

# Building a GMC CCKW 6x6 40mm Bofors AA Truck in 20mm

*A modelling project by Richard Baber*

I have now for a while been trying to do something different with my quite old and tired US late war forces. On a whim I have decided to re-paint some of them as French, so I could add colourful units like – Goumiers, French marine infantry in their distinctive cap with red pommel, Foreign Legion and ex-Spanish Republicans. Whilst doing some research into Leclerc's French 2nd Armoured Division, I discovered that the division wasn't issued with M16 type SP anti-aircraft guns like the American units but something quite unique.

Built in the field workshops of the division, the GMC 353 CCKW 6X6 40mm Bofors AA is a beast. The engineers and mechanics, stretched the chassis and reinforced it to carry the heavy gun and its ammo load. They converted only 32 vehicles, these served with the 22nd Colonial Anti-Aircraft Group. They served with 2nd Armoured from its landing in Normandy in July 1944 until the end of the war. The unit was credited for shooting down 17 German aircraft and damaging 6 others. The vehicles that survived the war were sent out to Indo-China in March 1946 to assist in the war against the Viet Minh in a ground support role. Once I saw one, I knew I had to have one to add to my "Groupe Mobile". Now Milicast sell a lovely kit (but at £17.95, far too expensive for a whim), so I began a plan to build my own.....

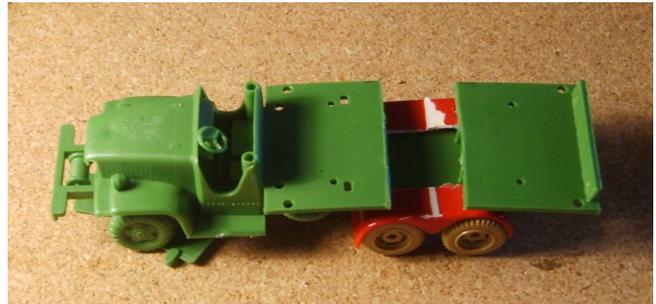
First off let me admit I'm not the greatest modeller, and I have little patience when it comes to fiddly parts. So this was intended to be a functional "wargames" model and not a 100% accurate representation.

First thing I needed was the basic parts and I got these via a second hand stall at Crusade 2008 in Penarth. An Atlantic soft PVC GMC truck and an Airfix Bofors (total cost £4 and I now have a spare Morris tractor too). From my bits-box I gathered some spare wheels (off an Airfix '88 which came free in a job lot off Ebay), various lockers and boxes and a set of wheel arches off an Airfix Austin Crash-tender (£0.50 off of bootfair).



*The various main parts laid out before and cutting/fitting*

With the main parts selected, first thing that I needed to do was stretch the chassis. Thankfully the Atlantic truck can be broken up allowing access to the deck without too much effort. I removed the side panels and seats, then cut the deck in two at the point where it bisected the lead rear axle. I then was able to dry-fit the wheel arches off the Austin, shaving and cutting them to fit, this gave the length required and room for the Bofors. At this point I replaced the outer rear wheels with the '88 ones (the Atlantic ones had no detail).



*First stage finished, with wheel arches and split deck.*

Once the cutting was done, I made a false deck from 1mm plasticard and added the main tool/ammo lockers, plus seating for the crew. I also built and fitted 3 large lockers and a Jerry can rack from plasticard, these hang underneath the vehicle.

For assembling soft PVC parts to the hard (kit plastic) parts I use Bostik glue and once dry a thin coat of PVA over the entire model. I've found that this combination is quite hard wearing and prevents the soft parts separating over time. Any joints, holes, etc I fill with that old modelling favourite Plasterscene (of course nowadays you should probably use Greenstuff, etc).



*Model with gun dry placed for position, hanging lockers, fuel can storage rack and spare wheel fitted*

Happy with the overall look, I added further light stowage (available in packs from various companies - SHQ, Frontline, Sgt's Mess, etc); a spare wheel alongside the cab, a few more tool lockers and a large tarpaulin made of plasterscene. I removed the wheels from the Airfix bofors and cut down the trailer base to fit on the truck deck; I was careful to dry fit everything before cementing in place.



The seated gunners are SHQ jeep crew, the driver and gun commander are Hasawaga plastics and the last figure is an old Airfix US Marine.

Once I'd selected the crew, I sprayed the whole model black, then painted it Olive Green overall, with various browns, Khaki, sand and grey to pick out the details. I painted the crew separate to the vehicle before fitting them in place.

The actual build took me no longer than any other carefully built kit - in fact far less time than I took recently over a M60A3 with this new track-link system!!!! And the cost was I estimate around £10 including the crew, extra stowage etc - I am quite happy with the results.



**Sources**

[http://www.smallscaleafv.com/ANG/Technika33/72\\_GMC.htm](http://www.smallscaleafv.com/ANG/Technika33/72_GMC.htm)

[http://2db.free.fr/materiels\\_gmc\\_bofors.html](http://2db.free.fr/materiels_gmc_bofors.html)

<http://www.milicast.com/american/US116.shtml>