

B.M.W.



GERMAN MOTORCYCLE B.M.W. R/75

It was September of 1939 when the Germans invaded Poland at the very beginning of World War II. Polish cavalry soldiers of 11 brigades rushed at German tank forces with lances about 3m long and sabres nearly 90cm in length overhead, and suffered a sad crushing defeat. This unbelievable story of valor hinted that the day of battle fought mainly by infantry and cavalry was over and mobility with fighting vehicles as the most important factor would decide battle there after. The Treaty of Versailles concluded after Germany's defeat in World War I stipulated that the German Army should not consist of more than 100,000 officers and men nor possess even tanks or armoured cars.

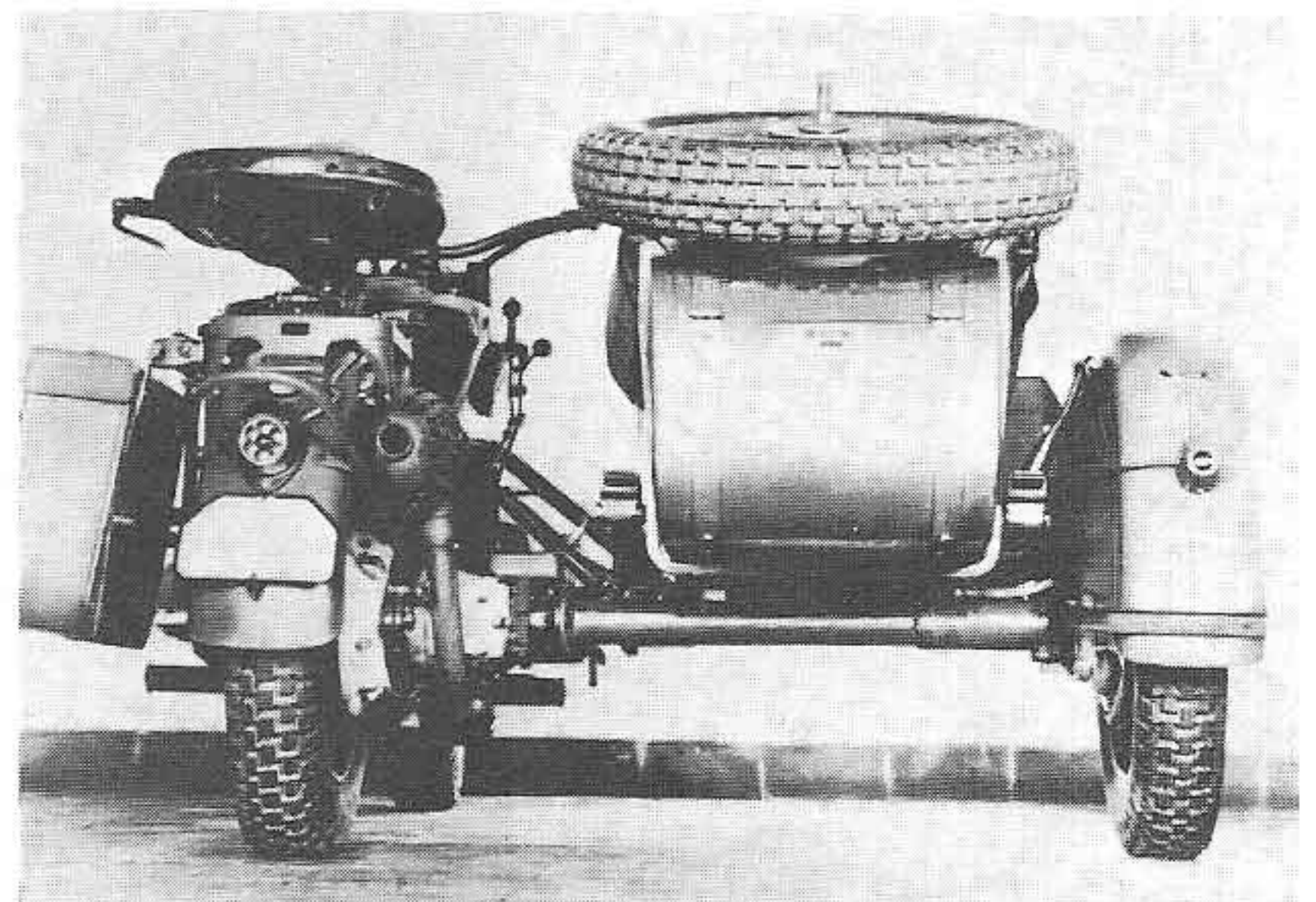
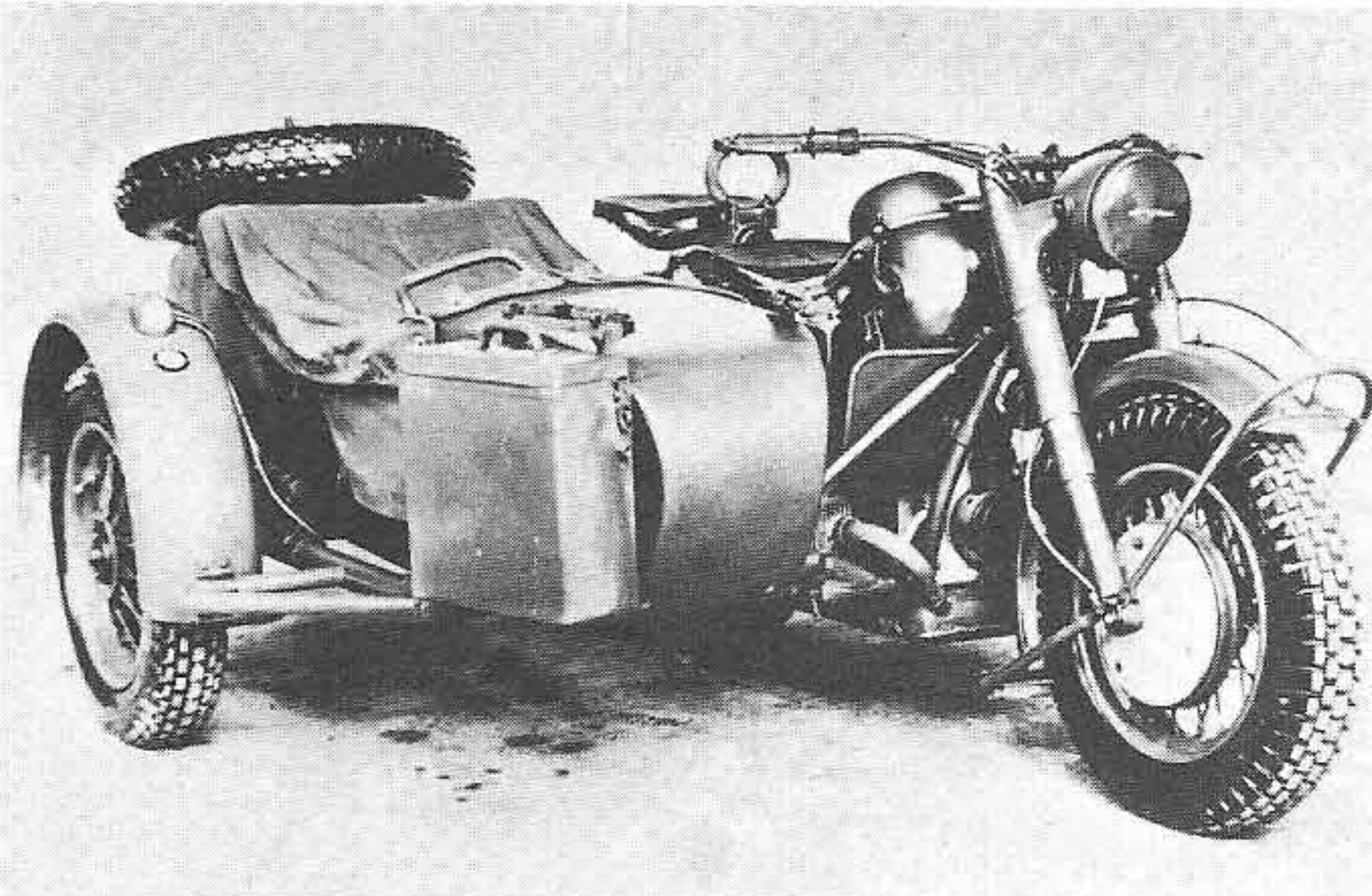
Under these circumstances, the Reichswehr paid its attention to motorcycles (kraftrad or krad) as a successor to cavalry orderly and bicycle orderly, and started to concentrate its energies upon production of cars, transport lorries and motorcycles for mechanization of fighting troops. Motorcycles among others were first used as the main body of mechanized troops since they had such advantages that they were relatively unexpensive and those developed for non-military use could be used as they were.

General Heinz Guderian, who was called the father of German tank troops and vigorously promoted the mechanization of the German Army, looked back upon the summer of 1930 saying, "The third Prussian motorized battalion under my command consisted of four companies. The first company was of armoured reconnaissance cars, the second was of armoured cars, and the third was of armoured cars with wooden dummy guns. On account of financial retrenchment and the limitation of the Treaty of Versailles, each of these armoured cars was a sham one. Among my four companies, it was only the motorcycle company that had regular equipment and machine guns." Motorcycle units were not merely used for an ordely purpose. Just like tank troops in early years, they grew into the main body of ground troops in place of cavalry in 1934 to 1935. After the outbreak of the war, motorcycle units ran across all battlefields as elite ones. They always led the van of mobile troops and fully displayed their superiority. About 1942, they were provided with the Schwimmwagen, armoured cars and even tanks, and became the main body of reconnaissance battalions. In 1943, they further grew into an essential part of tank grenadier divisions. In the latter half of the war, however, their leading place was gradually taken by half-track motorcycles (kettenkrad) which were better suited to bad roads.

The German Army grouped motorcycles into three classes according to their displacement: small class... under 350 cc; middle class... 350 cc-500 cc; and large class... over 500 cc. The large class contained motorcycles with the standard sidecar. Among quite a number of motorcycles of the German Army including the Zundapp, the NSU and DKW, those manufactured by BMW Bavarian Motor Works were most widely used. Especially the R12 of 750 cc class with excellent acceleration was appreciated by motorcycle soldiers. As warfare spread to Poland and France after the outbreak of World War II, a question arised if motorcycles were serviceable in actual fighting. On the Eastern Front, it was proved they were unsatisfactory in durability. Motorcycles of the small class under 350 cc were rendered almost unusable in a few days' battle. The large class which was manufactured before the beginning of the war lasted only several weeks. The country of Russia was too vast for motorcycles to run across. It was the BMW Model R75 having tough body and reverse gear that appeared at this point of time and displayed excellent ability. BMW's traditional 2-cylinder flat engine of 746cc had a maximum output of 26 hp and gave the 400 kg motorcycle with a sidecar a maximum speed of 95 km/h. Carrying a MG34 or sometimes even a trench mortar on its sidecar, the R75 served as the spearhead of attacks and showed activity. It was also used by the Waffen S.S. which guarded Hitler. A large number of the R75 were employed by the Afrika Korps under the command of General Rommel and stood battles in severe, hot deserts, which raised its reputation further. The production of the BMW Model R75 was started in the autumn of 1940, and about 16,500 were sent to battlefields until the end of the war. The K-M72 motorcycle which is being used by the Russian Army is a slavish copy of the German R75 captured during the war. This directly slavish may safely say, how excellent was the BMW Model R75.

