

Militar's kits 4

English version Viviane Deygas

Editorial

Dear modelers, what a pleasure to meet you at the time of the Model Shows. It is the opportunity to exchange ideas, to compare our works, to be friendly and that allows us to more appreciate our passion. Every piece presented is an amazing, either planes, boats, cars, figures or tanks, yes, really, the model world is fascinating!

The year passed was rich with new kits, so rich that most of us don't arrive to follow financially. The choice is sometimes hard, even cruel, so we must avoid some traps. Beware of unscrupulous manufacturer who can make you "believe that the moon is made of green cheese" and sell you some very onerous conversions of resin kits, when we could make them ourselves with plasticard for next to nothing! Fortunately, all is not negative but we think this caution was necessary.

We give one's attention on the choice of the subjects appearing on the MILITAR'S KITS summary. We have progressively developed a formula which seems seduce you, alternating injected plastic, resin, vacuform, white metal.

Now we are able to answer at your liking and at your requirements presenting you a great number of marks which exist on the market. Don't hesitate to tell us about your wishes. We conclude thanking you for your fidelity and the trust you show becoming more numerous every day.

COBRA

End of July 1944, the COBRA operation that has started on 25th of the month is now quite a long way on. The US Armoured Divisions mass-engaged for the first time force the German back. Nevertheless, the occupying power hangs on and resists. So, in Saussey, the German have placed a battery and bombard the Southeast suburbs of Coutances. Men of the 4th Armoured Division just arriving in town find themselves under fire. The first wounded freed from the rubbles are going to be evacuated soon in a WC 64 Dodge hospital vehicle.

In August 1943, the Medical Department Equipment Laboratory in collaboration with the Ordnance Department proposed the production of a new 3/4 Ton version from former command car chassis reformed and lengthened, or from M6 Dodge with 37mm gun.

The special feature of this ambulance was its rear body entirely knocked down, made from wood and oiled cardboard compressed and from tilt. The whole was covered with thin metal sheets.

This model was not very solid but it presented two advantages: it was less voluminous to carry and the body required less steel for its making. On 24th March 1944, this vehicle was declared to be standard and it was named 3/4 Ton ambulance, 4x4 T 214 WC 64 KD (for knocked down).

THE MODEL

As the kit of the WC 64 does not exist, I have used

the Italeri Anti-tank Dodge no.245 like base for this conversion. A few years ago, Italeri proposed three other Dodge references on his catalogue: the WC 51 or 52 no.237, the WC 54 no.226 and the WC 56 no.228. Some of these models are no more available on the market. They will probably soon be produced again, so we hope! The fact remains that for our WC 64 we can use any of the given references depending on their availability. I will have reserves about the WC 64 Dodge kit: because of its conception, an additional work will be necessary for the windscreen.

Your choice being made, let's see the supplementary material you will have to find. Do not worry, it is not very costly and some of you may already have a large part of it: plasticard plates of various thicknesses (.010", .020" and 1mm), Evergreen strings, Slater's rods, copper wire of various diameters, tin sheet and a well stocked surplus box.

ASSEMBLING

The conversion work starts right from the stage 1 of the setting up. Cut the chassis strings with a sharp bladed saw like shown on figure 1. Lengthen it gluing two Evergreen strings: 15mm length, 3mm height and 1,5mm width. The propeller shaft (part 32) that links up the auxiliary box and the rear deck is now unusable. Take the universal joints and link them together with a Slater's rod: \varnothing 1,5mm and 20mm length (picture 1). To improve the "comfort" of the vehicle, the front deck

has received an additional shock absorbers set (picture 2). Moulding traces on the front bumper will be filled up with putty. On the upper edge, we will add two bolts taken from the Verlinden set "Nuts and Bolts" no.75. We will do the same thing on both sides of the bumper (picture 3). A 1,5mm width plasticard strip will be glued at the rear. On this part, we will fasten the two rear buffers and the towing hook (picture 4).

The left footboard (part 63) will have to be lengthened. Cut a 13mm x 5mm rectangle from a 1mm plasticard sheet. Unfortunately, this material supply will require us to remake the non-skid plate. The wiliness is to apply an aluminium foil on the supplied part and to delicately rub with the thumb. Glue this engraved strip on the footboard with cyanoacrylate glue but do not forget to remove the former engraving. The right footboard has been remade as well because it presented some defects (picture 5).

