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AFV Modeller Ltd
Old Stables
East Moor
Stannington
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NE61 6ES
Tel: 01670 823648

Editor and Designer: David Parker
email: david@afvmodeller.com
Deputy Editor and Designer: Mark Neville
email: mark@afvmodeller.com
Sales Director: Keith Smith
email: keith@afvmodeller.com

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1:35



HEROYAM SLAVA!

PART
THREE



GLORY TO THE HEROS!

Created by Chris Meddings



The Figures

We are hardwired by evolution to see the human in the world around us. We even have the phenomenon of Pareidolia, which causes us to see faces in objects and arrangements of light and shade, and we frequently anthropomorphise objects and animals assigning human motivations and stories to them.

While there are many ways to tell a story in modelling, in my opinion the most powerful way to do so is to tell a human story with figures that the viewer can relate to.

As a modeller, you really have three options when planning your figures on a diorama:

1. Sculpt them entirely, to custom-fit your story. This method gives you total freedom to design your story and poses.
2. Make your story fit a set of commercial available figures (or a collection of figures from various sets).
3. Modify existing figures to fit your story. This allows you to come closer

to the freedom of the first method, but maybe without the full suite of required technical skill.

I elected to pursue option 3 and set about collecting my materials. The core of this would be five commercially available figure sets, at the time the only Ukrainian sets I could find to purchase in the UK. They were:

Masterbox:

"Ukrainian Soldiers, Defence of Kyiv, March 2022" (35223)

"Territorial Defence Forces of Ukraine, Bucha Clean-up" (35226)

"News from Home" (35230)

Miniart:

"Ukrainian Tank Crew at Rest" (37067)

ICM:

"To be Ahead, To Save the Life Sappers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine" (35753)

In addition, I also purchased:

AFV Modeller:

Two copies of their 1:35 Resin Sculpting Mannequin

Hornet:

Bare Heads Looking Up (HH19)

Figure in Italy:

1/35 hands, sets 1 and 2



Rather than convert individual figures, I used arms, legs, torsos, heads and equipment from different figures to create each figure. Lets look at an example:



All of the figures had some degree of Magic Sculp application, In the case of the above figure, it was a hood on his jacket and some filling. In other cases it was more significant. One figure got a new arm around a wire core, while others had more significant work. One figure only used a torso, head, feet and hands from my supplies, with the limbs sculpted. This gave me more freedom for a very specific pose.





Some figures had to be almost fully sculpted (except hands, feet, heads and kit). These were built around AFV Modeller mannequins, with all their clothes and body armour sculpted with Magic Sculpt. In all cases, I needed many hands. Most kit hands are pretty bad. Lumpy and poorly defined.

Having a range of hands to choose from helped a great deal, particularly for things like holding weapons, or as in the case of the two reaching for each other, and the one reaching for the dove, gesturing. Straps were made with masking tape, cut on an Infini masking tape template for consistency and width.



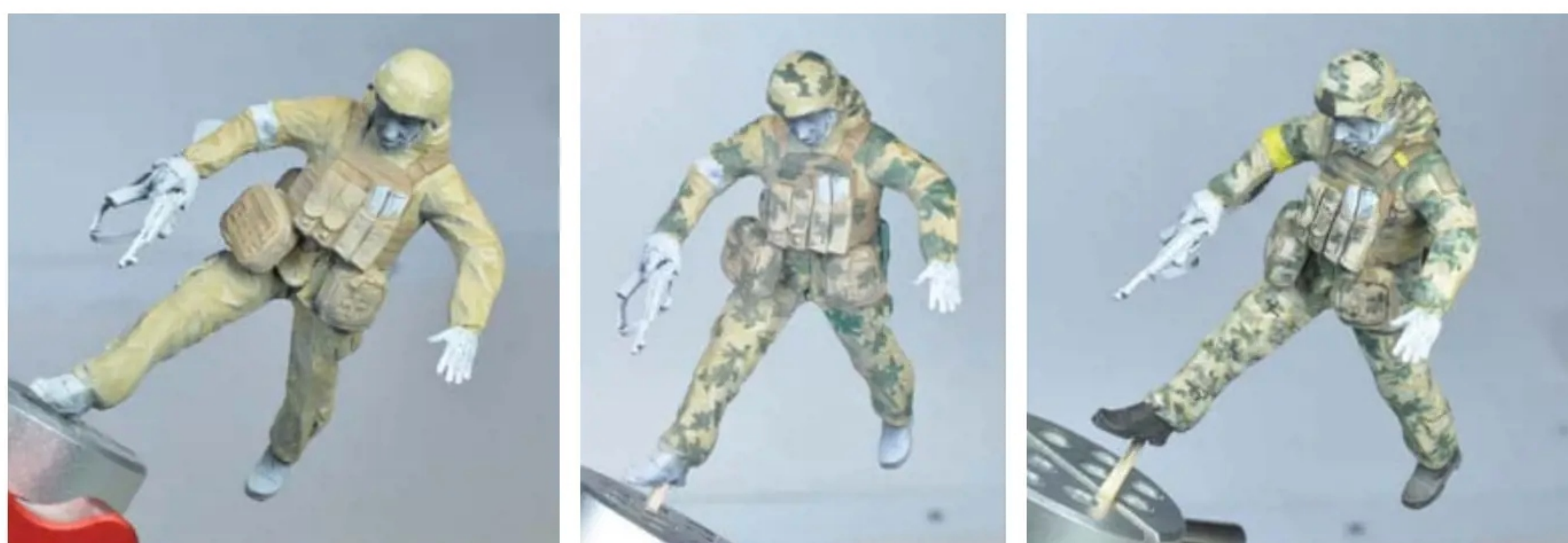
Painting began with a coat of black, then a heavy zenithal application of white from the airbrush. This is not a preshade, none of it will really be visible when the figures are painted. Instead, this is a guide for when I block in the colours by hand.

I decided that the basic colour of the Ukrainian camo is a sandy tan, so I start by blocking in the shade colour of this scheme, using my airbrushed shadows as a guide.

Next, Vallejo Model Color Khaki was applied for a second shadow. For the midtone, I used AK Sand Yellow (11035)

I added a little white to a mix of the yellow and khaki for a highlight and started on the camo.

To work out the camo colours, I used a colour picker in a graphics program to identify colours from a photo of Ukrainian autumn camo. I started with the green, using Vallejo German uniform and a touch of black. Then mixed in some white for the pale grey and used flat brown mixed with AK Tanager Grey for the dark grey, being very sparing with this last to maintain the overall tone.



Ukrainian webbing is nearly always a brownish colour called 'Coyote'. (This is one of the ways you can immediately tell them from Russians, as Russian webbing is olive green.) I used a mix of Khaki and flat brown to make this. However, attachable items, like small packs, ammunition pouches and so on, can be almost any colour, depending on its material and origin, and much is supplied by western partners, so I reflected this mismatch on the figures. Depending on the area of operation, Ukrainians wear yellow, green, or blue ID armbands. I had sculpted these into the uniforms and again used a mix, this time for symbolic purposes. I also made my figures a mix of ZSU (Ukraine regular Armed Forces) in all over camo, and NGU (National Guard) in green parkas and with more of a mix of equipment (one even has UK DPM denim trousers) to show the symbolic unity of the Ukraine Armed forces.

The Composition & Groundwork

This diorama went through a lot of iterations and revisions. The original idea was to have five vehicles and a single symbolic figure atop it. Originally it was intended to be a BMP-2, BRDM-2, Gaz Tiger, MT-LB and a T-72. Later I even tried to add a T-62 after seeing photos of some T-62s destroyed in Ukraine. Over time this changed: I could not find many good photos of BRDM-2s from the war (at least not on the Russian side), and the Tiger was too tall to work in the compositions I was trying. The base too, wasn't working. It needed more height, and a combination of wanting everything to have room, whilst fitting in a standard cabin sized box for air transport lead me to start a new base in foam. In turn this lead me to reassess my aims for the diorama, based on the shape of the base and the vehicles I was now going to use.

The T-62 has now gone, and I had elected to add a BMP-3, in the heavily destroyed form I would ultimately use. By now, on the advice of my good friends Marijn van Gils and Tracy Hancock, I had halted work on the vehicles until I had the composition and figures, and essentially the final story, locked in. So I started playing around with various layouts and compositions within this new base shape. It became slightly longer, and higher at the back to accentuate the shape and slope, and I even narrowed it a bit to reduce lateral dead space. By now, I had my story, of the Ukrainians climbing over the destroyed Russian forces to reach peace and victory.

The concept of the dove had occurred to me as the symbol of this goal, and I knew I wanted the figure reaching for it to be a tribute to a friend that had lost his life in this war. The final piece of this symbolic puzzle came together when, playing around with the positioning of the wrecks, quite unconsciously, I placed them in a 'Z'. I looked at it, and knew it was the perfect layout. The composition was decided.

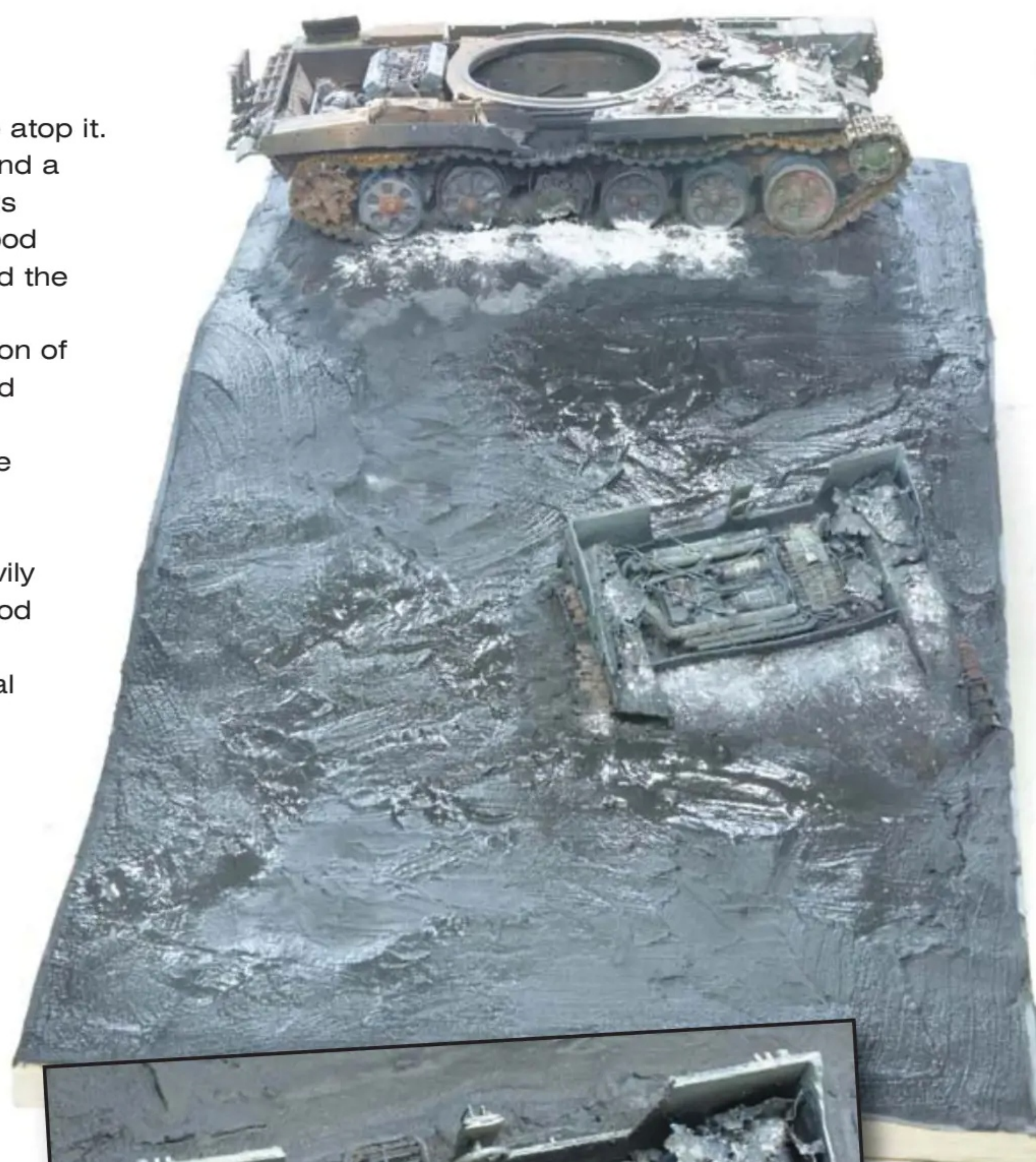
Groundwork I started by 'bedding in' The two vehicles I had already given a 'mini-base', the BMP-3 and T-72B3. This meant glueing their bases to the main foam base with foam-safe UHU Pour.

To blend them in, and provide a base for the whole dio, I mixed up a lot of household filler powder with some water, PVA glue, black paint and a little sand (for texture) and smothered the base with it, including blending the edges of the mini-bases into the rest of the diorama base.



I spoke to Alexey Belov to ask him about plant life in Ukraine. Really. I was looking for advice on specific common plants, but he gave me something much more valuable. He pointed out to me that almost all the fighting (outside of any settlements) in Ukraine, takes place on farm land. Ukraine is one of the most intensively farmed countries in Europe, and has always been known as the Breadbasket of Europe (as this war has shown, Africa too). It produces vast quantities of grain and wheat products, farmed in vast fields. This rolling low terrain is great for farming, but the huge fields and winter winds can blow the topsoil off, so fields are bounded by treelines and scrub, which break up the winds and protect the fields. I decided that I would reference this in the groundwork of the diorama.

I chose three types of plant items: dead leaves (to suggest bigger trees without having them), shrubs, and grassy tufts.





For the leaves, I coloured tissue paper with various autumnal shades using a sponge and acrylics. I waited for it to dry and punched leaf shapes out with a leaf punch. To augment this, I also dried some real leaves and crushed them up into tiny pieces and mixed it all together.

For the shrubs, I used seafoam. This looks pretty good, but there are broad long leafy shapes in it that need to be removed. Rather than just discard these, I glued them together to make low level weeds. I sprayed the seafoam black, then various greens from above, getting lighter as I went up.

For the grasses, I used seagrass, which I teased out to various lengths. I added a blob of PVA to a sheet of greaseproof paper and pushed the seagrass into it, teasing it up and out, into the right shape as it dried. This could then be sprayed any colour I wanted, and peeled off the paper to be applied to the base.

In amongst the reference photos Aristokl Zima sent to me, was a photo of personal detritus left by the Russians near Kyiv. In this, was a Russian ration pack. I copied that into a drawing program and traced and resized it, before printing some out, cutting them out with a scalpel and gluing them together. I crushed them and hid them on the base for the viewer to find, along with some excellent 3D ammo cans by Andrew Kubarenko from #StandWithUkraine.

I added everything to the base, and a shout out here to Alexandre Duchamp who gave me a lot of advice on making everything that little bit more realistic, especially the leaf litter and ground tones. Finally, I dialled up the ash on the burned vehicles, crushing black and white (mostly white) chalk pastels and applying them where ash would lay, before fixing them, and the leaves and other loose items, with decanted hairspray, thinned with water. Once everything was in place, I still had an issue that, tonally, the tops of

the vehicles, and the figures did not lift enough from the ground. To separate them out and foreground them, as the core of the story should be, I needed to add more tonal range, so I sprayed some very heavily thinned black acrylic over the ground work and the lowest parts of the vehicle to shade them more. The figures were placed, including a miniart pigeon, painted as a dove, on the tip of the T-72 barrel, and finally, after 12 months of work, the diorama was complete.





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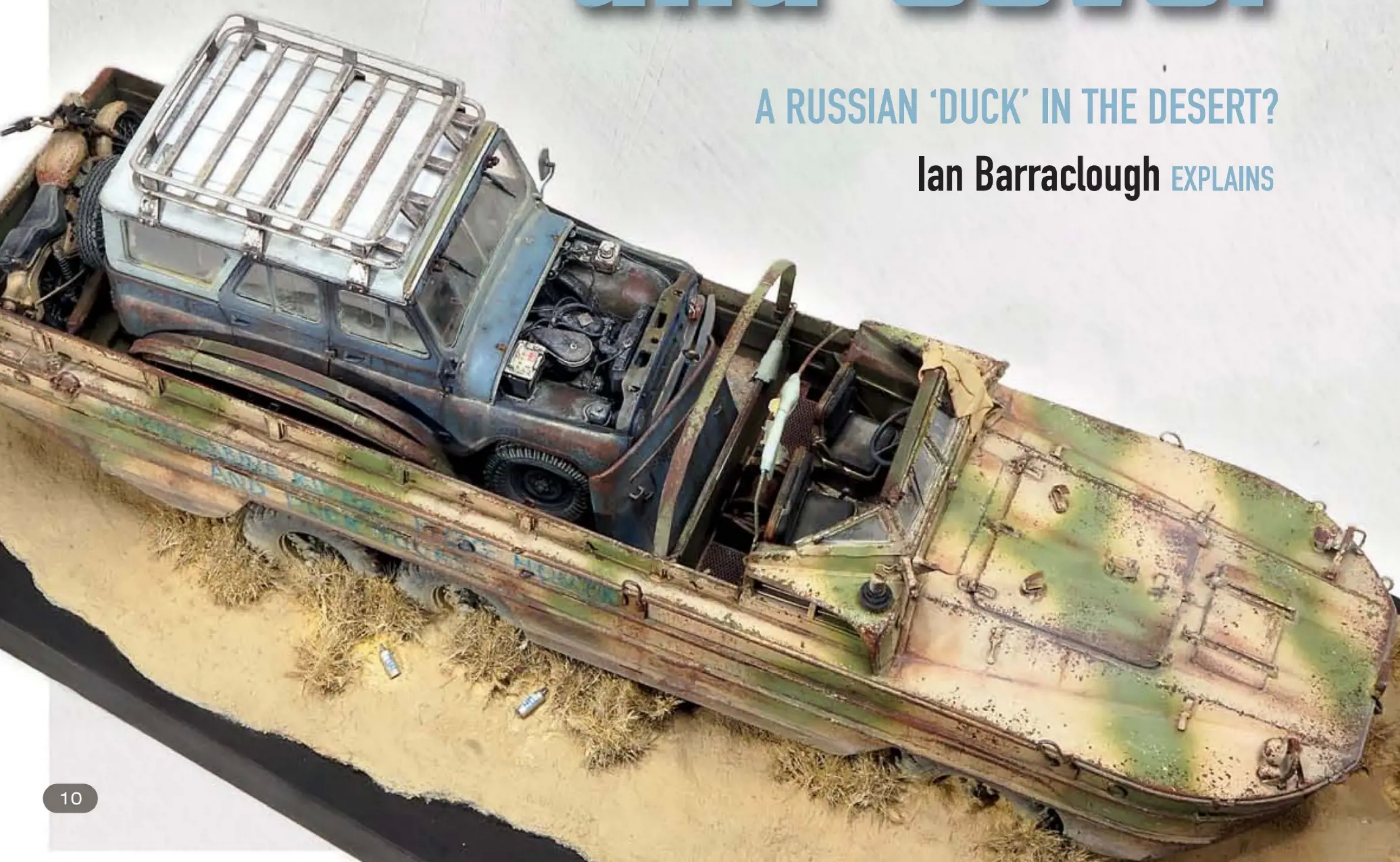
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DUWK and cover

A RUSSIAN 'DUCK' IN THE DESERT?

Ian Barraclough **EXPLAINS**





So, when is a Duck not a Duck..?

When it's a Soviet era BAV485, of course!

My interest in the BAV485 started when I saw an online image (Facebook - Iraqi Armed Forces Research Group) of what seemed to be a few DUKWs in Iraq, abandoned in the desert and tagged by US forces. But wait a minute, this seemed odd as DUKWs were WW2 vehicles, or at best used for river tours in tourist hotspots. A bit of research was needed...

At the end of WW2 the Russians realised that they didn't have amphibious vehicle cable of transporting cargo across its many rivers and marshlands. They did, however, have access to many lend-lease American Made DUKW, a water going modification of the six-wheel drive CCKW 2.5-ton truck - more commonly known as the Duck.

In the early 50's, the Soviet Union reverse engineered the DUKW, removing the rear platform and steps and adding a rear loading ramp. The Zavod Imeni Stalina factory built it on the structure of its ZiS-151 truck, and production continued until 1962, with over 2,000 units delivered. The BAV (Russian, БАВ, bolshoi avtomobil vodoplavayushchiy, big floating vehicle) was modified through its life, with later variants (BAV485A) being built on the ZIL-157 truck. The BAV 485 was only used by Soviet army and Polish army, it being a reliable and easy-to-use equipment. Study of online sources show that even though the BAV was only produced at one factory, the variation between individual vehicles seems to be massive and restored versions have many fixtures and fittings that may not have been seen when in service. It would seem that at some point ex-Polish Army vehicles were sold to Iraq for use in river estuary marshes during the Iran-Iraq war.

Interest piqued, I searched about for a suitable model: Panzershop used to produce a resin conversion for the Italeri kit, but this is no longer in production. I found a few 3D resin print items, but I'm only just getting started in my 3D printing journey, so didn't feel confident enough to tackle a full-sized 3D print just yet. Some Eastern European manufacturers produce 1/72 scale models, but nothing in 1/35. After some further research I realised that my only course of action was going to be to convert an

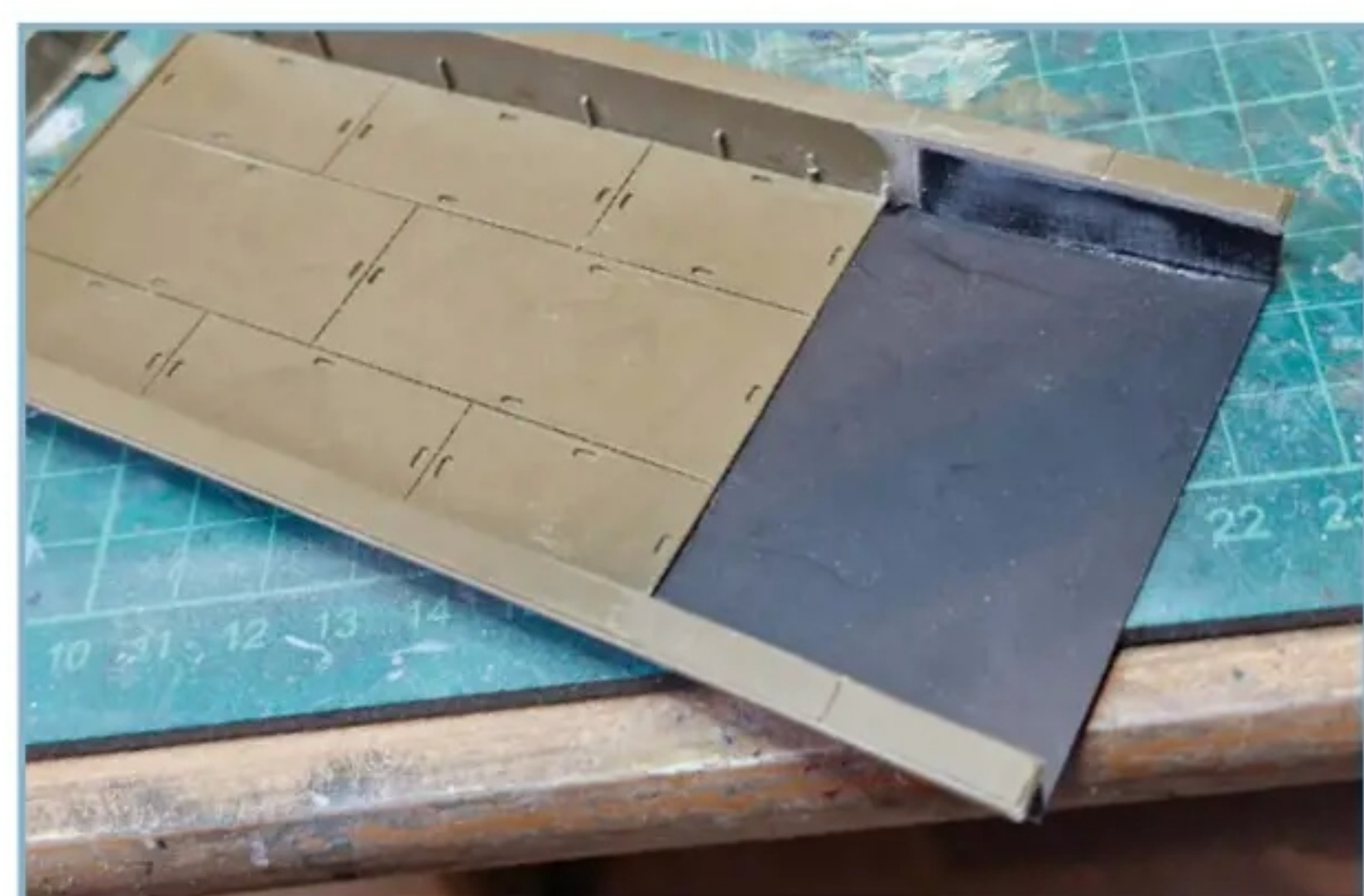
existing 1/35 DUKW myself. There are loads of workarounds of the BAV485 (search for 5AB485) for reference, so I decided to use the cheap and readily available Italeri kit, of which there are many variations, but the base kit is the same throughout.

The obvious main difference between the DUKW and the BAV is the rear loading ramp and extended load bed; but I also noticed that the ones in Iraq had large wheels. Again, a bit of research identified these as BTR-152 wheels and tyres. I'm unsure of the mechanics of these attaching to the BAV485 axles, but I ordered 3 sets of Miniarm 1/35, B35116, Flat tyre for ZiL-157 / BTR-152 in preparation.

The build started with the surgery on the rear end of the Italeri kit. The load bed has wooden panels which can be lifted to get access to the amphibious drive on the real thing. Looking at plans of the BAV, these could be used to line up where to cut. With the old adage of measure twice, cut once – I cut off the rear end of the Italeri kit with a razor saw. I left the sides attached as much as possible, so that I could use these to support and align the rebuild. I rebuilt the load bed and sides using thick plastic stock, onto which I added detail in the form of ribs and new wooden panels.



The rear platform and some of the load bed removed.



Structural rebuild of the lower load bed.



Sides and rear ramp were rebuilt from plastic stock and card.



Details added to the ramp such as handles and tie downs.



I replaced the moulded on louvres with more defined vanes from plastic stock.

