

# TAC NEWS

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## Fully - Tracked *Schützenpanzerwagen* **WEHRMACHT '47**<sup>®</sup> Recon & Panzer Grenadier Vehicles

The line of vehicles GHQ is introducing under the Wehrmacht '47 trademark begs to be done, and by doing them GHQ will create in these dimensions the whole range of not what 'might-have-been' but rather what would have been had the war taken some different turns.

The ranges of vehicles contemplated were not science fiction fantasies. Many were in prototype form, some actually firing shots in anger. In fact, several were done years earlier as part of GHQ's regular line (E-100, *Maus*, *Kugelblitz*, etc.).

Many of these vehicles will seem foreign to you at first, much as they would have to units at the front during WWII. But on closer examination you will discover the familiar German stamp in design and function.

All of these vehicles were designed with two main criteria in mind; product improvement based on combat experience and simplified and standardized manufacturing processes.

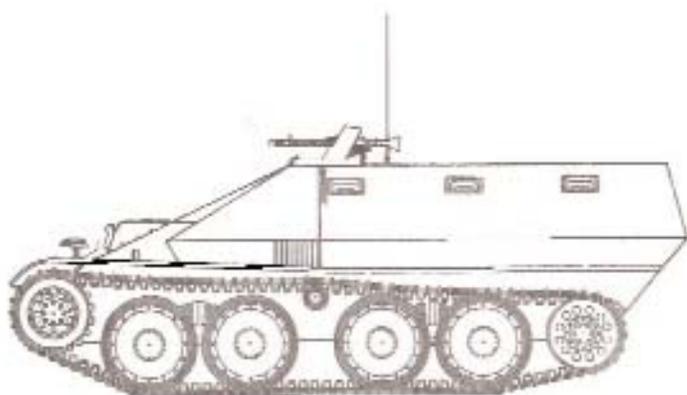


A prototype of the troop carrier, featuring a 38(d) chassis and 251/C body captured by Allied forces after the war. GHQ believes that production models would have utilized the 251/D style doorways.

There were three main categories of combat vehicles to be upgraded or replaced: armoured *panzerjäger*s and tanks; weapons carriers ("*Waffenträger*") and armoured personnel carriers and recon vehicles. For this article we'll deal with the APC/recon vehicles.

The Demag made D7 1 ton tractor chassis and the Hanomag designed 3 ton chassis which led to the SdKfz 250 and 251 series of halftracks were problematic from the beginning. Both were overly complicated and expensive to produce. Büssing-NAG designed and manufactured the bodies of both series and while eye-pleasing, both went through a redesign to simplify construction. Mid-war efforts were made to eliminate the SdKfz 250 halftrack series completely and standardize solely on the heavier 251 vehicles.

After experiencing combat and environmental conditions in Russia it became more and more clear that a new fully tracked vehicle (without overlapping road wheels) needed to be developed. Coincidental with these thoughts, there was a growing awareness that the SKODA 38(t) chassis was extremely versatile, reliable, and flexible and was lending

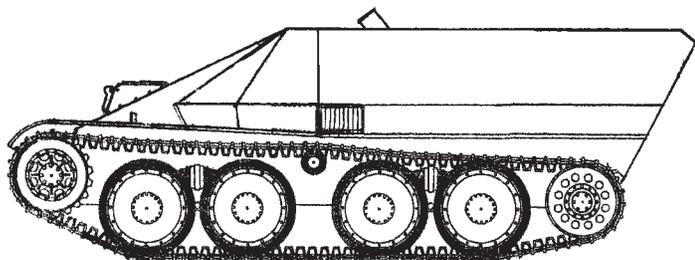


Side view of a fully tracked armoured personnel carrier. It shows the obsolete style rear doorway - complex in design and difficult to manufacture.

itself to all types of uses. Both front drive and rear drive chassis were developed expanding the scope of this vehicle. During 1944 two prototypes of SPW ("Schützenpanzerwagen" = Armoured Personnel Carrier) were created: the *Morserserträger 38(t)* and the SPW 38(7). Both were based on the *Ausf M SKODA* chassis with the engines in the left front and the driver in the right front. Both were open topped with a SdKfz 251/D type bodies, the SPM 38(t) being slightly larger than the *Morserserträger 38(t)*. They were essentially replacement prototypes for the SdKfz 251/1 troop carrier and 251/2 8cm mortar carrier.

The development of the *Aufklärungs* ("reconnaissance") family history is even clearer. Completed drawings are available, and GHQ has worked with these. On 23 January 1945 the Panzer Development Commission declared that 5 variants of the basic *Aufklärungs 38(d)* with 3cm frontal armour were to be developed:

- With 20mm turret
- With the new 7.5cm L/48 PaK ("*Panzerabwehrkanone*")
- With 12cm mortar
- A *Bergepanzer 38(d)* (tank recovery vehicle)
- *Kugelblitz 38(d)* AA tank with twin 3cm guns



Side view of a fully tracked 81mm mortar carrier. In this view the late-war production rear and doorway is shown.



GHQ's model of the standard troop carrier in the *Aufklärungs* series. We call this vehicle an SdKfz 350/1. Note that the 350 *Aufklärungs* series has the engine in the rear of the vehicle: the 351 *Panzer Grenadier* vehicles have the engine in the front.



GHQ's model of the 81mm mortar carrier.

For designing these vehicles for the war gamer, we took these two vehicles and came to three additional but rather obvious conclusions: the slope-backed door of the D model 251 series would have been adopted for the fully tracked vehicle as it was on the late-war halftracks (even though the prototype appears to have the 251/C style back end); the 38(d) improved SKODA chassis would have replaced the 38(t) chassis as it was phased in; and last but not least, versions of fully tracked chassis would have been done to duplicate the basic SdKfz 251 halftrack variants. Additionally, the latest version of plans for using the Skoda 38(d) chassis called for use of a wider track. This would improve the weight to footprint ratio which would greatly assist in muddy terrain. GHQ's models reflect this plan.