THE CAB

On the engine hood, remove the two stops and the two handles serving to hold the windscreen in low position. Needless to mark out their places, as these parts are moulded 5mm too much forward. Stops are remade from copper wire flattened with a hammer, handles are in lead wire (picture 6). Supplying cables for headlights are in stretched plastic.

Some little improvements have to be brought about under the wings. First of all, remove the assembling square moulded in the block at the front. It will be replaced by a little 7mm x 1mm Slater's strip (picture 7). The low part of the wing is screwed on a .020" plasticard bar, 1,5mm x 12mm. The three nuts are made with stretched plastic (picture 7).

On the floor (part 45), rub down the three pedals and replace them by parts in plasticard and stretched plastic. The small rings on either side of the dashboard are made with copper wire as well as the handrail being face to the passenger seat (picture 8).

Now let's talk about the windscreen. For setting up reasons, and above all for painting reasons, it will be glued inside out. Once the cab of the MC 64 entirely over, its conception does not allow the right placing of the window panes, especially as they will be remade in rodhoid. Both arms allowing the windscreen to revolve forward will be removed (fig.2), anyhow they would have to be remade! Glue the windscreen, its central upright must line up on the engine hood axle. Both sides pass beyond slightly but it is normal. We can now make the two windscreen locking hooks. The motors of the windscreen wipers are cut from a Ø 1mm Slater's rod. The nut is in stretched plastic and the feeder is in copper wire (picture 9).

Making the deflectors is not difficult. In some .010" plasticard, cut a triangle of which the side measures 1,5mm. The copper wire skid is 7mm long, the tightening wrench is in stretched plastic (picture 10). Small section electric wire will be used to realize the arms of both outside driving mirrors. Cut up the window supports in a .010" plasticard sheet using a Ø 2mm punch that will make this work easier. To fasten the arm on the body, insert a small tin sheet part between two clamps made with lead sheet. All the nuts are made from stretched plastic.

To make the search of wounded easier, a small searchlight is fastened on the left of the vehicle. The headlight is taken from the surplus box, the arm is made with copper wire and the handling wrench is in stretched plastic (picture 11). Note that a small Evergreen string fastened on the driving mirror arm ensures a perfect stiffness of the whole. The cab's roof will be made later, once the rear body over. Window panes and windscreen wipers will be glued after painting of the model.

REAR PLATE

All the parts for the building are detailed on the scale plan. Cut the floor in a 1mm plasticard sheet. Make the openings for the wheels passing and glue a 3mm x 3mm Evergreen string as shown on the plan. This part will be used like a centring bar that will be inserted between the petrol tank and the two pegs moulded on the

stringers (picture 12). Detail the inside floor gluing at regular intervals some small Slater's strips, ref.1007 (picture 13). Front, both sides and rear are made with 1mm plasticard. See the plan for their shapes and their dimensions.

To avoid additional work, I have taken the parts on which reflectors are engraved, from the parts no.68, 69 and 72 of the Italeri kit. Then it will need only to deduct the length of the cut parts from the parts of the plan.

You can now assemble the various elements. The cavity that contains the tank cap is made from an English helmet! The cap is cut in a Ø 2mm rod (picture 14).

The mudguards of the kit (parts 67) can be used. The inside dressing is made with .020" plasticard: base 34mm x 30mm, 7mm height, 10mm width (picture 15).

REAR BODY

Cut both sides and the front in a 1mm plasticard sheet. The scale plan will allow you to determine the various dimensions and to locate the place of the elements that constitute these parts. As I wanted to present the vehicle with its rear doors large open, I have detailed the inside of the body.

Glue the two seats. Cushions, eight per seat, are made with .020" plasticard. Lightly abrade the cushion edges with abrasive paper (picture 16).

The front of the body is equipped with a door. On the outside face, the groove will be engraved with the back of a X-Acto blade (picture 17). Cut the window with a thin bladed saw. The grating is a piece of tulle made from .010" plasticard that will be inserted between the front plate and the door. This part will be glued between two uprights: 1mm x 1,5mm Evergreen strips. Hinges are made with plasticard and stretched plastic. The handles and the small crank allowing the window to go down are made with copper wire. A .010" document case will be placed on the inside face of the door. All nuts are in stretched plastic (picture 17 bis).

