



SPRUE EXAMINER®

Newsletter of the Austin Scale Modelers Society

May 2016

The Masochistic Modeler Episode Two: A Flock of T-Birds by Ron McCracken

In 1948, the Lockheed T-33, nicknamed the "T-Bird," was the United States Air Force's first purpose-built jet trainer. A true aviation classic, it continued to soldier on well into the 1970's and a few are still airworthy and flying in civilian hands, even today.

It has always been the Masochistic Modeler's (MM) intention to add at least one to his "finished stash" and when the MM's "kit stash" turned up four kits, from four different manufacturers, the possibility of building all four basic variants of the T-33 became obvious.

The four variants are the T-33A trainer, the RT-33A photo-recon aircraft, the AT-33A ground attack trainer, and the TO-2/TV-2/T-33B Navy trainer. The kits were, in order of their age (oldest first) are the Hasegawa T-33A, the Heller T-33A/RT-33A (optional parts), the Sword T-33A, and Platz T-33A.

[continued on page four]



Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS) is a chartered chapter of International Plastic Modelers Society (IPMS/USA).

ASMS meets on the third Thursday of each month.

Annual dues for full membership are \$25/individual or \$30/family.

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. It is intended for educational purposes only. ASMS does not endorse the contents of any article.

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In This Issue

A Flock Of T-Birds	1
Upcoming Events	2
Peanut Brittle	3
Fiddly Bits	3
Web At Night:	9
Rewind	
Get Out Of Your Rut	10
Muster Day	12
Model O' The Month	13
Modelmania 2016	16
Old Rumors/	18
New Kits	2G

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Upcoming Events

IPMS/USA Region 6 Model Shows

RiverCon V, Boosier City, Louisiana	5.21.16
http://www.ipmsredrivermodelers.org/	
ScaleFest 2016, Grapevine, Texas	6.04.16
http://calendar.ipmsusa3.org/sites/default/files/events/scalefest-2016/scalefest2016web.pdf	
Historical Miniatures and Fantasy Society, Tulsa, Oklahoma	6.3/4.16
http://www.hmsneo.org/index.html	
EagleQuest 2016, Grapevine, Texas	6.16/18.16
http://www.squadroneaglequest.com/	
SoonerCon 2016, Bethany, Oklahoma	6.18.16
http://www.ipmsmetrookc.com/soonercon-2016.html	

Local Club Meetings

Alamo Squadron, San Antonio, Texas	6.02.16
http://alamosquadron.com/meetings.html	
Austin Armor Builders Society, Austin, Texas	6.01.16
http://www.austinarmorbuilders.com	
Austin Model Cars, King's Hobby Shop, Austin, Texas	6.02.16
Centex Scale Modelers, Killeen, Texas	5.19.16
http://www.centexscalemodelers.org/	
Hill Country Outlaws, King's Hobby Shop, Austin, Texas	6.04.16
Lone Star Military Miniatures Society, San Marcos Library, San Marcos, Texas	7.09.16

Other Events

Build-N-Bull Day, King's Hobby Shop, Austin, Texas	5.21.16
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IPMS/USA Support the Troops Initiative

The IPMS/USA initiative was established to provide model kits, supplies and reference materials to our servicemen and women serving in combat zones, recovering in hospitals, and rehabilitating in specialized facilities.

The program is expanding into other areas as well. Some local programs take place in USO facilities, some are centered around active duty personnel and are scattered across the country.

The IPMS/USA Support The Troops program is still going full-tilt. The national program director is Jon Emery. Jon is accepting any and all contributions and is sharing them with all of the active programs around the country.

www.models4troops@gmail.com

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Peanut Brittle

Randy Bumgardner

Welcome to May!

With the amount of rain we've been having, I'm sure most of you are getting a lot of time in the shop. I know I'm not.... This month, for once, I'm going to make this a short and sweet column.

The Procrastinator's Contest, true to it's name, is postponed until July 21. Why finish something for June when July is better? I want to give all of the procrastinators who are participating a fighting chance. I guess that includes me, for even though I'm steadily working on my project, the fact that I have to correct the correction parts that is slowing down my progress. I'll bring the project to the next meeting for all to enjoy and make fun of me.