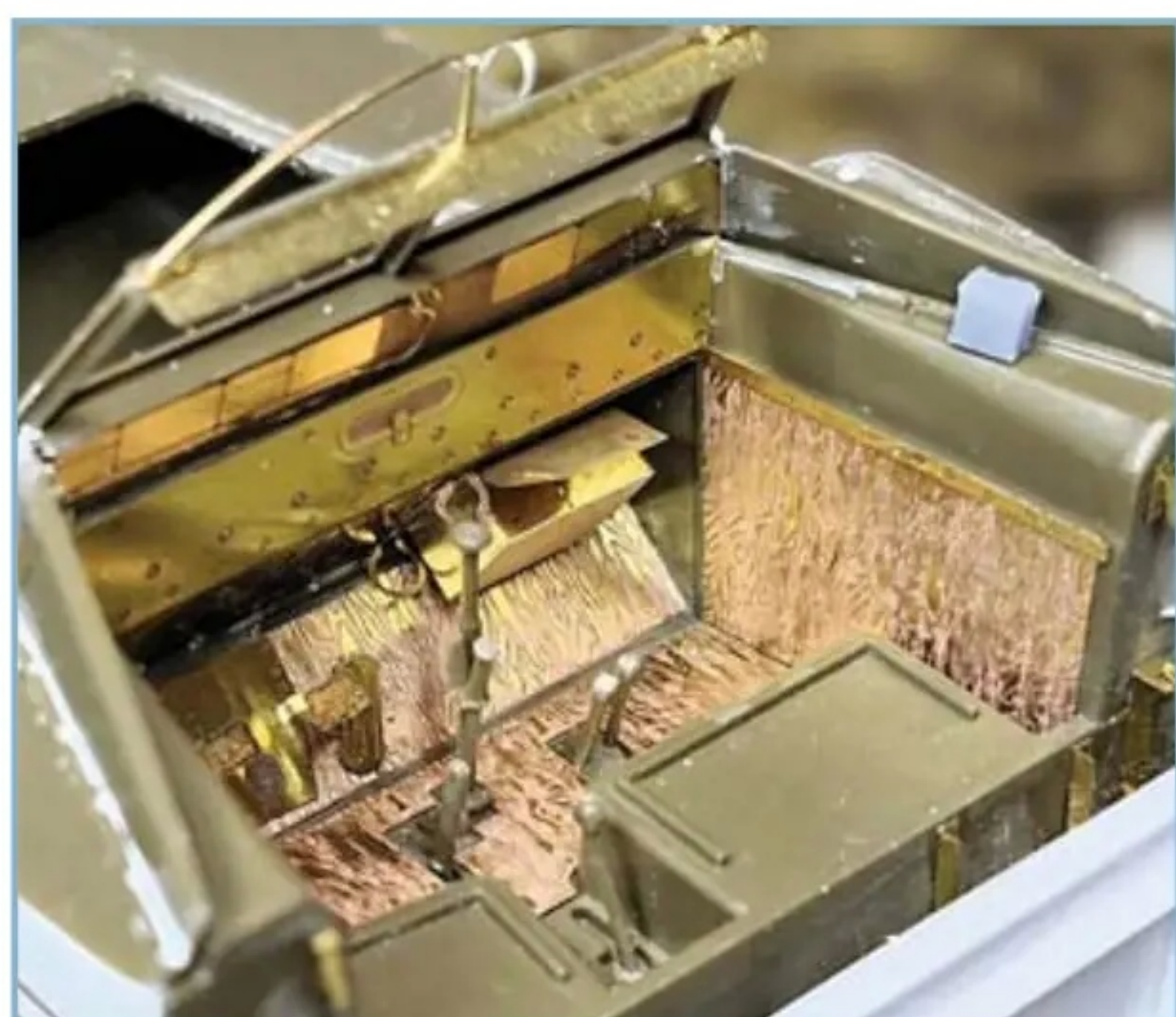


Note the rebuilt front engine door area, with a smaller door than the DUKW and separate vent.

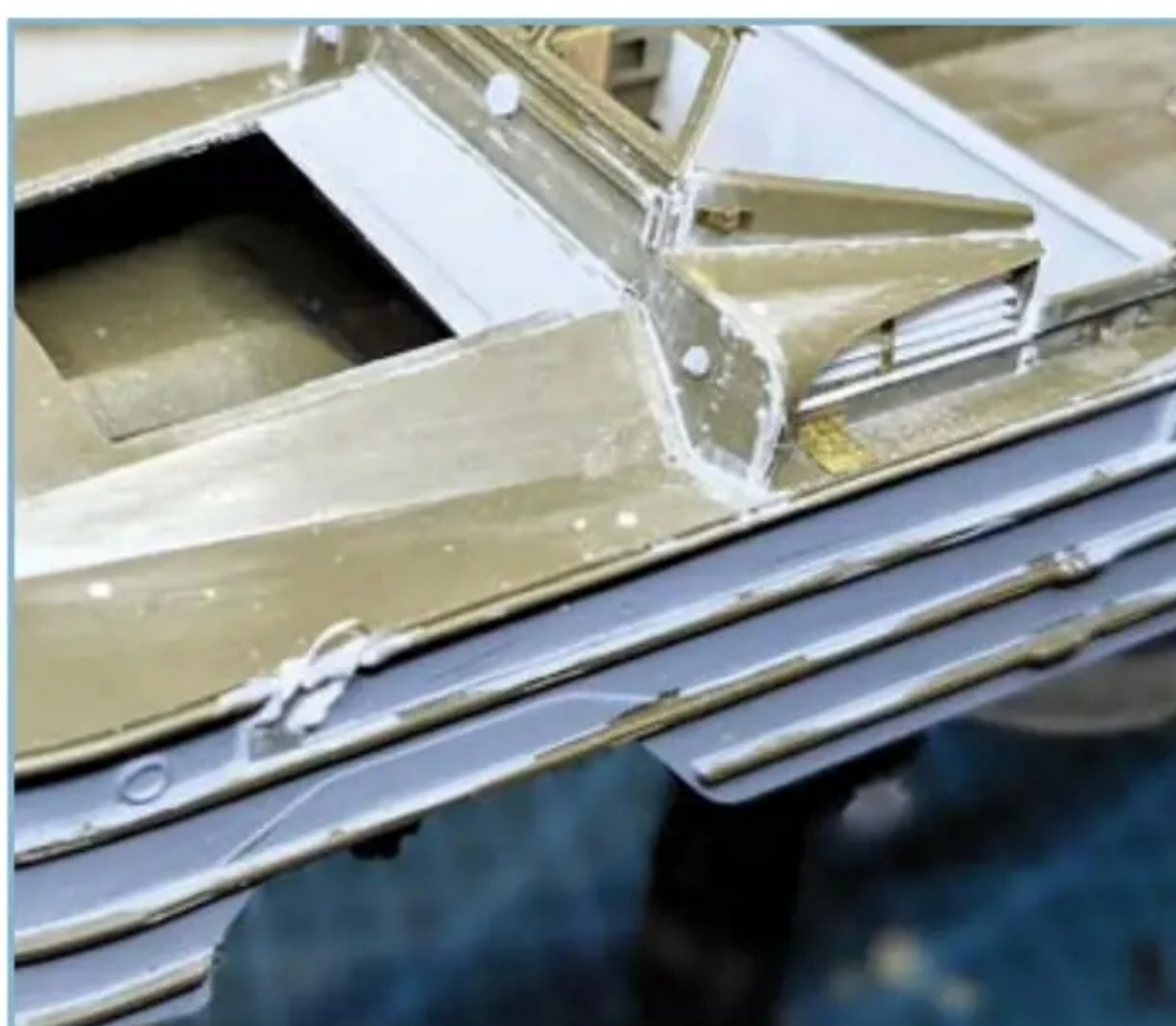
The most difficult part of the rebuild was the rear drop ramp. Although basically a rectangle, it has some complex strengthening ribs and hinges. The winch is relocated from the rear platform to directly behind the crew cab. I added a couple of hydraulic pipes, and the louvres need to be cut to allow this to fit in the gap.

At the front end, the engine bay door must be shortened, and the ventilation flap replaced, to be refitted directly onto the hull top in front of the cabin.

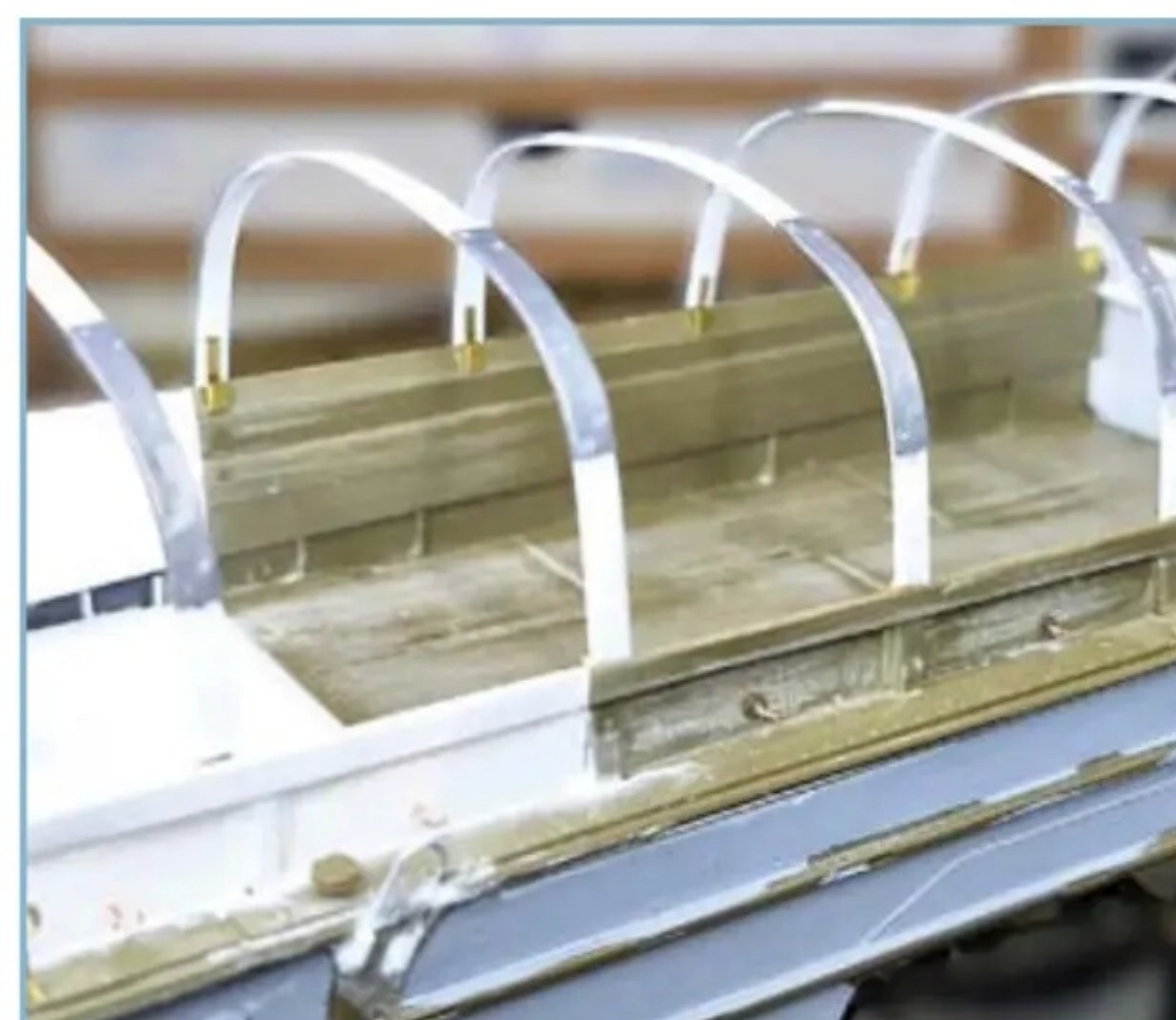
Although not a complicated procedure, I messed up the cutting and had to replace both the engine bay door and flap from plastic stock.



The Eduard etched brass set really adds great detail to the cab area.



I covered the sides with Mr Surfacer to add some texture.

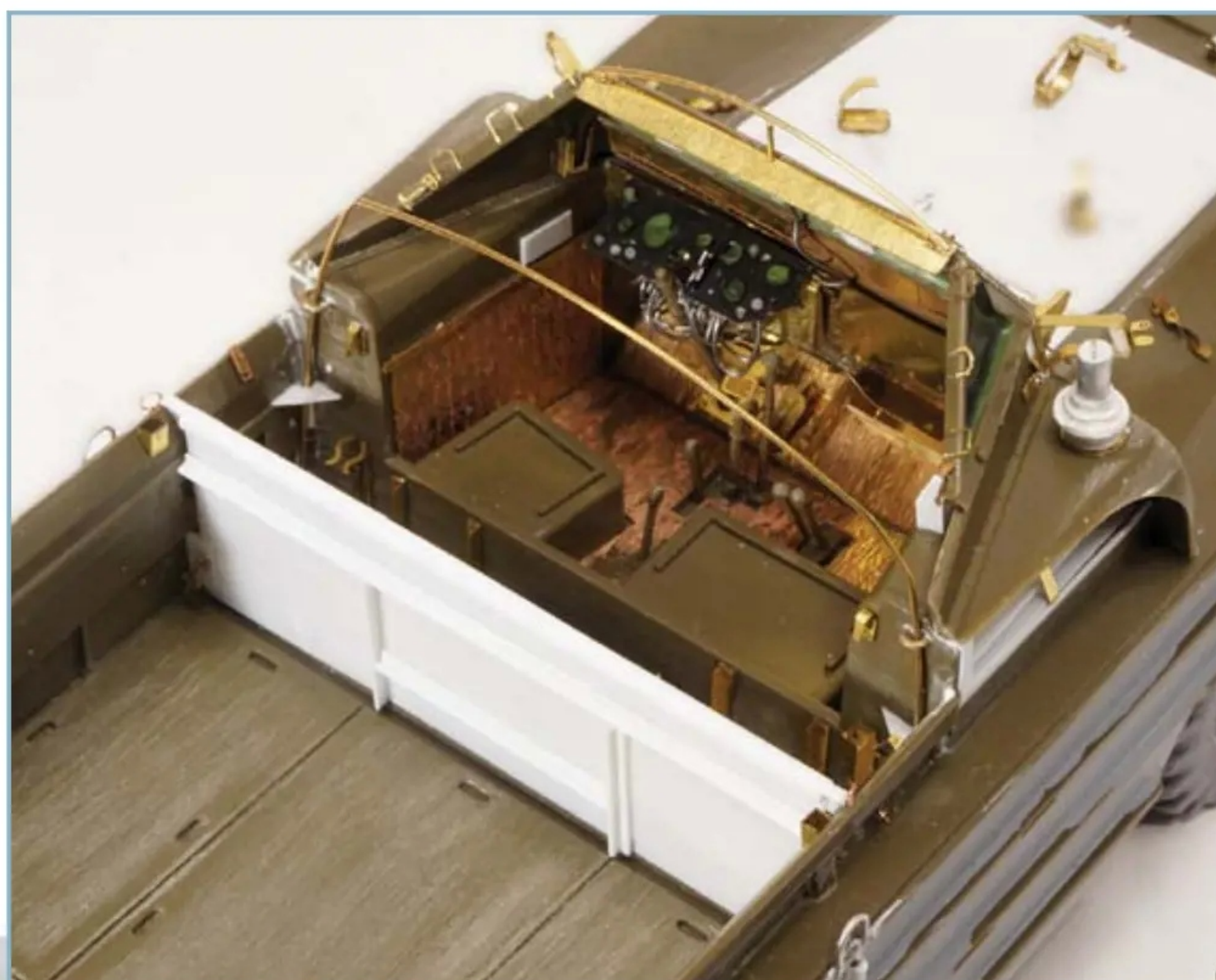


The tarpaulin supports fitted. These will be inside the load area on the finished model.

I added extra detail from the Eduard etched brass set, as well as replacing many of the clunky details from Italeri kit, which was first released in the 60's and is now very much showing its age!

The dashboard of the BAV485 is different to the DUKW, so I made up a new dash using thin plastic card and a punch and die set. The final addition was to build up some tarpaulin supports – very visible in the pictures of the BAVs in Iraq.

Each of these supports is made up of five parts, which slot together to make up the support. I made a wooden frame and bent thin plastic stock around it, held in place with an elastic band. This was then immersed in very hot water and allowed to cool, ensuring the desired shape remained.



The final step in the conversion was to add the wheels to the 'DUKW' axles. At this point I realised that the wheels were way too big for the base machine axles.

I think that in real life the axles from a larger vehicle (possibly a BTR-152) must have been used with upgraded suspension, but for my build I simply used CA glue to 'make' the wheels fit. The axles aren't centralised, but as the BAV will be sitting low in sand, no one will notice (Shhh, don't tell the judges...).



The large BTR-152 wheels didn't fit the stock DUKW axles, so I made them fit.

Painting followed my usual steps: Wash in soapy water, primer, shadowing and then base colours getting progressively lighter to highlight detail. The green camouflage was painted freehand using an airbrush. I only use acrylic paints. The secret is to thin the paints using the manufacturers thinners – I mainly use Tamiya paints, so use the Tamiya X-20A thinners. I find that if using water to thin acrylics the paint adhesion suffers and will almost certainly peel during the weathering phase later.

The base coats were then sealed with an airbrushed coat of Future Klear (floor polish), over which I applied a pin wash of sepia and brown oil paints, heavily thinned with odourless thinners. This is applied around details and allowed to run into crevices, because of the Future Klear coat, any excess can be rubbed off later with a cotton bud. I used a wide make-up brush dampened with thinners to brush downwards around the sides of the model. This adds dark streaks and again, can be washed off if you're not happy with the results.



I used a grey primer over a black base to start the painting process. This adds shadows that will show through the final colour.



Further pre-shadowing using brown around raised detail.



Note the interior was left in Russian 4BO green.



With the interior and wheels masked, I used Tamiya Dark Yellow for the first sand coat.



I then used Tamiya Desert Yellow, lightened with Buff concentrating on the upper surfaces and raised detail.



A mix of various greens was used for the camouflage bands

To start the chipping and rust process, it's important to understand the process that would happen on the real vehicle. The camouflage green would chip, revealing the sand paint underneath. The Iraqi applied sand paint would chip and wear, revealing the original Russian/Polish green underneath. This would then chip, exposing the base metal material, which would then rust. To follow this process, I used a small piece of sponge to chip

the camouflage green paint with sand, the sand paint with 4BO Russian green, and the Russian green was chipped with matt black paint. I have tried the hairspray technique to do this, but I can never seem to control it well enough and find that the chip sizes are too big. I have found that different densities of foam have different effects, and I now have a small collection of packaging foams that I use in a similar way to different brush



I sealed the paint chipping with a coat of Windsor and Newton matt varnish, before starting the rusting process. This was done again with a small piece of sponge. I've noticed that in arid areas rust seems to be very dark. Seldom are seen the bright oranges and yellows of rusty machines in wetter areas like Northern Europe.

I used Tamiya Flat Brown, heavily applied to the ribs and edges of fixtures. To add some limited highlights, I used Tamiya Red Brown to exposed edges; and in very limited areas used some Lifecolor Rust Orange to the raised surfaces.

To add specific areas of rust, and streaks I used the AK Interactive weathering pencils rust and streaking set. Over a matt surface these can be used to apply very precise effects and patterns and can be used in a similar way oil paints, by applying dots of colour and then streaking downwards with a wide brush dampened in water. Again, I used the darker colours from the set and allowed water to pool in crevices and along the tops of the long ribs on the sides of the BAV.

To replicate dust effects, I used a mixture of weathering powders and AK Interactive weathering pencils. When using weathering powders, I mix them with water, and again allow them to pool in corners and crevices. By using water, when dry, you can then use brushes and cotton buds to wipe them off if you're not happy. I finished off the dust effects by using Lifecolor Liquid Pigments around the lower surfaces and wheels, applied heavily with a



brush and then wiped off with a water dampened brush whilst still wet. I sealed everything with a matt varnish – sometimes all matt models don't look very realistic, but with machines that have been outside in dusty conditions this is how they look. I added the 'Sabine River Tours...' tag with a blue water colour pencil over a water dampened surface. This allows the colour to bleed slightly, giving a good representation of the sprayed tag.

I built a small base from MDF and a wall filler/white glue mix. Whilst still wet, I pushed the BAV into the mix over cellulose film. This stops the wet mix sticking to the model. I added some tufts of long grass and airbrushed everything with progressively lighter coats of sand, then buff. These colours were also allowed to creep up onto the lower hull and wheels, tying everything together nicely.



Noticing that the load bed looked very empty, I decided to add a bit of interest and colour by loading it with a UAZ469 that I'd recently received for my birthday (thanks Sis!). This model was built pretty much from the box, adding some engine wires and cables, and flattening out the wheels a bit by putting small screws through the bottoms.

I added a 3D printed hardtop and roof rack purchased from Cults3D and painted it in the same way as the BAV. Even with the UAZ in the load area, it still looked empty. I 3D printed an Enfield motorbike as a single print - again, a free item on Cults3D. The detail on this is amazing and care must be taken to not break off and of the minute parts. This filled the empty space behind the UAZ nicely.



Putting a screw through the bottom of the rubber wheel gives it a weighted look. The spare on the right has no screw.



The UAZ is a great little kit that has a surprisingly large number of parts.



I added a few wires to and cables to the engine area...



and painted to match the weathered exterior.



The single piece 3D print Enfield bike was a late addition. The detail in this print is amazing. Even the brake cables print!



Clutter added to the interior. Most of this won't be visible through heavily dusted windows.



Blue! Base colour added and highlighted. I used the kit rear cover as a mask for the interior.



Starting the chipping and rust process. Here the 3D printed hardtop is fitted.



Frustratingly, the day after I finished the BAV, I took it to the wonderful Scale Scotland Model show in Edinburgh.

On the way, it slipped off the rear seat and landed squarely on top of the Mack NO featured in Issue 138 of AFV Modeller.

Sadly, the Mack sustained most of the damage and was left in the car for the show (it has since been repaired).



The BAV underwent some hasty battle damage repair and took a gold in class in the competition!

кря-кря

(that's 'quack quack' in Russian!)





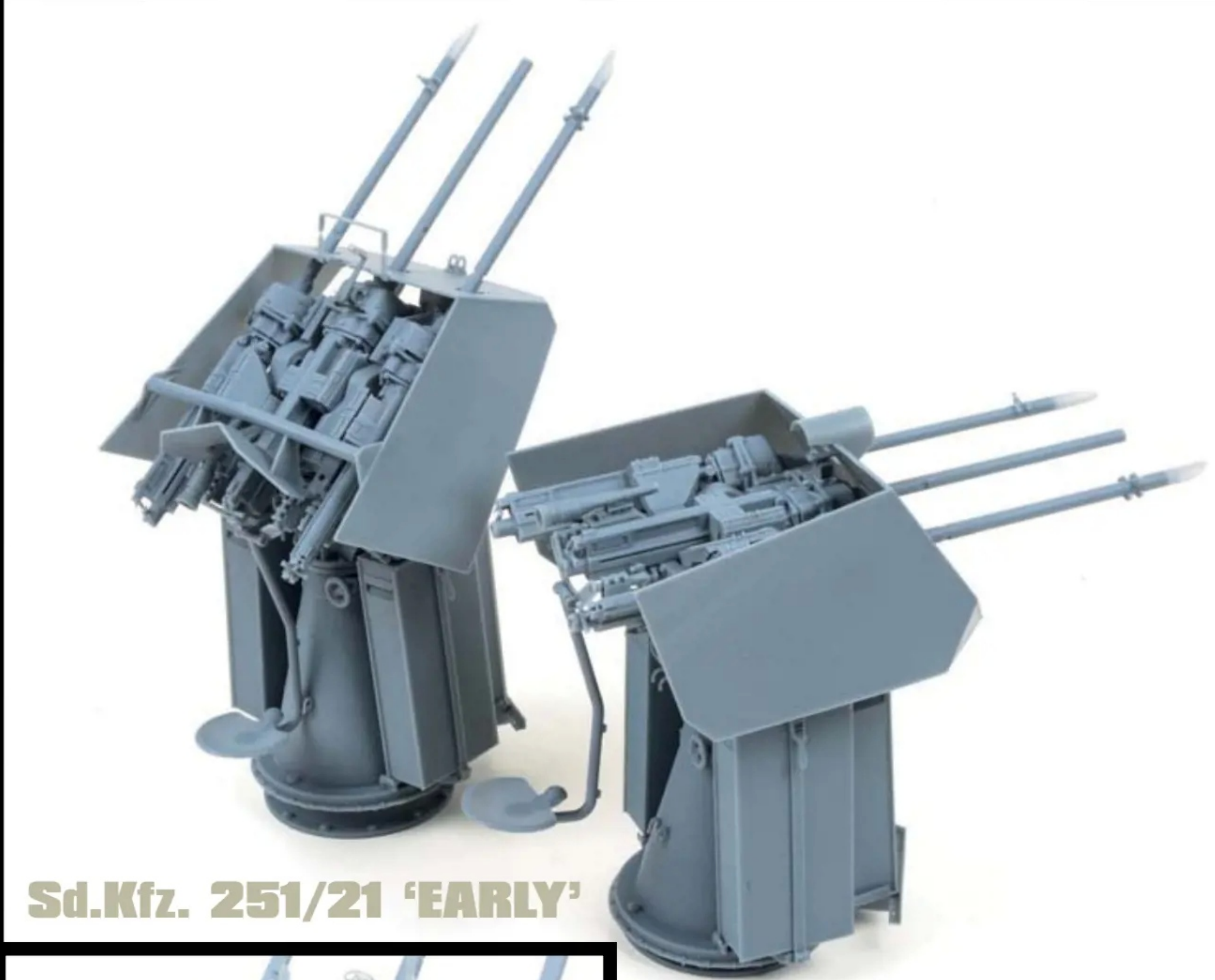
DUWK and cover **BAV485**



Sd.Kfz. 251/21 HALFTRACK

1:16

DRILLING CONVERSION

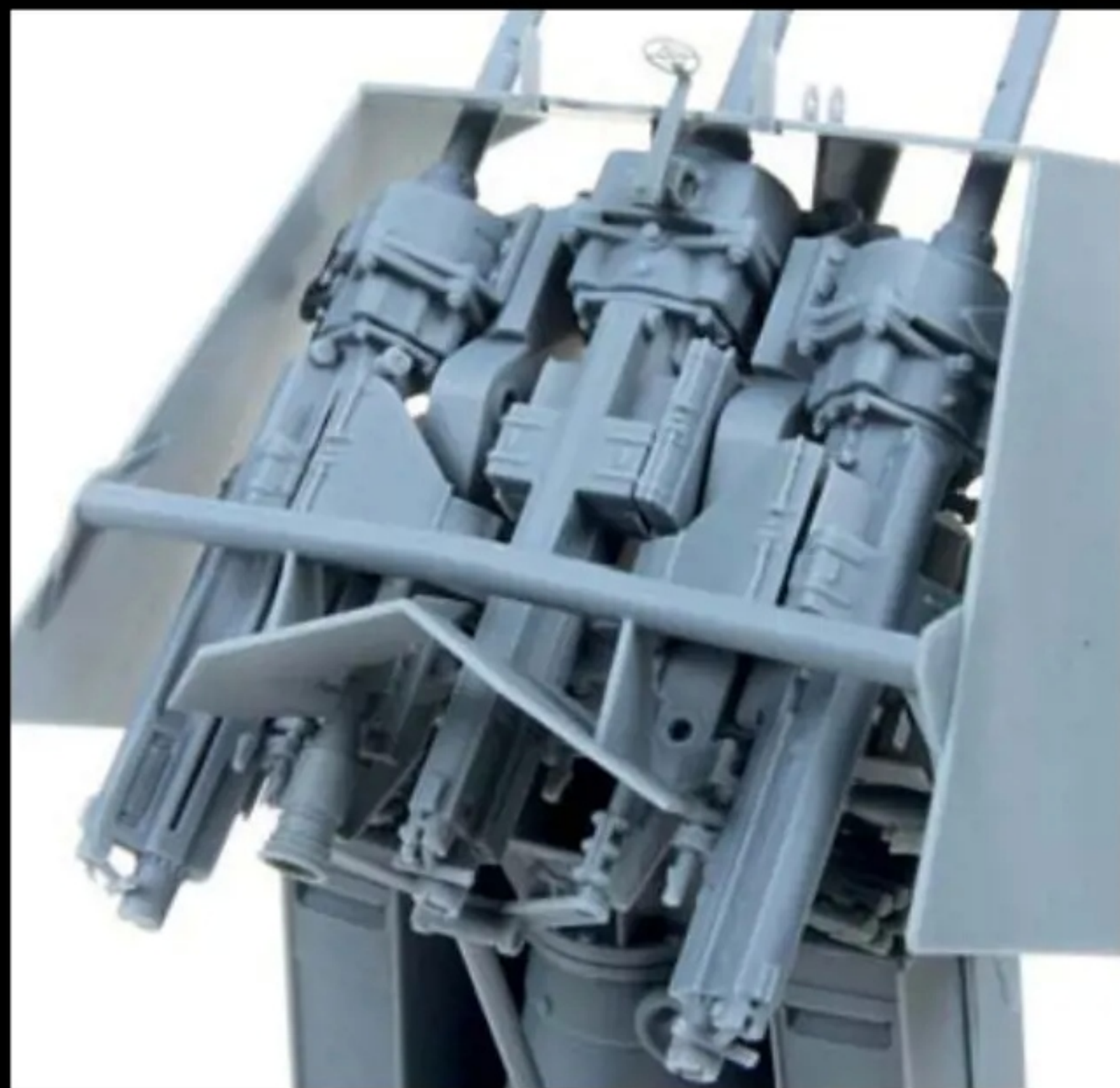


Sd.Kfz. 251/21 'EARLY'