The heating is made thanks to a motor grid (surplus box) and to a plasticard box. Place it under the door (picture 17). Now you can glue the sides and the rear frame. This later is made with 1,5mm section Evergreen strings (picture 18).

Now let's see the skids allowing to incline the upper stretchers backwards. This little device, as ingenious as simple, enabled the ambulance men to quickly load and unload the wounded out of the vehicle. Make four "U" shaped skids from a lead sheet and glue them as shown on picture 19. The stretcher support is made with .010" plasticard (see the plan). Both retractable handles are made with Slater's rod.

Door hinges are made with .010" plasticard: 2,5mm x 1,5mm. Nuts are in stretched plastic (picture 20). Cut the three doors from a .020" plasticard sheet. For the inside strengthening pieces of the central door, I have used an Evergreen string. Round off the ends with abrasive paper. To cut the window is not difficult, the technique is simple! Put a Ø 1mm drill on your mini-drill or, for lack of it, on a tool holder. Pierce some holes inside the line, as close as possible ones from others. Cut the remaining plastic rods and refine the cutting with a round file. The window pane in rodhoid will be glued later. The handles and the small crank are made with copper wire. Nuts are in stretched plastic (picture 21).

THE ROOF

It is made with 1mm plasticard. Its concave shape is obtained bending a second .020" plasticard plate. If you wish, you can glue a 2,5mm Evergreen string on the central axle. Using cyanoacrylate glue will make the success of such a work much easier (fig.3). Front and rear faces are closed with plasticard. Jointings will be filled up with putty.

I have detailed the inside adding a .020" plasticard strip on the ceiling. The three ventilation flaps will be glued on this strip. To obtain regular discs, I usually use a punched ruler and a sewing needle mounted on a tool holder. A punch will also do nicely. The interior light taken in the surplus box comes from a small 1/72th scale car headlight. The eight rings

allowing to ensure the stretchers are made with copper wire twisted around a Ø 1mm Slater's rod (picture 22).

It is tricky to get stretched plastic nut heads of the same diameter. Since many years, I use a very simple technique of which I am totally satisfied. Here is how I do. Cut a Ø 0,1mm Slater's rod into 5mm long bits. Wedge a rod extremity between the jaws of tweezers and take a landmark; usually, I take the width of the jaws. Move the rod towards the flame and let the plastic retract up to the metal edge. Repeat the process but be careful to keep the same landmark. Last detail: the Slater's rod section must be chosen depending on the diameter you wish.

As the inside of the body and the ceiling will no more be accessible once they are glued, they must be painted before assembling: olive green 86 base, mat black lavis, olive green + white dry-brush. For the cushions and the stretcher cloth: khaki 72 base, olive green lavis, khaki + white + yellow 99 dry-brush. For the stretcher handles: sand 63 base, Sienna lavis, sand + grey 64 + white dry-brush.

CABIN ROOF

It is made of uprights cut from a 3mm x 1mm Evergreen string, 23mm length. The small notches are realized with a file. Bows are made from copper wire flattened with a hammer, they are held up by two 1mm section plastic arms. A first plasticard guide is glued against the body (picture 23). Place the tilt, paper handkerchief coated with a mix of water and wood glue, form the folds with a tweezers, then let dry. A second copper wire guide shaped with a pincer will be placed just above the first one (picture 24). Glue the cover made from plasticard covered with paper handkerchief, it contains the cabin doors. Both hooks allowing to secure the tilt are made with flattened copper wire (pict.25).

Glue the roof and fill up joints with putty. Gutters are cut from an Evergreen string, nuts are in stretched plastic (pict.26). The side plates are assembled thanks to nuts taken in the Verlinden set no.75 "Nuts and Bolts". The three airings on the roof are shaped in some plasticard (pict.27). For their locations, see the scale plan.

We will end with the placing of the tool rack, Italeri part no.75. Rather than gluing the spade, the pick and the axe, it is better to realize the hooks holding up them with copper wire. Webbing is made with lead sheet, buckles are in copper wire (pict.28).

PAINTING AND DECORATION

First of all, protect the parts already painted. Stuff the inside of the body with paper handkerchief. You can even place two foils to replace the rear doors momentarily.

As every US vehicle of that time, the model is covered with a Humbrol 86 olive green coat. Then apply a veil of mat varnish and let dry.

