



AR-0203 Matilda Mk IV “Russian” Update (TAM)

(TAMIYA 35300)

Mastered by Mike Sills

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CAUTION

Tigermodels uses mold release agents to aid in demolding. Mold release agents may prevent paint from properly adhering to resin surfaces. To avoid this, we recommend that you wash all resin pieces in warm, soapy water. For an even better result, use an appropriate primer before applying the finish paint.

Resin is a soft plastic, and is susceptible to warping. In most cases, it is possible to repair warped parts by placing them in a hot water bath for a few seconds. You can also try heating them with a heat gun or hair dryer. After heating the resin enough to return to its original shape, simply set it aside and allow it to cool slowly. If this does not work, please contact Tigermodels for a replacement part.

Resin pieces can be difficult to remove from their casting gates. We recommend a razor saw or rotary tool with a circular cutting blade.

CAUTION: rein dust can be harmful to your health. Always work in a well ventilated area, and wear a dust mask while sawing or sanding.

CAUTION: This product may contain lead. Lead can be very harmful to your health. Always wash your hands after handling these materials.

CAUTION: This product may contain photo-etched parts. Photo-etched parts may be sharp. Care should be used to avoid cutting yourself while handling these parts.

CAUTION: this product may not be meant for children less than 10 years of age. This product may contain materials that could be harmful to your health, and small parts that may present a choking hazard.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF SMALL CHILDREN!

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MATILDA Mk IV EVOLUTION

This conversion provides parts to update the kit to the configuration of a typical Matilda IV as produced in 1942. Many of these features were introduced during Matilda III production in the last half of 1941, and with some mixing of kit and conversion parts one of these may also be modeled. Few of these tanks were issued to British units as the Matilda was considered obsolete by 1942. Many of them were provided to allied armies, most notably the USSR where they served “as built” with little modification.

Of 2,900 Matildas built, approximately 1,000 were sent to the USSR, although almost a quarter of these were lost in transit. They were taken from depots in the UK, and whatever was available was sent. Tanks from a wide span of production blocks could be found on the Eastern Front. They displayed a variety of configurations: There is no standard “Soviet” Matilda. However, many of the later production Matilda IIIs and IVs served there, and so these vehicles have generally come to be associated with this theatre.

Combat experience resulted in the introduction of a number of design alterations during Matilda III production. There were no alterations in the tank’s title to reflect them. (The exact configuration of a specific vehicle is best determined from photographs. The following provides some general guidance as to alterations and the sequence in which they were introduced.)

In mid 1941, a revised nose casting with a thickened armoured fairing beneath the driver’s visor was introduced.

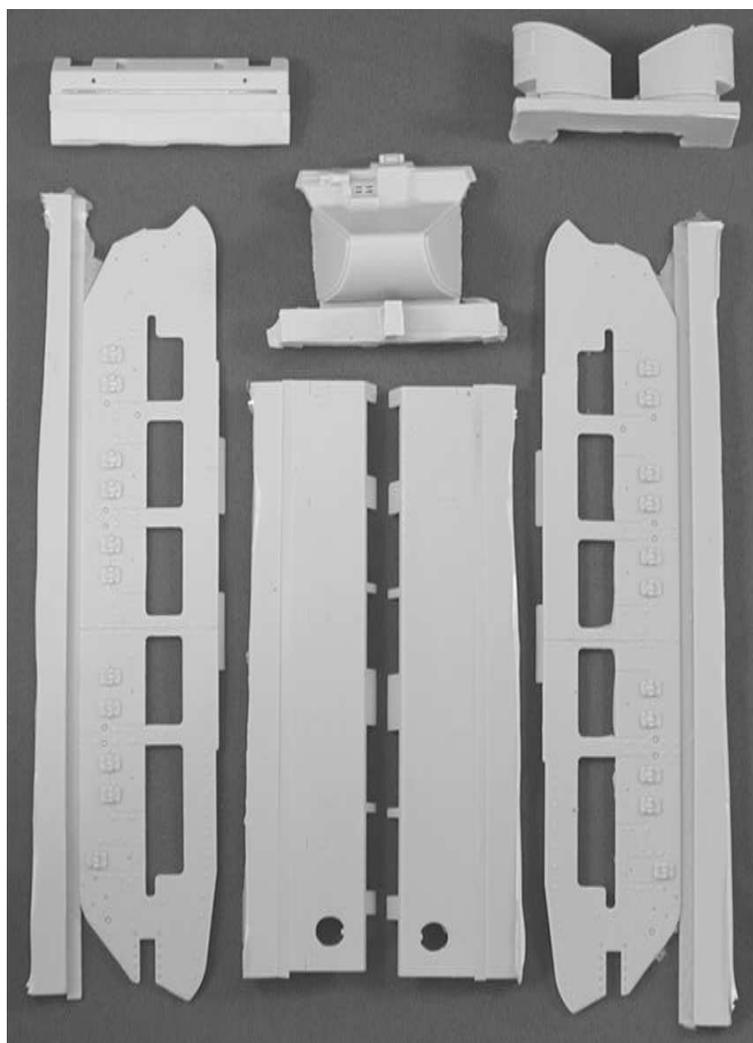
The covers for the nose stowage lockers were redesigned, eliminating the louvers.

