

Weathering a T-34-85

By Roman Volchenkov

Kommandoverband "Jaguar" was a special unit formed in 1944 by Germans for disruption and disinformation on the Eastern front. It was equipped with Soviet equipment and soldiers were either former Red Army members that change their affiliation to German army or Russian-speaking Germans, Hungarians and other nationalities. There are several photographs, including T-34 tanks from that unit which were captured from the Red Army, repaired at the workshop and put back into action. The tank that I modelled had an interesting two-tone camouflage and hand-written slogan "death to Bolsheviks" on the turret. Well, let's say such slogan will remove any confusion if they would have met real Red Army!



- 1 The project began with a "kit bash" combining the AFV Club t34-85 hull along with a turret from Dragon. Various upgrades were also added from Aber and ET Models photo etched sets as well as cast parts from my friend Steve Reid.





2 Painting begins with an overall layer of AMMO Black Primer (A.MIG-2005) which applied using an airbrush. The initial layer of primer is a critical step in all painting, but especially important when preparing a multi-media kit such as this with plastic, photo etch and resin parts.

3 Next, in order to enrich the base colour I sprayed acrylic white paint (A.MIG-047) on the most exposed top surfaces to enhance the contrast and highlights of the base colours from the black primer.



4 The basecoat was created by airbrushing AMMO 4BO paint mixed with 1 drop of white paint. The observed colour modulation effect was achieved by underlying black and white shadows and highlights.



5 Next I made the camouflage with AMMO Russian Tan (A.MIG-021) sprayed through airbrush without masking. Here I think it can be debated whether the camouflage had hard edges or not as it is not clear where the tank got two-tone camouflage – in Red Army or after it was refurbished at German workshop.

6 For the markings I used AMMO washable white paint (A.MIG-024) as it is easy to correct errors or inaccurate application. As the markings were finished I airbrushed a couple of gloss varnish coats and let the model for 24 hours.



7 Afterwards I did a wash using AMMO Dark Brown Wash for Green vehicles. This is enamel based product and flows nicely over gloss surface. The excess of the wash was removed with enamel thinner. Here I would like to point out that I am not doing "general washes to my models", only pin washes around details, corners, welds and so on.

8 For replication of mud on the hull I used acrylic texture paste and several tones of pigments from AMMO with pigment fixer. I first applied the paste to create the mud texture and then the pigments were generously placed on top. The fixer was dropped in the corners so that it soaks the pigments under capillary action. The procedure can be repeated as many times as desired.

9 To enrich the appearance of lower hull under the fenders I used enamel weathering products and large brush for speckling of the paints on the model. It is important to add some gloss effects that would replicate moist and grease on the hull.

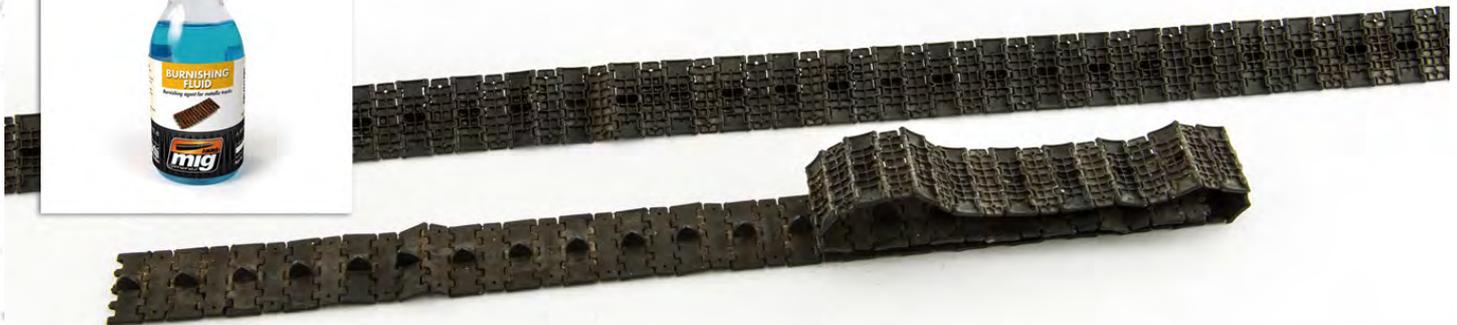




10 Before placing the tracks, I painted the idler and sprocket surfaces that are in contact with metal tracks using Gun metal paint from AMMO(A.MIG-045).



11 The tracks were burnished with AMMO track burnisher (A.MIG-2020) and then treated with the same tones of pigments and enamel effects as the lower hull.



12 Dust is added to the wheels by dissolving the pigments with acrylic thinner and applying them with a brush.



13 Thinking of possible rain that would lead to streaks of grime and light rust I replicated these effects with small amounts of enamel paints from AMMO using vertical movements and fine brush. Flexibility of enamels allows some time for correction with clean brush and enamel thinner if you feel that the effect is overdone.



14 The general dust effects were done with both pigments and enamels. The pigments were first applied on the surface in small quantities and then dissolved with thinner. AMMO Effects Rainmarks and Kursk Soil were diluted and "speckled" onto the surfaces by flicking with a brush. At the time of application the paint was almost transparent, but when it dries on the model you will get very fine layers of dust which looks very realistic when examining it on a model in person.



15 I also added fuel spillage effects on the engine deck and extra fuel drums using both oil paints and enamel effects from AMMO. After that it was only a matter of adding more effects here and there trying to find a balanced appearance afterwards.

Overall, I am very happy with the result and I am glad that we have AMMO Soviet camouflage paints that give accurate replication of original colours used by the Red Army without unnecessary alterations. Personally, it looks very realistic to me and what else do we need from modelling apart from being happy ourselves?