Essential Specifications

- * Overall length : 2.40 m * Overall height : 1.00 m * Overall width : 1.73 m
- * Weight : 400 kg (including sidecar) * Engine : BMW air-cooled 2-cylinder flat engine of 746 cc * Maximum output : 26 hp/4,400rpm
- * Maximum speed : 95 km/h (when carrying sidecar)



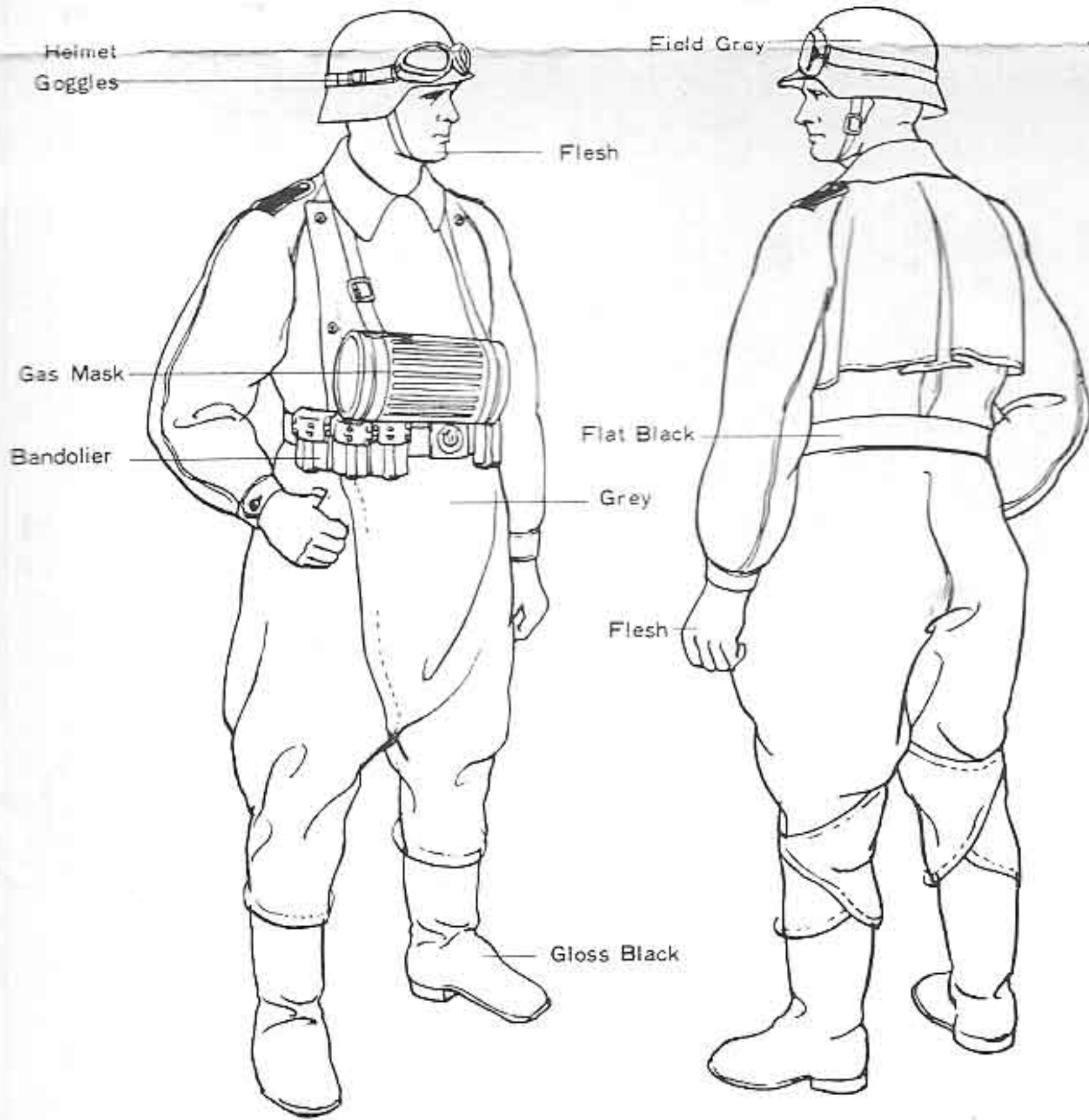
Motorcycle Units

A tank division had motorcycle infantry units. Two or three motorcycle companies and a HQ company formed a motorcycle battalion. A motorcycle company had 18 motorcycles some of which were equipped with a sidecar. After the wars against Poland and France, however, the motorcycle infantrymen were incorporated into the Tank Grenadier and the Tank Reconnaissance Battalion. An average infantry division on the Eastern Front in the early stage of the war used 452 motorcycles including those with a sidecar, made up as follows: 17 (HQ company), 45 (reconnaissance unit), 32 (signal battalion), 141 (infantry regiment), 40 (artillery regiment), 45 (antitank gun battalion), 44 (engineer battalion) and 88 (supply unit). An average infantry division

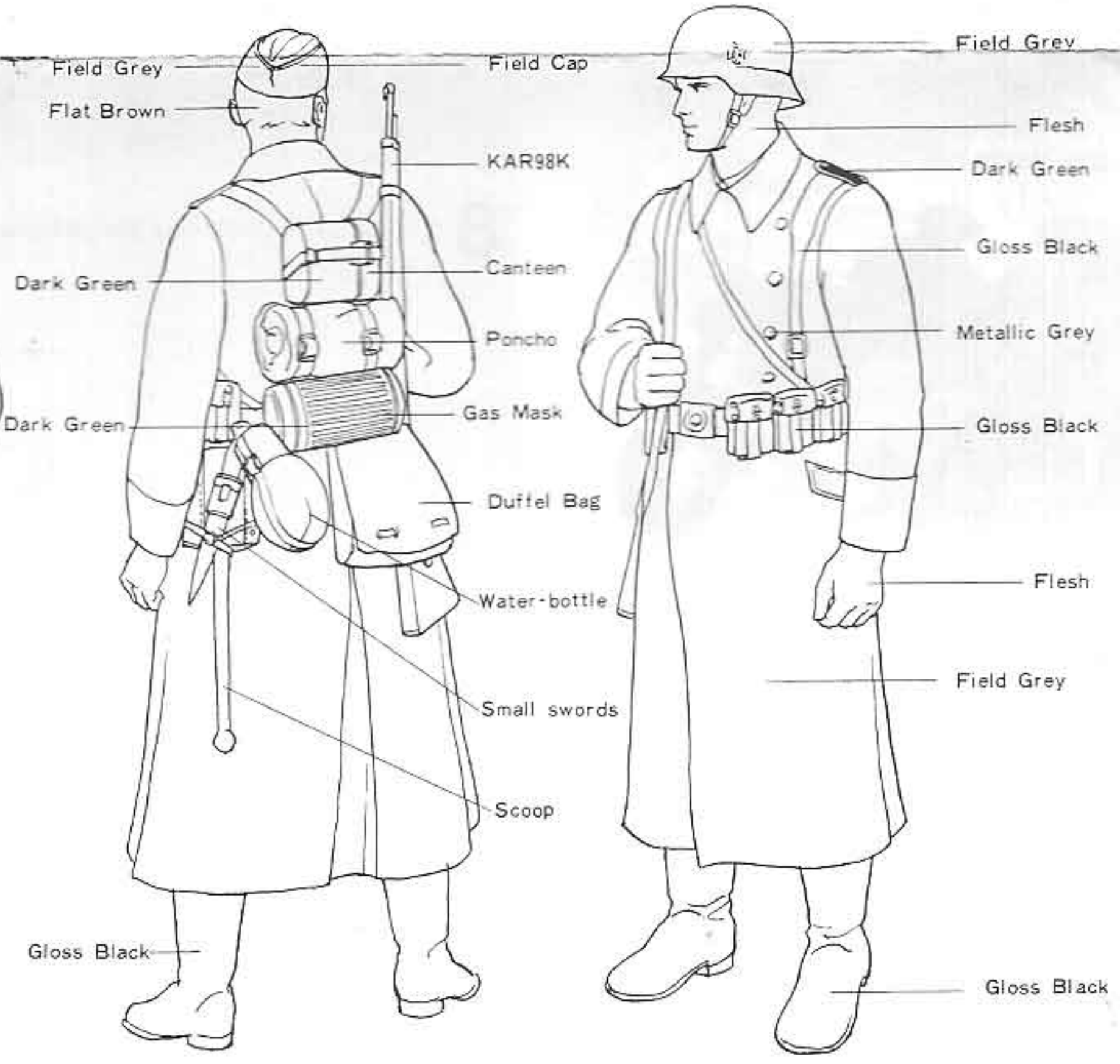
in 1943 to 1944 came to use an increasing number of Kübelwagens and Kettenkrad which had excellent durability and various uses in place of motorcycles. Thus, the number of motorcycles it used was reduced to 168.

Motorcycles and their units played an unimaginably important role in German troops during World War II. Each of the motorcycle soldiers ran by himself across muddy ground, snowy and frozen battlefields or the sands where he had no place to hide himself in to carry orders, necessities or wounded soldiers. Motorcycle soldiers were unforgettable and reliable "comrades" for German officers and men.

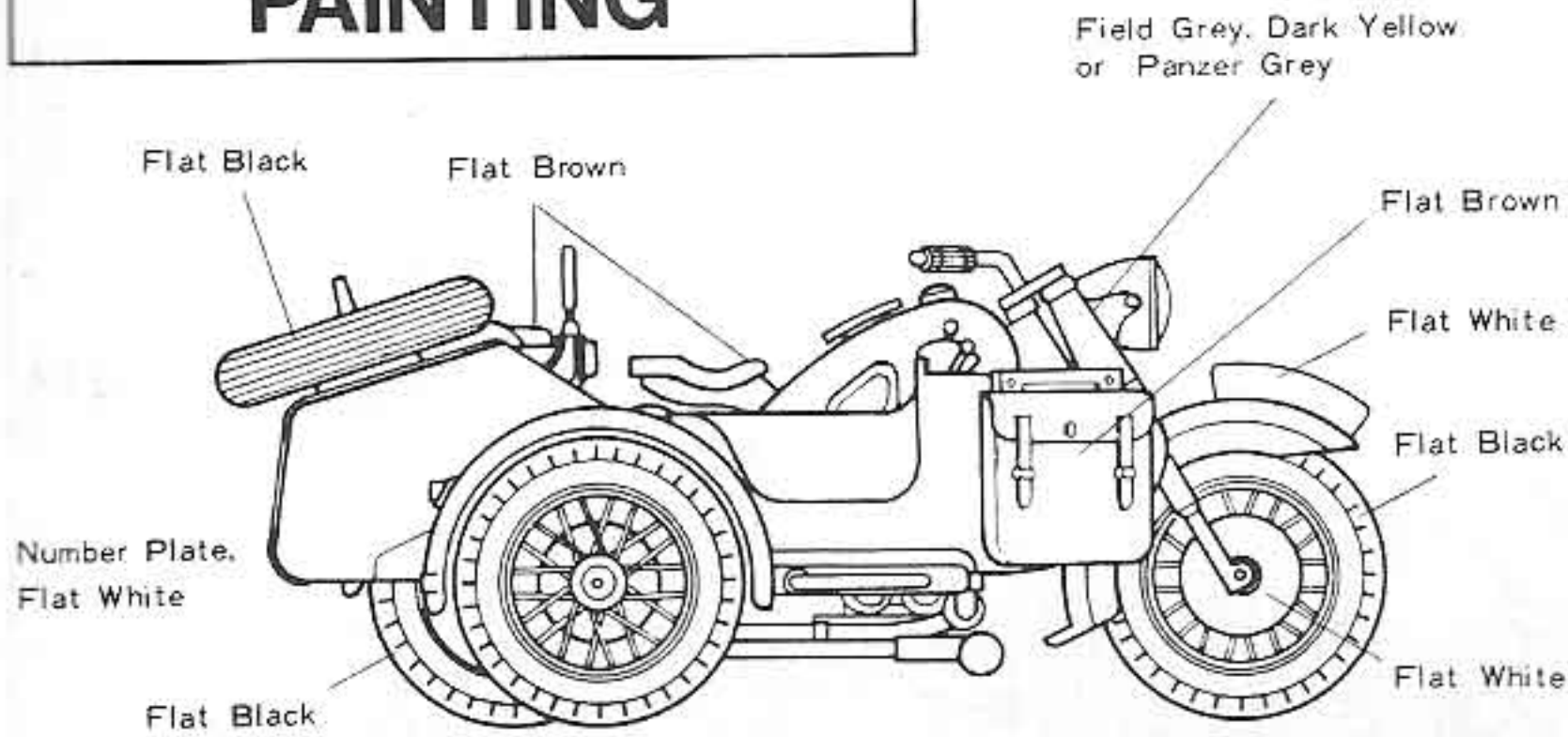
Uniform of Motorcycle Soldier



Infantrymen(wearing an overcoat)



PAINTING



Motorcycles and their sidecars which showed activity in Europe, especially on the Eastern Front, were painted field grey or panzer grey, while those used by the Afrika Korpe were dark yellow. At that time there were no camouflaged motorcycles but after 1943 German military vehicles came to be painted mainly in dark yellow and a small number of motorcycles wore camouflage painting, e.g. dark yellow spotted with red brown and dark green, dark yellow spotted with red brown only and unicoloured camouflage of dark green. For painting of your motorcycle, see the illustration. If flat earth (for mud) and flat black (for soot on the exhaust pipe) are applied onto the basic painting, your model will look more like the real BMW-75 Sidecar.