The No. 19 w/t set became standard. Its two aerials mounted directly on the turret. The hinged “trapeze” aerial mount on the back of the turret was no longer necessary and was eliminated.

The track return rollers were replaced with track return rails. The outboard return roller mounts had been attached to the side skirts with sets of six flush screws. Vehicles with return rails can be identified by the absence of these screws. Small extensions of the plating were required in the upper corners of the first and last mud shoot openings to provide mounting points for two of the rollers, resulting in the asymmetric shape of those openings. Without the rollers, these became unnecessary, and on some late production Mk IVs the plate extensions were eliminated, resulting in symmetrical mud shoot openings.

The suspension access panels below the mud shoots were redesigned, replacing the internal hinges with external ones.

The Matilda IV entered production at this point, featuring a redesigned engine bay and fuel system. Vulcan made the switch to the new variant in late 1941, although some contractors delivered Matildas built to Mk III standard as late as March 1942. There were no direct external distinctions between a late Mk III and an early Mk IV. However, amongst the Mk IV’s fuel system changes was the provision for the mounting of an auxiliary fuel tank. Its brackets were attached to the rear hull by an “L” shaped adapter fitting that required raising the towing/lifting ring mounting plates. The tank and its mounting brackets were removable, so its absence does not necessarily identify a Matilda as a Mk III, but if it is present, it is a Mk IV.

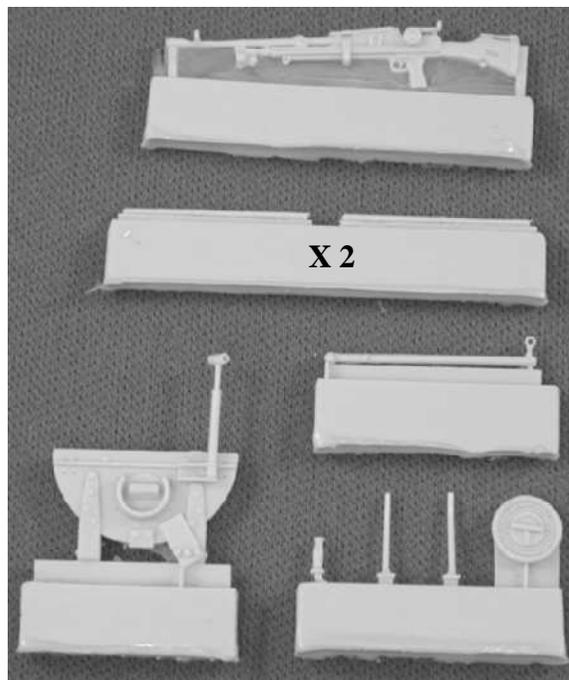
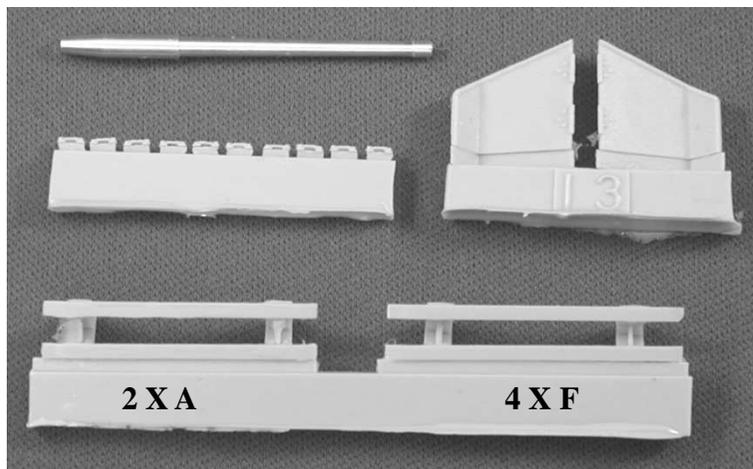