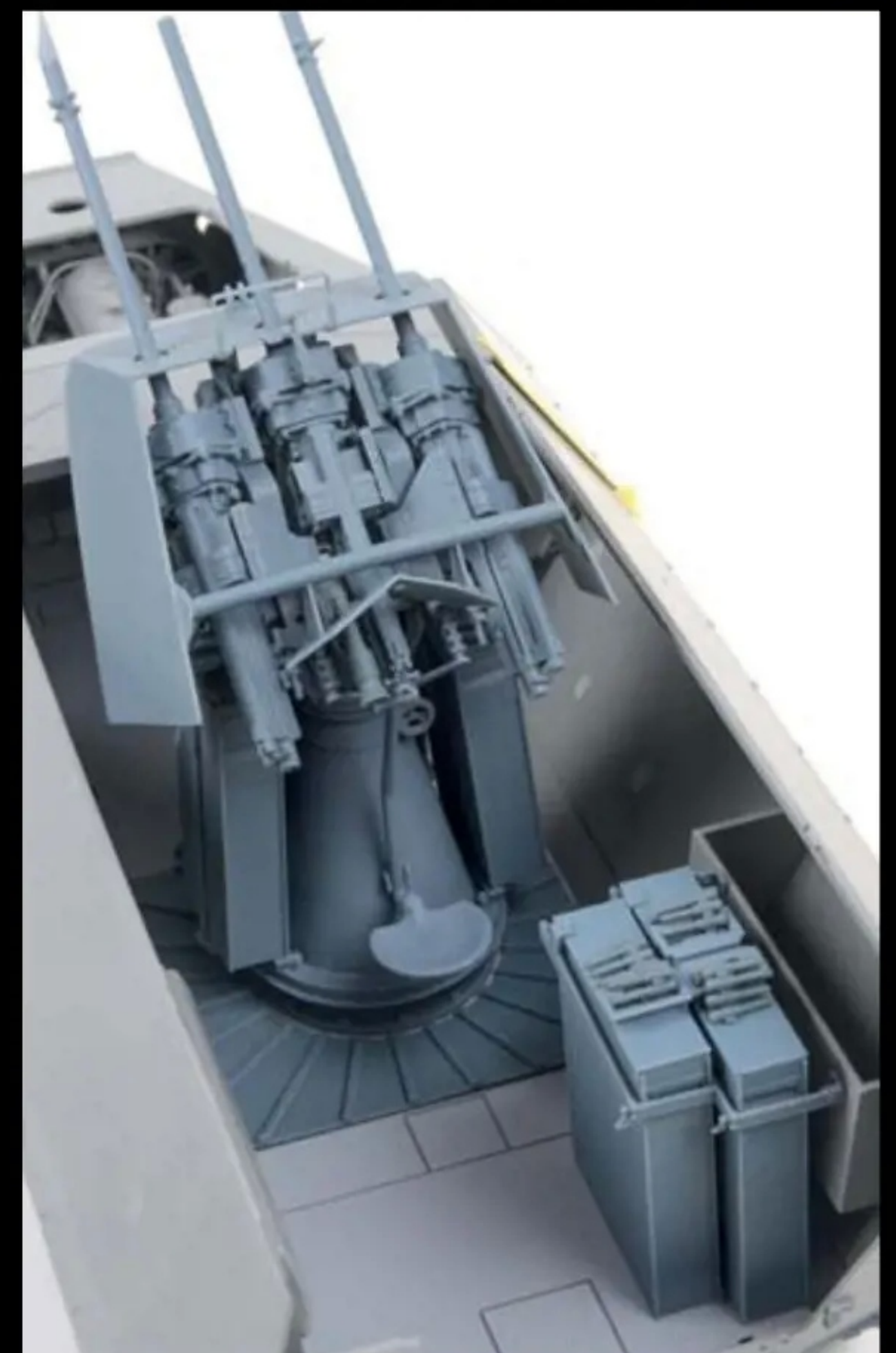
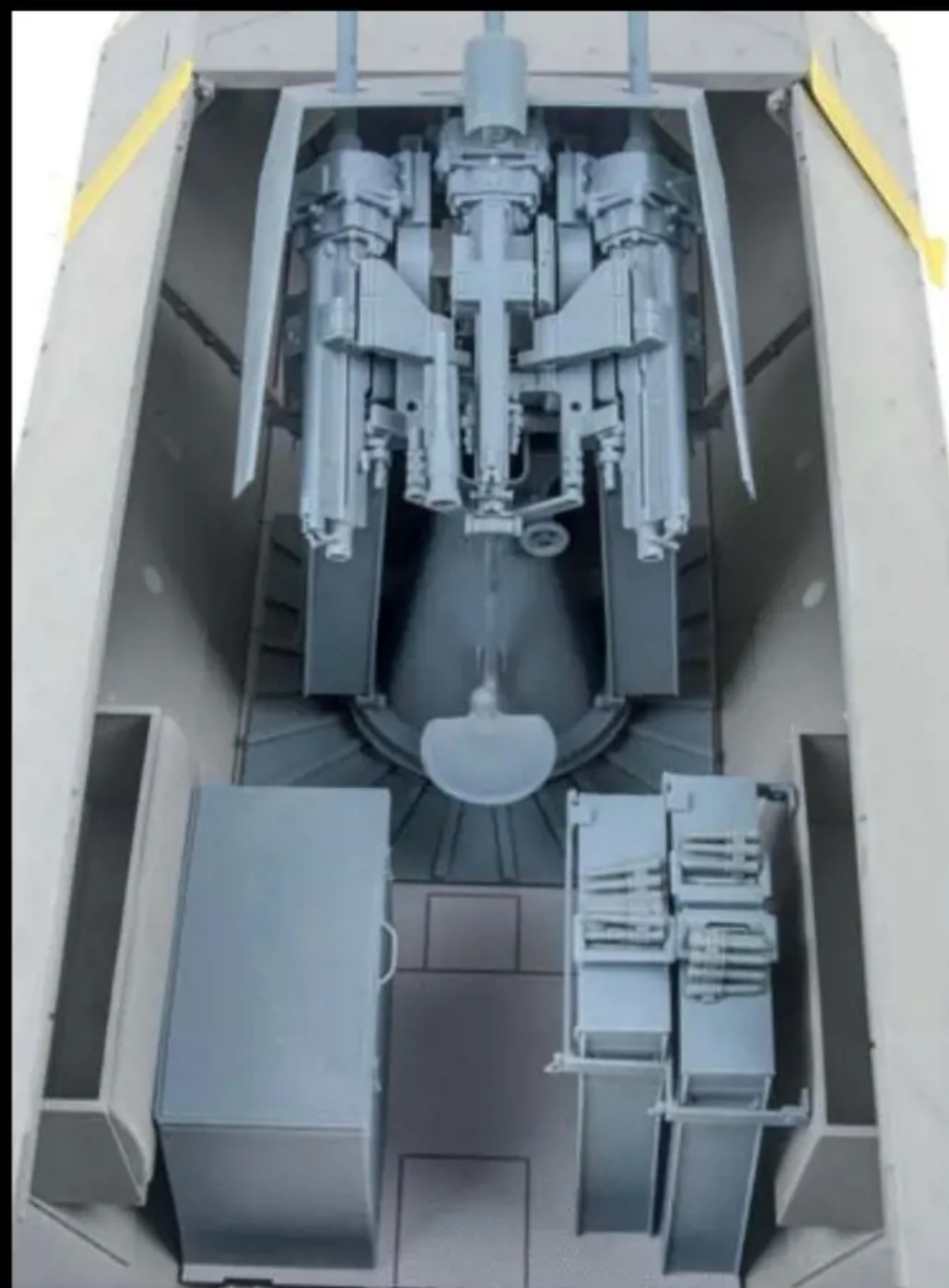
Sd.Kfz. 251/21 'DRILLING' Conversion Sets

We are delighted to announce the release of one of our most ambitious and complex 1:16 products, the triple M.G.151/20 'Drilling' mount for the Sd.Kfz.251/21. This will be available as 'Early' or 'Late' configurations. The Late version sits on a lower pedestal than the Early and is designed to work with the Das Werk kit 16022 (Pakwagen) as it offers the Late 251 features required. The Early version will work with this or the standard 251 from Das Werk. (note that Trumpeter 251 kits have hulls that are 2mm too narrow with consequent implications on the fit of the Drilling but they will accept the gun.) Our Drilling offers the option to model the guns in the horizontal position or at maximum elevation which is how it rests when not locked in the travel lock. Spare ammunition boxes, floor section, folding seats and brackets for the hull armour extensions are included. Its an impressive model and surprisingly large!

Sd.Kfz. 251/21 'LATE'



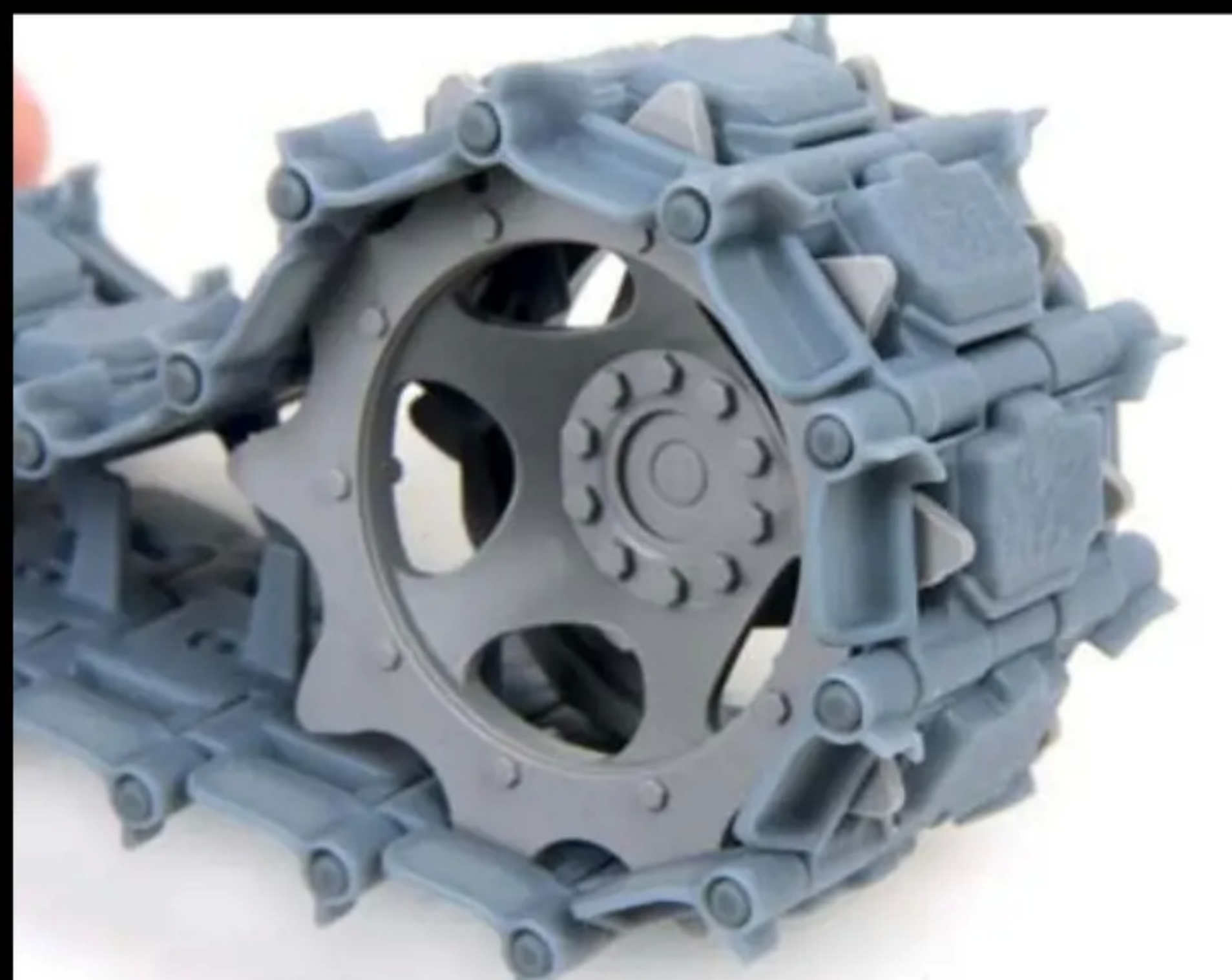
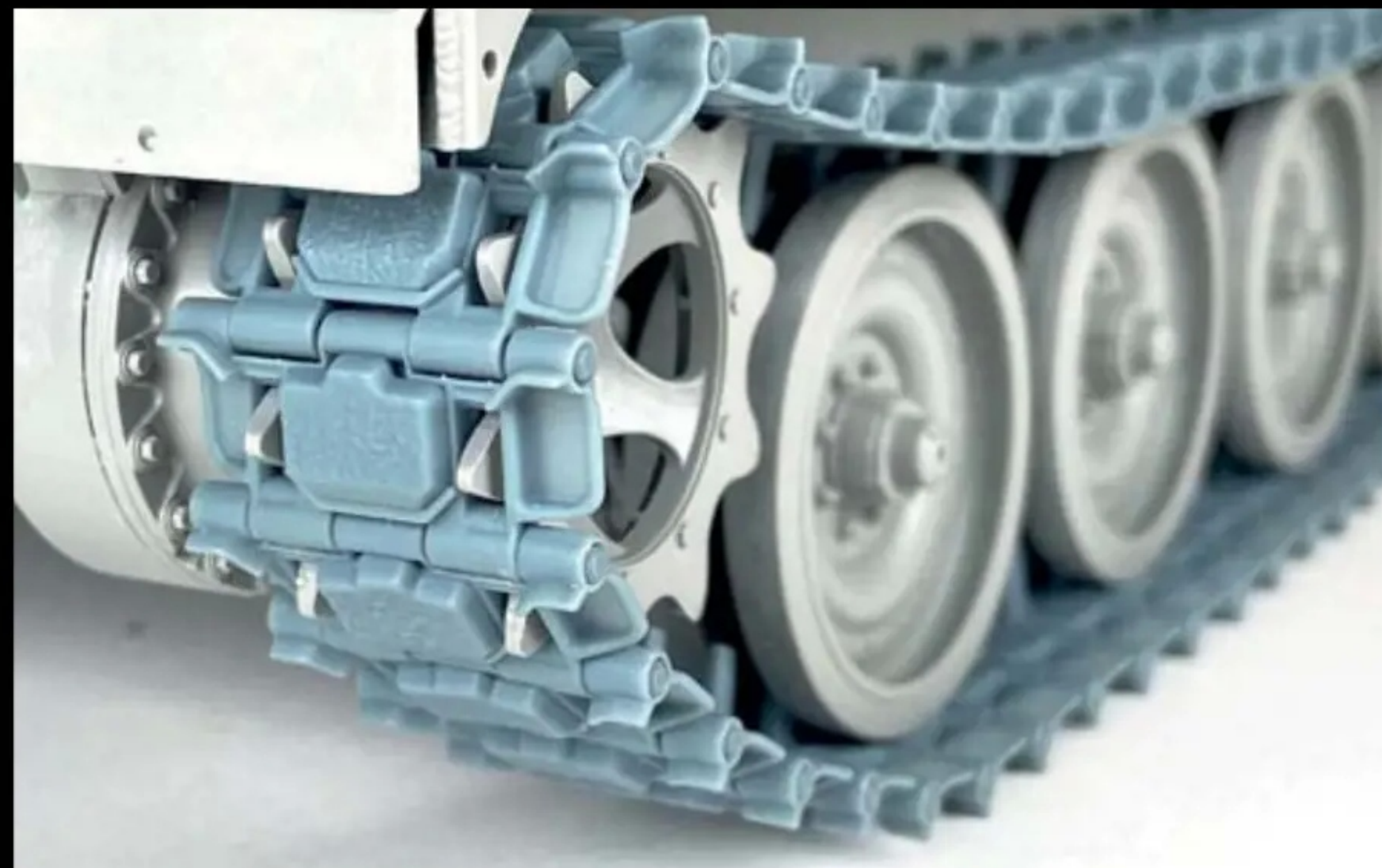
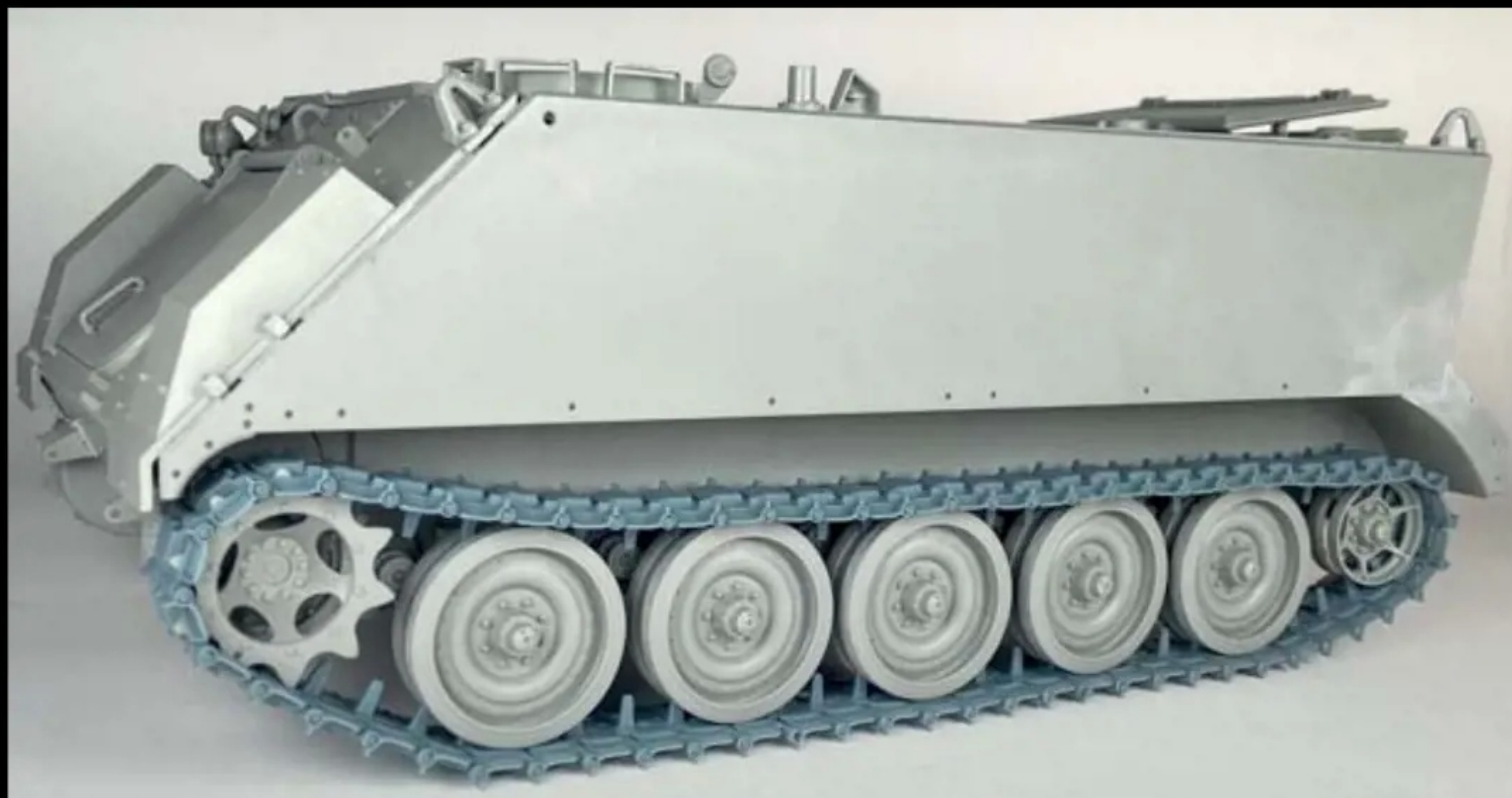
Photos show pre-production prototypes, some details may differ at production.



1:16

M113 APC

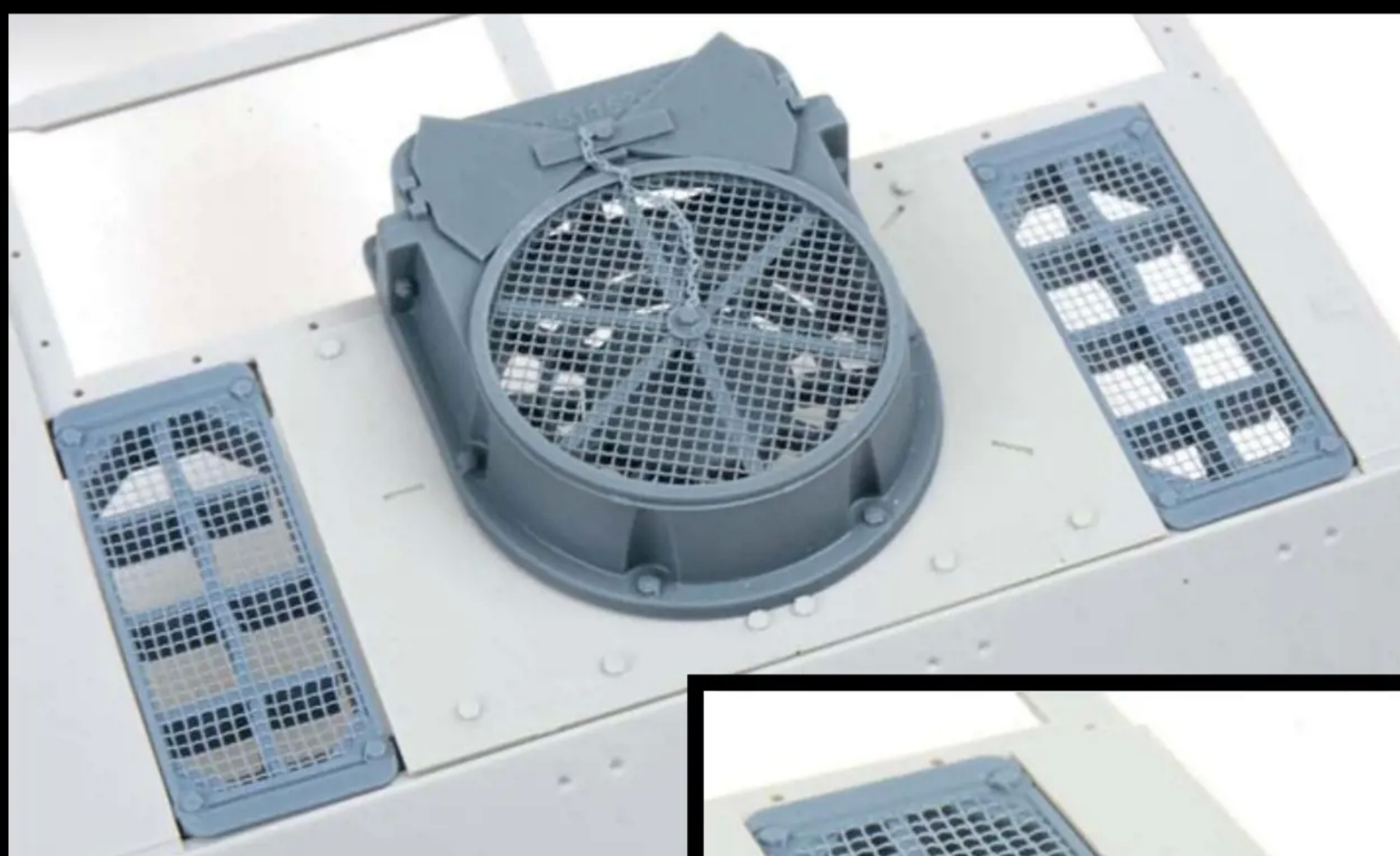
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M113 Corrected tracks with worn pads

These workable replacement tracks fix the shape issues with the kit tracks as well as offering enhanced levels of detail. The tracks come with a mix of seven different wear patterns on the pads to give a random worn look when they are assembled.

