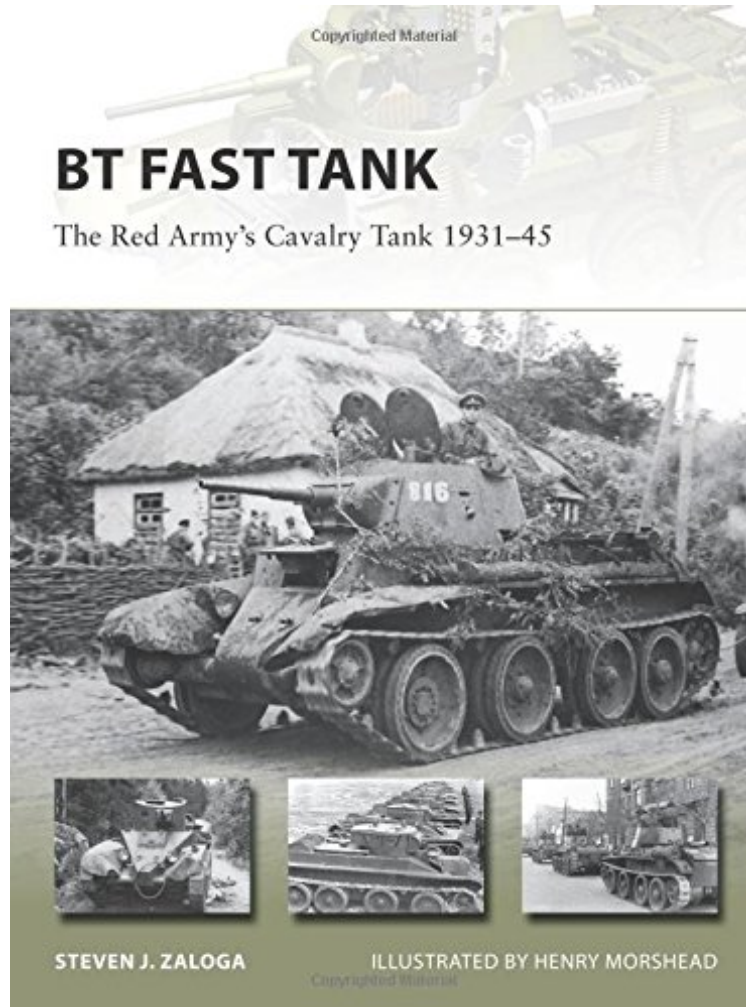


BT Fast Tank: The Red Army's Cavalry Tank 1931–45 (New Vanguard)

Steven J. Zaloga

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Steven J. Zaloga : BT Fast Tank: The Red Army's Cavalry Tank 1931–45 (New Vanguard) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised BT Fast Tank: The Red Army's Cavalry Tank 1931–45 (New Vanguard):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very good. Discusses every aspect of the BT tank series: armament, armor, engines, combat deployment. By Bayard B. Very good. Discusses every aspect of the BT tank series: suspension system, armament, armor, engines, design engineers, specialist variations, combat deployment. There are also plenty of black and white photos, a color cutaway showing the tank components and construction features, and several color renderings. One of the problems that was not discussed much is the stagnation that occurred in Soviet tank design from

about 1931 when the BT series was introduced through 1940 when it was superseded by the T-34. Thus, for nine years the Soviet tank designers focused on making minor improvements to the BT series and didn't spend much effort on trying for a really significant improvement. Admittedly, there were reasons for this beyond their control: the purges of the late 1930s killed both Army officers who might have pushed for more radical or advanced concepts and also killed several of the weapons engineers who might have been able to develop something really better. Also, the Soviet tank industry was poorly developed at the time and there were many manufacturing issues with the early BT models. This latter issue is discussed to some extent in the book.

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Fast, light cavalry tank. By Stone Dog In another Osprey title by Steven Zaloga, BT FAST TANK chronicles one of the Red Army's staple armored vehicles in the 1930's and early WWII period. Zaloga first begins with the genesis on the BT series tanks in the Soviet shell corporation Amtorg which trolled the West for military and industrial technology it could acquire or steal...or in the case of Christie, an unscrupulous inventor who had no problem knowingly selling military technology to a pariah state that had already murdered millions of innocent people. The Christie tank formed the basis for the BT, but the Soviets would develop the BT into an effective light and fast tank in fits and starts. One designer/engineer was under arrest during the purges, people were shot, there were the usual inefficiencies in communist systems. Even so, the Soviets developed new engines, developed new turret styles as well as an effective 45mm main gun. Zaloga does a good job of showing the progression of improved models and their salient features. He does a fairly good, but all too brief, job of giving the reader a summary of the BT's combat history. He even includes important early combat both in the Spanish Civil War and against the Japanese in Manchuria as well as in Finland and the Polish walkover before getting to the catastrophe in 1941. It's only here that the book stumbles a bit. No first-person accounts or accounts of battle at the tactical level with the exception of a poorly executed attack in Spain. Basically, it's the usual Zaloga work: thorough in technical details, good on the big picture, but somewhat dry and lacking in examples of combat. All the usual Osprey color plates, period photos and line drawings. Four stars.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Zaloga is thorough and excellent, as always. By Lord Haw Haw Excellent book by Zaloga, one of the world's foremost military historians who is still alive. Covers the under-appreciated BT series of 'fast' cavalry tanks developed by the Soviets in a time where motorization and the use of mass armored attacks was blossoming. Great tech and historical detail, which is the norm with most of Zaloga's works. A must-have for fans of the USSR in WW2 as well as gamers and modelers.

When the Red Army needed to mechanize its cavalry branch in the 1930s, the BT fast tank was its solution. Channeling the American Christie high-speed tank, the Red Army began a program to adapt the design to its own needs. Early versions were mechanically unreliable and poorly armed, but by the mid-1930s, the BT-5 emerged, armed with an excellent dual-purpose 45mm gun. It saw its combat debut in the Spanish Civil War in 1937 and was later used in the border battles with the Japanese Kwantung Army in the late 1930s. The final production series, the BT-7, was the most refined version of the family. One of the most common types in Red Army service at the beginning of the Second World War, BT tanks saw extensive combat in Poland, Finland, the opening phases of Operation Barbarossa in 1941, and the 1945 campaign against the Japanese in Manchuria. This is the story of their design and development history.

"I found it to be a most interesting read and learned quite a bit about this interesting vehicle. I can assure you that you will like it as well." - Modeling Madness "Very accessible, lightweight overview of a significant vehicle series. Highly recommended." - AMPS

About the Author Steven J. Zaloga received his B.A. in history from Union College and his M.A. from Columbia University. He has worked as an analyst in the aerospace industry for over two decades, covering missile systems and the international arms trade, and has served with the Institute for Defense Analyses, a federal think tank. He is the author of numerous books on military technology and military history, with an emphasis on the U.S. Army in World War II, as well as Russia and the former Soviet Union. Henry Morshead is a design consultant in the European automotive and aerospace sectors, with clients including Jaguar, Bentley, Citroën and Airbus. He is also a technical sponsor of the Bloodhound supersonic car, contributing digital surfacing and design services. A former officer in the Royal Engineers and illustrator for Jane's, he maintains a keen interest in the design and use of military land and air vehicles.