If you haven't signed up for a trophy sponsorship, I'll bring the forms to the meeting. We need all hands on deck for this show, most likely our last at Norris. I say "most likely," as they may reduce their fee and cut us a break. Well, a show coordinator can dream. If you can't sponsor a trophy package, then please consider volunteering at the show. Every little bit goes a long way.

Lastly, be sure to bring in your creations to our meeting. Especially the procrastinators in the crowd. Whether finished or not, it's always interesting to see what you're building.

We are also going to discuss our summer picnic/auction event as well. And we'll be having a presentation by our very own newsletter editor, the esteemed Ben Morton.

Be sure to make it down to the library for some fun this Thursday evening. And join us for dinner afterward, as well.

Now, go build something for us to look at!

Randy



Fiddly Bits

Frank Seibert

I have been remiss of late with my fiddly bits and want to begin by thanking the executive board of ASMS and the entire staff of our newsletter for allowing me this brief respite from my duties. My absence was necessitated by a rather cantankerous state of affairs with one of my ex-wives. Thankfully, they don't all live in Texas. With apologies to George Strait and by way of context: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMNw_-yUm_0

The Procrastinator contest, originally scheduled for June, has been postponed until our monthly meeting in July. Like the sign says: Procrastinators Unite...Tomorrow!

Mike Gilsbach has gone and spiffed up the newsletter page on our website. There are now facsimiles of the cover for each newsletter going back through 2001. Lots to read and lots of fun things to look at. Nicely done. Check out all the back issues of The Sprue Examiner at: <http://austinsms.org/newsletter.php>.

The newsletter used to be called *Sprue Confessions*. There is a comment to be made about that name, but I'll save it for later.

Frank



At this point it occurred to the MM that building all four at once might prove an exquisitely painful task truly worthy of the MM's talent for self-flagellation, and thus the idea for this article was born.

This was the first such "multi-kit" endeavor undertaken by the MM. Several advantages rapidly became apparent. Construction challenges with multiple kits are often interchangeable, even between kits from different manufacturers.

With several kits to choose from, thanks to the magic of modern mold compounds and casting resins, one can pick the best parts from each, and replicate them for all.

Given enough masochistic discipline, one can make sure the worst "dog" of a kit progresses right along with the best. So, without further ado, let's get into the serious content of this article.

The Kits

The MM rates the Platz offering as the least painful build overall, followed closely by the Sword offering. The Heller and Hasegawa kits are both older, have raised panel lines, and are generally more crudely detailed, hence their enhanced pain rating. Because the Heller kit offers alternate parts for the RT-33A, it is nevertheless the preferred kit if you want that particular variant of the T-33.

Wing Construction

All the kits have a single-piece lower wing half, and that method of engineering a plastic kit has a common problem – getting the wing dihedral correct.



Unless very carefully done by the manufacturer, this technique results in dihedral errors, due to warping as the part cools following injection molding. Bear in mind, it doesn't have to distort much in order to significantly change the dihedral angle. The problem is most likely to occur in thin wings, such as those on jet fighters.

The T-33 had, according to sources the MM managed to locate, a 3 degree, 50 minute dihedral angle, meaning the chord line of the wing is inclined by that amount from the horizontal.

One benefit of a mass build is that you get to re-use any tooling you make, so the MM constructed a very simple dihedral jig that could be clamped under the wing to check for the correct angle during assembly. In the final analysis, only the Heller kit required drastic intervention in the form of a brass stub spar to force a correct dihedral angle. The Sword kit's dihedral was a bit too much before assembly with the fuselage, but the force-fit required between the upper surfaces of the wing and the fuselage cured that. The Platz and Hasegawa kits' wings went together without difficulty and held an accurate enough dihedral.



