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SMERCH
AND GRAB



U.S. MAIN BATTLE TANK M1A2A SEP

ABRAMS TUSK I/TUSK II

1/35
SCALE



美国 M1A2 SEP "艾布拉姆斯" TUSK I / TUSK II 主战坦克



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CONTENTS

- 2 Smerch 'N Grab**
Meng's mighty Russian launcher gets an in-depth review from Domingo Hernandez Martin.
- 12 Panzerkampfwagen IV Part 5**
The Editor continues detailing Trumpeter's 1:16 kit.
- 20 SWS**
Glenn Bowen creates a stunning scene with Great Wall's kit.
- 28 BMP-2**
Mark gives Trumpeter's kit sunburn.
- 36 Small Scale Somua**
Some serious 1:72 surgery by Francois-Regis Binder.
- 46 Keeping Track**
New releases.
- 56 Staghound**
Antonio Martin Tello adds a winter chill to Bronco's kit.

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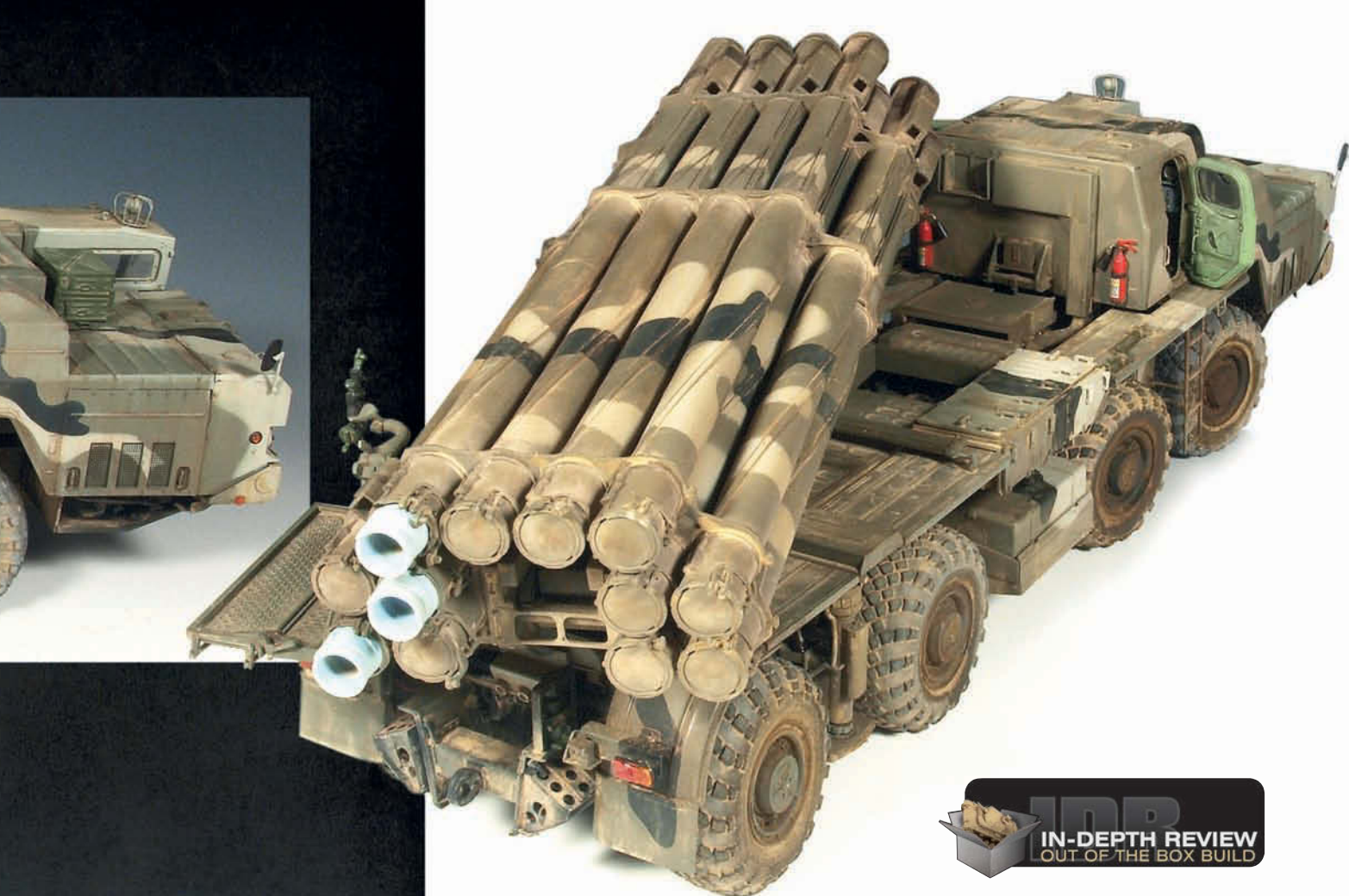
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**MENG's new monster kit
modelled and described by
Domingo Hernandez Martin**



1:35



The BM-30 'Smerch' (tornado) was developed in the early 1980s and was pressed into service with the Soviet Army in 1987. At the time it was the most powerful multiple-launch rocket system in the world. Even today it remains one of the deadliest, if not THE deadliest artillery rocket system. Currently the Russian Army operates just over 100 of these artillery rocket systems. It saw combat during both Russian wars in Chechnya and recently in the Ukraine and in Syria. Other operators are Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kuwait, Peru, Syria, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela. The Russian designation for the whole artillery system is the 9K58, while the launching vehicle is the 9A52.

This type of model is the best built in sections, each to be completed separately and always with a camo scheme in mind so the patterns match during the final assembly. I also wanted to leave the doors open to view the interior, so it was important to finish all of the interior separately. Two things pleasantly surprised me with this kit from Meng, the fact that you could buy a set of resin wheels with a weighted effect, essential I think with this massive vehicle, and also despite the high number parts, this is such a well designed simple and clean kit which was a pleasure to assemble. Meng has taken a step forward for modellers, it's like Tamiya to build, but with more detail.

The construction process starts as you'd expect with the hugh chassis and drive-train, it's a shame because much is hidden in the finished model.

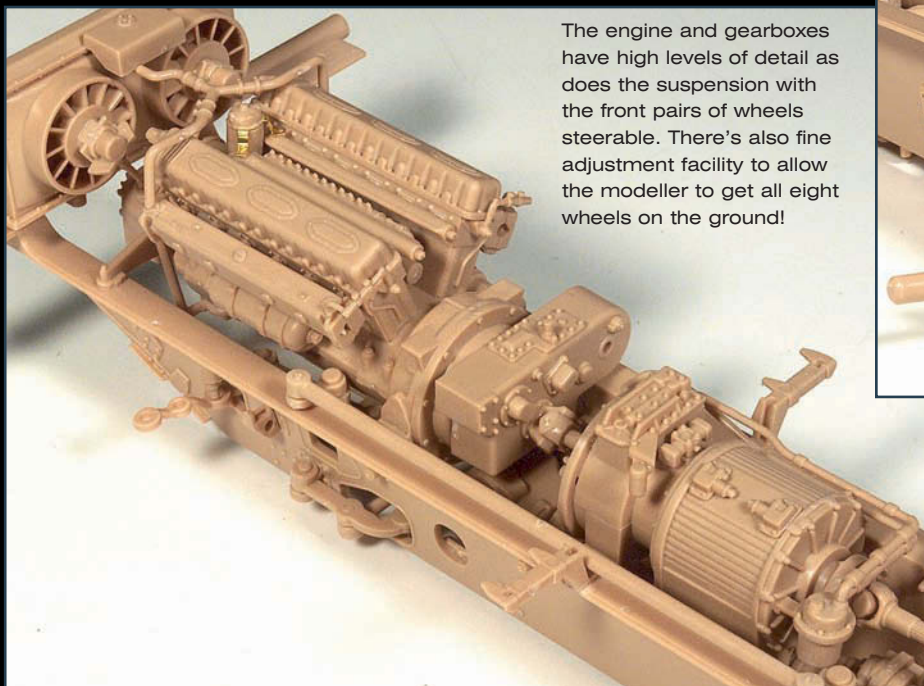


9A52-2 SMERCH

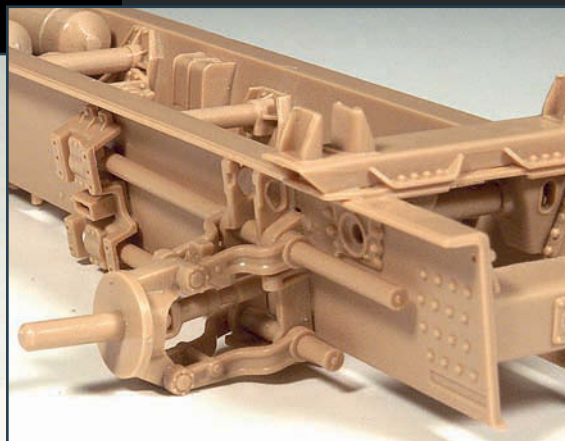
Rolling stock



I experimented with the kit wheels putting a screw through the vinyl tyre and into the wheel rim which pulls the tyre to give a weighted look. Effective, but still not as nice as the resin options.



The engine and gearboxes have high levels of detail as does the suspension with the front pairs of wheels steerable. There's also fine adjustment facility to allow the modeller to get all eight wheels on the ground!

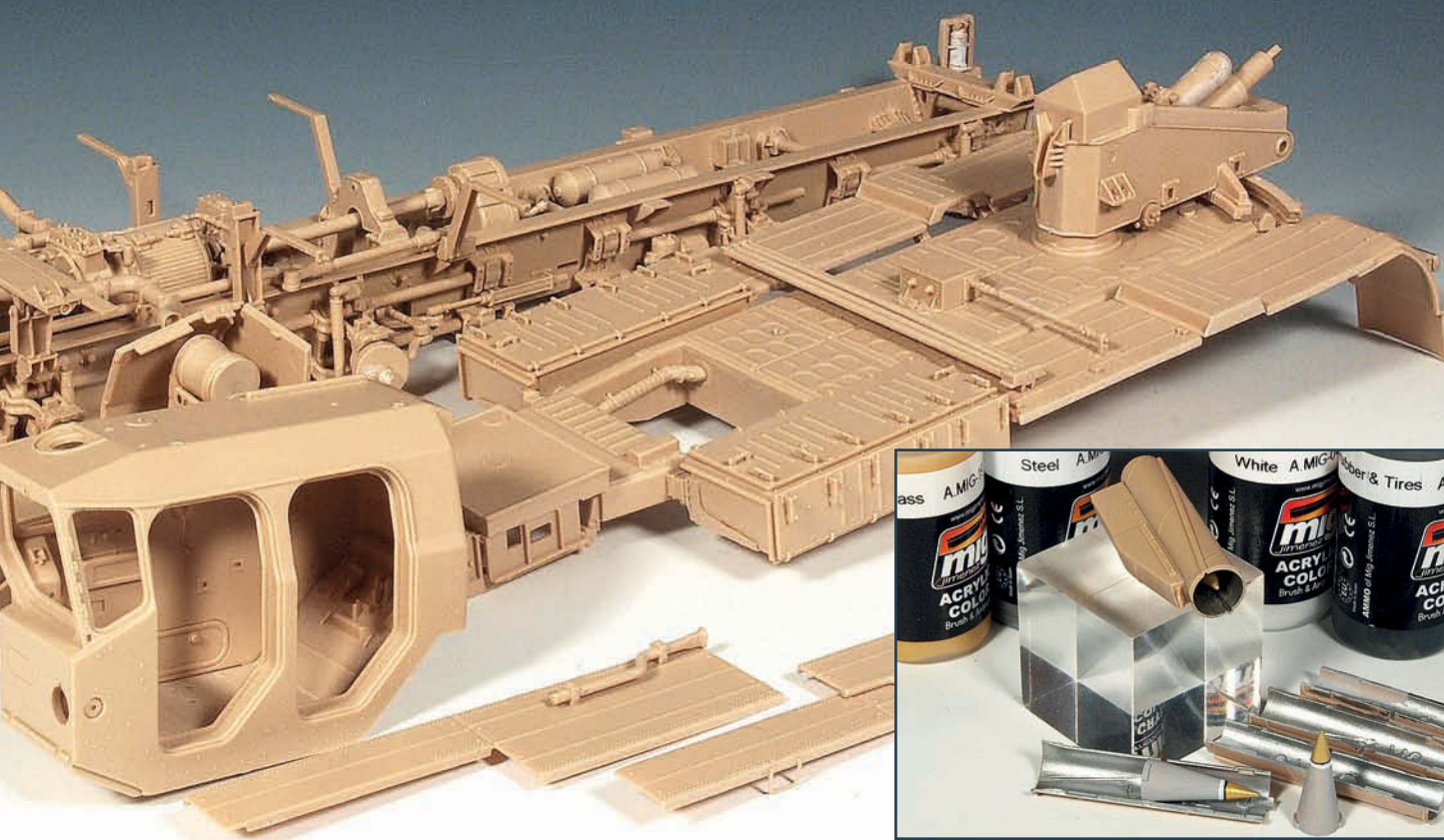


The finesse of the chassis detail really shows when painted and weathered.

The Smerch chassis is a model in itself! It's a shame to hide any of that detail with the cab and launcher units.



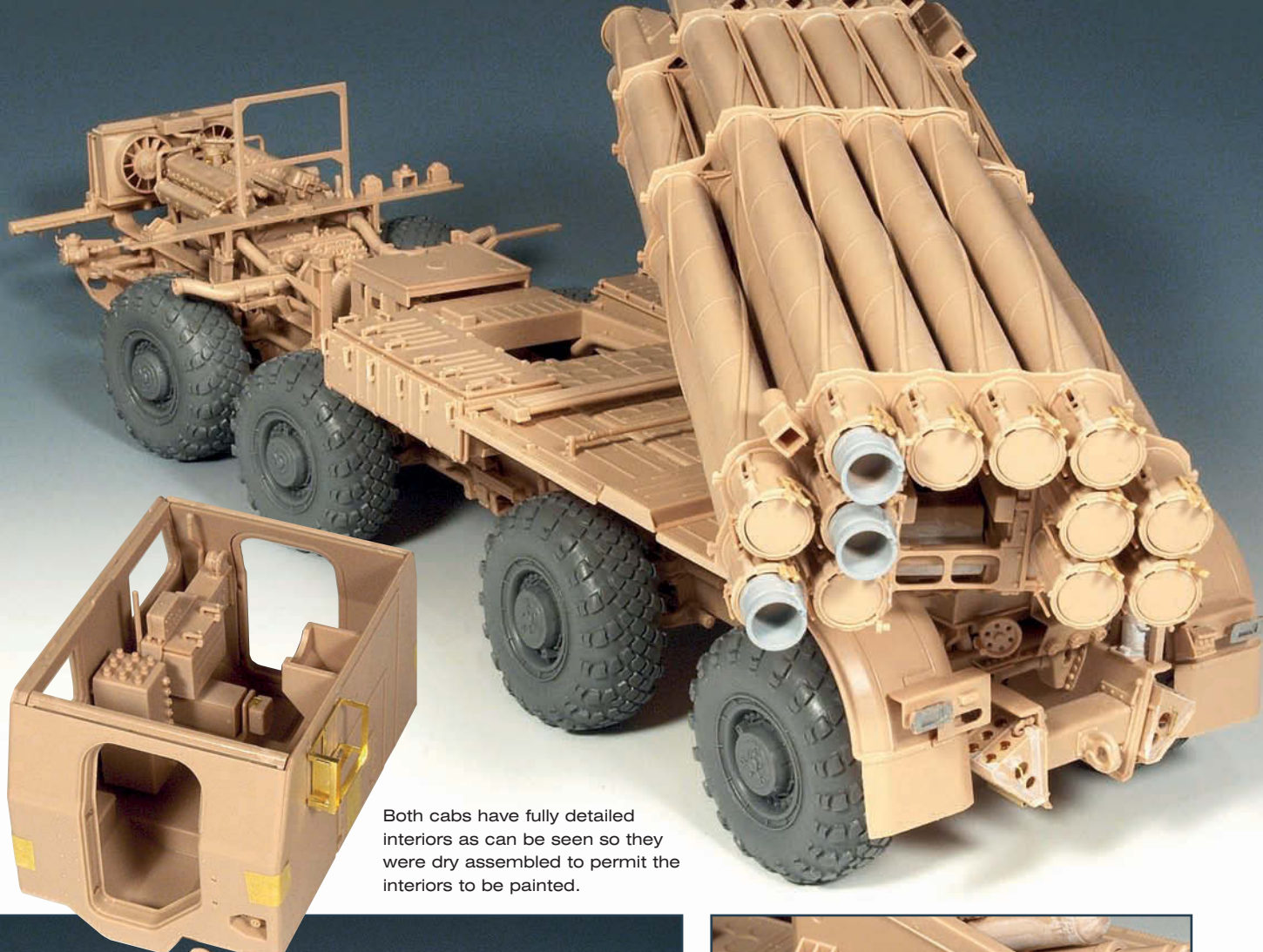
A major feature of the model are the launcher tubes. There are many but the fit is very good making for a swift assembly. There is options to build the launchers in transport or firing positions. I decided to leave some of the end caps off revealing the warheads inside for added interest and detail.



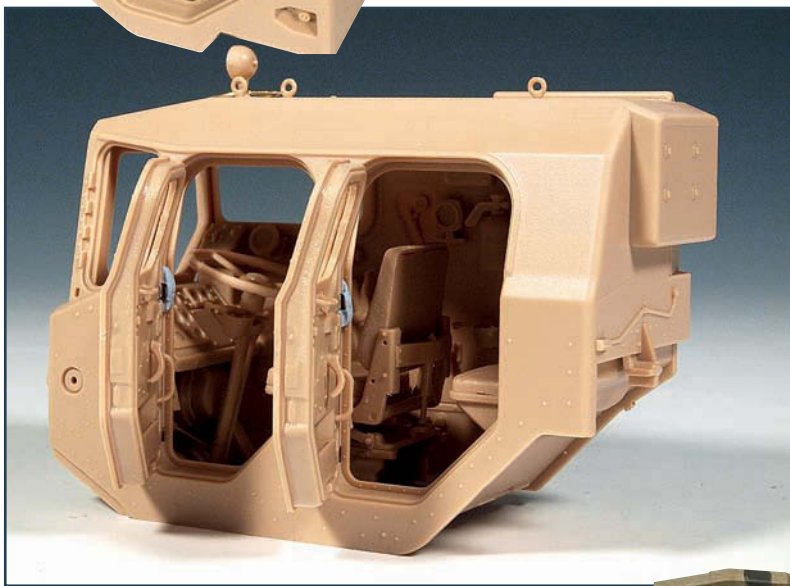
The rocket warheads and the insides of the tubes were pre-painted before they were assembled.

After a dry-fit of the sub-assemblies I was satisfied that I would be able to paint the model in sections and bring everything together without fear of having to do any filling or breaking of delicate detail. This is a beautifully engineered kit.





Both cabs have fully detailed interiors as can be seen so they were dry assembled to permit the interiors to be painted.



Ready for paint



I started the process of painting with the interior of the cabin. A mix of XF-71 and XF-76 from Tamiya, the latter to give some highlights. I also added a few drops of X-22 clear which helps with the flow of subsequent weathering.



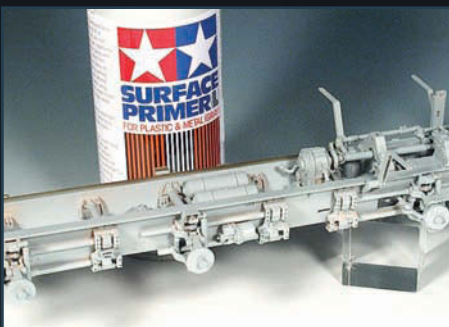
Meng supply some interior decals to enhance the cab area. Micro Set and Sol helped bed the decals into place with a finishing coat of X-22 clear.



The strong contrasts of the interior colours allow much of the detail to still be seen even when closed up.



The control cabin elements all painted and ready for final assembly.



I next tackled the chassis assembly. As this was to be heavily weathered I gave an overall coat of Tamiya Surface Primer...



followed by Tamiya XF-1 which has good coverage as a base colour.



To break-up the monotone black I began by airbrushing sand and brown in random patterns.



Splattered mud from the rolling wheels was added using pigments 'wet' with an old brush. When dry this effect can be toned down easily by brushing the pigment.



Heavily diluted oil colours were used to suggest damp areas and lubricant stains.

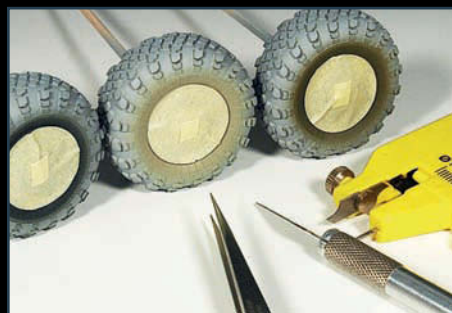


Wheel-istic

As the wheels are a major visual part of the finished model I took time to get a natural weathered look. As the wheels are so far apart on the vehicle because of it's size, I gave each of them variations of dry and wet mud using Ammo dry pigments and their Dark Mud Nature Effect. The first step was to base coat the wheels and mask the coloured centres with some home-cut masks followed by airbrushing the tyres with black and grey tones. A

heavy dusting of dry pigments were brushed away to various degrees including the wheel rims and hubs leaving dry dirt in the tyre tread pattern.

