine Roller system is also covered in detail along with battering rams and towing adapters, and concludes with a section on vehicle markings. Perfect modelling reference and an essential book for fans of IDF Armour.



AMX-30 Family

By M.P. Robinson
Published by Kagero
Softback A4 format, 96 pages
ISBN 978 83 64596 24 7
www.casematepublishing.co.uk

If you have any of MENG's AMX-30 versions here's a cracking visual reference in the Kagero 'Photosniper' series featuring studies of the AMX-30D recovery vehicle, the GCT and Au-F1 self propelled guns, AMX-30R Roland and AMX-30SA Shahine anti-aircraft missile launchers, AMX-30 Bitube DCA anti-aircraft tank, AMX-30H Bridgelayers and the EBG armoured engineer vehicle. All vehicles are covered with a good mix of text and photographs featuring overall views, action shots and good close-up reference providing great conversion reference and inspirational weathering and colour schemes. Seven pages of nicely rendered colour plates have you itching to get building as do the shots from the Iraqi base of the GCTs put out to pasture. Recommended reading for any French armour fan.



Leopard Workshop 1:35 Leopard Upgrade Parts

We have a great new selection of upgrade parts for all things Leopard-related from our friends at Leopard Workshop and we begin with LW013 which is a complete set of replacement Leopard 2 roadwheels and idlers. These are designed for any Tamiya or Hobby Boss Leopard 2 with a straight fit on Tamiya axles while you will need to drill them out to fit Hobby Boss. Comparing them with the Tamiya wheels you can see difference in detail right down to the central lubrication point and these wheels have fully detailed rear face which the kit wheels do not have. A helpful small instruction leaflet is included. Next is LW010 which is a leopard 1 Suspension Upgrade set designed to enhance Meng / Revell / Italeri Leopard 1 kits. The new swing arms in the set have been designed to fit any of the Leopard Workshop wheel sets. New Dampers, shock absorbers and return rollers are also included and there are illustrated guides to assist in fitting them to your choice of Leopard 1. With the skirts removed from your model this set is going to be an essential and offers a significant upgrade on the level of kit detail. Staying with

suspension set LW012 is an Export Suspension set for the Leopard 1 as fitted to Belgian, Canadian, Italian and Norwegian vehicles and designed to fit Meng / Revell / Italeri Leopard 1 kits. Along with the dampers there are also small pattern idler wheels and again instructions are provided. Exhaust grilles are next with a choice of two Leopard 1 patterns. LW008 provides replacement welded exhaust grilles and LW009 provides replacement cast exhaust grilles. These will suit Meng / Revell / Italeri / Takom kits with a great looking depth to the slots and skirt mounts are also supplied attached to the right hand grilles. Finally we have two sets of stunning Canadian pattern Aerials. LW014 is to suit the Leopard C2 and C2 Mexas and LW015 are for the 2A4M, CAN/2A6M CAN. The turned brass aerials are superbly delicate and a welcome upgrade as these are a pain to make yourself. Each set comes with a set of resin sockets to mount them on the vehicle and an illustrated instruction leaflet to assist you. Top quality upgrades ideally timed to get the best from all those new Leopard kits. More details of the range at www.leopardclub.ca



Lifecolor Acrylic Paints Leather Boxed Set

Another great addition to Lifecolor's growing range of boxed acrylic paint sets which contain six different colours. This set is designed to help in replicating leather in its various shades ranging from a very dark black/brown through to very light shades which would be ideal for replicating the pale undersides of some leathers or the more exotic shades featured in some vehicles. Figure modellers will certainly appreciate these and I can also see these colours being useful for seat cushions or padding on hatches as well as for straps

and webbing. I am a big fan of Lifecolor paints as they always handle well whether brush painting or airbrushing when they can be diluted with water or using Lifecolor thinners. Easy to open tops and a squat bottle design to avoid spillages only enhance the experience. For full details of this set and the rest of the range the UK distributors who kindly supplied our sample are the Airbrush Company www.Airbrushes.com or visit www.astromodels.it

