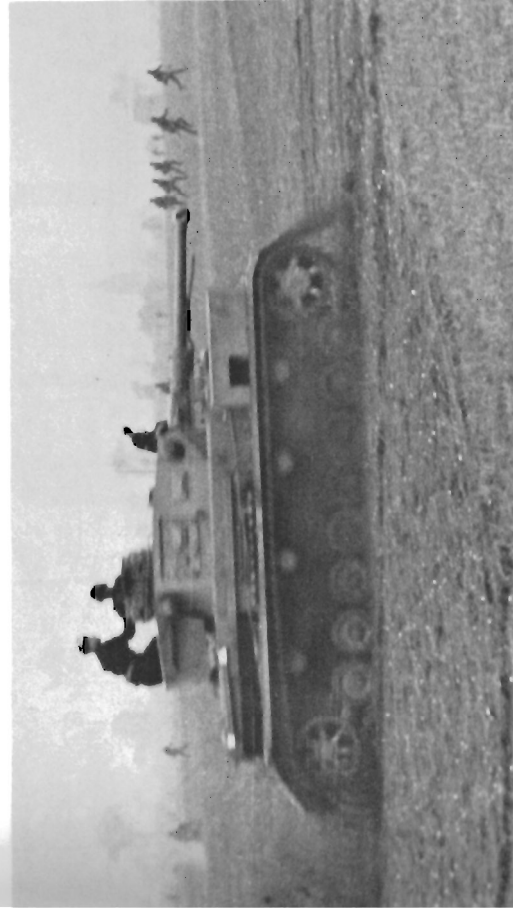


PzKpfw IV ausf F2

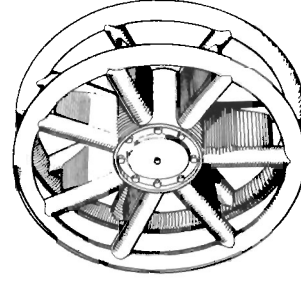
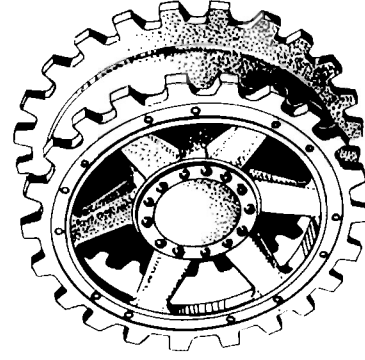
The invasion of Russia in June, 1941 revealed unequivocally the shortcomings of many German tanks, none of which could knock out the KV-1's and which had to get dangerously close to the T34's in order to put them out of action. Thus, in November of 1941, Hitler ordered the fitting of a longer high velocity antitank gun in the PzKpfw IV. The first examples were ready in March, 1942, and were in effect rearmed ausf F's, differing externally from the F only in the installation of the 7.5cm KwK40, L/43, and differing internally only in the different stowage arrangements for the rather long ammunition of the KwK40. The recuperator housing was more angular in section and had a flat front plate held by 4 conical bolts. Although the majority of ausf F2's resembled F's except for the longer gun and different recuperator housing, some late production vehicles appear to have been fitted with ausf G turrets which differed in detail from that of the F2. All ausf F2's were built with the single baffle globular muzzle brake, and to prevent confusion in referring to long and short gunned vehicles, all ausf F's retaining the short L/24 KwK were designated PzKpfw IV ausf F1.



This ausf F2 was photographed during training in France, 1942. Many Panzer Divisions were badly mauled in the Russian campaign and were sent back to France for rest and refitting. The large stowage box on the right mudguard was fitted to some F2's, and a similar box was used on some ausf G's, but they were not fitted to all these models. (Bundesarchiv)



In this view of F2's in Russia, all of the crewmen are wearing the field-gray uniforms with black Panzer caps. The coloring of the nearest F2 appears to be dark gray with sprayed patches of a sand color, perhaps the African shade sometimes used in the central and southern sectors of the Russian front. (Bundesarchiv)



Drive sprocket and rear idler used on ausf F, F2 and G, plus rebuilt D and E.