

T-10M 1/35 scale, Trumpeter vs Meng Model

History

The T-10 entered production in 1953 under the name IS-8 (Joseph Stalin). The name change was due to purely political reasons, after Stalin's death. The T-10 is the latest model in the series of heavy tanks manufactured in the former Soviet Union, which traces its origins to the KV1, passing through such iconic models as the KV-2, IS-1, IS-2 and IS-3.

In this family of heavy tanks, the one that is most similar to the T-10 is the IS-3, as common characteristics to these two models we can mention the general configuration:

- Engine and transmission group in the rear part of the helmet.
- Front tensioner wheel, rear traction wheel and three return rollers, all per side.
- Totally metal running gear and tensioner wheels, without any rubber covering.
- Shielding of the helmet with flat welded and inclined sheets to improve the protection of the vehicle.
- Tower made of cast iron with a dome shape, which maximizes its protection.
- Driver's position in the front area of the central part of the helmet.

The basic differences between the two are that the T-10 has seven wheels per side on the undercarriage, has a longer and more armored hull compared to the IS-3, which has only six wheels on the undercarriage per side, in the T-10 the tower is larger and with increased armor, with a new 122mm cannon equipped with a better performance fume extractor. To compensate the increase of weight, a more powerful diesel engine was installed, this made the performance between the T-10 and the IS-3 similar, despite the increase in weight.

The T-10, being a heavy tank, was framed in independent tank regiments, which could be assigned to support conventional armored units to carry out breaks and penetrations in depth in enemy lines.

In World War II the separation between heavy, medium and light tanks was very marked and the doctrine of use of tanks used by the Soviets was fully founded. At the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War (the late 40s and 50s) the difference between heavy tanks and medium tanks was disappearing, thanks to improvements in armor, cannon firepower and motorcycle groups. -more effective propellants, this resulted in the birth of a new category, the MBT (Main Battle Tank or Main Battle Tank), which caused the different nations to dedicate their economic efforts to develop this new category, so the heavy tank version development was shelved.

The T-10 was in production taking into account all its variants from 1953 to 1966, the manufacture was carried out only in two plants of the former Soviet Union, No. 185 and No. 174, for 1993 all variants of the T-10 had been withdrawn from active duty.

In the particular case of the T-10M it was put into service in 1957, it differs mainly from the first production T-10 in the following aspects:

- Improved barrel model M-62-T2 of 43 calibers in length, with a newly designed muzzle brake.
- Stabilization of the barrel in two axes.
- Replacement of 12.7mm machine guns with 14.5mm machine guns
- Introduction of NBC protection equipment. (Nuclear, Bacteriological and Chemical protection)
- Introduction of infrared night vision equipment.

After this, in 1963, the T-10M was equipped with equipment for deep fording and in 1967 HEAT and APDS ammunition was developed for the gun, thus improving its capacity against tanks.

KITS

Strangely and for who knows what reasons, there are several Hong Kong companies dedicated to our hobby, which have fierce competition between them, to the point that they make announcements of the same future models and / or bring the same models to the market almost simultaneously, an example of this is the T-10M which was released by Trumpeter and by Meng Model the same year. There are other similar cases with other manufacturers and other models, but in this article, we will see this particular model

PACKAGING AND BOX SIZE

Meng Model launched its T-10M on the market in 2015, under the number TS-018.

- Top opening box, resistant.
- Size of the box: 38x24.5x8.5 centimeters.
- Weight: 0.9 Kg.



Trumpeter also released its model in 2015, under the number 05546.

- Top-opening box, made of thick and resistant material
- Box size: 41x26x6,5 centimeters.
- Weight: 0,7 Kg.



COMPARARISON OF BOTH MODELS

Meng Model	Trumpeter
Ten sprues, including one of transparent pieces.	Fifteen sprues.
One Photo-Etched sheet	Three Photo-Etched sheets.
Upper and lower hull.	Upper and lower hull.
One Cartograph decals sheet	One decals sheet
Polycaps sprue, for use on the barrel axle and wheels	No polycaps sprue.
Thirteen sprues in black to build the tracks, Model Kasten style (workable).	Ten light brown sprues, corresponding to the tracks, which are not articulated (not workable).
Four decal options, all options are solid Russian green. There are references to each of see proposed versions.	Three decal options, all options in Russian green, no explanatory of where any of the options were serviced.

THE MENG MODEL T-10M

The first impression when opening the box is to be in front of a model of outstanding quality. The sprues of the tank are cast in dark green, the sprues of the tracks are cast in black polystyrene, each sprue is packed in individual transparent bags, there is a sprue of transparent parts.

Although the box is full, it does not present agglomeration of pieces that cause breakage or deformation to the most delicate parts.

