

Hotwheels – Tie-Fighter spaceship model

Price: RRP £7.99, but actually £1.99

Review by Jonathan Aird

One of the happiest consequences of the new Star Wars film *“Rogue-1”* -- other than the gaining of an excellent new addition to the films set in the Star Wars universe -- is that it initiates a new cycle in the associated merchandising campaign. Which means that anything to do with last year's Star Wars: *The Force Awakens* immediately becomes old hat. And the consequence of that is the wholesale discounting of the products associated with a film that is now an ancient 12 months old. Which, it has to be acknowledged, is for the science fiction wargamer a cause for mild celebration.



First celebration: the Hotwheels range of die-cast Starships and other vehicles supplied with a clear plastic flying stand (where appropriate). These are of the box models representing a large variety of the Star Wars universe modes of transport. The of the box scaling does mean that if they are to be used exactly as what they represent then very few look good together. However, there is ample opportunity to mix and match into other science fiction settings and some of the original models are a bit obscure for other than the real Star Wars fan and so they could be co-opted to represent a very different class of spaceship and a small fighter from Star Wars could be a generic large freighter for example.



Having said that and the first example I found in a discount store was the Tie-Fighter, which, with its hexagonal solar panels, is one of the most iconic spaceship designs of the Star Wars universe. A nominal length for this spaceship is 9m, taken along the longest part of the side panels and this model is 6.5cm long, making it ~1/140th scale: to my mind just close enough to 15mm (1/120th) to make a nice addition to a game in that scale with a representation of a spaceport to be fought over! At just £2, the model is also cheap enough to consider turning into a crashed wreck -- hack off most of one panel and mount it crashed into a sand dune on a 15mm Tatooine. Or -- and this is, I admit, a bit of a radical thought -- use it, alongside other suitable choices from the Star Wars collection, for a ship to ship fighter combat game! Maybe recreate the trench run from *“A New Hope”*. It's a good model of a classic and instantly recognisable design, and certainly robust enough for gaming.

More to follow !