

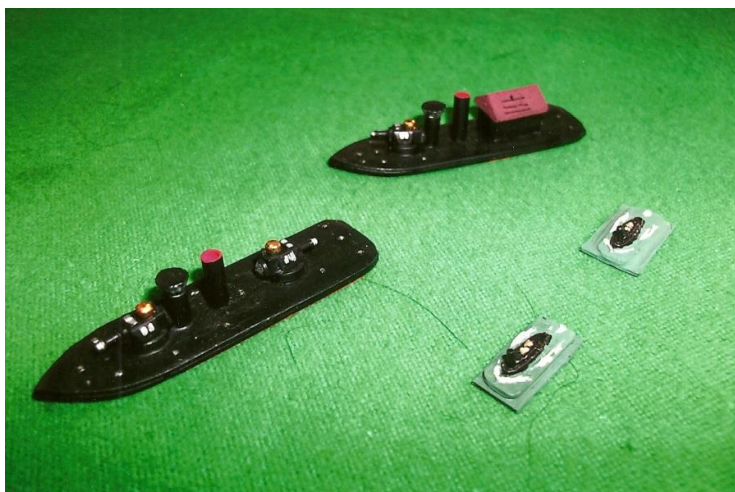
Milwaukee-class Monitors from Navwar 1/1200

Review by Rob Morgan

Like many wargamers, I have a habit of acquiring models which prove after a little thought to be absolutely useless for the purpose I'd intended, and here's a good example, or rather two.

Years ago, I bought a pair of 1/1200th Navwar monitors, of the four-strong Milwaukee class, river monitors from the end of the American Civil War (one apparently survived as a ferry until 1944, I believe!). They were broad, hefty and frankly unattractive. The turrets looked small and the decks looked empty. Not much use on the table top. Mind you, I didn't really need another group of Monitors, so I put them aside until recently.

I was working on a short note about CSS David, and a thought crossed my mind. Out came the two long forgotten Milwaukee's and a brief conversion plan followed. I found three WWII, 1/300th scale Soviet tank turrets, from KVI's I think. These I cemented on top of both of the low turrets of one, and the forward turret of the other. The low pilot tower needed to be bigger, so I cemented a tank wheel hub on top of each. Then a biro tube funnel, 18mm tall over the thin funnel of the original. I didn't bother with a mast, but it would be easy enough.



The second hull, with just a forward tank turret, needed a small 'house' from a Monopoly set cemented over the old turret position aft. It looks rather like a seaplane hangar, but without a crane. That's another option, of course, plenty of suitable cranes to be found in model ship kits. Seaplane carrier, or balloon ship, possibly? Or, as in this case, a Torpedo Boat carrier, and you see her here, aft of her gun-armed sister

ship, having just launched two torpedo boats (Peter Pig 1/600th in this case).

The scale of the two models is now a more respectable 1/600th, by the way, and they are truly riverine craft by the look of them. Sprayed black overall, and with gunmetal, red and gold touches. It's a fairly basic conversion, no super-detailing, but that would be easy enough. You can add ship's boats or rafts, masts, a jack staff aft (I haven't decided on a flag or ensign yet). The little torpedo boats could be river minesweepers, of course -- another option.

Simple.