The assembly instructions are quite complete and of good quality, a section is dedicated to the history of the tank and its designer, which is appreciated, since our hobby deals with precisely that, scale, real objects and is not others know a little about its history.

The instructions are divided into twenty steps, with extremely clear diagrams, despite this it is advisable to study the plan first before starting with the assembly and thus be able to become familiar with the options offered and decide in advance which option we will assemble. Pay attention to the profiles of the options supplied in the drawing, since there are some equipment differences between them, which are not detailed during assembly, in any case, for a model of this type it can always be done and it will be convenient to make a search for photos and references on the internet to increase our knowledge regarding the model.

The tracks are in my opinion the most delicate point of this model when assembled as it should, they must be articulated, like the real object, those who have seen the tracks of the Model Kasten brand (after-market) will recognize the type of assembly and the care that this implies, but don't panic, it's part of the fun. Meng provides a set of templates in the kit to help us in the task of assembling the tracks, so be patient and careful at this stage.



Track assembly detail with the template help

Another detail worth mentioning is the suspension. To complete the set of "workable" tracks, Meng Model has developed a set of functional torsion bars for this model, so pay attention to the parts that you should "not" glue and which ones. Yes, this will allow you in the end to conform the suspension and tracks to the irregular base of a diorama that you want to make, but keep in mind that for this you may have to weight your model (add weight so that the suspension adapts to the terrain), I still I've never done this, so good luck and tell how it goes.

The instructions include drawings of all the sprues and color profiles of the four decal options supplied with the model:

- (A) 13th Guards Heavy Tank Division, 1st Guards Tank Army, Group of Soviet Forces stationed in Germany, Operation Danube, 1968 - features white reconnaissance bands on hull and tower that need to be painted.
- (B) 20th Independent Tank Battalion, 20th Guards Motor Division, 1st Guards Tank Army, Soviet Forces stationed in Germany, 1972-74.
- (C) 1st Guards Tank Army, Soviet Forces stationed in Germany, parade scheme in Berlin 1960.
- (D) Unknown Soviet unit, late 1960s and early 1970s.

All paint references in the instructions indicate Vallejo paint codes, but it is not difficult to find the equivalences of these to any other brand.

The flat surfaces of the upper and lower hull have a finish that simulates the real finish of the tank, even on the surfaces that will not be easily visible when the model is finished, in my view this surface represents the real object very well.

As for the tower, it is another story, the real tower is made by casting molten metal in a mold, generally made of compressed special earths, so the product surfaces of this type of manufacture are usually rough. For my taste, this surface of the model is smooth, but this can be solved by texturing the surface with any of the already known methods, this will also help us to cover the union line of the two halves of the tower, which should not be seen. As always the advice is look for and lean on photos, luckily we live in an era where this is relatively easy (Google images, thanks for existing)

THE TRUMPETER T-10M

In general, Trumpeter boxes have a specific order in the sprues, so when you open the box you will find it full but neat, everything in its place and without damaged pieces, but remember the order of the sprues because if you don't order them well they will not fit back into the box. The sprues are cast in light gray polystyrene, except for the tracks that are cast in brown, the quality of the pieces is very good, without burrs or extraction marks, in a separate section of the box are the upper and lower shell, three sheets photo-etch, decals, wire rope and fenders.

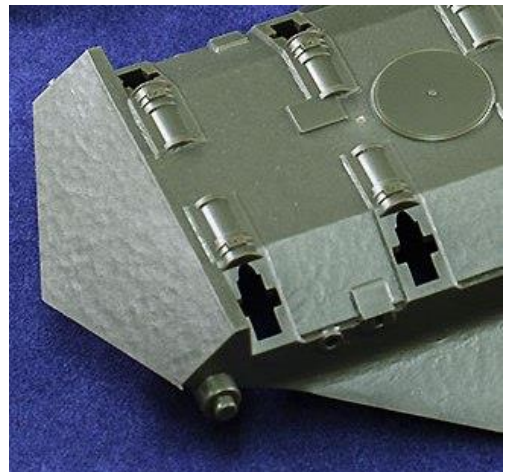
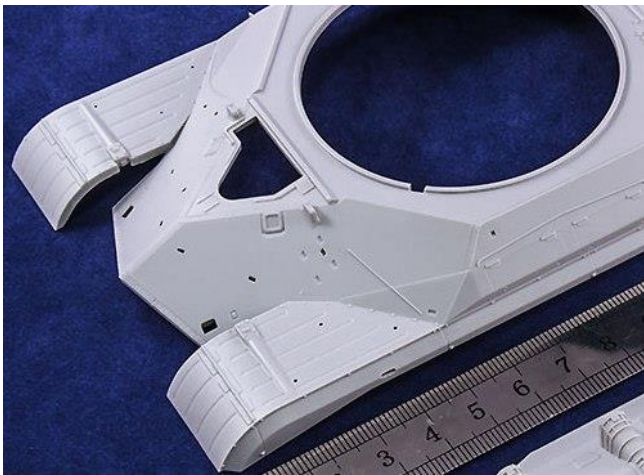
The assembly instructions have eight black and white sheets, with diagrams of all the contents of the box and the eighteen steps that the assembly of the model takes. There is also a separate color sheet where the three brand options offered in this model are indicated. As a curious fact and that I have not seen in any other Trumpeter model, on the front of the plane he placed a decal in two languages (Chinese and English) in which Mr. Krill Koksharov from Chelyabinks-Russia is thanked for his collaboration and support in the design of this model, by providing information, measurements and drawings for it (honor to whom honor deserves, bravo for Trumpeter).

