



2006
IPMS/USA Region VI
Chapter of the Year



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Newsletter of the Austin Scale Modelers Society

June 2007

SPRUE EXAMINER



Criel Models 1/35
Italian Mortaio da 210/8 D.S.

by
 Russ Holm, IPMS # 36619

BIG guns and artillery pieces have always caught my attention. Whether it's because there isn't a plethora of kits out there or it's some subliminal envy, they are way cool!

This particular kit is numbered R059 and is a model of an Italian Army 210mm heavy mortar. Conceived in 1891, it was an important part of the Italian siege artillery in the early part of the 20th Century. Various manufacturers produced 970 during the Great War, and 180 were still available when WWII started in 1939. They saw some action against the French, but by August 1943 they were phased out of frontline service.

This particular artillery piece has a simple dual recoil operating mechanism: a hydraulically controlled reduction of the gun cheeks that hold the trunnions, and a hydraulically reduced carriage in track that carries the gun cheeks. Both return to battery on inclines by gravity. For movement, the gun was removed from the emplacement and transported on its wheels.

The emplacement components are moved separately.

The Kit

The Italian company Criel Models uses resin exclusively for all their products. Air bubbles and voids abound in their kits, so have your super glue and accelerator handy to fill them. Many of the components have a rough "as cast" finish which in some areas are fine, but in others they will have to be sanded. Poor moldings will have to be carefully removed and sanded. Corners and edges also need crisping up and smoothing. The barrel will have to be drilled out for a proper appearance.

This kit contains about 28 pieces, and it is very straight forward in assembly. Unlike most plastic kits, much of the detail is molded into the parts instead of separate assembly. The instructions are printed on a single sheet, with separate drawings to show parts placement and the gun in recoil, battery, and towing positions. The platforms that attach to the wheels for towing are not provided in the kit.

Assembly

I used superglue and epoxy to put this gun together. To allow working time for squaring
(continued on page 4)



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2007 Show Schedule

IPMS/KC, Heartland Model Car Nationals, Overland Park, KS	June 23-24, 2007
Emerald City Modelers, OZCON 2007, Wichita, KS	August 11, 2007
IPMS/El Paso, Bassett Place Show, El Paso, TX	August 12, 2007
IPMS/USA, 2007 National Convention, Anaheim, CA	August 22-25, 2007
IPMS/Fort Worth, SuperCon 2007, Arlington, TX	September 8, 2007
IPMS/Metro Oklahoma City, Sooncon, Moore, OK	September 29, 2007
CASM, 6th Annual Contest, Little Rock, AK	September 29, 2007

Editor's Notes...

Last month NCT held their annual Scalefest on the Memorial Day weekend. Not many of our members made the trip to the Metroplex this year because of the foul weather and gas hike. But those who did turn up all came home with trophies and ribbons, including myself. Needless to say, we all indulged ourselves with a trip (or two, for some of us) to Squadron Mail Order's open house.

The biggest winner at Scalefest, however, belongs to ASMS. Our society won the **Region 6 Chapter of the Year Award** for our achievements in 2006. This comes as a total surprise to us all as we were not aware ASMS was nominated! In any case, job well done everyone, and let's keep up the good work.

On the cover this month we have Russ' award winning Italian 210mm mortar. We seldom have artillery pieces in our newsletter, so this is a most welcome article. Pictures, pictures, pictures... here are more highlights from our show back in April and the just concluded Scalefest. Floyd Werner also sent us his review on Victory Film's latest Mustang video. It looks like this is their best ever, if I may quote from Floyd's praises. And last, but not least, we have a new puzzler on page 12.

Our next meeting will be on **June 12th** at 7:00pm at the usual Yarborough Branch Library. **Richard Eaton** will show us how to package finished models for shipping and transport. **July 14th** is the day for our **summer picnic** this year. Don't forget to bring your models to the meeting to be displayed in the library display case until our July meeting.

Eric

ASMS Officers for 2007

Kenny Roady, president, kar66@swbell.net	260-2907
Dave Edgerly, vice president, david.edgerly@baesystems.com	670-9424
Bill Dalk, secretary, falconfyre@austin.rr.com	282-6832
Ion Tesu, treasurer, itesu@austin.rr.com	301-7256
Eric Choy, editor, asmsnews@austin.rr.com	249-9184

Web Site: <http://www.austinsms.org>

Mike Gilsbach, webmaster, mike@gilsbachdesigns.com

Austin Model Show Coordinators

Kenny Roady, asmscon@swbell.net	260-2907
Kathy Roady, vendor Liason, asmsvendors@swbell.net	260-2907

Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS) is affiliated with the International Plastic Modeler's Society (IPMS) as the Republic of Texas Chapter. ASMS meets the second Tuesday of each month except December. Dues for full membership are \$20 yearly. Subscription to the newsletter *Sprue Examiner* is \$15 yearly. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. ASMS does not endorse the contents of any article.

