

German BMW R/75 Motorcycle

Reviewed By Ben Gray

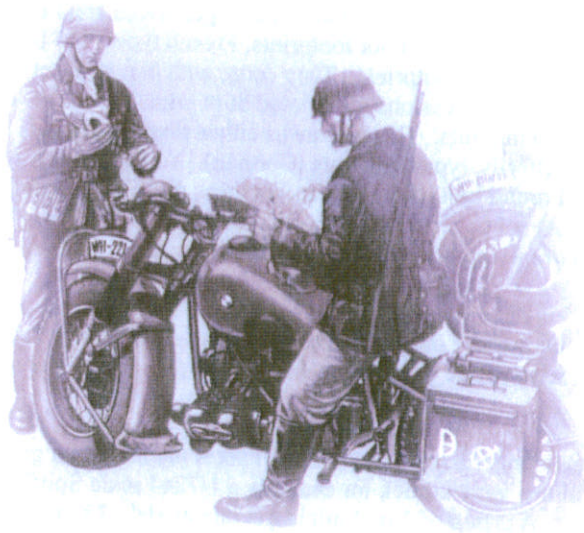
By Tamiya 1/35th scale

For Father's Day, I was the lucky recipient of a German BMW R/75 Motorcycle kit manufactured by Tamiya. Although this was not my first experience with Tamiya kits, it was my first motorcycle.

If you have essentially any knowledge of WWII vehicles (or even seen old war movies and documentaries) then you have probably seen a German motorcycle with a sidecar. Motorcycles played an extremely important role in German troop deployments in all areas of operations during WWII. The BMW R/75 was one of the most widely used of all German motorcycles because of its engine size, durable frame and body, plus the fact that it had a reverse gear. The sidecar could even carry a machine gun or even a trench mortar. In addition to this and other uses, the motorcycle could also carry up to three men. Production on the R75 started in 1940 and about 16,500 were made.

This particular kit comes with the motorcycle and 4 figures. For this review, I have concentrated on the motorcycle. The motorcycle has 38 parts contained on one sprue tree. Two additional sprue trees accommodate the figures and accessories. There is also a combined decal sheet for the motorcycle and figures. The motorcycle is assembled in 8 steps, which are well illustrated and easy to follow. The translation from Japanese to English is not that great but in this case, it is part of the entertainment value of the kit. The version I built used 35 parts from the motorcycle sprue tree, one from the accessories sprue tree and 5 decals from the decal sheet.

Assembly was not very difficult and the process was generally well thought out. I would have breezed through the construction phase if not for the fact that most every part required some work to clean up seam lines or ejector pin marks. Some of these were time consuming, specifically the seams on the engine heads. To fix these required delicately sanding the engine head so that the fins remained in good shape, and then taking a sharp exacto knife blade down between each fin to cut out the embedded seam. The ejector pins on the inside of the shocks and on the fork cross member were particularly hard to deal with. Once you got through the clean up process, however, construction went quickly and smoothly.



I constructed the sidecar and motorcycle subsections individually in accordance with the instructions. In addition, I drilled out the MG34 gun barrel and stretched some sprue for the engine wire harness. Except for clear coat and weathering, I painted each subsection individually. This allowed me to get in close with the dry-brush for all of the details adjacent to the sidecar. I also sprayed some gloss clear for the areas that would be getting decals. Once dry, the decals went on easy and clean and with a little solva-set, snuggled down beautifully. I would have liked a decal for the BMW logo on the gas tank and for the speedometer, but the kit didn't include it. I also washed both the motorcycle and the sidecar with an oil wash of my own combination of black and browns before final subsection assembly. Once the sidecar and motorcycle were attached, I added some weathering around tires, fenders and other of the usual places.

I spent 10 hours on this project. Most of that time was in the construction phase with lots of attention to removing mold seams, and ejector pin marks. However, for a 10 hour commitment spread out over multiple days, I was very pleased with the experience and the result.