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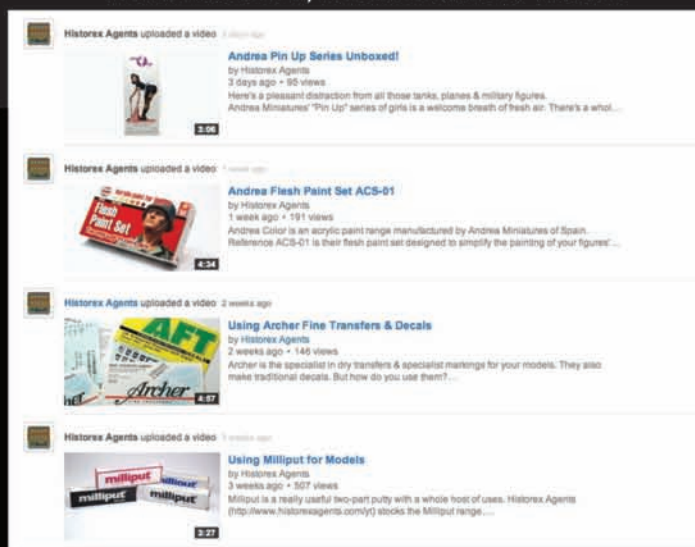
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“OH LORD, WON’T YOU BUY ME A MERCEDES BENZ...”

MINIART’S MB L1500A MODELLED BY BERNHARD LUSTIG

Over the last few years there have been lots of different truck kits released in 1:35 scale. Not so long ago you’d be excused for thinking the Opel Blitz was the only truck used by the Germans in WW2. The enormous amount of supplies needed by the Wehrmacht was a huge logistical problem, with nine supply personnel serving each

fighting soldier. Many different companies like Magirus, Opel, Faun and Mercedes Benz produced trucks in different sizes. Also, trucks from occupied countries were pressed into service. The Mercedes Benz L 1500 A was developed as a light truck, but later used as a “schwerer PKW” (heavy personal carrier).



1:35



MINIART'S KIT



A well detailed chassis and engine can be built straight from the box.



I decided to build the Cargo version, used by the Africa Korps in North Africa. I received help from my friend Martin Roth, who built the basic kit. My job was to refine it and set it into the scene.

The kit contains a total of 240 grey styrene parts plus two sprues with wooden barrels and other supplies. There are also two small etched frets included which gives a reasonable supplement to the kit. There is a full engine compartment included, so you have the option to build it with an open or closed engine hood.



Magic Sculp was rolled into thin sheets and was used to make the tarpaulin cover.



Headlamps are from Royal Model and the etched grille is an optional part from the kit.

All parts fit together very well, but because of the tiny details it's more a kit for the experienced modeller.

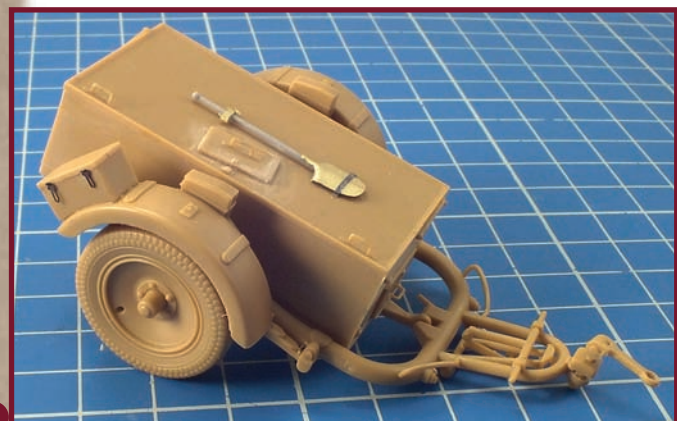
I added two jerrican holders to the fenders and changed the headlights to Royal Model's ones.

I wanted the vehicle carrying a tarpaulin cover over the load bed so I switched the plastic tarpaulin bows to exact copies made of copper wire for strength.

The canvas was made of rolled out Magic

Sculp. I prefer to roll the putty between baking paper so that nothing sticks together, baby (talcum) powder also helps. You must find a balance where the putty is thin enough to look natural, but also thick enough to make for comfortable sculpting. First I worked on the ends, and once dried out I added the top cover in one large sheet. The seam lines you can see in the pictures are made of thin Evergreen plastic strips

softened with plastic glue. To enlarge the display, I used an ammunition trailer from Tristar, which was built straight out of the box. If you add a trailer to a German WW2 truck, you have to build the triangular sign on the cabin in an upright position, take note!



The trailer was taken from a Tristar Flakpanzer I kit, I only added some etched parts from the sparebox

The kit was given a dark grey base using Lifecolour UA 207 Panzergrey

D.A.K. DESERT COLOURS

The vehicle received a black primer from AK interactive. This primer gives a very thin and matt base for the following colours. The entire vehicle was painted in Lifecolor UA 207 Panzer grey. Here I worked with the 'hairspray' technique. Two layers of AK Interactive chipping medium were applied in this case. A mix of Lifecolor UA 201 Gelbbraun and UA 202 Sandgrau (50:50) followed when the chipping medium is dried out completely. A stiff brush and warm water was used to remove the sand-yellow paint in the desired areas. Where the Africa Palm symbols are located I added a thin layer of gloss varnish. Nordland models offers a large decal sheet with a great variation of palm symbols in different sizes. I always soften the colours of my models with a thin filter of diluted artist oil colours.