To be in accordance with the Geneva Agreement, all the ambulances must display the adopted emblem: a red cross on a white field. These emblems must be seen on controlled places and they must have precise dimensions. You will find below the dimensions for the MC 64 to 1/35th scale:

	CROSS (60 red)	ARM	FIELD (34 white)
Sides	26mm	9mm	28mm
Rear doors	19mm	6,5mm	21mm
Body roof	54mm	18mm	57mm
Flag	2mm	0,7mm	3mm

The other markings, identification number that always starts with a 7 for ambulances, the unity identification, stars, and so on... come from the Verlinden plates no.153 and no.159. A second coat of mat varnish will protect these markings. The lavis composed of black abundantly diluted with white spirit is applied with a flat brush. Mop the surplus with a rag. The dry-brush has an olive green + white base. Lires are mat black, dry-brush dark grey, dirt 29 dark earth + white. The cabin tilt is 72 khaki, the lavis is Sienna, and the dry-brush is khaki + white + yellow.

FINISHING

Cut the windscreen from a rodoid plate (38mm x 13mm). The frame is made with a 0,5mm Slater's rod, the windscreen wipers are taken in the surplus box (picture 51). At the rear, add a copper wire rod on the side door allowing to keep it open.

Like most US vehicles, this ambulance is equipped with a class plate. Round and yellow, this plate is placed on the front, and it indicates the weight class of the vehicle for the crossing of army bridges. Some plates display two figures: one for the gross weight of the vehicle alone, the other one for the vehicle and its trailer.

FIGURINES

Twelve in number, the figures come from various selling boxes. Poses have been modified in order to give a certain consistency to the whole, depending on the situation. To fill up joints and small holes due to modifications, I use Stucco or Humbrol putty diluted with acetone. If the thickness is too important, I prefer using some Verlinden putty no.197 or some Milliput. Folds are shaped with a spatula or the tool shaft.

Now let's see in detail where the figurines come from. The civilian on the rubble heap and the woman who has just picked up a plank come from the Esci box "Partisans Resistance Group" ref.5009. Only the arms have been replaced, the French helmet comes from the Italeri box no.420. Paul, the blacksmith, who came with his spade to give a helping hand, is a Belgo figurine, ref.506 not modified. Both US soldiers on the rubble come from the Tamiya box ref.35048. The right arm of the officer, a vertical bar at the rear of the helmet, has been changed. The chest and the arms of the soldier have been taken from another figurine of the box. The spade is made with plasticard and stretched plastic, note the small satchel made with lead sheet. The squatting doctor is an Italeri Marines ref.310. Both wounded men on stretchers are made from the surplus box. Heads come from the Verlinden sets no.1 and no.2, ref.146 and 151.

All the figurines being over, I painted them with a sand tint with an airbrush. This undercoat will first help us to check that there is no defect on figurines and will serve us to paint the flesh parts. It is wise to use Winsor & Newton oils because it is a very thin paint that covers well. Its pigments are natural, that makes the mixing easier.

THE DIORAMA

Realizing this diorama took a little more time than usually. Indeed, the great number of figurines, the buildings, the rubble and the vehicle could not be placed in a haphazard way. Once the various elements made and their location chosen on a paper sheet, I could calculate the dimensions of the base.

A 400mm x 350mm plywood plate, 8mm thickness, will be sufficient. Glue a balsa string around taking care to let 3mm jut out. This device will be used as a formwork to pour the modelling plaster. Use a well liquid plaster and smoothen the surface with a metal ruler. Let well dry. To engrave cobblestones, use a joiner spike and a metal ruler as a guide.

A new formwork will be necessary to realize the sidewalk, balsa chocks and modelling plaster. **BE CAREFUL:** you must humidify the area that is already plastered to prevent it from soaking up the water held in the new casting. If you forget, you would get a bad adherence that would lead to cracks. The street and the sidewalk will receive a Humbrol mat 111 uniform grey base, then a mat black lavis. The patina will be obtained from several brushings 111 grey, 64 light grey and white. Work on one area after the other and avoid too regular brushings. Dry pastel powder will be used to darken the channels and the draining gutters.