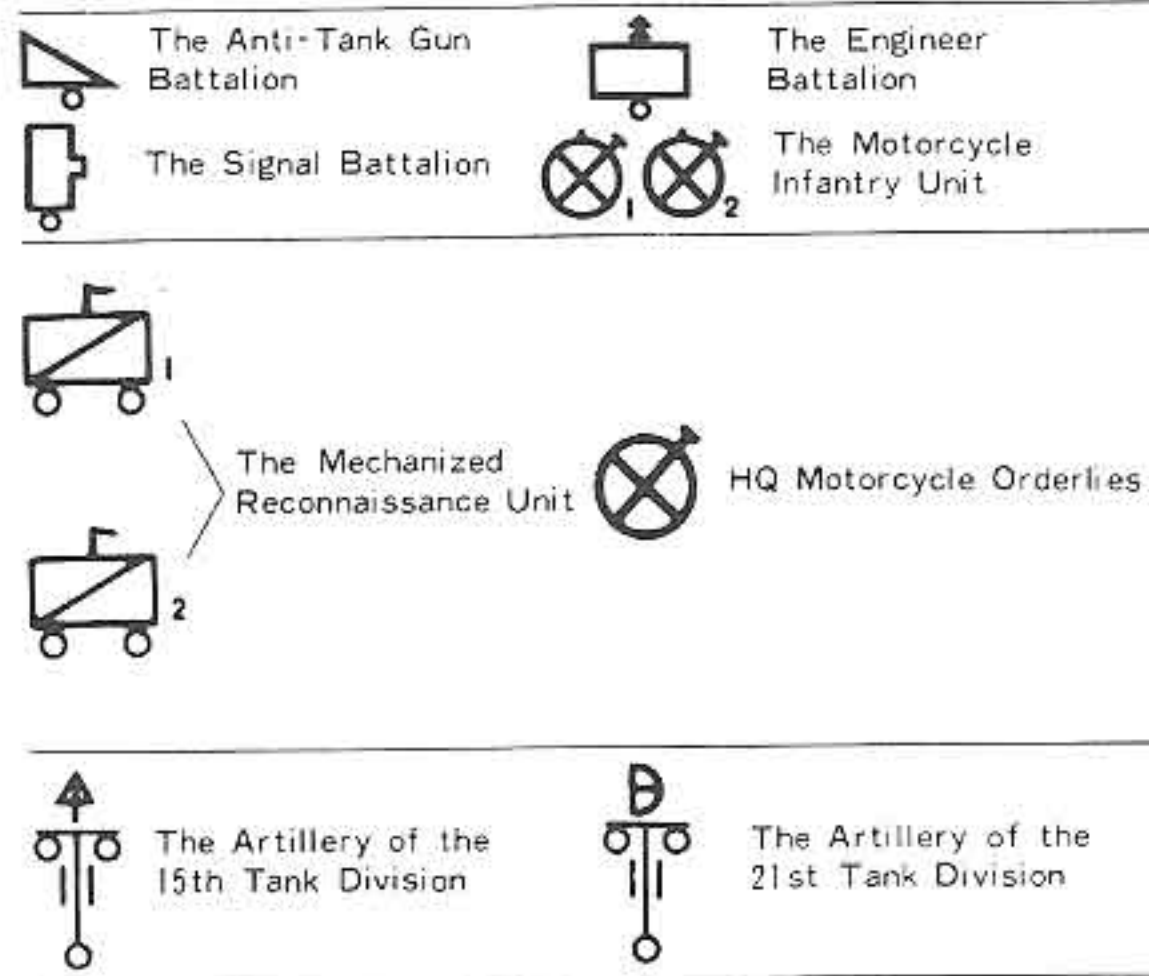
APPLYING DECALS

Divisional marks at left can be used in combination with tactical marks given in corresponding column at right.

Divisional Marks

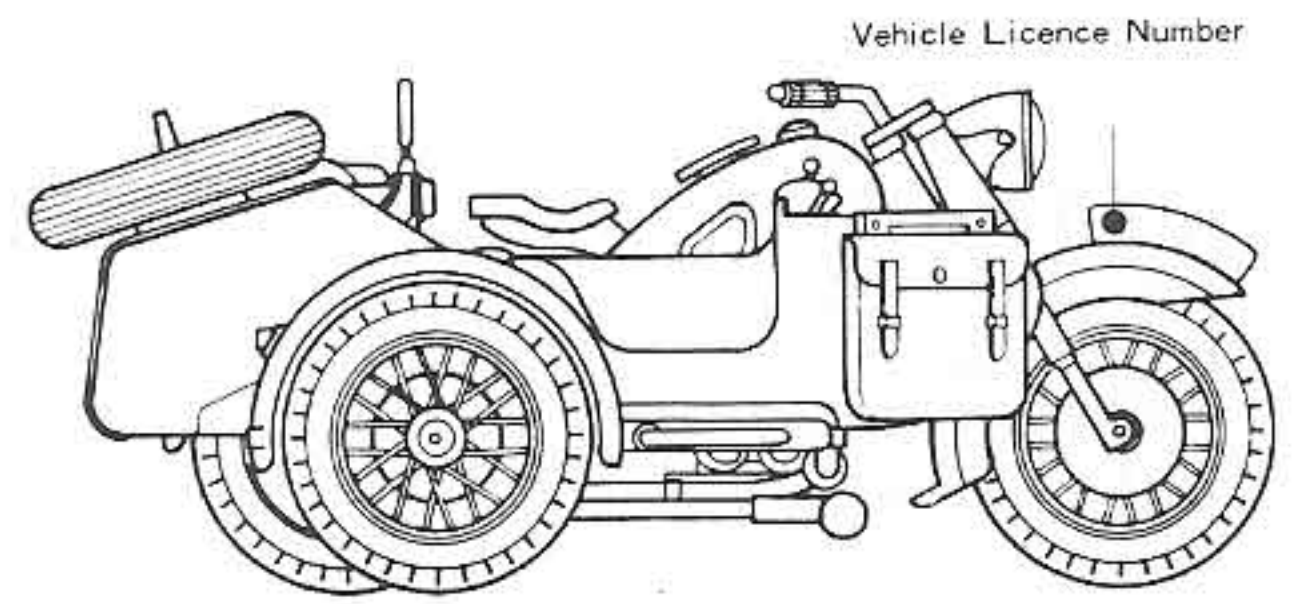
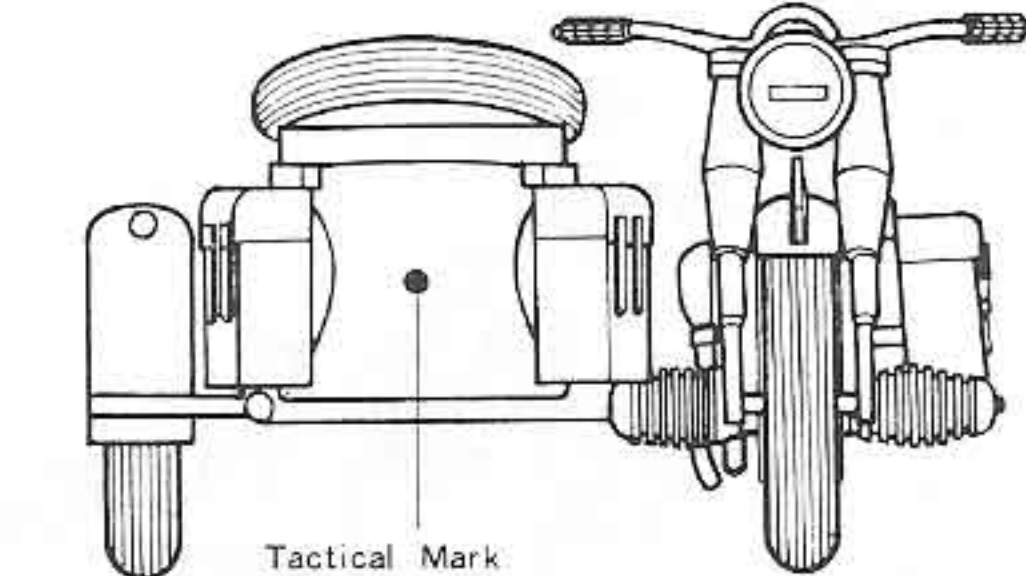
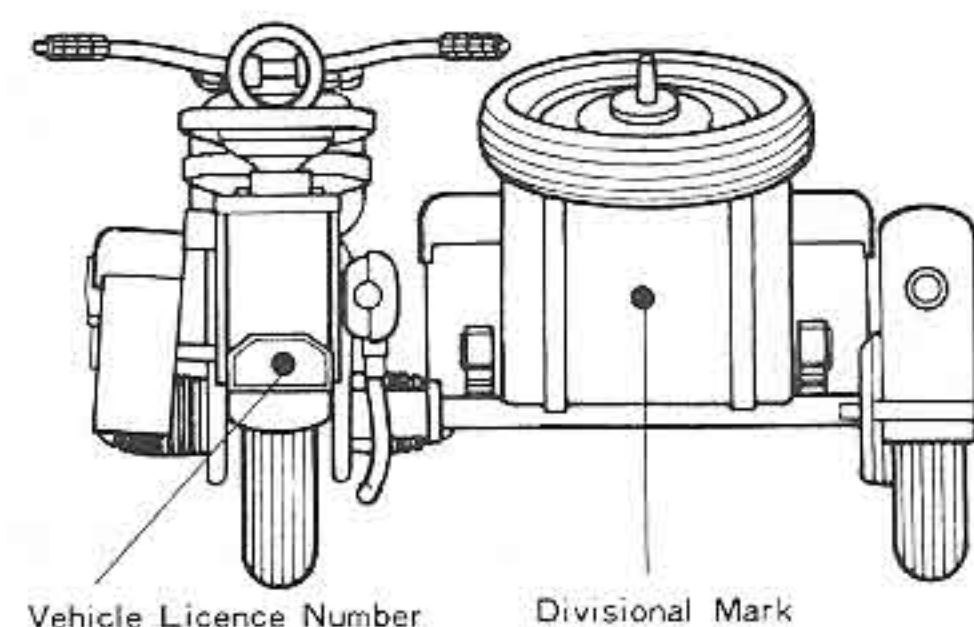