Panel Lines and Surface Finish

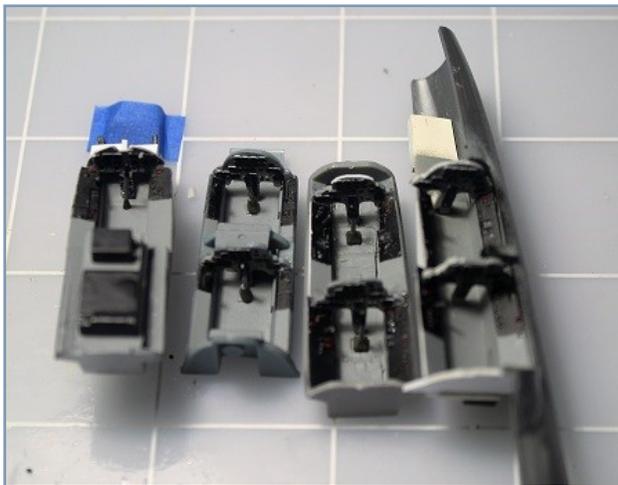
The Hasegawa and Heller kits both have raised panel lines, so the first order of business was to sand those off, and scribe proper recessed panel lines.

The MM's preferred technique is to draw the lines on the parts in ordinary lead pencil, then dig out the scribe and trace over the pencil lines. The MM is also a proponent of Dymo label-maker tape as an aid to scribing. It can be bent to conform to curves, and is self-adhesive, allowing the modeler to focus on controlling the scribing tool. First, tape your part to the work table, then apply your Dymo tape, and finally, with everything stable and secure, scribe your line. Then rinse-and-repeat until you've got all the lines scribed.

Following scribing, the entire model needs its surface re-polished to as close to a mirror finish as you can achieve. This is vital if you want a convincing bare-metal finish, and the MM's Heller kit, at least, would eventually end up in that sort of color scheme. The MM started with 600 grit paper, followed by 1500 grit paper, and finished with automotive polishing compound.

Cockpit Detail

To the MM's delight, the four kits presented endless opportunities to enhance the cockpit detail. All used some variation of the "tub" approach to cockpit construction. The Sword kit was the easiest to upgrade, as it provided two sets of usable front and rear instrument panels and only needed some slight enhancements to the side panels, such as throttle levers.



The Platz kit was reasonable, but the base and footrests of the ejection seat parts were molded onto the floor. That would not be a problem if the seats themselves matched the quality of the rest of the kit. They don't, however. It needed additional mods to the side panels and the existing, inaccurate detail had to be filed off. In addition, the instrument panel was not up to the MM's standards.

The Heller kit provided a representation of the exposed electronic gear for the rear cockpit of their RT-33 variant, but the front cockpit detail required extensive work on the cockpit side panels, and a scratch-built instrument panel. As for the Hasegawa kit, the cockpits are pretty much a scratch-building effort. The approach eventually taken was to make silicon rubber molds of the Sword instrument panels and Sword's resin ejection seats, and cast parts for the Platz and Hasegawa kits.

The MM regretted the necessity of such a pain-limiting shortcut, but if this article was ever to make it to the newsletter editor, some sacrifices to the pure art needed to be made. The MM comforted himself with the realization that the RT-33 instrument panel would have to be scratch-built, as it differed greatly from the standard T-33.

The Heller cockpit tub was too narrow to accept the Sword ejection seat, but a T-33 seat from True Details fit nicely.

Main Gear Well and Speed Brake Well

Of the four kits, Sword had the best execution of this feature, with a separate resin part that walled in the inner ends of the main landing gear wells and speed brake wells.

They had the right idea, but the MM found the execution lacking. On the T-33, there is a longitudinal bulkhead between the port and starboard main gear wells. This bulkhead has structural stiffeners *only* on the starboard side. Sword missed this little subtlety.

The challenge in walling in landing gear wells is to make them look built in, as opposed to looking like an afterthought with an obvious seam line, and this is the biggest problem with the Sword approach. The other kits did wall in the landing gear wells, The Platz kit being acceptable, but the Heller and Hasegawa kits did a very poor job.



TV-2 / T-33B

The MM decided that the only acceptably painful solution was to clean out the existing gear well walls and scratch build replacements. Once the kit walls were gone, the rear of the gear well opening was extended by .030 inch and the bulkhead between the main gear wells and the speed brake wells was also removed.

This allowed the MM to install front and rear walls that extend out beyond the surface of the fuselage. Once the glue cured, it was then a simple matter to carve away the extended wall flush with the fuselage surface, giving the desired seamless look.