One of the few things that I criticize about the Trumpeter instructions is that there is no historical data of the model you are building and, in the decals, and paint options there is no reference to the place or date where the model in question operated, in principle This is not an impediment to build the model, but as I tell everyone who asks me about our hobby, the history and knowledge of the model we build is part of the hobby (very particular opinion).

Going into the description of the model and comparing it with the Meng model, we will start with the largest pieces that are in the box, the upper and lower hull, all the details are very well represented, the few visible ejection marks are in places that do not They will be visible after assembly, the shielding surfaces do not present details of the laminate of the real object, which if it presents the Meng model, the tower surface of the Trumpeter model on the contrary if it presents a rougher and more realistic surface in my opinion As that of the Meng model, the weld lines of the upper hull are equally smooth or poorly marked by Soviet standards



Trumpeter turret on the left and Meng Model turret on the right, note the differences in surface.



Details of the laminated surface on the Trumpeter model on the left and Meng Model on the right

As a common comment to other writers, Trumpeter on this occasion does not include a barrel turned in aluminum, as it has done with other models, such as its T-62 series or the SU-152, this lack is regretted and, well, you have to work with a cannon in two halves (cheer up, it's all part of the fun). Another observation that there is regarding the barrel is its articulation, which looks very weak for its length, so you could have problems when the pieces wear out, in this case Meng's solution is more successful by including poly-caps in this part

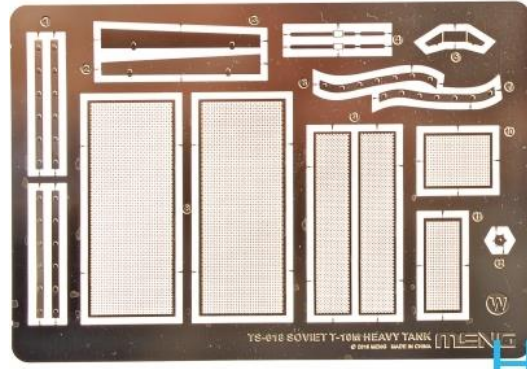
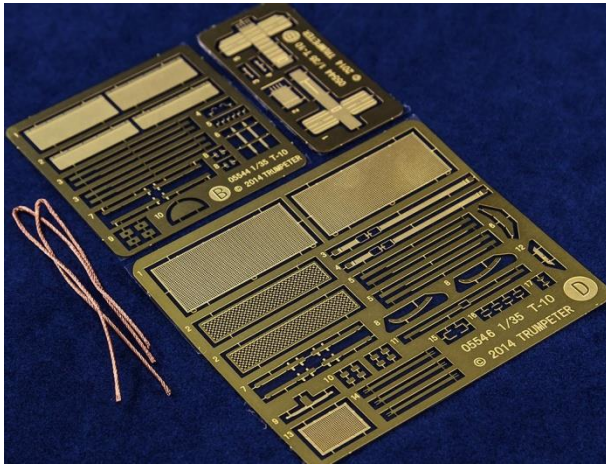
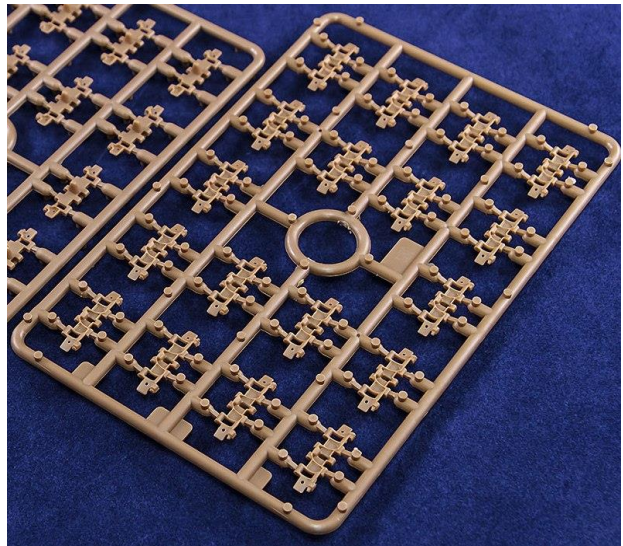