Here I used Sepia and 502 Abteilung Industrial Earth.

MIG Productions also offers a set of three filters specially for Afrika Korps vehicles which were used to give a variation in colours done in a very subtle way. All the filters I use I mix on a white tile together with some white spirit. I feel I have more control than using filters out of the bottle.

To get a worn effect, I added some more chipped paint. I prefer a Windsor & Newton Series 7 '00' brush to apply fine damage. For dust effects you will get good results with AK Interactive (AK 015) Dust effects in combination with a dose of Mussini Napels yellow oil colour, of course, both thinned with white spirit and again mixed on a white tile.

In my eyes a "must have" on Afrika-Korps vehicles is an air recognition flag. Again rolled out Magic Sculp was used for this. I did it in the same way as the tarpaulin. Here I had the special challenge to sculpt it as if blowing in the wind. I formed the putty and supported it in the desired position with the help of Blu-tak which can be removed when the putty is stiff. For the circle and the swastika I made stencils cut out from Tamiya masking tape. You have to be careful that the circle and swastika is on both sides of the flag at the exact same position!



A mix of Lifecolor No UA201 and UA202 was airbrushed over a coat of AKI chipping medium in thin random coats allowing the base-coat grey to show through.



For air recognition a white bar is painted over the engine hood. Don't forget the chipping medium before you spray the white (mixed with some drops of gloss varnish).



The exhaust was painted with the help of the fantastic Life Colour Rust colours set.

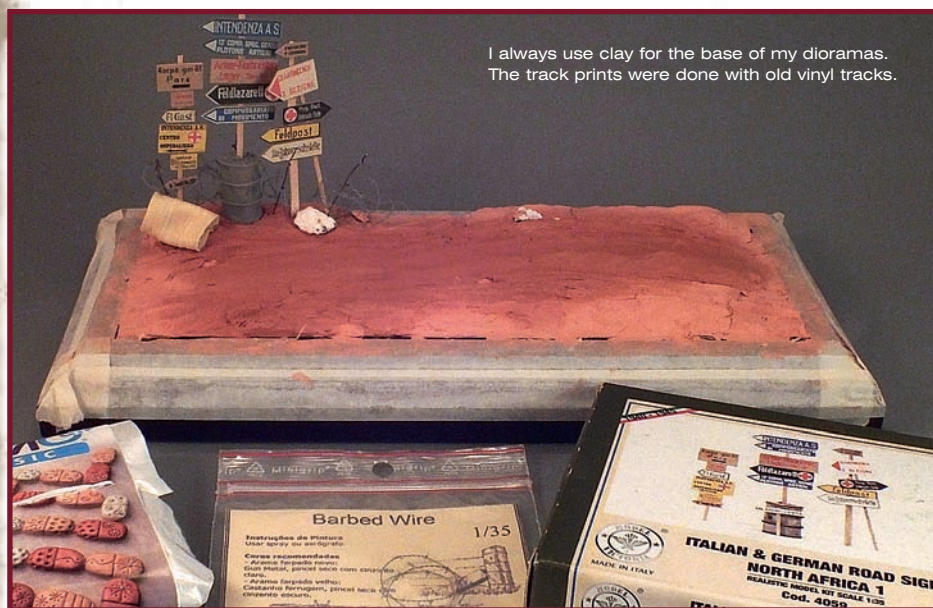


The windscreen also got a weathering with thinned AK Dust effects. I treated the colour with white spirit to get an irregular effect. All the edges, where most of the dust is gathered, got a pinwashing with AK Dust effects and thinned Mussini Napels Yellow.