A nice contrast to the dark colours with the dirt and grime are the exhaust pipes. Base coated with a bright aluminium they were washed with various tones of light rust and burnt umber. Touches of sooty black pigment were added to the outlet.



Camo colours

For the base colour made a mixture of 70% of XF-71 Dark Green, XF-20% 80 and 10% of XF-57 to give a little warmth to the green. With this mix I airbrushed the body parts with thin coats.

Following the camouflage patterns of Meng's instructions I used rolls of Blu-Tac to outline the shapes. The second colour was a mixture of 80% XF-80 and 20% of XF-57 applied with care to avoid over-spray.

The third colour, and since I was a little tired of masking, was applied with a brush, basically black Vallejo and a few drops of flat flesh and blue. It is highly recommended to apply two or three coats diluted best results when brushing.

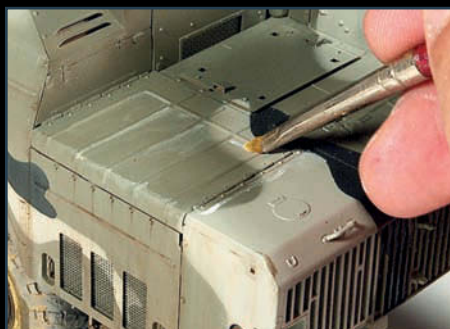




A nice contrasting touch of colour and realism is displayed with the light lenses which are base-coated in bright silver overpainted with Ammo's semi-translucent Acrylic Crystal Colours



Some restrained areas of wear and tear were added, obvious parts such as handles and the crew ladder were gently brushed with Vallejo German Camo Black-Brown with touches of silver to replicate polished bare metal.



To add some scale dimension, panel outlines were highlighted with dark washes and white oil colour blended by brush.



The classic touch of clear wiper areas on windcreens was done with home cut masks and a gentle coat of matt varnish.



Ammo's Dark Brown Wash for Green Vehicles was mixed with sand coloured pigments to get dust deposits across the horizontal surfaces.

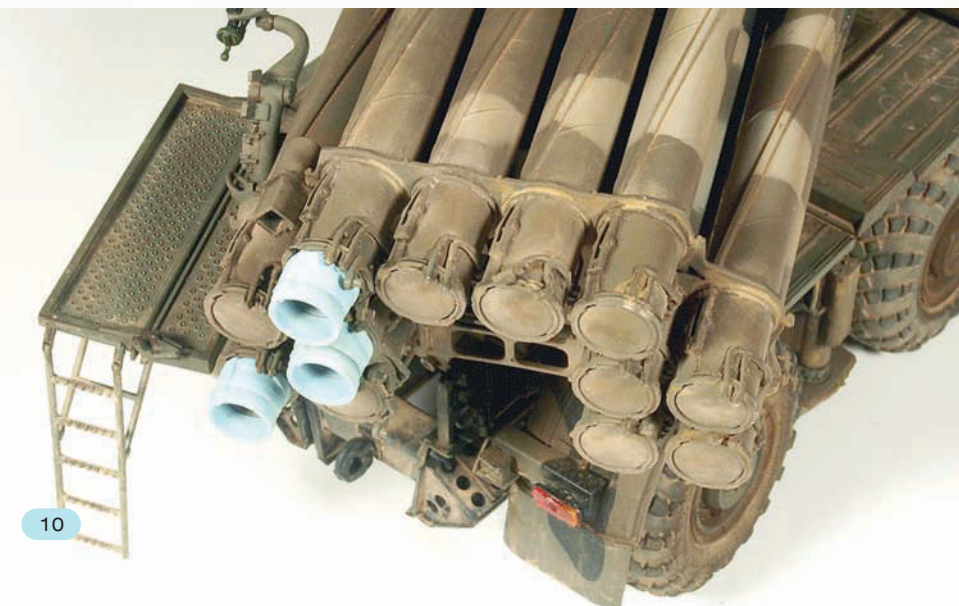


Another nice touch from Meng are the self-adhesive reflective mirrors



The rocket assembly was finished in exactly the same way as the rest of the body.







This is Meng's most ambitious kit yet. The designers have succeeded in making such a large and complicated vehicle a pleasure to build. With such a large number of parts this won't be a quick project for even the most proficient of modellers, it's one to build carefully and with patience but the Smerch will take pride of place in your display cabinet!

SMERCH



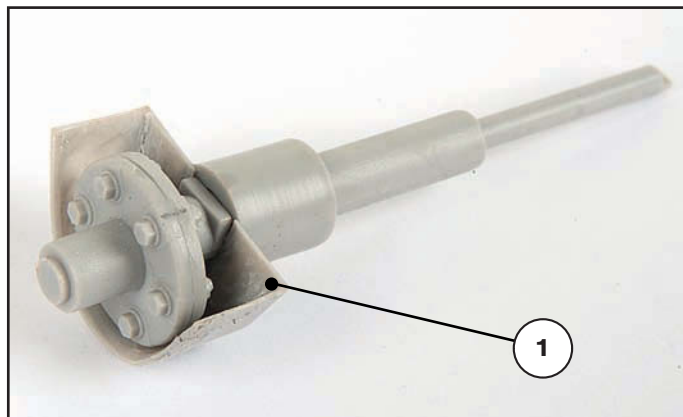
Panzerkampfwagen

David Parker builds Trumpeter's 1:16 kit

Part Five

In this installment I was able to finalise the work on the drive shafts in the bow and to enjoy the comparative luxury of simply assembling the ammunition racks almost out of the box! However, most of my time has been taken up with building a replacement auxiliary generator for the engine bay. The kit provides the early

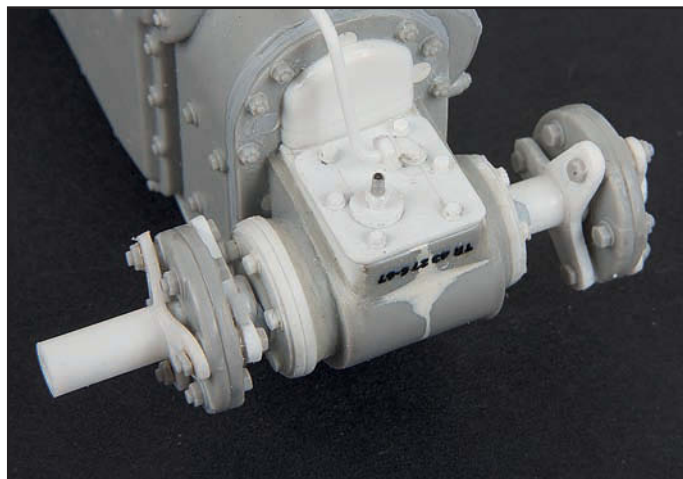
pattern of generator which is incorrect, and given the complex design of this I really wish they had got this correct. I hope that the coverage of the gradual progress in building the generator will provide some guidance on scratch building techniques along the way.



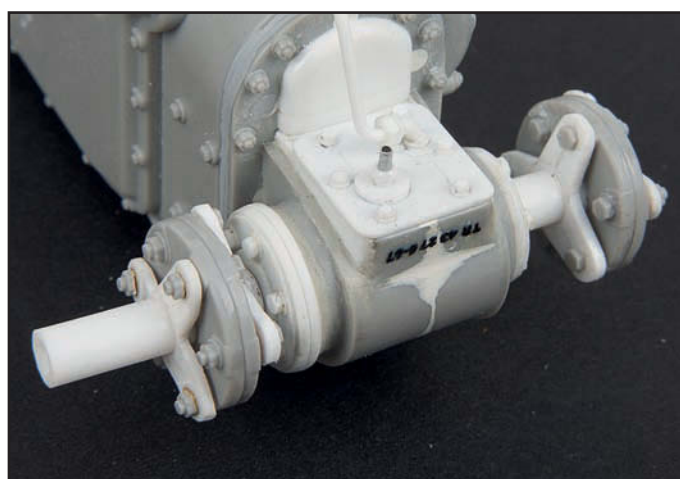
The kit drive shafts will need some work and my first job was to use a burr in a mini drill to thin down the protective cover **1** for the shaft on the Driver's side.



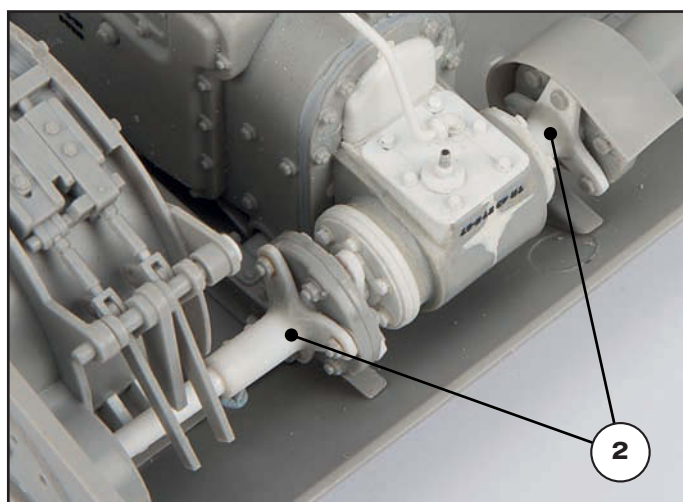
The kit replicates the pair of rubber discs at the heart of the rag gear coupling but does not include the three point brackets which attach to them. These are not mounted flush but stand off the rubber parts. I cut discs of plastic before marking out the shape of the brackets.



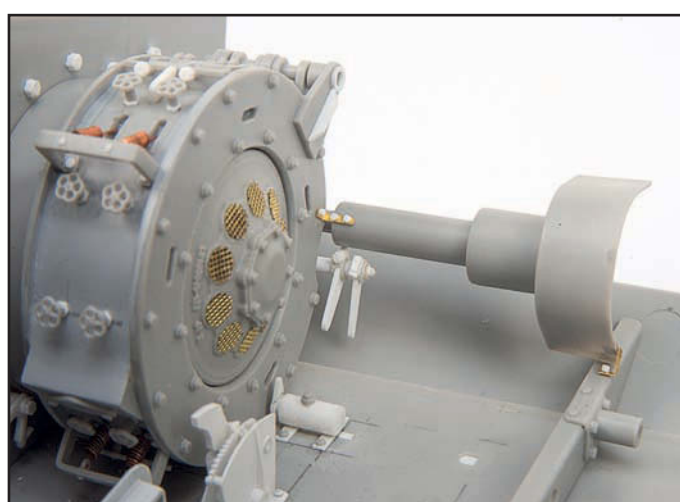
The brackets were bent into the required stepped shape and a disc of plastic glued to the centre of the underside. I shaved off the bolt head detail from the rubber discs before fitting the brackets and then I reattached the bolts. As can be seen the two rag gears are not symmetrical.



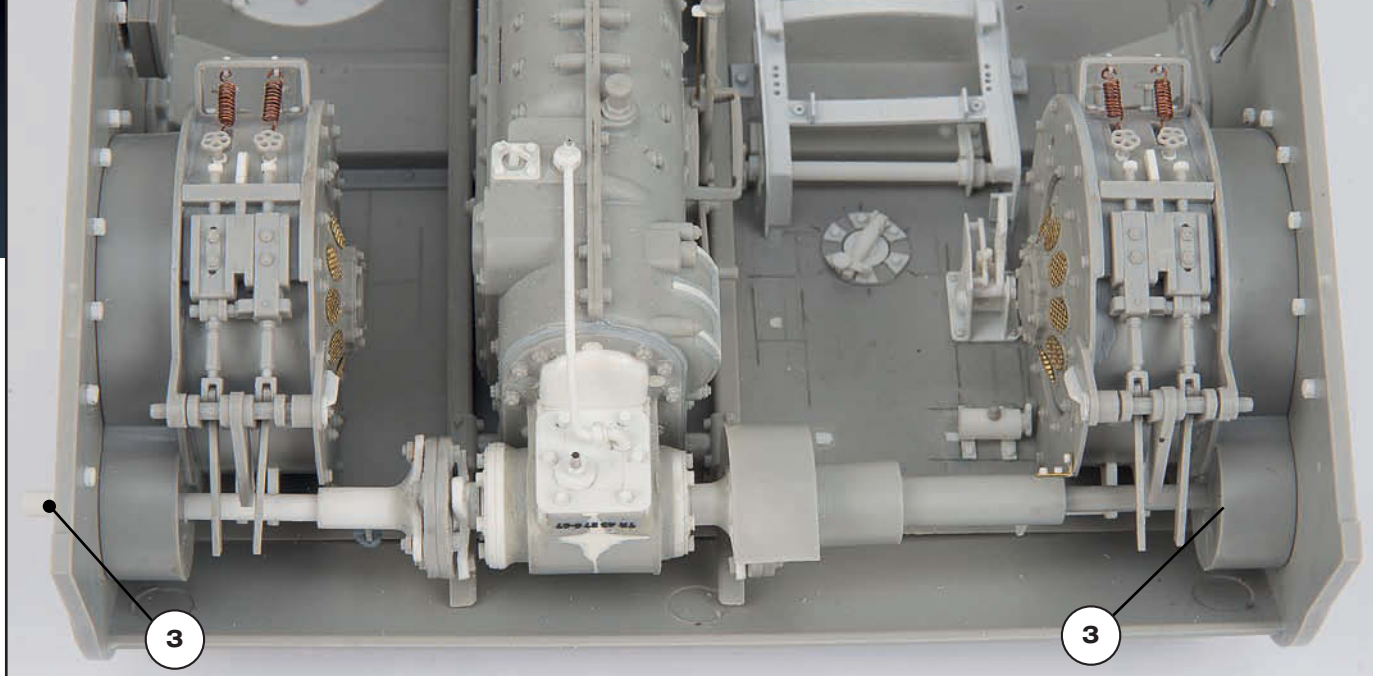
Having done that it was pointed out to me that the three point brackets should attach at opposing points rather than the same as I had done so I had to remove the inner brackets and move them!



The final step was to apply some Magic Sculp to blend the shafts of with the rag gear with the brackets **2** and I used a rubber tipped brush to give a smooth blend.

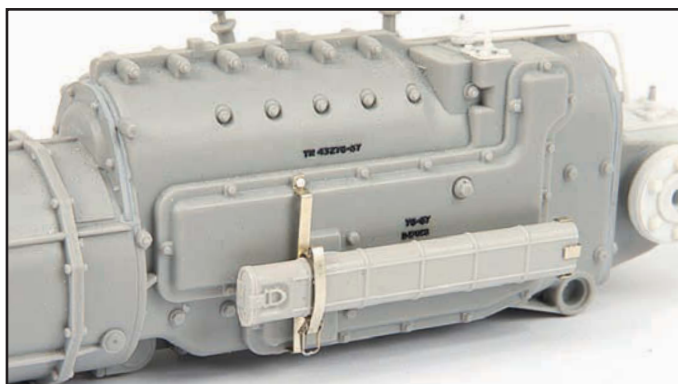
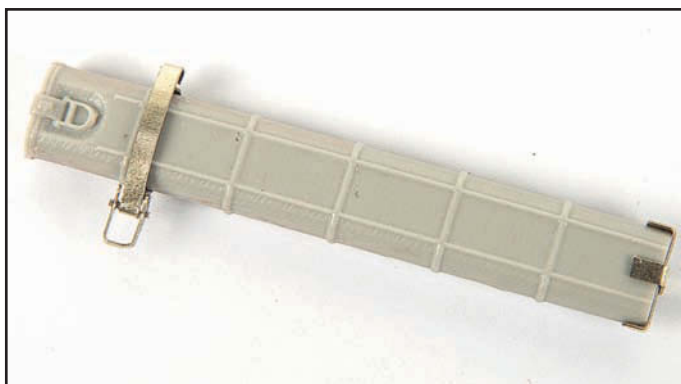


On the protective guard I added some small brackets that secure it to the brake drum and the gearbox rail, not an easy job!



Fitting the whole drive shaft assembly into the hull is not easy given the very tight tolerances. I drilled out a 2.5mm hole right through the point at which they connect with the brake drums **3**, which allowed me to slide the drive

shafts along their axis. Even so the fit is very tight and the way that both the gearbox and the break drum locate into the hull means that considerable care is required even to dry fit everything for this photograph.



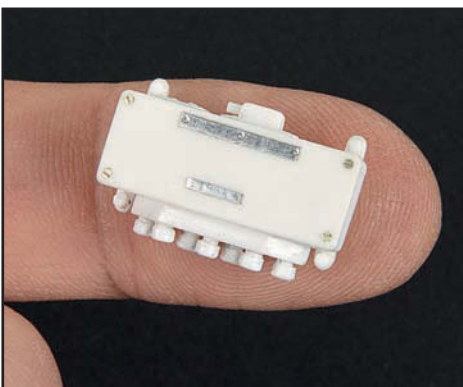
In part four you will recall that I was trying to establish the position of the spare MG barrel case in the vehicle. When reading a wartime intelligence report on the Panzer IV I found a reference to it being located on the side of the gearbox. Further research of preserved vehicles showed me the pair of

brackets still on the side of the gearbox and provided me with the information I needed to fabricate them. I used some spare strips of photoetch from an ABER set to form the clasp along with an ABER tool clasp latch.



The vertical hull ammunition racks were assembled from the box but I realised that painting the interior of them would be hard to do once they were completely assembled so I primed the interior with Mr Oxide Red Surfer 1000

which consentiently colour matches the real parts. On the three right hand bins I added the missing lip detail to the top edge of the bins from thin plastic strip and replaced the moulded latches with ABER photoetched versions.



Further to the work in Part 4 on the Z18 box, I was able to find much better all round photos of the real box so I reworked the part to correct some errors.

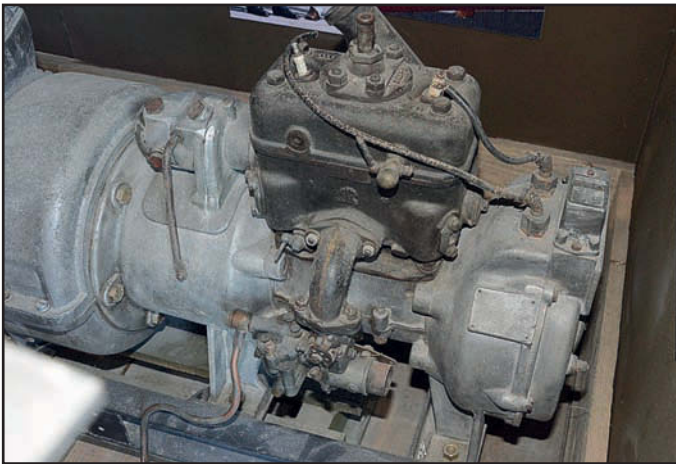
The seven cable ports on the bottom were rearranged in two rows and the pair of headphone sockets added to the top as well as fascia labels.



A change of scene now as we move to the engine bay and this little chap. He is the auxiliary generator providing electrical power without running the engine and identifiable by the small square exhaust muffler on the rear of the hull. The kit version seen here is only applicable for the Ausf. A to D.



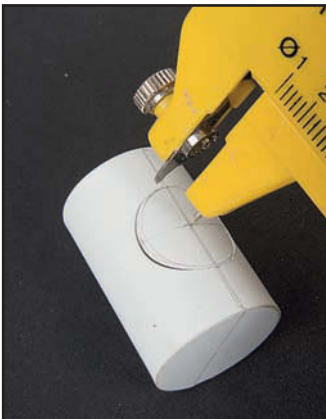
This is the version of the generator for the Ausf. E to H and quite different to the earlier example. The more streamlined generator housing is seen here.



This shows the other end of the generator which sits against the engine firewall. This example was removed from a knocked out vehicle in Normandy and used to power a post-war sawmill.



I began to make the new generator by starting with the generator housing by constructing a hollow plastic card cylinder from 20 thou plastic with 30 thou end caps. This was shortened in order to accept the laminated plastic discs seen here which were made of 2 and 3 40 thou discs.



I used a compass cutter to cut out a disc of plastic to accept the generator 'tower'. I constructed the tower by wrapping 20 thou plastic around a circular former and then dipping it in boiling water to fix the shape. This was then



glued to a disc of plastic. I then prepared some magic Sculp putty to fill both the cylinder and the tower.



Both the parts have been filled with the putty to give the whole thing more strength as the 20 thou plastic is quite fragile.



Before the putty set I fitted the tower and made sure that it was sitting at the correct height above the top of the cylinder.



I left the whole thing to set and several days later I added some more putty to blend the tower into the cylinder. In my haste to move on I put in near a radiator to harden the putty. Pockets of air inside the cylinder expanded blowing open the seams and distorting the cylinder into a barrel shape!



I had no choice but to start all over again, I managed to salvage the tower but had to make another cylinder. I also made the two heat formed collars to fit each end of the cylinder.



Here the cylinder and tower have been assembled without blowing them apart and the joint area blended with putty. The collars are then glued around each end, leaving a small overlapping lip which is trimmed when dry. Using an angled cut to trim this helps to blend the joint and you can see how all the joints are lined up along the underside of the part.