Kenny's Korner

(until I can think of something better)

Almost half the year has vanished! I hope everyone has recovered from our show. Just as a final wrapup, we had 320 models entered. Last year, we had 385. Even though we did not do well on the fiscal side, I believe everyone enjoyed themselves, and we will have enough money to hold a show next year.

Last month I started a new career and have not been able to get back to the bench. I have several models that are close to completion, and hopefully I will have time to knock them out in the near future.

June brings us to some very important and seemingly forgotten anniversary dates. From the Battle of Midway to Operation Overlord, and even the elimination of the Czech town of Lidice, many gave their lives for our freedoms. Even if we forget or never know the battles, let us never forget the cost. All paid some, some paid all.

Kenny

ASMS & AABS Members Who Won...

At our show in April:

Name	Place [Category]	Subject
Jorge Aduna	2nd [Armor Box Stock]	T-62A
	3rd [Armor Box Stock]	German T-34/76
Milton Bell	1st [1/48 Allied Prop]	P-40N
	2nd [1/48 Allied Prop]	P-400
	2nd [1/72 Small Prop]	P-47D
	3rd [1/48 Axis Prop]	Zero Type 21
Phil Brandt	1st [Automotive Comp]	Renault Rally Car
	1st [Vacform/Conversion]	X-24C
Bill Delk	2nd [Vacform/Conversion]	B-57G Canberra
	2nd [Aircraft 1/48 Jet]	RA-5C Vigilante
Dave Edgerly	3rd [Horror & Creature]	Black Lagoon
	1st [Diorama Other]	Type VIIc U-Boat
Angel Forster	2nd [Diorama Other]	78' Higgins PT Boat
	1st [Beginner]	F-14
	2nd [Beginner]	747 Air France
Rick Herrington	3rd [Beginner]	Concorde
	1st [1/35 Armor Modern]	Leopard 2A5
	1st [Submarine]	Type IX U-Boat
Russ Holm	3rd [1/72 Armor Modern]	KFOR Challenger 2
	1st [Artillery]	210mm Mortar
	2nd [Artillery]	305mm Howitzer
Bill Johnson	2nd [1/35 Armor up to '59]	T-26
	1st [1/35 Armor Open Top]	M-18 Hellcat
	1st [1/72 Armor Modern]	T-80
Jeffrey Kachoris	2nd [1/72 Armor Modern]	T-72 Iraq
	1st [Figure Junior]	Warhammer Figures
	2nd [Figure Junior]	King Ghidorah

Tim Keily	2nd [1/32 Aircraft Prop]	Bf.109G-14
Katherine Kupka	2nd [Aircraft Junior]	Tempest Mk. V
	1st [Miscellaneous Junior]	Dilophosaurus
	2nd [Miscellaneous Junior]	Triceratops
	3rd [Miscellaneous Junior]	Stegosaurus
Melinda Kupka	1st [Aircraft Junior]	Mi-24D Hind
Michael Kupka	3rd [Aircraft 1/48 Jet]	F-104
	3rd [Aircraft 1/72 Jet]	F-16
Sarah Kupta	1st [Pre-Teen]	Rino-Beagle
	2nd [Pre-Teen]	Triceratops
Karl Leidy	3rd [1/35 Armor Open Top]	T-34 Flak Tank
Dave Orloff	1st [1/32 Aircraft Prop]	SBD-2 Dauntless
	1st [1/35 Armored Car/APC]	M2A1 Halftrack
	2nd [1/72 Aircraft Large Prop]	F-82G
Kenny Roady	3rd [1/48 Armor]	Kubelwagen
Tim Robb	1st [1/48 Aircraft Large Prop]	Ju-52
Pat Rourke	1st [Armor Box Stock]	USMC M4A2
	2nd [1/48 Armor]	Polish Panther
	3rd [1/35 Armor up to '59]	IS-152 Early
John Seaman	1st [1/48 Armor]	K2Y Ambulance
	2nd [1/72 Armor WWII]	GMC 6x6
	3rd [1/32 Aircraft Prop]	A6M5 Zero
	3rd [1/350 Ship Naval]	LCM (3)
Ion Tesu	1st [Miscellaneous]	MiG 21 Engine
Keith Townsend	2nd [Automotive Low Rider]	Frankenstude
	3rd [Miscellaneous Humor]	M1 w/ Starter Decals
	3rd [Automotive Comp]	Triumph Road Racer
	3rd [Automotive <1/32]	Motorola LMP Lola
Rick Willaman	2nd [Automotive Box Stock]	Shellby GT-350R

Special Awards

Phil Brandt	Best Aircraft	X-24C
Ion Tesu	Best Engine	MiG 21 Engine
Ion Tesu	Best Finish	MiG 21 Engine

At Scalefest in May:

Name	Place [Category]	Subject
Milton Bell	2nd [Aircraft 1/48 Single Eng]	P-400
	3rd [Aircraft 1/48 Single Eng]	P-40N
	3rd [Aircraft <1/72]	E-2C
	2nd [Closed Wheel Comp]	Renault Rally Car
Phil Brandt	2nd [Aircraft conversion]	X-24C
	3rd [Aircraft conversion]	B-57G Canberra
Eric Choy	2nd [Sci Fi Movie/TV]	ISS Enterprise
Marc Hobbs	3rd [Armor ≤1/72 armored car/softskin vehicle]	Dodge 3/4t Truck
Russ Holm	1st [Armor Artillery]	210mm Mortar
	2nd [Armor Artillery]	305mm Howitzer
	2nd [Armor 1/30-48 Allied]	T-26-4
	3rd [Armor 1/30-48 Half-track/armored car]	Spahwagen
Pat Rourke	3rd [Armor 1/30-48 German]	Bergepanzer
	1st [Armor 1/30-48 Allied]	ISU-152
	2nd [Armor 1/30-48 Half-track/armored car]	Ba-6K
	2nd [Armor Box stock]	M4A2
	3rd [Armor Box stock]	Marder III
	3rd [Armor 1/30-48 German]	Captured Panther
	2nd [Aircraft box stock]	F4U-5NL Corsair
	3rd [Aircraft 1/48 Single Eng]	Spitfire IXe

(continued on page 10)

(Italian Mortaio da 210/8 D.S. continued)

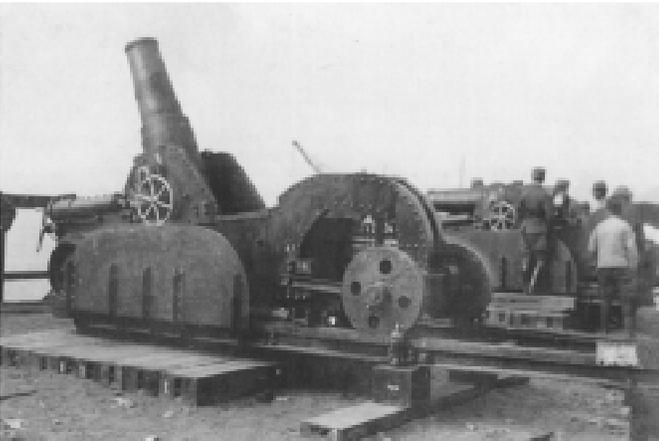
up and alignment, I epoxied the hydraulic reducer platform into the locating slots on the recoil rails. The two rear support cross members were then added. After that, the exterior cheeks were glued in place and squared up. The main carriage front support was then glued in place, followed by the mid carriage frame support, rear axle, and rear frame cap.

Working carefully and taking time to test fit all the parts, the squareness of the assembly affects how the barrel mounts and the wheels ride in the track. The other bits follow in no particular order. I added a tie off point for the shell hoist as none is provided.

**Painting**

I painted the nicely molded wooden emplacement components with Model Master wood enamel. After a day of drying, burnt umber and burnt sienna were applied in a streaking/drybrush fashion. This was allowed to dry for half an hour or so. Then India Ink, diluted with denatured alcohol to a semi-translucent consistency, was applied and again allowed to dry for ten minutes or so. Finally, I used a "Q" tip dipped in alcohol and moving with the grain to remove the excess ink. This blends the colors slightly and creates highlights in the wood.

The carriage and gun were painted with Model Master Italian Green and allowed to dry. The green was lightened with Floquil Antique white and thinned (one part paint to four to five parts thinner). This creates the faded effects on the top of the gun



barrel, recoil reducers and the sides of the cheeks. Artist oil filters and weathering powders were then applied for final affect.

This was perhaps one of the more pleasant Criel kits that I have built. I would recommend it to anyone wanting to move beyond Verlinden's fine resin artillery products.

Russ

**6 Years Ago (June 2001) ...**

- Our best summer picnic ever...the club gained closed to \$1400 from auctioning members' donations, according to then president, Jarrod Cunningham.
- Long time member Floyd Werner, Jr. and his family left Killeen for St. Louis, Missouri for his new job as a commuter airline pilot. The move turned out to be temporary as his job vanished after the September 11 attacks. Fortunately, Floyd was able to find his current employment with the Baltimore Police Department as a "flying copper" in the helicopter division shortly after.

10 Years Ago (June 1997) ...

- NCT's two-day Scalefest held in Plano attracted over 2000 attendees, with 1400 showing up on the first day. There were 526 model entries, and the Collection category alone had nine entries occupying three long tables!
- With the Republic of Texas Militia in the news, some members suggested a name change of our charter from IPMS/Republic of Texas to IPMS/ASMS to avoid any confusion and potential bad publicity. After much discussion and debate, the motion was narrowly defeated. We remain known as the Republic of Texas Chapter of IPMS/USA d.b.a. The Austin Scale Modelers Society.
- The late George Lewis celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Village Hobby Shop. George was the third owner of the store.

More Austin Scale Model Show Highlights



Steward Brouillette from Killeen won first in Aircraft Box Stock category with his Eduard Hanriot HD.1 Biplane.