BUILDINGS

To equilibrate my diorama, I needed a house that was still intact. I found it among the MK 1/35 products. Besides figurines and accessories, this firm offers a whole range of intact buildings to 1/35th scale. I chose "The Shop" ref.8003. The box contains four

plaster parts: the wall, the side, the roof and the penthouse. The assembling will be made with wood glue. Joints will be filled in with liquid plaster. The following board details the various colours used to paint this house:

	BASE	LAVIS	DRY-BRUSH
Wall	60 red + white	29 dark earth	64 light grey + white
Mouldings	84 stone grey	grey + mat black	ochre + 103 cream
Adornments	67 grey	mat black	64 light grey + 128 grey + white
Zinc Penthouse			
Store	29 dark earth	W & N burnt Sienna	dark earth + white lightened with ochre
Window			
Metal Shutter	67 grey	mat black	128 grey + aluminium
Roof	67 grey	mat black	grey + white

A bang in the target made the wall of the second house fly into pieces. The remaining wall is a piece of polystyrene covered with a thin coat of plaster. Use a screwdriver to engrave the stones. The inside has not withstood the explosion blast. Almost all plasters, made with 125gr Canson paper, are fallen and let appear the brick walls made from Fallier plates ref.552/80. Then, you just have to imagine what can be found in a house! Furniture, stairs, and floors are made with balsa. The various accessories are taken from the Historex set "Campagne et Auberge" and from the ARA Miniatures set ref.4619 and 4620. Once they will separately be painted, place them in the house. So you can put the rubble.

It is unusual to see a debris heap corresponding to the damage on a diorama containing a building in ruins. To reproduce this rubble, I used a block of polystyrene covered with modelling plaster. Bricks and stones constituting the walls, beams, planks, and various debris are then driven in the still fresh plaster. Once again, it is better to paint all these accessories before placing them. Some thin sand sprinkled on a wood glue bed will hide the joints. Before placing the figures and the Dodge, spray a veil of mat white to simulate the dust.

LEGENDS OF W/B PICTURES

Pict. 1: Side frames have been lengthened. This very simple work requires all your attention in order not to twist the chassis while gluing it, so caution! In the middle, we can see the new propeller shaft.

Pict. 2: Front shock absorbers. Upper cylinder: 6mm length, Ø 3mm. Low cylinder: 8mm length, Ø 2,5mm. For the triangular prop: base 3mm, Verlinden nut.

Pict. 3: The bumper with small bolts on each side of the hooks. Moulding defects are filled up with putty.

Pict. 4: The rear plate is cut from an Evergreen string: 30mm long, 1,5mm wide. The use of aluminium foil to make the non-skid plates will allow to well take the rounded shape of the left footboard. Avoid to overly press with your finger in order not to erase the engraving.

Pict. 6: Improvements of the hood. The greyish marks indicate the former place of the stops!

Pict. 7 and 7A: Nothing must be neglected, so here there are the squares and the supports for the front wings. The removal marks are also filled up with putty.

Pict. 8: The inside of the cabin. Various improvements are still valid, even for another version of a Dodge. I removed the winch lever, as this WC 64 is not equipped with it. Windscreen wipers motors, Ø 1mm, are well visible. The small cable follows the upright of the windscreen.

Pict. 10: This view allows us to appreciate the side details: quater-light, windscreen locking hook, and the small ring for the safety webbing. On the front, note the cable of the headlight made with stretched plastic.

Pict. 11: Close up of the searchlight and the outside driving mirror.

Pict. 12: Underside of the body. We can see the marks

written with a pencil. They are necessary to well work and must not be put apart.

Pict. 13: Inside of the body before putting the seats.

Pict. 14: Left side. Note the peculiar shape of the tank cap envelope.

Pict. 15: Right side. The left mudguard will be slightly cut in order to place the tank cap.

Pict. 16: The inside is well ahead. As many elements as possible must be glued before closing the body. Indeed, the inside will no longer be accessible.

Pict. 17: The door seen from outside. We can clearly see the grid made with thin tuile.

Pict. 17A: Dressing of the inside face of the door. Note the opening guide (plasticard + copper wire) and the two side supports of the stretchers.

Pict. 18: Rear frame and left door. The handle is made of copper wire. The small cutting off on the uprights will allow the placing of the central door's hinges.

Pict. 19: Dark on the picture, you can see the lead sheet skids: 14mm long, 1mm wide.

Pict. 20: This other view allows us to appreciate the exacte shape of the skids. The locking notch (mark A) is made of plasticard. On the central upright, note the closing pin of the door.

Pict. 21: From left to right: the inside of the central door, the inside face of the right door and the stretcher support. All these elements are made with plasticard, nuts are in stretched plastic. On the central door, we can see marks written with a grey pencil.