Returning to the laminated discs that I had made right at the start, I mounted them onto a spindle on my mini drill usually designed to carry cutting discs. Using abrasive emery paper I very gradually sanded them to achieve the rounded profile of the end caps.



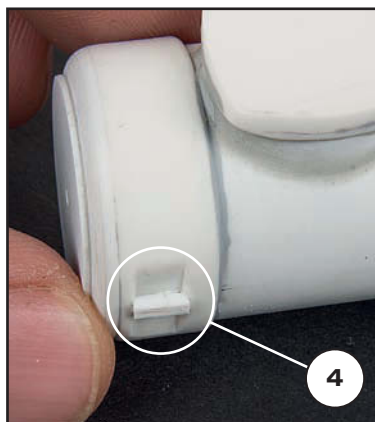
The caps were then fitted to each end of the cylinder. I then used sponge sanding sticks to achieve the final correct profile which blended into the rest of the shape.



With the overall shape established I marked out the axes of the housing before establishing the positions of the cut outs for the fixings. These were cut out using files to make the shapes.



I added the double flange around the front end of the generator by cutting oversized parts that were then sanded to shape once fixed in place. I also added the new top section of the tower using laminated plastic.



When adding the flanges the recesses in the cover needed to be filled first. Here an oversized section of plastic 4 has been glued into position across the gap.



Once it had set it was sanded back to be flush with the rest of the cover and allowing the flange parts to then be glued across it.



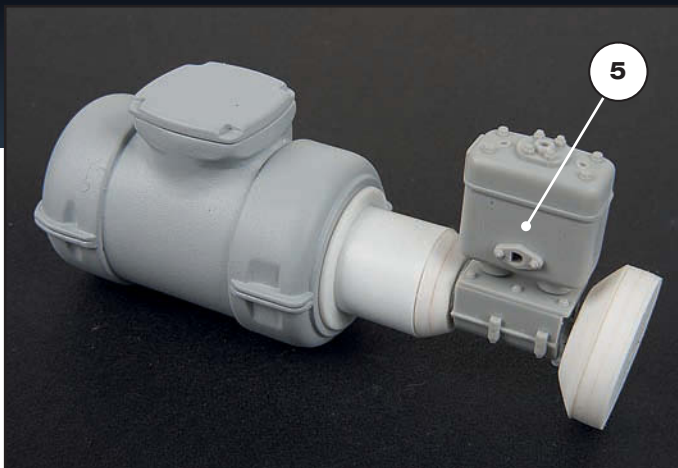
The second flange was then added to the rear end of the generator housing and this joins up to a disc on that face where the rest of the machine bolts on to this housing.



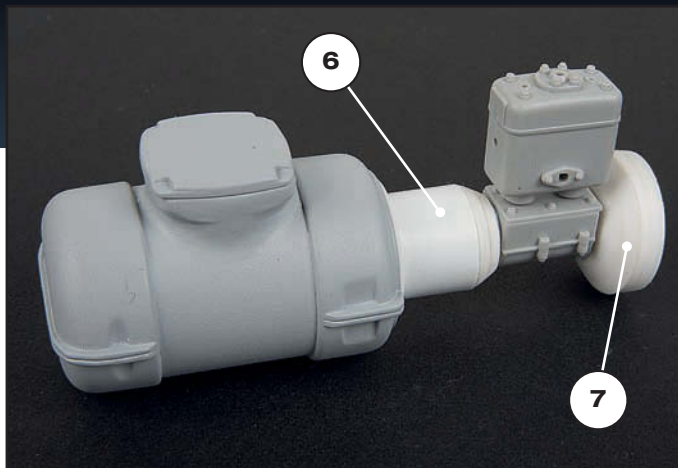
I made a cover plate for the top of the tower from laminated plastic with cut out corners for the screw fixings. On the reverse face of the tower I also added the angular panel to the base of the tower and blended it with putty. This will house the electrical output sockets for the generator.



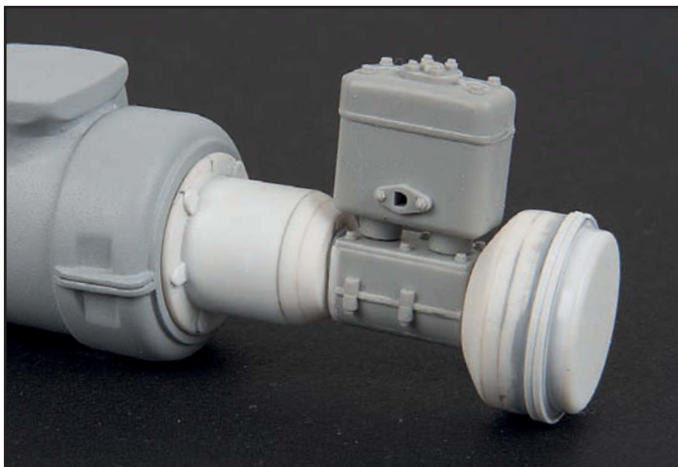
A coat of Mr Surfacer 500 shows any flaws or faults that need adjusting before moving on. You can also see the substantial size of the model!



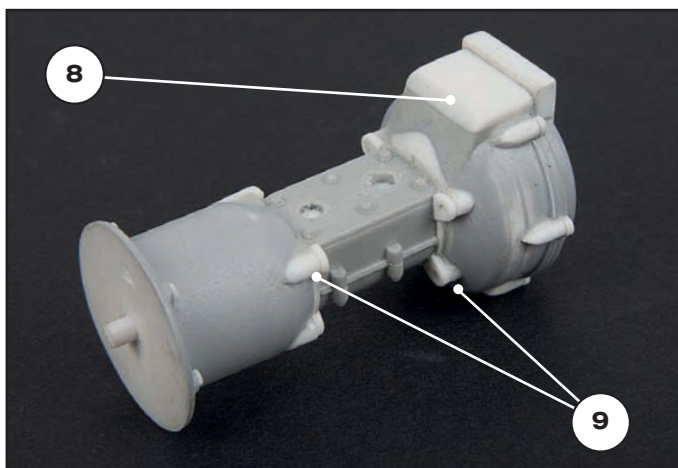
Rather than adding all the fine detail to the generator housing at this stage I moved on with the rest of the generator. I was able to utilise the central petrol engine section 5 from the kit version which saved some work.



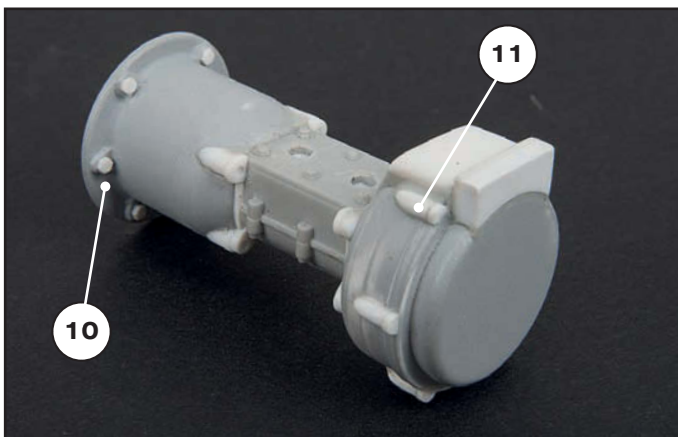
I used the same approach to make the front section 6 of a hollow cylinder filled with putty and a laminated end cap sanded to shape in the drill. The other end 7 was made from laminated discs with a laminated and drill sanded cap. The parts here are just dry fitted together.



Moving on with the shape of 7 I added another disc to extend the length of it and then added the end cap which is a smaller diameter. The ring where the end cap bolts onto the rest of the housing was cut from a strip of plastic, engraved to give the joint line and then it was wrapped around the housing.



With the basic shape established I moved on to adding the smaller details. The raised section 8 on the top of the housing was made with a section of thick plastic and then the gaps were blended with putty. Plastic rod was used to add the connecting points on the housings 9 and these too were blended in with putty.



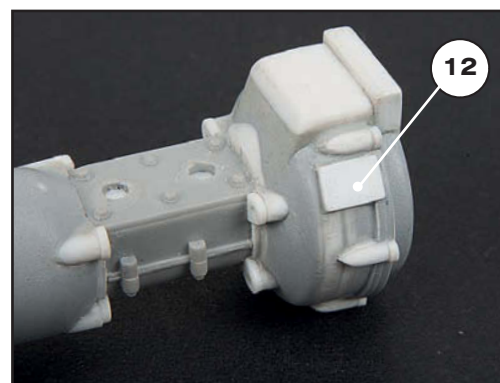
The flange fixings on the collar 10 were also blended with putty and the bolt head detail added. The fixing points 11 were made by cutting plastic rod in half and then sanding them to give the pointed ends. a fillet of plastic was glued under each one to allow them to sit over the lip of the joint flange.



The holes that I drilled in order to shape the end caps in the drill now serve as the perfect guide to align the different parts of generator. It also allowed me to work on the different sections and easily test fit everything together.



Plugging the parts together shows the generator taking shape but there are a couple of errors that I had not yet noticed that would need to be changed.



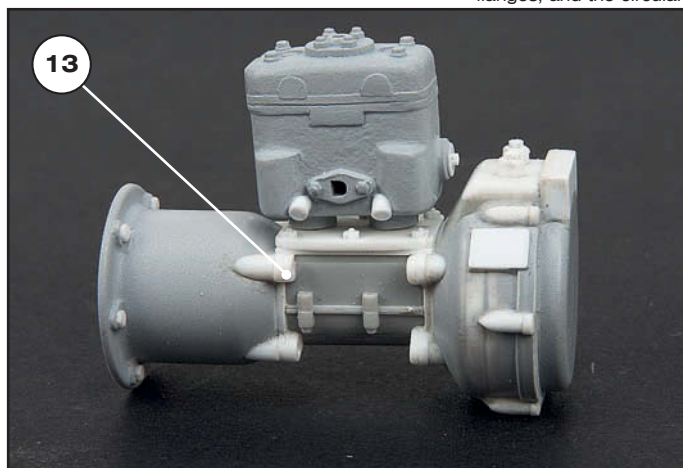
I added the flat section 12 to the end of the housing and blended it in with putty. It looks as if it is to mount a data placard which will be added later.



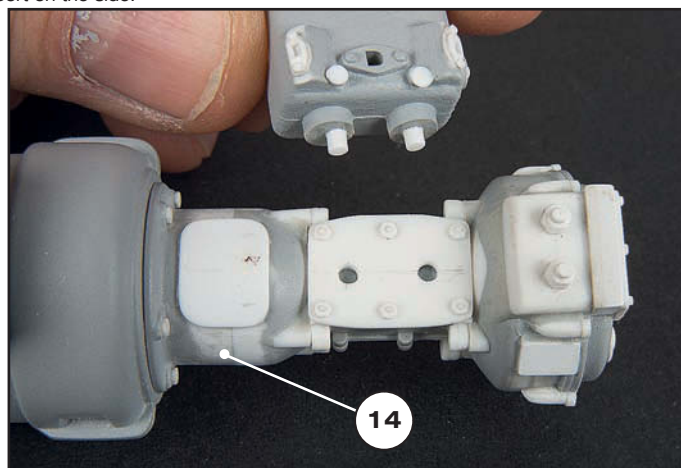
On the end of the housing I added the smaller details which are always the fun bits, notice that the six screw heads around the edge of the cover still need to be added.



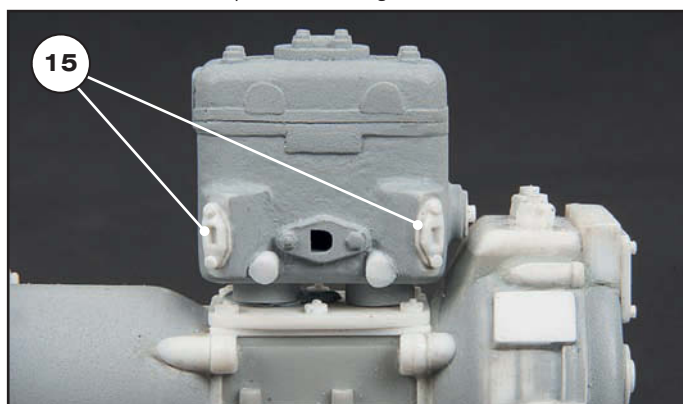
The cylinder head of the petrol motor which was taken from the kit part needed missing details adding, most importantly the two bulged sections on the front face. I used self-adhesive aluminium tape to extend the depth of the machined lip around the joint of the upper and lower parts and added the other machined areas from thin plastic. On the back I sanded off the detail and added the two exhaust flanges, and the circular port on the side.



I added a cast texture to the cylinder head with stippled Mr Surfacer. It was here that I noticed that the connector collars **13** I had already made were far too thin so I had to remove them, add a backing piece of the same thickness and then trim them to shape before refitting them all.



I fabricated a new mounting plate for the petrol motor with bolt head detail and added locating pins for the motor. You can also see that I have reworked the main body **14** as it was fractionally too long. I cut the body and adjusted the size before joining the two parts together again.



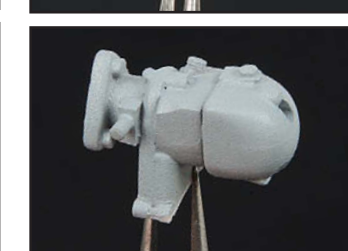
The pair of small flanges **15** on the front of the motor were carefully made from plastic and cutting the rectangular slots in them was a little bit tricky!



I have no idea what this piece of the motor is but it is another of those parts that seems to have been designed to be difficult to model! Again I used laminated plastic card to make the basic form with sponge sanding sticks used to shape the rounded areas.



Once again Blu Tac aides test fitting of the part onto the rest of the generator. The curved base plate that it stands on has already been fixed to the top of the generator body. You can also see where the body was shortened.



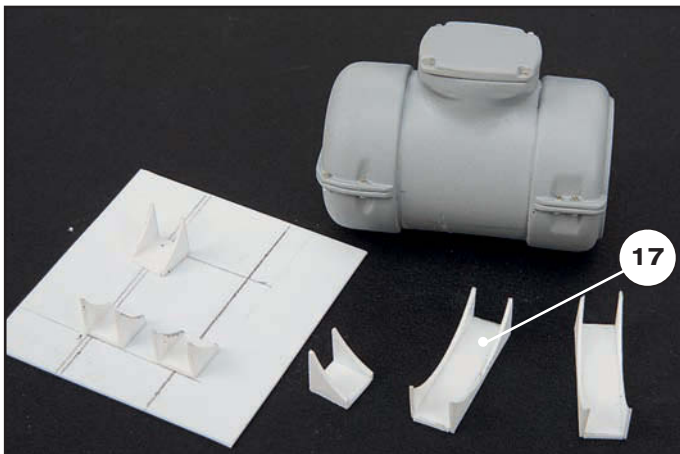
Finer details were then added along with the pipe and flange that connects the assembly to the cylinder head. I also carefully drilled out the three sets of holes in the front of the part. A coat of Mr Surfacer brings out the details.



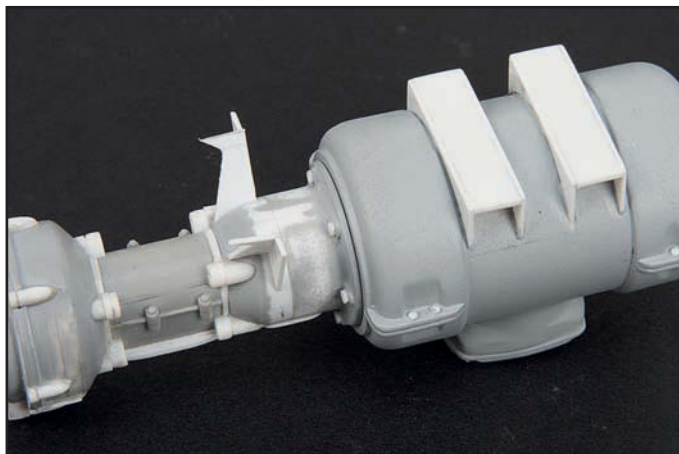
Another dry fit of the parts to check that everything fits and aligns, this is the side of the generator with faces into the engine bay as it is positioned against the left hand side of the hull.



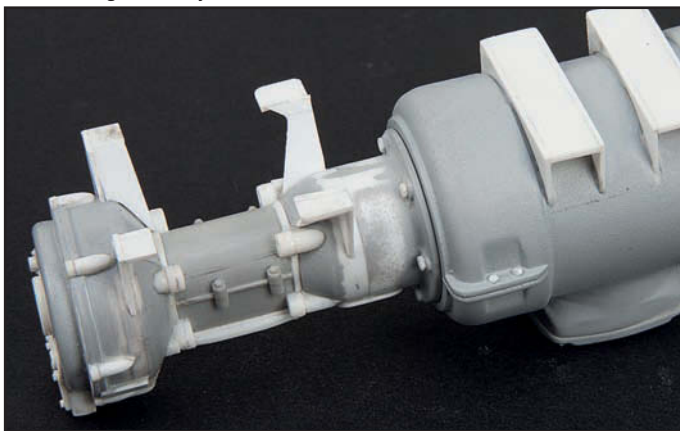
I added the screw head fixings to the generator housing using ABER photoetched screw heads. To get the correct height for these I first glued a disc of plastic **16** in position before gluing the screw head on top.



Making the feet for the generator proved to be a challenge. At first I constructed four individual feet but even drawing out the footprint and fixing them in place proved very difficult to get everything aligned. Instead I constructed two single feet **17** to run right across the housing and much easier to align correctly.



With the first feet fixed in position I was able to move onto the second set seen under construction here, taking care that the generator would sit level and that the feet aligned lengthways too.



The final pair of feet was then added, as the housing are all different shapes each set of legs had to be individually shaped and fitted to the housings.



The final result with the generator now standing on its feet. I worked on all the legs adding a small blended seam of putty into all the joints to replicate the finish of the real feet.



The exhaust pipe was the next detail and I used the heat from my soldering iron to help me to bend the plastic rods to make the exhaust which was secured by pins to the housing.



I managed to salvage a couple of parts from the kit carburettor to incorporate into my new version. Photoetched mesh was added to the front of the air filter and ABER photoetched screws add great touches of detail.



The carburettor is test fitted to the rest of the petrol motor.



At this point I also started adding the fine detail to the generator housing using both photoetched bolts and plastic ones produced with the RP Toolz Hexagonal punch and die set.



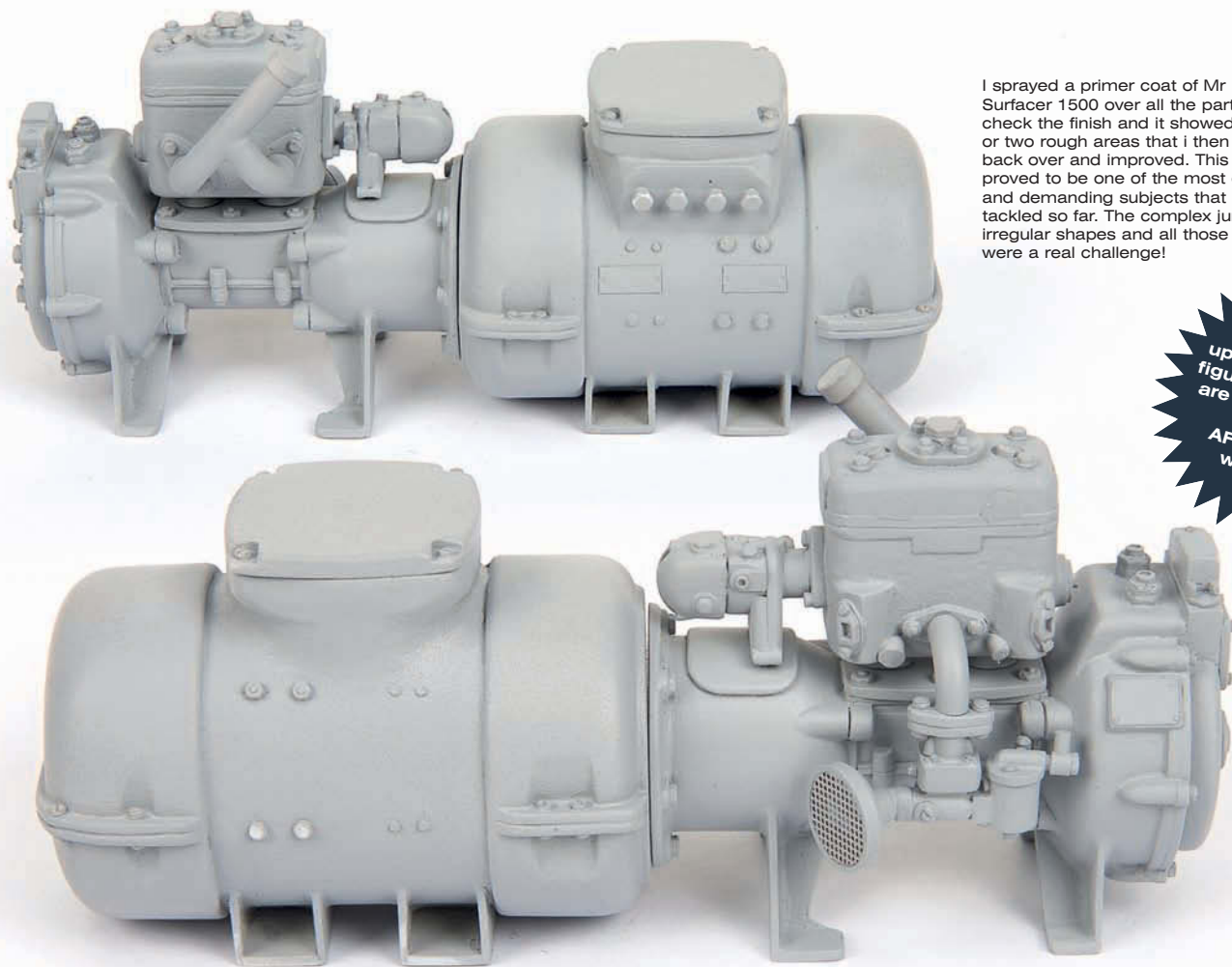
Similar detail was added to the other side of the housing along with the four power outlet sockets and the labels made of self-adhesive aluminium foil.