PANTHER/JAGDPANTHER



Panther / Jagdpanther Engine deck grilles

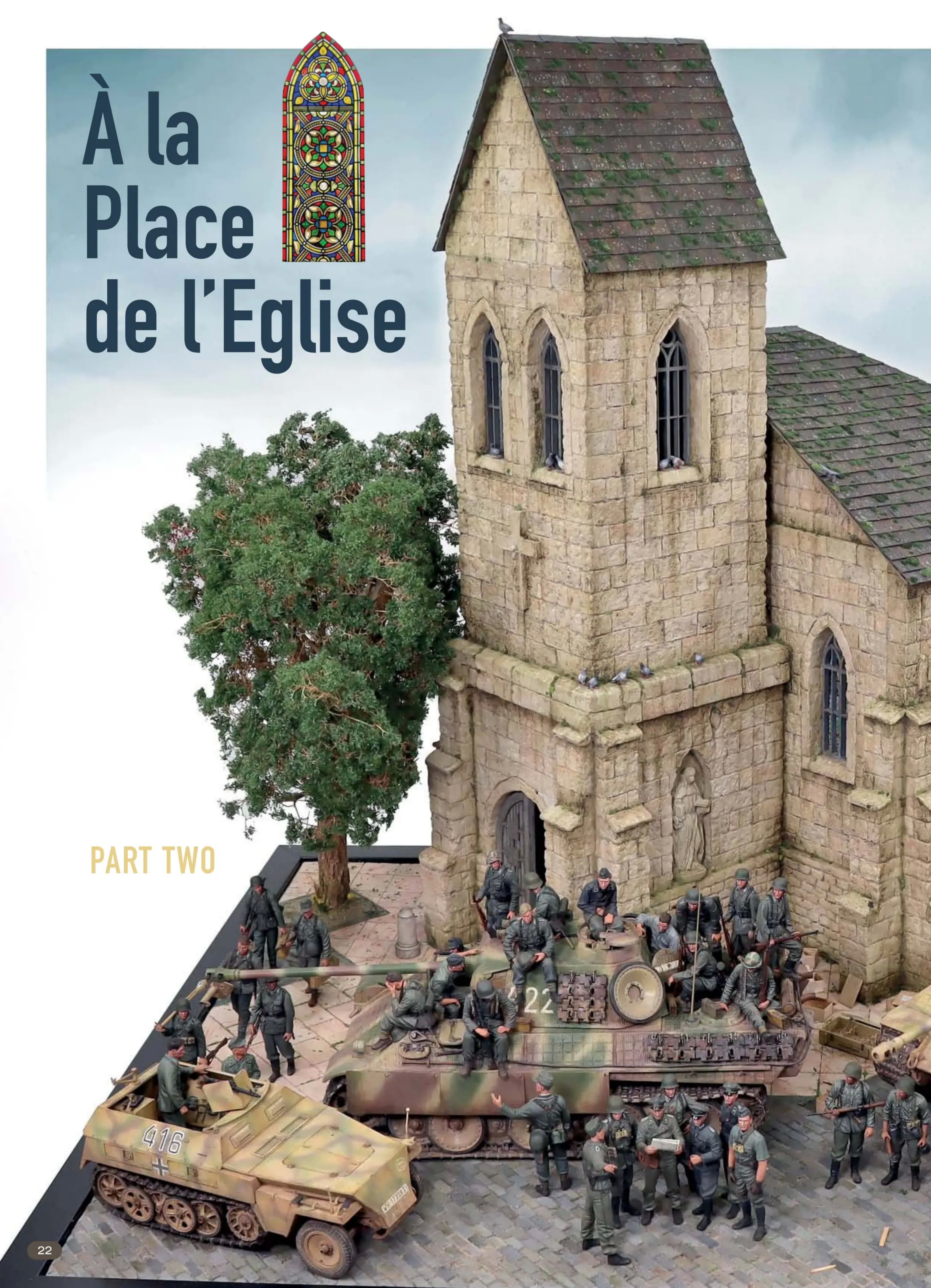
These upgrades for the Panther family give the correct 3 dimensional look the mesh screens that photoetch cant quite achieve and are slightly sagged for that extra bit of realism. Sold as individual items so you can model your specific arrangement. Jagdpanther G1 grilles are available too.



À la Place de l'Eglise



PART TWO



ANTONIO MARTÍN TELLO'S BEAUTIFUL, BIBLICALLY PROPORTIONED DIORAMA

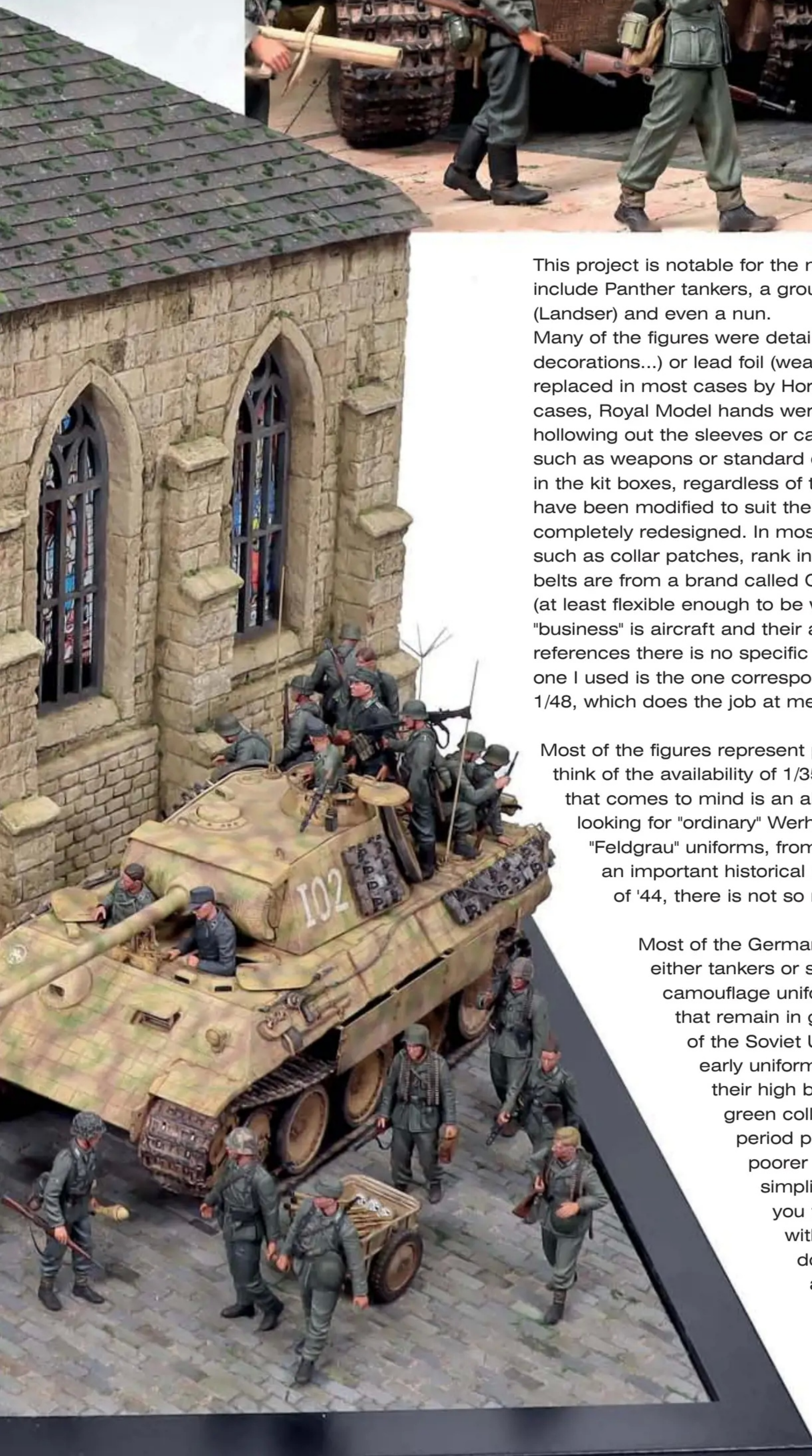


This project is notable for the number of figures featured, a total of 55. These include Panther tankers, a group of officers and NCOs, German infantrymen (Landser) and even a nun.

Many of the figures were detailed with PE (belt buckles, shoulder straps, decorations...) or lead foil (weapon slings...). The original heads were replaced in most cases by Hornet or Tamiya replacement heads. In some cases, Royal Model hands were used. Many figures were improved by hollowing out the sleeves or carving some details. Wherever possible, items such as weapons or standard equipment were taken from the best available in the kit boxes, regardless of the manufacturer of the base figure. Some have been modified to suit their intended role, and a few have been completely redesigned. In most cases decals have been used for details such as collar patches, rank insignia or decoration strips. The ammunition belts are from a brand called Gaspach and are made of a flexible material (at least flexible enough to be worn around the neck). Actually Gaspach's "business" is aircraft and their accessories, so among their various ammo belt references there is no specific one for the 7.92 of the MG-34/42 in 1/35. The one I used is the one corresponding to the American Browning calibre .50 in 1/48, which does the job at medium distance.

Most of the figures represent plain German WWII infantrymen. When you think of the availability of 1/35 scale German soldier figures, the first thing that comes to mind is an abundance. This is not the case. If you are looking for "ordinary" Wehrmacht soldiers in more or less standard "Feldgrau" uniforms, from an anonymous infantry unit, suitable for such an important historical period as the French campaign in the summer of '44, there is not so much choice.

Most of the German figures on the market, especially in resin, are either tankers or soldiers in glamorous and sophisticated camouflage uniforms, especially from the Waffen-SS. Of those that remain in green uniforms, most have the typical "invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941" look. While it is true that the early uniforms can be seen until the end of the war (with their high boots, long jackets with pleated pockets, bottle green collars...) and the mix of uniforms is evident in the period photos, the figures in later, more common and poorer quality uniforms (ankle boots, gaiters, simplified square pockets...) are not exactly legion. If you take out the "in action" figures and you are left with guys sitting, walking or standing without doing anything special, the search becomes almost an arduous task. In fact, I had to use some figures with tropical uniforms, but painted green, which I think will do the trick, except for the very demanding and knowledgeable.





- 1** CMK35263 Panther G cupola
- 2** Dragon 6375 Panther G co-driver, Hornet head
- 3** Dragon 6456 Panther G driver, Tamiya head
- 4** Miniart 35283 Panther G rear hatch, Hornet head
- 5** Dragon 6156 Panther G standing left, Hornet head

- 6** Miniart 35266 Panther G sitting on the turret, Tamiya head
- 7** Miniart 35266 Panther G sitting by the driver, Hornet head
- 8** Miniart 35248 Panther G sitting on the engine deck, left, Hornet head
- 9** Dragon 6156 Panther G turret right, Hornet head
- 10** Master Box 3515 Panther G engine deck, Hornet head
- 11** Dragon 6348 Panther G sitting hull right, Hornet head
- 12** Tamiya 35371 Panther G kneeling engine deck

- 13** Tamiya 35371 Panther G standing engine deck
- 14** Tamiya 35371 Panther G standing engine deck
- 15** Dragon 6348 Panther G sitting engine deck, Hornet head
- 16** Miniart 35266 Panther G sitting engine deck, Hornet head
- 17** Dragon 6375 Panther A driver, Hornet head
- 18** Miniart 35283 Panther A co-driver, Hornet head
- 19** Hobby Boss 84401 Panther A cupola, Hornet head
- 20** Dragon 6375 Panther A rear hatch, Hornet head





- 21** Dragon 6280 Panther A kneeling engine deck, Hornet head
- 22** Dragon 6656 Panther A kneeling engine deck, Hornet head
- 23** Dragon 6280 Panther A standing rear deck rearwards, Hornet head
- 24** Dragon 6280 Panther A standing rear deck frontwards, Hornet head
- 25** Dragon 6348 Panther A standing rear deck frontwards, Warriors head



- 26** Tamiya 35371 Panther A standing rear deck with MG42
- 27** Dragon 6656 Standing by Panther A, Hornet head
- 28** Dragon 6656 Standing by Panther A Hornet head
- 29** Hobby Boss 84410 Climbing Panther A right, Hornet head
- 30** Master Box 3515 Loading MG42 on Panther A rear, Hornet head
- 31** Miniart 35266 Panther A sitting engine deck, Hornet head
- 32** Dragon 6156 Panther A kneeling engine deck left Hornet head



33 Master Box + Hobby Boss
3515 + 84410 Standing right to
Panther G, Hornet Head

34 MJ Miniatures
35006 Officers party, NCO pointing

35 Dragon 6456 Officers party,
Infantry, Tamiya head

36 MJ Miniatures 35006
Officers party, holding a map
Tamiya head

37 Tamiya 35371 Officers party,
NCO at the rear

38 Hobby Boss 84401
Officers party, high officer
Tamiya head

39 Tamiya 35354
Officers party, tankman in black jacket

40 Dragon 6456 Officers party, tankman
in short-sleeved shirt, Tamiya head

41 Dragon 6156 Standing by Panther
A with Panzerfaust, Hornet head

42 Master Box 3541 Towing IF8 (right)
Hornet head

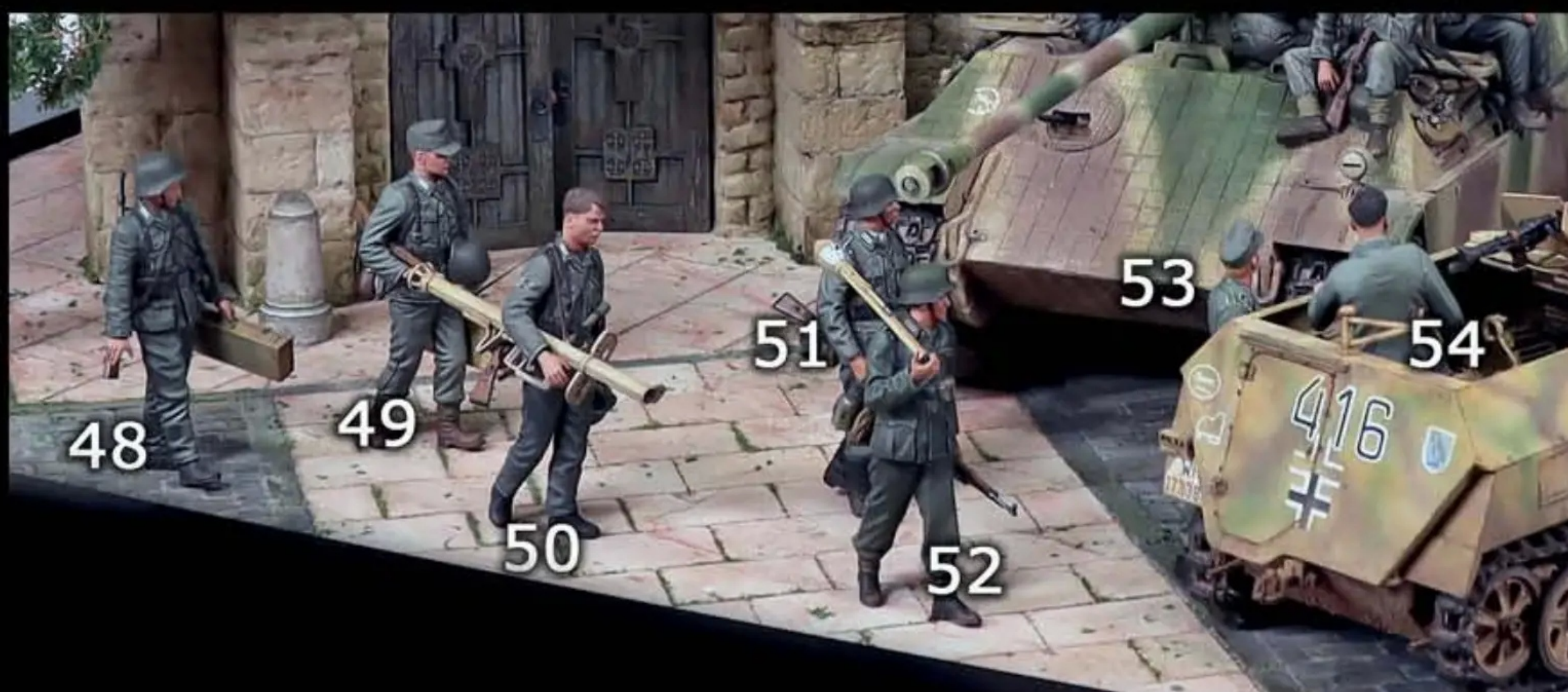
43 Master Box 3541 Towing IF8 (left)
Hornet head

44 Hobby Boss 84410 Walking behind
IF8 with MG ammo case
Hornet head

45 Hobby Boss 84410 Walking behind
IF8 Hornet head

46 Tamiya 35377 Walking behind IF8
with MG34 Hornet head

47 Hobby Boss 84410
Walking behind IF8 with MG42
Hornet head



48 Master Box 3541
Carrying Panzerschreck ammo box
Hornet head

49 Dragon 6374
Carrying Panzerschreck ammo box
Hornet head

50 Master Box
3541 Carrying Panzerschreck
Hornet head

51 Tamiya 35377
Walking by Panzerschreck's bearer

52 Tamiya 35377
Walking in front of Panzerschreck's
bearer

53 Tamiya 35370 Standing by
SdKfz 250

54 Hobby Boss 84407 Standing in
SdKfz 250, Hornet head

So the first step was to scan the market for figures with the desired prerequisites. Apart from a few resin figures I already had (CMK and MJ Miniatures), for obvious budgetary reasons I concentrated on plastic and ended up with figures from Dragon, Tamiya, Tristar, Miniart and Master Box. The quality varies, but the best ones are from Tamiya. Their latest figures are so good that they do not need a head replacement. In fact, I have used some leftover Tamiya heads to improve the other brands. Dragon is the

one that brings more figures to the party, not for nothing they have the largest catalogue of plastic figures. Their quality varies. In terms of detail, there are "normal" ones and there are excellent ones (some of the Gen-2 series, for example), but in many cases the naturalness of the pose and the body language are not good. The Tristar ones (now distributed by Hobby Boss) are usually quite good, both in detail and in "pose".



The Miniart ones are a complete disappointment. They are very rough and don't stand up to any comparison with the others. It is true that the last reference I bought (German Infantry at Rest) is much better than the previous releases. Finally, the Master Box was a pleasant surprise because, without being exceptional in terms of detail, they tend to have very natural, accurate and sometimes unique poses.

All figures were painted with Vallejo acrylic paints, following the Zenithal concept. The first lights and shadows were applied to the base colour with an airbrush, projecting this base colour lightened or darkened from above or below (as if you were painting the lights and shadows), and then refined with glazes of very diluted paint. I am by no means a master of figure painting, an art in itself, but with practice I think I have reached an acceptable level. If so, it is

because I have watched and read every article, video, tutorial and book you can find on WWII figure painting by my two favourite artists: Jaume Ortiz and Calvin Tan. I just try to copy their directions with mixed results.

The list of colour references used would be too long and probably not very useful. Anyway, and as I said before, being only an average figure painter, I relied on a "ready to use" set from Vallejo, the "German Field Grey" set (ref. 70181), which contains everything you need to paint several shadows of green German uniforms, and which I recommend to you, as it simplifies things a lot.



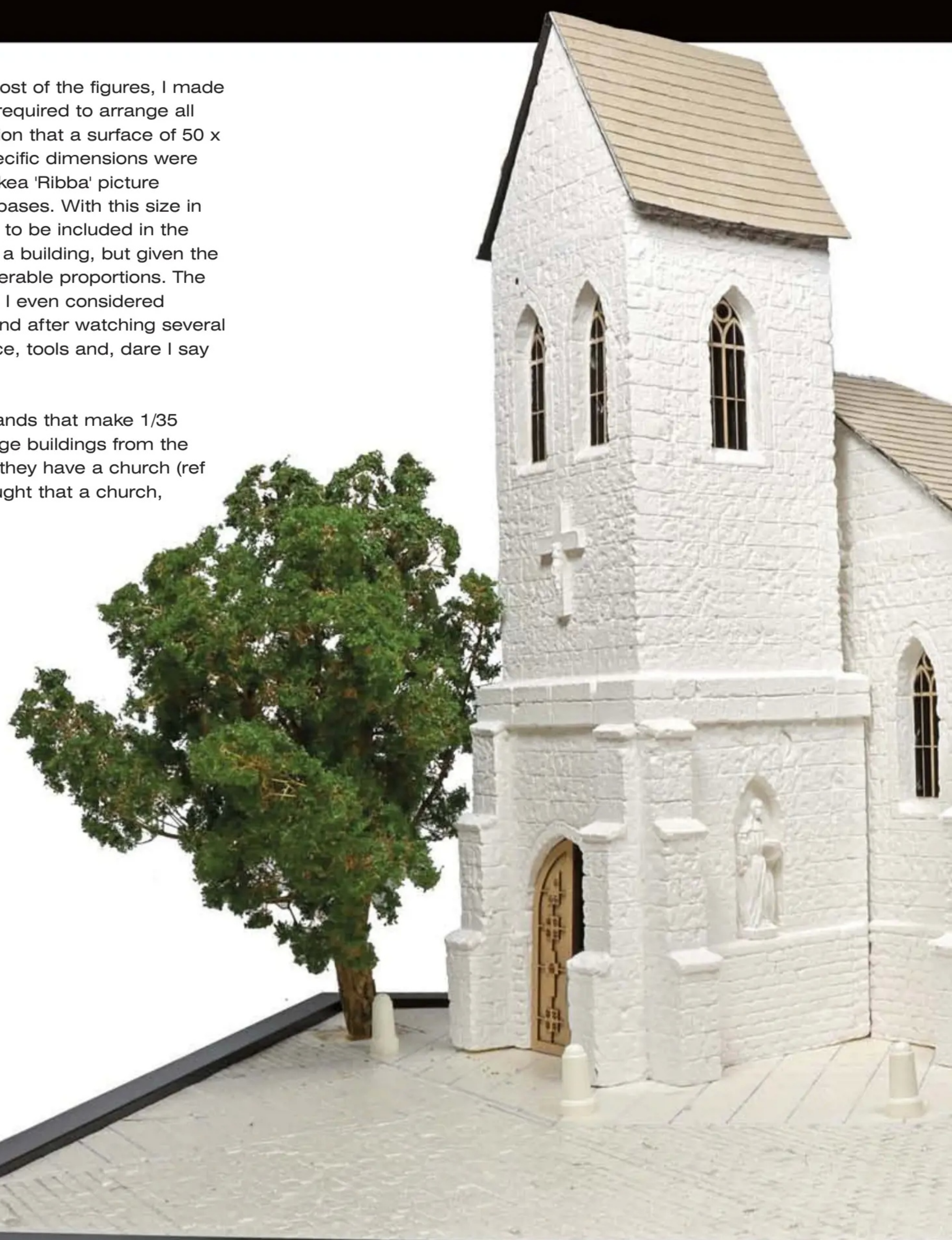


Once I had completed the models and most of the figures, I made an approximate calculation of the space required to arrange all these elements and came to the conclusion that a surface of 50 x 40 cm would be sufficient. In fact, the specific dimensions were determined by the available sizes of the Ikea 'Ribba' picture frames that I usually use to surround my bases. With this size in mind, I started to think about the scenery to be included in the diorama. From the beginning I thought of a building, but given the size of the diorama it had to be of considerable proportions. The first option was a multi-storey house, and I even considered building it myself out of foam. However, and after watching several tutorials on Youtube, my lack of experience, tools and, dare I say it, laziness, led me to abandon the idea.

Looking through the catalogues of the brands that make 1/35 scale buildings, I came across several large buildings from the German brand RT Diorama. In particular, they have a church (ref 35199) of considerable dimensions. I thought that a church, including its tower, is a unique and eye-catching building, and that its height and general volume would make it a very suitable background for models and figures.

So I decided to use this kit, which in theory represents a ruined church, although not too badly damaged.

I wanted my church to be intact, so I removed the damaged parts. On the other hand, I replaced the roof completely, so there was no problem there either. The kit provides the walls and roof as engraved plaster plates and the doors and window frames as laser-cut pieces of wood. The quality is average and the construction is not easy, although it could be that the difficulties I encountered were due to my lack of experience in this medium.





It is necessary to sand the surfaces where the pieces are to be joined and to check that they are perfectly aligned. Even so, I found it difficult to get everything to fit (and in some places it didn't). Although the instructions suggest using white glue to join the pieces together, I strongly advise against it as it takes a long time to dry and the joint is not very strong, especially considering the weight of the whole thing. I used two-component, quick-drying epoxy glue, which allows you to position the pieces correctly at first, but gives a more or less solid joint after a few minutes. To reinforce the joints, I even used small metal brackets on the inside, glued in with lots of epoxy. The joints between the pieces were covered with aguaplast, which allows you to engrave lines or volumes when it dries. I also used Aguaplast to fill in the many bubbles and imperfections that the engraving of the plaster pieces revealed.

The roofs are supplied as plasterboard with the flat tiles engraved, but they have lots of bubbles and are too thick. I made new roofs from plastic sheets and glued the tiles onto them, one by one, which are nothing more than small cardboard squares of 1x1 centimetres. Finally, I also used the "stained glass" that RT Diorama sells separately as a specific accessory for this kit (ref. 35844).

Once the church was built, I placed it on a foam board of suitable size with a diagonal layout. Following this layout, I engraved the tiling and paving of the floor with various blades and pens to create different widths in the lines.

To close off the back left of the diorama, I decided to add a large tree. The trunk and main branches are a natural branch collected in the field, to which I added thinner branches of "aristata teloxys", a plant widely used in modelling and ideal for this task. I filled the joints of the different types of branches and painted the filled areas in a colour similar to the natural colour of the plants used.

A few washes with oil allowed to unify all the tones and to emphasize the reliefs, especially in the main trunk (scenic base/001-006). The leaves are small pieces cut from a piece of Mininatur vegetation (ref. 913.32), glued one by one with white glue.



I started the painting with a dark yellow primer on the plaster parts and grey on the floor. The church was airbrushed with a mixture of Tamiya acrylic colours Buff XF-57 and Desert Yellow XF-59. The weathering was done with oils in different shades, mostly dark. A green oil glaze was applied in some areas, especially in the lower parts and corners. The frames and doors were carved with a cutter as they were too smooth and "perfect". They were then painted with Vallejo acrylics, mainly grey, but mixed with brown in varying proportions. Glazes and micro-paintings of these browns were also applied. The tiles were painted in different shades of brown to create a variety of tones. They were then individually subjected to oil washes and acrylic glazes in a wide range of

colours, so that even within the same tile different shades could be seen. At this point I applied an outline of sepia-coloured oil to the joints of the tiles, the contours of the window frames, the corners and lines of the mouldings and buttresses of the walls to give depth to the whole. The spots of lichen, dirt and pigeon droppings on the roof were painted with watercolour pencils in various shades of yellow and white, then blurred and rubbed with a wet brush.

Finally, I added vegetation to the lower parts of the walls, corners and especially the roof, mainly "moss" from AK interactive (ref. AK8131).





In the tiled area of the floor I tried to simulate the look of marble. To do this, I painted the veins with reddish and in some cases greyish oil colours on a pinkish-grey base. These veins were more or less blurred with solvent, with the intention that all the tiles would be different, some with more pronounced veins and others more even. In the cobblestone part, I painted each cobblestone with a different shade of grey, lighter, darker, browner... I then applied individual washes in ochre and grey oils to create even more tonal variety. I also applied a subtle general wash in green, more intense in some areas, to simulate the verdigris. Once all this painting work was done on the floor, a diluted sepia oil paint was applied to profile the joints between the tiles and paving and the cracks in the paving and tiles. The final touch was to use pigments to stain the floor.