The turret cupola was replaced with a lower profile version, approximately half the height of the original.

The signal lamp and the commander's blade vane sight were eliminated.

The towing/lifting rings were replaced with a sturdier triangular pattern.

(Very late production vehicles were fitted with an armoured collar to protect the turret ring. Alternative castings for the turret pistol port were introduced. Some contractors adopted an asymmetric fitting of the exhaust silencers. Parts to represent these features will soon be offered separately for those who wish to model them. This allows Tigermodels to offer this set at a more affordable cost.)



INSTRUCTIONS FOR MATILDA IV CONVERSION

•SUSPENSION COVERS

Direct replacement parts for kit parts E1 and E3.

•TRACK RETURN RAILS

New parts. The longer rails (marked "F") are for the forward and middle positions. The shorter rails (marked "A") are used in the aft position. Locate and align the rails as shown in the diagram. The "feet" on the rail assemblies should be aligned over the squares etched into the resin suspension covers mentioned above.

•SIDE SKIRTS

Direct replacement parts for kit parts E2 and E16.

•CENTER NOSE CASTING

Direct replacement part for kit part C4. The sides of the casting have been added as per the prototype. To install this part will require removal of part of the tab molded on the front of the lower hull.

•NOSE LOCKER COVERS

These are optional. Mk IV Matildas could be found with or without the squares cast into these armor sections. Direct replacement parts for kit parts C11 and C12. The early lifting eyes are included as well because some "Russian" Mk IV Matildas were actually rebuilt Mk II's and Mk III's and would have had this style lifting eye.

•REAR HULL REPLACEMENT

This is also optional. Again, Mk IV Matildas were often found without the rear-mounted fuel tank. You can fill the holes for the mounts on the kit part and replace any lost texture, or you can splice the casting onto your kit hull instead.

Although they are not shown in the instructions, Tamiya provides parts for the low profile cupola and the No. 19 wireless/telegraph aerial bases.

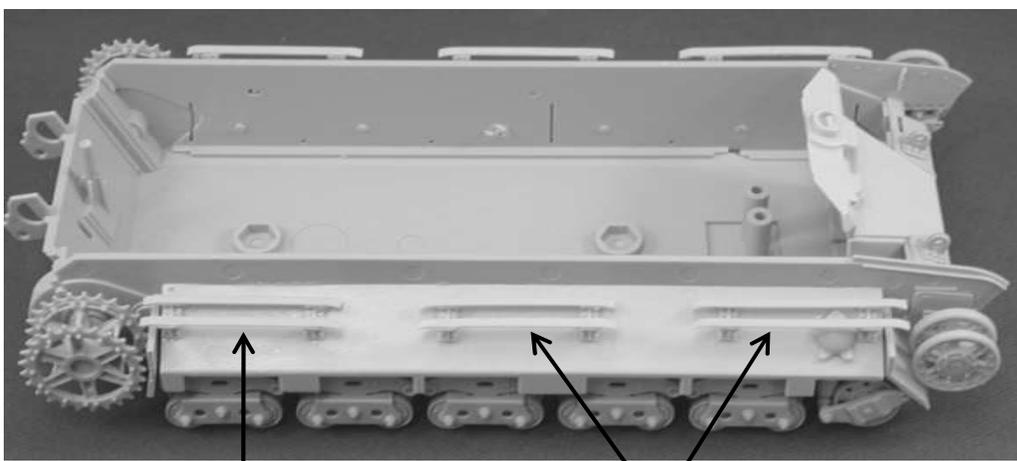
For the low profile cupola, substitute part D50 for parts D51 and D52.