Keith's 1/72 M1 Abrams, Hooters Edition.



Our Veep Dave's award winning U-Boat Diorama.



Lyn Julian's LRDG Chevy took home the Best Armor Award.



Ron O'Neal's excellent F-18A won first in 1/48 Jet.



Ion won first in the Miscellaneous category with this MiG-21 Engine and Radar. It also took Best Engine and Best Finish.



This humorous "Toad Artillery" is another fine creation by Bill Cronk of Palestine, Texas.



She'll be back... Joe Howard's Terminatrix and her cyberdog.



Young Jeffery Kachoris swept the Junior Figure category with this King Ghidorah and his Warhammer figures.



Hip, Hip, Huray! Kenny finished a model!



One of Milton's five winners at the show, a 1/48 P-40N.



Paul Coughlan's Apache 1876 won first in Figure Diorama.



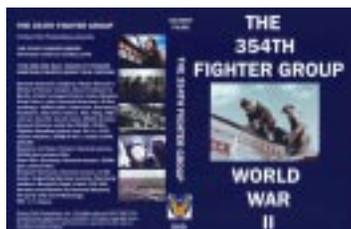
"American Manned Space Collection" by Steve Spooner.

Victory Films The 354th Fighter Group

Cost: \$29.00

Reviewed by

Floyd S. Werner, Jr., IPMS #26266



The P-51 Mustang. Iconic to say the least, but where did it get its start? Which unit had the distinction of introducing the P-51 to combat in World War II?

That honor would belong to the 354th Fighter Group of the NINTH Air Force (not 8th), the Pioneer Mustang group.

This DVD is 2 1/2 hours long and is actually a video diary of the unit's activities from its inception on 15 Nov 1942 with P-39s until its deactivation on 31 Mar 1946. The opening shows a very nice formation of the unit's P-39s on the stateside. The acquisition of P-51Bs came about when the unit moved to England. Following the Mustangs from the cargo ship along the road side to the airbase, it is neat to see them cocooned in their protective shells. Takoffs with the new aircraft with their white nose and stripes are quite interesting, too.

One of the unique aircraft is one coded CG-2. You are also introduced to James Howard of Flying Tiger fame and his P-51B "Ding Hao!" with a normal canopy. His gun camera footage captured his Medal of Honor mission, and it shows some great shots at Me.110s and 109s.

The next sequence is a Berlin mission, and the highlight is a crash landing B-17.

Because of the uniqueness of their new aircraft, 354th were visited by a variety of VIPs, including the King of Yugoslavia. The King is remarkably young looking, maybe even younger than the pilots of 354th. There was lots of pomp and circumstance. There is also an interesting footage of General Eisenhower shooting the guns of a P-47. He was smiling from ear to ear, and I would be too if I were manning those guns!

It is in this sequence that we get our first look at a NMF B model and a Malcolm hood modification. We can also see the tail stripes are overpainted, and the noses are now adorned with the unit's colors.

D-Day markings are the highlight of the next sequence. The mission of 354th was to escort the glider force into France, and their invasion stripes were hastily painted and were not very straight and proper. IPMS judges take note! LOL. Also included in this segment are first D models and Major Turner from Short



Fuse Sally fame. The candid interviews with the crews are a hilarious feature.

Interspersed throughout the video are strafing films. Everything is taken under the guns of the Mustangs, from 109s to trucks and trains. Most of the films are shown in color. This lets the viewer see how exciting and terrifying the war was.

Moving onto the continent at A2 in July 1944 is next. This sequence starts with C-47s lumbering into the air, then the P-51s with full D-Day markings, which by now were more neatly painted. You are treated to some excellent low level buzz jobs. Some of them were so close that you can hear the supercharger. You get the feel of what it was like to be a German infantryman. One can tell whoever is flying aircraft #4 was a hot dog or an old hand flying FT-P. He gets really low. Artillery noises can be heard in the background as well. I'm not sure if all these sound effects are post production addition, but they sound really cool.

One thing for the modeler to note is the weathering and mud patterns while the aircraft landed and taxied. Some aircraft exhibited very chipped paint on the nose. The sequence ends as it begins with the C-47s landing.

Behind and eventually highlighted is the bombed up P-51B with some excellent graffiti on the bomb. The nose markings of "Atlanta Peach" are very nice, and likewise for the camouflage netting over "Bonnie B", a P-51B with a fuselage fillet and Malcolm hood. Nice diorama potential here.

The day to day life of the soldiers and airman are included to show you the conditions on the continent. An unsuspecting young looking pilot was being interviewed with a beautiful French woman and her children. It is all very canned and campy but nostalgic. Horses on the airfield did not like the mechanical Mustangs. Nor did they enjoy the company of pilots who one would believe to be from Texas. When these cowboys tried to rope and wrestle a colt, the mare was not pleased, and she showed them she would not put up with their antics. Eventually she was broken, but it was not an easy proposition.

