



SCENARIOS MAIL

Contents

Bulletin Board

OKB-Grigorov 1/72 Challenger 2 Wheels (Types 1-4)

OKB-Grigorov S72516 1/72 Suspension
Units for M3/M5 Family

On the table at our November meet-
ing

NEXT MEETING

7.30 pm Tuesday 19/12/2023

Royal Oak Bowls

146 Selwyn St, Onehunga

COMMITTEE

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Secretary - Brett Peacock Lance Whitford
Treasurer - Mark Robson

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From the Editor

Another year gone and it all seems to have come and gone in a blink. We look back on the nationals which, after 2 aborted attempts finally happened in Auckland. I think it's fair to say the event exceeded our widest expectations. We had nearly double the entries of the previous nationals and the quality of entries was excellent overall. The vendors that participated were also very happy with their decision to attend. From my point of view it is great to see quite a few new faces at the regular meetings which bodes well for the club going forward.

This month we have our traditional end of year celebration and we invite you to bring along all your completed models for 2023. A chance to see who was overly optimistic and who has achieved their ambitions based on



BULLETIN BOARD

NEW MEMBERS AND SUBS *** 2023/24 NOW DUE *******

Subs for 2023/24 now due -see below for club account details or see the club secretary at the next club meeting. The Interim account to use is shown below

Membership	Description	Cost
Full	Living in the Auckland	NZ\$45
Out Of Town	Living 75km or more from	NZ\$30
Junior	Same rights as full membership for those under	NZ\$25

***Please use this account
until further notice
03-0114-0006259-02***

EVENTS

CLUB NIGHT EVENTS

**IPMS Auckland Meet on the
third Tuesday of each month at
7.30pm**

**Venue: The Sports Lounge
Royal Oak Bowls
146 Selwyn St, Onehunga**

**19/12/23
December**

Christmas Drinks plus bring all your models that have been completed for the year. We will cross check with your predictions from Christmas 22. There will be a membership vote to judge the best effort, and the winner will receive a Kotare 1/32 Spitfire Mk1 (Early) kitset.

January

Bring your entry for the 2024 Black and White theme build. The model could be still in its box, part completed or finished already. Tell the group all about it.

BULLETIN BOARD

CLUB SUPPORT

The following retailers have kindly agreed to offer IPMS Auckland club members a discount on their purchases upon presentation of their current IPMS Auckland Membership card.

The discount only applies on selected product lines and remains at the discretion of the retailer.



Modelair

349 Dominion Road
Mount Eden
Auckland
p: 09 520 1236



Cnr Market Rd & Gt South Rd
Auckland
Ph: (09) 520 1737

10% on kits and modelling supplies

Constellation
HOBBIES

Unit 5/1 Greenwich Way,
Unsworth Heights, Auckland.

Ph: (09) 441 3562

10% on kits and modelling supplies



Merv Smith Hobbies

27 Davis Crescent
Newmarket
Auckland

10% off most items on presentation of IPMS Auckland Membership Card.

Avetek Limited

Gwyn and Christina Avenell
28 Lauren Grove, RD 2, Pakura,
Auckland 2582, New Zealand.

p: +64 (09) 298 4819,
m: +64 (0)27 343 2290
e: aveteknz@gmail.com

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OKB-Grigorov 1/72 Challenger 2 Wheels (Types 1-4)

Reviewed by Mark Davies

These Challenger 2 road wheels should enable any specific Challenger 2 to be modelled in 1/72 scale. Available injected kits in this scale are offered by Dragon, Trumpeter, and Forces of Valour but, no doubt, there will also be printed resin offerings, and probably cast resin examples by Cromwell Models if you can find them.

OKB-Grigorov's Challenger 2 wheels are good quality castings that are easy to remove from their casting blocks with little clean-up required. I think that while the pricing of NZ\$23.60 per tank set is perhaps nudging the high end of acceptable, but offers reasonable value for what are the only after-market Challenger 2 wheels I am aware of. However, this value for money is only possible if they are ordered with other products to spread OKB-Grigorov's €15/NZ\$26 fixed postal charge across as high an order total as possible.

Four styles of road wheels are offered. I understand that the perforated types 3 & 4 were introduced from 2005 onwards after the dished types 1 & 2 were found to fail under sustained and intense use. The perforated types run cooler and reduce compaction when compared to the dished types, leading to fewer failures.

S72466 - 1/72 Wheels for Challenger 2, type 1



S74267 1/72 Wheels for Challenger 2, type 2



2468 1/72 Wheels for Challenger 2, type 3



S7S72469 1/72 Wheels for Challenger 2, type 4



Click [here](#) to see the website listings for all four sets of wheels.