Finally, I added grass, moss and small vegetation in the corners and some of the cracks and joints between the tiles and pavers. I also glued the doors in place. To add interest and a light touch, I decided to leave the door ajar, allowing a glimpse of a nun peering out cautiously with a mixture of curiosity and fear. The figure of the nun herself is barely visible, made from scraps and tinfoil for the head. The last addition was the pigeons watching the scene from the window sills and tower mouldings, a reference from Miniart (38036) (scenic base/007-021).

With the scenic base completed, it was time to place all the vehicles and figures. First, I placed the two tanks and the half-track, as they were the largest elements and would determine the available space around them in which to place the "unmounted" figures. Once these were in place, I thought that there was a gap left just in the corner of the church behind the Panther G. To fill it, I placed generic wooden boxes and also those of the Panzerfausts that were supposed to have gone to the Infanterie (a small model by Lion Roar) and that will be distributed among the soldiers.

The figures on foot form three main groups: The officers in the centre of the scene, the group of soldiers that appear on the right, led by those pulling the IF8, next to the Panther A, and the group of soldiers with the Panzerschrek that appear on the left, in front of the Panther G. In addition, there are some detached figures that connect the groups with their looks and gestures. This is an aspect I tried to take into account to avoid the scene becoming a jumble of figures without much meaning. It is up to the viewer to judge whether I have succeeded.

After about four years of work, the diorama is finished. I am very pleased with the result, which I modestly consider to be an eye-catcher (although again, this is left to the viewer's judgement), but also with the mere fact of having been able to complete it. As I have





À la Place de l'Eglise



ARGENTAN, NORMANDY, AUGUST 1944



JEAN-JACQUES LABROT
builds the AFV Club 1:35 kit



M113A1 ACAV

“tracks”



The M113 is an US Armoured Personnel Carrier was produced and developed by the FMC Corporation.

This tracked vehicle was extensively used during the Vietnam War by the ARVN, (South Vietnamese Army) and is considered as the most widely used APC of the U.S. Army during this war and was employed in a light tank role. Combat experience led the U.S. Army to introduce a number of upgrade modifications which included a gun shield and a circular turret for the .50-caliber M2 machine gun, two M60 Machine guns fitted with shields mounted on either side of the combat compartment hatch. With these modifications, the M113 was named ACAV (Armoured Cavalry Assault Vehicle).

The ARVN developed the idea of using the M113 as an assault vehicle rather than a simple APC and fitted their vehicle with multiple machineguns and armoured shields. The standard M113 was armed with a single .50 12.7mm machine gun, which was mounted at the commander's cupola. But, during the early stage of the war, M113 crews discovered quickly that more firepower was needed, as they want to use the M113 as an offensive weapon, rather than a simple APC. "Armament subsystem A" was developed to give the M113 and its crew the ability to fight from their armoured vehicle. The main armament comprised the M2 Machine and two M60. All three machine guns were fitted with armoured shields offering protection to the commander and the two machine gunners.

(MP Robinson, American Armor in Vietnam, AK Interactive).

AFV CLUBIN'

The AFV Club M113A1 ACAV (Vietnam War) is a very fine model and a very well detailed kit. This is not a kit for beginners, as it comprises a great number of small and fragile parts. The model represents the ACAV version of the M113A1 used during the Vietnam War by the U.S. Army and the ARVN.

Moulded in olive green styrene, the parts are gathered and presented on ten parts sprues, one small sprue of photo-etched details, a sprue with transparent parts and the lower hull. The waterslide decals sheet provides 7 markings for vehicles in service with the U.S. Army in Vietnam and one for a M113 of the Republic of China Army. A small piece of wire for the cable attached to the rear access ramp is also provided and can be replaced by a metal cable. Tracks are one piece vinyl. They are nicely done and you have to use the metal pins provided in the box to connect the ends together. But there is serious issue with them, they're too long. To remedy this problem, it would have been possible to mount the idler in the 'full-back' position.

Another solution is to use the workable track link set for M113 APC series from the same manufacturer. I choose this option and I do not regret it.

I was keen to tackle this latest M113 kit, and decide to treat myself to the luxury of some aftermarket items to give it the full works. The first improvement to the base kit involved using part's from Eduard's photoetched set. This set includes very useful items like the light guards and engine air intake screens.

In conclusion, the quality of AFV Club's kit is evident as soon as you open the box. AFV has provided a full interior with this kit. The model can be built out of the box with great results, but there is always the option of upgrading existing parts.

The kit offers a very decent result when built from the box. That said, it benefits from extra detailing to produce an accurate miniature. I began with the workable suspension. The first step is to install the torsion bars. I simply glued the torsion bar to the trailing arm. The whole thing is installed easily. Once completed, I noticed that the suspension is not 'completely' workable.

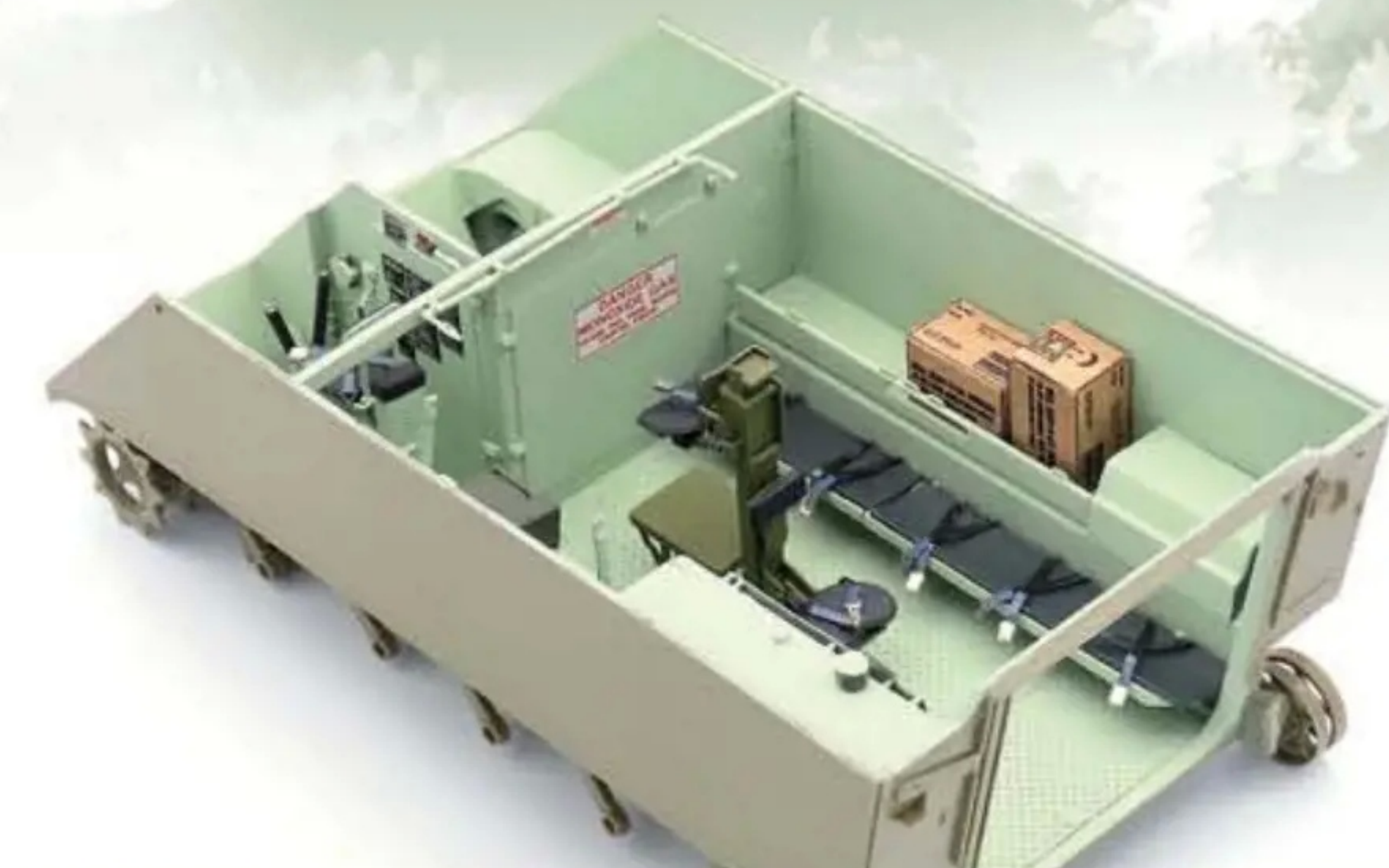
The support shocks positioned on the front and back arms, at both ends of the hull, are moulded as one piece and are not movable. Only the middle three trailing arms can still be moved. With the suspension in place, I then assembled the road wheels. The assembly is a bit complex and requires a bit of patience, but the result is pretty convincing.

The wheels are not designed to rotate, so I recommend to glue them in place and make some adjustments before the glue dries to get everything lined up. As far as I'm concerned, I decided to fit the wheels after they had been painted and weathered.



The following task was to assemble the interior components (firewalls, between the driver and the engine, and the one between the engine and troop compartment, steering levers, accelerator etc). Not surprisingly, there are some noticeable ejectors-pin marks on the firewalls, so they need to be filled and sanded. The problem is that some important parts are missing, So I decided to add them. If you look inside the driver's compartment, these parts will be clearly visible when assembly is complete. Fortunately, they are available in the photoetch set.



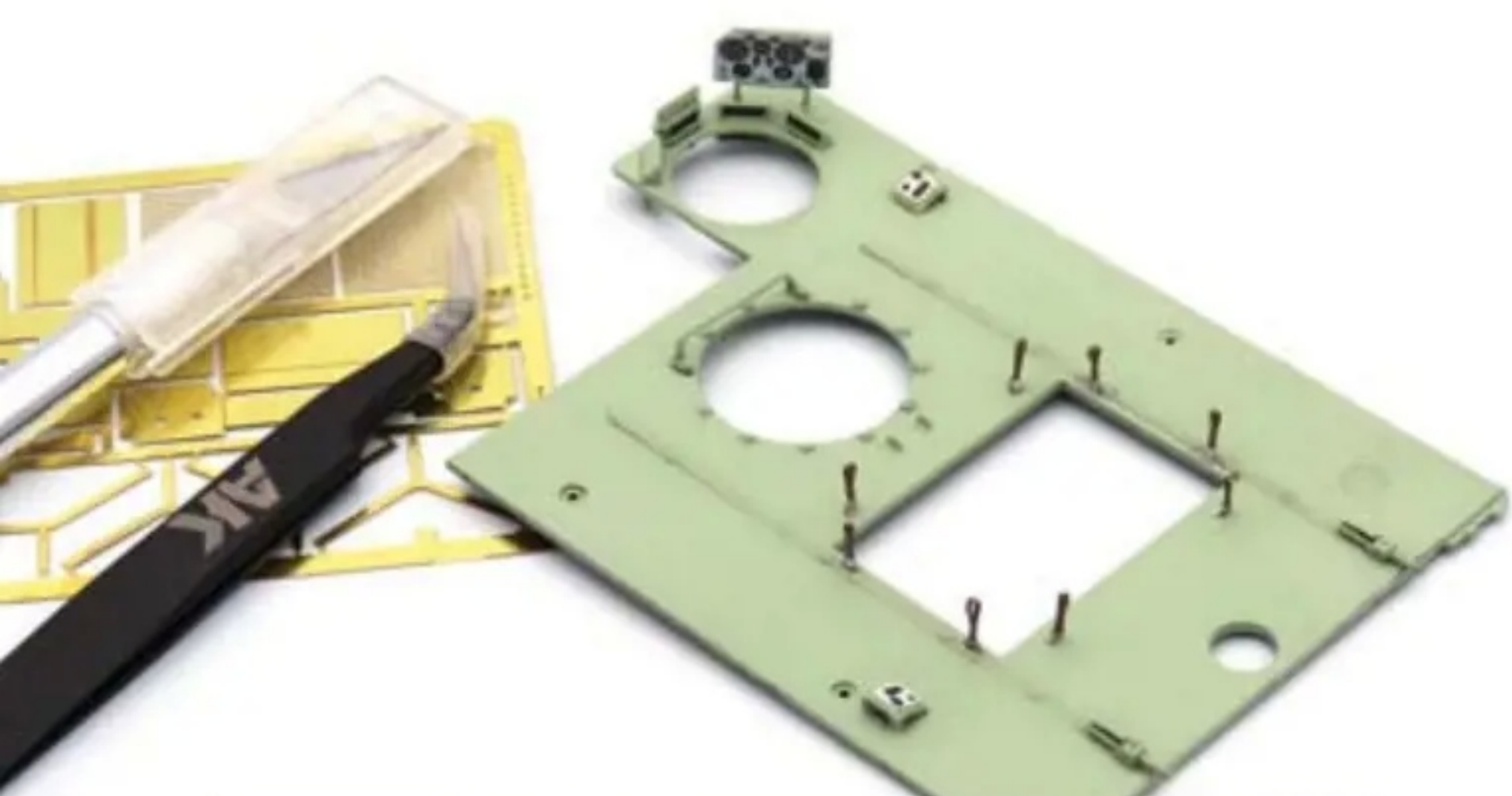


Eduard released two photo etched set for the M113A1 especially designed for this kit. The first improvement to the kit involved using parts from Eduard's photoetched detail sets (36377 and 36378). Both sets including very useful items, like selection lever, foot pedal and ramp actuating lever. Photo etched parts are well visible here. I then attended to the left side of the interior. This includes the fuel tank, the radio and rack, the driver's and the commander's seat. Both are nicely moulded. Once again, they were some noticeable ejector pin-marks on the upper body, so these needed to be filled and sanded. The benches and driver's seat were then installed in the driver's compartment. All these parts are painted separately.

The interior was given a coat of AK Interactive Grey Primer AK11241. Once this was completely dry, and any imperfections sanded down, I painted the interior of my M113 using AK Interactive AK11345 Interior green. Satisfied with the appearance so far, I left the model to dry for two days before adding the decal markings and photo-etched safety belts from the Eduard set. Eventually, I added a light coat of AK Interactive (AK677) Wash neutral Grey and some traces of AK Interactive Vietnam Earth Pigments (AK141) to suggest earth deposit.

At this stage, the building of the interior of the M113A1 is nearly completed. You can see that the rear bulkhead is not yet fixed. Some rations boxes were arranged on each side of the rear troop compartment. Once the bottom of the hull is ready, the upper hull is attached to the lower hull. The interior of the rear ramp and the ramp door were painted in US Dark Green (AK11157). Vietnam Earth Pigments are then applied with a brush.

Building of the M113 can continue. Before painting, the clear parts like the periscopes, were masked with Tamiya Masking tape. You can also see the photo etched parts which are a mixture of the kit parts and those from Eduard's photoetched detail sets like the footman loops. The next step was to trial-fit the wheels on the hull. My original plan to paint the wheels in place was aborted and they were finally removed from the chassis. Wheels and tracks will be painted separately.



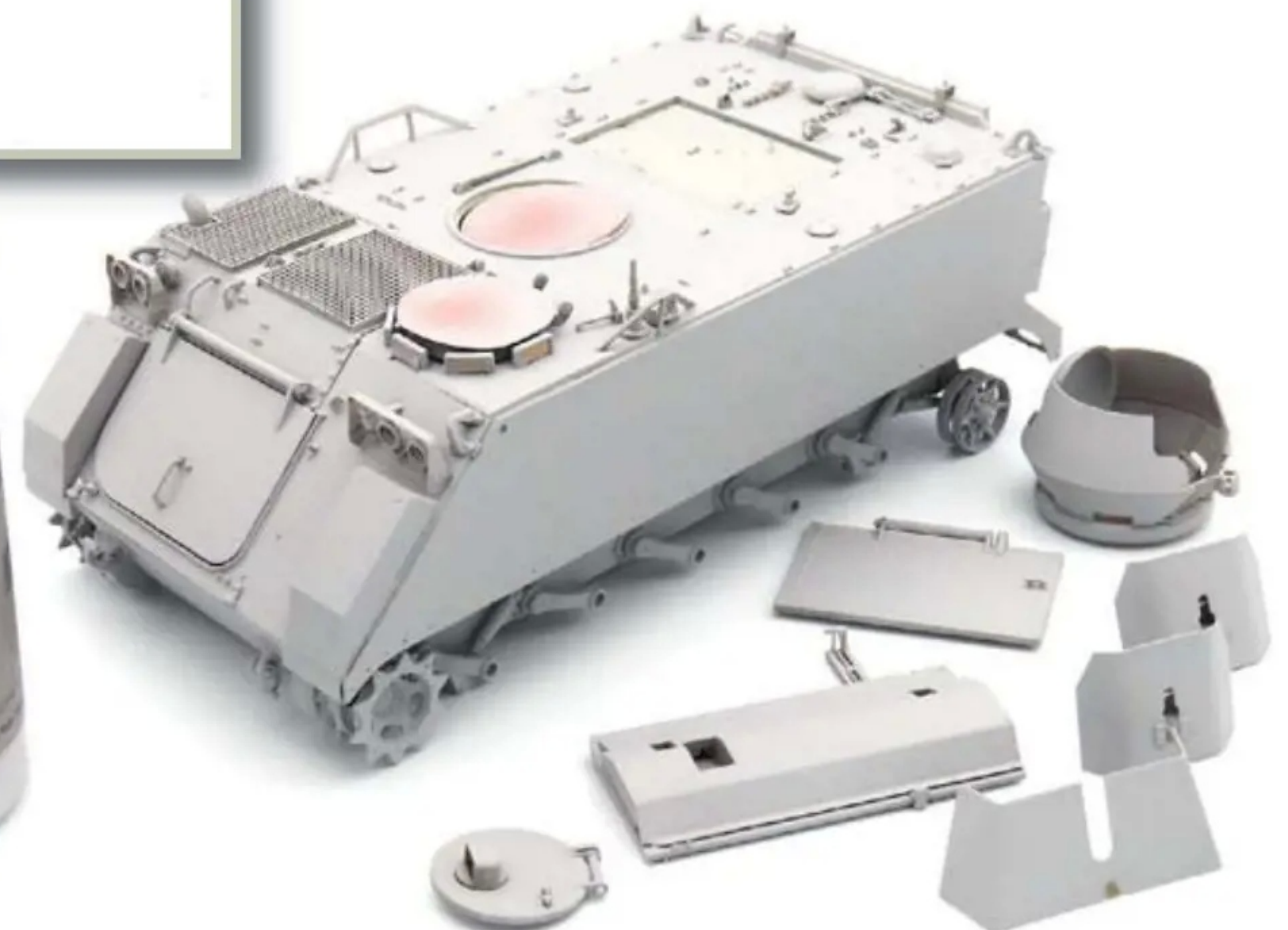


The vinyl tracks provided in the kit are well detailed (albeit too long) but they are not sufficiently weighted to create a realistic natural sag. To solve this problem, I decided to replace the kit tracks and used the extremely fine AFV Club plastic tracks. With care and patience, I also assembled a run of twenty track-links to ensure that these fitted perfectly around sprocket teeth. the completed tracks are fully articulated which create a very realistic sag to the upper run.



PAINTING

Priming a model is always necessary with multi-media parts. Having thoroughly cleaned the model, I first applied a coat of grey primer, the perfect choice being AK Interactive Grey Primer (AK11241) on the road wheels and on the hull. Once these were completely dry, the entire model was given a light coat of AK Interactive (AK11157) US Dark Green. As you can see, I also kept the wheels unattached at this stage. Time now to treat the model to an overall colour wash.





WEATHERING

It's time to weather the model. A subtle grey filter is applied on the model followed by a series of pin-washes using a neutral gray wash (AK677). Two light coats are applied to get a wide colour variation. I applied it with a wide brush. The filter is just enough to settle into the cracks and panel lines. Some details can be picked out with a solution of Enamel Black Wash. Having allowed this to dry, and checked for any surface imperfections, I treated the machine guns with a coat of gun metal. Putting the model to one side to fully dry, I turned my attention to the tracks. They were sprayed in a metallic brown mix using AK Interactive acrylics and weathered with an acrylic wash, then pigment powder was carefully brushed over, using a flat pencil, to leave a residue when dry.

Before continuing the weathering, appropriate decals were applied with the help of Tamiya Adhesive Softener. My M113A1 is now covered with dust and Vietnam Earth Pigments (AK Interactive 141).



Pigment powder is applied with a small, flat brush. To give the impression of accumulated dust and fresh mud, I mixed Tamiya XF-57 with a small amount of Tamiya XF-52. I sprayed the mix in lightly over the horizontal surfaces. Various Vietnam earth pigments are then brushed onto the model, over the upper hull and roof to vary the tones and provide more visual interest. The final task was to emphasize mud stains and accumulated dirt around the lower hull and running gear using AK Interactive Fresh Mud. Brown Acrylic Filter (A.MIG 0823 Medium Brown) is now applied by flicking from the end of toothpick to suggest mud splashes over lower areas.

Therefore, as my goal was to achieve a very dusty vehicle, I added streaks on vertical and sloping panels, and accumulated dust over horizontal areas. Using Vallejo, I replicated grease and oils residue to appropriate areas. Smaller localized washes were applied near the fuel tank cap.

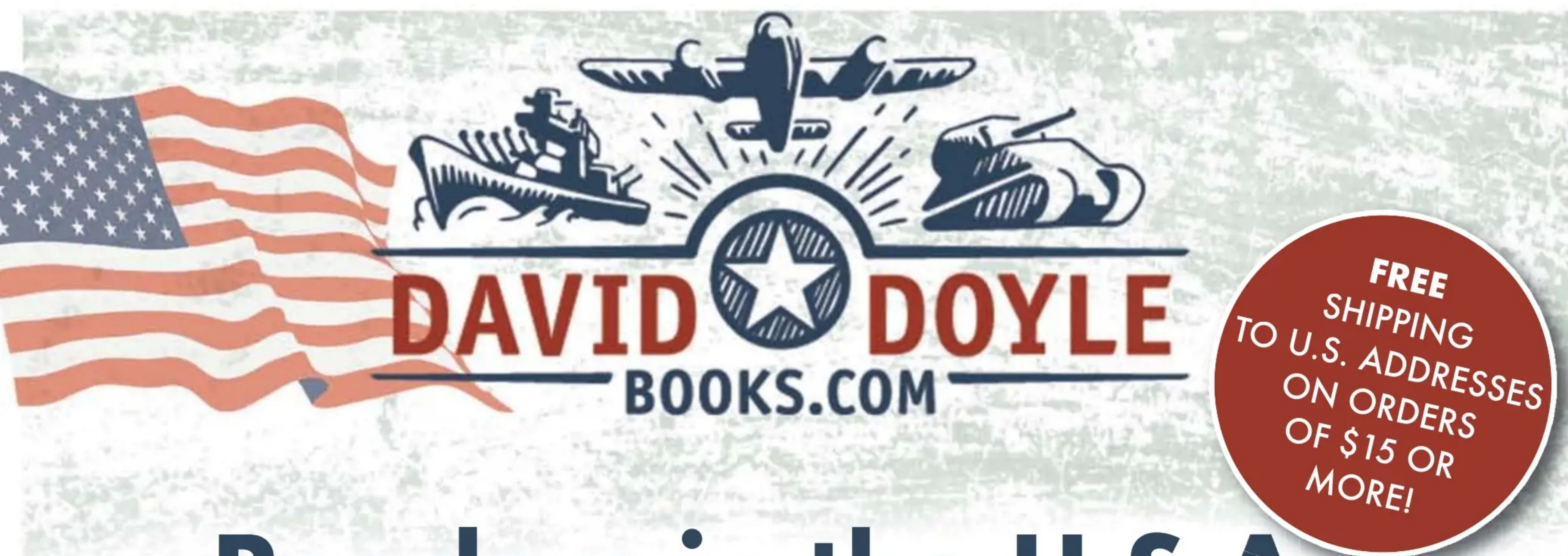
On a vehicle like this, operating in harsh conditions, camouflage green paint is often heavily damaged, so the areas surrounding the hatches were also heavily weathered. The M113 is made from aluminum. Photos of real vehicles often show scratches and chips present on these parts. I used Vallejo Aluminum to represent these. The various weathering steps had toned down the matt finish given by the AK Interactive paint. A slight sheen in certain areas tends to give a more natural look. There is always a roll of wire mesh on most M113 deployed in Vietnam (defence against RPGs). It is made from a reference from the manufacturer Eduard, rolled into a thin sheet and folded into shape. The straps are thin Tamiya masking tape stripes with photoetched buckles. As the APC is moving through dense jungle vegetation, I used small pliers to place 1/35 scale Greenstuff paper plants on the M113.

My M113A1 is almost finished and time to apply various pigments to the hull roof where the crew would have been walking. Having previously painted the machine gun with matt black, I dry brushed gun metal pigments over the surface to create a subtle metallic sheen.

To complete this simple little project I like to add one or more figures to a model, as well as giving the finishing piece a sense of life they help to show the vehicle's relative size. As you can see on the photo, I use three resin items of the Bravo 6 range. The flesh areas are painted with AK acrylic paints as are the uniforms and equipment. The main challenge was to replicate the exact shade of the US uniforms used during the Vietnam war using various colour images from the period.







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TAKOM'S LATE TIGER I MODELLED BY THOMAS BIRZER

LAST OF THE BREED





1:35

With Takom, the next kit manufacturer is expanding its range with one, or in this case even three, new Tiger I kits.

The special thing about the new Tiger kits from Takom, however, is the ultra-realistic Zimmerit design. Even very experienced model makers probably couldn't do a better job with selfmade Zimmerit. And the rest of the kit is also absolutely up to date and rich with detail. Only actually building the kit can determine whether the new Takom Tigers can keep up with their counterparts from Dragon or RyeField. Lets see.

BUILD YOURSELF A BIG CAT

First of all, a warning. If you glue the radiator packs in step 1 according to the construction instructions, you will later have problems putting the upper part of the hull or the engine deck on. Because the coolers are a bit too high.