Tactical Marks

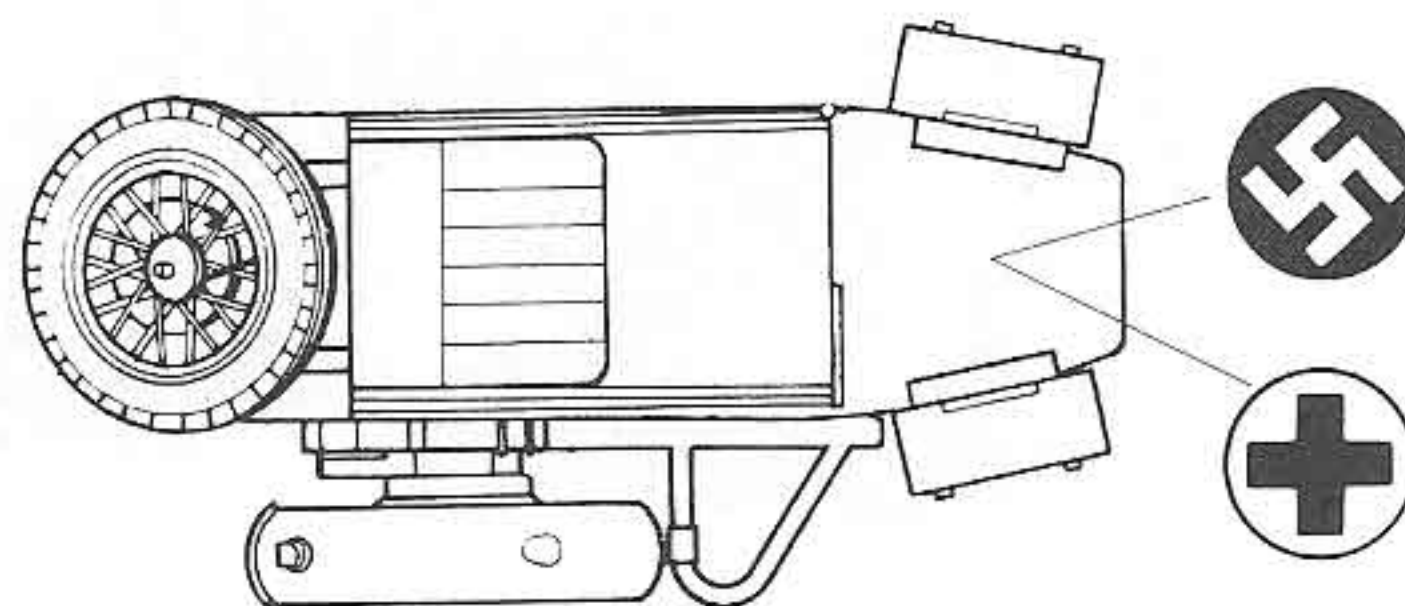


Vehicle Licence Numbers

WH 188 802	The Reichswehr	WH-188 802
WH 992 10		WH-992 10
99340		44-99340
156702	The Waffen SS	44-156 702
WL 137902		WL-137902
WL 99530	The Luftwaffe	WL-99530



- K** Mark applied to vehicles of the 1st Tank Group under the command of General Kleist.
- G** Mark applied to vehicles of the 2nd Tank Group under the command of General Guderian.



In the initial stage of the war, the Haken-kreuz was applied for identification from the air.
Mark used by medical corps of all divisions.

In the initial stage of the war, "K" and "G" were applied to the front and the rear of sidecars.

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R/75 SIDE CAR



★Be sure to read the following instructions carefully and see the figures well before your assembly work.

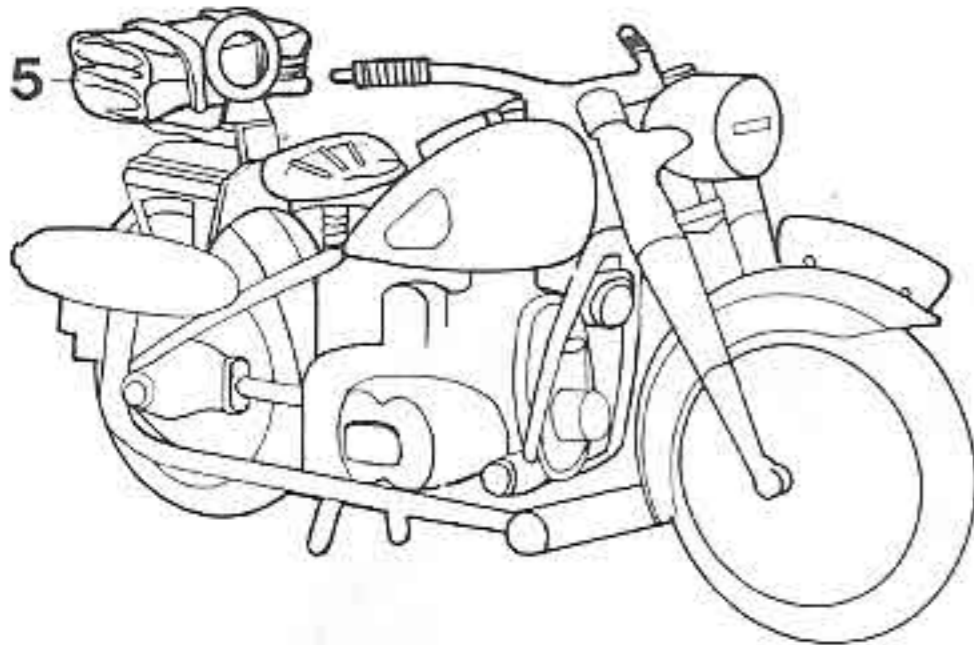
★This Kit contains very small parts. They should be removed from the runner carefully.

★Get a pair of nippers, a file, a cutter and the like ready for use.

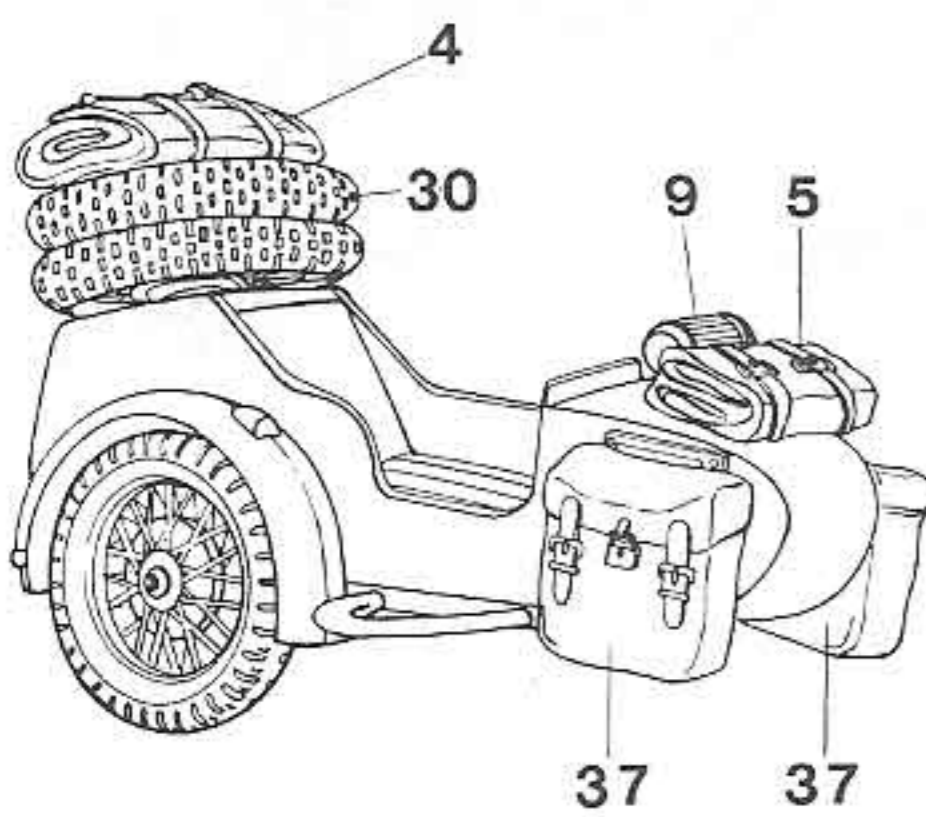
Equipment May Be Fixed As You Like

When marching, the sidecar mounted duffel bags, spare tyres and the like together on its body. Considering various circumstances, make a suitable combination of equipment.