Pict. 22: Ceiling before painting. Once it is glued, it becomes nearly invisible. Nevertheless, I have entirely detailed it.

Pict. 23: Framework of the cabin roof. Uprights are made of plastic, bows are in flattened copper wire.

Pict. 24: The tilt and the cover are in place. On both sides, we can see the copper wire guide.

Pict. 25: Left upright. Note the small cutting off and the copper wire hook.

Pict. 26: To make the assembling and dismantling of the body easier, sides are assembled with numerous Verlinden nuts ref.75. Bolts of the hinges and of the roof squares are made with stretched plastic. Note the upper gutter made with Ø 0,5mm Evergreen string.

Pict. 27: The three airings allow a perfect ventilation of the inside. To build them, see figure 4.

Pict. 28: Tools have been taken off. This allows us to study the shape of the various copper wire fasteners. Webbing are made with lead sheet and buckles with very thin electric wire.

Pict. 29: Two additional jerrycans are fastened on the right side. Supports are made with .010" plasticard and webbing with lead sheet.

Pict. 30: On this figure, I used putty diluted with acetone to remake the trousers, and Milliput to modify the arm. The pockets of the jacket are bulged with liquid plaster. There is no trick! One must know how to use products depending on the work to do, and one must also carry out many attempts.

Pict. 31: This nurse is modelled from a MK 1/35 chest, Italeri legs and a Verlinden head. Note the lead sheet helmet and the armband on the left arm.

Pict. 32: A WC 64 on the village place at Ste Mère l'Eglise in 1989. Hidden by the bumper, we can see the additional shock absorber under the wing (Military's Kits picture).

Pict. 33: Nicely restored, this Dodge shows the various regular markings (Military's Kits picture).

Pict. 34: This side view allows to count the numerous assembling nuts (Military's Kits picture).

Pict. 35: Searching light and outside driving mirror. We can clearly see the fastening device as well as the bar linking the whole lot (Military's Kits picture).

Pict. 36: Body roof with airings (Military's Kits pict.).

Pict. 37: As there is no cover on the doors, this allows us to well see the metallic guide on the tilt. On the right, we can see the rope tied on the side hook. We can also see the stops and the left hook of the windscreen (Military's Kits picture).

Pict. 38: This WC 64 Dodge KD belonging to the 101st Airborne is equipped with a Braden winch (Military's Kits picture).

Pict. 39: The body inside with the emblem of the Geneva Agreement painted on the central door (Militar's Kits picture).

Pict. 40: The opening of the central door allows the spreading out of the retractable footboard (Militar's Kits picture).

Pict. 41: Body inside with the quater on the foreground, the windscreen locking hook underneath, and at last the small ring allowing to fasten the safety webbing. Note the form of the windscreen pivoting arm (Militar's Kits picture).

Pict. 42: Stretcher support have been folded back, so that one can seat. At the back on the left, we can see the small hook allowing to secure the stretcher while driving (Militar's Kits picture).

Pict. 43: Close up on the small door, various details clearly appear. On the ceiling, we can see the rings and the small lamp (Militar's Kits picture).

Pict. 44: On the cabin roof, this WC 64 Dodge is equipped with a cover containing the doors of the vehicle (Militar's Kits picture).

Pict. 45: Face to the drivers' indifference, the men belonging to the "Ordnance" were used to paint as much caution indications as they can on the vehicles. Here we can read the tire pressure: TP 40 (A. Laffargue picture).

Pict. 46: The central skid is well visible on this view. Removable arms allow to move the whole support + stretcher to the horizontal. Another interesting detail: the closing device of the side door (A. Laffargue picture).

Pict. 49: A very special cutting off has been made in the body to place the tank cap (A. Laffargue picture).

Pict. 50: The inside door seen from the driver's seat (Militar's Kits picture).

LEGENDS OF COLOUR PICTURES

Pict. 51: Once the painting and the patina are over, you can glue the windscreen, the uprights and the windscreen wipers.

Pict. 52: Masks to paint the white fields are made from sticky PVC film. You will find it in art shops

presented in rolls of various widths. Be careful as these products are expensive. For the sake of economy, I have widened the masks with glazier sellotape (see picture). In order to entirely protect the model during the spray, I made some masks from a paper sheet.

Pict. 53: Markings on the bumper are dry transfers from Verlinden. The small triangle is taken from the Tamiya M4 A3 Sherman plate. The class plate is always fastened at the vehicle's front.