With the front and rear walls in place, the center divider was added, then the various detail bits, and finally, a top skin of .005" sheet styrene completed the wheel wells.

Wheels and Tires

The Platz kit had the cleanest and most detailed wheels and tires, but none of the kits had “weighted” tires. The MM elected to add the weight feature to the Platz parts and use them to create rubber molds for use on all four models.

Since the kit has solid, one-piece wheels there is a fairly simple procedure that will satisfactorily weight the tires. Heat an old knife or screwdriver blade over a candle until it is just hot enough to soften the plastic (but not completely melt it), then press the tire down onto the knife. This will create a flat spot, and slightly bulge the sides of the tire.

Don't get carried away with the flattening on a jet aircraft. Jet tires are typically extremely high-pressure tires (hundreds of PSI) and don't flatten all that much.

Run a bit of cool water over the wheel and blade to set the shape, then unstick the wheel from the blade by twisting it.

Ejection Seats

Sword had the best solution to ejection seats. The kit contained a pair of superlative cast resin seats with all the detail one could wish for. The other kits' seats were marginal-to-terrible, so once again molding compound to the rescue!

Using the Sword seat as a pattern, enough seats were cast to equip all the others, with the exception of the Heller kit. The Sword seat would not fit! The MM found that Squadron markets F-80/T-33 seats in their True Details series which, although not up to the standard set by Sword, nevertheless solved that problem for the Heller kit.

Engine Air Intakes

The geometry of the F-80/T-33 engine air intake is complex, and consequently difficult to model. Each manufacturer found a different way to engineer this feature.

Of the four kits, the Platz offering does the best job and the Sword offering the worst. If you assemble the Sword intake parts per the instructions, you will be left with a visible (and impossible to fill) seamline right under the front of the splitter plate. The procedure the MM used was to cement the inner duct wall part to the fuselage half, clean up the seam at its front, then add the splitter plate after the seam cleanup was done.

On the real T-33, the engine air intakes are roughly D-shaped in cross section, and run from the front opening to a point just behind the rear cockpit. There, the smoothly walled-in ducts just end and the air enters a large chamber that basically occupies the entire fuselage interior at that point.

(Yes, the MM had a hard time believing that the first time he saw it, too).

The J33 engine's centrifugal compressor section occupies the center of this large open area and just sort of hangs there in midair.

Most kit manufacturers blank off the engine inlet roughly a half inch behind the intake opening. It would look far more realistic to have the inlet duct left wide open because that is exactly the way it is on the real thing. And that is what the MM did. As long as you cannot see daylight when looking down the intake, it is an acceptable representation.

The Platz kit provides the tail section as a separate assembly and includes interior structural ribs and stringers on their parts. All that is needed is a J33 engine and interesting diorama opportunities suggest themselves (Eduard, are you listening?). Even the MM is not enough of a masochist, however, to attempt scratch-building this.



T-33A

Finally, all T-33s had a bulged fairing for a gun camera just inside the lip of the starboard jet intake. The Platz and Hasegawa kits have this feature, but it is omitted on the Sword and Heller offerings.

Jet Tailpipe

The T-33 has a very long tailpipe leading almost the entire distance from the point where the tail assembly joins the fuselage (just behind the wing root) all the way to the back of the aircraft. The Hasegawa representation is hopeless, and the MM substituted a length of 1/4 inch diameter plastic tubing, capped at the front end, for the kit part. The Platz kit provides a sufficiently long tailpipe, but omits anything to cap the front end.

The Heller and Sword offerings are the best in this regard, with a sufficiently long tailpipe capped at the front with a solid bulkhead to seal off the aft end of the aircraft.

Cockpit Canopy

The T-33 used a long, “clamshell” type of canopy that is hinged at the rear and actuated by a long cylinder attached to a Frame cross-member at roughly the center of the canopy. At the rear of the canopy, on either side, is an extension for the canopy hinge.

Another feature, sometimes installed and sometimes not on actual T-birds, is a windshield that separates the front and rear cockpits. The Platz kit, alone, furnishes this feature.