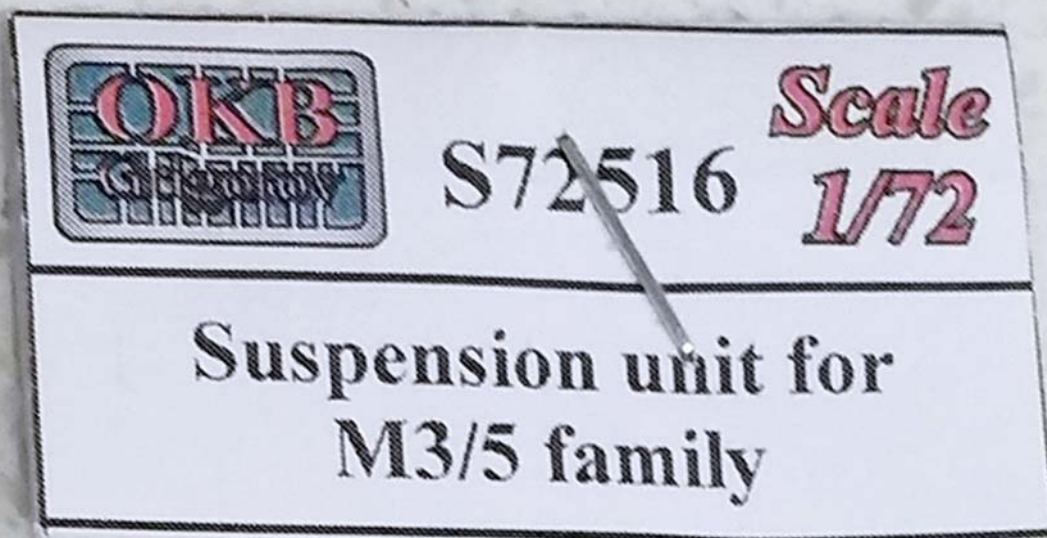
I am accustomed to OKB-Grigorov's quality, having bought many of their accessories and kits in the past. As such I am more than happy to recommend these wheel-sets, although they are best ordered with as many other items as you can justify, to spread the fixed postal charge as thinly as you can.

Thanks to [OKB-Grigorov](#) for the review samples.

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OKB-Grigorov S72516 1/72 Suspension Units for M3/M5 Family

Reviewed by Mark Davies



Whilst M3/M5 can refer to many different pieces of equipment within the US Army, in this case, M3/M5 refers to the Stuart Light Tanks. The 75mm Howitzer Motor Carriage M8 should also be included as it was simply an M5 Stuart hull fitted with an open-topped 75mm howitzer turret as used on the LVT-(A)4 amphibian.

The crisply printed resin parts come supplied in a zip-lock plastic bag with a paper header. This contains a set of four, which is sufficient for one tank, and costs €8.40 / NZ\$15.00 plus postage (€15.00 / NZ\$27.00 per shipment regardless of order size).



Mirage Hobby and S-Model are the three injected brands catering for the Stuart Light Tank family in 1/72 scale and cover most versions. The former is intended as a display model and the latter has a foot in both the display and the wargames camps. Plastic Soldier Company (PSC) also offer an M3 Stuart aimed squarely at wargamers although I have built one for display that I was given, but I made several refinements...



The PSC kit is sufficiently crude that nobody with any sense would buy premium after-market suspension parts for it, so this brand will not receive further mention here.

The Mirage Hobby kit's suspension units are quite fiddly to assemble and use vinyl tracks. This makes them ideal for replacement by the printed resin units reviewed here, as the entire vertical-volute unit and its road wheels are printed as one part that is an easy fit to the Mirage Hobby kit's hull.

The S-Model kit is more compromised as it is a fast-assembly kit with compromised track detail moulded integrally with the suspension. The units reviewed here would only make sense as replacements for the S-Model kits if all of the running gear is to be replaced, but currently, this is not possible.

OKB-Grigorov (OKB-G) also offers as separate parts:

- Three types of Stuart track (sufficient for one vehicle with some left-over track in each pack);
- Two styles of drive-sprocket (4 pairs per pack); and
- Track grousers (50 per pack).

Click [here](#) to see the OKB-G range of Stuart accessories.

Surprisingly, they do not offer the large trailing idler wheel which was made in at least two different styles. As such, it's not possible to replace the S-Model running gear because of no replacement idler for the kit item that is moulded integrally with the tack and suspension swing-arm.

The replacement drive-sprockets I mentioned are needed more than the suspension units by the Mirage Hobby kits as the injected kit parts have soft detail and are very fragile due to the rather soft styrene they are made of. Their sprue gates are also awkward to clean up satisfactorily. Fortunately, the Mirage Hobby kit's idlers are moulded separately, so the OKB-G suspension units can be used with either the kit's vinyl tracks or one of the three track types offered in resin by OKB-G.