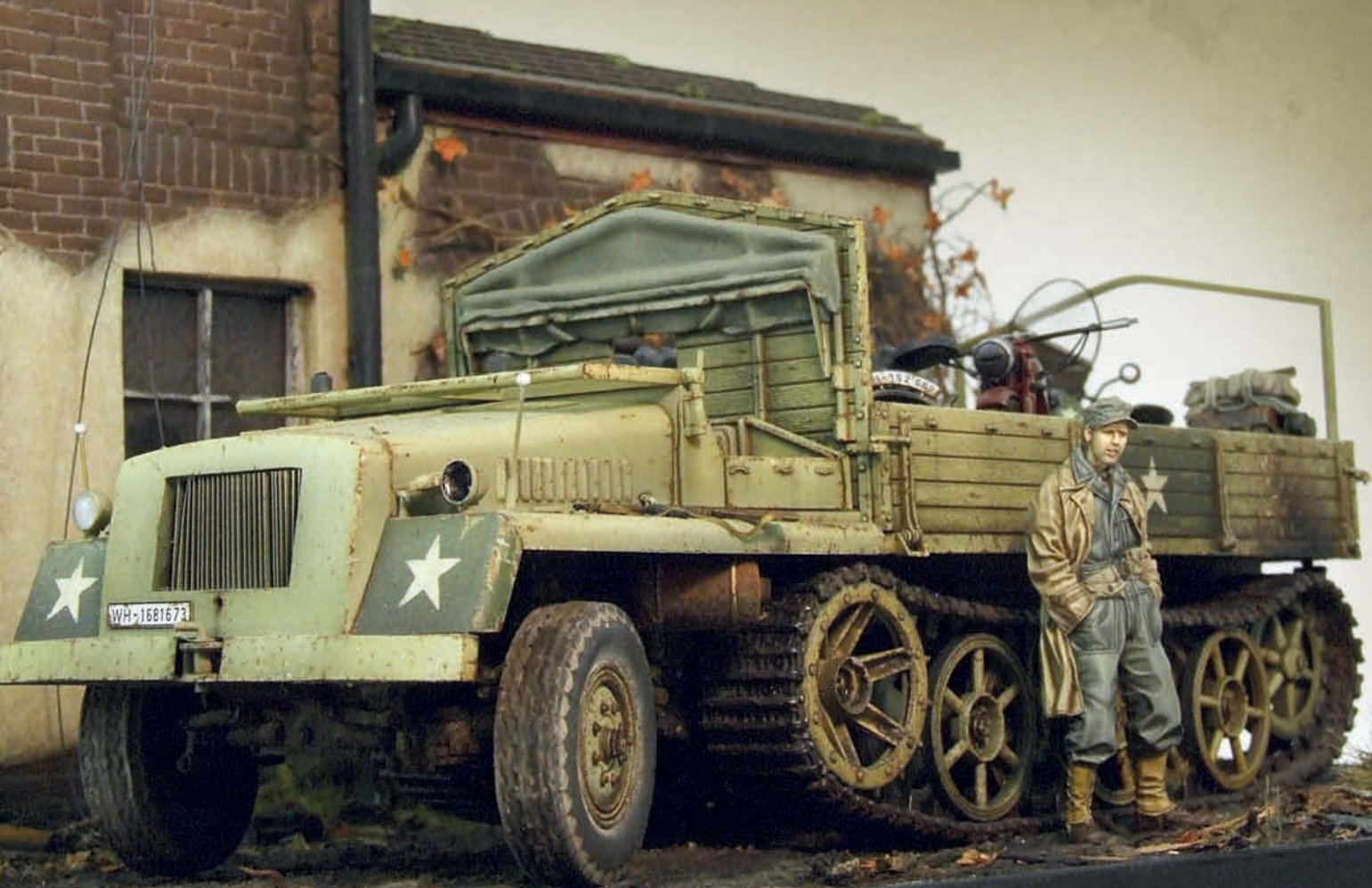


Final touches were things like the spark plug and I just made one to have a resin copy made.

I sprayed a primer coat of Mr Finishing Surfacers 1500 over all the parts to check the finish and it showed up one or two rough areas that I then went back over and improved. This generator proved to be one of the most complex and demanding subjects that I have tackled so far. The complex jumble of irregular shapes and all those curves were a real challenge!

Resin detail upgrades and the figure mannequins are now available from the AFV Modeller web-shop.





The Enthusiast

Great Wall Hobbies SWS

When Great wall Hobbies first announced that they were to release a new range of German halftracks based upon the SWS chassis the modelling world got very excited. Up until then the only ones on the market were the very old and not so good Italeri offering or a very expensive and out of production resin one. At the time the Editor sent me one to build for the magazine. Several years later here's the result! It was not that I was bored with the subject, but when I received the model I was in the process of moving house, so I would like to thank David for being so patient.

The construction of the Great Wall SWS followed the instructions from step 1 straight through to the end. There were no major problems to report. In fact it went together like a dream. David was also kind enough to send



MODELLED AND DESCRIBED BY GLENN BOWEN

along ABER's photo etch set for the model as well. This is indeed a very full and impressive detail set. I will admit I did not use all of it as I thought the majority of the kit parts were just as good. For instance, ABER added a fret to replace the bonnet, this would have been perfect if I was portraying the model with it open but I wasn't, so the kit part was just as good. The only part that I would definitely replace would be the front grill as the kit part is one solid piece. The model comes with a very nice tarp to go over the cab but not one for the cargo area. Bronco now offers this kit with both tarps. I wanted to portray my model with the cab tarp in the folded back position but as the kit does not come with this option, nor is there one available from the aftermarket guys, the only option I was left with was to scratch build one. This was quite easy to do using various sized plastic card for the framework. Then I took some magic sculp and rolled it out into a thin sheet and draped and folded it around the framework. It is always good to have great reference books for this



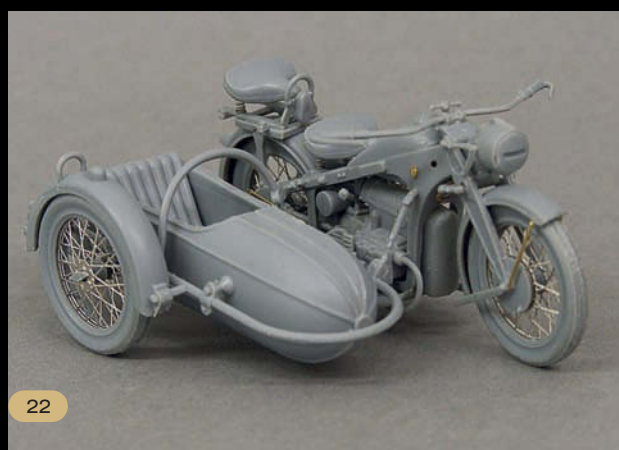
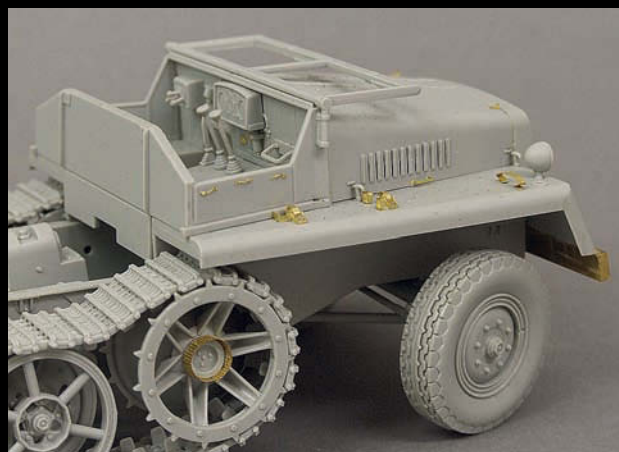


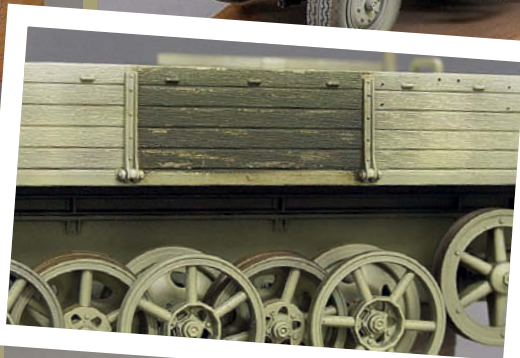
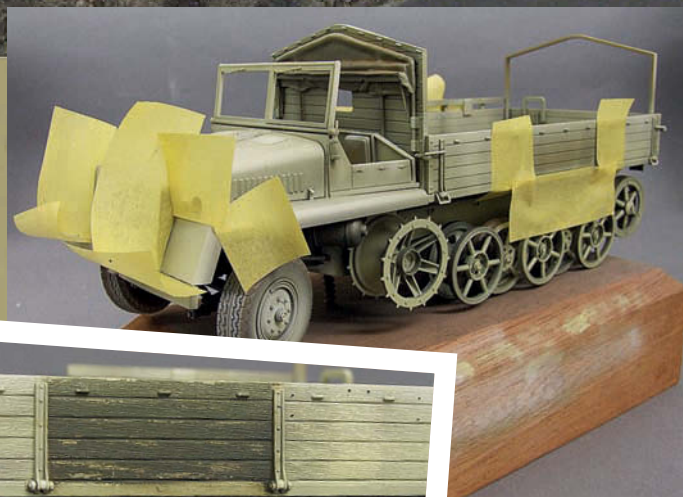
sort of thing, and they don't come much better (for me anyway) than Concord Publications "Panzer in the Gun Sights 2" book. There are a series of photos in this book that my vehicle is loosely based on. As you can see from the picture of the assembled model I only replaced a few small fittings with parts from the update set and the kit running gear looks excellent.

Splash of Colour

For the painting stages I built the kit in sub-assemblies to make painting easier. I had the vehicle's main chassis, with the wheels and tracks left separate. At the time I was starting to paint AK interactive had just released their German Dunkelgelb Modulation set. This set was perfect for what I wanted to achieve with my model. I started off with priming the whole model and then I

applied the shadow areas followed by a dark base colour and then by several lighter shades. When I first looked at the end result I must admit it did look a bit on the bright side, but when a brown wash was applied the whole thing toned down and started to look more uniform. I wanted to add some little personal touches, such as having one of the front wheels left in red primer and some of the rear inner wheels green, as if they've been removed from another vehicle. As I wanted to depict this particular SWS in Allied service I needed to apply some stars. To do this I started by masking off certain areas and applying a coat of green then over this, then the stars were applied. With the base colours done it was time to start on the weathering. It would take too long to list every single thing that I did through this stage so I will just point out some of the things I did and used. I must

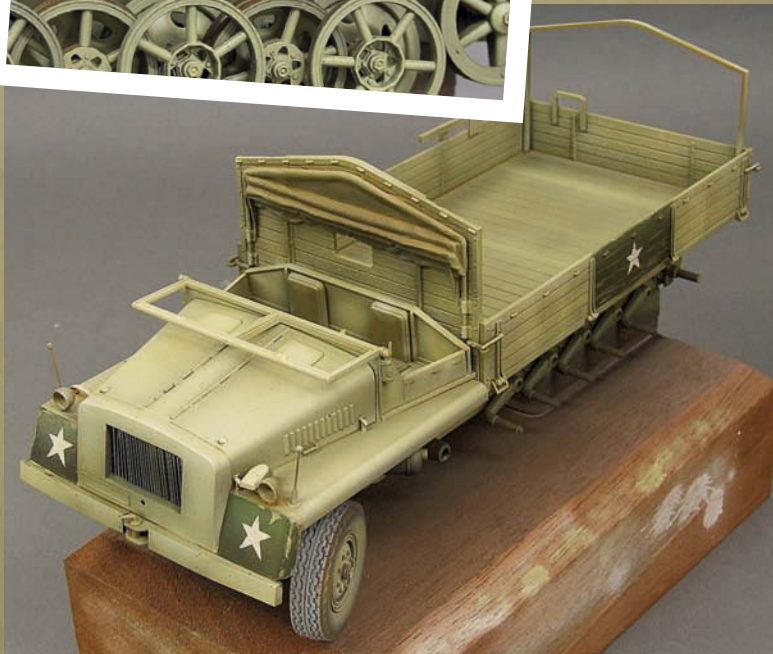


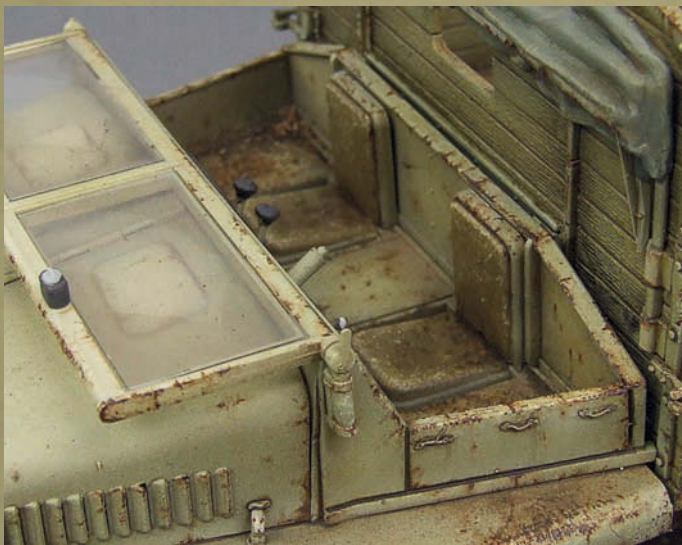
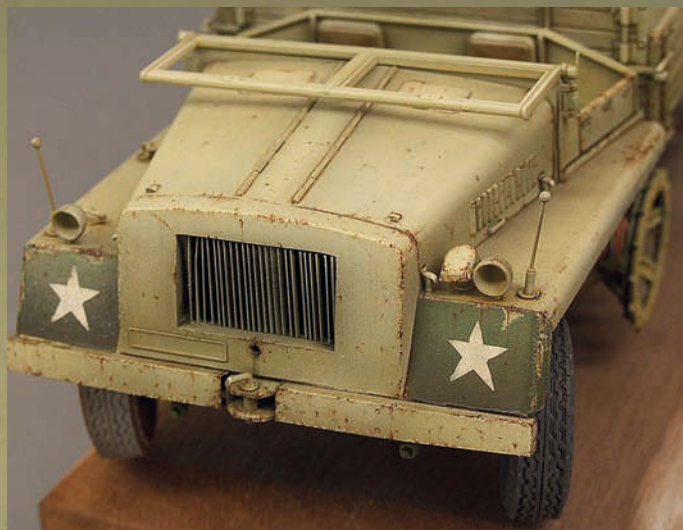


admit I used a lot of AK products starting with filters of all shades which were built up until I was happy with the result. Dark brown oil colours were used for the pin washes. These were applied darker in the corners, to give the impression of built up dirt and grime. This effect was put to good use in the rear flat bed, although you can hardly see it once all the stowage clutter had been put in place. The scrapes, scratches and worn paint areas were all done with a fine brush. The effect of the mud build up was achieved by using AK's mud effects set. This stage of the weathering was done by building up the layers slowly, as I did not want to overdo it and lose all the other paint effects that were on the model. Once this was done and I was happy with the end result, the model was set aside so I could concentrate on the flat bed load and diorama.

Bikes, Bikes and More Bikes

I have had this idea in my head for quite some time as I've got a motorbike myself and love every minute I can get out on it... British weather permitting. I wanted to tell a story of a U.S. GI going around the outskirts of





some German or Belgian town, collecting motorcycles to take back with him to the U.S. after the war - an enthusiast if you like. Two of the bikes are old school Italeri offerings. Don't let this put you off as they are outstanding little gems, all they need is an Eduard photo-etch set to bring them up to today's standards. Both the BMW and the ZUNDAPP still go together really well. The ZUNDAPP and sidecar is a more up to date offering and comes from Vulcan miniatures. This is a lovely little model, which again goes together really well plus it has the added bonus of coming with photo etched parts. The fourth and final motorcycle to fill the bed is Miniart's Harley Davidson. This again is a truly outstanding model. It's quite a complex build, considering all of the small parts that are involved. The only other thing to add to all four bikes were the brake and throttle cables. With all the bikes built and sitting there on my work bench, it was time to start painting again. I decided I

would paint the BMW in a late war colour scheme and the ZUNDAPP in early war panzer grey. Now this may not be historically correct, but I did not want everything to look all one colour... call it artistic licence if you will. I wanted to portray a civilian motorcycle also, this had to be the ZUNDAPP and sidecar. I came across some great images on the internet of some restored examples. There was a beautiful sky blue one which I thought would look perfect but I was proved wrong and I will come back to this later. The Harley was painted in the standard U.S green colours. All four bikes were airbrushed with Tamiya acrylics and weathered in a similar manner to the halftrack.

Base Work

I wanted to keep the base of the diorama as small as possible in order to pack as much detail into it as I could, without taking



anything away from the main subjects, SWS, bikes and figure. First the base was made slightly raised, this is done to add height and interest for the viewer. This was followed by adding the workshop building. This came from the Great



North Roads' range of products. These are fantastic products and great value for money, saying that I needed to add a few things to get it to look how I wanted it to look however these were nothing major and weren't difficult to do. The first this I did was to scratch build some wooden doors out of plastic card. The handles were made out of thin brass rod. Next, windows were added which again were fashioned out of plastic card, as were the planks covering the broken window. The roof tiles and water pipes came from the Miniart range. Now that I had the workshop all built, I decided to paint it before it was fixed to the base. Again it's good to have reference material around you when doing this kind of thing. I wanted to show a building in some sort of rural environment, so whenever I was out walking in the countryside with my wife I always took a camera and took lots of shots of farm houses and country dwellings. Again Tamiya acrylics were used for all the base colours. I wanted to show some age to the wooden parts of the building, so for this I used the hair spray method. First the doors and windows were sprayed in



various wood tones. This was then sealed with Johnson's clear varnish which is done to protect the paint. A layer of hair spray was applied next, this was then followed by different tones of red on the door and white on the window. I then took a small stiff bristled brush soaked in warm water and carefully started to scrub at the paint work. This is done so the paint starts to lift and reveal the underlying colours. Once I was happy with the result, the rest of the building was finished off using various weathering materials. The building was then set in place and left overnight to dry out. The ground work was tackled next. First a layer of household filler mixed with water, PVA glue and a dark brown acrylic paint mix was applied. I then sprinkled some fine sand and Treemendous tree bark over it - this is a very fine powder and is ideal for simulating mud. Into this I pressed small stones and bits of small tree roots. Bits of old tree roots were also used to make the creeper growing up the front of the building. Various products were used for the vegetation, from silver birch seed, moss from the garden and laser cut plants and foliage that I've picked up at shows over the years. The SWS was then gently pressed into the groundwork. It was at this moment I noticed something didn't look right. The sky blue motorbike and sidecar, it stuck out like a sore thumb. It looked too overpowering for the rest of the scene. The only thing for me to do was to remove it and respray it the colours you see before you now. The whole thing looked a lot more harmonious. Now that the ground work had cured and fully hardened it was sprayed with various mixes of muddy coloured acrylics. This was then finished off with oil paints

and AK's mud effect set. All that was left for me to do was to add the figure. Alpine do some of the best figures on the market today and in my opinion this is one of their best. He's got the perfect pose for the scene - that "too cool for school" look. His face was painted in acrylics and the rest of him was done in Humbrol enamels. I must admit that I thoroughly enjoyed doing this small vignette. It allowed me to try new things and new products. I also enjoy looking at it more now because it won me a Silver medal at Euro Militaire, making me very happy indeed!



Ten years ago I'd have never given a second thought to a modern Russian vehicle build, and a look around the shows and internet forums tells me it's been the case for many modellers. There's certainly a huge surge in modelling post WWII Soviet built vehicles. Maybe it's down to the increased emphasis put on weathering effects in recent years? There's certainly a lot more scope for some radical finishing with the great colour reference that's available at the click of a mouse, and of course, a vast choice of quality kits. Something we never take for granted here at AFV Modeller (and AIR Modeller) is the choice of kits we have to work with. There's always a touch of schoolboy excitement when a delivery turns up (although a lot of huffing and puffing can ensue if it's a set of pans someone's had delivered to the office) One such delivery

recently was a selection of kits directly from Trumpeter. All were modern Russian subjects in 1:35, an area in which they certainly specialise and receive acclaim for from modellers Worldwide. One kit stood out to us as a very tempting project, the BMP-2 IFV. Since the early 1980s this upgraded version of the BMP-1 has been used in conflicts Worldwide and it's new two-man turret certainly looks more proportionate than it's earlier 'shrunk skull'. A quick on-line search threw up countless images of veteran vehicles sporting heavily weathered paintwork which had me itching to get started.

