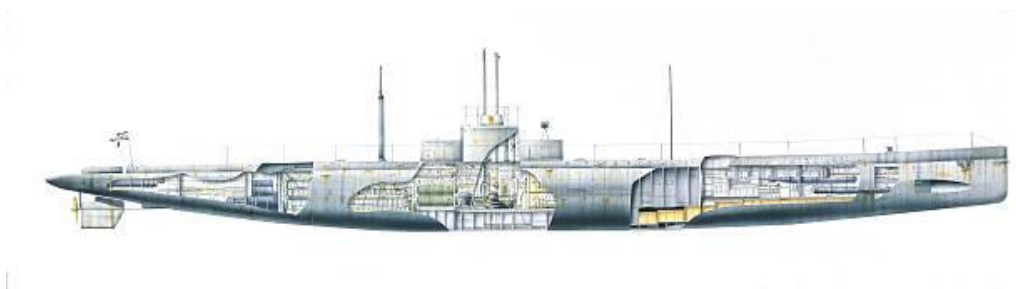


Part 1: History and the Kit



History and Specifications:

S.M. (Seiner Majestät—His Majesty's) U9 was a petroleum-electric submarine of the Imperial German Navy in World War I. There were four boats in her class: U9, U10, U11, and U12, although U9 is by far the most famous. The U9 class can best be described as submersible torpedo boats as these were mostly operated above water—diving was the exceptional case.

U9's construction was ordered on July 15, 1908, her keel was laid down by Kaiserliche Werft in Danzig, she was launched on February 22, 1910, and was commissioned on April 18, 1910.

The double hulled U9 was 57.38 m long (188 ft 3 in) with an internal pressure hull that was 48 m long (157 ft 6 in). The beam was 6 m (19 ft 8 in) wide. She had a draft of 3.13 m (10 ft 3 in) and a displacement of 493 tons above water and 611 tons under water.

U9 used a complicated petrol-electric drive system involving a complex 3-engine transmission. This configuration was chosen because the petrol engines were neither reversible nor controllable in the true sense. Maneuvering was only possible with the electric engines with one being used to charge the batteries and one to drive the boat. When the boat was underway on the sea, it was usually only the petrol engines that were used to propel the boat.

U9 was fitted with two Körting 8-cylinder plus two Körting 6-cylinder two-stroke petrol engines for use on the surface and two Siemens-Schuckert double-acting electric motors plus two electric motors for underwater use. These engines powered two shafts, each with a 1.45 m (4.8 ft) propeller, which gave the boat a top surface speed of 14.2 knots and 8.1 knots when submerged. Cruising range was 1,800 nautical miles at 14 knots on the surface, and 80 nautical miles at 5 knots under water. Diving depth was 50 m.

The U9 was armed with four 50 cm (20 in) torpedo tubes, two fitted in the bow and two in the stern and carried 6 torpedoes. Originally, the boat was equipped with a machine gun, which was augmented with a 3.7 cm (1.5 in) Hotchkiss gun when war broke out in 1914. In 1915, an additional 5 cm (2.0 in) gun was fitted. When U9 underwent a major refit in 1916, two mine-laying rails were added, which were later removed. The boat's complement was 4 officers and 31 enlisted men.

On September 22, 1914, under the command of Kapitänleutnant Otto Weddingen, U9 sank three British armored cruisers (HMS *Aboukir*, HMS *Hogue*, and HMS *Cressy*) one after the other and on October 15 sank the British armored cruiser HMS *Hawke*. After that, U9 was allowed to carry an Iron Cross on her conning tower. Apart from U9, only the small cruiser SMS *Emden* received this honor during World War I. U9 undertook a total of seven combat cruises and sank five warships. No other boat sank more warships during World War I.

After the war, U9 was delivered to the British on November 26, 1918 and in 1919 she was scrapped in Morecambe, Lancashire.



The Kit:

This recent kit by Das Werk is their first foray into a naval subject at this scale (1/72) and for this period (World War I). I pre-ordered this kit from [Andy's Hobby Headquarters](#) after seeing his “first look” video on YouTube. Given the current issues with shipping due to Covid, I have to say that this kit arrived from China *via* Andy in a timely manner and in good shape.

The box is of sturdy construction and the box art on the top is shown in the image above—top notch! Opening the box, one finds four sprues, containing, I believe, 164 parts in clear plastic resealable bags, a decal sheet with markings for all four boats in the class (U9-U12), a very nice, gloss-paper instruction manual (Fig. 1 below), and because I was one of the first orders, a 99-page bound book covering background information, history, technology, crew, and the kit (Fig. 2 below). The kit does not include any photoetch but I understand PE sets are/will be available.