Ike also made another appearance by visiting in a very filthy two seat P-51B CQ-Z. I didn't notice the "Stars look down" markings on the nose, but it is very apparent that Ike is going to ride this pony to the ground if something happens as he has to be "released" from the aft cockpit. It is interesting to see how he had to be wrenched out of the back!

There are numerous takeoff and formation shots, including some in color. The formation videos are very close and very useful for the modeler. The attack sequences were filmed in



color, and you can see the flak bursting around the aircraft. One beautiful sequence is highlighted with a flyover of a bombed out city, or I should say the rubble that used to be a city. There is also a A-20 escort mission showing a real closeup of the Havocs' bomb run.

Some time in late 1944, the Pioneer Mustang group traded in their Mustangs for P-47s. There is a sequence showing their P-47s in a winter setting with ice and snow everywhere. This will provide lots of inspiration for modelers building the new Hasegawa 1/32 P-47. The Thunderbolts did not last long with the group. After about four months, the pilots were flying Mustangs again.

The relocation to Ober Olm airfield is a great sequence showcasing aces like Lieutenant Bruce Carr and his P-51D "Angel's Playmate". Lt. Colonel Todd Eagleston's P-51 is also shown to great effect with its large eagle motif. Eagleston was the group's highest scoring ace with 18.5 victories. "Margie Maru" and "Wee Speck" are just some of the other Mustangs that are shown.

Some of the best sequences on this video are gun camera footage. Shot in color and remarkably clear, you get to see how the 354th travelled the countryside, blew things up, and duelled with Fw.190s and Bf.109s in the sky. There is one sequence that stands out for me: a Fw.190 was shot down over an airfield while the flak was shooting at the Mustang. Really cool.

Something for the Luftwaffe buffs: there are the wrecks that the mechanics looked over, including a Bf.109G-10 or K-4, all shot in clear color film. Other aircraft include a Ju.88G-6 night fighter (notice the yellow wiring inside the cockpit). In Ansbach, you see a well used Ju.52 and a He.111 (wkn 201413) with some very interesting squiggle markings on the tail only. Then there is another 109, this time a G-12 trainer. As far as I know this is the only color photo of a G-12 I've ever seen. Still want more? There are two other 109s, both G-14s, "Yellow 28" and wkn 161037. Very useful and informative.

When the war finally ended, the 354th got a close look at their enemies on their tour of the Luftwaffe bases. The inside of the German hangars will be very helpful to modelers for dioramas. A Fw.190F-8 is shown in full color and from all sides as the American pilot taxied the aircraft past the cameraman. It provides a wealth of knowledge, including Red Primer on the wheel hub and a late style prop with counter weights. Now that's a real walkaround!

VE-day was celebrated with some low level high speed passes. Some were so close you might want to consider ducking along



with the cameraman. The young pilots of 354th took some time off touring the Nuremburg Stadium. A very picturesque postcard view of Alpine villages and the Eagle's Nest are also included, all in full color of course.

Meanwhile, the VE party continued with more bands and Red Cross nurses. This is followed up with another awards ceremony with the entire group. It is amazing how many people it took to keep a fighter group going. Also impressive is the number of aircraft spaced around the field. There are lots of shots of P-51Ds, including one named "Flagship Nancy Ann" with a three colored spinner. By the time the fighting ceased, most Mustangs were very worn and weather beaten. You'll notice the large amount of mud on the airplanes. Some of the canopy framing was painted silver instead of natural metal. One thing to watch for is the spectacular low level stall and crash of a P-51 "Sweet Jamie".

Awesome air to air shots are included in the next sequence including P-47s coded F4. There are more low level high speed passes shot from a higher elevation to give you a feeling of speed and exhilaration.

The final sequence is the C-47 named "Pioneer Mustang Skyliner" with the 950 kills the unit amassed in combat. The 354th was only 50 short of surpassing 4th Fighter Group in Luftwaffe kills, and they were only in combat for a little over a year and a half. The unit was finally deactivated in March 1946.

What can I tell you about this video? WOW! It is impressive in its scope and documentation, not to mention it contains more Mustangs and colored gun camera footage than you will find anywhere else. This quality of the video is typical of what I've come to expect from Victory Films. This is simply the best video I've had the pleasure to watch. If you need inspiration for a modeling project, this is all you'll need.

I HIGHLY RECOMMEND this title and the rest of the series. Great research material, color and B&W film makes these videos a great value for the money.

You can get a copy from Wade Meyers Studios online at

<http://wademeyersart.tripod.com/id70.html>

Don't forget to check out the wonderful artwork while you're there, and as usual there is coupon code at the bottom of the page to save postage. Let him know that you heard about it from here. Thanks to Wade Meyers and Victory Films for the review copy.

Floyd

Scalefest 2007 Highlights



The new venue at Grapevine this year is much smaller than any of the other Scalefests I can recall. Few tables were allocated for the contest, and models were cramped in a very crowded area.