The sturdy box contains eighteen sprues in pale grey and clear, a photoetched fret and a pair of single run rubber-band tracks. Previous BMP-2 kits from ESCI and DML were fraught with mistakes, this is a brand

new tooling from Trumpeter which looks accurate throughout and very well detailed and moulded. A comprehensive interior is included (minus engine) with excellent detail including a full turret basket, all of the hatches are possible with internal hatch detail. This would make for an excellent opened-up or KO'd project but I've skipped the interior as I wanted to spend time on the painting and weathering.

As I was looking to do a simple out-of-the-box build of the kit to show exactly what to expect I haven't added any detail. As with the majority of, if not all, kits the modeller could make a few tweaks here and there should they wish, I think most of us would be happy with the levels of detail offered here from Trumpeter.

Trumpeter's recent BMP-2 became too tempting to resist as an out-of-the-box build...

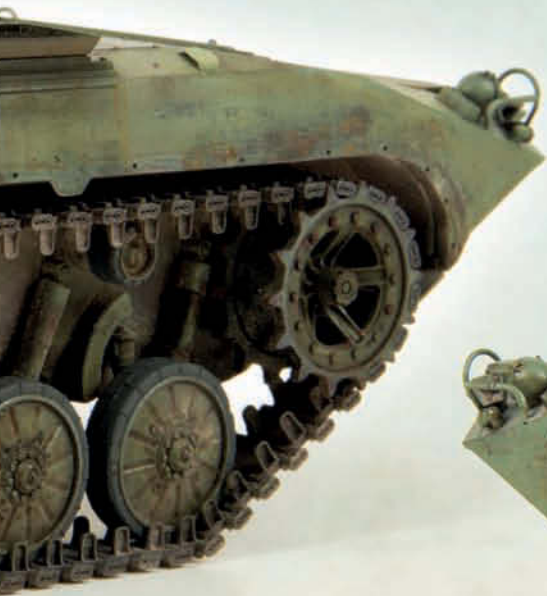


modelled by mark neville

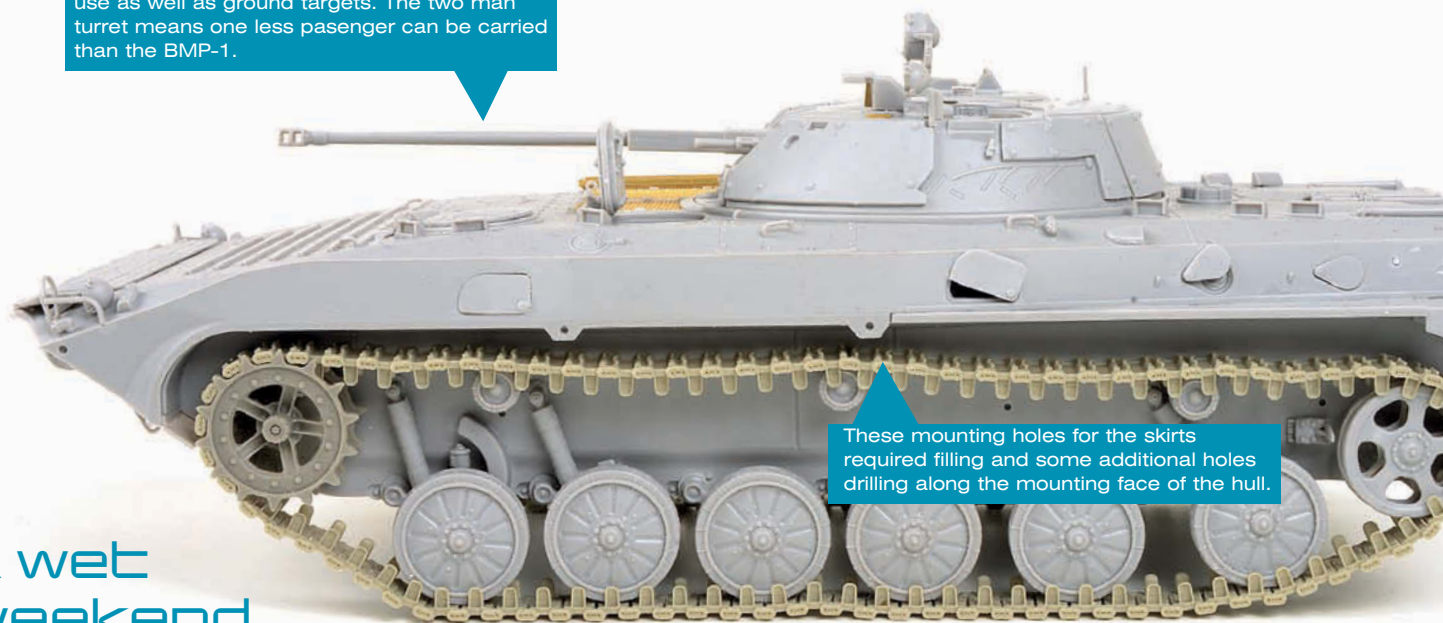
БМП-2



1:35



The BMP-2's larger turret mounts a 30mm automatic cannon designed for anti-aircraft use as well as ground targets. The two man turret means one less passenger can be carried than the BMP-1.



These mounting holes for the skirts required filling and some additional holes drilling along the mounting face of the hull.

A wet weekend

This kit was built with no more than the most basic of tools and some Mr Cement thin. I didn't do this as some kind of test, it just so happened I had my youngest son at a football tournament over a weekend and packed some sprue cutters, scalpel and a few files into the kit's box 'just in case' I had any spare time. In true British fashion the football was rained-off after a day...and the kit pretty much built!

Starting with the lower hull, the belly of the BMP has full detail of the pressed shapes and weld beads with separate trailing arms, bump-stops and shock absorbers. Road wheels are nicely detailed and quite delicate to position, I found cementing in

place was a must. The idler sprocket has some tricky photoetched ribs to insert but the results are worth the effort. Now for the tracks. I'm no 'track snob' and with recent releases from many manufacturers the kit-supplied tracks take some beating. Not the case here I'm afraid, Trumpeter often supply individual link tracks but have opted for soft vinyl in this kit and they are awful. Not only could I not get them to stretch into place but the soft material 'pulled' between the teeth of the drive sprocket. We looked to the aftermarket suppliers and ordered two types of BMP-2 track, MasterClub and Spade Ace.

I opted for the resin MasterClub resin versions. The detail is stunning, among the best you'll find but due to the delicate nature I managed to snap a few of the guide horns when clicking the links together. Fortunately plenty spares are included and separate links to curve around the idler and the drive sprocket supplied in resin. I liked these tracks so much I decided to omit the floatation screens I'd been replicating in foil (to show some heavy damage). By this time I'd decided to replicate a vehicle in Sierra Leone's Civil War and the BMP in question had the side screens missing anyway.

The BMP-2's larger turret makes for a shorter rear deck with two large hatches as opposed to four. The kit allows these to be opened.

Vision / rifle ports are posable, the closed position does leave a gap but this becomes less evident when painted.

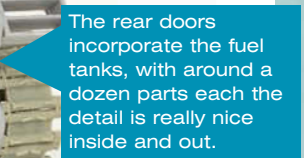
Excellent photoetched screens for the engine intake and exhaust



The rubber tyres were distressed with some heavy-handed filing



Turret armour is provided as separate parts to ensure an accurate appearance.



The rear doors incorporate the fuel tanks, with around a dozen parts each the detail is really nice inside and out.

The kit contains some delicate parts, tricky to fit and easy to lose! Because of this there's no sacrifice to detail. The majority of the parts fit beautifully and require nothing more than basic modelling etiquette, careful removal from the sprues and cleaning of mould seams. The 30mm gun barrel cleans up well although some of the aftermarket versions on the market are tempting; the kit parts are more than adequate. I opted to leave off the ATGM missile launcher from the turret roof as the photos I'd found showed these to be missing. In improvised African fashion I filled the subsequent hole with a pan lid! If you decide to go all-out with your BMP

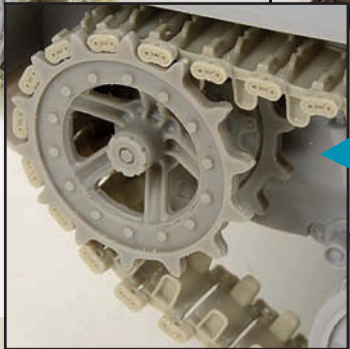
and complete the interior I can vouch for the excellent fit of the upper and lower hulls. This will allow interior painting in stages without the concern of any filling or sanding down the line. Full floor and side-wall details are included with the engine bay and engine the only omissions. The front wave-guard can be posed in an open position, in fact, the more you look at this vehicle throughout the construction the more boat-like it appears...now there's a novel diorama idea...

I used some of the clear moulded lenses at the final stage of building which I backed with reflective silver and masked with Mr Masking Sol Neo. The tracks are quite

delicate so I decided to leave them in situ, although loose, which proved to have enough movement to help when painting. MasterClub include spare track links with mounting brackets in their set so I filled the holes required by the kit parts. This kit builds very nicely without major issues, if it wasn't for the tracks it would be an excellent kit to recommend to the novice modeller due to the nice fit and very satisfying levels of detail. Hopefully Trumpeter have plans to release a separate track set to match the quality of the rest of the kit.



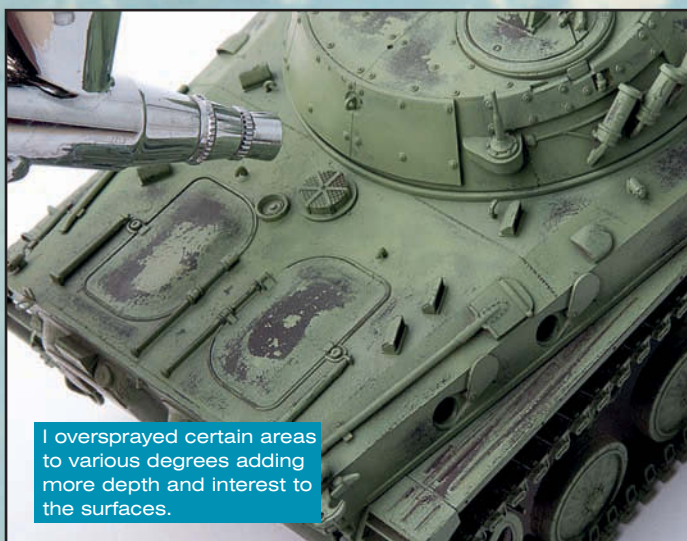
The first stage of painting was to lay down a base colour acrylic mixed to represent a bare oxidised metal. This base colour / primer was allowed to dry before receiving a heavy coat of hairspray straight from the can in preparation for the heavily worn paint finish.



MasterClub's track set includes crisply detailed drive sprockets and spare links with mounting brackets. The detail is superb and assembly is a simple 'click' fit.



Hairspray 'chipping' is all the rage, it's just fun to do and can be very effective.



I oversprayed certain areas to various degrees adding more depth and interest to the surfaces.

sunburn

My reference showed a very faded and worn Russian green which had taken on a very yellow tone in places. The sun-burnt finish is no doubt due to the harsh conditions in Africa with the paint completely worn away in places. The now common technique of hairspray or chipping fluid was employed. The hairspray provides an unstable surface for the subsequent coats of colour which are easily removed in random, natural looking patterns by the use of warm water and a stiff bristled brush. The colour I found a good match to the faded green was AK Interactive's German Grey-Green from one of their WWII sets. The colour was airbrushed in a few layers using the base brown as a pre-shade, removing varying degrees of the green to add depth to the effect. The paint was allowed around half an hour to dry, any longer and it becomes difficult to remove.

As I was planning to add effects which would require copious amounts of thinner, the model was given several days to dry.



We tend to test the multitude of finishing products we're sent samples of, for a change on the BMP I decided to use good old fashioned oil paints. The first step was to add some colour filters to add variations to the green and achieve the chalky yellowed effect shown in the photographs. Yellow Ochre did the trick here.



Here we can start to see the subtle shifts in colour, touches of white oil colour combined with the ochre compliment the faded effect and add to the sun-beaten appearance. Note how the different panels are broken by the different tones and the contrast between the bare metal and remaining paint takes on a more realistic appearance and slightly dusty surface effect.



Here we can see the effects of the multiple layers of subtle colours and filters. Various dark pin-washes have been flooded around the details to add dimension and shadow, Burnt Umber and black oil colours were used to tint enamel thinners. AK Interactive's Light Rust wash was used sparingly at the edges of some of the exposed steel where the chalky paint finish would stain.

Controlled scratching and chipping was applied with a 000 brush and sharpened soft pencil. Vision blocks were picked-out with translucent drawing ink.



The running gear required a dry and dusty application of dirt for which pigment powders are ideal with their dead-flat finish. To allow more control the pigments were mixed with enamel thinners and applied like a wash. Splashes and splatters were achieved by blasting the loaded paintbrush with an empty airbrush. The empty airbrush can also be used to speed up the drying time by using it like a miniature hair drier.



Lifecolor produce a Grease Stain effect which was selectively used on some of the hubs to replicate weeping fluids as you might expect to see on an older hard-worked vehicle. The same effect was applied to some of the suspension arms where they meet the torsion bar housings. Drive sprockets are also subjected to constant abuse and were weathered accordingly.



Tyres were picked-out in dark grey matt acrylics, even when new tyres rarely look 'black' and become even lighter with age. Tracks were undercoated with a thin coat of Vallejo German Black-Brown and a heavy coat of dry pigment powder, much of which was removed with a stiff brush leaving in-grained dust in the detail. The inside contact surface of the tracks had a light application of Uschi polishing powder as did the raised areas of the outer tread.



Much of the BMP's engine deck panels are made from aluminium which shows quite brightly where paint has worn away. Vallejo's new Metal Color metallics are designed to airbrush but the ultra-fine pigment brushes very well. Here I used 'Dull Aluminium'.

A final touch of realism to the exposed metal was gained with Uschi Van Der Rosten's polishing powder (steel) applied and polished with a Micro Brush.



Some final detail painting of the tools and equipment was now all that was needed to finish off my BMP-2. The oily-diesel stained exhaust outlet was airbrushed with an airbrush art acrylic 'Com-Air' black which dries to a slightly glossy and semi-translucent finish. Mirrored light lenses were used to add a glint of realism to the searchlight and headlamps. Touches of accumulated dust were added with a fine brush and pigment powder. Undoubtedly some groundwork or a vignette go a long way in placing a subject in a particular place and time. Having limited hours at the workbench had me thinking that a figure would be the next best thing.

A quick rumage through our figures turned-up a Warriors African T-55 crew, one of them only requiring a re-sculpted arm leaning on the open hatch. He was finished in acrylics with oils for the skin tones leaving a natural looking sheen





conclusion

So Trumpeter's BMP2 is surely the default choice now for modellers. It's a surprisingly large model in 1:35 and the inclusion of the full interior offers excellent diorama and super-detailing potential. I've only built a handful of Trumpeter kits but have enjoyed them all with some really off-beat subjects to choose from, and as mentioned earlier,

enough Russian post-war subjects to keep modellers of the machines busy for many years. Yes, the tracks are pretty much useless but that did give me the excuse to try the Masterclub set which were a delight and surely better than injection moulded plastic links should Trumpeter have chosen that route.

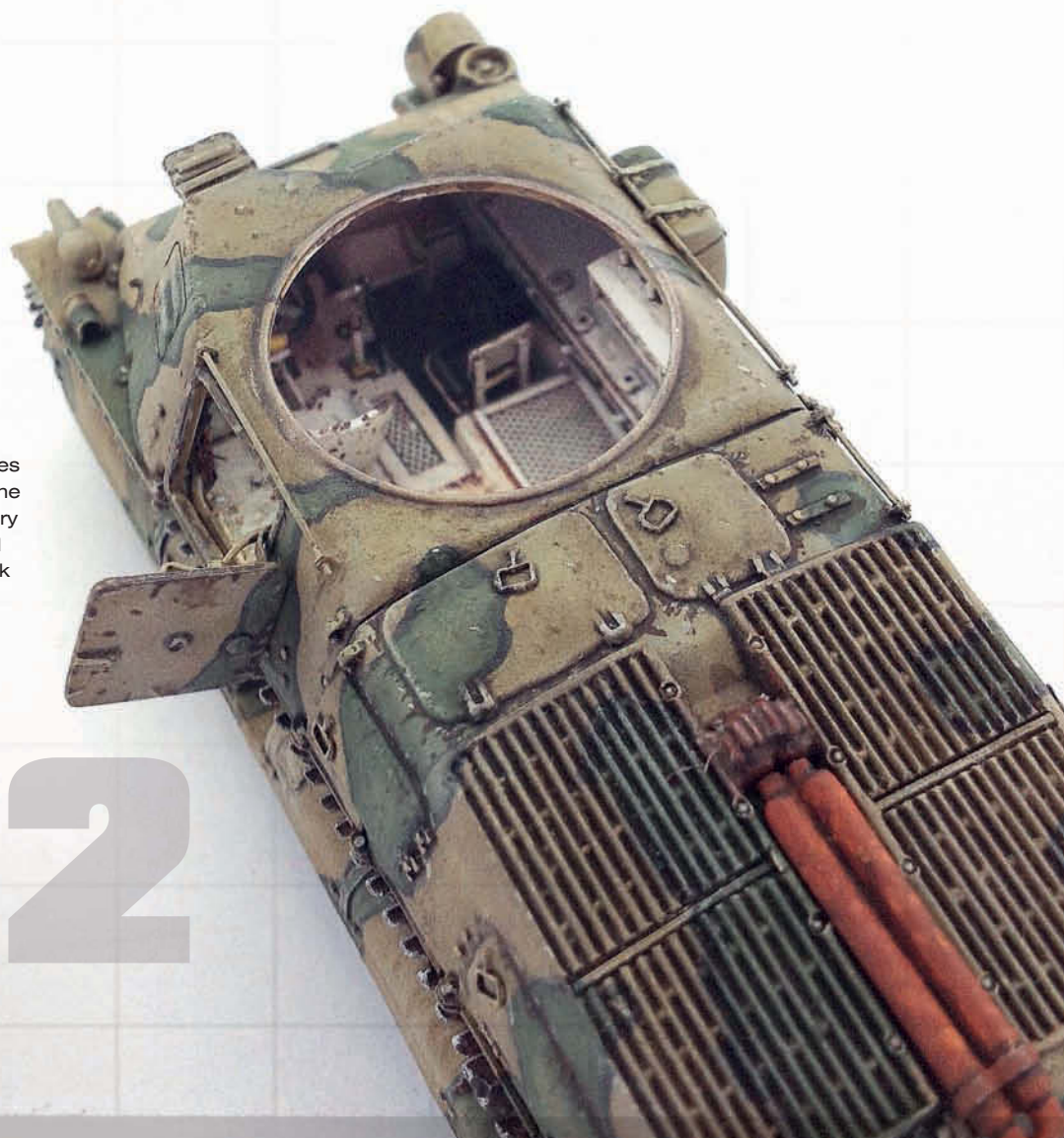
A great kit and subject to try some new weathering techniques on, all good fun!





PETIT PANZER

The Somua S35 is an essential AFV for anyone who appreciates French armour. The model is the veteran Heller kit updated with Armory photoetched parts for the tracks and external details and the "Focus" book from Barbotin provided detailed references for my own upgrades.



