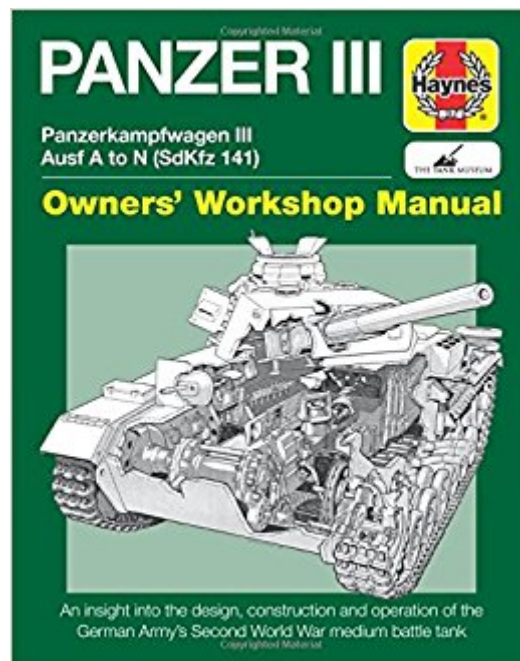




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Panzer III: Panzerkampfwagen III Ausf. A To N (SdKfz 141) (Owners' Workshop Manual)



Synopsis

When Hitler unleashed Operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union in June 1941, the 23-tonne Panzer III was in the vanguard of the German assault. The German Panzer III tank (official designation Panzerkampfwagen III, Sd Kfz 141, abbreviated to PzKpfw III) saw widespread use during the Second World War campaigns in Poland, France, the Soviet Union and the Balkans, and in North Africa with the famous Afrika Korps. A small number were still in use in Normandy (1944), at Anzio (1943), in Norway and Finland and in Operation Market Garden (1944). Some 5,774 were built between 1937 and 1943. Although the Panzer III was conceived to operate alongside the infantry-supporting Panzer IV to fight other tanks and armoured fighting vehicles, the roles were reversed when the German Army came up against the formidable Soviet T-34 tank. A tank with a more powerful anti-tank gun was needed so the Panzer IV with its larger turret ring and long-barrelled 7.5cm KwK 40 gun was used in tank-versus-tank battles, with the Panzer III being redeployed in the infantry support role. Production of the Panzer III ended in 1943, although its dependable chassis provided hulls for the Sturmgeschütz III (StuG III) assault gun, one of the most successful of the war, until the end of the war. Centrepiece of the Haynes Panzer III Tank Manual is the Bovington Tank Museum's PzKpfw III Ausf L, which has been restored to running condition. This tank belonged to the same battalion as the museum's famous Tiger I (the 501st (Heavy) Panzer Abteilung) and is an early production Ausf L, modified for tropical service. It was shipped via Naples to Benghazi in Libya in July 1942 and was issued to the 8th Panzer Regiment, part of the 15th Panzer Division and probably fought in the Battle of Alam Halfa. It was subsequently captured by the British Army and shipped to the UK. The Tank Museum has restored the tank to running order, has repainted it in its original camouflage and markings and is currently replacing many of the ancillary tools and equipment that it carried.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mike Hayton was closely involved in the restoration of the Tank Museum's Panzer III to running order and is co-author of the Haynes Tiger Tank Manual. Dick Taylor is a former British Army Challenger tank commander and now works fulltime as an author specialising in armoured fighting vehicles. Dick is author of the Haynes Challenger 1 MBT Manual.

Although I have a mild interest in the history, development, and inner workings of armored fighting vehicles, I'm not a "treadhead" by any stretch of the word. Therefore, I can't really attest to the accuracy of this book. I've enjoyed Haynes' other tank manuals, and was definitely looking forward to this one. The result is a pretty solid, well rounded reference - not quite as polished or in-depth as some of the books in the series, but definitely a fine addition to the library of any armor buff. Despite being only 172 pages, this book packs in quite a lot of information without feeling suffocatingly detailed. The early chapters lay out the evolution of German tank design and doctrine in the interwar period, production problems, and the many Panzer III variants. The middle includes chapters on the internal and mechanical arrangements of the tank, the main armament and types of ammunition, and a "walkthrough" of the Tank Museum's restored Ausf.L. Finally, there's a chapter providing a concise operational history of the tank, and a chapter covering the restoration of the aforementioned Ausf.L. There are many period "in action" photographs, including a number in color. Sprinkled through are numerous tables detailing the specifications of each major model, production statistics by month and manufacturer, ammunition performance, and divisional strengths during several major campaigns. On a historical level, this book is pretty strong. On the other hand, it's a little bit shaky on a technical level. Although there are many excellent diagrams, technical details, and interior photographs, it seems to miss a certain something for a "workshop manual." What I loved about the [Haynes Tiger Manual](#) was all the "how it works" material - how to start the engine, how to load and fire the gun, pictures of oil-spattered guys in a workshop taking apart a transmission, etc. This book takes a less hands-on and more detached approach. The historical details and insights into tank design are fascinating, but I was expecting additional technical details to support the "workshop manual" subtitle. As much as I love this series, it's been a long time since I bestowed a five star

ranking on one. This is another solid entry which just falls short of greatness. Maybe I'm getting a little burned out (I feel like I'm simultaneously Haynes' biggest cheerleader and biggest critic at this point), but I feel like Haynes needs to shake things up a little bit at this point.

Another great book in the series.

If you are interested in the Panzer III, this book is for you. Well written and informative. I plan on buying the Tiger manual next,

Great reading!

Great!

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