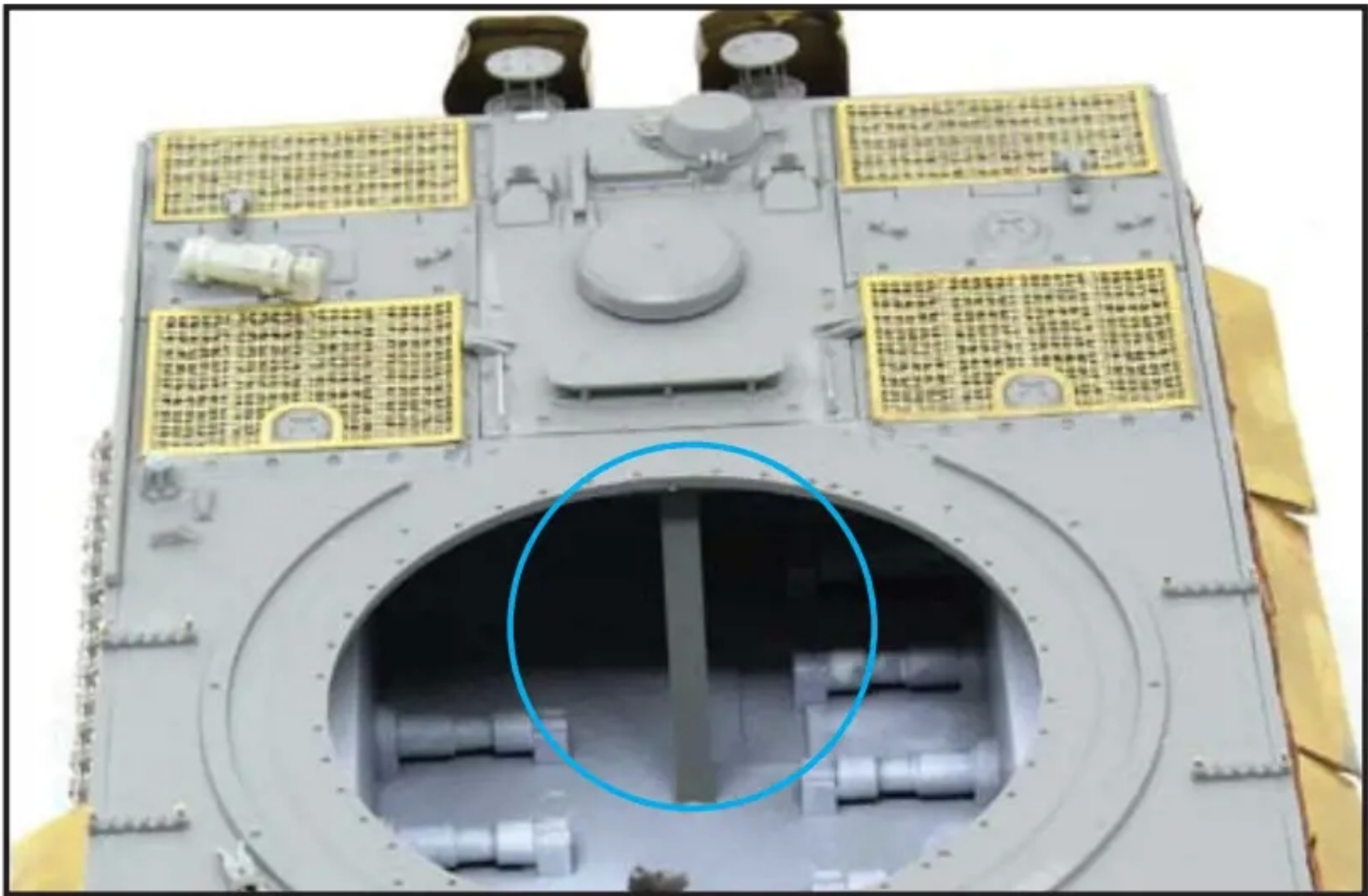
Since you wouldn't be able to see any of the coolers and fans when they're closed, you can simply leave them out. My simple solution is to place a piece of black cardboard under the grills, then no one can see through to the empty hull. In order to ensure a certain stability of the upper part of the hull, a suitable piece of sprue can simply be glued in as a support instead of the fan and cooler. However, further construction was relatively problem-free. A little bit of filling had to be done here and there, but nothing serious.

Since the Tiger "134" was from the SS.Pz.Abtl. 102 it was probably from a construction batch after March 1944, the 40mm turret roof with the three sockets for jib boom and the small version of the muzzle brake also had to be installed. But I didn't really like the little muzzle break from the kit. Somehow the proportions of the openings aren't quite right. Luckily I still had a spare from Dragon's box. When attaching the commander's cupola, attention is also required. This must be twisted slightly so that the front periscope

points directly forward. All you have to do is remove the locking lug on the component. So it's pretty easy to do if you know you need to do it!

In order to increase the level of detailing, etched brass side fenders, exhaust covers and a few small parts from my collection of Tiger spares were used. The replica of the track winding rope using 0.5mm copper rope from Karaya also increases the realism enormously. 3D printed tool holders are more delicate than the clamps from the kit, but shorten the construction time (and cursing!) compared to etched parts. In order to be able to bend the side fenders realistically, they must be soldered. If you've not soldered before after a little practice, this is quite easy to do for a competent modeller. Fortunately, since all periscopes are included in the kit as transparent parts, they only need to be taped-off and painted. The realistic glass surfaces are retained.

After the metal tracks from Friul have been assembled, nothing stands in the way of painting. The segment tracks included in the kit are certainly useful, but metal workable individual link tracks are even nicer.



In order to ensure a certain stability of the upper part of the hull, a piece of sprue can simply be glued in instead of the fan and cooler



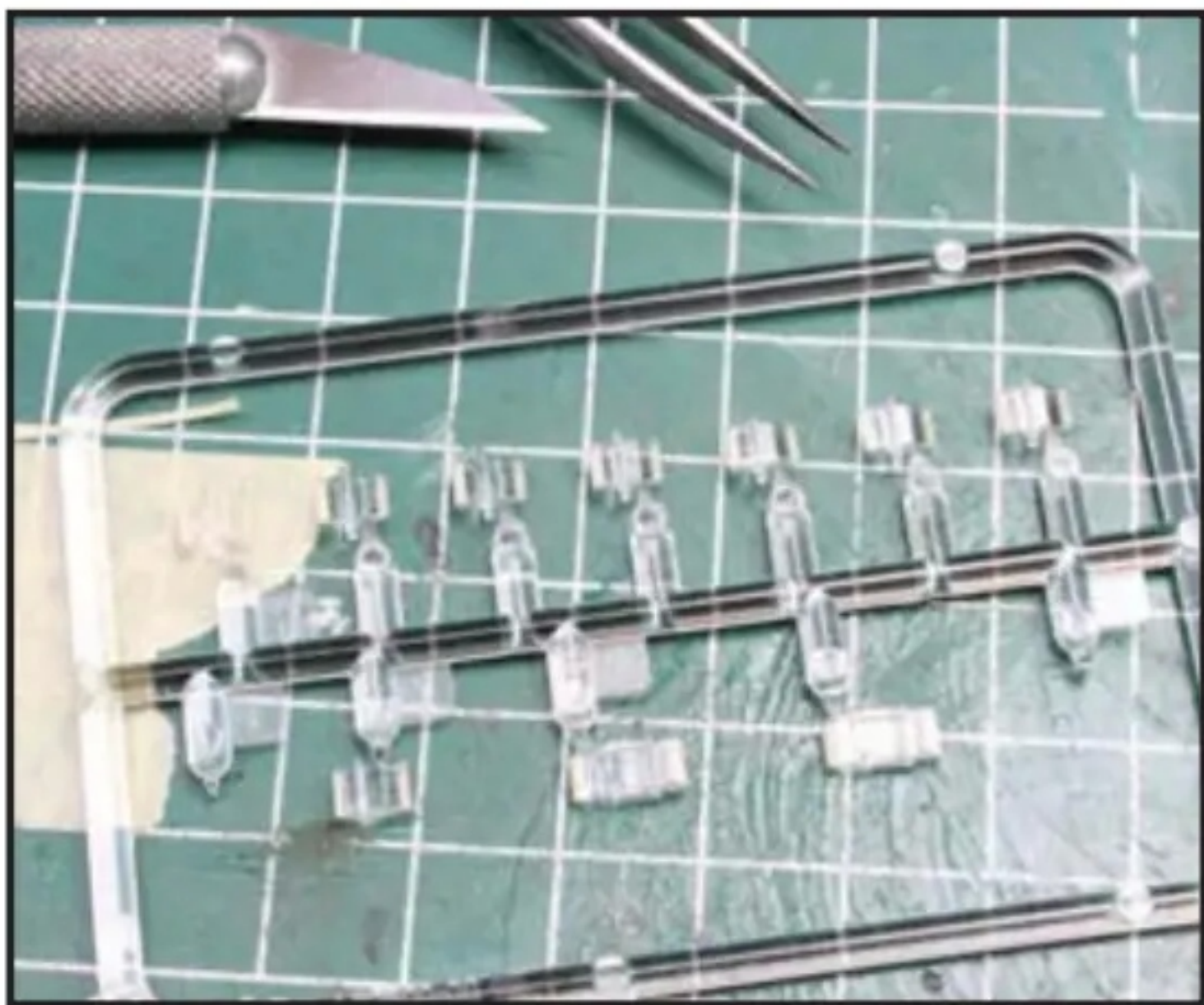
If the level of detail needs to be very high, the modeller cannot avoid using PE parts



Soldered etched fenders can be bent easily. With superglue, however, everything would fall apart.

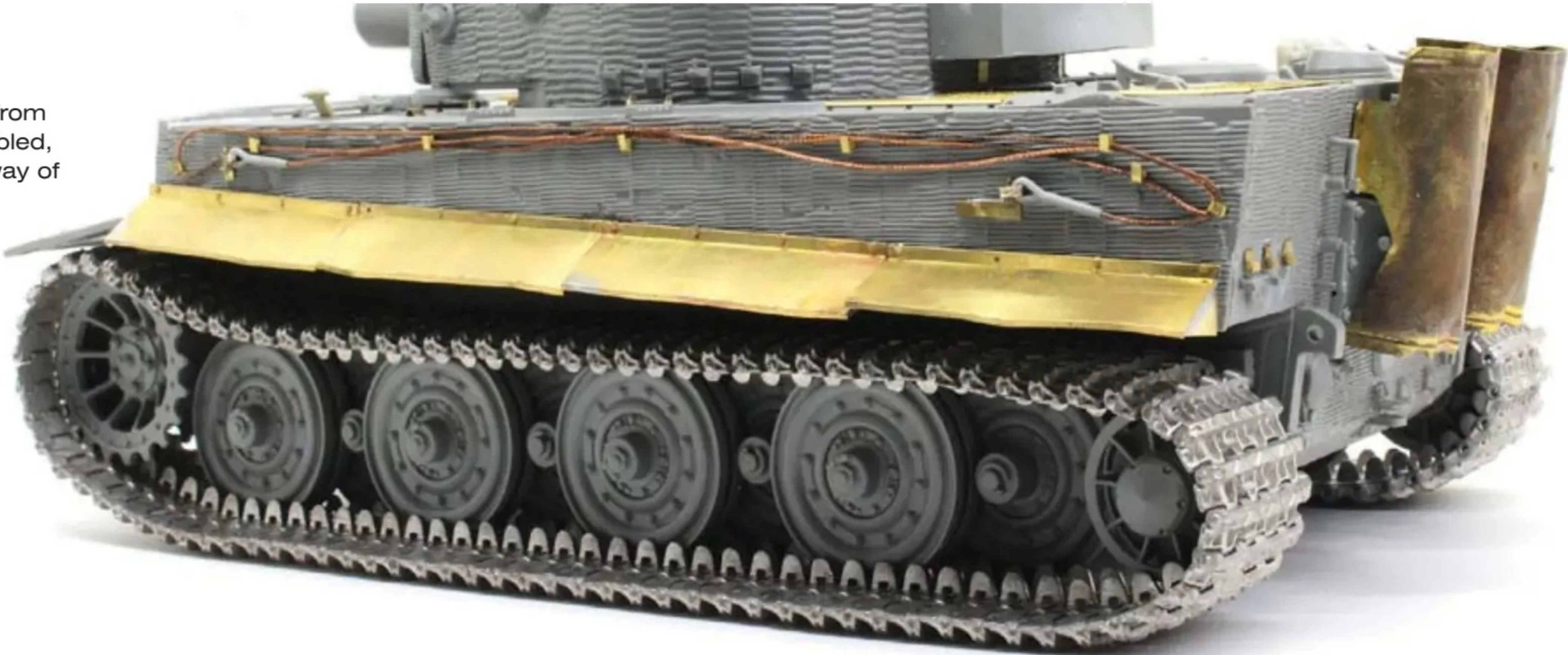


From left to right: Dragon, RB Model, Takom. The Takom muzzle brake is somehow too short at the front



By covering them with pre-cut adhesive tape, the beautiful glass surfaces of the periscopes are preserved

After the metal tracks from Friul have been assembled, nothing stands in the way of painting!





Note the damage to the stowage bin and exhaust shields.



The metal tracks are hard to beat on a Tiger. They also have the advantage that the contact points with the ground and road wheels only can be sanded until shiny with sandpaper or a fiberglass stick. Real photos also often show significantly greater wear on the tracks on the half of the track facing the hull.



PRIME TIME

A primer is recommended, and not just because of the metal parts. Here in this case "Rust Base Matt Primer" from Titans Hobby from the spray can. The following dark yellow base colour is a 50:50 mix of Tamiya XF-60 and XF-2.

The typical camouflage scheme of the SS.Pz.Abt 102 was then painted freehand using XF-68 and XF-67. Both colours brightened with about 20% XF-2. After I applied the decals, the entire model

was sealed with Vallejo satin clear varnish.

Now the detail painting begins. The Zimmerit chips are painted with a light tone (UA706 Lifecolor). A subtle chipping was also applied at this stage using the sponge method and a fine brush. I completed the subsequent pinwashing and filtering with oil paints in one step. Dark colours go into the recesses and around details, and lighter colours go onto the raised surfaces. Basically, two or three oil paints are enough, which are then mixed and blended together on the model. "VanDyckbraun", "Buff" or, for example, "Basic Earth" from 502 Abteilung are well suited for this.

Photos of these Tigers show only subtle mud and dirt build-up. As base dirt, I dabbed a thin layer of Wilder's "Textured Earth" onto the lower areas. After drying, this layer was provided with various sprinkles and streaks.

Products from the "Splashes" series from Ammo of Mig are very suitable for this. But oil paints are also used.

The exhaust covers received special attention. Since they literally burned out in the upper area due to the strong heat, they rusted quite quickly there. This effect can be achieved quite well with oil paint "Burnt Siena". Chipping with rust colours from the "Dust and Rust" set from Lifecolor is also very useful here.

To ensure good adhesion of the paint to the metal parts, a primer is recommended. The red-oxide brown replicates the factory process.

The following dark yellow base colour is a 50:50 mix of Tamiya XF-60 and XF-2 "Flat White"

A track winding cable is made of copper increases the realism even further compared to its plastic counterpart.

The heavier tow cable is also from twisted metal wire

I painted the typical camouflage scheme of the SS.Pz.Abt 102 freehand using XF-68 and XF-67 following period images as a guide. Very little of the base dunkelgelb shows on the finished pattern.

Trial and error with airbrush pressure and paint thinning allows these tight, freehand shapes with their slightly soft edge.

Decals are few but need care to conform to the textured surfaces.

The original Zimmerit paste has a light ochre colour. For the damage revealing the bare paste, UA706 from Lifecolor works well.

The Zimmerit is so delicately moulded by Takom care must be taken with washes and weathering not to enhance the texture to an unrealistic level.

KEEPIN' IT REAL



The so-called pinwash and the filter are processed in one step using oil paint wash. This is basically tinted thinners to various degrees.



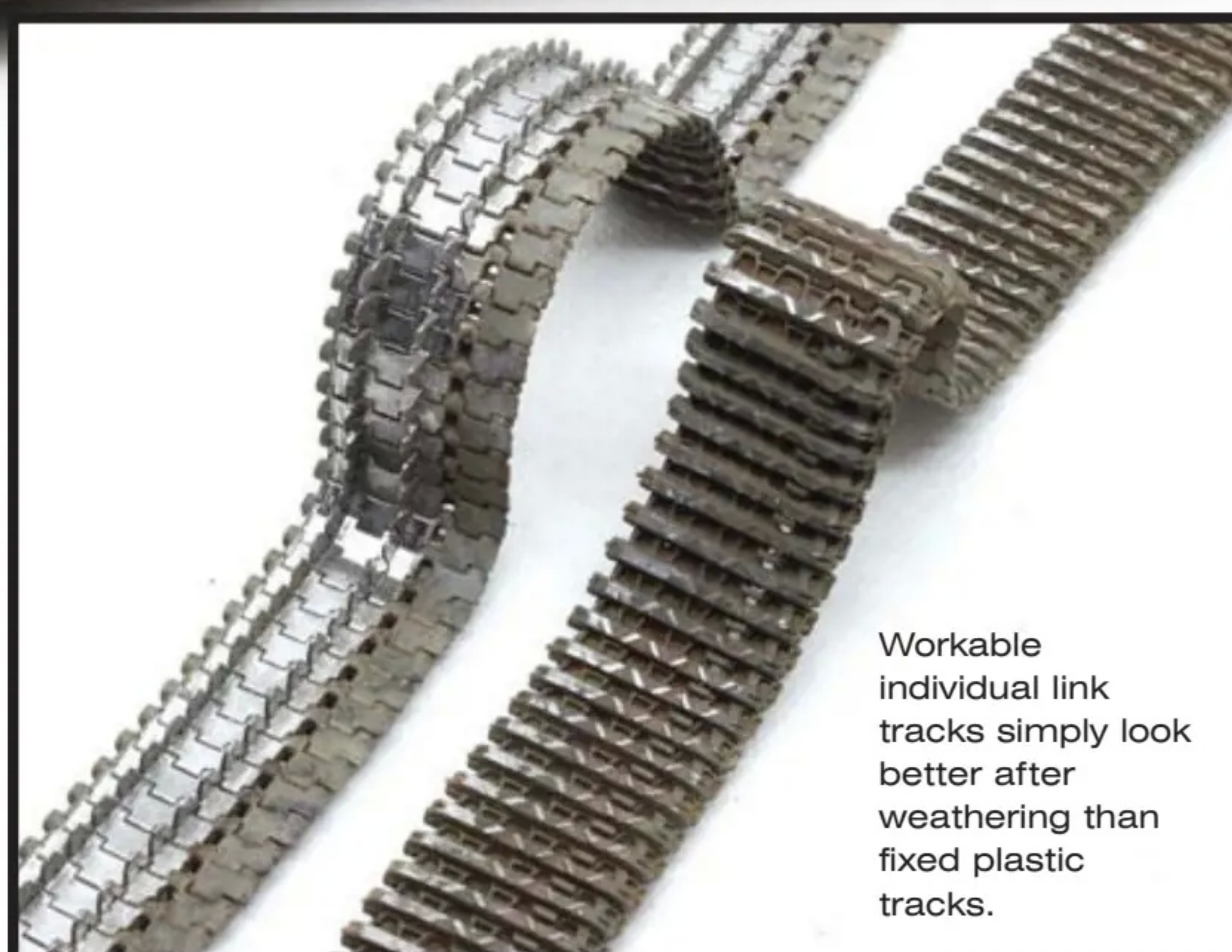
The spare track links were fitted with track bolts made of round profiles from Evergreen. The turret is now ready to be put on.

With Wilder's "Textured Earth" you can get some volume into the first layer of dirt. Most of the paint manufacturers have their own versions of textured effects which are very convenient to use.

To break the monotony of the first layer, I applied speckles and streaks in additional colours



FINISHING TOUCHES



Workable individual link tracks simply look better after weathering than fixed plastic tracks.

Since the exhaust covers literally burned out the paint finish in the upper area due to the strong heat, they rusted quite quickly.



The finished Zimmerit of the new Takom Tigers is really excellent and is second to none

The heavier Zimmerit pattern on the turret of late Tigers is often seen in original photos and replicated well.

The tools are in place. But wait - Yikes! who lost the C-hook? A touch of interesting detail with a ghosted Shadow.





TOP MARKS TAKOM?

The Tiger kits from Takom are certainly impressive. Above all, the Zimmerit of these three new kits is really excellent, and the rest is also state of the art. Zimmerit is something that puts-off German armour modellers from certain subjects but Takom have achieved something here to keep most modellers happy.

Pretty much every kit has a few minor “glitches”. But in this case they can be fixed quite easily. The Tigers from Takom are definitely an adequate alternative to the Tiger kits from other manufacturers.



LAST OF THE BREED





Alan Ranger Archives

In this series we gain exclusive access to the unpublished images in the collection of long-time Military historian and collector Alan Ranger. Most of the images are from private sources taken by the service personnel in the field or in training, hence the varying quality and lack of date and location recorded but offer a unique insight into lesser covered subject material.

Trucks in German Service



This Einheits-Diesel was photographed crossing a German pioneer's prefabricated field engineering bridge that was erected to cross the River Meuse south of Sedan during the 1940 invasion of France. The photo was taken in late May of that same year.



A pre-war ex civilian Mercedes 3 ton truck now in service with the Wehrmacht and painted overall Panzer Grey with a prominent shipping stencil painted on the drivers cab door, was photographed in the July 1941 somewhere in the Pas-de-Calais region of France and belonged to a construction company assigned to upgrading/ repairing airfields in the region.



This is a photo of on the right-hand side facing us a rare and massive a Mercedes L65000 6 and a half ton rated load truck. This picture was taken on the 23rd of June 1942 in the area of operation of Germanys Army Group Centre somewhere on the Russian steppe.



This Mercedes L3000 3ton Command/Radio box body type was photographed in Northern France in March 1942 during a training exercise.



Here we have a mix of various types of truck as was the usual situation in any given German convoy due to the lack of or late implementation of any real form of standardisation of their military transport pool. This mess was evidently the aftermath of an allied aircraft strafing run over the convoy that occurred in northern Belgium during an RAF "Rhubarb" mission that took place during late May 1941.



A nice portrait of an ex-French military Citroen model I.R.51 now in the service of the German military and is photographed here Belgium during the summer of 1941 near the town of Aalst



Another ex-French military Citroën model I.R.51 belonging to the same unit as pictured before and taken on the same day at much the same place somewhere near Aalst, Belgium in 1941.



This Bussing-Nag Type G31 that was built between 1931 and 1936 unfortunately rolled over in an accident in the snow during the winter of 1937/38 somewhere in the Munster region of Germany. It is seen here after recovery being assessed for repair or scrapping and after being stripped for useable parts.



This Mercedes-Benz LG 3000 is seen in Hamburg during Hitler's Birthday celebrations of April 20th 1939.

Note that this was one of the first trucks to be built to a standard specification that also saw Henschel & Krupp building virtually the same truck type with but a few individual differences and they were mostly cosmetic such as different radiator grills and engine compartment side panel covers.



On a railway flatbed loaded for the trip to the Russian front, this Einheits-Diesel's crew is using the time to do some maintenance on something removed from the cab. The photo was taken in the rail yards in Leipzig on 15th July 1940.



This 1.5 ton 1934 ex civilian Opel Blitz was pictured in the apple orchards of Normandy on July the 12th 1942.



These Mercedes L3000's are seen picking up 105mm ammunition from a temporary railhead near the Polish town of Kraków just prior to the commencement of operation of Barbarossa on the 20th of June 1941.



This Mercedes L3000 radio truck was photographed speeding through the dusty roads of central Russia during the height of Summer 1942 somewhere in the area west of Smolensk.



Seen in the outskirts of Poltava, Ukraine, during October 1941, this Opel Blitz 2 ton is being used as a mobile canteen and a crowd of German troops have gathered around to receive their lunch. Many of these ex-civilian types were used in such reserve (behind the frontline) duties. We can identify this 1931 design type Opel Blitz truck as having been manufactured post 1935, as it has a steel cab rather than the original wooden type.



Sadly I do not know much about who manufactured this tractor unit, and other than it is part of a command units equipment and is towing the commanders caravan/accommodation and office trailer and that the combination was pictured in Southern Austria on route to do battle in the Balkan's in the summer of 1941.



A Mercedes-Benz LG 3000 that has not been able to manage the turn radius required to negotiate this road junction, and has pushed through the barrier and over the edge of a drainage culvert. This accident happened on the 24th of August 1941 close to Metz in Eastern France.



This high quality photograph shows a Luftwaffe mobile signal unit's Einheits-Diesel moving through a picturesque village somewhere in Luxemburg. Unusually, due to the clarity of this photograph on the original print, the manufacturer's logo can be identified – this truck was produced by Faun and is in as new condition.



This Borgward 3 ton truck was pictured on the sea front close to La Rochelle, France, and was being used as an ambulance assigned to the base at the time. Note the 1920's black of flats in the background they can still be found there and are now holiday lets. The picture was taken on July 5th 1942.



This Ford G917-T 3 ton truck with a field unit built rear bed hard body caravan conversion fitted is seen loaded upon a railway flatbed wagon photographed on route to the east during August 1942.



A Borgward 3 ton truck belonging to a German pioneer/engineering unit was photographed somewhere in Latvia in the late summer of 1941 during operation Barbarossa, it is seen to be towing part of a field engineering pontoon bridge section on its bespoke trailer.



This pair of 3 ton Opel Blitz lorries, seen being washed in the Riviere De Morlaix just north of the town of the same name. Morlaix, a French town east of Brest, was home of a large German garrison in the immediate aftermath of the victory over France. It was later used by troops that were there to oversee the huge amount of forced labour workers needed to construct projects for the Organisation Todt, such as the "U" Boat pens in Brest harbour and local elements of the Atlantic Wall defence system.



This pre-war ex civilian Man Type F-4 4 ton truck was pictured in Vilnius, Lithuania, on the 25th of December 1942. Of note is the unusual style of the towing indicator triangle on the roof of the cab and the uncovered headlights lenses.



The occupants of this Opel Blitz 3 ton truck are taking the opportunity to eat lunch whilst not being bounced around in the back of the truck whilst it is being repaired after a minor break down according to the photo notes written on its reverse the truck had to replace its broken fan belt and the driver was waiting for the engine to cool down to enable access for the work. Sadly I have no confirmed information as to date or location for this photo but as other in the same album were taken in Holland in-between 1941 and 1944 I would guess its probably Spring or Autumn of 1942.



This field-converted flak truck is made up of an Opel Blitz 1.5 ton truck with a Zwillingssockel 36 pedestal mount type 36 for twin MG34 machine guns mounted in truck's load bed. The gun mount was probably removed from a previously horse-drawn infantry support wagon. As trucks became available in larger quantities after the capture of the BEF's and French army's serviceable transport stock, many infantry units were upgraded from horse-drawn to motorized and this type of conversion became common place. The photo is taken just inland of the coast somewhere within the Pas-de-Calais, France, in June 1940.



Photographed on in November 1943 in the Kraków area of Poland this photo shows us in the foreground an Opel Blitz 3 ton type 'S' belonging to the Luftwaffe. This ex-civilian truck still has its civilian number plate but has a Notek light fitted and an extra horn on the front bumper. A cold weather cover has been strapped over the radiator grill; it also has a small windscreen heater fitted. Lastly of note is that the truck is clearly not towing anything but does have its towing indicator triangle in the raised position.



This 1 ton Opel Blitz towing a Pak 36/37 37mm Anti-Tank Gun was photographed on August the 2nd 1941 at the start of Operation Barbarossa, Germany's invasion of Russia. The vast expanse of the Russian step looms ahead.



This 1941 Ford 3 ton V3000 seen towing a radio detection caravan during the winter of 1941/42 somewhere in central Russia the unit was part of Army Group Centre at the time.

This Henschel 33D1 was photographed in the "Panzerhalle" (Garage area) of the German army barracks in Munster, Germany on the 19th of April 1939, and is being cleaned prior to a parade through the town in celebration of Hitler's Birthday that was the next day.

Note the camouflage scheme of Dark Green tree shapes over its Panzer Grey base colour.





The Henschel 33D1 we see here has a field kitchen mounted on its rear load bed and is pictured providing dinner to a group of soldiers from Pioneer Regiment 11 whilst on an exercise being held in the country side around the small village of Gimblet approximately 7 Kilometres north of the town of Munster.



