

Stealth Recon Vehicle With “Melted Look” Is Introduced at Mideast Arms Show

A firm in Belarus, one of the republics of the former Soviet Union, has introduced a new, 27-ton tracked reconnaissance vehicle designed with stealth characteristics. The Stalker 2T was introduced at the Abu Dhabi arms show earlier this year, drawing attention because of its unusual appearance.

Although manufactured from welded armor steel, the turret of the Stalker has rounded edges and a dull surface coating said to help defeat radar and infrared detection. At either side of the turret are retractable missile launchers for antitank and anti-aircraft defense, employing the SA-18 or SA-16 SAMs and the AT-6 “Spiral” AT missile, which can employ either HEAT or thermobaric warheads (see article on thermobaric weapons elsewhere in this issue). The main armament is a stabilized 30mm cannon, teamed with a 7.62mm coaxial machine gun and 30mm automatic grenade launcher.

The fire control system includes day/night thermal imaging and a laser rangefinder. An NBC defensive system protects the crew of three and laser detectors automatically trigger smoke-screen protection. A diesel engine and hydro-mechanical transmission propel the vehicle and a hydro-pneumatic suspension system allows the driver to adjust the ground clearance from six inches to about 24 inches.



The 2T Stalker, from Belarus, weighs in at 27 tons.

The vehicle commander and gunner are situated in the turret, each with day/night sights on the turret roof.

Those attending the IDEX 2001 show in Abu Dhabi were impressed with the vehicle's appearance, its cross-country capabilities, and its 100km/hr top speed. It was also shown at a time when there is little new in the armored vehicle market.

The chassis is apparently derived from the 2S6 Tunguska gun-missile anti-aircraft system, which is also manufactured by the Belarus-Minotor Service Unitary Enterprise. The firm said that the Belarus Army is acquiring the first 30 production vehicles.



Below, the turret detail shows the pair of missile launchers in the raised position. One launcher is for anti-aircraft missiles, the other for antitank missiles, both Russian weapons.

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