Pict. 54: At the rear, markings are usually painted on the plugs.

Pict. 55: The cabin tilt is painted 72 khaki followed by a burnt Sienna lavis and a khaki + yellow + white dry-brush.

Pict. 56: The name "ambulance" is taken from the Verlinden plate no.153. Both flags are painted freehand.

Pict. 64: The electric pylon is a Mk 1/35 accessory ref A002. It is made of three resin parts + insulators. Once you have set up and cleaned this pylon, cover it with a white priming, a 64 light grey base, a mat black lavis, and at last a light grey + white dry-brush.

Pict. 58: The mattress is shaped with Verlinden putty: 72 khaki base, khaki + white dry-brush. The small stool on the right is a ARA Miniatures accessory.

Pict. 59: Crosses on the helmet are painted freehand. The stretcher is a scratch. The blanket is made with paper handkerchief coated with wood glue and water.

Pict. 60: The left nurse carries peculiar haversacks containing the first aid material (bandages, sticking plasters, safety pins, and tincture of iodine). The wooden trousers of the other stretcher-bearer has received a 62 + white leather tint, a burnt Sienna lavis, and a leather + white + yellow dry-brush.

Pict. 61: Civilians and soldiers apply themselves to extricating the possible survivors. On the ground, we can see the commercial shop sign (ref. Mk 1/35 A004).

Pict. 62: The Mk 1/35 building has been built directly from the box and has not been subject to any modification. The shop sign also comes from Mk 1/35, ref. A004.

Pict. 63: Under the attic floor, we can see the stairs and the small chest of drawers.

Normandy June 44

The various wheeled and semi-tracked tactical military vehicles which the German government and industry had designed and produced during the thirties were the cream of contemporary automotive engineering. For the takeover methods and the "blitzkrieg" tactics of lightning war and a quick victory, the elaborate and sophisticated motor vehicles which the Wehrmacht's "Elite Divisions" used when they overran their neighbouring countries in 1938-40 were ideal. They also came out extremely well in parades, propaganda films and the reality of the Eastern Front when the fighting there dragged on and got stuck in the winter of 1941/42.

The extra hard work under arduous sub-zero temperatures, combined with maintenance problems, took its toll. Artillery tractors in particular became scarce, partly because of the large amount of prime materials required, supply just could not keep up with demand. The transport shortage was solved to some extent by the pressing into service of captured enemy equipment, although on the other hand, this only added to the maintenance and repair problems. Moreover, few vehicles were able to cope adequately with the atrocious going and severe temperatures encountered in Russia. Both the duration of the conflict and the vast distances into enemy territory had been grossly underrated and these miscalculations were to cost dearly.

It was Hitler himself who, in November 1941, stated that there was no point in keeping in production at high expense semi-tracked artillery prime movers. "A new generation of much simplified tractors would have to be devised and taken into production", he decreed.

Sophistication and superfluous detail had to be abandoned forthwith, if only to preserve high-grade materials.

Specially for the Eastern Front, the Heereswaffenamt Wa.Pruf. 6 (the appropriate Ministry department) arranged with Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG in annexed Austria for the design and manufacture of two new types of artillery tractors: the Radschlepper Ost (wheeled tractor, Est) and the Raupenschlepper Ost (tracked tractor, Est). The various projects presented was not kept. The time was pressing (Hitler wanted the tractors for the forthcoming winter of 1942/43); yet, another alternative solution was studied and proposed to the Latil factories of Suresnes (under the control of Daimler-Benz, in occupied France) and to the Skoda factories of Pilsen in Czechoslovakia. The large wheels were a feature Hitler had great belief in to struggle against the wretched roads in Russia which were just wide tracks of deep mud in which his supposedly mobile armies waded. But how wrong he was!

The new prototypes were tested and while they performed reasonably well in certain types of terrain, they were next to useless in snow, and particularly on icy surfaces and hard snow on metalled roads. Several improvements were made during the tests. The petrol consumption was 2 liters/km, not excessive perhaps for this type of machine (the Latil consumed 10% more than Skoda's), but petrol was extremely scarce and when Porsche applied for another 4000 liters for the continuation of the tests, the HWA being clearly unhappy with the Radschlepper Ost, refused.

The main weakness of these vehicles were in the wheels which did not provide sufficient traction and