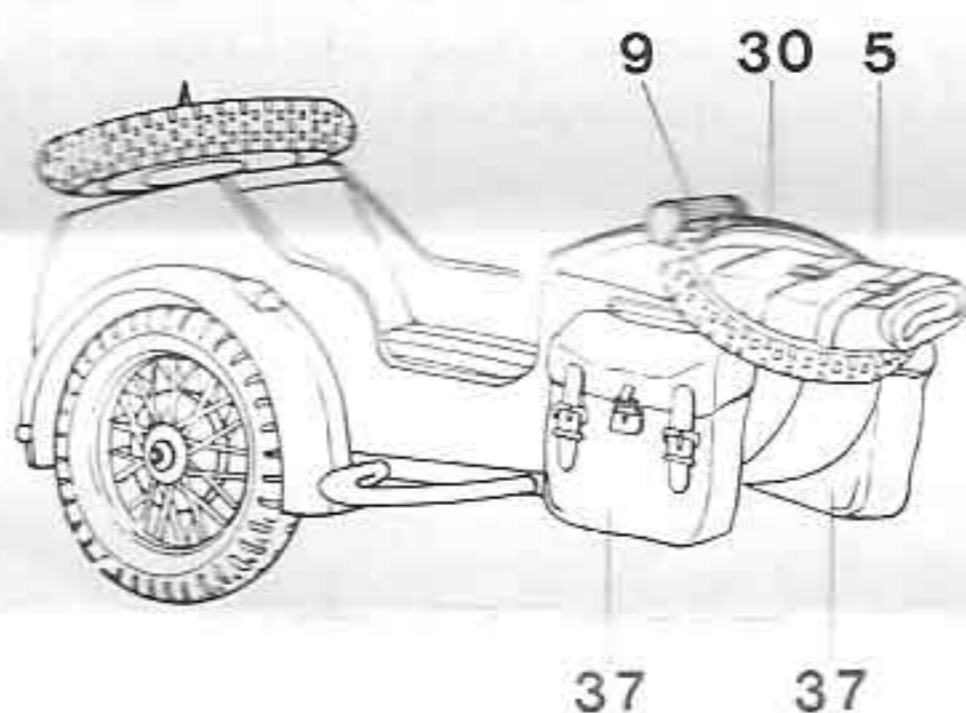
When Mounted on Motorcycle



When Mounted on Sidecar. A

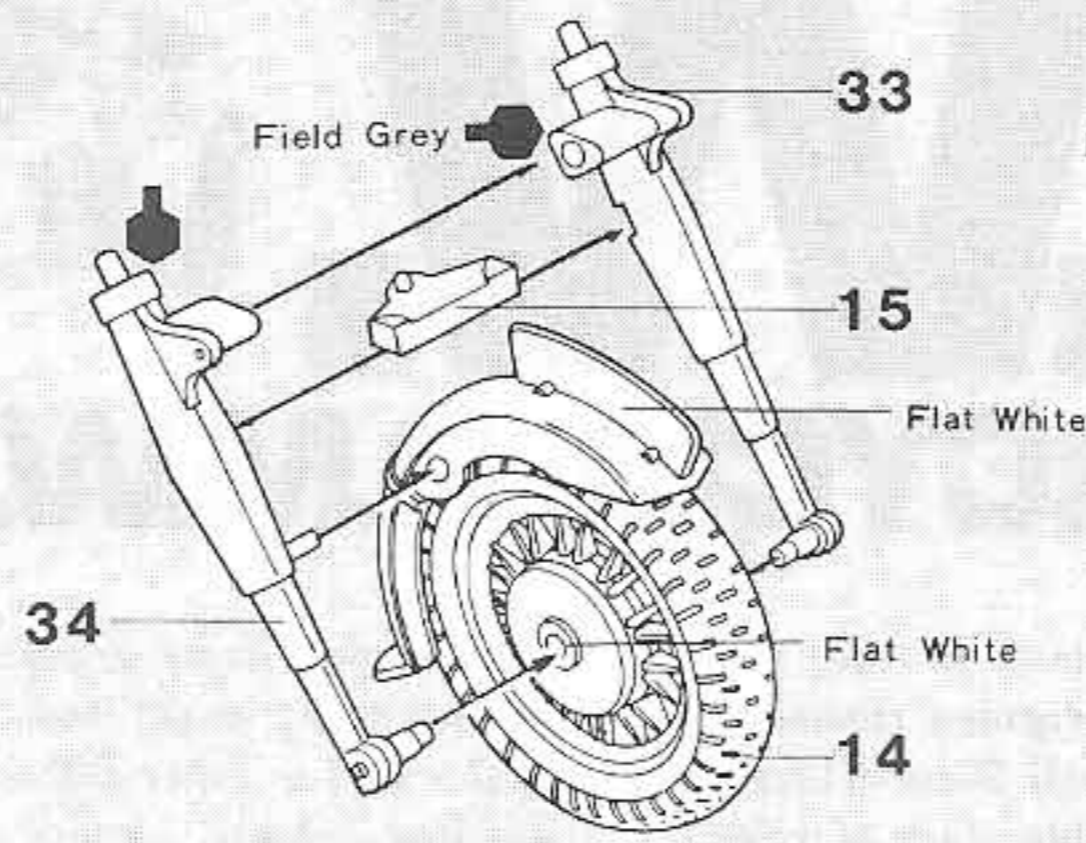


When Mounted on Sidecar. B

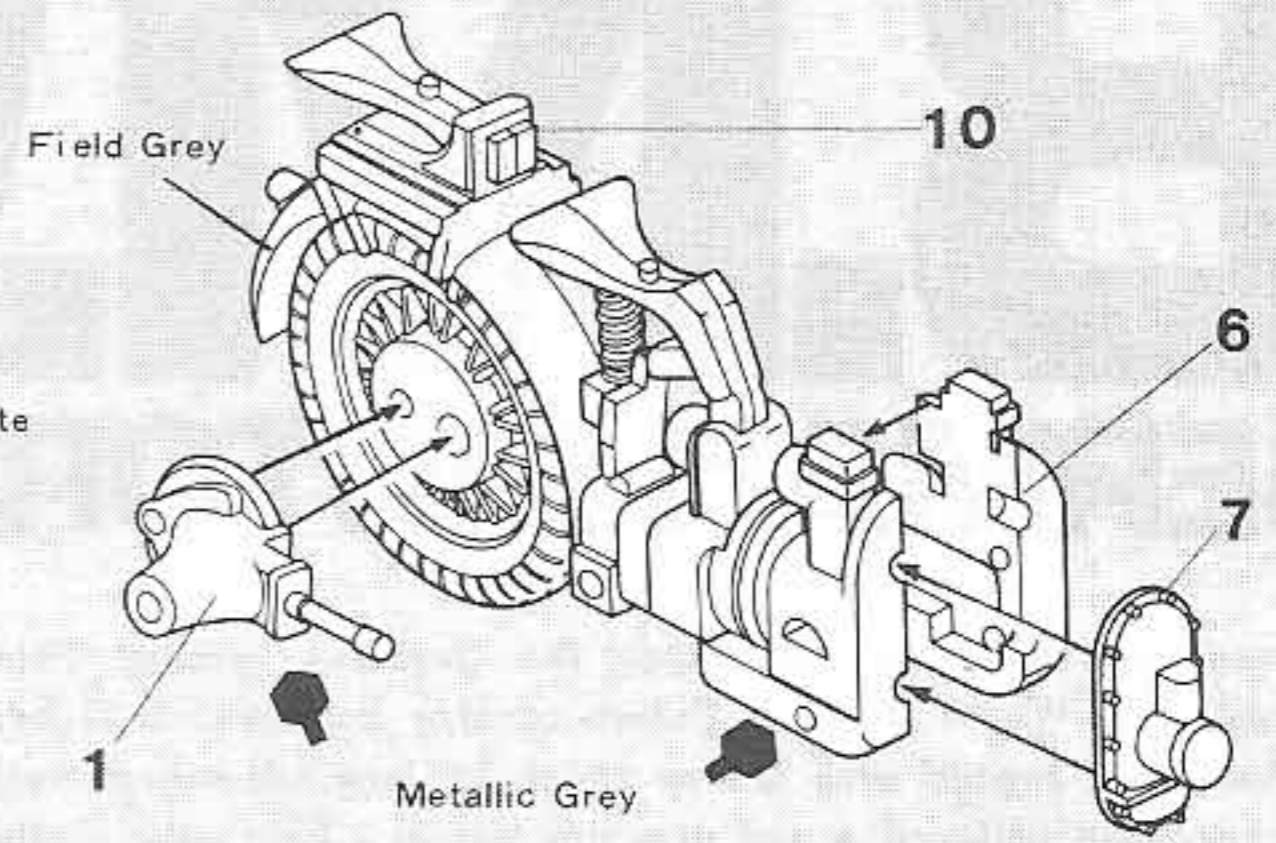


Night Marks

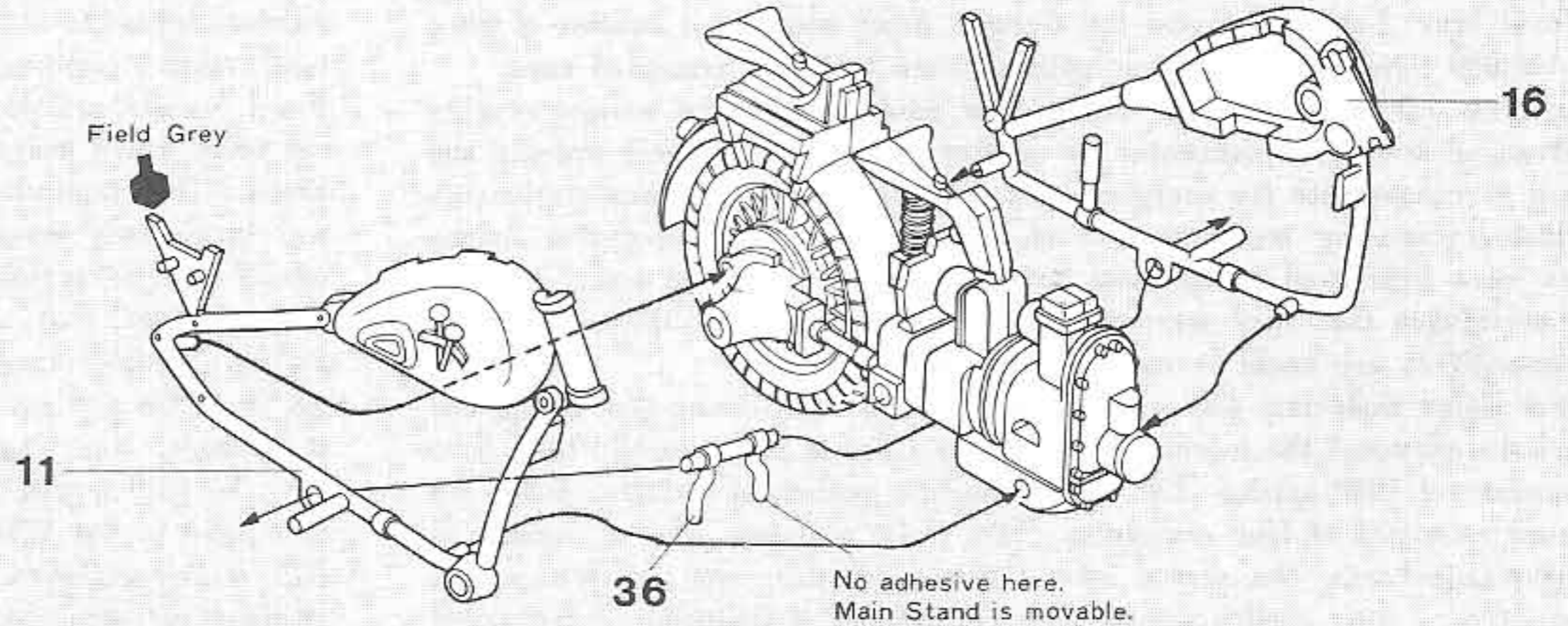
1 Construction of Front Fork



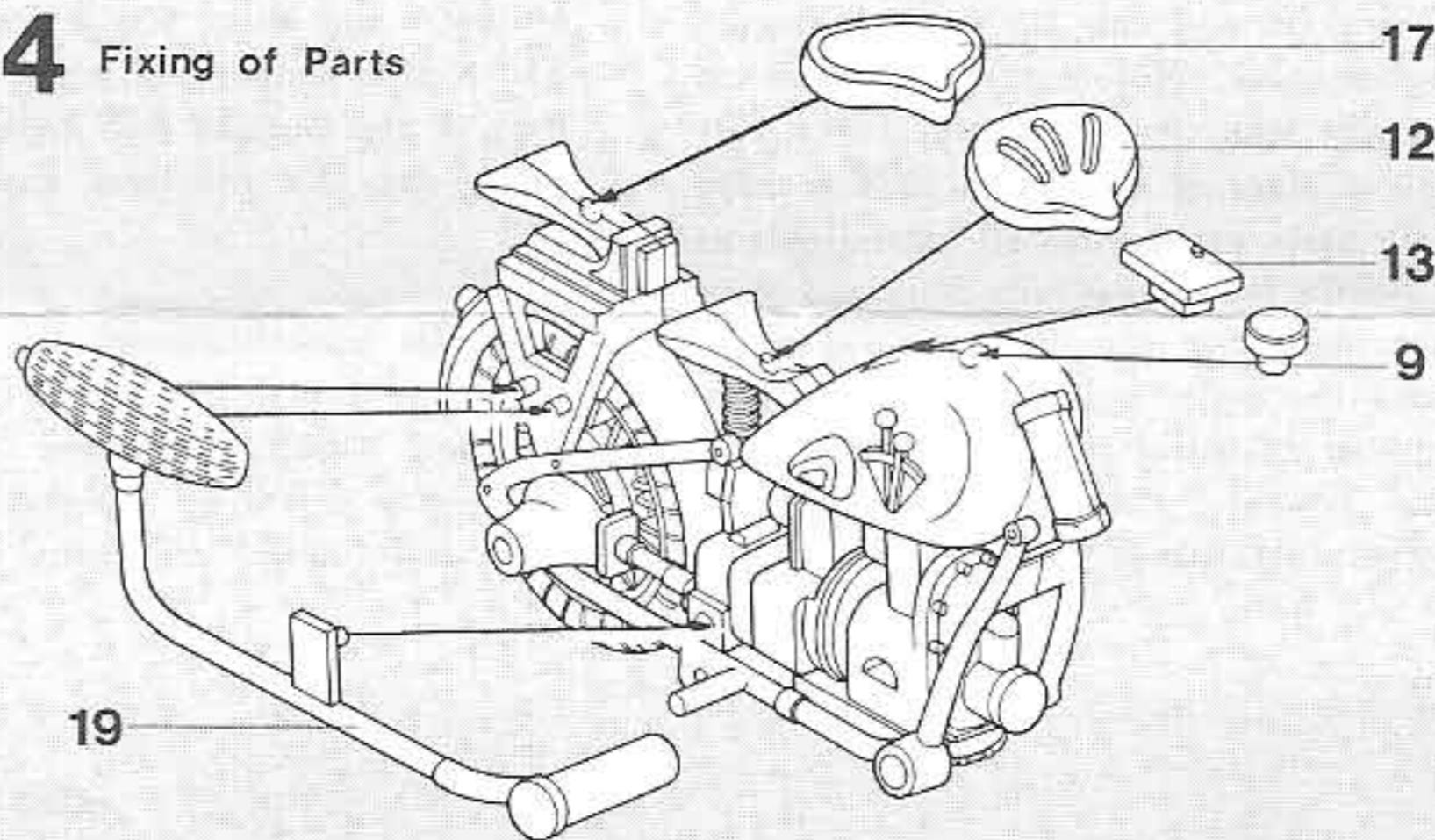
2 Construction of Motorcycle Body



