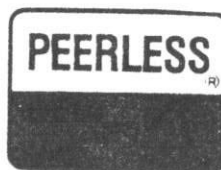


STEYR RSO/01 TRACTOR

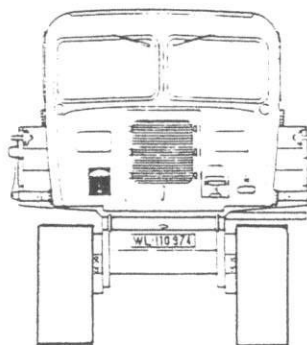
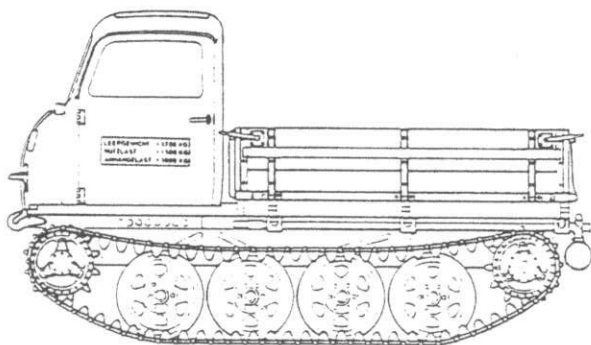
KIT #3512 1/35 SCALE

BY



Can you say Raupen Schlepper Ost? Ja!

If you are a World War II German armor builder then you will recognize this as the "East Front Battle Tractor". As the Germans quickly found out after their invasion of Russia in 1941, horse drawn vehicles were inadequate in dealing with the weather, mud and vastness of "Mother Russia". Both horse and wagon were unable to survive the severe climate. Wheeled vehicles were also inadequate and by 1942 a better method for transporting troops and supplies had to be found. The Steyr company in Austria developed and by late 1942 began producing a fully tracked, light weight truck using their successful 1500A engine. By the end of the war over 2,700 units were produced and they saw action in all fighting fronts.



The RSO in my opinion is one on the neatest vehicles ever produced as evidenced by the attached photos. It may have been the original "monster" truck. I built my first one over ten years ago. It was a Testor/Italeri kit (813) which was originally produced by Peerless. I had a great deal of fun putting the T/I kit together and in fact it was rebuilt and repainted about five years ago. In retrospect I may have had too much fun building the kit as the fit and finish were not up to my now, mediocre standards. Still I had fun rebuilding the T/I kit. Gee I could really cut my modeling budget if I just rebuilt everything! Naaa!! Three or four years ago I was out to see Bo at Aardvark Models. On the shelf was an original, unbuilt kit of the RSO by Peerless. Yes Peerless, the company that sold the mold to T/I. If you remember Peerless then I can easily guess your age. Despite the age of this kit I had no reservations about buying it because Peerless was just that--peerless. They produced numerous fighting vehicles of WW II vintage (White Scout Car, Canadian Chevy 15 CTW Truck, etc.) that were light years ahead of the competition. What made the purchase even easier was the fact that Peerless included their excellent Nebelwerfer 41 (smoke thrower) in the same kit. For \$20 I left the store happy and Bo made some greenbacks. If you are interested in getting the 1/35 scale kits these are worth considering. In fact Italeri just recently released a RSO with a PAK-40 (75mm anti-tank gun) built on the Peerless chassis. I purchased that kit several months ago and it is on my "must build" list.

My RSO was on the "in progress" table at our meeting several months ago. While it still is not finished, I've made some more progress thanks to Thursday night build sessions at fellow armor nut, Ed Warner's house. The Peerless kit cleaned up easily and there were only minor fit problems. The unattached doors needed the most attention to insure proper fit. A fair amount of filling is required with the Peerless kit. I do not recall that problem with the T/I kit. Gaps around the suspension system were most noticeable. I purchased at AMPS the Eduard brass detail set for my RSO. These photo-etched parts greatly improve the interior especially the dash and engine compartment areas. These detail kits are well worth considering anytime you are building an older kit. With the hanging of a few remaining tools I should be well on my way to the paint shop by September. Find one, build one--RSO.

.Jan Hiett--TSSM