GHQ has simply complied with the wishes of OKH. ("Oberkommando des Herres" - Army General Staff Headquarters.)



Photograph of prototype 38(d) chassis armoured recovery vehicle.



*Panzer Grenadier* units needed heavy anti-tank coverage. Here we see the improved *Aufklaererkanone 7 B*, a 75mm / L 48 gun, mounted on the SdKfz 351 chassis

## Nomenclature for **WEHRMACHT '47**<sup>®</sup> Fully-Tracked SPWs

GHQ has chosen to replicate many of the vehicles that would have been placed into full production, had the war lasted after 1945. Though referenced as the “E-5 series” in some documents, these vehicles never received SdKfz numbers. To maintain continuity and to simplify understanding of this new series by those of you familiar with the 250 and 251 halftrack series, GHQ has assigned them the following series numerals:

<b>SdKfz 250 Halftrack Series</b>	<b>[ Role ]</b>	<b>SdKfz 350 Series Fully Tracked Series</b>
SdKfz 250/1	troop carrier	SdKfz 350/1
SdKfz 250/2	cable-laying communications	SdKfz 350/2
SdKfz 250/3	radio communications	SdKfz 350/3
SdKfz 350/4	armoured observation post	SdKfz 350/4
SdKfz 250/5	light recon vehicle	SdKfz 350/5
SdKfz 250/6	munitions carrier	SdKfz 350/6
SdKfz 250/7	8cm mortar	SdKfz 350/7
SdKfz 250/8	7.5cm L/24 close support	SdKfz 350/8
SdKfz 250/9	2cm recon turret	SdKfz 350/9
SdKfz 250/10	3.7cm AT/platoon command	SdKfz 350/10
SdKfz 250/11	2.8cm sPzB41 AT/platoon command	SdKfz 350/11
SdKfz 250/12	Artillery plotting & survey	SdKfz 350/12
	7.5cm L/48 PaK	SdKfz 350/13
	Twin 3.7cm FLaK	SdKfz 350/14
	12cm mortar	SdKfz 350/15
	Recovery w/ crane	SdKfz 350/16
	5cm light tank	SdKfz 350/17

<b>SdKfz 251 Halftrack Series</b>	<b>[ Role ]</b>	<b>SdKfz 351 Series Fully Tracked Series</b>
SdKfz 251/1	standard armoured personnel carrier	SdKfz 351/1
SdKfz 251/2	8cm mortar carrier	SdKfz 351/2
SdKfz 251/3	radio communications	SdKfz 351/3
SdKfz 251/4	munitions transport	SdKfz 351/4
SdKfz 251/5	(vehicle discontinued 1943)	
SdKfz 251/6	(vehicle discontinued 1943)	
SdKfz 251/7	engineer carrier	SdKfz 351/7
SdKfz 251/8	ambulance	SdKfz 351/8
SdKfz 251/9	7.5cm L/24 close support	SdKfz 351/9
SdKfz 251/10	3.7cm AT/platoon command	SdKfz 351/10
SdKfz 251/11	telephone / cable laying	SdKfz 351/11
SdKfz 251/12	(vehicle discontinued 1943)	
SdKfz 251/13	(vehicle discontinued 1943)	
SdKfz 251/14	(vehicle discontinued 1943)	
SdKfz 251/15	(vehicle discontinued 1943)	
SdKfz 251/16	flamethrower	SdKfz 351/16
SdKfz 251/17	2cm AA / platoon command	SdKfz 351/17
SdKfz 251/18	armoured observation post	SdKfz 351/18
SdKfz 251/19	mobile telephone exchange	SdKfz 351/19
SdKfz 251/20	infra-red spotlight vehicle	SdKfz 351/20
SdKfz 251/21	triple 3cm AAA (" <i>drilling</i> ")	SdKfz 351/21
SdKfz 251/22	7.5cm L/48 AT	SdKfz 351/22
SdKfz 251/23	2cm recon turret	SdKfz 351/23
	12cm mortar carrier	SdKfz 351/24

## Camouflage for **WEHRMACHT '47**® German Vehicles

Most modelers who have attempted to replicate the E series of proposed German vehicles have continued the patterns that were most attractively used late in 1944 and 1945. This is the 'ambush' scheme. A base coat of GHQ's CLR2 Desert Yellow (*dunkelgelb*) is applied. This is followed by a pattern of CLR1 Camouflage Green (*olivgruen*) and CLR3 Camouflage Brown, (*rotbraun*) generally applied with a spray gun on the full sized vehicle. Then, in some instances, a fine pattern of CLR2 Desert Yellow dots are carefully applied to the green and brown areas. Certainly, this scheme was not universally used on Wehrmacht vehicles late in the war, but it is very attractive.



GHQ model of the SdKfz 351/1 (G528)



E-50 - the 'Standard' Medium Tank in 1947 (G538)

Another alternative would be to use a scheme which, rather like the Wehrmacht '47® models themselves, had been planned for implementation, but which was preempted by the Allied victory in April 1945. Orders were issued in November 1944 that armoured fighting vehicles and panzers were to be painted with a base coat of CLR30 *dunkelgruen* (a shade very similar to GHQ's Modern US Aircraft Green). This was a pale olive green color. Overspray or brush painted camouflage patterns were to be created, at the factory, by using CLR3 Camouflage Brown or CLR2 Desert Yellow "in sharp contours." This order was to be implemented by June 1945.

NEW RELEASES FROM GHQ



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