

BIG Cats

Steven Downes reviews the latest releases from Classic Construction Models in the form of the Caterpillar 385C excavator, the 385C face shovel and the Cat 390D mass excavator, all precision engineered in 1:48th scale die-cast.



1: The 385C face shovel accurately captures all the details of the full-size machine very well, from the functioning shovel with hydraulic operated actuation, replicated tooth and wear plating, and flexible hoses to the protective covers over the stick and boom cylinders. The range of movement of the digging equipment is authentic, with narrow gauge track pads typical for quarrying applications and a high-rise cab offering a good all-round view.

2: The standard 385C is configured with an 8.4m general-purpose boom, 4.4m stick and 1.7m general-duty digging bucket with 36in double grouser shoes. The hydraulics are stiff in operation and allow the full range of movement to be demonstrated. Flexible hoses and fixed piping cast into the boom all add to the realism.



3: The 390D features a 7.25m boom and, for mass excavation work, is fitted with a large bucket with excellent cutting edge detailing and caps covering the connecting pins. The track pads installed on the undercarriage are wider than those fitted to the shovel version, and raised fixing bolt heads are visible on each pad.



4: The cab of the face shovel version is raised and access steps integrated into the fixed extension, complete with scaled safety rails. The front and roof windows are covered with protective screens that have crisply cast bars to give a more realistic appearance.

5: The rear engine compartment features two opening covers that reveal the replicated 513hp C18 engine and filtration components within. A side-opening door reveals the hydraulic pump, complete with flexible hoses, while the photo-etched panels have an intricate pattern allowing more of the internal features and cooling systems to be seen. While the majority of the body shape is the same across all versions, the 390D has a slightly larger counterweight.

6: All the cabs feature an opening door that allows an unobstructed view of the fully modelled interior. It's a nice addition to the model, and all the hand and foot controls are present and accurately decorated. The 390D has a different decoration and this has been captured on the model's all-black cabin exterior.

