

# Striving but never reaching

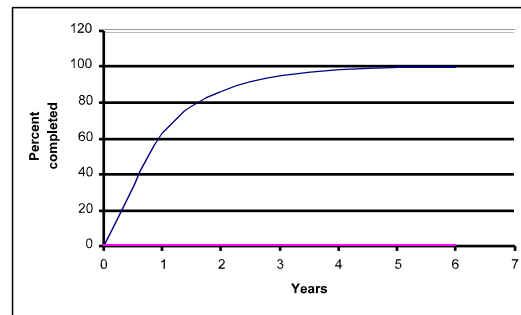
Gary Zimmer

The ancient Greek philosophers thought about lots of stuff. They had to, they didn't have TV, hobbies or jobs. Pythagoras thought about right angled triangles. All you had to do to drive him crazy was to say the square root of 2 was irrational. Another one was Zeno, who gave us Zeno's Paradox, and here it is. Achilles was racing a tortoise. Achilles was supposedly a fast runner, but he must have been having a slack day and was only going twice the tortoise's speed. Or the tortoise was on speed, and was cranked up to half Achilles' speed. The tortoise had a head start and is halfway down the track. Zeno's Paradox is that Achilles will never catch the tortoise. When Achilles is halfway, the tortoise is at  $\frac{3}{4}$  track. When Achilles gets to where the tortoise was at  $\frac{3}{4}$  track, the tortoise is now at  $\frac{7}{8}$ th and so on. Following this argument, Achilles would never catch the tortoise. Then again, if she weighs the same as a duck.....

Here is a Sdkfz251/7 halftrack made by Dragon. The 251 was a very versatile vehicle with many variants and the /7 was the pioneerpanzerwagen, combat engineer vehicle. The usual load was the small assault bridges, and sometimes like this example, a 28mm squeezebore antitank gun. Inside some of the seats are replaced by racks for ammo or whatever they carried. All of this comes in the kit, so this is pretty much out of the box build. There is nothing much wrong with the kit, it is not Mach 2. Everything fits and there is no need to scratchbuild anything. It had brass bits, but only a few are essential. So why did it take me 3 years?

I was trying to think when I purchased this kit, and when I began constructing it. Well it could have been as soon as I got it home or maybe it sat in the Wall for a year. I can't recall. However when I decided to build it, I initially made great progress. The first night I had the lower hull assembled with all the running gear in place. In a few more days I had this painted, and the tracks on. All this was made simpler by the design of the kit, the inner road wheels are not separate parts but joined in sticks, the tracks are flexible so I didn't spend a month of Sundays joining individual links. So I was half way done. The next quarter of the process seemed to take longer. There were interior parts such as seats, ammo racks, radio, vision blocks, and racks for crew weapons. Then I dropped some tiny part on the carpet and had to make a replacement. That was another job I kept

putting off. After a long time I had this  $\frac{7}{8}$ ths done, and there it sat for another year. In that year it lived in an open box in the pile of semi-complete kits. This is an archaeological dig, the further down one goes the further back in time we are. I analyzed this process and I can now show this in a graph.



Many times I would say I will do some more work on the 251 kit. I would exhume it from beneath some more current projects. I would look at it and put it back in the pile. This went on many times, and I don't know why. Normally when a kit build reaches a stagnation point, it is because it is one of those kits that doesn't have parts, the kit instructions say "make from wire". I didn't have to do any of that. I didn't have to cut and shape clear styrene sheet to make windows, which is a job I always put off.

Nevertheless, one day I decided - this was it, I was going to finish this thing or, well I didn't have a Plan B. So it was one piece at a time until the number of unused parts diminished, and the few leftovers, I decided I didn't need anyway. There. Done. Finished. Now all I need to do is complete the other 50 or 60 started kits that are lying around somewhere.