Photographed in Yugoslavia on the 15th of April 1941 two days before Yugoslavia surrendered on the 17th, this 1939 Borgward 3ton truck is seen negotiating the twisty roads that run down the central highland spine of this now defunct country. Although I have not been able to recognise the unit markings on the tailgate of the truck I can tell you that the unit was assigned to the 40th Panzer Corps at the time.



Here we have on the lefthand side of the photograph seen with a crew member lying under the front assessing the damage to the front steering linkage that has become unattached is a Borgward 1.5ton truck whilst on the right is a Mercedes 3 ton L3000 truck, both photographed during the winter of 1941/42 somewhere on the Russian step.



Here we have a Magirus M206 seen negotiating part of the earth works defences put up by the Russians around the city of Kharkiv after the second battle for the city were by the Germans recaptured it on the 15th of March 1943, this photo was taken on the 17th of that same month. Note the factory supplied 2 ton rated trailer that is camouflaged the same way as the truck in overall Dark Yellow (Dunkel Gelb) with Dark Green and Red Brown squiggles, this is a very early example of what was to become a standard type of German camouflage as the war progressed.



These two trucks are parked outside a Ukrainian farm house somewhere on the Crimean peninsula in July 1942. Note the truck with its front in the foreground is a 3 ton Opel Blitz Sd.Kfz 304, painted in overall Dark Yellow (Dunkel Gelb) with a camouflaged poncho draped over the radiator grill probably just to dry out as it does not appear to be attached to the truck in anyway.



These trucks making a delivery to one of the Panzer halls (Garages) located in the barracks complex based in Munster, Germany on July 10th 1939 the small truck on the left is an early 1.5 ton Opel and whilst I can't tell from what we have in the photo what make this truck is I can be sure that it falls into the 4.5 ton class of large commercial vehicles.

Note it is still in its civilian livery but not doubt if it has not yet been commandeered into the military it will be soon as nearly all such large trucks were commandeered before the end of the Polish campaign as the military realized their need for such large truck too late to produce enough to come close to their requirement before the commencement of the next campaign in France and the low countries.



Photographed on the August 3rd 1942 this Mercedes L3000 towing an E3 Einheits standardized military 3 ton trailer is seen loaded with hay that it is delivering to a farm complex that has been commandeered by the army to house a horse drawn supply unit of the occupying forces based in France somewhere in the Reims area.



This Universal Diesel complete with its unit workshop built trailer made from a cut up wrecked French trucks rear load bed. The photograph was taken in the Aalst area of Belgium during March of 1941.



This French truck (I think it is a Citroën) was photographed in an appropriated industrial area that was temporally being used as a truck refurbishment area for some of the many recovered French, Belgium and British trucks recovered from northern France and Belgium in the late summer of 1940. The picture was actually taken on June the 3rd 1941 close to the town of Lille, France.

This is a Chevrolet truck that was one of many purchased by the Dutch in the late 1930's for their military and subsequently captured and impressed into service with the German army as was so much of the captured motorized equipment of the vanquished European nations throughout the war. This photograph was taken in Hengelo Holland on the 17th of May 1942.



This pair of 1934 Mercedes 2 ton trucks were photographed in Poland during the early part of the invasion in the invasion in 1939, These early trucks did not last much longer in military service as age and were and tear rapidly rendered them inoperable in any form of off road environment and they soon disappeared from Germany's military transport pools inventory.



This 3 ton Magirus 3000 radio truck of 1938 vintage was pictured on the Lüneburg military training grounds during an exercise during October of 1939. This type was not a very successful design and was relegated to the training role rather quickly mostly due to its poor off road performance and the rapid advancement in radio communication technology at the time.



This is an Opel Blitz that is pictured whilst towing an electrical generator lose to one of the temporary forward airfields set up in Holland during the invasion in 1939. The aircraft seen on final approach to land is a Focke-Wulf Fw.58 that I have more photos of in the same photo series taken on the same day in June of that year.



An unfortunate Mercedes L3000 has turned over after losing its brakes whilst coming down a steep hill and not been able to make the slight turn at the bottom and thus rolling over, these accident took place in the par de Calais, France close to Saint Omar



This Henschel D33 that belonged to a field telephone unit and is seen in the process of laying a long distance telephone cable along a French roadside in the latter stages of the invasion of the west in May and June of 1940. The photo was taken in the Alencon area south west of Paris during June.



A Mercedes L3000 is seen in the left hand side of this photo taken in Lithuania during the early stages of operation Barbarossa on July 16th 1941 was taken by a surprised German soldier as his unit was approached by some local men offering to assist in the fight against the Russians whom they saw as a unwelcome occupying foreign power at that time before the cruel excesses of the new Germany occupying forces became apparent.



This is very rare pre-war ex-civilian Henschel large tractor unit for an articulated truck and trailer unit, its self a rarity in pre-war Europe was photographed in this wrecked condition having run over a mine on the road between Enschede and Hengelo in eastern Holland during the first day of the invasion of the west, the 10th of May 1940. Nearly all if not all such large trucks were commandeered for military service during 1939 in an attempt to elevate the Wehrmacht's chronic shortage of large transport units.



This Tatra truck with a field timber made caravan body was photographed on the southern Russian front in the early winter of 1941/42 somewhere in the Odessa region and is getting set to tow the disabled truck seen behind it.



This 1934 pattern Ford G9183 ton truck is seen with its original owners proudly standing next to it before it was handed over willingly to the victorious (at the time) German Wehrmacht. Civilian owners and companies were often happy to hand over there trucks to the army at that time (July 1938) as they had been told they were only lending to the armed forces and it would be returned after a short period.

Following the Austrian Anschluss of March 1938 and the occupation of the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia in June that same year the belief in the German armed forced by the civilian population was unequivocal and national pride was unequivocal.



This is an overturned Bedford truck that had been pushed off the road during the head long advance into France by the 6th panzer Division however now the battle of France has been won we see a recovery crew about to retrieve the truck and send it to a refurbishment unit for relocation to one of the many new motorized united that appeared after the wind fall of allied abandoned trucks became available after the German victory of 1940.



This is a captured and commandeered French Renault AGR 4.5 ton truck being used by the occupying forces in the suburbs Paris on the 19th of October 1942. A note on the photos reverse states that the unit was engaged in House clearance (looting) for high ranking Wehrmacht officers of commandeered Jewish properties.



This 1938 Ford 3 ton truck with an extended rear load bed platform (a factory civilian option) & also towing a factory option 3 ton trailer as well was photographed in the winter of 1938/39 in the barracks complex located in Leipzig, Germany. Note the WW1 vintage ammunition wagon loaded on to the flat bed of the truck and many wooden ammunition boxes loaded on to the trailer.



This Henschel D33 photograph whilst taking a slight detour from its route as many units did to take the opportunity to see the devastation that was left behind in the Dunkirk perimeter after operation dynamo had been concluded in the late summer of 1940.



Another Henschel D33 that is seen here to be towing a 20mm Flak 30 mounted in its Sd.Anh 51 transportation trailer, photographed here on May 18th somewhere in Holland during the invasion of the west in 1940.



An Opel Blitz 1935 pattern 1.5 ton 10/40 PS with a wooden cab seen in Russia during the early phase of Operation Barbarossa in the late summer of 1941, few of these ex civilian early trucks survived past the first Russian winter and they became a rare site in the east very rapidly.



This interesting scene was taken in the summer of 1940 and depicts a German pioneering unit in the process of manufacturing a timber bridge over the river Meuse in Eastern France, the ambulance in the background is an Austrian built Steyr type 640

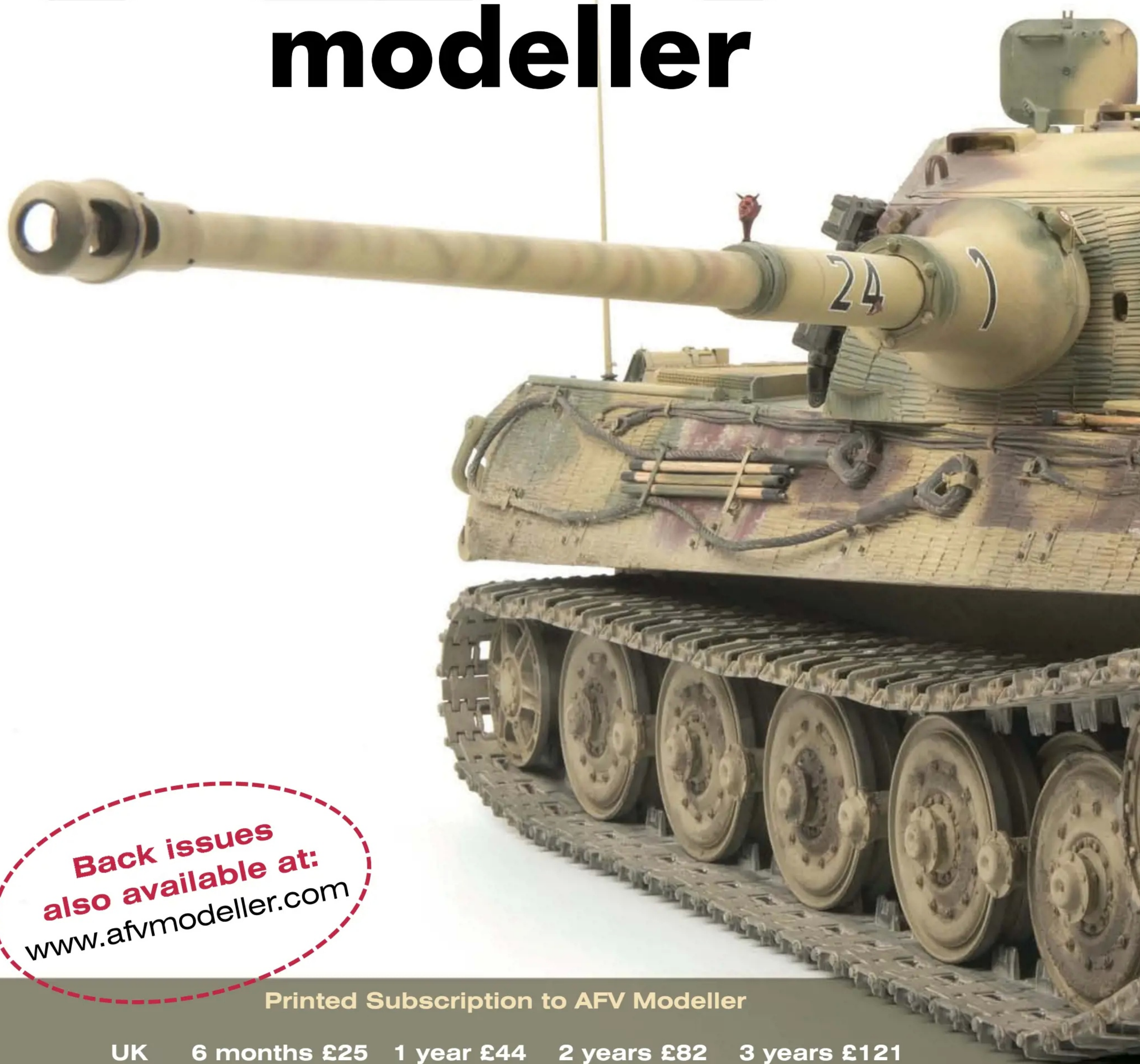


Here is a 1.5 ton Phanomen Granit type 25 ambulance seen closing a ford in the river Bug during the early stages of operation Barbarossa. Sadly I have no further information on this photo other than the unit this ambulance served with was part of Army Group Centre in the summer/autumn of 1941.

This Mercedes L3000 has become a victim of "General Mud" after the first rains on the Russian step at the end of the summer of 1941 a problem that was to become much worse in the coming weeks. Note the shorts and bear backs of the troops as the summer heat is still lingering on. This task in the cold winds and driving rain of autumn was nowhere near as much fun nor was it a simple task many trucks were actually lost for ever due to damage to their drive train in such incidents.



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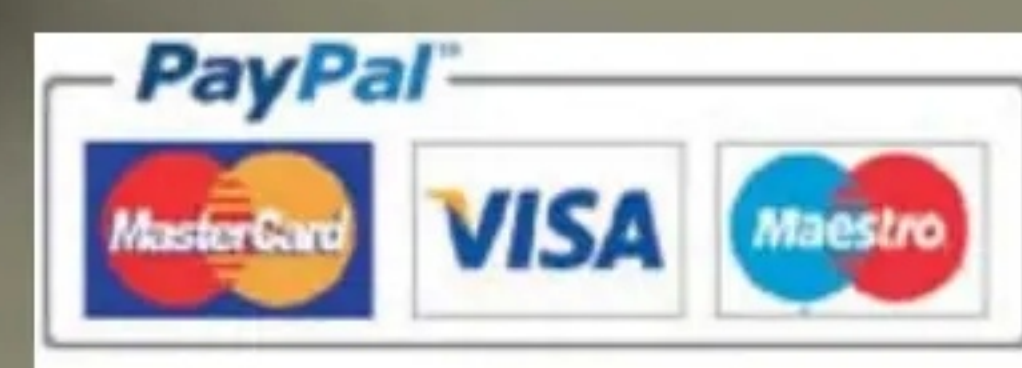
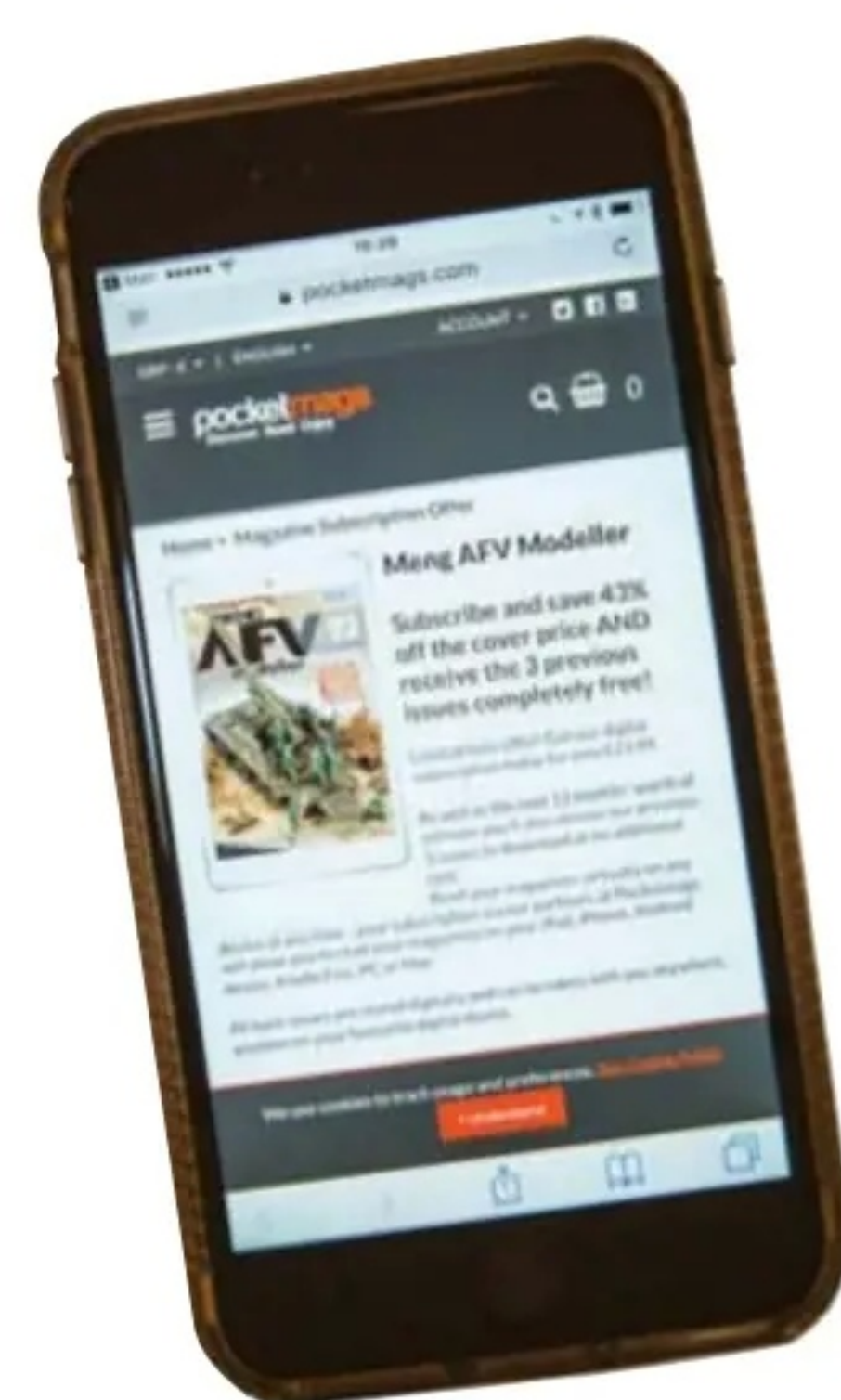
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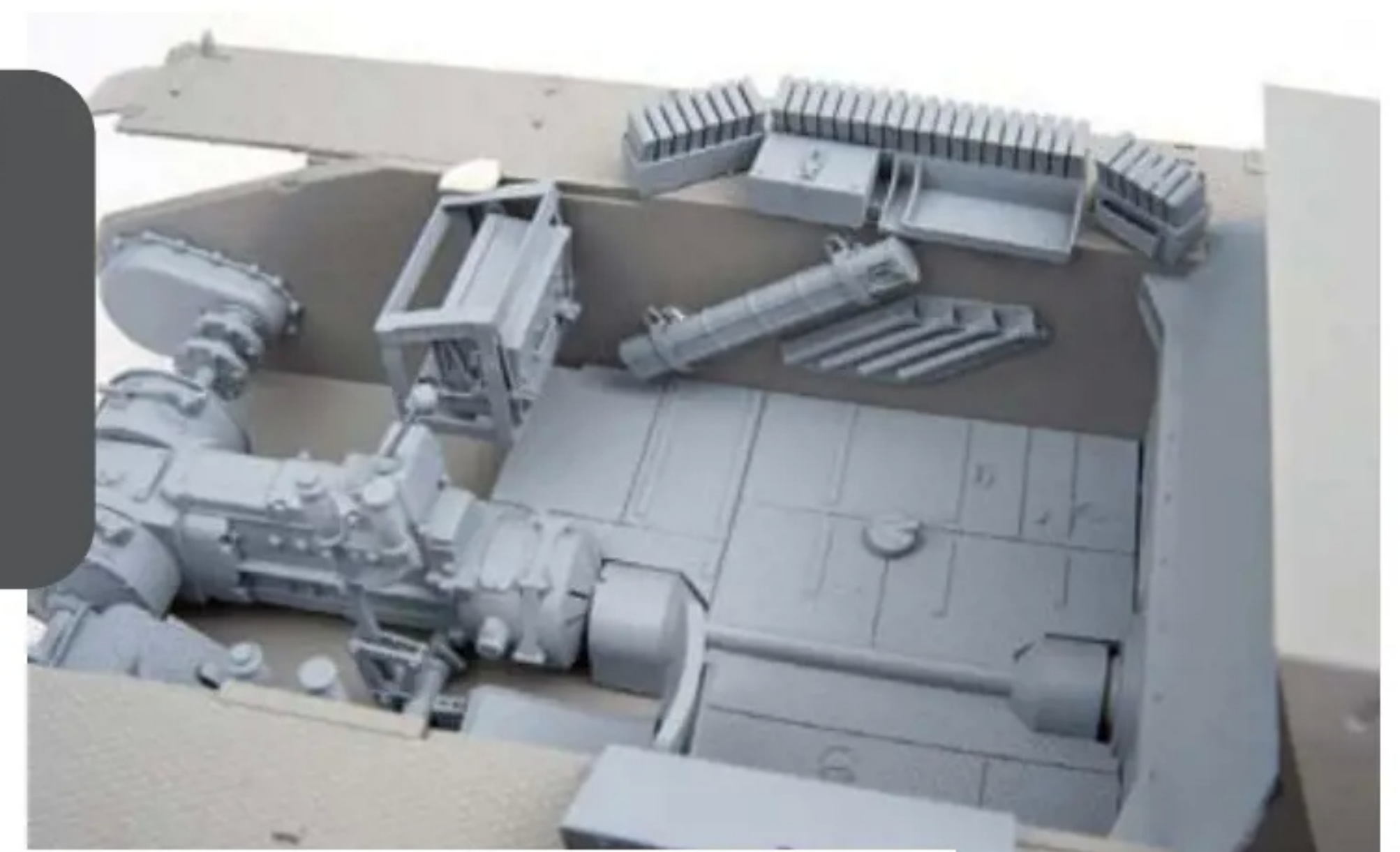
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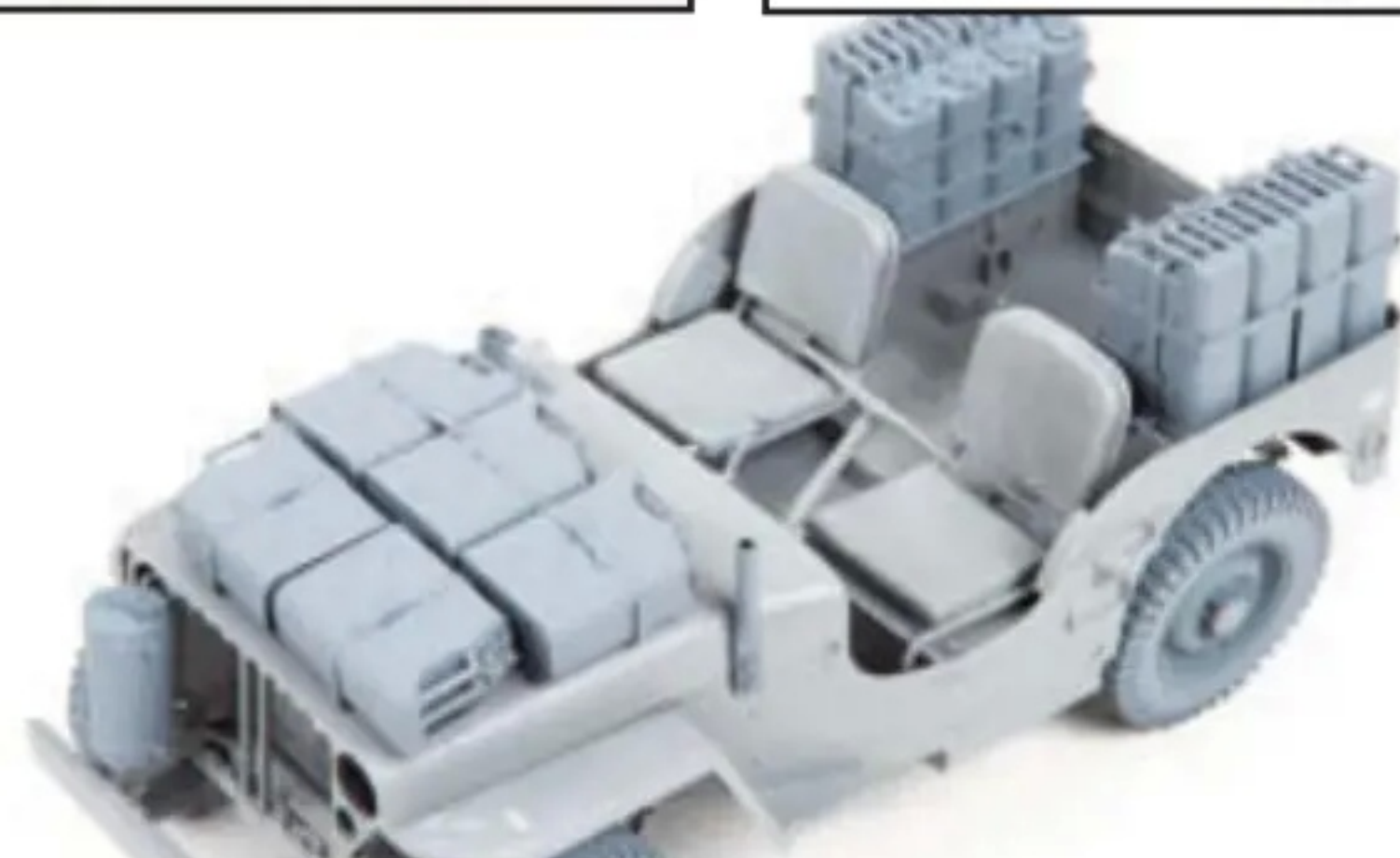