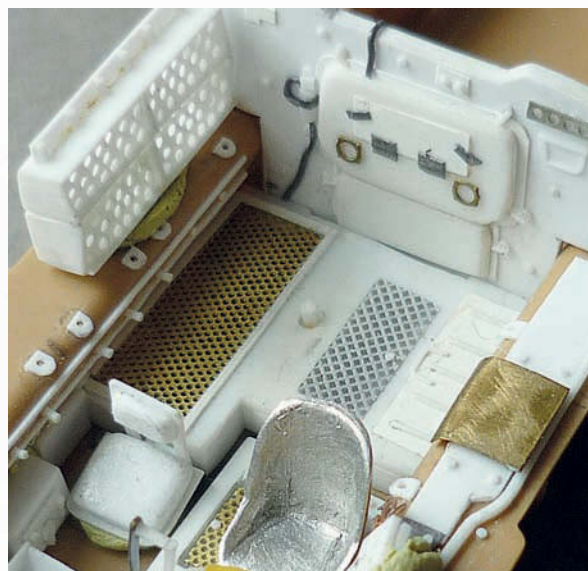
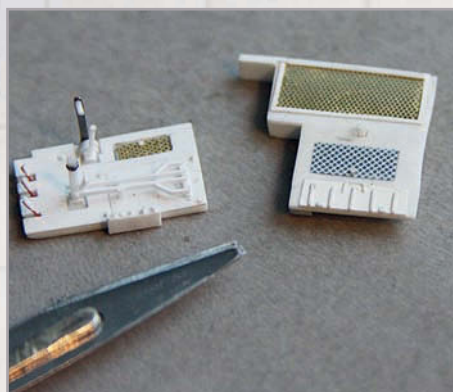
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FRANCOIS-REGIS BINDER
CONDUCTS SOME MAJOR SURGERY ON
HELLER'S VINTAGE SMALL SCALE
SOMUA S35



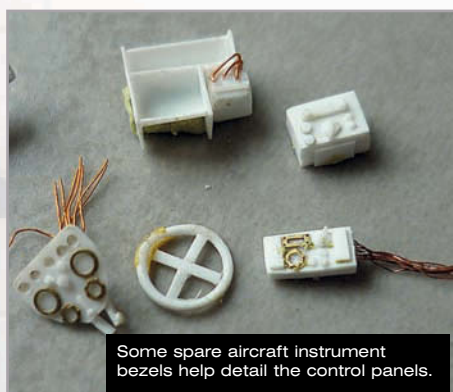
INTERIOR DESIGN



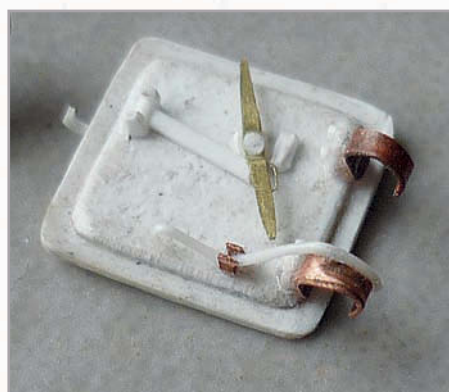
The starting point of the project was the interior and engine bay firewall. With the floor, it took me a while to understand the configuration and the different levels. Seats were scratchbuilt with the driver's modified from a white metal aircraft accessory. To obtain an accurate ammunition box I had to make many tests in plastic card, most of them ended up in the bin, no surprise

with all of those tiny holes! The large side hatch had to be built from scratch, the main shape is simple enough but the hinges have a specific shape (to control the hatch's position) which proved a challenge. Then I started with the turret interior: the access hatch, the MG with its big sighting system, the gun breech and the control

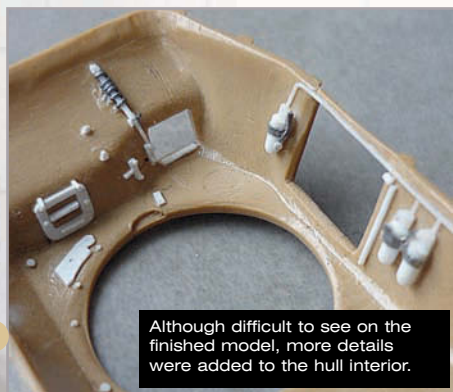
system for the turret rotation along with some finer details were all built from scratch in styrene and copper wire. The inside of the turret received a stippled (with an old paint brush) coat of green Tamiya cement in order to simulate the foundry cast appearance.



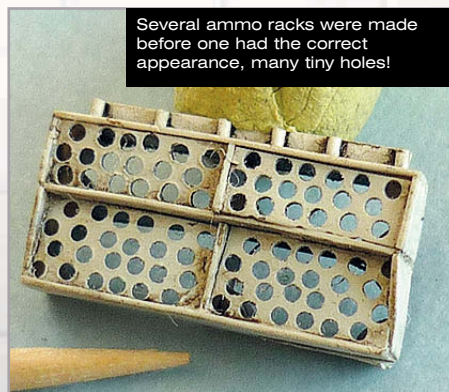
Some spare aircraft instrument bezels help detail the control panels.



The turret components ready for final assembly.



Although difficult to see on the finished model, more details were added to the hull interior.



Several ammo racks were made before one had the correct appearance, many tiny holes!

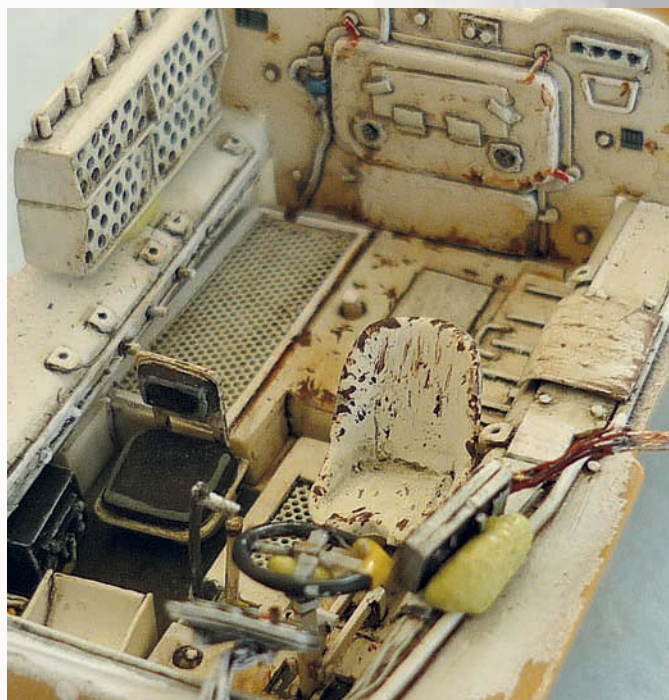
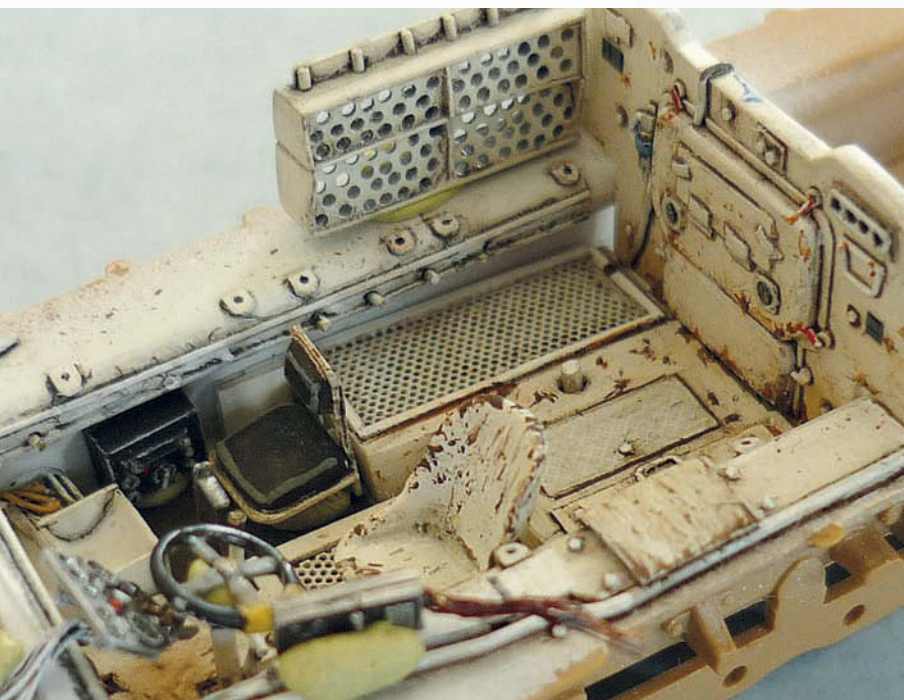




Leaving the interior components separate makes painting more manageable.

The inside of the Somua is painted following standard techniques. I used Gunze flat white airbrushed as a base coat, Mig dark brown wash and AK 094 for the streaking effects help give contrast around details and give a used look to the cramped fighting compartment.

Traces of primer and chipped paint were added carefully with a fine brush and thinned paint, a delicate procedure in 1:72!



FRENCH CURVES

One problem with the Heller model is the wrong external shape of the right side of the turret. The angle on this side is concave when it should be convex so the shape is corrected with Milliput. Then I

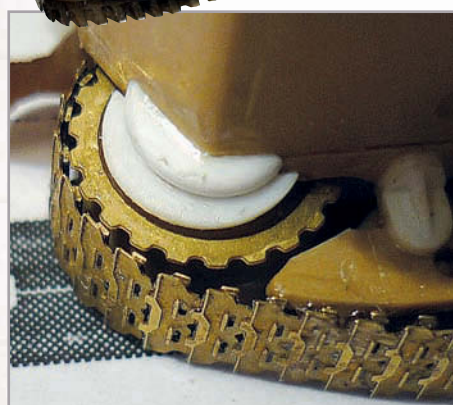
added various details such as a stud above the access door and an opening at the rear of the cupola forgotten by Heller. The right side of the cupola should be modified in order to represent the opening

mechanism of the little flap. For this, I used plastic rod coated with Tamiya putty. On the front of the turret I added missing detail at the base of the barrel.





The corrections made to the shape of the turret are evident here.



The 'Armory' tiny photoetched hooks throughout the hull are glued with cyanoacrylate. Then I tried to reproduce the textured casting effect on the turret using some Tamiya Glue (green cap) as I'd done on the turret interior. On the putty area, I used the same technique but with some diluted putty.

One of the major flaws of the Heller kit is the poor representation of the engine doors on the side of the tank. Indeed, the bottom edges of the doors blend into the body. To solve this problem either you can remove the doors or scribe new edges. I choose the latter using an ultra-fine saw blade along the entire length. The top of the tank hull received various details such as hinges and handles. For this, the Armory photo-etched sheet is very

useful adding a lot of finesse. Armory provides some very small brackets, which once glued allow to you pass a 0.3mm plastic rod through to represent the rails. On the front of the hull, Heller forgot a small visor that should be engraved. Note the nice Somua manufacturer's plate provided by Armory.

More corrections on the rear upper hull were required, the radiator slats are moulded in one piece when it should be cut in half and the right hatch between the turret and the radiators has a bulge (here made in Milliput). The exhausts are too long by 2 mm and a fixing clamp from thin metal sheet is added near the exit. The main gun is made with a syringe and Albion Alloys tube used for it and the machine gun. The barrel's muzzle is made

by wrapping a strip of thin metal around the barrel.

Next I tackled the stage that worried me the most: the Armory photoetched tracks. First, I fixed the running gear with the help of the Armory parts that sensibly improve the detail level along with some parts made by myself in styrene. To improve the solidity, I inserted a metal axle between the two main Wheels. The Armory tracks do take some figuring out and I did struggle with how rigid they are especially when I realised the toothed drive sprocket was slightly misaligned. Perhaps photoetched copper would give a little more movement than the brass? Two-part epoxy adhesive was used at certain points along the tracks to provide added strength.



I decided to show the same camouflage pattern as the Somua preserved at the Saumur Museum (France). I started with the sand colour (Humbrol) then the green masking with 'Wilder' Tac putty taking care around small and delicate parts. After base colours I started the weathering with mottling in lighter tones to highlight and give shape to certain parts. Then I sprayed Prince August Satin Varnish and AK Interactive filters in order to unify the overall finish.

A Brown Wash (Mig) helped give depth and shading and some textured mud and dirt effects were applied to the tracks and lower hull area. To finish, I created chipping and surface damage using a fine brush.





The Somua is perhaps France's most famous WWII tank, even in 1:35 it makes for a small model, so in 1:72...!?

I hope I've shown that Heller's vintage kit can still provide a decent basis for an accurate small-scale Somua)



SOMUA S35



1:72



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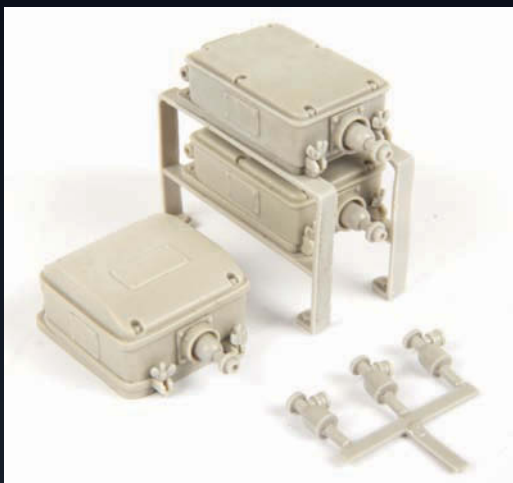


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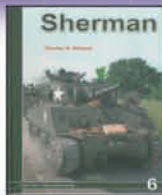
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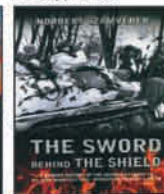
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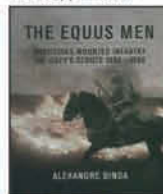
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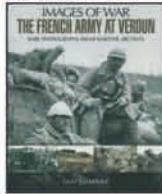
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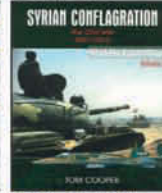
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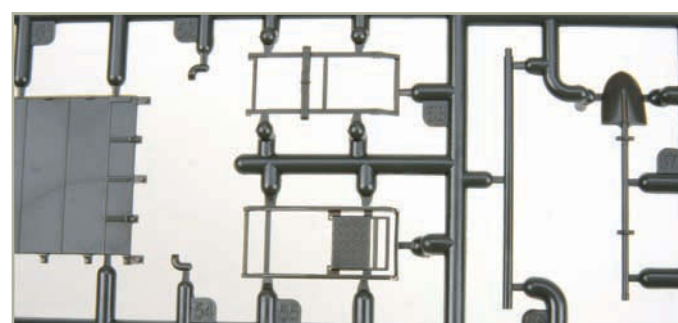
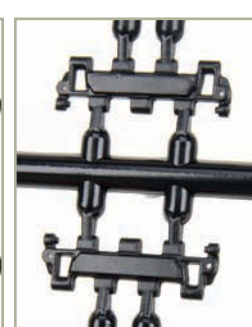
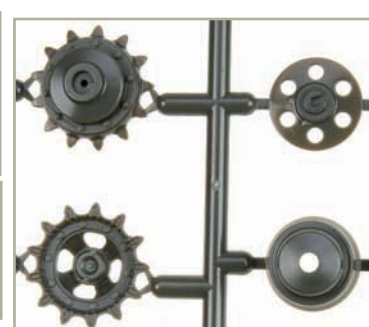
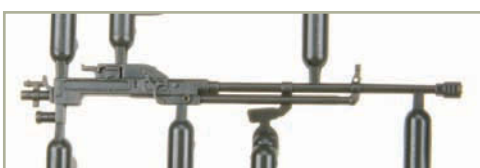
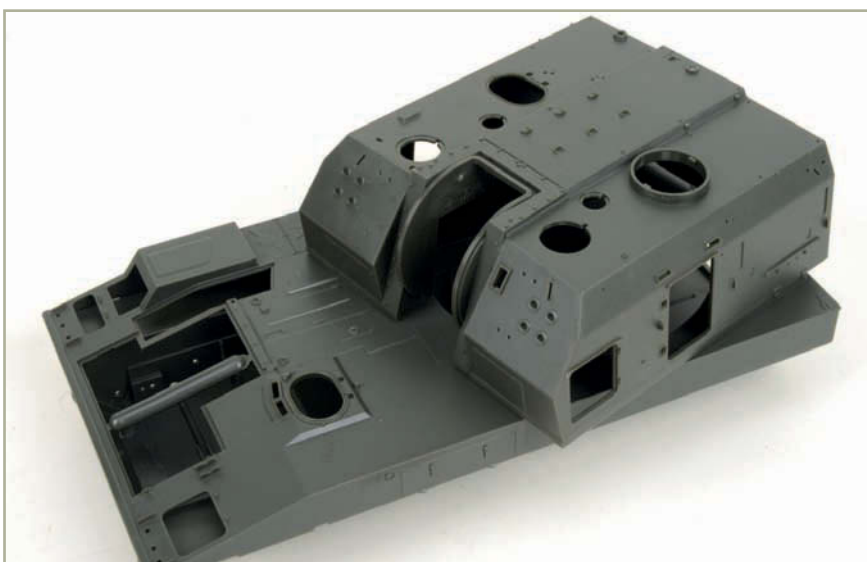
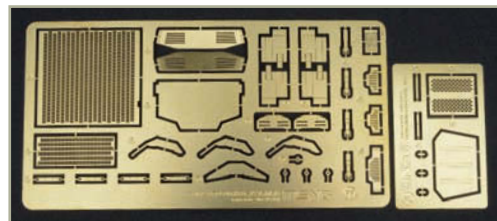
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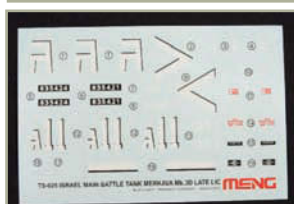
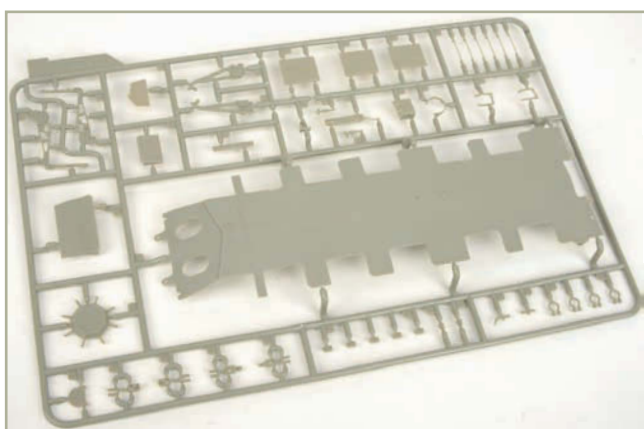
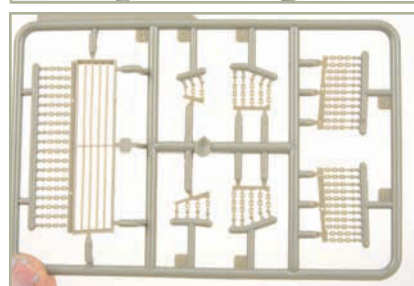
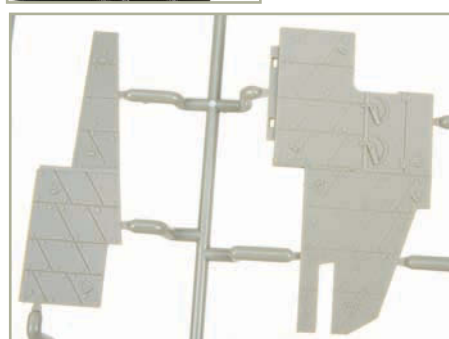
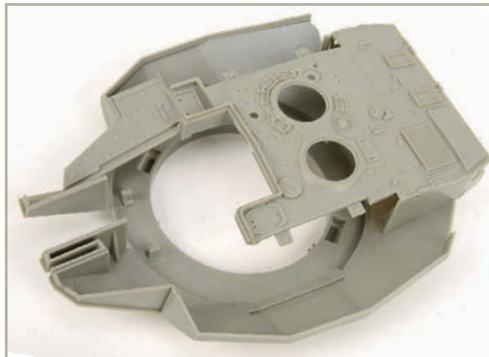
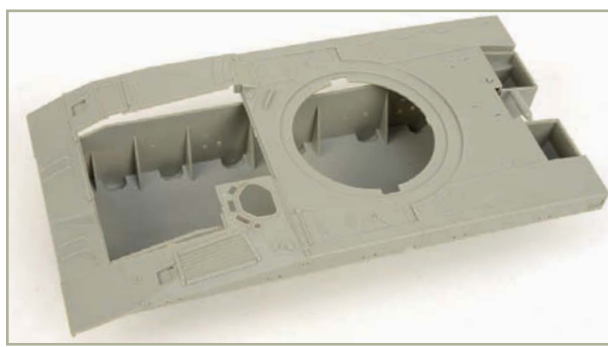
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Meng 1:35 Chinese 155mm Self-Propelled Howitzer PLZ05

Not a vehicle we're too familiar with in the Western World is the modern Chinese produced PLZ05. This is a menacing looking machine with its giant gun barrel reminding us of the Panzerhaubitze 2000. The handsome packaging houses a typical Meng-quality offering with a bundle of dark green sprues and the lower hull tub, upper hull and enormous turret provided as larger individual parts. Clear parts, photo etched frets and an aluminium gun barrel are also included along with individual track links promising a very nice out-of-the-box project with a very reasonable amount of parts for the level of detail and the quality of moulding we've come to expect. Roadwheels have separate tyres for crisp definition and the torsion bar suspension

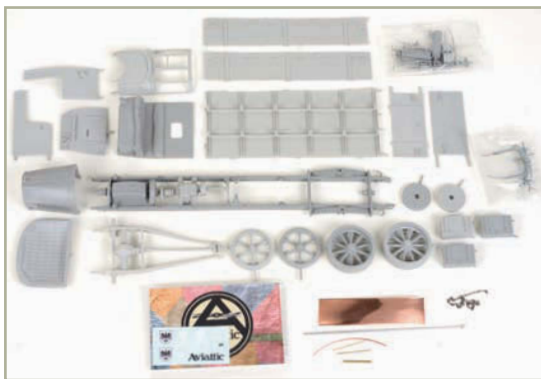
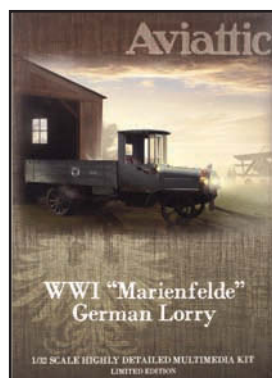
is workable as are the tracks should you wish to pose the PLZ on uneven ground. The upper hull only requires several assembly steps with the majority of the kit concentrating on the turret and gun. The turret hatches can be posed open but no interior is included. This kit really has appeal for a vehicle we know nothing about, the assembly looks so simple but the paint finish certainly isn't! Two of the options are a digital camo pattern, a challenge for sure but would really look superb. This kit would make a great little project, especially if you fancied a change from your usual topics and want to show-off some skilful painting.