Photo-etched Trumpeter (three sheets and cable for the wire) on the left and Photo-etched Meng Model (single sheet) right

The tracks are link-to-link, not workable, the appearance is impeccable, the manufacturer recommends 88 links per side, and unlike the Meng model the suspension is not mobile, that does not imply that the Trumpeter model, with a little extra work, it cannot be conformed to uneven ground, but let's be clear that this will be fixed, once done it could not be changed (you can reposition the torsion bar arms by cutting the guide of them before installing them, see step 2).



Trumpeter Link to Link tracks.

The decals are manufactured by Trumpeter herself and four well-defined series of blank numbers are included for you to customize the numbering of your T-10M, but as mentioned before, it is better to do a little research before making a decision. They could also be used for any other Soviet model at the same scale and same time (again we run to see Google images).

Regarding the options, we can comment on some interesting things between the two models:

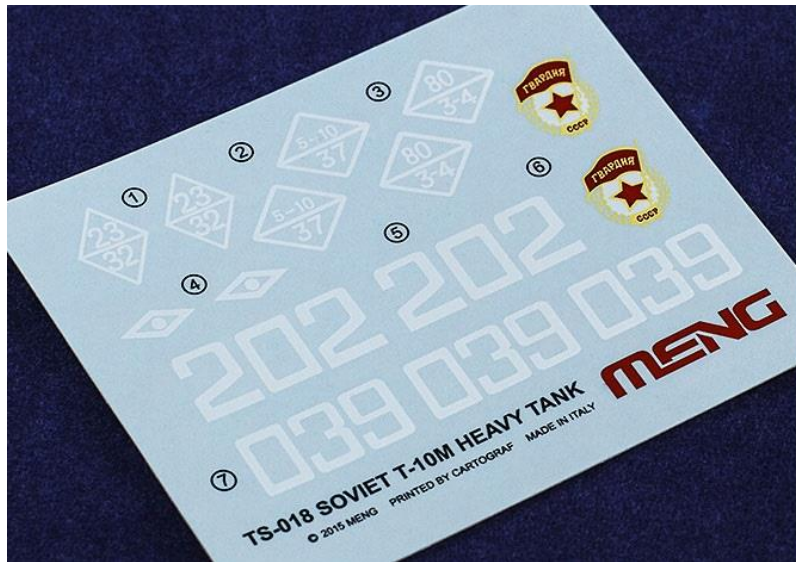
- Version A by Trumpeter corresponds to version A by Meng, except for one detail that we will comment on at the end (note 1).

- Trumpeter's version B corresponds to Meng's version C, except for a detail that we will comment on at the end (note 2).

- Trumpeter's version C corresponds to Meng's version D.

Note 1: In Meng version A there are three pairs of numbering options to be placed on the tower, pair 1, 2 or 3. In any case, the numbering to the right and left of the tower must be the same. In Trumpeter version A, in the color scheme, different numerals are shown to the right and left of the tower, but in Trumpeter's transfer sheet there are two different sets of numerals, par 10 and 11, so it must be pay attention to this point (the numerals must be the same on both sides of the tower).

Note 2: This detail is a bit more complicated than the previous one, the parade version presented in this option features the red star shield on each side of the tower, as is common on all Soviet parade vehicles, but this shield is symmetrical not the same, the flagpole is oriented to the front of the vehicle and the flag flies towards the back, Trumpeter has taken this into account and the shields on its decal sheet are symmetrical, not so Meng who presents in its decal sheet has two equal shields, so if you want to be faithful to reality you should take this detail into account, what has been said applies to other vehicles that carry this shield (unless you find a photo that indicates otherwise, keep looking in images of Google).



Meng Model Decals



Trumpeter Decals

All the paint references in the Trumpeter instructions have references in various brands, so you won't have a problem knowing the color equivalency you need, but it's still a totally green tank in any case.

CONCLUSION

This representative tank of the cold war and last in the category of Soviet heavy tanks, is a very interesting object for any collector of this subject, the qualitative differences between one and another brand are really few, so the price / quality ratio favors to the Trumpeter model, but the fact of having workable tracks and a mobile suspension can tip the balance towards the Meng model, it all depends on the taste of the modeler and how much you want to complicate your existence when assembling the model, in any case the two models are very good and will fill with satisfaction whoever builds them.

Wrote by: Luis Sayalero

Traduced by: Luis Mendoza