To fit the No.19 W/T aerial bases, two pre-located holes must be drilled out. They are the two holes shown (but not labeled) in step 24 of the kit instructions, one forward and one aft of the loader's hatch. Part D2 is the forward aerial base and part D7 is the aft. Aerials may be made from wire or stretched sprue.

LAKEMAN MOUNT

We provided the Lakeman AA MG mount as another option. Many of the Mk IV Matildas sent to Russia were seen with this device mounted. Follow the instructions for assembly, and/or refer to your own references for more clarification on this mount.

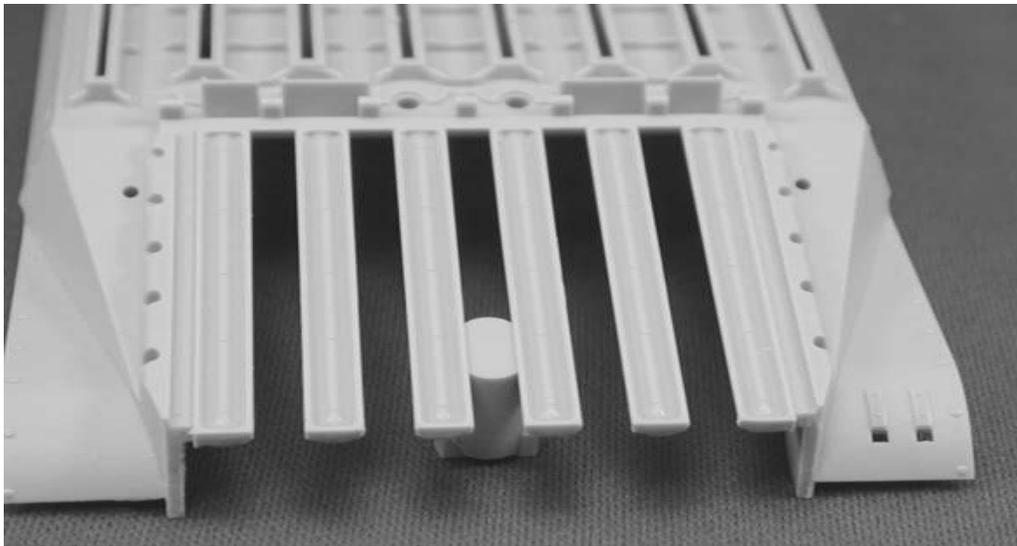
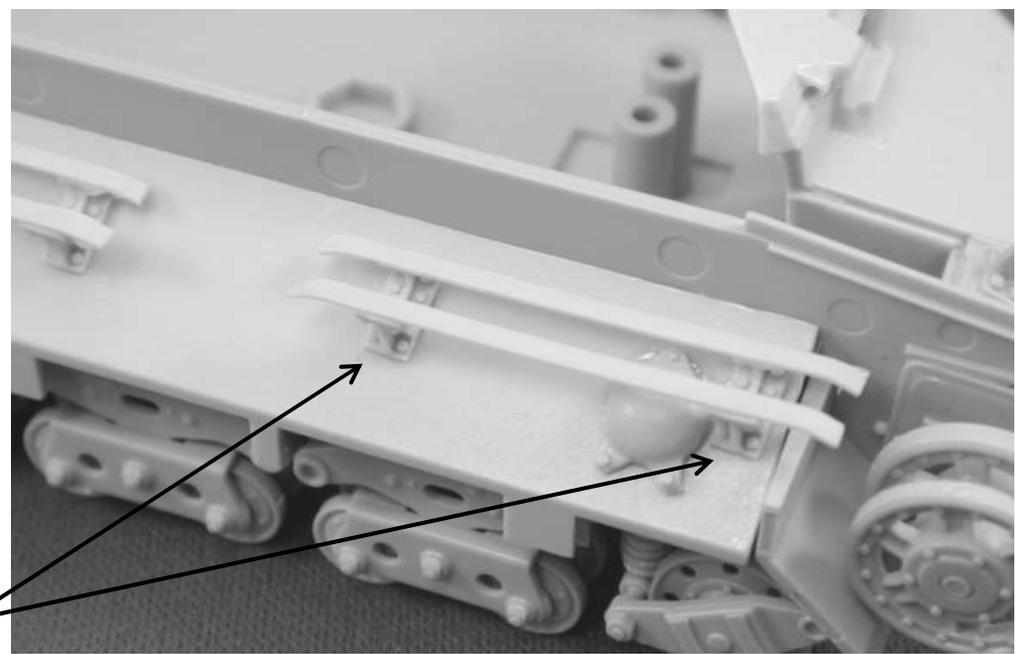
The rest of this kit should be pretty straight forward. Most of the pieces we have provided are direct replacements for the kit parts. If you have any questions, you can email me, or ask the guys on www.track-link.net. They are a wonderful source of information and I'm sure they will be able to help you.



