

T-34 tank in "propaganda edition"

Introduction

The idea for this particular tank model arose when I saw a picture of the prototype, which is reproduced in Source 1. (This reproduction of the illustration comes from www.battlefield.ru)



The same image is shown in Source 2, but here in a less cropped version.

Judging by the caption, it is a T-34 tank (Model 1943) equipped with armored loudspeakers. The tank was used forward in the front line to send out messages that would make German units give up the war, desert and go under the protection of the Red Army.

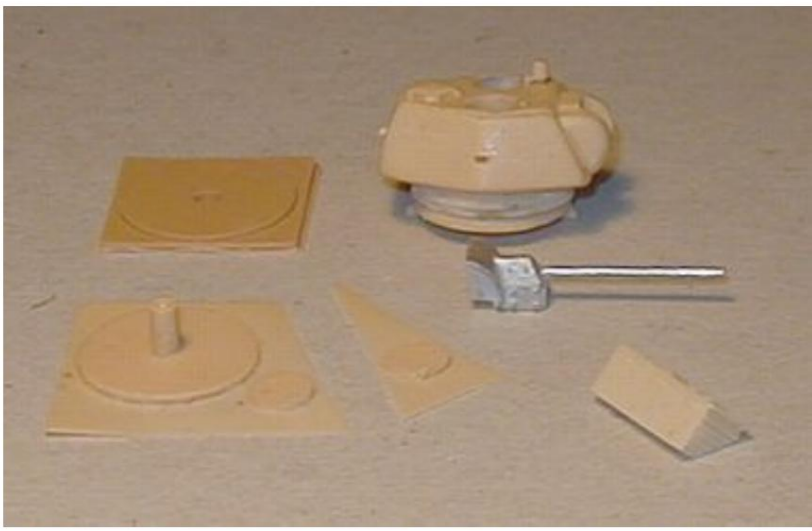
Whether these are actually elements that are interesting in a wargame context can probably be debated, but it is nevertheless the basis for an unusual model (which can also be used as an ordinary tank model).

Psychological operations (PSY-OPS, as it is apparently called in contemporary military terminology) are known from many accounts from the war on the Eastern Front, where both sides did their best to - with varying success - influence the opponent.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any further information about the tank shown, either in terms of organizational affiliation, equipment or otherwise. If there are any readers who have information that can shed light on the matter, I would very much like to hear about it.

My tank model

The picture shows the two Vac-U-Cast sets.



On the tank turret, the part that makes it fit roughly on an Airfix version of the T-34 is mounted on the underside.

With the help of the other large circular elements, the tower can fit other models.

The two small circular elements are the turret hatches. Very appropriately, this tower is referred to in American sources as the Mickey Mouse edition. When the two hatches are opened, the tower resembles the ears of the famous mouse.

The speaker is shown in the lower right.



The complete model - ready to be finished painting.

When assembling the tower, it was a bit difficult to get it to fit sensibly into the tower crown.

As a result, I had to glue the turret in place, thereby missing out on one of the things that I try to aim for especially in plastic tank models - namely that the turret can rotate.



Here is the finished model.

The tank commander is from AB Figures.

The patriotic slogan on the side of the tower means *Za Rodinu!* (For the motherland!).

Wouldn't all the enemies immediately give up their hopeless fight and immediately surrender when they hear the impressive music pouring out of the speaker?

If nothing else, the model gives the word music box a whole new meaning... ;-)

Sources

1. *T-34 in Action* by Steven Zaloga and James Grandsen, Squadron/Signal Publications, 1983, ISBN 0-89747-112-1.
2. *Soviet Tanks in Combat 1941-1945 - The T-28, T-34, T-34/85 and T-44 Medium Tanks* af Steven J. Zaloga, Jim Kinnear, Andrey Aksenov & Aleksandr Koshchavtsev, published as number 7011 in Concord Publications Company's *Armor at War* series, 1997. ISBN 962-361-615-5.

Read more about the T-34 tank on The Russian Battlefield's website

http://www.battlefield.ru/t34_76_2.html

http://www.battlefield.ru/t34_76_3.html

http://www.battlefield.ru/t34_76_5.html

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