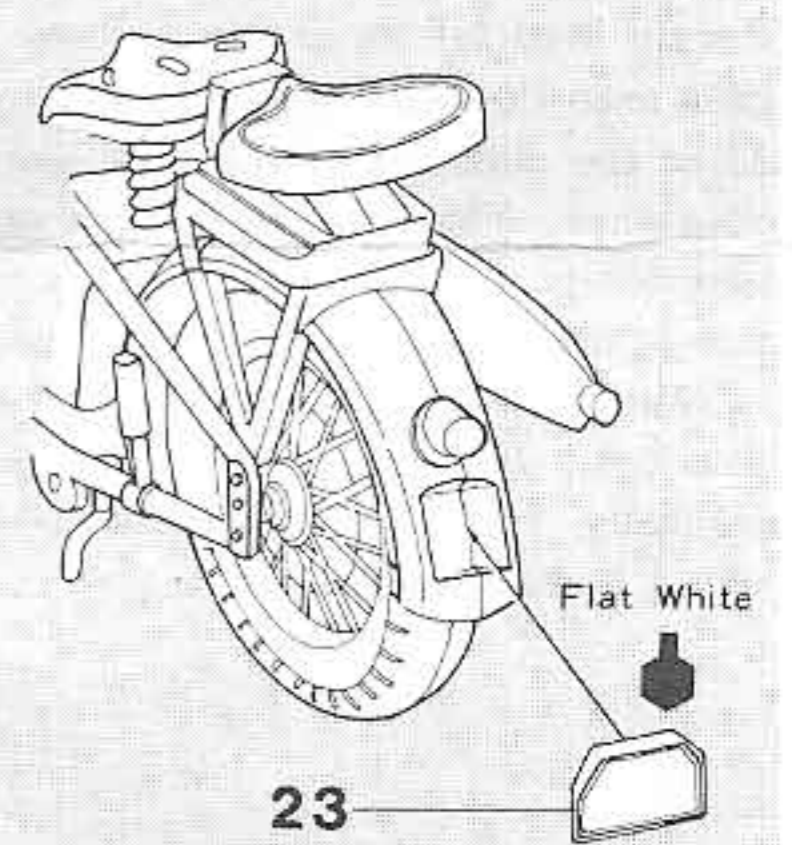
3 Construction of Frame



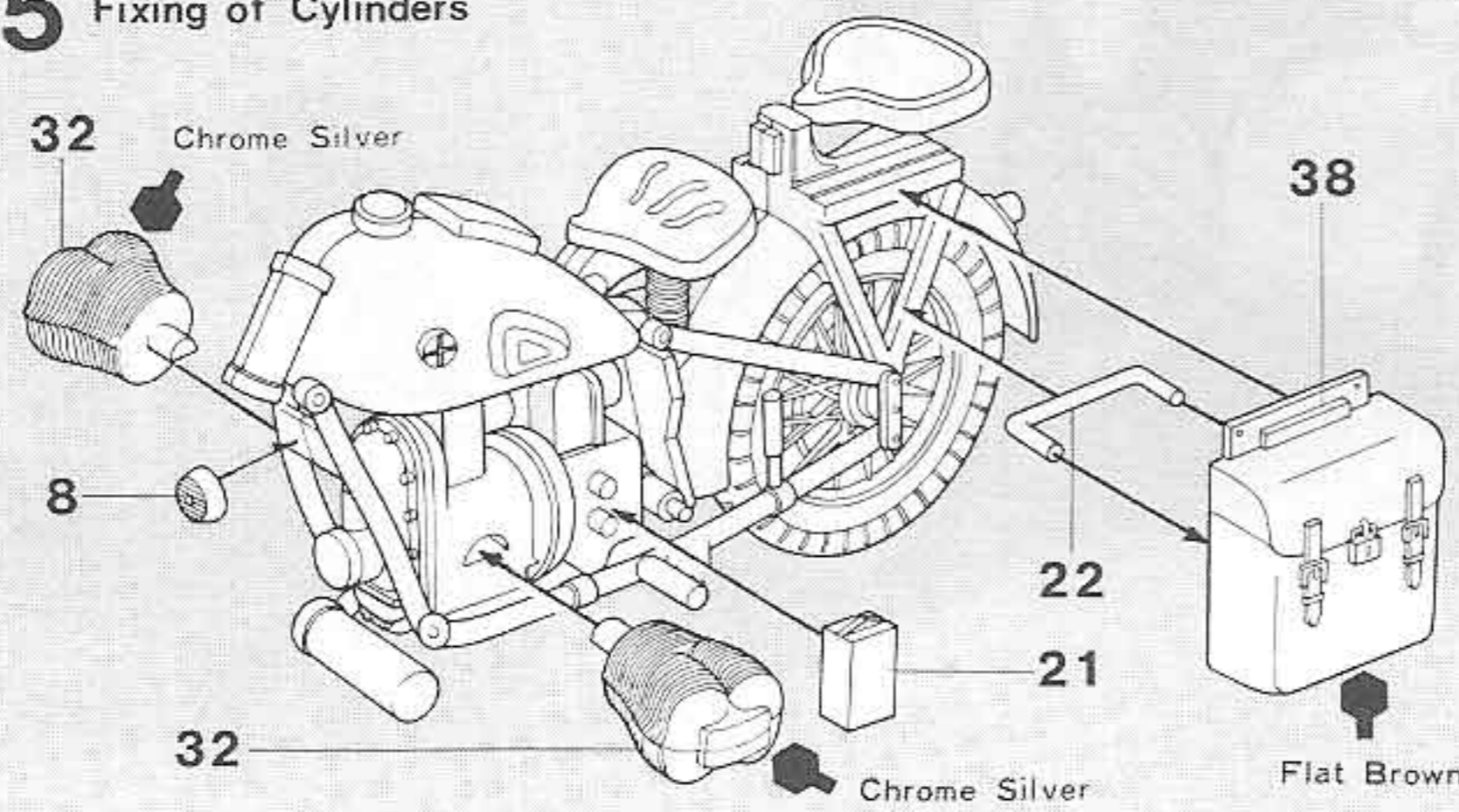
4 Fixing of Parts



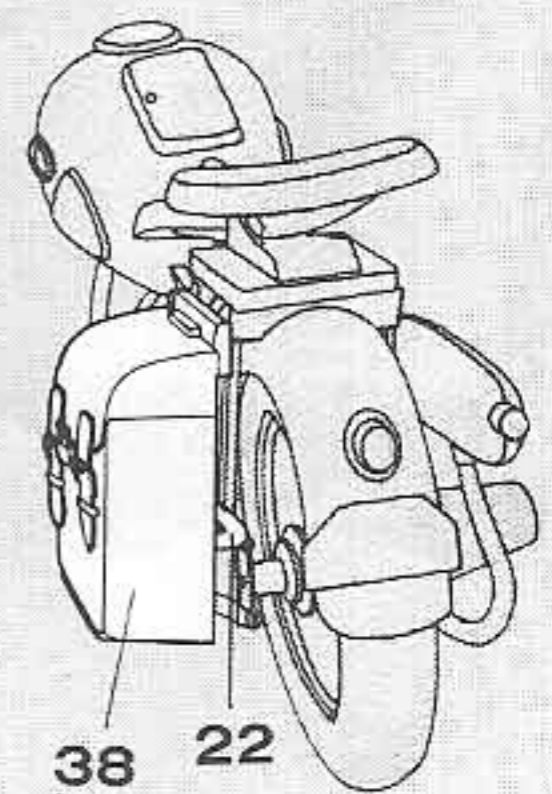
Fixing of Number Plate



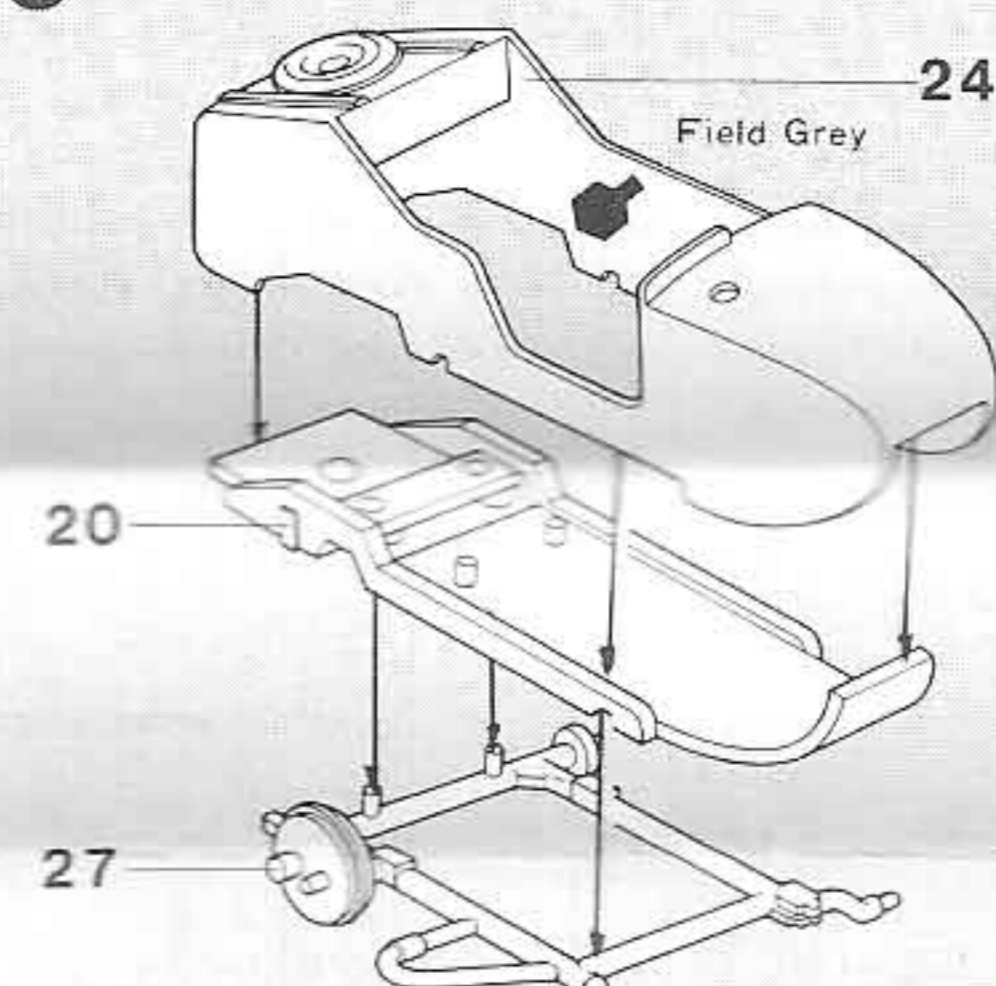
5 Fixing of Cylinders



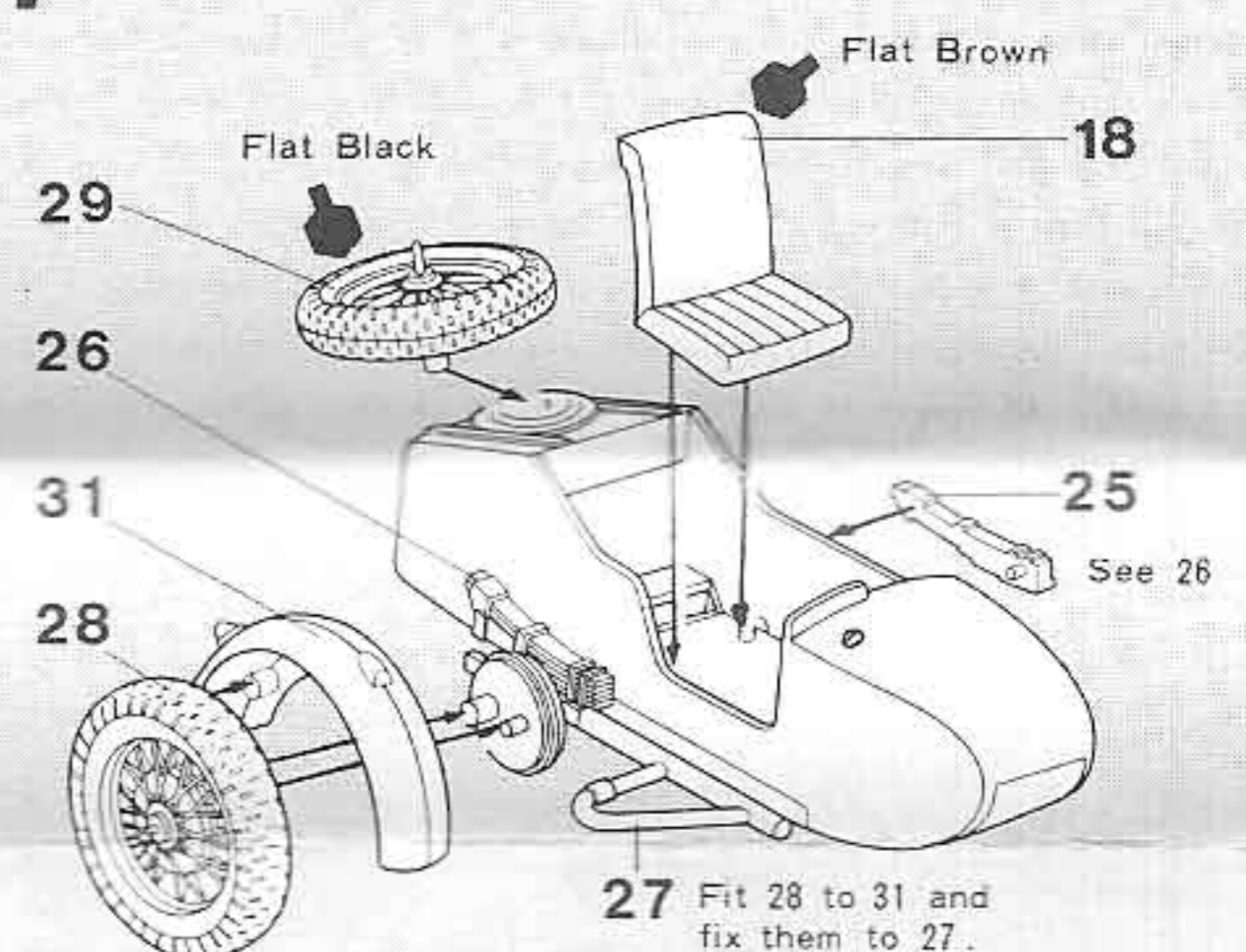
Fixing of Side Bag



6 Construction of Sidecar Body



7 Fixing of Sidecar Parts