Only the Sword kit provides a two-piece canopy and windshield. All the rest provide both sections as one part. Sword also provides a resin canopy frame and the canopy actuator so that the canopy can be assembled in the open position.

However, the MM discovered that this frame does not fit especially well, so it was ultimately omitted from the build. The Hasegawa kit simplifies their engineering further by omitting the rear hinge extensions, so an open canopy on that kit is nearly an impossible proposition.

Wing-to-Fuselage Join

In the MM’s opinion, the acid test for the engineering of a model having a single-piece wing is the degree of difficulty in joining the wing to the fuselage without the need for brute force techniques, such as filler putty or forcing the two components together.

To the MM’s surprise, only one kit’s wing fit cleanly and easily into place – the Hasegawa kit, which was the oldest of the lot. It just fit right into place, with no joints that couldn’t be dealt with using gap-filler CA, and no need to force things into proper alignment.



The Sword kit was the most delightfully painful of the lot. None of the underside seams fell on panel lines, meaning each joint had to be perfectly filled. The wing assembly was a force-fit to the fuselage, which in one way helped, by reducing an excessive dihedral angle. But the lower half of the wing includes the entire

fuselage underside to the front of the engine intakes. That joint would not close fully and needed a lot of gap-filler. The wing alignment with the fuselage also needed careful attention and a bit of pressure to get right.

The Platz kit’s wing fit into place easily enough, but the mating surfaces didn’t end up level with one another, requiring extensive effort with files and sandpaper to smooth out wing-to-fuselage joints, both top and bottom.

The Heller kit was the worst of the lot, and in order to get a proper upper wing-to-fuselage join it was necessary to resort to filler. The MM used Milliput forced into the joints by use of a pallet knife.

Alternate Versions

The T-33A and TV-2/T-33B are essentially out-of-the-box builds, so enough said about those.

The RT-33A obviously requires a different nose section, and here the Heller kit comes through with alternate parts. However, the camera windows are represented as simple recesses in the surface. No clear parts are provided for these windows, leaving the job of opening them up and providing clear windows to the modeler.

As for the AT-33, none of the kits provide wing pylons or bomb racks. In addition, they all have the two nose gun ports plated over, as was typically done for T-birds used in a pure pilot training role.

The only good news is, the Sword kit does provide a resin gunsight for the front cockpit, so it is the kit of choice if you want that variant.

If you happen to have a Sword P-80 or RF-80 that you don’t want to hang bombs on, you can scrounge the correct underwing bomb racks. Otherwise, the armament provisions are an exercise in scratch-building.

The MM was fortunate to still have an ancient IPMS Quarterly article that provided dimensions and details for the rocket tubes, practice bomb racks, and practice bombs, and this information was painfully put to good use.

Paint Schemes

The T-33A was generally left unpainted except for anti-glare panels on U.S. Training Command aircraft. ADC used a bunch of them for various purposes, and those typically ended up in gloss light grey.



The Sword kit depicts one of the latter T-birds, so the MM used the Sword decals on the Hasegawa kit. The RT-33A was developed as a Military Assistance Program recon aircraft, and most went to U.S. allies. There is a wide variety of possible color schemes. The MM decided on a bare-metal RT-33A used for a special operation, Project Field Goal, in 1961.

The AT-33A scheme is patterned after aircraft stationed at Cannon AFB, New Mexico in the early 1970's and features an all-white underside and polished bare metal upper surfaces.

The TV-2/T-33B scheme selected was the later Navy white scheme with international orange visibility markings. Early TV-2s were all bare metal, just like their Air Force contemporaries.

Summary

Having built four of the 1/72nd scale T-bird releases, the MM recommends the Platz offering as the best for those not desirous of a painful build.

If you just have to have an RT-33, you should probably still start with the Platz kit, and use the Heller kit for its recon nose and cockpit parts.

On the other hand, with a bit of effort, any one of the four kits will yield a decent representation of the T-bird. It is simply a question of how much effort you wish to put into the build.

