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Read an excerpt of this book! This book examines the technology and strategy that defined the outcome of the battles between the King Tiger and the IS-2. The Soviets had been quick to develop tanks that could fight the Tiger on an equal footing, but these were developed as part of a completely different strategy than that employed by the Germans. The King Tiger was a modern marvel, and remained unmatched in one-on-one combat. Technologically superior, with greater firepower and better armour than the Soviet IS-2, the King Tiger was a formidable opponent. However, the IS-2 was lighter, more manoeuvrable and most importantly, far more numerous. With overwhelming numerical superiority the Soviets were able to simply overwhelm their opponents, negating the technical superiority of the King Tiger ISBN-13: 9781849088633 Publisher: Bloomsbury Publishing Publication date: 09/20/2011 Series: Duel , #37 Sold by: Barnes & Noble Format: NOOK Book Pages: 80 File size: 12 MB Note: This product may take a few minutes to download. Table of ContentsIntroduction · Chronology · Design and development · Strategic Situation · Technical specifications · The combatants · Combat · Statistics and analysis · Aftermath · Bibliography · Glossary Author David R. Higgins brings to us a wealth of historical, tactical, doctrinal, technical, organizational, and archival information about the ultimate armor adversaries of World War Two. —Frederick Boucher, AeroScale From the Publisher Start your review of King Tiger vs IS-2: Operation Solstice 1945 A pretty thorough book in terms of the technical specifications and tactics used by each weapon. The Operation Solstice part is a bit confusing though. It was hard to follow the battle narrative, which jumped around. Solstice needs its own volume (or sub-entry) in the Osprey Campaign series. One of the latest in the Osprey Duel series, this book looks at two of the armored giants of World War 2. While I think the description of the vehicles is reasonably good, the book suffers in the later chapters as the combat is described solely at the operational level, with no tactical detail in terms of tank vs tank combat. The operational description lacks adequate supporting maps to allow the uninformed reader to develop a clear understanding of the action, such that I found myself mostly re One of the latest in the Osprey Duel series, this book looks at two of the armored giants of World War 2. 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The King Tiger was a modern marvel, and remained unmatched in one-on-one combat. Technologically superior, with greater firepower and better armour than the Soviet IS-2, the King Tiger was a formidable opponent. However, the IS-2 was lighter, more manoeuvrable and most importantly, far more numerous. With overwhelming numerical superiority the Soviets were able to simply overwhelm their opponents, negating the technical superiority of the King Tiger. Source: Osprey Publishing King Tiger vs IS-2 Operation Solstice 1945 – OSPREYS Wait, Searching OSPREYS for you. . Find kits on eBay; [ae affiliate byphil keyword="Konigstiger"] ... Related kits: Views : 1284 © 1996-2014, Amazon.com, Inc. or its affiliates As a prelude to the post-war concept of a single "main battle tank" design, vehicles during World War II tended to be categorized as light, medium, and heavy, depending on their use. In this last category, tanks had grown in size, weight, and firepower to counter ever-improving anti-tank weapon systems. This resulted in changes in tactics and doctrine to better integrate heavy armor into a combined arms system. This was especially true on the Eastern Front, where the open terrain promoted armor action and a rapid cycle of improvements. The Soviets were quick to develop vehicles that were able to fight the Tiger I on an equal footing by late 1943, such as the up-gunned T-34/85 and the self-propelled ISU-152s. Because the American T-26/M-26 Pershing arrived late in the war, and the British Centurion not at all, only the Soviet IS-2 serves as an example of a heavy design that was fielded in large battlefield numbers. The Soviet drive to cut off enemy forces in East Prussia during Operation Solstice (February 1945) is a prime example of this conflict. The Germans, had limited resources, and were strategically on the defensive, but enjoyed ever-shorter logistic distances as they retreated, and fought in an environment and terrain that played to the strengths of the technically-superior King Tiger. The IS-2 was lighter, more maneuverable, and far more numerous, and used these assets to its advantage. This battle, fought in the closing months of the war, depicts the classic late-war contrast between the military doctrines of Germany and the Soviet Union. Bibliography INTRODUCTION During the 1920s and 1930s the concept of a heavy breakthrough tank was a common theme in European military thinking, when mechanized and armored doctrine was in its post-World War I infancy. Throughout this period, former combatants wrestled with how best to use armor to help avoid repeating the previous war's static and wasteful trench warfare. Soviet futurist military thinkers such as Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky envisioned integrated mobile groups spearheaded by heavy, multi-turreted T-32s and T-35s that had been organized into independent units. Lighter vehicles, operating much like the Russian cavalry during the Russian Civil War (1917–23), would then be used to quickly push through the breach to initiate