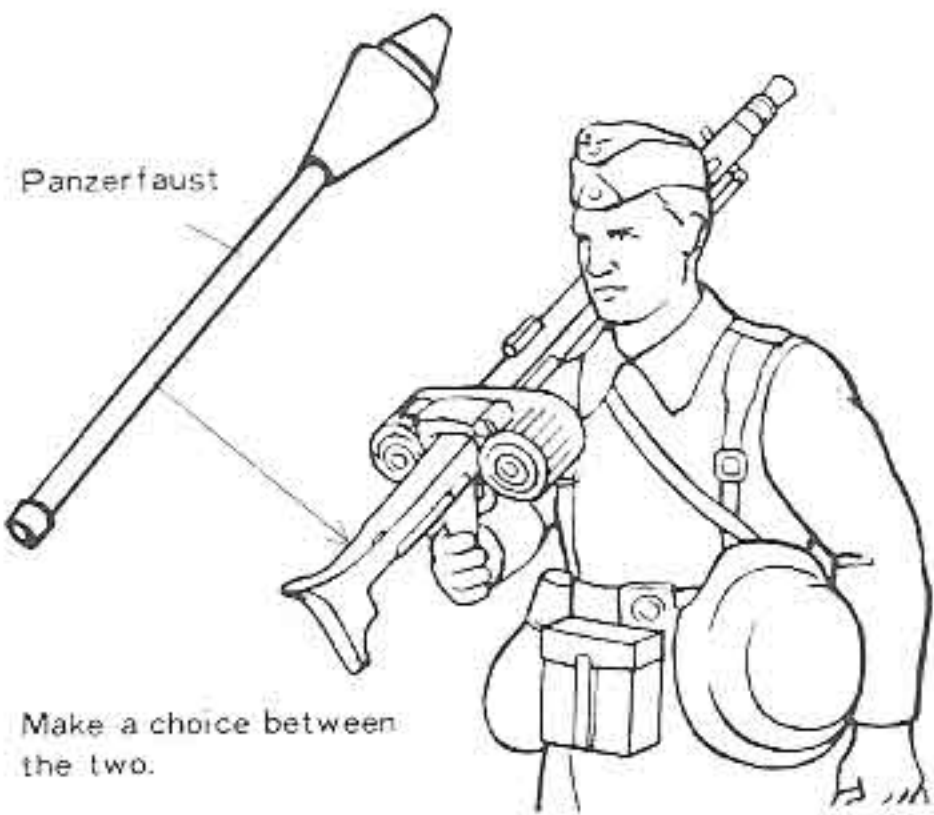


Night Marks



In the initial stage of the war, motorcycles painted German grey had white paint on the front and rear sides of motorcycle and sidecar fenders so that the vehicle width could be seen at night.

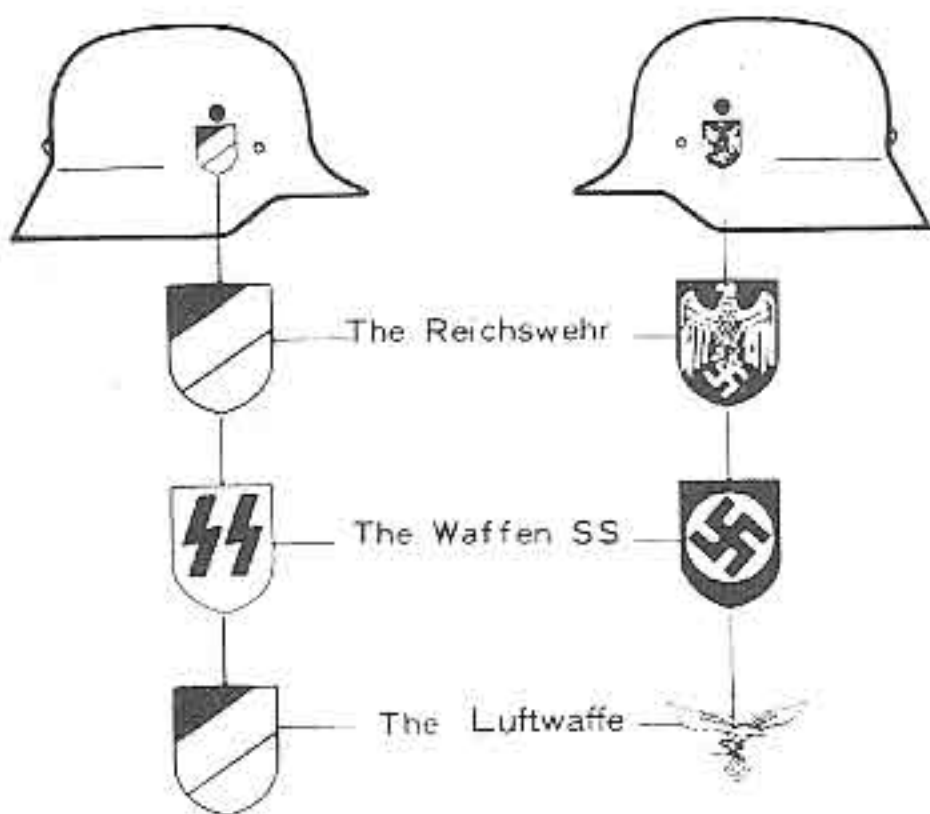
Panzerfaust



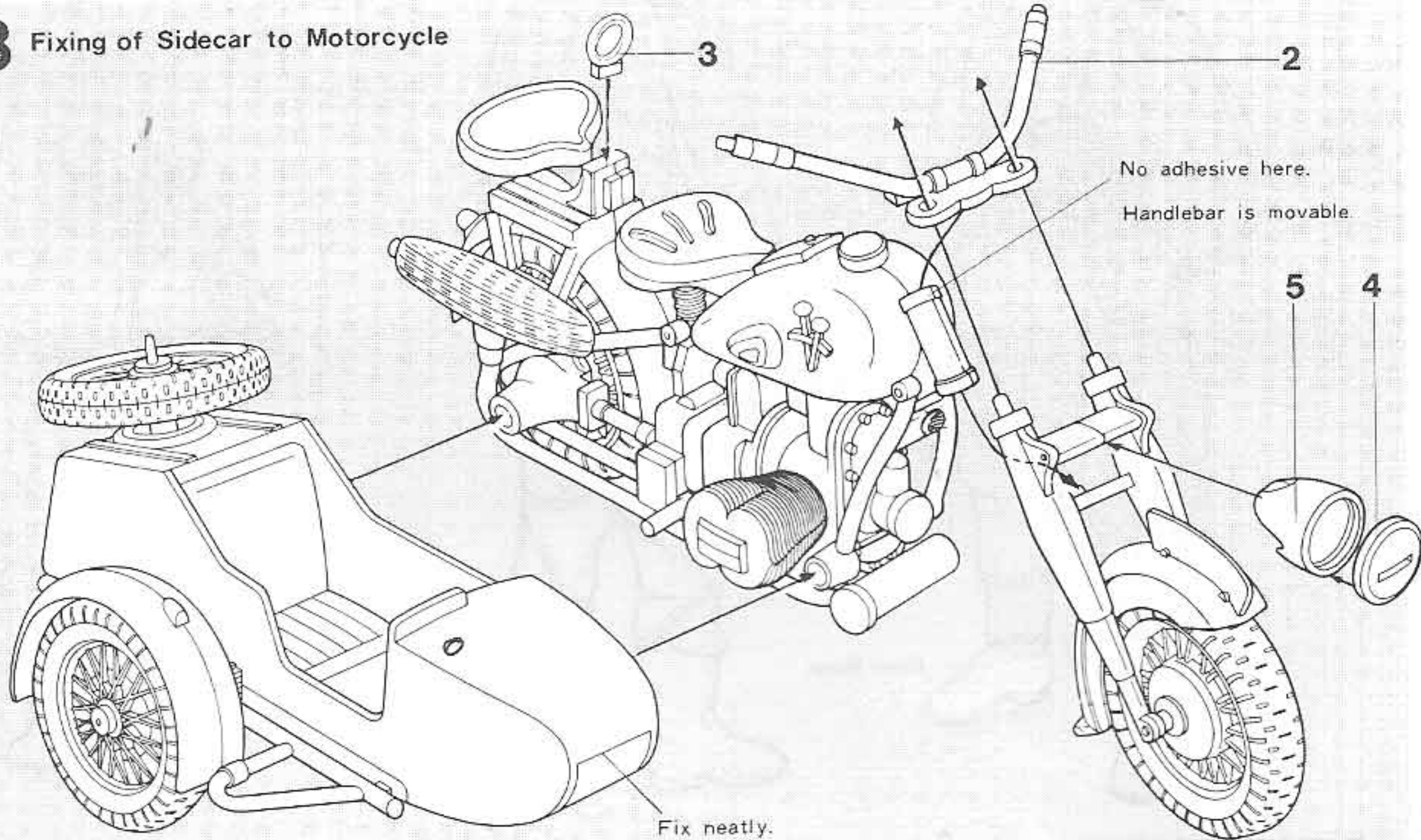
Make a choice between the two.