Nicest hobby shop owners in Texas: Rudy and Janis Cline.



A 1/48 diorama with Tamiya Sherman and figure sets.



The old Bandai 1/48 Opel Blitz on rail.



A giant entry: Trumpeter 1/35 Kriegslocomotive.



Nice finish on this Special Hobby 1/72 Lloyd C.V.



A Sci-Fi diorama titled: Bridge Over Troubled Water.



Although this Revell 1/144 Airbus A380 did not place, its colorful "Virgin Atlantic" livery captured my attention.



Winner of the box stock category: Tamiya 1/24 Nissan 350Z.



A very nice rendition of a WWII Fallschirmjager in 200mm.



This Tamiya 1/12 YZR-M1 took third in the motorcycle category.

(ASMS & AABS Members Who Won.. continued)

John Seaman	1st [Armor ≤1/72 armored car/softskin vehicle]	GMC 6x6
	1st [Armor 1/30-48 softskin]	K2Y Ambulance
	3rd [Aircraft: Origin to '37]	Ki-10
	3rd [Aircraft: 1/32 WWII]	A6M5 Zero
	3rd [Armor 1/30-48 softskin]	Schwimwagen

Special Award

Karl Leidy	Best Vietnam Armor	M50A1 Ontos
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**AMS 1/48
F/RF-84F Resin Detail Sets**

Cost: \$19.95 (Introductory price; regularly \$24.95)
plus Postage
Contact: hairold@verizon.net

Reviewed by
Phil "Bondo" Brandt, IPMS #14091

Background

Elderly recce puke that Bondo is, he always liked the looks of Republic's swept wing picture-taker, and Heller favored us modelers many years ago with a decent injected version, albeit with raised panel lines. Over the years, the essentially lone piece of aftermarket embellishment for this kit has been Reheat Model's RH006 PE fret, long OOP. Another scheme that Bondo Industries visioned was to graft in the not-bad Monogram F-84F cockpit, also a bit long in the tooth.

All of a sudden, from out of the West (Tigard, Oregon) comes Harold Offield to finally provide a definitive resin cockpit/nosegear bay/tailpipe for the Heller recce kit...as well as for plain ol' F-models of Heller and Monogram! Not only that; Harold offers a choice of cockpit vintage for each brand kit: early, late or Euro styles.

In the accompanying pictures, I've lined up the AMS (aptly named, don't you think?) RF pieces alongside the corresponding Heller RF and Monogram F kit parts for comparison.



As far as the AMS set comparison with the stock Heller parts, well, there is none! Truth be told, though, Monogram did their F-84Fs in the same, excellent tradition of their still-popular

Century Series. That is, there's a significantly higher level of cockpit interior/bay detail that didn't normally exist in other brand kits of the same 70s-80s time frame. Harold's nosegear bay is one-piece, though, and that's a big plus. The AMS resin details are crisper than Monogram, too.

Molding

The pictures speak for themselves: the resin is sharply cast with excellent detail. I especially like the small lines, tubing and hoses in the AMS tub and seat. Belts are cast-in.



It's a big help to have one-piece nosegear bays and jet tailpipes. Don't know 'bout you, but I surely get tired of having to cut separate sheet plastic floors to cover the split in gear bays! Also, Harold has cast the nosegear bay door hinges integrally with the bay itself; another time saver (Monogram headed this problem off at the pass by casting the gear doors as part of each bay half).

