

DEVASTATORS!

By Jes Goodwin & Nick Davis

Last month the awesome new multi-part plastic Space Marines hit the shelves. Now they get some heavy support in the form of the new Space Marine Devastators boxed set. Based on the same plastic kit, with metal heavy weapons and backpacks, they are truly awesome miniatures! We sent Nick Davis to talk to Jes about his new creation...

The new Space Marine Devastators boxed set includes five of the excellent plastic Space Marine bodies and the Space Marine special accessory sprue. It also includes new metal components for the Devastator weapons: a lascannon, a heavy bolter and a plasma cannon, to go with the plastic missile launcher from the special accessory sprue.

Jes even designed a new metal arm for the Sergeant, so he looks like he is directing the squad's fire (it's based on the classic Blood Angel Devastator Sergeant model). So, Jes – what's changed?

THE DEVASTATORS

Jes: When we talked about the missile launcher in the last issue (WD226) we discussed how we'd re-defined it as a one-shot launcher, fired from the shoulder, and gave it a more high-tech look. This was what I wanted to do with the rest of the Devastator weapons. This time the Marines would not be restricted to firing the weapons from the shoulder. Space Marines wear power armour so they have no problems lifting these supremely big guns. This is one of the things that makes Space Marines distinct from the Imperial Guard. The Imperial Guard has to use two-man weapon teams to move these huge guns around (*big girls' blouses that they are* – Paul Sawyer).

To do what we wanted with the guns we had to overcome a couple of technical problems. First we had to get the guns to fit with the plastic Space Marine models that we already had. Plus we had had some problems with other plastic and metal hybrids falling over, because the models weren't very well balanced. We also had to make sure they had a chunky enough look on the battlefield, so that you didn't mistake them for other troops. One of the things that people liked about the previous Devastators was that even though they looked a bit gawky with their weapons on their shoulders, they were very easily identifiable. To counter the weapons' weight and solve the miniature identification problem, we went for expanded backpacks.

We took elements from the weapons themselves (ammunition hoppers, cooling systems, etc.) and placed them on the backpacks. The design of backpack varies according to the model's weapon. The backpack's weight stops the model from falling over. They don't even rock (with the lascannon this is particularly important, due to the length of the barrel). Now let's talk about those lovely big guns...

THE HEAVY BOLTER

Many of you will recognise the heavy bolter's firing from the hip pose from some of our older models. The first time that



An Ultramarines Devastator Squad

Ultramarines Devastator Sergeant



Blood Angels Devastator with heavy bolter.



Black Templars Devastator with missile launcher



Dark Angels Devastator with plasma cannon



THE LASCANNON

The lascannon is the classic WH40K anti-tank weapon. What I decided to do with this one was bring the lascannon slightly off the shoulder, so what you got was a huge anti-tank rifle. The lascannon is held into the shoulder, with a shoulder damper to protect from the recoil of the gun.

The backpack is attached by a bundle of heavy duty electrical cables. This Devastator walks around with an electrical generator on his back, the little circular shapes on the side of the backpack are little power cell rods. I wanted to give this gun a large sight, akin to the sniper rifle but a lot bigger, more of a target tracking device. If you tilt the head of the Marine you can get him to look down the sight in the same way as you can with the Missile launcher.

we ever did this was on the Orlock heavy bolter, and that proved so popular that we have actually ended up doing the pose quite a lot – the Sisters of Battle heavy weapons, and the Space Marine Scout and Chaos Space Marine heavy bolter models are good examples.

The first thing I wanted to do was change the ammo feed system for this gun. The Sisters of Battle heavy bolter had a belt system while the Space Marine Scout's uses a large ammo hopper. The idea is that the Devastator is carrying the equivalent of a cannon off an Apache gunship, so we boxed in the ammo to make it look like a proper motor-driven feed. This feeds all the way round into the backpack so you've got quite a large link between the two. The backpack also features a number counter. We've modelled two large ammunition canisters onto the top of the backpack and if you look at the canisters you can see the bolter shells.

THE PLASMA CANNON

The third new gun is the plasma cannon. This weapon is a lot more unstable in new WH40K, so it was time for a complete overhaul. What I've tried to do is make it look like it isn't particularly safe to use. The other thing about the plasma cannon is that we've never had an external power source on these before. What we've done on the cannon and the plasma gun is to have two areas on it that look like they have a link to attach plasma flasks to (you can see the flasks on the gun). The flasks provide the fuel for the reaction chamber (the ribbed area of the gun).

The plasma is then shunted into the shaped area at the front of the gun. It's this area that pushes it into shape to be ejected out of the muzzle. We detailed emergency vents round the big cowling at the front of the cannon to dissipate the plasma in case of an overheat.

As the plasma cannon's power source is attached to the gun itself, we have turned the backpack into a refrigeration system. The backpack is joined to the gun by a large, jointed, armoured hose, that protects the little capillaries which go into a padded refrigeration sleeve around the front of the gun. The look of the gun is a lot less high tech than the others but that's deliberate because it is supposed to be unstable. The backpack has lights to tell you if the unit is working, a screw-off canister area to change the filters and a pump that turns the cooling system.

BUILDING A DEVASTATOR MARINE

When you come to linking the guns' hoses or ammo feed to the backpack you should test-fit them first. Use blue-tak to stick the gun into place and then position the backpack on the model so it fits the weapon link. I also suggest you paint the gun and the backpack separately from the Marine, as it

is easier to paint the details. When you come to glue the weapons into place, use a tiny bit of modelling putty (or plasticine) rolled into a ball and superglue it into place on the weapon link. Then, when the backpack and gun are attached just trim off the excess putty and you should have a very snug fit.

It's also worth considering the position of the Marine's head. I have found the Marine looks particularly effective looking the same way as his weapon or looking out across the weapon. Remember with the Space Marine kits you can pose these models with a minimum of effort. The conversion options with the metal guns are a little less than on the missile launcher, but you can still play around and get some interesting poses just by angling the body slightly. You've also got all those extras from the body sprue. Bolt pistols look good attached to the waists as back-up weapons.

COMING UP...

The last of the Space Marine Devastator weapons to be designed is the multi-melta. It will be low slung like the heavy bolter. The reason for putting the guns in different positions is that you have to fire all of these things differently; the lascannon uses a single shot to pick off a target, so you don't want the Marine looking like he is firing indiscriminately. Firing from the hip for the heavy bolter and the multi-melta is appropriate because these are used to strafe a larger area.

The multi-melta on the Land Speeder has two small canisters attached to the gun. These will be moved up into the backpack and again the gun will be attached by armoured hoses, etc. When we've finished the multi-melta, the Devastators will have all their weapon options available. Keep an eye on White Dwarf for future Space Marine releases, we still have lots of stuff to come...

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998AV GODWIN-PATTERN HEAVY BOLTER



M17(D1) MODIFIED HEAVY BOLTER BACKPACK



MKS ASTARTES MISSILE LAUNCHER



M17 BACKPACK/POWER UNIT



ASTARTES LASCANNON MK5.53 "STEELBANK" (MARINE PORTABLE)



M17(D) MODIFIED BACKPACK/POWER UNIT



****THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Retribution stalks the heretic from afar

MK23 "HOLOCAUST" PLASMA CANNON



M32(D) PLASMA CANNON COOLING

