

AFV Club M730A1 "Chaparral" Air Defense Missile System

Kit Number:	AF3502	
Scale:	1:35	
Cost:	Varies	
Availability:	In Release	
Rating:	4 out of 5 stars	
Media:	Injection molded plastic	
Reviewed By:	Richard Slusher	
Review Type:	Construction Article	
Date:	May 2000	

Pros: 1) Very good detail
2) Good decal selection (Israel, Taiwan, & US versions)

Cons: 1) Instructions are vague in places as to part placement
2) A good deal of flash needing to be removed.

Summary:

After all is said and done this kit is one of my all time favorites. The subject was something other than the same old tank and APC fair that seem to be everywhere these days. It was "something different". There weren't any problems that were impossible to overcome. I highly recommend this kit to all those modern armor fans.

Kit Construction

Sub - Step A: Drive Sprockets - This step was very simple. One A2 had a sinkhole and there was the slightest bit of flash on both of the A1s; but these were easy enough to fix.

Sub - Step B: Idler Wheels - There is a little flash to be removed from pieces A6 and A7; but other than that there aren't any surprises.

Sub - Step C: Road Wheels - Some of the pieces will need to have the flash removed. This seems to be a common occurrence with the first three steps; but it's the only "negative" I've found so far.

Step 1: Inside of Steps - These parts: A12 and A13 serve as the inside to the steps for climbing into the crew compartment. They simply seat behind the rungs on the inside of the hull section. The instructions call for decals inside what will be the doors to the crew compartment; but I held off on placing them until after I get everything painted.

Step 2: Rear Hull - Part A23 required a little bit of sanding for proper fit but nothing too serious. Parts A31 and A32 fit perfectly leaving only the slightest seam to be filled later.

Step 3: Driver's Compartment - A "Super Glue" type of glue is handy when joining parts A35 and A36. You'll want to be sure that the top of A35 is clear of the back of the cab (A11) or you may have a problem with placing part B4 during the final assembly. Also, another idea would be to sand off the notch for A21 and move it towards the front 3 or 4 millimeters but that's only if you've got the time and the inclination.

Step 4: Front of Driver's Compartment (Interior) - A38 and A39 fit well onto B17. Again I held off on the placing of decals.

Sub - Step D: Winch for Front of Chassis - All parts fit together well with minimal flash. There's a slight seam where A24 and A28 join that will need to be sanded down prior to painting.

Sub - Step E: Headlights - Part A17 is VERY small so be careful.

Sub - Step F: Left Mounting Bracket - Same note as in previous.

Sub - Step G: Right Mounting Bracket - Same note as in previous.

Step 5: Front of Chassis (Exterior) - I held off on placing the tools and winch onto the front of the model until after it's been primed and painted. Everything else went on OK without any major problems.

Step 6: Mounting Spare Tracks - Same as previous step.

Step 7: Mounting Wheels to Lower Hull - Parts A19 and A3 were glued on but the wheels weren't mounted until after the lower hull was primed and painted.

Step 8: Tailgate - There weren't any problems here. Be careful when removing part B19. It's very thin and can easily be broken. I held off on placing on the tailgate until after I get it painted.

Step 9: Rear of Lower Hull - Everything fit very well in this area; but like part B19 you'll need to be careful when removing parts A33 and A34 from the sprue because they are very delicate.

Step 10: Pedestal for Launcher - There is a small sinkhole on part C2 that needs to be filled.

Step 11: Securing Base of Launcher - Glue part B16 to the pedestal and allow it to dry before placing part C1.

Step 12: Upper Hull Assembly - Excellent fit of all major components. There were no problems to report.

Step 13: Mating Front of Hull - The fit of the front of the hull is a bit snug so I gave the front of the crew compartment floor a slight bit of sanding to loosen it a little. Be careful when removing part B1. I cut mine a little close and had to fill it in with a little putty.

Step 14: Tracks and Side Skirts - I waited on this step until after I get all the other major components built. I'm from the "old school" where we learned to put the major pieces together then paint everything and put it all together. I did test the fit of the side skirts though and they fit quite nicely.

Sub - Step H: Building Tracks - I skipped this step for the time being.

Sub - Step I: Firing Station - This step was pretty straightforward. There weren't any problems.

Sub - Step J: Firing Station Door - All of the parts in this step are clear. I plan to mask off the main part of the "windshield" so I don't get primer and paint on it; then paint it the appropriate color.

Sub - Step K: Rear of Firing Station - Part C23 is VERY small; but everything fits OK.

Sub - Step L: Right Side of Firing Station - Part C18 has a rather deep sinkhole that will need to be filled; but it's no big deal to fill it.

Sub - Step M: Left Side of Firing Station - The fit of the parts in this step is pretty good. There was a little flash that needed to be removed; but other than that everything was OK.

Sub - Step N: Front of Firing Station - The fitting of parts C37 and C40 does leave a little to be desired; but it's not too terrible.

Sub - Step O: Infrared Seeker - There is a small seam between parts C31 and C32 that required a little filler.

Step 15: Building Firing Station - As in Step 14 I waited on putting the major pieces together until after I get everything painted. A test fitting did reveal seams along the sides and rear of the firing station that's I'll have to fill at some point.

Sub - Step P: Sidewinder Missiles - There is considerable flash on part C36; but a couple of gentle rubs with my Emory board get rid of it. I also waited before mating the missile to the launch rail until after painting.

Step 16: Mounting Missiles to Launcher - I went ahead and mounted part C28 onto the correct locations on the sides of the launcher; but I will wait to add the missiles and launch rails. I've also not mounted the infrared seeker.

Step 17: Shoot or Transport Position - When I set the vehicle up for display purposes I'll be using the "Shoot Position" with the launcher raised; but I'll leave parts B5-B8 off so that you can see the interior of the crew compartment.

Painting

Colors Used: US Army / Marines Gulf Armor Sand

Flat Black

Medium Field Green

Flat Red

Steel

Silver

All colors are from Testor's Model Master product line.

The overall color I used was US Army / Marines Gulf Armor Sand. The interior and Sidewinders were painted Medium Field Green, as was the lift for the launcher. I used Flat Black on the side skirts. The tracks were done using Steel darkened with a little Flat Black and the track pads were colored Flat Black using a Testor's paint pen. The lights and other details were painted with a little silver and flat red where applicable.

Decals

All decals were placed according to the instructions after the model was painted and sealed using Future floor polish.

Weathering

After sealing the paint and applying the decals I weathered the model using Burnt Umber oil paint and mineral spirits. I also used a little bit of powdered chalk to subdue the flat black on the side skirts and the crew compartment seats. Once I was happy with the results I gave it all a couple of gentle coats of flat lacquer to reduce the shine from the sealing.

Happy Modeling!