There is however a significant obstacle I will now mention – price. OKB Grigorov's products are very good quality and have never been cheap. But they are now overly expensive in my opinion and do not represent good value. For example, consider these rounded landed costs in NZ dollars for just one tank model:

- Mirage Hobby Stuart kit \$18;

- OKB-G Suspension Units \$16;

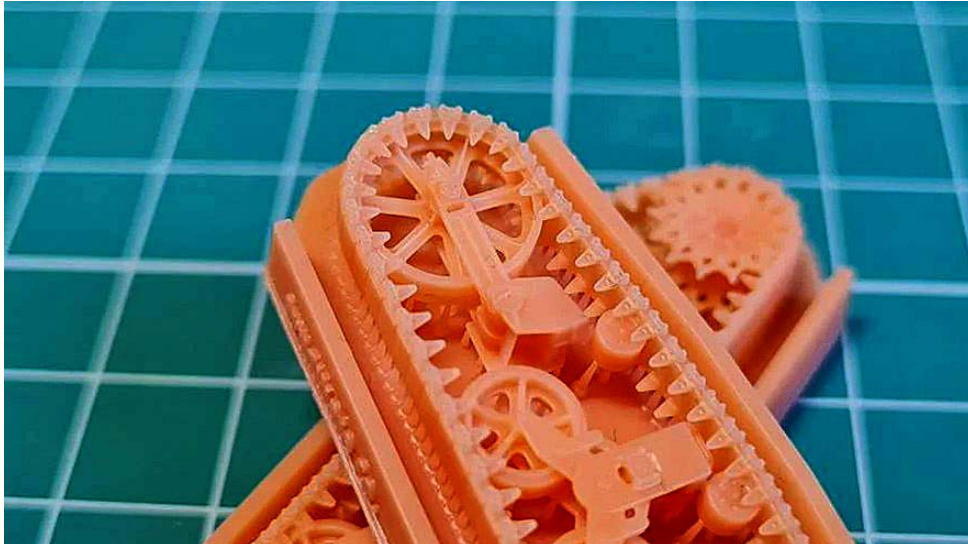
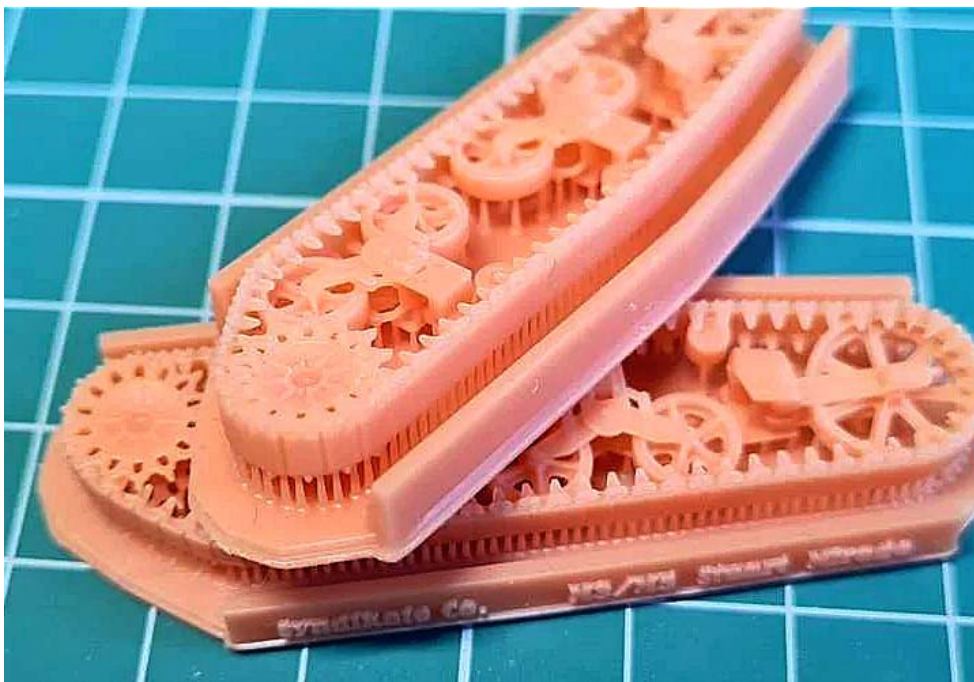
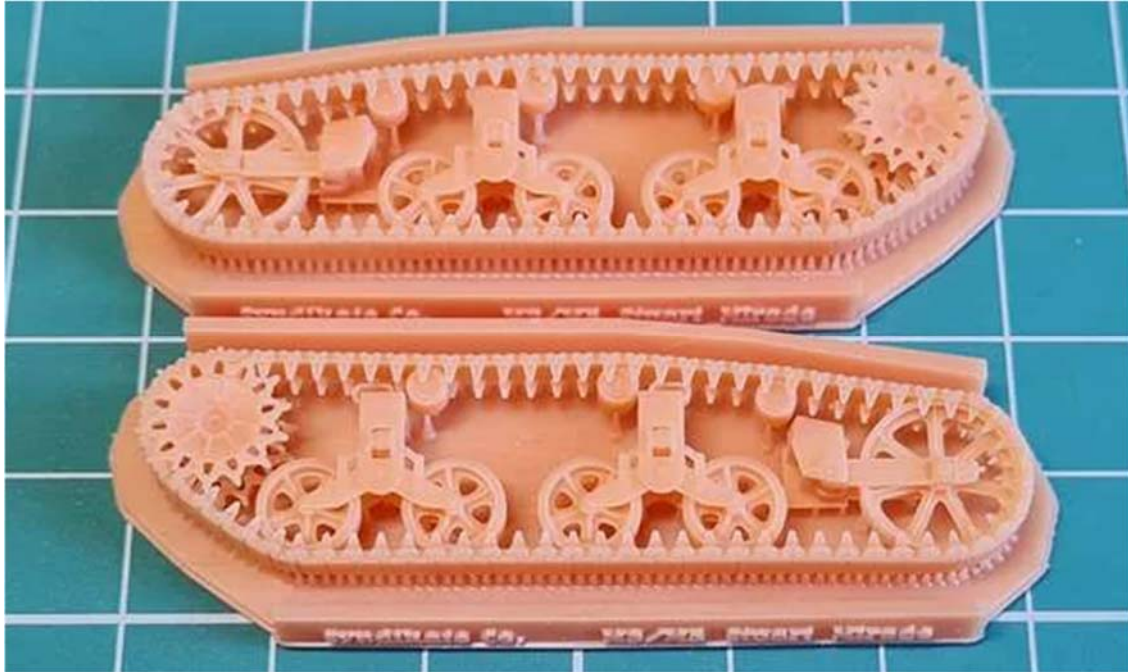
- OKB-G Drive Sprockets \$5 (actual cost is \$21 as three pairs not used @ \$5.25 each); and

