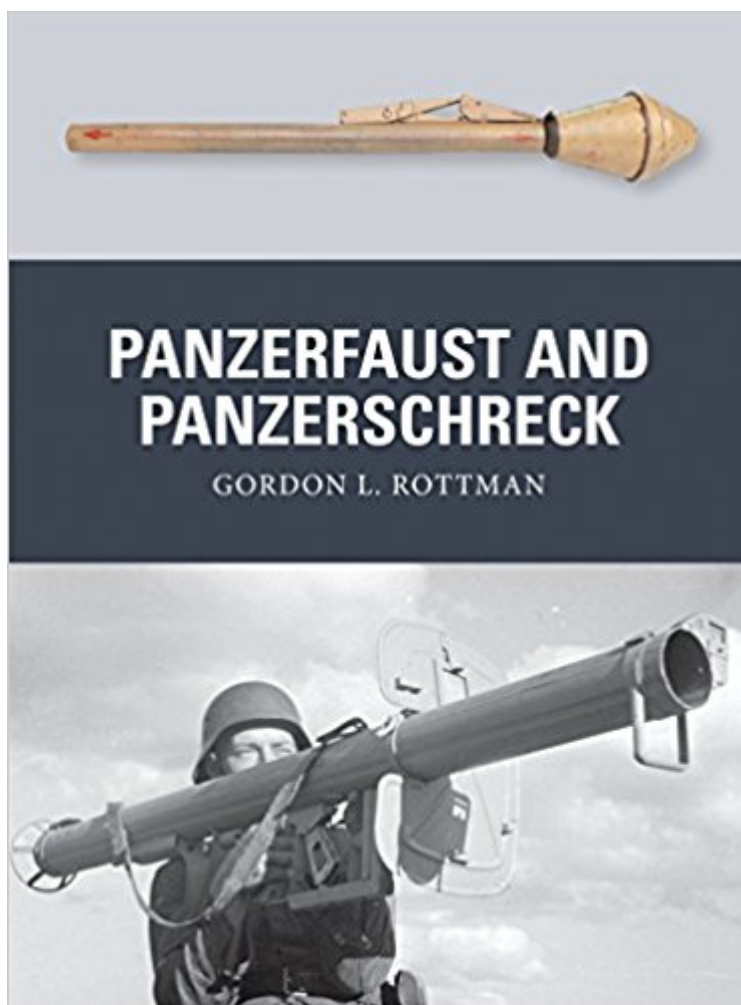


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Panzerfaust And Panzerschreck (Weapon)



Synopsis

These lethal man-portable anti-tank weapons enabled Wehrmacht infantry to destroy T-34 and Sherman tanks. Written by an expert on anti-tank warfare, this book reveals the fascinating development history of the Panzerfaust and Panzerschreck and assesses the tactics that were employed by the soldiers using these two feared weapons. Two of World War II's most distinctive weapons, the Panzerfaust and Panzerschreck offered German and other infantrymen the ability to destroy enemy tanks singlehandedly at close range. While the Panzerschreck owed its origins largely to the US bazooka, the Panzerfaust was a revolutionary design that was unlike any previous weapon, and went on to influence anti-tank technology and tactics for decades after World War II. Germany had begun World War II with several inadequate antitank weapons for infantry use, supplemented by improvised and captured weapons and, from 1942, a hand-delivered 3kg antitank shaped charge. As the fortunes of war turned against Germany, what was desperately needed was an antitank weapon that allowed the individual soldier to destroy a tank. The first effort to field such a weapon began with the Faustpatrone 43, a handheld short tube with a propellant charge and an over-caliber, shaped-charge warhead; it was the first of the Panzerfaust ("armor fist") series of anti-tank weapons. The warhead was propelled by a launcher cartridge. The sights were extremely crude, but more sophisticated sights were unnecessary owing to the short ranges and the fact that tanks were large targets. Panzerfaust models were designated by two- or three-digit numbers indicating their approximate range in meters. The reloadable Panzerfaust 250 was under development at the war's end, as was an anti-personnel high-explosive-fragmentation projectile. The Panzerfaust was not manned by a dedicated crew but was issued to individuals. Training was extremely simple and given in the form of a lecture and demonstrations, often without even any live fire. German propaganda made much of the Panzerfaust capable of being used by Hitler Youth teenagers, old men of the Volkssturm and other civilians. Over eight million Panzerfauste of all types were produced, and they became as widely used as hand grenades. They proved to be comparatively effective against tanks and other armored fighting vehicles, as well as fortifications and buildings. Allied troops, notably Soviet forces, made widespread use of captured Panzerfauste, and they were also supplied to German allies such as Finland, Hungary, and Bulgaria. The Germans provided the Japanese with examples and plans for the Panzerfaust and they went on to develop their own reloadable and very different version called the 45mm Type 5 recoilless anti-tank weapon; it was to be used to defend the Home Islands.