Ron



Fred's Fun Facts

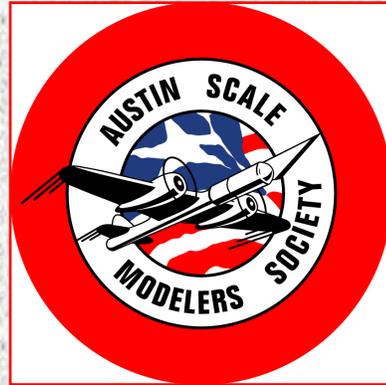
On May 19, 1954, Peter Townshend singer-songwriter and guitarist for The Who is born.

In 1928, the first frog-jumping jubilee is held in Calaveras County, California.

In 1967, the Soviet Union ratifies a treaty with the United States and Britain banning nuclear weapons from outer space.

IN 1999, *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* is released in the United States. Opening day ticket sales are 28.5 million.

[courtesy of Fred Horky and Wikipedia]



Newsletter Contest Chugging Along!

The ASMS Newsletter contest continues unabated. For the small cadre of folks that may be unaware of this contest, this is the one where you send stuff in for publication to our newsletter.

The individual that sends in the most stuff over the course of 2016 will have their 2017 ASMS club dues paid for by the newsletter staff

Stuff may include articles, websites, photos, odd but hilarious musings (Rick Cotton's essays), fun facts, etc.

Your submissions count whether published or not and you need not be a club member to participate.

Please send all submissions to: editor@austinsms.org

Web At Night: Rewind by Jean-Michel D'Aubigne

There have been a number of articles, here and elsewhere, about the proliferation of 3D printers. With all this information, it can be somewhat confusing.

Rest assured that our pals at Micro-Mark, with the help of Dremel are trying to eliminate some of the confusion. Dremel, hobbyist tool maker extraordinaire, has announced their own 3D printer, *The Idea Builder*.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnxWqakZ3g>

The Armor Modeling and Preservation Society (AMPS) held its annual model convention and contest this past April in South Carolina. Several ASMS members attended and from initial reports a thoroughly good time was had by all.

For a complete list of winners, as well as an extensive collection of photographs of the models present, check out the AMPS website.

<http://www.amps-armor.org/ampsite/default.aspx>

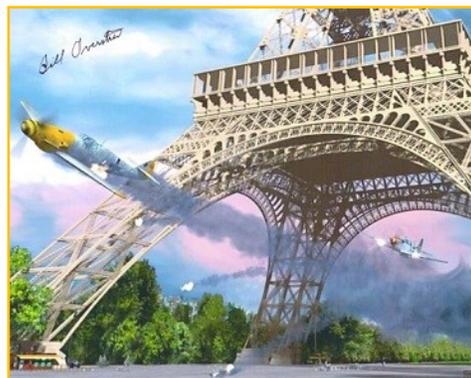
Friend of the newsletter Milton Bell, has submitted several items this month for your consideration. It should be noted that Milton, a past editor of this august publication, aided our illustrious editor during his formative years with this publication. Eric Choy was instrumental in our current newsletter editors education, as well!

The first item is a story about scratch-building. Many of us have tried, with varying degrees of success, to construct a model that doesn't exist in kit form. Taking bits from one kit and grafting them on to another, we come up with that one-of-a-kind model.

But what's an airplane enthusiast to do you when a scratch-built scale model just won't cut it?

<https://www.youtube.com/v/pzkoTulqA1U&autoplay=1&rel=0>

The next tidbit involves the story of William Overstreet. He was a fighter pilot during World War II and is remembered for his chase of a German Me109 beneath the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The German pilot maneuvered underneath the Eiffel Tower to avoid pursuit and Bill just followed.



Original artwork by Len Krenzler.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2533373/WWII-fighter-pilot-flew-THROUGH-Eiffel-Tower-dies-Virginia-aged-92.html>

For those among you who truly feel that you can't have too much toilet paper or too many modeling forums comes a newish one. iModler.com touts itself as an "easier to use modelers forum."

They do make it simple. Just sign up, send them your unabridged photos and text, and they will do the rest. Happy foruming! *

<http://imodeler.com/>

The last item for this month comes by way of Chuck 'Obi-wan' Konefsky. It beautifully illustrates the advantages of practicing your skill set *before* embarking on the real thing.

<https://gfycat.com/PlaintiveObedientFlounder>

Jean-Michel



[* Denotes a new phrase. Copyright pending.]