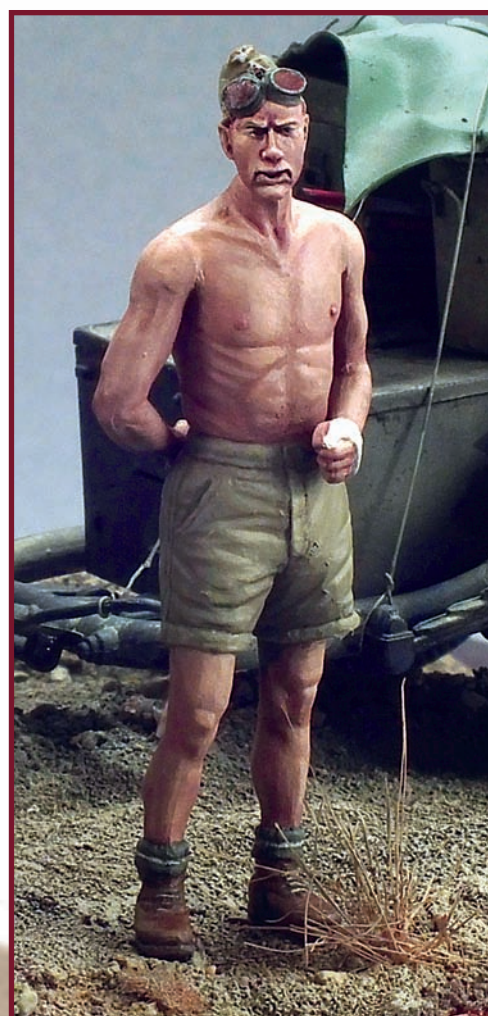
Chipping at the wooden loading platform was also done with the grey basecolour

THE SCENE



At first I placed my truck on a simple wooden base to display it but realised that it lacked it's natural environment; I decided to make a small vignette for it. The groundwork was sculpted with clay which was covered with fine sand and small stones. Model Victoria offers a set of German and Italian roadsigns used in the African theatre. The signs are printed directly on wood. The set is really complete and contains also a resin barrel and assorted balsa wood. The colours of the roadsigns are really bright requiring some weathering.

First I did a overspray of heavy thinned Tamiya Buff (9:1) followed by chipping with wood and sand colours. I was lucky to have a barbed wire set from RMG Resin Products in stock. This is by far the best barbed wire you can get, but I think it's no longer available. Miniart's figure fits the scenario with the Mercedes truck perfectly. The sculpting and the anatomy of the figure is excellent, I only added a Alpine head and painted him in Humbrol enamels.



Sand and gravel was fixed by a mixture of water and PVA woodglue.



I always start painting the groundwork in a dark colour. Here I mixed some sand colours with some drops of black. The first highlight is a cloudy overspray without black. More highlights followed with a brighter colour mix. Small stones and gravel were highlighted with a small brush in a light sand colour.







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35 142 Mercedes Benz L 1500 A cargo truck

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35 019 Flakpanzer I Ausf A

077 Headlights

55008 D.A.K. Palm Symbols

L3514 German Jerrycans

4059 German & Italian Roadsigns Afrika

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This model is dedicated to Alina & Alex
Rizhko from Miniart, based in Ukraine.

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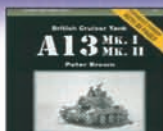
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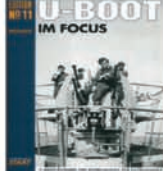
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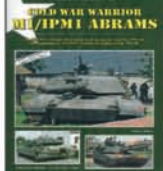
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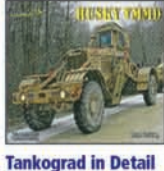
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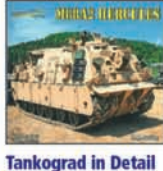
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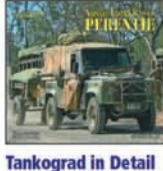
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UKRAINE CONFLICT COLORS



New

A.MIG 7125
UKRAINE ATO COLORS



The war in eastern Ukraine or "Anti Terrorist Operation ATO" of 2014 and 2015 has become one of the most popular worldwide modeling issues. The large amount of photos and information about the vehicles that are participating here has made many modelers choose this topic. The many color systems of all vehicles used there are indeed complex and multitudes of standardized colors are mixed with others improvised on the battlefield. This set brings together a small selection of the most common colors used on combat vehicles.

A.MIG-048 **YELLOW**
A.MIG-051 **LIGHT GREEN KHV-553M**
A.MIG-052 **DEEP GREEN**
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A.MIG-914 **RED BROWN LIGHT**

In 2014 the eastern regions of Ukraine, Donetsk and Lugansk (Donbas), part of the New Russia territories, rebelled against the central government and began a protracted war mainly supported by the Russians, providing armored vehicles to separatists. Although initially the "rebels" used vehicles captured from the Ukrainian army, with time new vehicles of Russian origin begin to appear. As the Ukrainian army used many colors in common with the Russian army and everything was mixed in the battlefield, the rebels decided to use a highly visible and common green, the color A.MIG 054, to identify and distinguish their vehicles from Ukrainians.

A.MIG 7126
NOVOROSSIYA COLORS

New

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