“A” for aft (short) skid

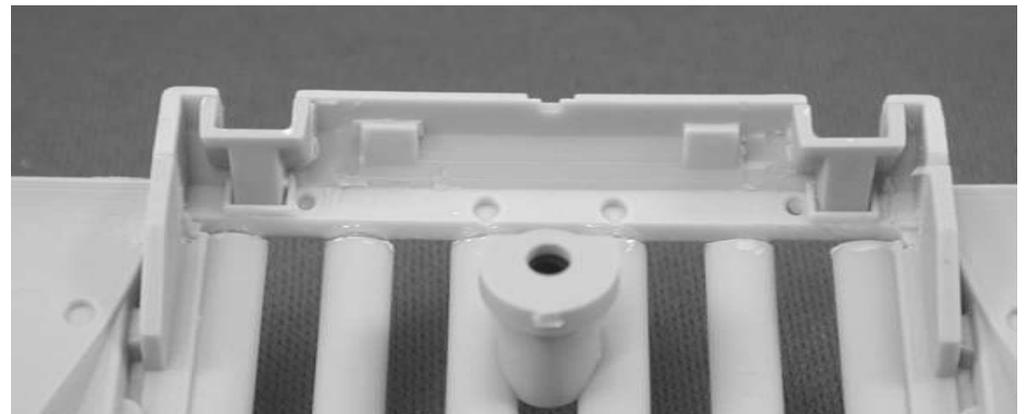
“F” for forward (long) skid

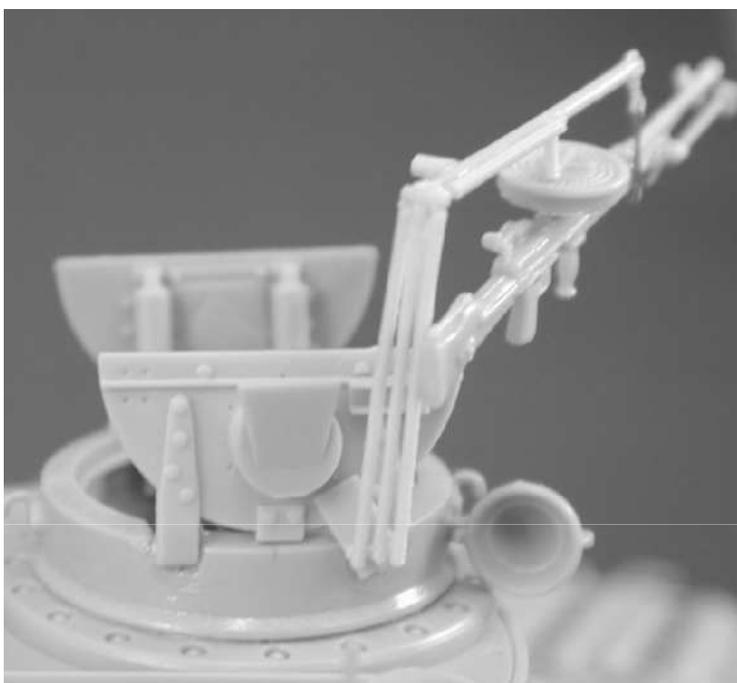
Skid “feet” should be aligned to cover the squares etched into the suspension covers as shown in the close up.