Conclusion

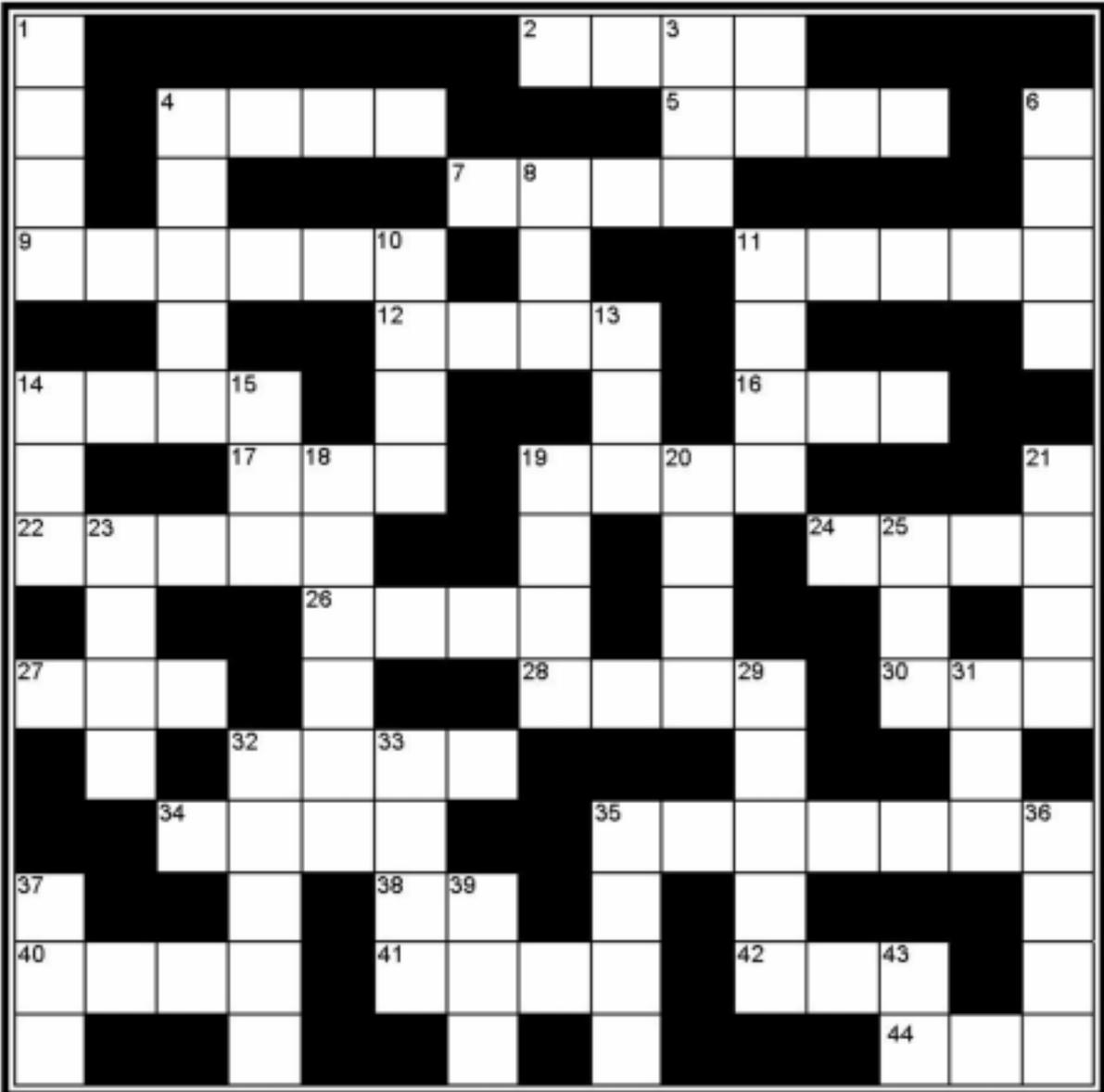
These helpful, often one-man, garage outfits just keep coming outta the woodwork, and we modelers are indeed indebted to them for their initiative and hard work in mastering difficult, much-needed parts. Small business entrepreneurs are a key ingredient in this Golden Age of Modeling. Highly recommended!

"Bondo" Phil

(Editor: Coincident with the release of this detail set is Kinetic Models' new 1/48 F-84F Thunderstreak. It would be interesting to see if the AMS set can adapt to this brand new tooling kit from the orient. You can find more detailed shots of the F-84F kit at <http://www.luckymodel.com>.)



Sprue Puzzler



Nicknames

ACROSS

- 2 UK's Union
 4 Supersonic Lancer
 5 Super Saber streetnames
 7 Imperial Walker
 9 Spanish 109
 11 Dr. McCoy
 12 Sesame streetname
 14 Kit__: art of part borrowing
 16 Bat or Hound
 17 CVN-72
 19 Corsair II streetname
 22 USS Forrestal, after the fire
 24 Willys MB
 26 Kamikaze cherry
 27 Pearl dive bomber
 28 Dubya!

- 30 Dogfight alley
 32 Common inside Plymouth 'Cuda and Porsche 911
 34 Second 80cm K(E)
 35 Anglicized Wildcat
 38 Home of the "Horns"
 40 He played Sgt. Stryker
 41 IDF Ben-Gurion streetname
 42 "Flying Tigers" unit
 44 US 4th Infantry
- DOWN**
- 1 Last F-14 variant
 3 Navy sewage
 4 Fat Man's delivery Car
 6 HVSS's Eight
 8 Grumman's last Cat
 9 Spanish 109
 10 Common inside F9F Panther and MiG-15

- 11 Stratofortress streetname
 13 Curtiss O-52
 14 IAF F-15
 15 USAAF Arnold
 18 SSBN
 19 Coast Guard cadet
 20 Fw.189 and He.219
 21 FN MAG, in the UK
 23 Russian grunt
 25 Prowler's weapon
 29 Airspeed glider
 31 Overlord chief
 32 Anglicized Stuard
 33 Dr. Porsche's little big tank
 35 Ford M-151
 36 Kawasaki Ki-61
 37 First Gulf War
 39 Lucas's 1138 protagonist
 43 Army grunt

Old Rumors & New Kits

Several ASMS members made the trek to Dallas on the last weekend of May—braving the rain and weather—for a chance to find some bargains at SMO and schmooze with fellow modelers. Several of us brought home trophies and I was fortunate to bring home a plaque proclaiming ASMS as IPMS Region 6 Chapter of the Year! As far as I know, that's the first time we have been so honored and the announcement by Dick Montgomery at the beginning of the awards ceremony caught me by surprise.