Figure 1: Cover of the Instruction Manual

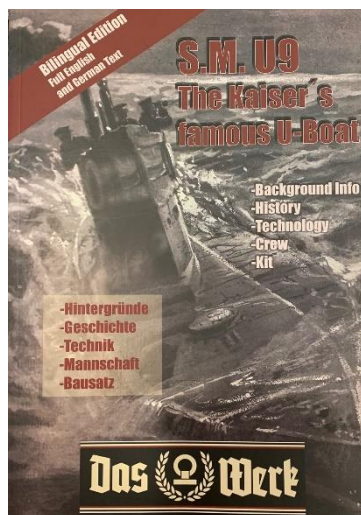


Figure 2: Book Cover

Das Werk's research for this kit involved divers visiting the recently discovered wreck of U12 in 157 feet of water off the coast of Eyemouth to measure some key areas. The plastic itself is finely molded with over 7,000 rivets and numerous sunken bolt heads (Fig. 3 below). The conning tower has options for both open railing and for the canvas wrappings. If one is careful, these can be interchangeable. Turnbuckles are included to aid in some of the rigging. Although no rigging plan is included, the drawing on the cover of the instruction book should suffice.



Figure 3: Rivet and Bolt Detail

One thing that I found particularly helpful was the included list of recommended paints. In addition to the usual listings for Humbrol, Mr. Hobby, Tamiya, and Vallejo, they also include Mission Models and AMMO of MIG. Very nice. Following is the painting page of the instructions (Fig. 4).

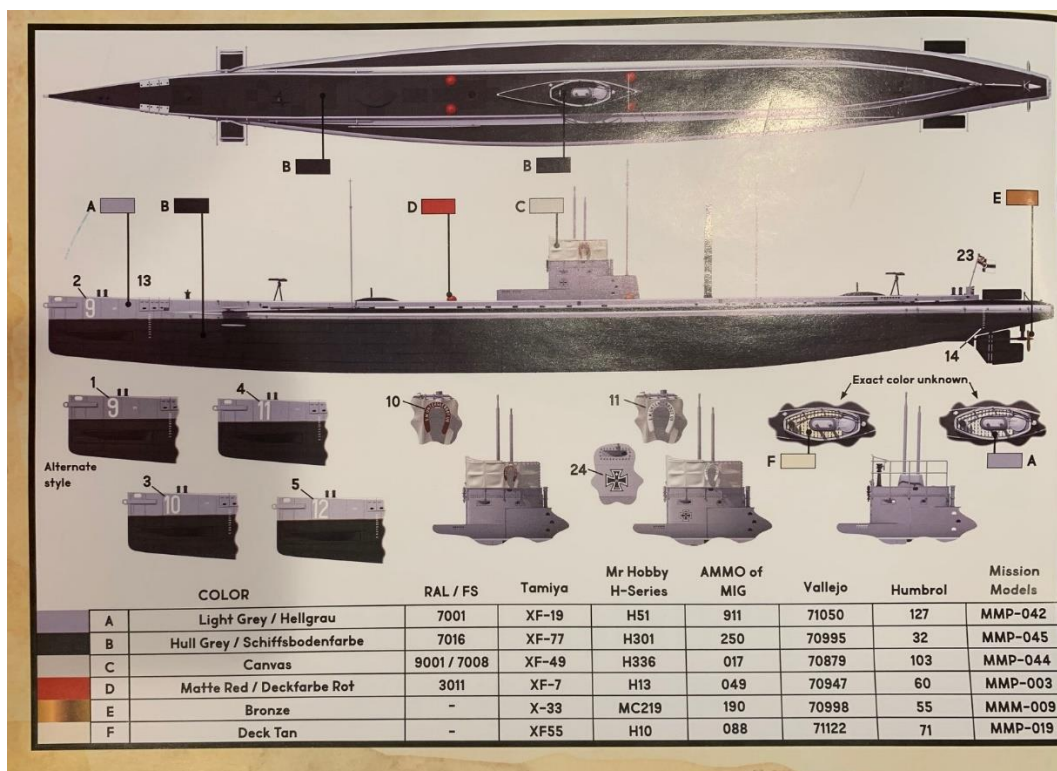


Figure 4: Painting Schematic

Next Up: Construction begins with the hull.