IF you decide to splice the resin rear end to your kit, start by carefully removing the kit section as shown. I used a pair of sprue snips and then cleaned up the hull with an X-Acto blade and sanding stick. It was pretty easy.

Next, glue the resin replacement piece to the rear of the kit hull as shown in the two pictures to the right. Finally, glue kit part #'s C23 to the rear of the resin replacement and you're done.

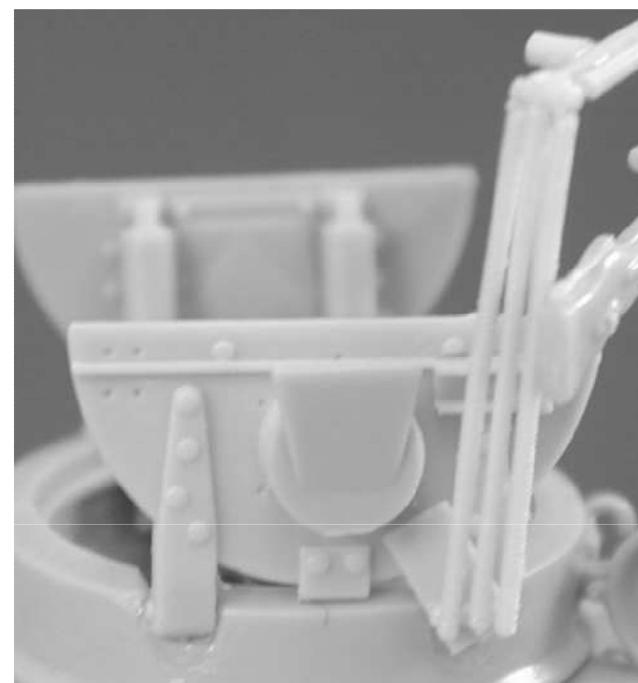




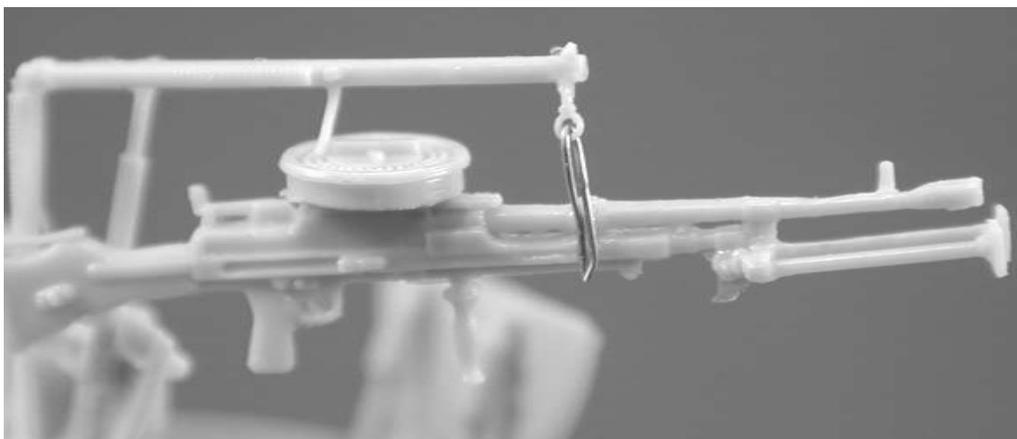
To assemble the Lakeman mount, start by using the new cupola hatch cover as shown.



Then glue the pin on the left side of the suspension arm to the hole on the right side of the vertical support tube cast onto the new hatch as shown.



Next, glue the three counter balance springs in place as shown. The bottom of each spring to one of the pins on the bracket cast onto the new hatch and the other end of the spring to the center and either end of the suspension arm.



Now, assemble the MG as shown in the pictures. Then make a small bracket out of scrap plastic stock and glue it to the top of the ammo drum as shown. And find some thin wire or solder to make a suspension strap so you can rig the MG to the suspension arm as we have shown in these pictures. Your personal references may show some variations to this design, but we have given you the pieces to make most of them. This is just one representation of several possibilities.