Get Out Of Your Rut by Rick Cotton

Lately, I have been experimenting.

No, not with chemicals or illicit plants. I mean in the workshop!

Are you the kind of modeler who tries something new all the time? Or are you stuck in that model-building rut, cranking them out over, and over, and over, until your wife can actually recognize the basic features of a Tiger tank?

If she starts asking you which Ausfuring that particular one is...it's time to try something new.

Are you building them all the same way you have always built them? Is it down to such a routine that you can do it while watching TV, reading the Internet, and talking on the phone, all at the same time? If so, you may be in a technical rut.

I have been reading online about the "Spanish School" of modeling. (Notably, Mig Jimenez of MIG Productions). Funny, I never knew there was such a thing. Wonder what their colors are, and when their prom is. I would never have guessed it was in Spain.

They probably play soccer, or some other foreign sport. But, looking at the European Modeling Championships, the "Spanish School" is the SEC or Big-12 of foreign modeling schools. Their depth of detail isn't just good...it's fantastic. And it gives me ideas....

I've been playing around with scraped dust from colored pastel chalk in my weathering. It goes on with a crappy, old brush, and get scrubbed around where you want it. Then a nice, soft, wide brush takes off the excess. Voila! It's subtle (somewhat), easy to do (very), and fun (remember that?)!

I used to use this stuff on the outside only, for smoke stains and dirt. Hmm. It seems it has a *lot* more uses! It's going all over the inside of a TBM-3 Avenger right now, and I'm having a blast doing it.

There is the base Interior Green painted on, but I am using a lime green pastel chalk dust in the center of each space between the ribs and stringers. If you blend it in carefully, it's pretty darn convincing as faded, weathered paint.

The TBM has, at 1/32 scale, an interior that can best be described as cavernous, and just cries out for detailing to the max. Interior ribs, platforms, hatches, radios... you name it, it's in there.

Despite Trumpeter's best efforts to hide it all, most of it can be more or less seen, especially if the folding wings are in the "down and locked" position.

If not, you'll have to do some serious thinking, as the folded wing blocks the open crew hatch showing off all that stuff inside.



Photo courtesy of Gene Nollmann

I've been replicating wiring by running household thread through paint...usually that cheap acrylic craft stuff that sells for 75 cents at the Hobby Blobby. Not only does it give the thread color, it seals it from unraveling and stiffens it when dry.

I am also using Florist's wire, and other thin, bendable wire to stuff in there. Keep it all from looking the same. I'm looking for something to replicate 1-inch rubber tubing. Maybe some solder? Experimentation...why not?

I'm just not the kind of guy who will regularly plunk down huge wads of cash for aftermarket resin. Not unless the kit error can be seen from somewhere in New Jersey, and it's a subject I am emotionally attached to. So, I experiment with other detailing techniques, on a budget.

Here's an idea: some brilliant manufacturer ought to release a big, fat bag full of styrene squares and boxes, all about a half-inch or less. I have more trouble trying to cut a square box than anything else, and those things would be darned useful in "busying up" empty-looking areas.

How about a box full of teeny-tiny little hose clamps? That would be useful. Above all, a 1/32 set of generic-looking guys, in generic-looking overalls, waving around generic-looking tools. They could be painted up for nearly any nation, setting, or unit, and the arms could be cut and repositioned to "work" on your 1/32 Flabbenschlapper in a diorama setting.

I'd buy several sets of these, cut them up, and engage in a little plastic surgery to swap limbs and create a veritable miniature crowd of maintenance men. No more taking 1/35th guys, performing surgery on them to make them "grow," and placing them out of their armor-infested element.

It would be even better if they were not all young-athletic-looking types...fat guys and a disgusted-looking sergeant type would do nicely. A pudgy, equally-disgusted looking Navy Chief would be good, too.

But, I digress...back to the TBM.

This thing has a *lot* of parts in the box to begin with, and an instruction booklet that just goes and goes. I'm armed with a stack of TBF interior photos, and a whole bunch of leftover scrap and parts. There will be much to do.

