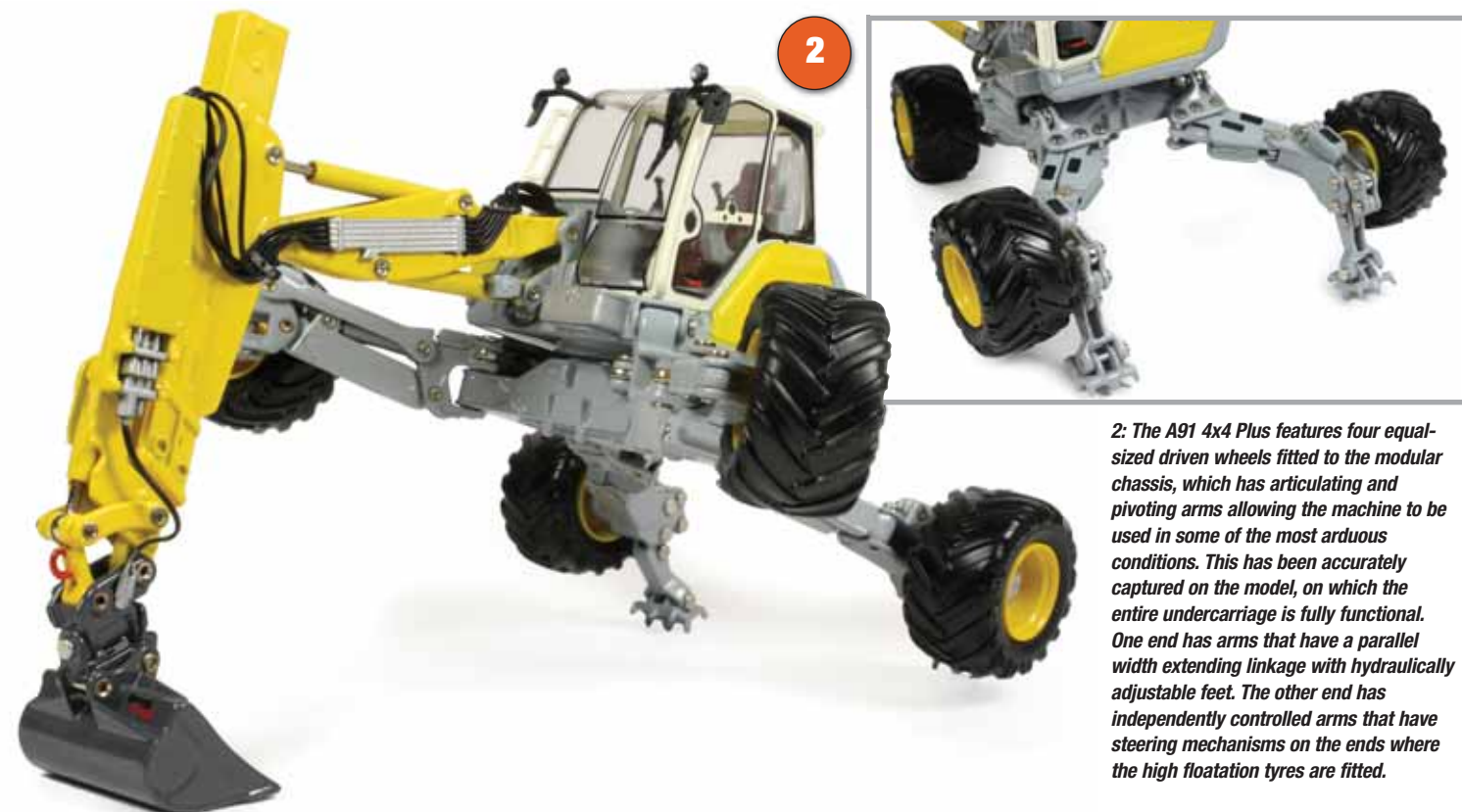


Hillside heroes

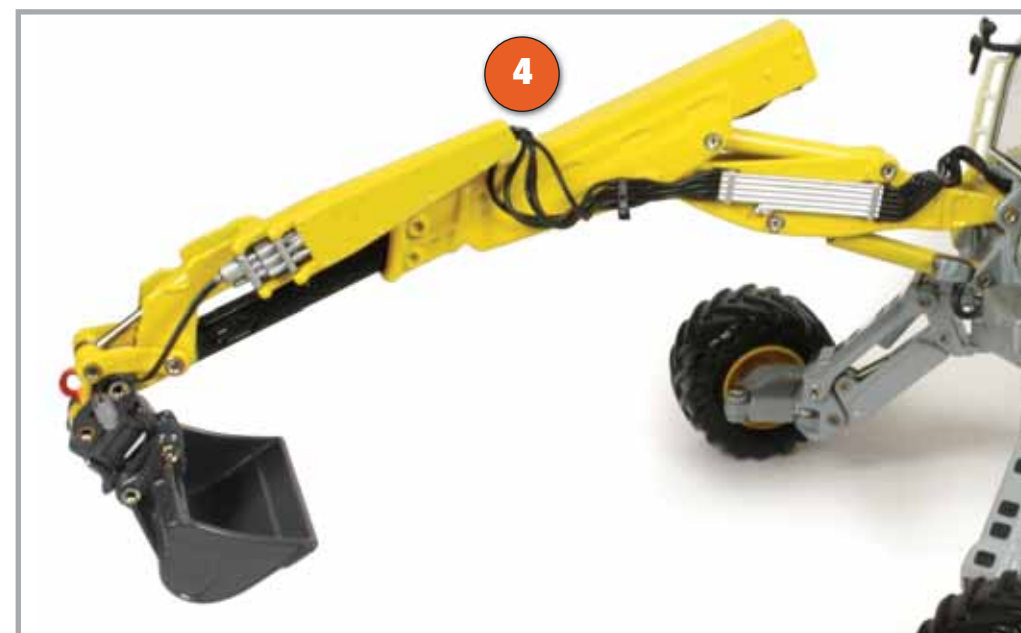
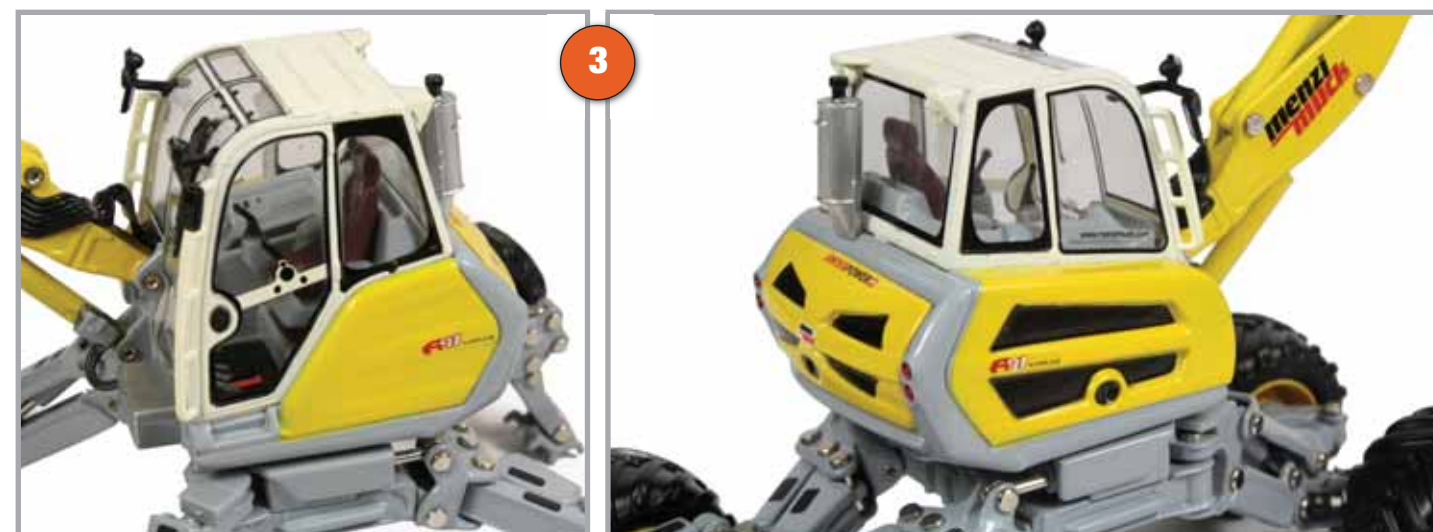
Steven Downes takes a detailed look at scale models of one of the most unusual types of earthmoving machinery – the A91 all-terrain spider excavator from Menzi Muck.



1: Two different versions of the highly detailed 1:50th-scale model have been produced by Italian model maker Ros SRL.



2: The A91 4x4 Plus features four equal-sized driven wheels fitted to the modular chassis, which has articulating and pivoting arms allowing the machine to be used in some of the most arduous conditions. This has been accurately captured on the model, on which the entire undercarriage is fully functional. One end has arms that have a parallel width extending linkage with hydraulically adjustable feet. The other end has independently controlled arms that have steering mechanisms on the ends where the high floatation tyres are fitted.



3: The upper-structure has 360-degree rotation and a fully replicated cab interior, complete with painted seat and controls. Silver highlighted foot pedals and accurate painting of the window seals and fixings give the model a very realistic appearance. The rear engine panel lifts up to reveal the replicated four-cylinder Deere engine block – another good addition on this model.

4: The tilting grading bucket has a simulated quick coupler and an interesting design of telescopically extending stick, which has all the fixed and flexible hydraulic hose detailing fitted. While the range of movement of the bucket linkage is a little limited, the movements of the boom and extending dipper stick are stiff, which allows the model to be posed as required.



5: The A91 Mobil version of the model only has two driven wheels and a different undercarriage arm configuration to the 4x4 version featuring two small, non-steering support wheels. The legs can be extended and have large spiked feet to offer a good grip on the steep hillsides where the machine is most at home. The engineering on the model, especially the undercarriage, is very well executed on both versions, although the pins could have done with a little touch of grey paint.