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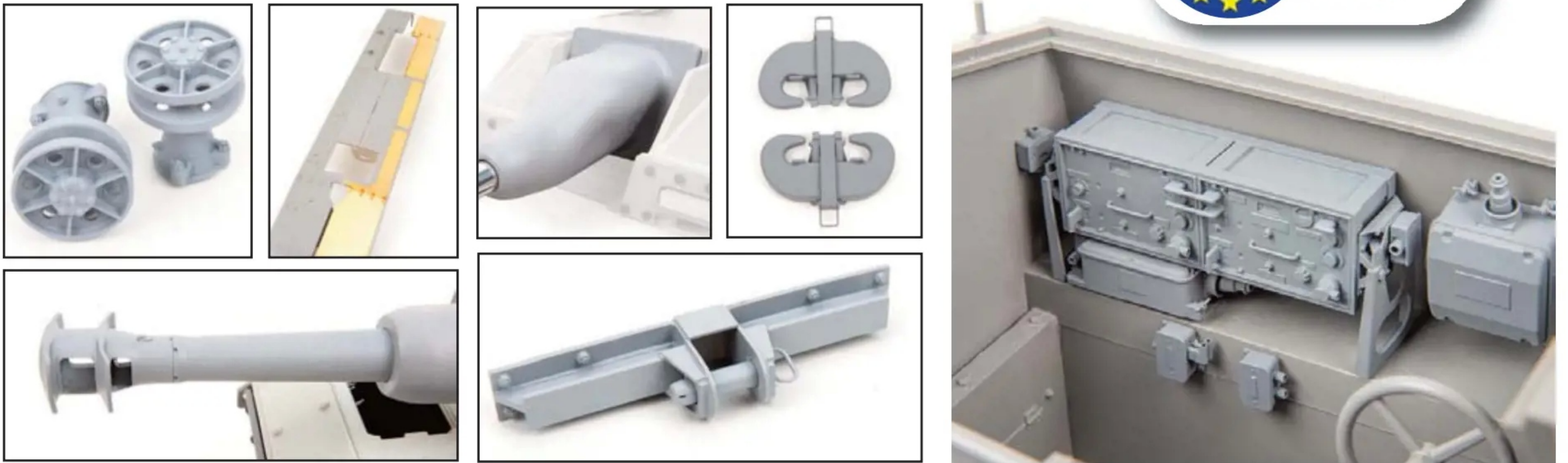
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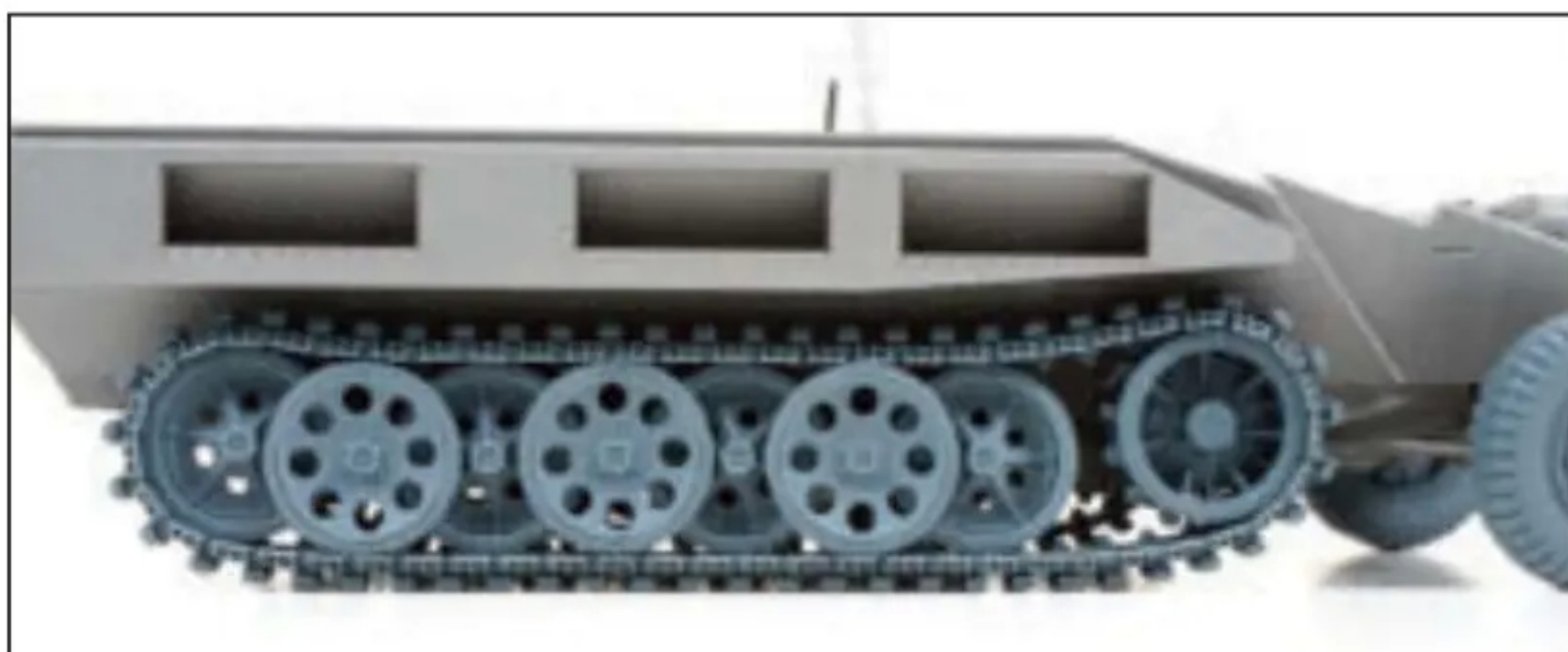
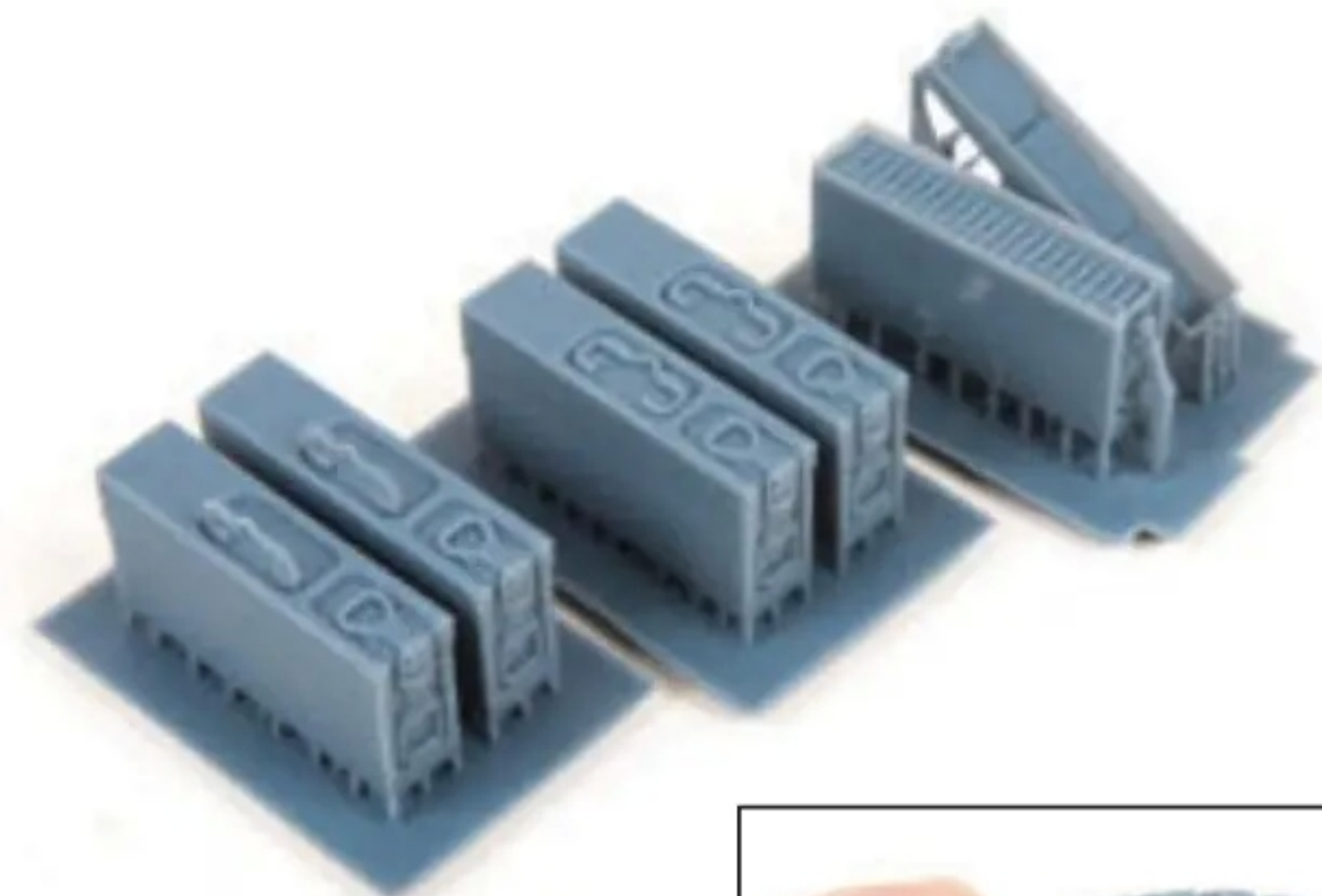
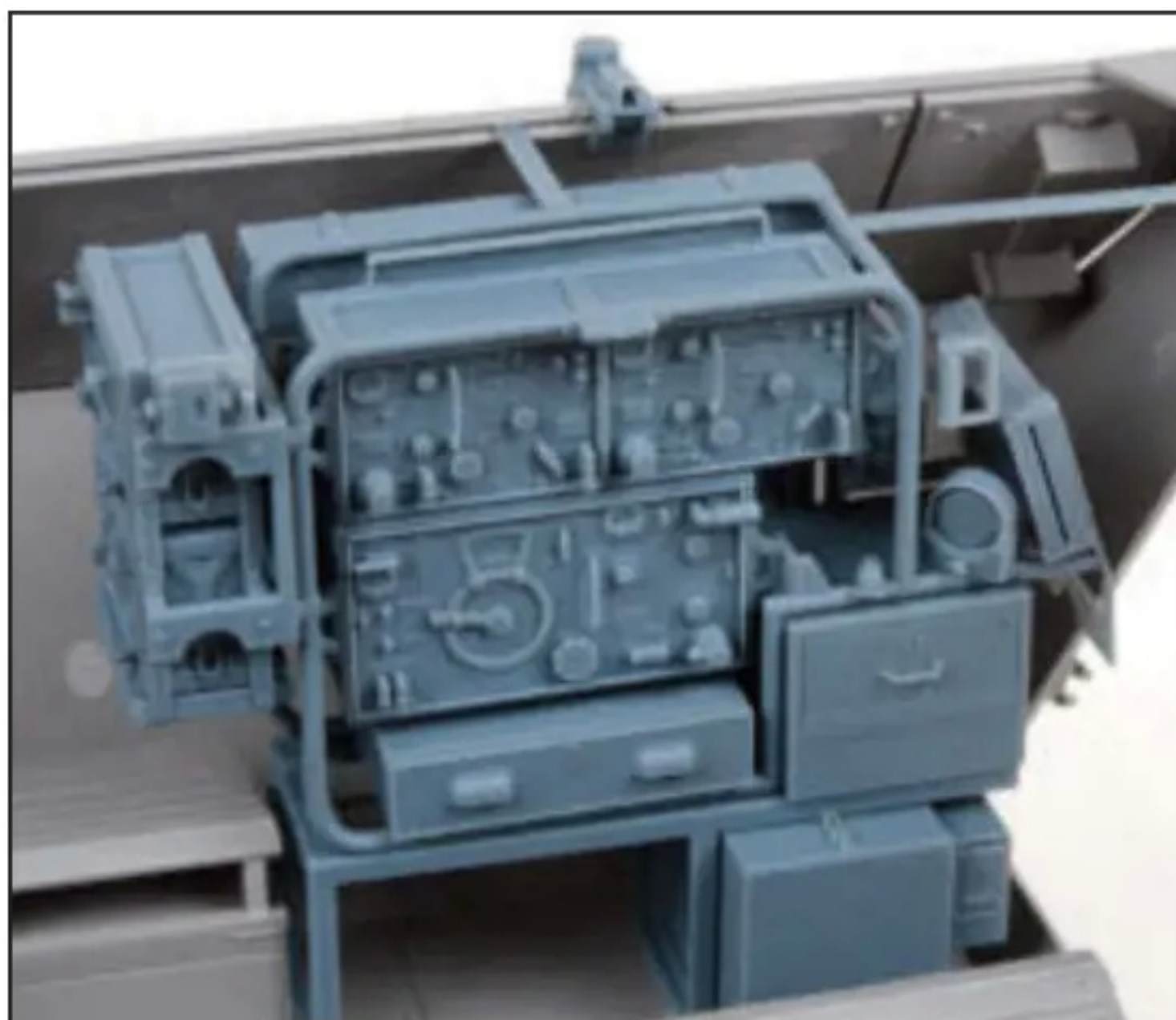
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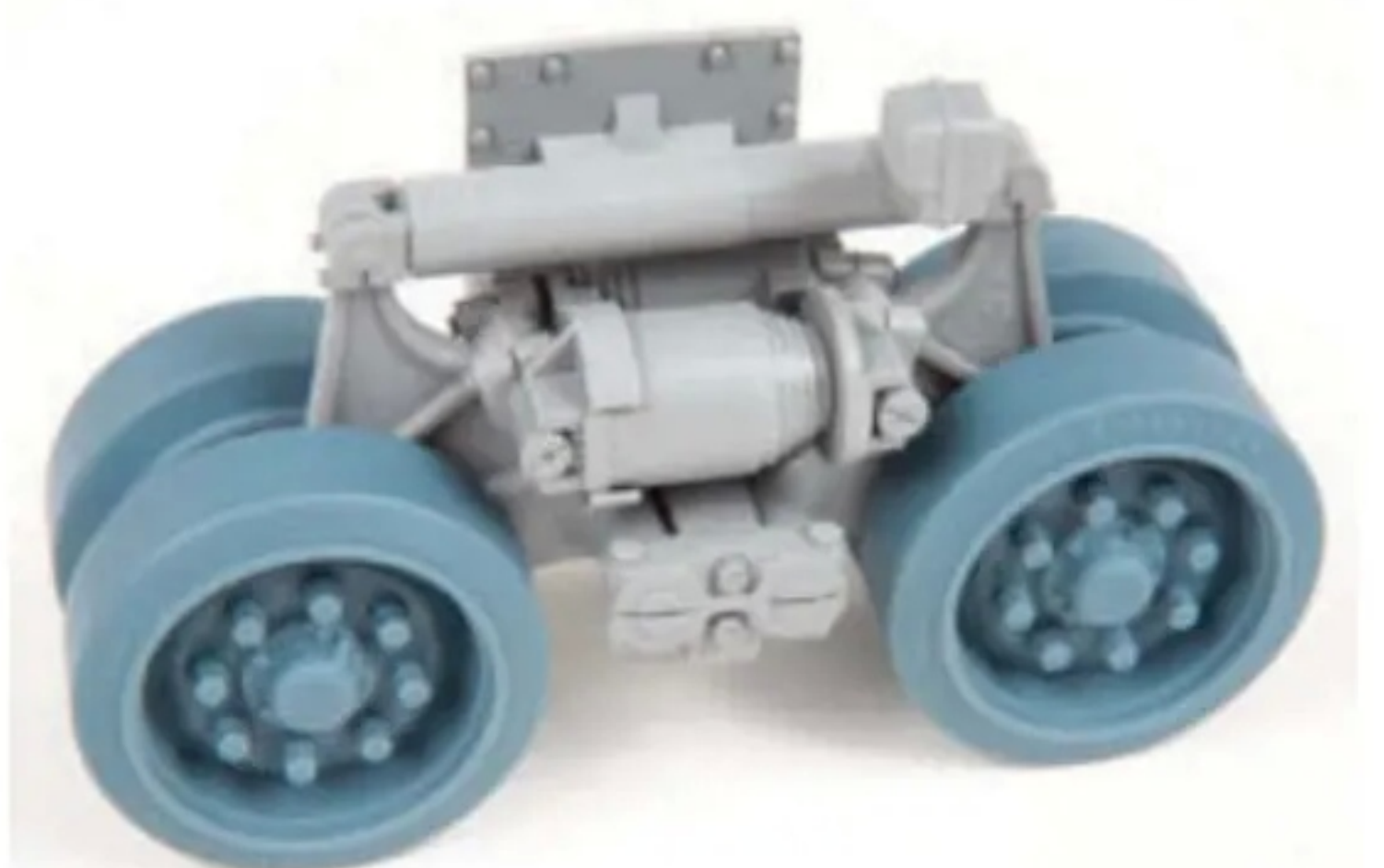
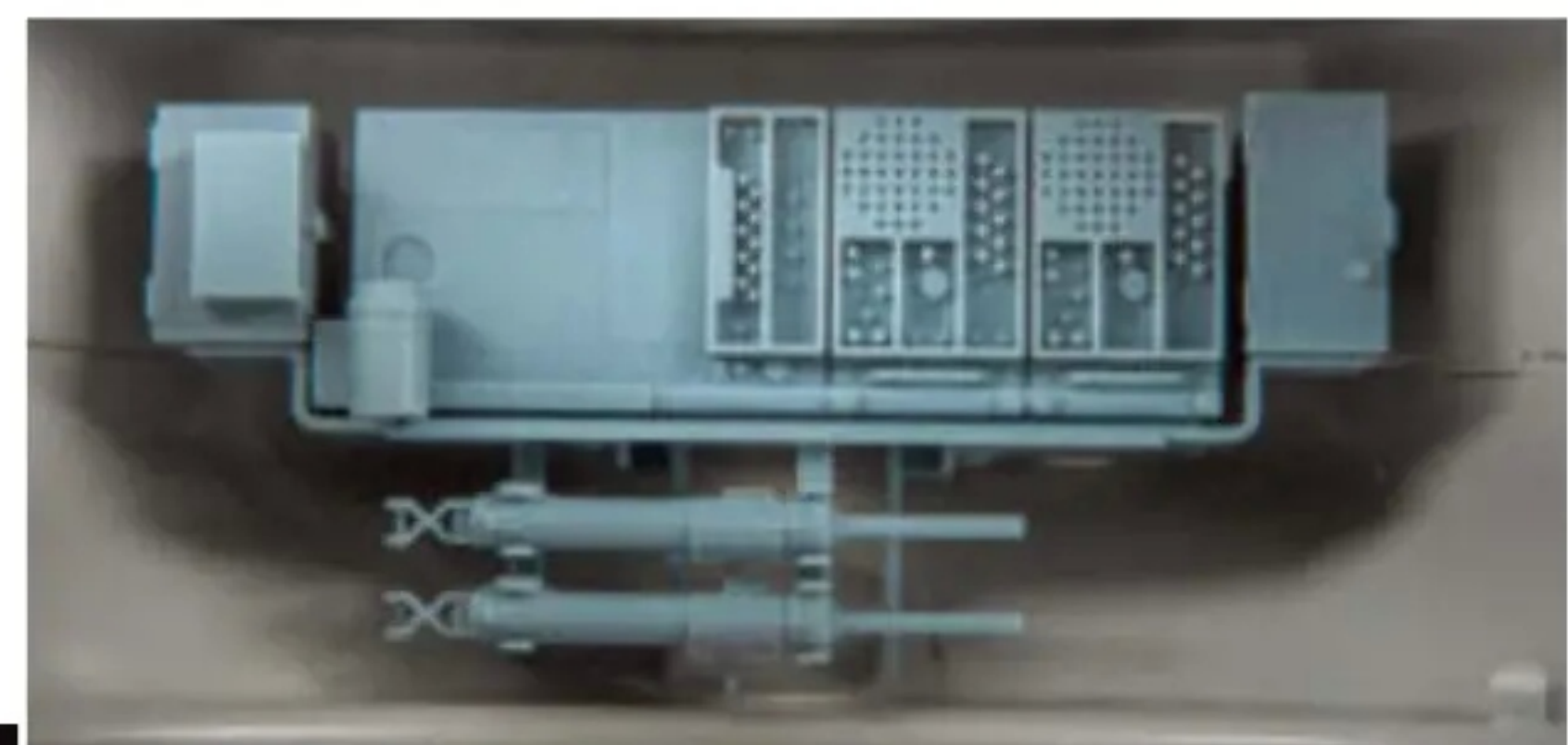
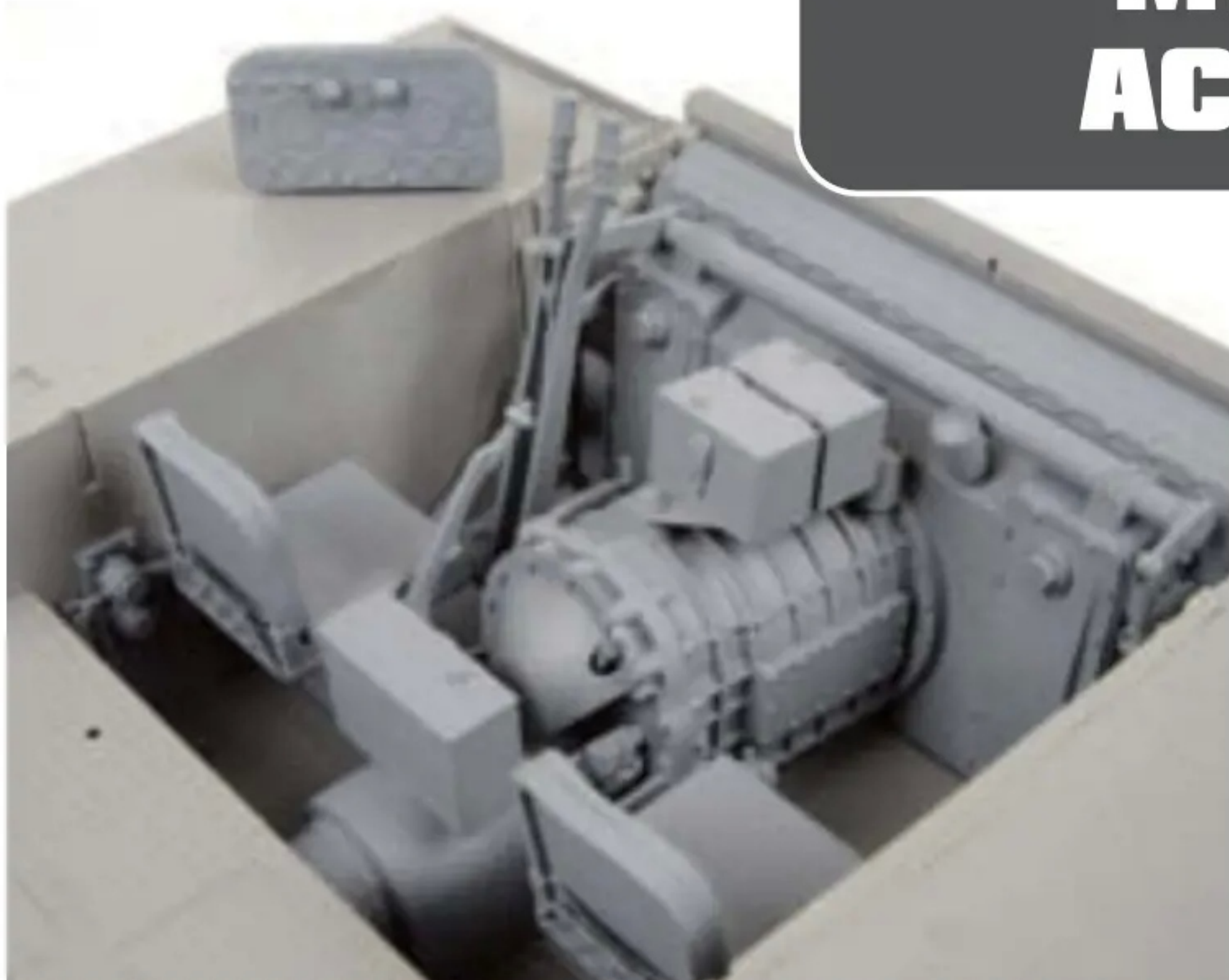


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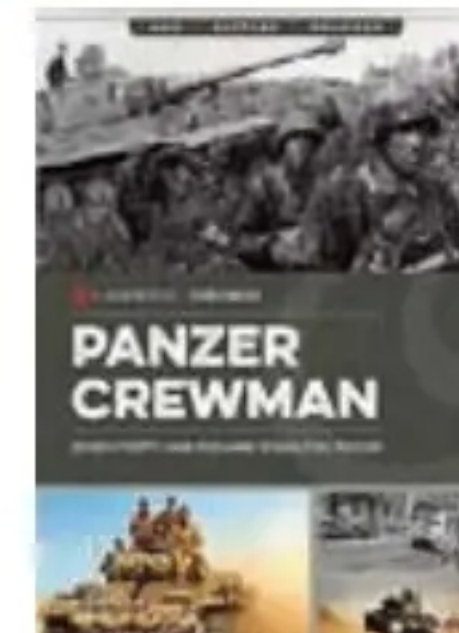
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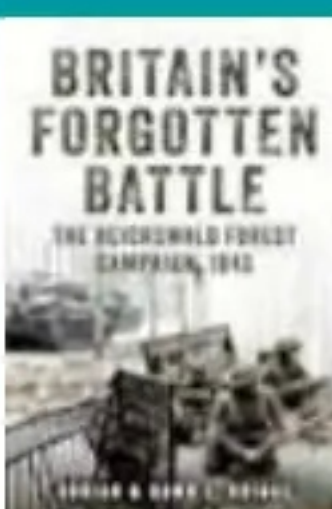
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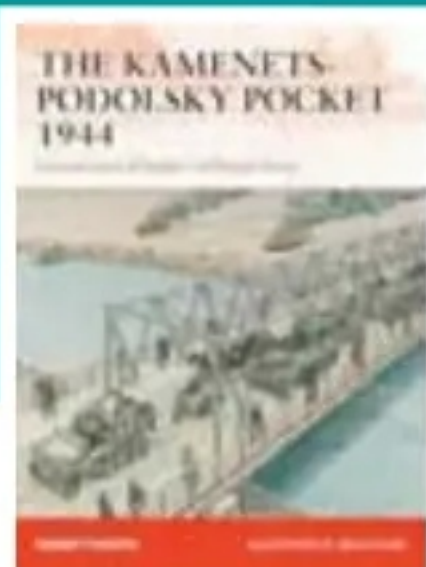
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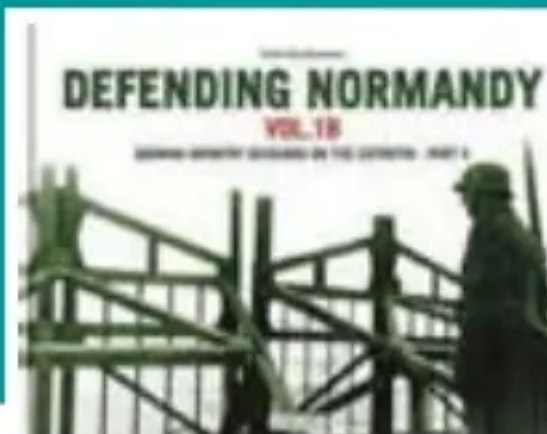
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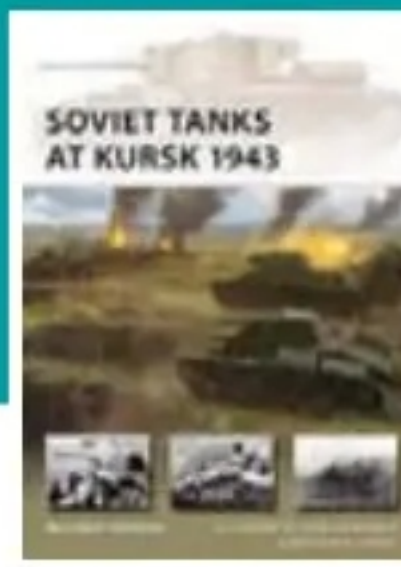
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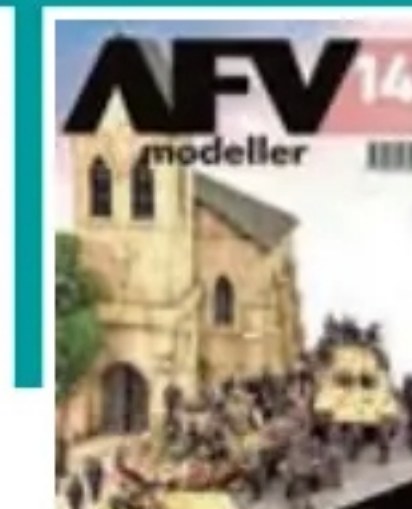
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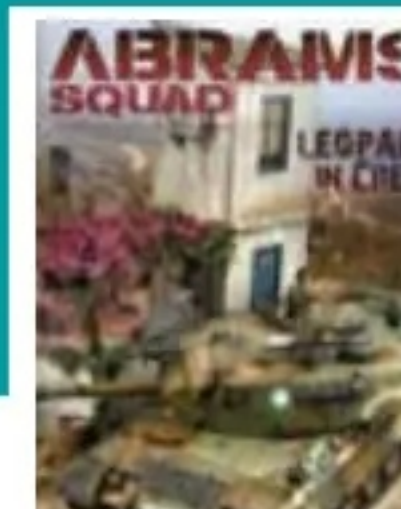
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