The award is for 2006 since the Regional Convention marks the end of that year and the beginning of 2007 as far as IPMS Region 6 is concerned.

In other IPMS matters, the cost of charter renewal has increased from \$10 to \$20 per chapter cycle (year). This is the first increase in charter fees and is not unreasonable.

Congratulations to the winners at Dallas—actually it was in Grapevine—especially Pat Rourke and Russ Holm whose names I seem to have heard quite often!

It was a good show but the venue reminded me more of Fort Worth than the previous NCT affairs. It was a bit crowded both for vendors and modelers but all seemed to have a good time and there were some excellent models displayed. A shuttle made regular runs to Squadron's open house for those looking for a free lunch—for real!—and bargains from a distributor.

King's Hobby had their second in-store contest recently with open cockpit aircraft as their theme. Sadly, there weren't many entries but Dave Orloff, John Seaman, and I were the winners.

Several new kits have made it to the shelves. The biggest splash was certainly the Trumpeter F-100D. This big kit in 1/32 is the first for the type and it has already met with some criticism but the overall effect of the kit is very good with good surface detail and not too many rivets. The criticism so far seems directed at shallow wheel wells (who displays a model with wheel wells up?) and some spurious lettering on the huge decal sheet. I know for a fact that Cutting Edge has several new decal sheets in the works but the main gripe seems to be that for a kit that costs over \$150, the decals should be right.

Eduard's new 1/48 Avia 534 III serie, a really neat little Czech biplane fighter of WWII is out. This is airplane is a "national treasure" for the Czechs. It's the early version with open cockpit and it comes with a pretty complete PE fret and very good clear parts. The later "razorback" version should be out soon. Also from Eduard is the weekend edition of the 1/48 Mirage III. As usual, it comes with markings for one aircraft and in this case it's the highest scoring Mirage, No. 259, flown by the Israeli Air Force. Both kits are reasonably priced.

Everyone has seen the new 1/32 Hasegawa P-47D Thunderbolt and the aftermarket blast tubes for the six .50 Cal. guns.

The big announcement at the Shizuoka Hobby Show was that they were also doing a 1/32 Ki 62 Hien "Tony" and it is to be released this month in Japan. It will probably be available in the states sometime in July. If it's anything like the P-47, it will be an instant winner not just for the well done kit but for the price as well. This will make those two Revell Tonys that I've been holding onto for years little more than collector items. Then again I may decide to build one of the just for the heck of it!

We all now that to get a new injected kit of any subject released, we have to spend some extra money and do a little bleeding with a kit that's not quite perfect. (Thanks to Bryan Phillipson and others who spent the money on the resin version for their "hard work and dedication".) Bryan did well with his model at Dallas, bringing home a first place in the category.

Some of you remember Masahiko Nakasone who was a member of ASMS for a couple of years when he was a student here. Masahiko is now working for Tamiya and seems to be moving up in the company. He is still building and has sent a number of photos lately. Sorry, he can't say what Tamiya is planning. One thing that has been announced is a 1/350 scale model of the I-400 Submarine that was designed to carry four Seiran aircraft and bomb targets in the U.S. including the Panama Canal. Even in this scale, the sub will be a big model. And just in time for the model is a new book on the I-400 with fold-outs and very nice drawings and photos of the boat and the Seiran. Even if you aren't a submarine fan, this is a fine book about the largest subs of WWII.

Classic Warships has a book on the North Carolina Class Battleships. For armor fans, there is a new publication on the Stryker Combat Vehicle, and if you have the Trumpeter kit, check out the 4 Plus book on the Gannet. Kagero has an excellent reference book on the Brewster Buffalo.

New armor kits for the past month include the 1/35 Marder III Ausf H from Tristar. I hear this is a good kit. Dragon has a new kit of a late Panther G with steel road-wheels in the Smart Kit series also in 1/35. They also have a late Panther G in 1/72.

Trumpeter has released a good looking kit of the Seahawk FGA, Mk. 6, in 1/48. The previous kit was from Classic Airframes but the one from Trumpeter looks like an easier build. Classic Airframes has also released a kit of the Do-117, "Flying Pencil" that looks much better than the old Hobby Craft kit with up-swept tail section. It's not cheap but it looks good in the box with sufficient resin for details and good clear parts. Special Hobby has a good kit of a relatively obscure aircraft, the Fairey Fulmar. They have also released a kit of an even more obscure (to U.S. modelers) aircraft; the Skua. And now they have announced another 1/48 kit for later this year, the Fiat G-55. That's about all for this month. Now go build a model!

Milton

**Next Meeting
June 12, 2007**



**2006
*IPMS/USA Region VI
Chapter of the Year***

*Austin Scale Modelers Society
Eric Choy
13213 Marro Drive
Austin, TX 78729*