Meng 1:35 Merkava Mk.3D Late LIC

The arrival of this new version of Meng's original Merkava reminds us of how we enjoyed the earlier 'D' projects we worked on for our book. The beautiful packaging promises another bumper Meng production with more new parts than I'd expected. Again, the colour of the styrene looks a good match to IDF sand grey and the moulding quality and design of this kit are as fresh as ever with some stunning fine detail. The main new features on the late 'D' are the completely new turret armour panels, extended cupola, turret optics armour upgrades and the full length belly armour with towing horns. The excellent individual track links are all de-sprued and ready to go with

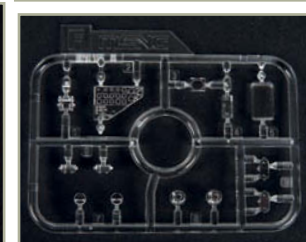
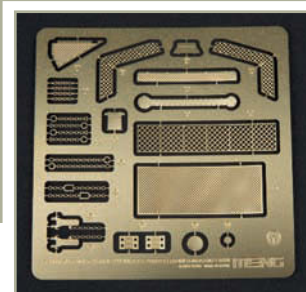
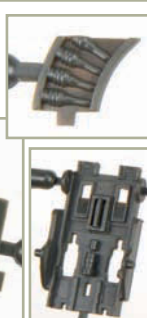
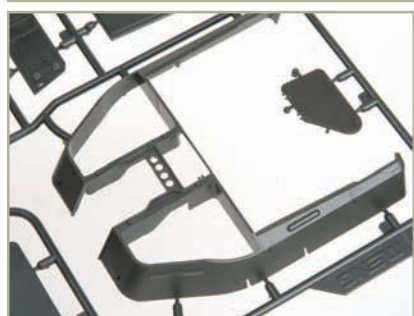
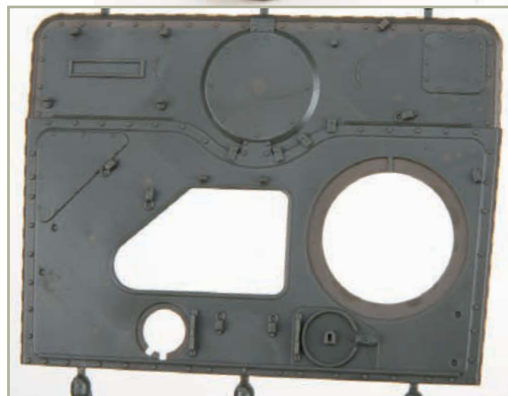
again, steel and rubber rimmed wheels provided which is a bonus if you're modelling a particular Merkava. These kits are a joy to assemble and look superb straight from the box, even down to the ball and chain turret protection, you'll perhaps want to replicate the anti-slip texture on the upper surfaces (which we covered in detail in the 3D book) a very welcome addition of a photo album booklet in the box will help with this. With Meng collaborating with the guys at Desert Eagle Publishing you can be assured of a well researched and accurate replica; what's not to like? or should that be LIC...



Aviatc 1:32 WW1 "Marienfelde" German Lorry

World War One specialists Aviatc have added to their growing range of aircraft decals and accessories with this stunning new kit. Production values in the kit are very high with a superb full colour instruction booklet with colour-coded diagrams providing painting guide information and there are assorted archive images of the Marienfelde in service. The majority of the parts are cast in a grey resin to an extremely high standard but there is also a photoetched fret to provide items like the front mud guards and a

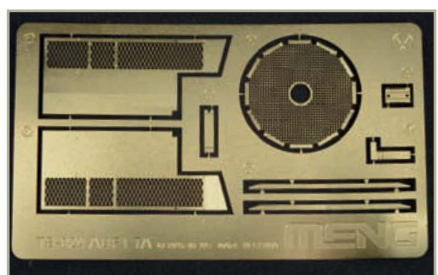
superb radiator grille with 'Daimler' logo. The kit also provides a small decal sheet, printed acetate sheet for the glazing, assorted brass rod and aluminium tube, a length of chain and some copper sheet to fabricate optional side curtains for the cab and there is also a seated driver figure for the cab. Full details of this stunning kit and the rest of the Aviatcs range can be found at www.aviatic.co.uk

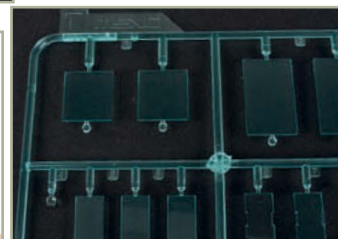
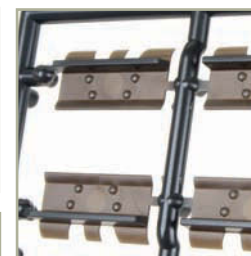
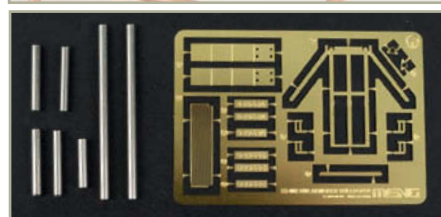
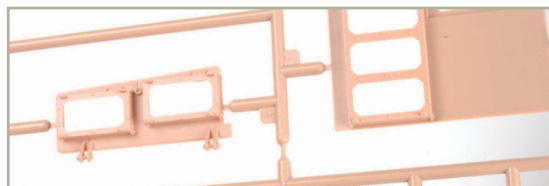
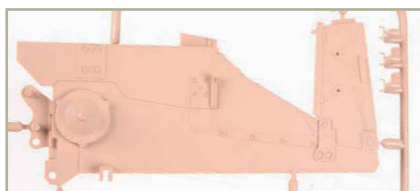
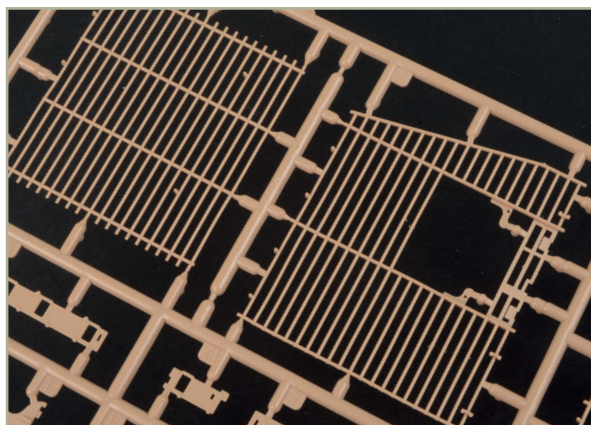


Meng 1:35 Russian ZSU-23-4 Shilka

A long overdue and anticipated subject as a modern kit is surely the Shilka and who better to deliver the goods than Meng? This is an all-new production of the Russian SP AA gun with a total production run of around 6,500 and used in 41 countries over the years the modelling potential is massive. Meng's typically handsome packaging houses nine dark green sprues, four black sprues of track links, a clear sprue, poly-caps, photoetched fret and decals. Moulding is of the highest quality as we'd expect so we're ready to kick-off the build with the lower hull. The torsion bar suspension is designed to remain workable with highly detailed suspension units and wheels all mounted with poly-caps. Tracks are a click-fit with beautiful subtle cast texture but will take some careful removal from the sprues and clean-up for them to move freely. A welcome feature is a full driver's compartment should you want to open up the very T-34 esque hatch. The other hull hatches are also separate with detail to the inside faces. The auto-cannon assembly is handled with great finesse with optional barrel designs

and flexible vinyl supplied for the plumbing with fully detailed ammo feed compartments with separate covers. There are indeed four options included in this kit: 4V1, 4M, 4M2 and 4MZ with applicable parts called out throughout the instructions, the huge turret mounted radar being one of the most noticeable differences between variants. Some sensible photoetch will enhance detail levels with the mesh having a subtle weave and fine chain included for mounting the unditching beam. The small decal sheet offers no less than eight marking options with some really striking camo patterns plus the scope of captured vehicles and local conflicts worldwide just search on the internet! Due to the complexed look and design of the Shilka, this is quite an involved build but with Meng's builder-friendly design we're yet to find one of their kits which isn't anything short of enjoyable time at the workbench. We can see this being a very popular release from Meng and rightly so - another beauty!





Meng 1:35 D9R Armoured Bulldozer with Slat Armour

Meng's D9 'dozer has become a bit of a modern classic already so this latest version including the very complex looking slat-armour is sure to be a hit with IDF fans. Think back to our previous issue's feature and you'll remember what an impressive model this beast makes! Meng have tackled the complex armour with the flair we've come to expect, the finesse is excellent and assembly looks very manageable (especially compared to doing it all in photoetch!) We still have the full cab interior with tinted armoured glass (and clear included also) and this version has been upgraded with the provision some polished metal tubing to replicate the hydraulic rams which is a nice touch. Vinyl tube is also included to replicate hydraulic hoses. Meng have listened to

modellers regarding achieving the correct track tension and produced a new design for the workable links, a separate part for the connectors is added to the track plate and a click-fit of the 43 links shouldn't take long to assemble. This is a big kit to produce an equally big model with workable 'dozer blade and rear ripper with stunning detail and design throughout helped by the clear, user-friendly instruction plans. The diorama potential for this model is pretty exciting, we even saw some images recently of snow covered IDF D9s...now that would be different! Great to see this kit out again with some very worthwhile additions, a true out-of-the-box project with superb results.

Stalingrad

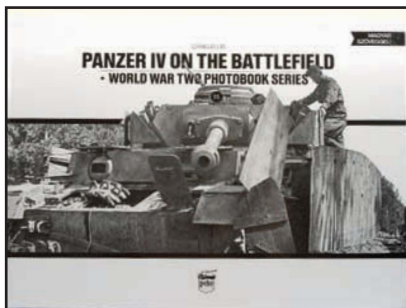
Any extension to Stalingrad's range of beautiful figures is welcomed by us, these two releases have you feeling the chill of the Eastern Front. S-3131 is a German infantryman in relaxed pose with a superbly sculpted great-coat, S-3135 is a pair of Russian children wrapped-up for the biting cold clutching a cooking pot and bowl. www.stalingrad.diorama.ru



D-Day Miniature Studio

The legend of the WWI Christmas Truce is depicted in style by D-Day Miniatures with this pair of figures playing football. The German figure is wearing the typical side-cap on top of a balaclava and the Highlander is in his traditional kilt and bonnet. Sculpting and moulding is top quality and this set would make a lovely little vignette...and yes, the Germans probably won on penalties. www.ddayminiaturestudio.com





Panzer IV on the Battlefield

By Craig Ellis

Published by PeKo

Hardback format, 111 pages,

English and Hungarian text

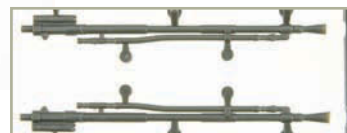
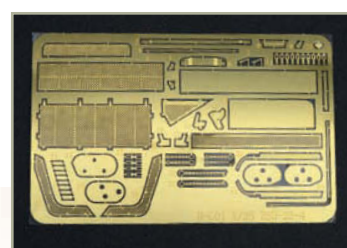
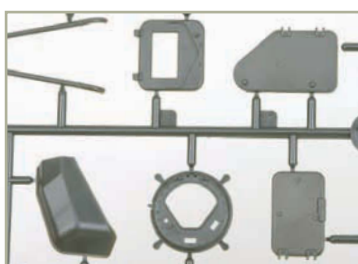
ISBN 978 615 80072 1 4

www.panzerwrecks.com



Panzer IV aficionado (and author of the 8Wheels-Good series on Panzer IV), Craig Ellis, shares many of the fresh images he has un-earthed and researched in this new volume of the WWII Photobook Series. All variants are covered from early war and freshly painted dunkelgrau Ausf.As to abandoned Ausf.Js in mid 1945 proving the Panzer IV as one of few armoured vehicles serving from the first to the last day of WWII. All of the images are presented in large format, one per page, giving modellers some

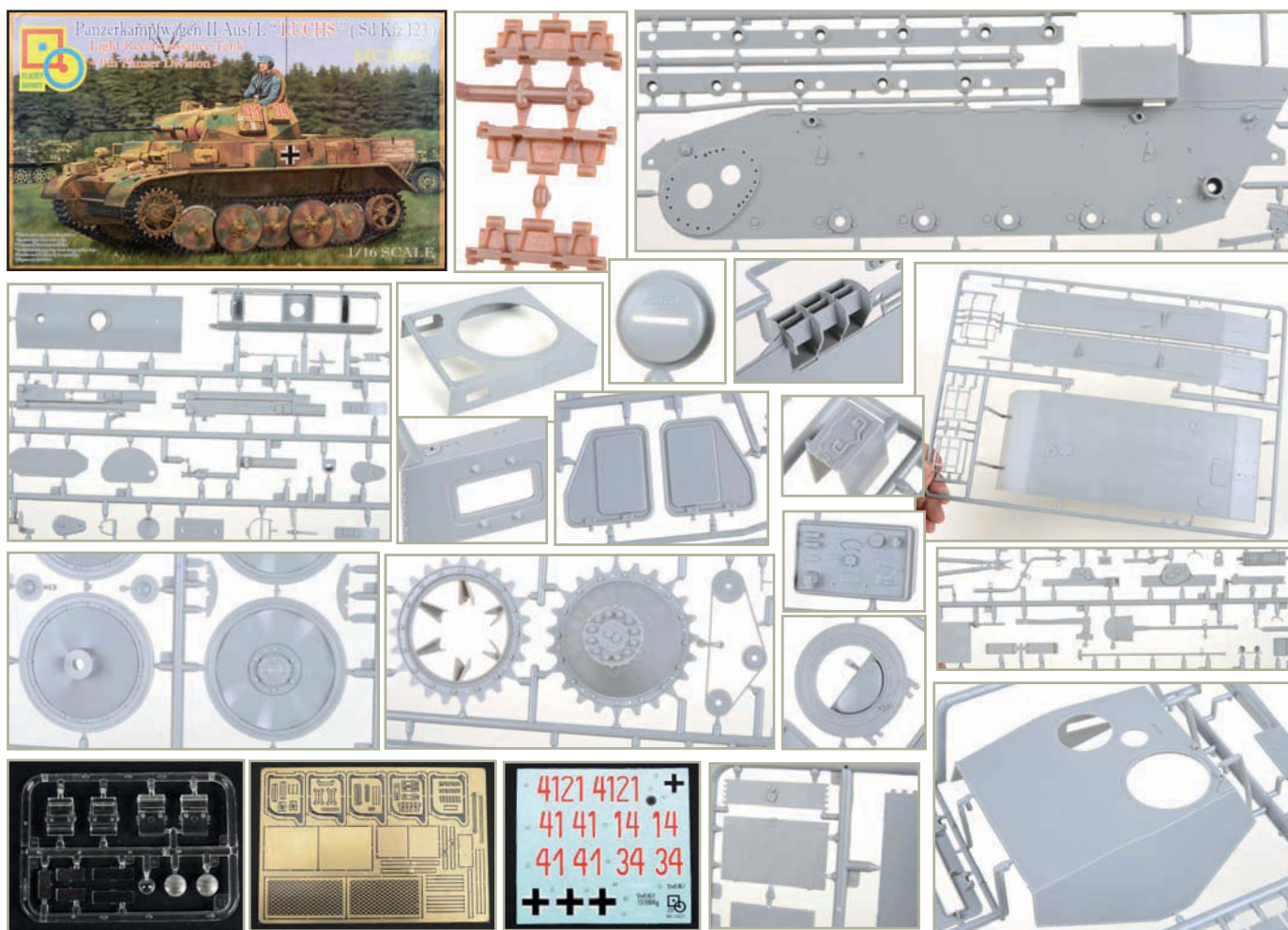
really solid visual reference with the author's in-depth research as dual-language captions pointing out production features in the minutest detail. The image quality varies but all of the photos hold points of interest both historically and from a modelling point of view with only a few looking familiar to us. A great collection of mostly unseen images very nicely presented and a must for any Panzer IV fan or German armour enthusiast.



Hong 1:35 ZSU-23-4M/MZ Shilka

So you wait for a new kit of the Russian Shilka and two come along at once! New manufacturer, Hong, kindly sent us a sample of this their first all-new kit. Impressive box art is a good start and as we work through the pile of green sprues it's obvious this is a modern tooling with some very nice detail on show. Helping with some of the finer fittings and mesh is a photoetched fret along with the usual clear parts and decals. Being a new manufacturer, we decided to get straight into assembling the Shilka to see how 'builder friendly' the kit is, starting with the lower hull. I've been disappointed with the fit of some of the parts and badly positioned sprue gates (as in the image above of the drive sprocket) with some sanding and filing required, not what we expect with modern tooling to be honest, the worst so far being the idler wheel which is very sloppy and will need cementing in a fixed position. This may cause issue with joining the track with the

correct sag to the upper run, each link requires the guide horns adding separately. The main parts of the upper hull are fitting pretty well so far with most of the doors and hatches designed as separate parts. There's no internal detail offered so leaving the drivers hatch and ammo bins open isn't really an option as they're rather large. The quad cannons have some really nice detail with open muzzles but the modeller will need to add some tubing to the assembly if you're striving for total accuracy. Looking back to our featured build and modification of the vintage Dragon Shilka back in issue 81 there's no doubt Hong's kit is leaps ahead in terms of detail and finesse. Yes, there are some niggling fit issues which we wouldn't have expected but a little percivance will, I'm sure, result in a very nice model from the box as can be seen over at www.hongmodel.com with some images of the finished kit.



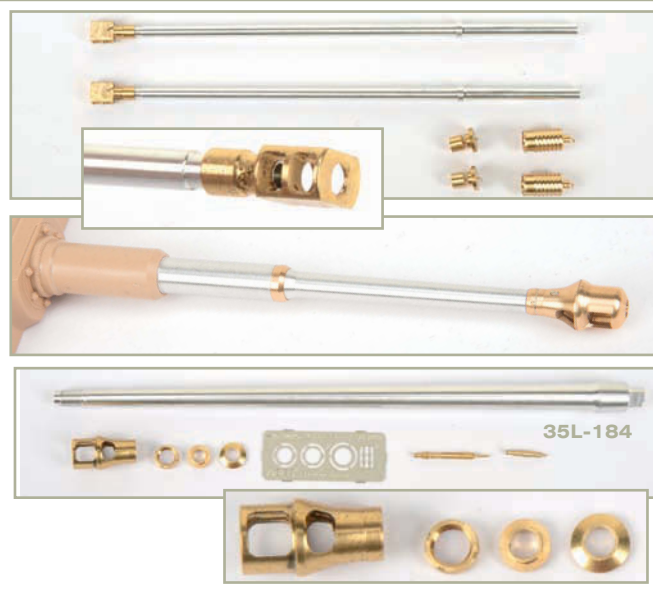
Classy Hobby 1:16 Panzer II Ausf.L "Luchs"

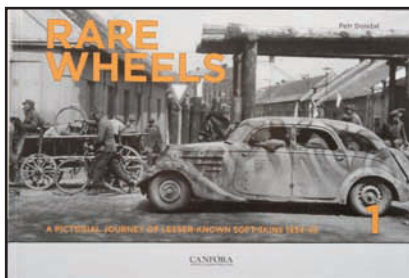
A new release from a new brand with a great choice of subject in the shape of the Luchs and perfect for the larger 1:16 scale where it is not not much bigger than the average 1:35 MBT kit. First impressions of this attractive new kit are certainly very good with the kind of crisp detail that you expect from a modern kit. The kit features individual link tracks with metal pins to connect them, clear moulded periscope lenses, photoetched fret with mesh grilles, straps, tool clasp, chains and mudflaps, a fully detailed turret interior and detailed cooling fan bay at the back of the hull which can be seen through the rear vents. This is where the assembly starts before moving on to assembling the individual plate hull tub. The side panels have the vent boxes cleverly integrated and the kit features a fully replicated torsion bar suspension and its a good basis if you wanted to add your own detailed hull interior. The distinctive rippled roadwheel design is nicely handled with integral tyres. Weld beads across the kit have a good texture and the vehicle tools have a curious mix of some with moulded on clasps and some without. A this kit is to model vehicles serving with the 9th Panzer Div. in Normandy it comes with the assorted

wooden stowage boxes that were a feature of these vehicles. These have an excellent subtle woodgrain texture and proper interlocking joints. Hull visors are fully detailed and openable and even have casting numbers moulded onto the frames. All hatches are moulded separately so can be opened and the kit includes the optional narrow and wide rear turret hatches. As the turret interior is beautifully detailed opening this rear hatch is going to be essential and that's the beauty of this scale! The variations in turret stowage is catered for providing the options for a choice of three different vehicles and the kit provides a jerrycan rack for the back of the hull. the 2cm ammunition boxes can also be opened and magazines are provided to fill them up. Even the turret roof mounted but rarely seen Orterkompass is provided in the kit. The decal sheet provides a choice of three schemes and you will really need to pick one before you start to avoid confusion with the variations between them. A great looking first release and we understand that an Eastern front version of the Luchs is also in the pipeline. Highly recommended!

