

Welcome to my DML parachute lock repair page.

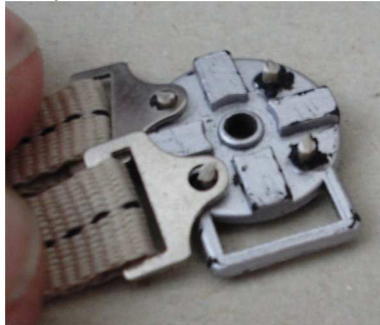
This page came about after I had bought the Soldat 3 DML figure, and I tried to fit the centre lock for the parachute together. As I had put a lot of the equipment on the figure under the oversmock, I found that the little pips inside the parachute centre lock would not hold the strap ends in place. Also as I had tried to tighten up the top part of the lock, the metal screw tore out the thread inside the lower part.

To say this annoyed me is an understatement, as I now had an expensive model that I could not use the parachute with. As the lock would not hold the straps in place, even if I tried to use it off the figure. So after leaving the figure for a few days, I decided to have a look at altering the base of the lock, so that it could hold the parachute end straps in place.

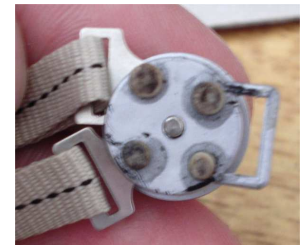
What I had to do was firstly cut off the little pips, and then drill 4 small holes in their place. I then got some plastic rod I had and cut off a small length of it to make the four pegs as shown below. Once I had these I applied some heat to one end of the rod with a lighter, and when it was soft I pushed it onto my workbench. This gave me a flattened end as shown on the right, which I did for all four of the pegs.

Once they had cooled down, I then pushed them carefully through the holes I had made in the bottom part of the parachute lock, as shown on the right. I then pushed the peg back through a little bit, and placed some superglue on the flattened ends, and pushed the end back against the lock to dry. Again I did this for all four of the pegs, so that they are set in position to hold the parachute ends in place.

When I was certain that the pegs and glue had dried, I cut them down so that I could still close the top part of the lock onto the bottom half. **This is shown in the picture below left, be careful cutting them down to size. Because if you go too far down, you will not be able get it to hold the strap in place.** The second picture below centre shows the parachute end straps placed onto the pegs, to test that the straps fit onto the pegs. The final picture below right shows the top screwed onto the bottom half of the lock, trapping the strap ends in place.



This picture right shows the reverse of the assembled lock, with the flattened ends of the pegs glued in place. I am going to sand this down a bit, so the lock sits flatter against the uniform. **But be careful doing this, as it can weaken the pegs if they are sanded down too much.** I have had to do this to two of my DML parachutes now (Soldat 3 and Frank Laird), and I am not very impressed with the way that these are made. Considering that these locks are made in metal by bbi. I have both the German and RAF parachutes, and I have never had this problem with those parts. So I cannot understand why DML cannot make them the same way?



PDF Update based on the Dragon Hans Pifer parachute



With this parachute lock it has to hold three strap connections on the left hand side, instead of the two as with the Soldat 3 and the Frank Laird parachute's. And no matter how I tried with the Pifer lock, I could not get them connected up and held in place as the item came supplied in the box. In the picture on the left is the Hans Pifer parachute lock, after I have added my own 'pips' to connect the parachute straps. So because of the 'pips' being replaced as above on Page One, I was able to tighten up the parachute straps properly, so that I could hang correctly as shown on my HE-111 pilot page.

A second problem that I have come across regarding the handling of the front of the Pifer lock is the wording coming off whilst being handled. So to prevent this from happening, I recommend a possible coating of clear varnish to protect it before use? Preferably by using an airbrush or something like it, because I am wondering if a paintbrush and liquid paint are used it may have the same result as the handling does.

Also I have also found the the threaded part on the rear of the front part of the lock, which connects to the centre of the back part, also if used too much strips out the plastic thread on the back part of the lock. Which then makes the whole assembly loose, which again adds to the problem of getting the lock closed to hold the straps in place. To get around this instead of gluing it in place, I cut a thin strip of double sided tape which I wound around the threaded part. I then removed the backing on it, and then I screwed it back into place in the back part. And because the straps are held in place with the 'replacement pips', the outer centre part of the lock is now just a cosmetic cover.

This is not meant as a criticism of the product as such, but a warning to my fellow modellers as to what can happen with this figure.