The Panzerfaust came to be used about 1944 as an anti-tank weapon. It should not be used in combination with the motorcycle wearing slide marks of the Afrika Korps or those used on the Eastern Front. So with the MG-42 machine gun.

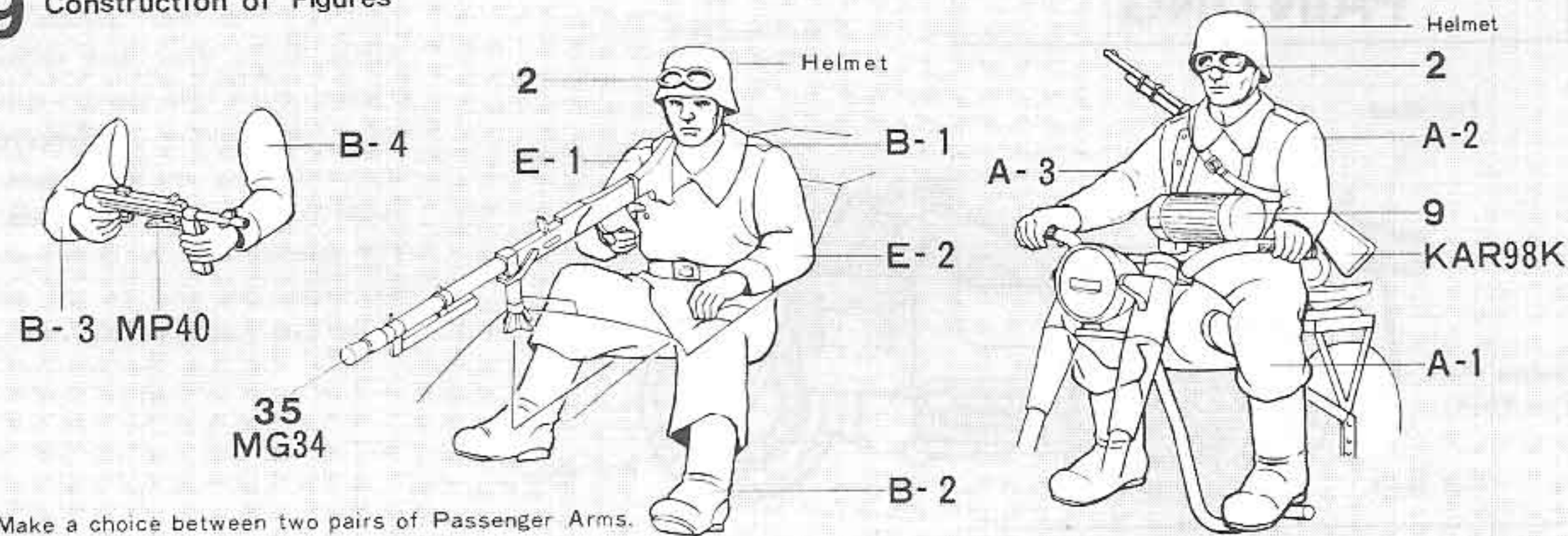
Marks on Helmet



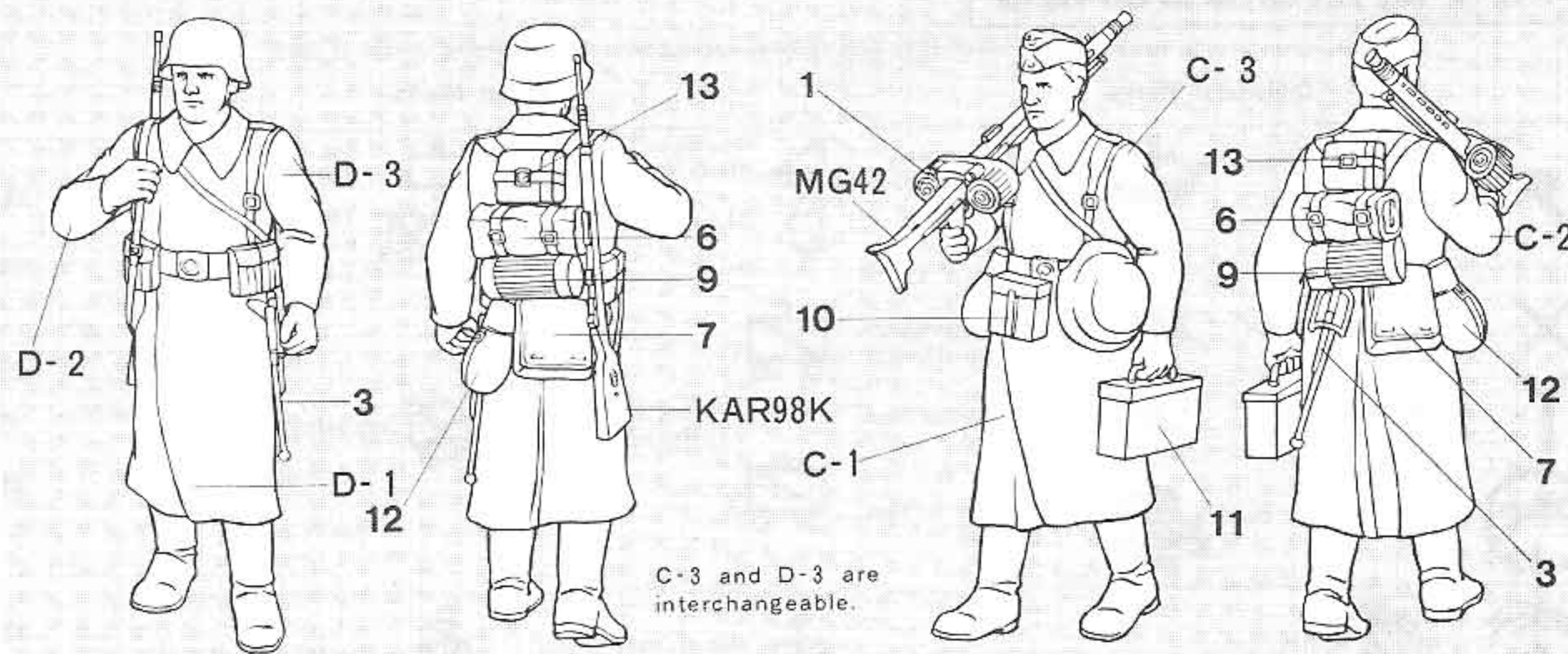
8 Fixing of Sidecar to Motorcycle



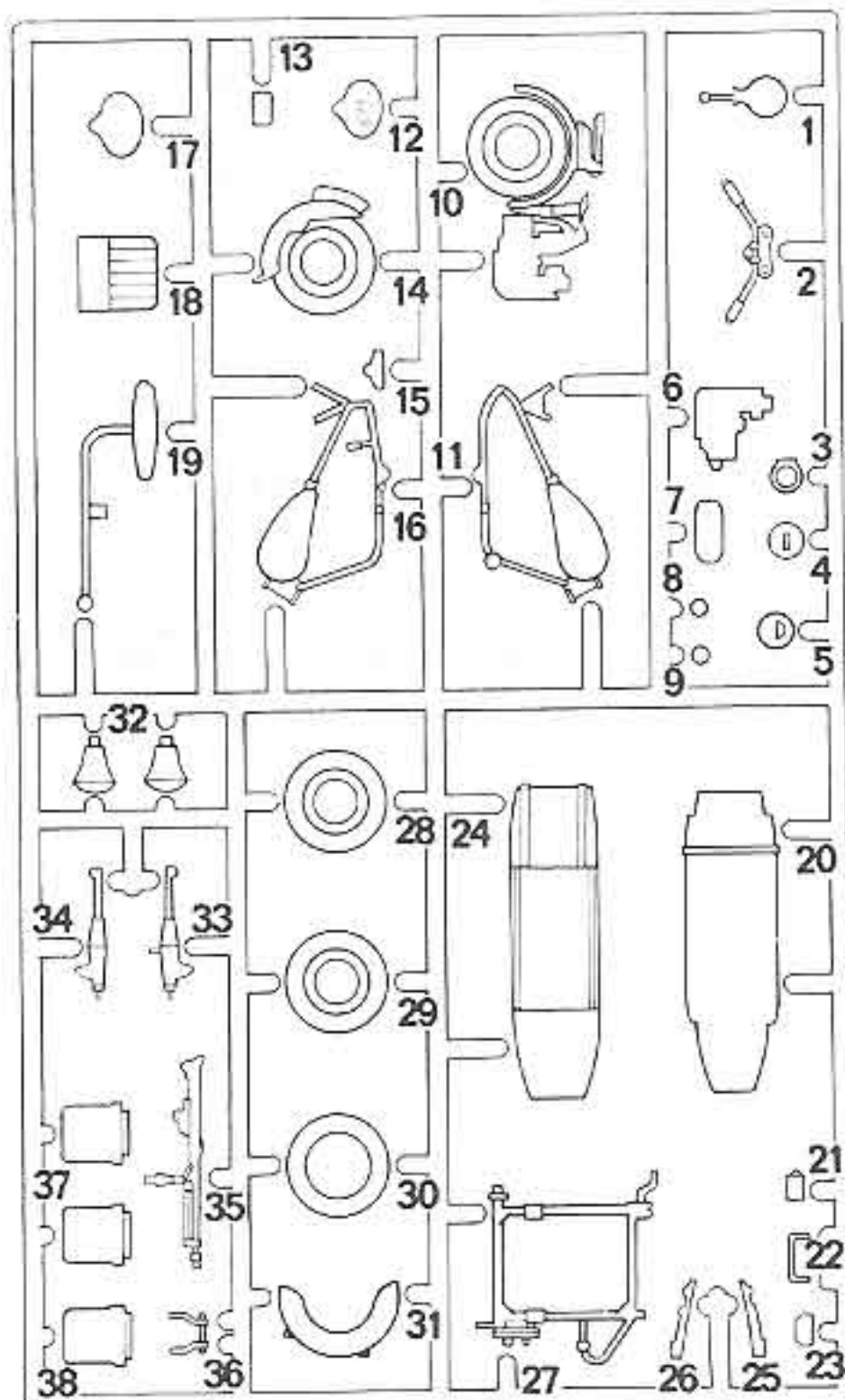
9 Construction of Figures



Make a choice between two pairs of Passenger Arms.



C-3 and D-3 are interchangeable.



Some of the figures shown in this picture are remodelled.