- Tracks \$19 to \$25 depending on pattern. (My 2018 landed costs for the same were \$10 to \$13).

I see little point in just replacing the suspension units as the kit items are quite OK, just fiddly to build, especially when they are about 90% of the kit's price! The most benefit will be gained by replacing the drive sprockets in terms of detail, strength, and ease of use. I really feel it would be better to offer separate M3 and M5 Suspension and Drive Sprocket sets for a single vehicle for around \$20-21 based on current OKB-G prices.

But I have already said I don't consider the suspension set to be good value when it costs almost as much as the kit for minimal gain. If you wished to get the full benefit of replacing all but the idlers and return rollers, it would cost costs \$40-46 per tank (in reality, \$56-62 as you must buy four pairs of drive-sprockets per set for \$21), which is an outlay of at least three times the cost of the kit!

Another comparison is the very good quality complete [Stuart running gear](#) replacement in printed resin by Syndikate.Co that has a landed cost of just \$13.60! It is a plug-in fit for the Mirage Hobby kit.



OKB-Grigorov's Stuart suspension units are superior to the Mirage Hobby kit parts, but not by enough to justify their price being 90% that of the kit. Here, for comparison, is my 1/72 Mirage Hobby Stuart MK.I illustrating the kit's running gear:



As an aside, you can see that the weak kit drive-sprocket has distorted. This is why I think the inclusion of a pair of drive-sprockets with the suspension unit set would make good sense. Even so, I feel OKB- Grigorov's prices are too high, their having increased by about 20+%. Added to this is an almost doubling of the postage and a less favourable exchange rate, meaning the landed cost for NZ modellers has about doubled in five years.

I can recommend this set on its quality without hesitation but, in my opinion, not on its value; I leave you to be the judge of that as individual circumstances vary. Thanks to [OKB-Grigorov](#) for the review items.

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On the table at our November meeting



















GALLERY

CLUB NIGHT MODELS

Check out our Website gallery for photos taken of models at our monthly meetings

<http://ipmsauckland.hobbyvista.com>



And as usual -check out the IPMS Auckland website as we're trying to keep the content a bit more dynamic. We won't be regurgitating content found on other websites but will provide links to sites we think are of interest to members.

