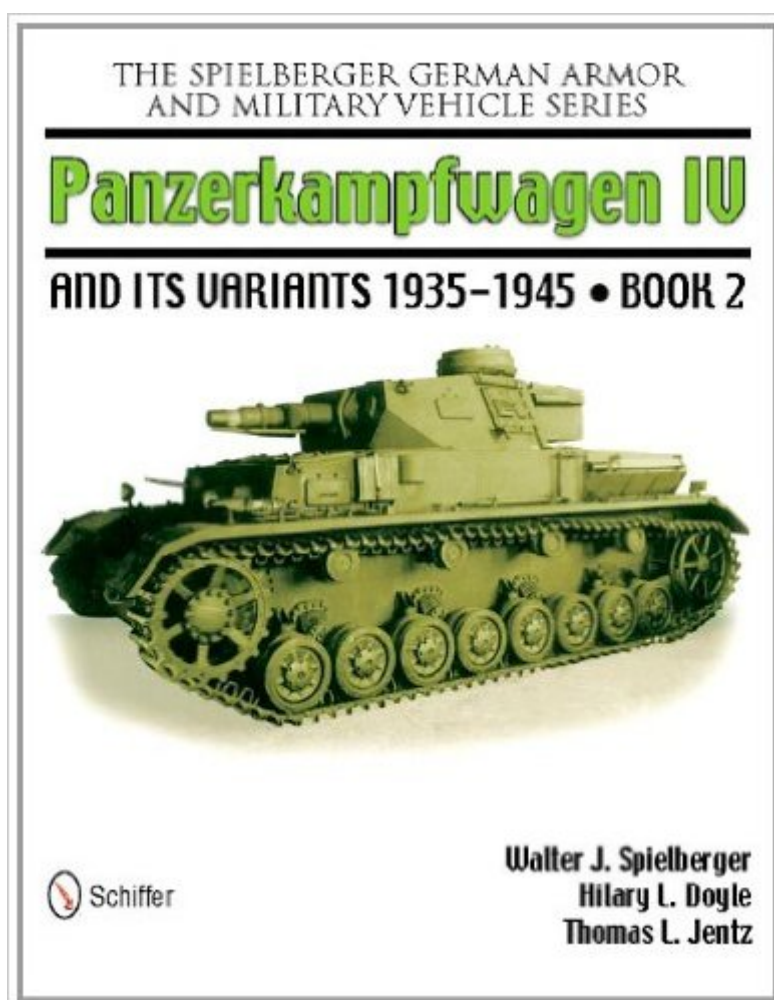


The book was found

Panzerkampfwagen IV And Its Variants 1935-1945, Book 2 (Spielberger German Armor And Military Vehicle)



Synopsis

This book is the final documentation on the Panzerkampfwagen IV series, the most often-built German tank of World War II and presents the exact chronology of the vehicle's development from 1935-45, plus many hitherto unknown and pioneering test vehicles. The authors discuss the origin of the Large Tractor, the so-called Neubau (New-Built) Vehicle and the attempts in 1944 to install the 7.5 cm Kampfwagenkanone 42 L/70 of the Panther onto the Panzer IV. The authors have dedicated an entire chapter to armament, and action in all war theaters.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The late German author Walter Spielberger's series of technical works on German military vehicles are not new. Most of the titles date back some years and earlier volumes were not as "good" as later ones. Spielberger's old Panzer IV book was one that is not so good. Fortunately, this all new "book 2" makes up for the shortcomings of the prior tome. Typical of Spielberger's works, this one is a technical and developmental history, although the last part of the book deals with operational use of the Panzer IV. A wide variety of drawings are included, many by noted draftman Hillary Doyle, along with reproductions of original German plans, etc. Photo quality is good also, with most of them being presented in a large, clear, format. There are some common photos reproduced here, but they are used to illustrate a specific vehicle or detail and the captions point out the pertinent details. Some of the translated text is a bit uneven almost as if it were done by more than one person. For

example (and on one page!) the Panzer IV's rear wheel is described as a "leading wheel" in one photo caption and then as the "idler wheel" which would be the common English term, in another caption. Unfortunately on that same page also the captions for several photos are all swapped around, making for some additional confusion. Sadly some proof reading errors like this are common in Schiffer's translated reprints. Not a huge issue but sometimes frustrating. The first portion of the book covers the development of the Grosstraktor and NbFz tanks, which lead to the Panzer IV itself. The bulk of the book then covers the design, development, improvements to, and usage of the Panzer IV through the War.

No other book on this tank has this kind of detail or primary source citation that this one does. It strictly deals with the Panzer IV tank as a main battle tank and doesn't talk about the variants that weren't intended for the battle tank purpose. It has great information on the proposals for major upgrades of the tank (sloped armor, Panther 75mm gun, even a fluid-final drive model which apparently still exists in the USA.) Like a number of books that I've seen from German authors, the book is organized more like an outline than a narrative. This book is the most extreme example that I've personally owned. It reads like a large series of excerpts from primary source documents organized in an outline-like format (including headers) broken down by model. This is not necessarily a negative. My own preference was for a book that delved into the technical and development aspects of the Panzer IV. There are no "battlefield stories" and few anecdotal experiences related. The level of documentation and primary source citation is unparalleled in any other work dealing with the Panzer IV. There's not as much reasoning given behind the decisions that the primary source documents illustrate. You know that certain changes were made, and even a basic reason for it, but not always the background that prompted the change to the vehicle. There are also what appear to be some translations that aren't clear. For example, the book frequently refers to "bandages" when talking about the chassis. This term wasn't defined. I believe what the term means in English are "tires." For all of this, there is nothing close to this book in describing the technical features and changes that this tank underwent during its evolution.

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