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Customer Reviews

In this Osprey Weapon #36, Panzerfaust and Panzerschreck, author Gordon Rottman does an excellent job of introducing the reader to these WWII German anti-tank weapons. You also get all the color plates and period photos Osprey is famous for. The author gives the reader the background with the dearth of effective anti-tank weapons available to German infantry at the start of WWII and with the invasion of the USSR, the desperate need for the German soldier to have an effective weapon to counter the T-34 and KV-1 Soviet tanks. The Panzerfaust and the Panzerschreck had different development paths. The Panzerfaust was an indigenous design from HASAG, the company that developed it and was responsible for all the improvements in regard to the mechanism and warhead. By the way, the book gives an excellent explanation of the shaped-charge concept that the layman can easily grasp. The Panzerschreck was the response from Germany after having the American "Bazooka" fall into their hands in both the USSR and Tunisia from American units. It was larger, with a larger warhead than the US 2.36" rocket. Although it wasn't a direct copy, it was close enough that you might as well say it was. The author does a really good job of explaining to the reader how these weapons were developed, manufactured and shipped. You learn how they were distributed to German units in the field and, best of all, how they were deployed (in an ideal situation) to defeat enemy armor. The author spends some time on how anti-tank units were formed within the battalion and regiment in late-war Germany. The reader also gets an idea of how desperate Germany was at that time in the war. I noticed how the soldiers in the period photos always seemed either very young or old. The author describes the use of these

weapons in the hands of the enemy because both American and Soviet infantrymen often picked them up and used them against their former owners as tribute to their effectiveness. The author concludes by looking at the Panzerfaust's effect on weapons' design after WWII. Even though the author states that the Soviets didn't exactly copy the Panzerfaust when designing the RPG series of anti-tank weapons, I think the simple and effective RPG reflects the same weapon type and design philosophy. This is a very good book giving the reader a surprisingly good treatment on these weapons in a very small, 80-page package. This is a very good work and I recommend it to those interested with five stars.

This book is a must have for the scale modeler as well as military historians. The book is a comprehensive explanation of the history, development and use of Germany's most prevalent anti-tank weapons, the Panzerfaust and Panzerschreck. When you finish this book you will know all about these weapons, something that has always been a quasi-mystery to me in the past. This will add a special depth to the high quality photographs that typify Rottman's works. For the scale modeler, this book is invaluable. The color plates show detailed cross sections of the weapons as well as full color renderings so you will know exactly what color to paint, where to place decals and what the aiming devices look like in detail. The Panzerschreck illustrations were like I have never seen before. The black and white photographs are high quality and show the weapons being carried, loaded, aimed and fired. There is a bonus section on precursors to these weapons that has some very good photographs, many of which I had never seen before. A 4 page reprint of the Panzerfaust 100 issued January 1945 is included and is of high quality and easily readable (in German of course). I have been studying military history and German weapons all my life; there was always a paucity of information, usually sketchy or incomplete on the Panzerfaust and Panzerschreck weapons until now! The book also explains the influence these weapons had on post war developments including the US M72 LAW and the Soviet RPG 1 and 2. Johnny Shumate has also included some superb action illustrations that would be worthy of framing. They are so rich in accurate detail that they alone serve as painting guides for scale modelers. Rottman is a retired Special Forces weapons expert with over 26 years in the military and as such offers a very deep and thorough understanding of these weapons and their deployment.

Like all militaries of the 1930s the German Army underestimated the need for a cheap but effective anti-tank weapon which gave the soldier a fighting chance of stopping the armored beasts. Anti-tank guns were either light, which meant they didn't pack enough of a punch to destroy the newer tanks,

or too heavy, which meant that they were often unable to set up in defensive positions or were too easy to spot. The panzerfaust and the panzerschreck turned out to be some of the most effective antitank weapons developed during the war. A fascinating book, this volume of the Weapon series gives insight into the two systems development, tactical employment and future influence on antitank weapons. Well illustrated with photos and original artwork.

I like the Osprey series of books and have a number of them. The price is right and they contain the right amount of information for me for intended use which is just general information and curiosity. If you are looking for an in depth study or are a collector, you will need to look elsewhere for reference material. If you want some general information with good pictures and close up drawings, then you will be pleased with these books. I gave them a five star because I get exactly what I was looking for. I love the Panzerfaust and really enjoyed getting this book.

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