

Hot Wheels SF-themed items

Review by Jonathan Aird

A little while ago, I rekindled my interest in Hot Wheels toy cars as potential items for wargaming. The standard retail price for Hot Wheels vehicles is £1.25. They can sometimes be found for as little as £1 and, if suitably cherry-picked, contain many useful items at a very reasonable price. There are, of course, plenty of ordinary cars in the range produced that fit in with 15mm and, to a lesser extent, 20mm figures, as well for modern and recent past wargames. A littered landscape of wrecked vehicles -- and second-hand items for crashed and trashed scenery can be easily found for just pennies -- for a post-apocalyptic game (did someone say zombies?) is easily obtainable. For a 15mm apocalypse at least. There are also a number of ōwackyō vehicles released every year, some of which are of potential interest, and again there are also some movie and TV tie-in items. This review looks at a few of the latter.

First up is a real piece of space kit -- the Mars Curiosity Rover. This is a nicely detailed model -- 55mm long and 32mm wide making it roughly 1:52 scale. It will, therefore, look pretty good with 25mm figures to represent itself or a similar probe device or some kind of fetch and carry robot. It could also be used with 15mm figures, or even 6mm figures, where it could easily represent an automated giant wheeled ōtankō -- various probes just cry out to be designated as laser weapons and the rear of the rover has a sloped payload area which looks perfect for use as a missile launcher -- this is an item with some potential!



Second up is The Batmobile -- this appears to not be one of the various film versions, but matches to the Batman Animated Cartoon Series Batmobile. It's to approximately 1/72nd scale (assuming a fairly large vehicle) and prominently features the engine both on the top of the bonnet and at the sides. With cops and robbers style plastic figures now available in this scale from **Red Box** there's definitely an opportunity to drop it into 20mm superhero gaming.



And finally, again from the world of Batman, but this time from the recent Dark Knight series of films -- The BatPod. This is a motorcycle with, in the films, many useful features. On the model, the most prominent examples are the weapons mounted to the front of the broad-wheeled motorcycle. It's otherwise a fairly straightforward little model -- and a good representation of the Batpod. Quite usefully, it is scaled well for 28mm figures, as shown in the pictures. Now, the first thought is to use this in a Superhero game, but really it would also make an ideal ride for Judge Dredd-style paramilitary police in a general science fiction setting. If it were possible to get a figure to sit well on it, then there is even the thought of using it as an attack bike for a full military force (WH40K has many such bike-riding military formation!).