deep battle missions to disrupt their adversary's command, control, and communications abilities. Following its proxy participation in the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), leading thinkers in the Red Army refined their views on armor, and while they missed many of the conflict's tactical lessons they excelled in the technical arena. The mobile fortress approach with its multitude of guns was seen as flawed and such systems were replaced with single-turreted designs that emphasized simplicity and reliability: assets for the large, undeveloped areas in which such vehicles would operate. Production quantities were also of primary concern and anything that was not absolutely necessary to achieve this goal was suspect. Crew comfort was generally a low priority in Soviet armor thinking, and fatigue and lessened performance was often a problem in the utilitarian working environment. Throughout World War II armor development and doctrine underwent considerable changes, especially within the accelerated crucible of the Eastern Front. The Soviet T-34/76, introduced during Operation Barbarossa in 1941, shocked the Germans with its thick, sloped skin, excellent mobility, and powerful armament. Although the German heavy Tiger I tank was made operational in August 1942, and could effectively contend with the T-34, the latter's considerable production numbers outpaced the capabilities of the German industry, with the result that the Soviets could better weather a war of attrition. As a result of the rapid arms race in the east where each side attempted to maintain a battlefield edge, vehicle weight, armor protection, and firepower all increased. After the fighting around Kursk in mid-1943, the Soviets looked to produce a vehicle that had thicker armor to better resist the German high-velocity 88mm gun and a main armament that could handle the armor mounted on the enemy weapon. When the IS-2 (Iosif Stalin) entered the field in April 1944, its 122mm round imparted considerable force, which helped to make up for its average penetrating ability. In combat it proved well suited for its task as a heavy breakthrough tank that could stand up to the German Tiger I and Panther. During the previous month, however, the new German Tiger II had been deployed, and would soon be sent to the Eastern Front. Although officially designated as Panzerkampfwagen Tiger Ausf. B, the Tiger II was more often known by its unofficial name, initially coined by the Reich Ministry for Armament and Ammunition, Königstiger (Bengal Tiger), which was incorrectly translated by Allied intelligence as King Tiger or Royal Tiger. By expanding on the thick armor and large main armament of the Tiger I, and the more modern design of the Panther, the 70-tonne Tiger II presented a formidable battlefield solution. During the final ten months of the war it was as suited to the defensive fighting Germany was forced to undertake as the IS-2 was to spearheading Soviet offensives across Eastern Europe. By 1945 both vehicles represented the epitome of operational heavy tank design that greatly contributed to the postwar, multirole main battle tank embodied in, for example, the German Leopard I and II and the T-54/55. A pristine, two-tone Tiger II with a series production (Henschel) turret. It has probably just been produced considering it lacks its bow and cupola armament, spare turret tracks, side skirts, glacis-mounted Bosch headlight, and tow shackles on its drive sprocket guides. (DML) CHRONOLOGY An IS-2 with a hard-edged welded nose, mistakenly promoted as the first Soviet tank to enter Prague, sits atop a monument in that city's Štefánek Square. Attachments between the towing shackles hold spare track links. Following the Velvet Revolution in 1989 the vehicle was painted pink to protest against the former Soviet/Warsaw Pact occupation. (DML) An early-model broken-nose IS-2 that appears to be disabled, judging by its missing return roller and disheveled appearance. Its horn and headlight have remained intact. (DML) A close-up of a Tiger II of 503rd Heavy Panzer Battalion in Budapest in October 1944, showing the commander's aiming rod, one of the vehicle's three Pilz mounts, and the cupola-mounted anti-aircraft support, minus its machine gun. Because of the Tiger II's impressive size it was frequently photographed; here it is part of a series of propaganda shots. (DML) Two IS-2s provide infantry support in Berlin on April 27, 1945. The rough external appearance is apparent on the rear vehicle, which (strangely, considering the location and time) lacks friend-or-foe identification stripes along the turret sides. (DML) Rear turret view of a Tiger II that is covered in anti-magnetic mine Zimmerit paste and lacks its cupola hatch cover. Because of its weight the rear turret door had a spring hinge to facilitate movement. (DML) DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT THE TIGER II ORIGINS By 1942 heavy tank design had advanced considerably since the German manufacturing firm Henschel and Son began development of a 30-tonne Durchbruchwagen (breakthrough vehicle) in 1937. While Germany had been on the strategic offensive between 1939 and 1942, lighter armored vehicles such as the 23-tonne Panzer III (main) and 25-tonne Panzer IV (infantry support) had proved sufficient in the maneuver and exploitation roles. Combat on the Eastern Front, however, necessitated tanks and self-propelled guns of increasing size and firepower as the Germans and Soviets both attempted to maintain an





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