Aber

Inovators in quality aftermarket parts, Aber, have some additions to their huge range of 1:35 barrels. 35L-178 is a set designed for the new Rye Field Tiger I (on our workbench at present) consisting of the main gun with separate muzzle brake and collars with the co-ax and bow MG barrels. The same selection of main gun and two MG barrels is provided for Tamiya's recent Panther D with set 35L-184. 35L-177 would be a beautiful addition to Meng's Terminator BMPT, a pair of 30mm barrels with superbly delicate muzzles and a pair of AGS17 hull mounted grenade launchers. Finally 35L-165 is for any kit sporting the German 20mm Rh202 MK 20 DM6 cannon. Incredible delicate detail as always from Aber www.aber.net.pl





Rare Wheels Vol.1

Petr Dolezal

Published by Canfora

Harback landscape format, 112

pages

ISBN 978 91 982325 16

www.canfora.se

A new release from Canfora in the vein of 'Panzerwrecks' is always welcome and modellers can always be assured of rare and quality images to get the imagination racing. This release focusses on the lesser-known soft-skin vehicles which served from the preparation to the end of WWII, most featured are in German hands whether German built or captured. Canfora publish some fantastic images throughout their books and it's quite staggering how new period photographs are still being unearthed, this book is a superb example with a great compilation of diverse subjects. Chapters include the Polish campaign, The Battle for France and the Mediterranean right through to Prague in May 1945 covering trucks, busses, civilian cars and even tractors, many subjects are now available as modern plastic kits (some of the MiniArt and ICM recent releases spring to mind) and if you have any waiting to be started in your collection Rare Wheels is an absolute gold mine of inspiration, recommended reading and even better reference as always from Canfora.

Lifecolor Liquid Pigments

These are a great new range of weathering products which I had the pleasure of testing on the Whippet build in Issue 86 and these can be airbrushed or brush painted as well as mixed to create different shades. Nothing especially clever about that but the real edge these have is that you can use the bottle of transparent remover liquid to take the colour back off the model. This allows you to create some stunning dusty effects where dust has settled and then been scuffed or brushed off. As well as the dust shades there is a set of rusty colours and another of mostly dark detail emphasiser colours. I was thrilled with how these worked and they will be a part of my painting essentials from now on!

www.airbrushes.com



Panzerwrecks 19, Yugoslavia

Lee Archer and Bojan Dimitrijevic

Published by Panzerwrecks

Softback landscape format, 97 pages

ISBN 978 91 908032126

www.panzerwrecks.com



Although featured in previous Panzerwrecks briefly, WWII in Yugoslavia is rarely documented, especially in English, but what a wealth of inspiration for modellers this Volume 19 presents with German, French, Russian, Italian and a few Allied vehicles pressed into service as anti-partisan armoured support. Some are shown captured again with the usual selection of never before seen

images that make Panzerwrecks such a popular series with modellers. Notable vehicles featured with some superb images are the Somua (ideal if you're looking for inspiration for the recent Tamiya release) 38Ts, Hetzers and a great series of photos documenting use of various vehicles post-war. Top marks again for the Panzerwrecks team, unmissable reference.



AK Interactive

More to help modellers get the contemporary finishing and weathering realism from the guys at AKI. A 100ml bottle of Acrylic Resin liquid 'Texturizer' is designed to have pigments mixed into it to create earth and mud effects. A couple of urban coloured pigments are new to the range with 'City Dirt' and 'Asphalt Road Dirt' with 'Faded Green' added to their range of generic colours. A couple of new weathering sets are available, AK4180 consists of two liquids and one pigment to create natural algae effects on abandoned vehicles

and structures. AK 688 is a good set to get you started consisting of thinners, worn effects fluid and a grey wash. You'll need some brushes for all these potions, AK 663 is a collation of AKI's brushes for specific tasks which are detailed on the packaging. Finally is a tub of steel balls to drop into any paints or weathering liquids that prove stubborn to mix, a good shake with one of these agitators should do the job. www.ak-interactive.com has details of all of the finishing equipment you'll ever need.



AMMO of Mig

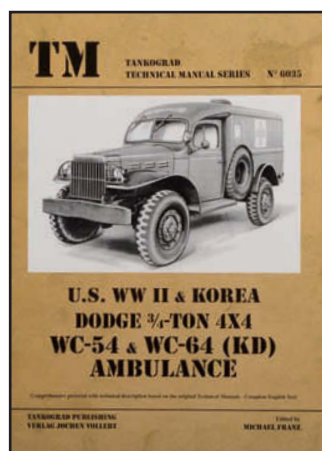
Two new ranges of effects from Ammo with 'Heavy Mud' consisting of a ready to use texture paste with realistic tones such as 'Wet Mud' and 'Dry Light Soil'. Couple these with 'Splashes' which consist of medium density textured fluids in a wide range of six colours, the ultimate in convenience straight from the bottle.

Smart Set 16 is a collation of four colours to finish a vehicle in the British 'Berlin' pattern camo seen in the late eighties and early nineties as ready to spray or brush acrylics. Finally, on occasion we need metallics on military subjects for ammunition and the likes. These new metallics are ready to spray or brush and have an ultra-fine pigment. www.migjimenez.com has details of their extensive ranges.



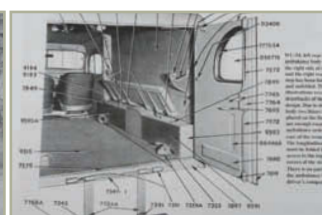
True-Earth

Italy's True-Earth produce a wide range of effect paints and weathering products which are all water-based. These new 'Shading Colours' can be airbrushed or brushed. We tried brushing / blending and they really do have a unique feel to them, with properties similar to oil colour when blending but with the advantage of being water-based resins. This German Camo set has three tones for the base Dark Yellow and Olive Green and Red Brown. Tutorials and more details at www.true-earth.com, well worth a look.



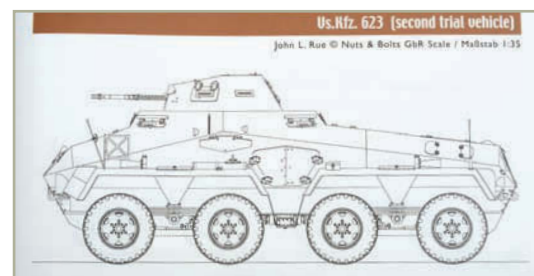
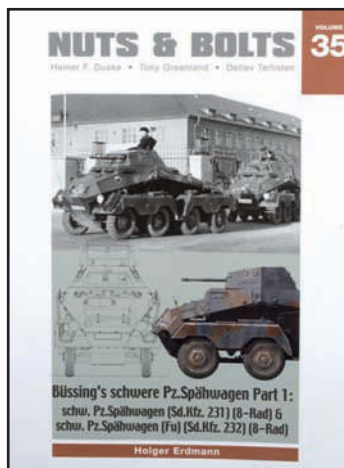
U.S. WWII and Korea WC-54 and WC-64 (KD) Ambulance

By Michael Franz
Published by Tankograd
Softback format, 48 pages



Number 6035 in Tankograd's 'Technical Manual' series covers the Dodge 3/4 ton 4x4 Ambulance, a classic kit in 1:35 from Max/Italeri still shows up these days and I'm sure a WC-64 conversion was available in resin? These compact references are great for modellers with the re-printed excerpts from original technical manuals invaluable in this case for the interior layout and details.

Covered also is the body construction and equipment with original diagrams of where markings were applied. A great collection of period images shows the ambulances in action in all theatres with some interesting detailed captions. Great value reference for any Allied soft-skin modeller.

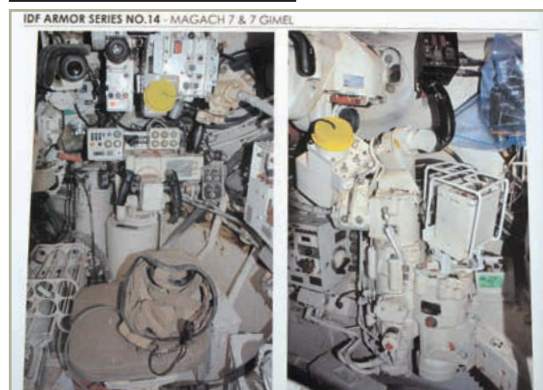
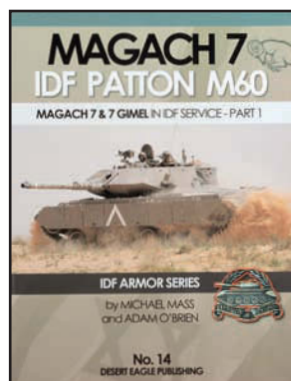


Nuts & Bolts Vol.35 Büssing's schwere Pz.Spähwagen Part 1

By Holger Erdmann
Published by Nuts & Bolts
Softback format, 200 pages, English and German text
www.nuts-bolts.de

If you're a serious German armour modeller, Nuts & Bolts are familiar bi-words for reliable and in-depth reference. This thirty fifth volume features the 231 and 232 eight-wheelers with the tried and tested format familiar to collectors of the series. The history and technical development is followed by the structure of the reconnaissance units and a collection of rare images split into pre-war, Polish Campaign, Western and African Campaigns and all other theatres right up to the war's end. Image quality varies but none look familiar and all have detailed

captions with call-outs of points of interest. N&B's drawings and plans have always had great respect for their accuracy, these coupled with the extensive walk-around section of several museum preserved 8-rads really does give the modeller a serious one-stop reference. With plenty of choice on the market now in 1:35 (featured in the modelling section) this volume is sure to be another 'must have' to add to the reference library and we can only presume with this being Volume 1 the other versions on this chassis will follow in Volume 2. Highly recommended reference.



Magach 7 IDF Patton M60, 7 & 7 Gimel part 1

By Michael Mass and Adam O'Brien
Published by Desert Eagle
Softback format, 83 pages
ISBN 978 965 7700 006
www.deserteagle-publishing.com

Desert Eagle always hit the mark with IDF modellers with their visual approach to presenting specific marques. The Magach (battering ram) 7 & 7C are barely recognisable as an M60 with their radically re-shaped turret and armour skirts making for one sleek looking piece of armour. If you're a bit of an IDF novice (as I am) Desert Eagle always start with a very clear description of each upgrade and designation of the vehicle

in question aimed to help modellers produce an accurate rendition I'm sure. The book is packed with quality images covering everything you might want to know to detail a project with walk-arounds (including interiors) with excellent descriptive captions and some great action images to get you inspired. The usual 'Man and Machine' chapter gives a unique insight to the crews and their life with the vehicles. Highly recommended as always.

1:35



Antonio Martin Tello makes a few choice additions to Bronco's kit

In 1941 both the U.S. and British Armies were looking for new armoured cars for their arsenal. The U.S. Army ordnance issued specifications to several companies for such vehicles, and Chevrolet responded with a design to which the name code T17E1 was assigned. It was a four wheeled, all driven vehicle with a cast turret armed with a 37 mm gun. After some trials, the Americans rejected the T17E1 in favour of what later would become the M8 Greyhound armoured car. Nevertheless, the British found the T17E1 well suited for their requirements, with its large, two man turret with the radio in it, and asked for its production under the Lend and Lease agreement. Eventually, around 4000 Staghounds, as the British designated the T17E1, were built and distributed to the British and Commonwealth armies. The Staghound was a quite powerful and

innovative vehicle for its class. It incorporated two engines that could be switched off selectively, as well as a 4x4 or 2x4 drive selector. It had no chassis, with all the drive train components directly attached to the hull. It arrived too late for the African campaign and made its debut in Italy. It was also extensively used in Northwest Europe after D-day. Due to its size, on the "big side", it usually was incorporated to squadron and regimental headquarter level in armoured cars units. After the war, the Staghound served in some European and Middle East armies, with some even reaching Cuba. I always have liked the look of the Staghound. In my opinion it was a quite compact but relatively large vehicle, and those big wheels gave it a remarkable "aggressive" aspect. Few years ago, and almost at the same time, Italeri and Bronco released plastic kits of the Staghound.

After reading some reviews, it seems that none of them are bad at all, but having heard better opinions on Bronco's, I chose this brand for my project. Bronco's (ref. CB35011) quality is excellent, with fine detail and good fit of the parts. The kit includes a basic PE fret that adds to the finesse of the model, specially the side fuel tank straps and the headlight guards. Also in the box the modeller can find an aluminium turned barrel, no doubt a nice bonus. The building process does not pose any problems, only the sequence suggested in the assembly guide is somewhat weird. The main body is separated at the side, front and rear panels, and the instructions call for adding all the detail to these before the main body is joined. I preferred to do the opposite, and first glued all the main parts together and then added the detail.



STAGHOUND



RB .30 Cal brass barrel

Bronco's
aluminium barrel
.....

Turret textured with

diluted Tamiya putty

Wheels and
stowage from Black
Dog's detail set
.....

Verlinden
ammo box
and tray

Winter warrior

I textured the cast turret with Tamiya putty diluted with liquid cement. Also, I added some detail such as the tie downs and straps for the tools, barrels for the glacis and turret roof .30 Browning MG (RB), ammo box and tray (Verlinden) and British style aerial bases (also RB). I had the opportunity to get Black Dog's complete

resin set to detail the Staghound, which includes plenty of tarps and other stowage plus a set of wheels with snow chains. While the tarps, (I only used a few), are ok, the wheels are just copies of the kit wheels with the chains moulded on them. In my copies, several areas of the chains were missing, as if air was trapped in the

moulds during the casting process. In the most visible areas I ended up adding some links of fine chain to fill the gaps. Several times I was tempted to reject the Black Dog's wheels and use the kit ones, which are good, but I liked this extra "winter touch" given by the chains so I pushed on.

RB .30 Cal brass barrel



Paint processes

For the base coat I airbrushed my good old Tamiya acrylics diluted with lacquer thinner from Gaianotes. The base colour was Khaki Drab XF51. In order to add depth and volume to the model, I darkened the lower surfaces by mixing this colour with Flat Green XF27 and I lightened the upper ones with a mix of the base colour and Sky XF21. Then, I airbrushed an overall coat of gloss varnish X22 to create a suitable surface for the decals.

These came for the sheet provided by Bronco in the kit. I chose the markings of a HQ vehicle of the 2nd Household Cavalry Regiment in Germany early 1945, attached to the Guards Armoured Division. The decals behaved perfectly and were fixed with the help of the Microset and Microsol solutions.

After a couple of green filters I started with the artist's oils. I applied these in two steps. Firstly, I used them to add tonal variations to the base colour and since I wanted to keep the model on the "green side" I used several shades of this colour. As usual, small dots of the oils were deposited on the model and blended with the help of some thinner.





Then I made the chipping with a sharp brush and a lighter green (for the shallow scratches) and a dark reddish brown (for the deeper ones). Then, I go back to the oils, this time with ochres, greys and yellows to create a faded look on the green base. I also added some grime and dirt with some AK fluids, sometimes in the form of streaks from details. I also painted the details, such as tools, at this time and also the exhausts. For this, I used a mixture of AK's Track Wash liquid (AK083) and track rust pigments, applied randomly and in the form of small spots or irregular stains.

The last step before the final dirtying was to profile the details. I used two techniques. One is the wash around the details performed with AK's Dark Brown wash (AK045), cleaning the excess with thinner. The other is profiling some lines or details free hand with a fine brush and

diluted Vallejo acrylic black.

In order to recreate the mud and packed Earth in the lower areas I used Dark Mud (P033) and Europe Dust (P028) pigments from Mig Productions, mixed with fixer or Dark Mud (AK023) or Fresh Mud (AK016) from AK Interactive. I mix all this stuff in variable proportions in order to obtain darker or lighter tones, damp or dryer, avoiding uniformity or monotony. I made a "paste" that was applied to the model (generally stippling it on with a hard bristle brush) or I mixed 'in-situ' on the model itself. Once dry, the area was given small touches of dry pigment applied with a small brush. Some damp stains were added allowing them to soak the pigments. Different degrees of intensity can be achieved by varying the amount of the wash or by the repetition of its application in one specific area. For the dirtying job on the upper portions of the hull and turret I

mainly used dry pigments. With a small brush, the pigments were accumulated in corners and horizontal surfaces, in general logical areas which you can observe on day-to-day working vehicles.

The wheels had been painted at the same time as the vehicle. I started by painting the tyres in black and the hubs in green, highlighting the tyre side-wall and centre of the wheels. The hubs were chipped, washed and dirtied as the rest of the model and the chains painted in a dark metallic grey. Finally the "pigment" treatment was also applied to the wheels, quite heavily in fact. The result is that not much of the previous work remained noticeable! The wheels found their way onto the model which was ready for the final stowage and crew.





Final fitting

The stowage represents canvases and rolls made of fabric, so to paint them I used the “zenithal approach” used nowadays by many figure painters who use acrylic paints. The brand I used was Vallejo. Moreover, looking for a British touch, I decided to add a couple of cricket bats, which I carved from toothpicks. Since my knowledge of cricket was near to zero, Google was of great help in the search for reference photos of such old vintage bats. The crew was composed of three members. The most visible one is a magnificent Alpine figure from the set “WWII British tank crew” (ref 35050) who is wearing the pixie suit very appropriate for the winter ‘44/45 in which my Staghound is located. For the second crewman in the turret I was going to use the second figure in this set, but finally I thought that it was a pity to waste such a great figure where little of it would have being visible. I opted to use a torso from an old Dragon figure with one of the Alpine heads on it. The third figure is the driver and is only faintly visible through his vision block. This is an old Tamiya figure (or part of it). All of the figures were painted with Vallejo acrylics.

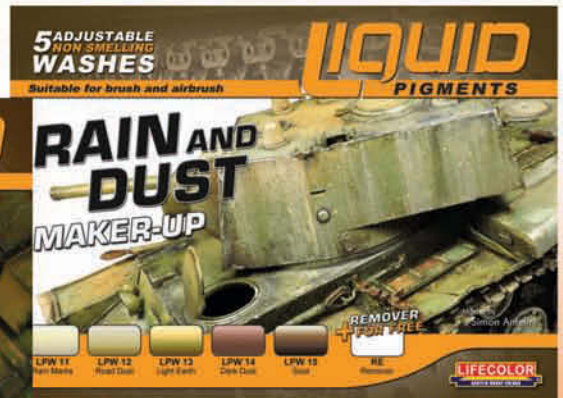
In conclusion, this has been an enjoyable project of a good looking vehicle which I wanted to model for a long time. The Bronco kit is excellent and the addition of the wheels with chains from Black Dog, despite their shortcomings, adds an “extra winter touch” that I was looking for. Who said that monochrome green vehicles look boring?





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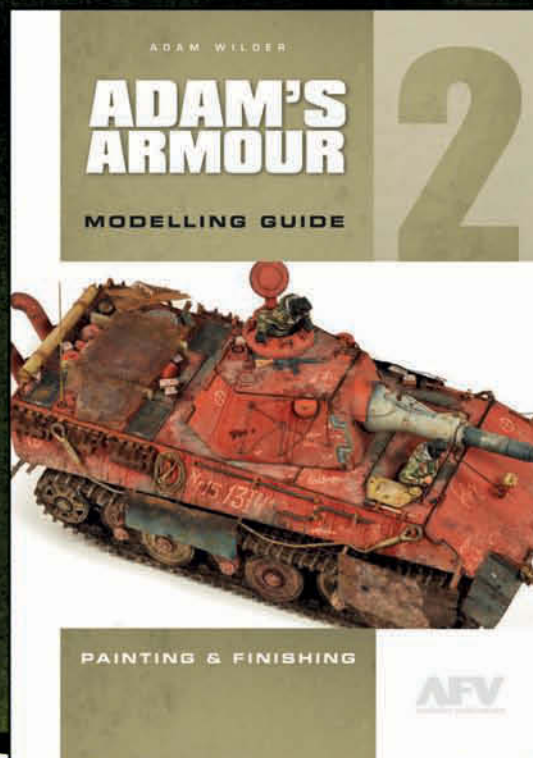
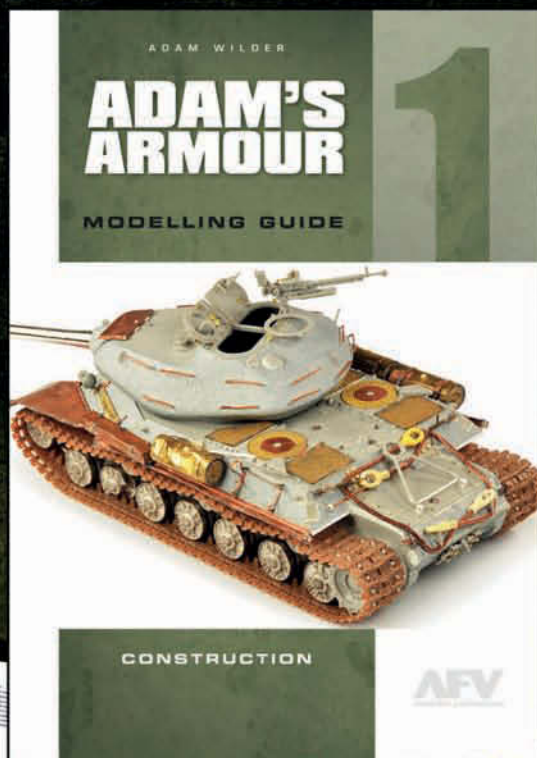
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