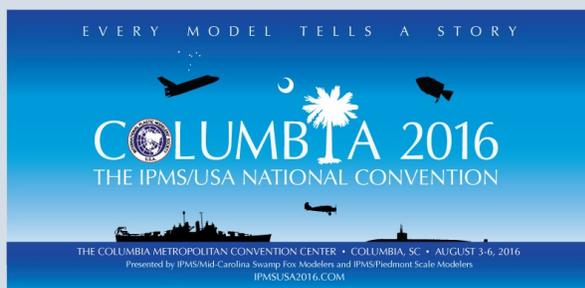
Maybe some day I'll actually finish this thing. Maybe it will actually make its way to a contest table or club meeting one day. Maybe.

In the meantime...I will continue to experiment!

Rick



Columbia 2016 IPMS/USA National Convention



The 2016 IPMS/USA National Convention will be held in Columbia, South Carolina August 3-6, 2016.

More information is available at:
<http://www.ipmsusa2016.com/>

Registration is now open.



ASMS Quarterly Contest Schedule

July 21

~~June 16~~



Procrastinator
Contest

September 15



Bondo Special
Contest

December 15



White Elephant
Contest

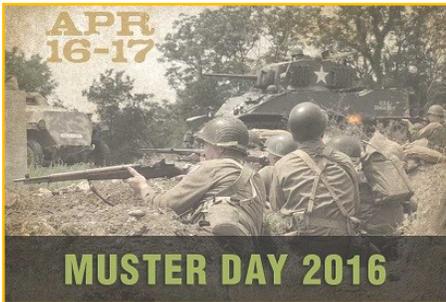
A special thanks to King's Hobby Shop for their support of our quarterly model contests.



<http://kingshobbyshop.com/>

Muster Day At Camp Mabry by Aaron Smischney

Greetings ASMS members! On Saturday, April 16th, Ian Candler, Walter Hames, and I (Aaron) braved the storm warnings to represent our club at the Texas Military Forces Museum's Muster Day at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.



From what I heard, the turnout was down because of the weather reports, but we were pretty busy. Lots of interested people came up to ask

questions and we quickly ran out of Capitol Classic 2016 show flyers!



Mark Hobbs, of King's Hobby Shop/Austin, set us up inside the museum. Here I am working on my Tiger I and Walter is working on some Airfix figures.



Ian spent his time painting figures. Whenever the kiddos would approach the table Ian would ask them what they thought. He was a very cordial ambassador!



I was so busy trying to finish up my Tiger I, I didn't notice the Sherman driving by.



I was *this* close to finishing my 1/48 scale Tiger I while at the event. I did make great progress while fielding questions from the crowd and trying to keep the kids from making off with Ian's figures.

There were many interested parties in both ASMS and our upcoming model show in September. Hopefully we will get a few new modelers from our outreach. It was a great time and I can't wait to do it again!

Aaron



[Editor's Note: ASMS also fielded a contingent at the Spring Air Fair- Fly In at the Pioneer Flight Museum in Kingsbury, Texas on April 16th. The Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry will hold a Close Assault demonstration on May 29th and 30th.]

<http://texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/tmfmevents/>

Model O' The Month by Roy Lothbrok

At each monthly ASMS club meeting, a small, informal contest is held to determine the best model brought in by the membership on that day. This in-house contest decides the Model o' the Month for that meeting. Each monthly winner is afforded the opportunity to bring that entry back in December. At ASMS's final meeting of the year all assembled contest winners are given a thorough going over and the best among those past winners is chosen as Model O' The Year. While that may not sound like much there is an added incentive for members to bring in their completed work each month. ASMS does award a trophy, but more importantly, a gift certificate to a local modeling emporium. Finish up that latest project and bring it in to our next meeting.



Ian Latham is moving to another room in his house and brought in his collection of WWI aircraft that have been gracing the ceiling of his old room. Ian uses guitar string for the rigging on his biplane models. I suspect that he uses Super Slinky's.



Tim Robb brought in another refurbishing project. Tim's model collection was the unfortunate recipient of some flooding and he has been washing off the mud, gluing stuff back on, and re-decating with a fury.

His 1/48th scale Monogram P-51D is testament to his tenacity. And, I might add, skill.





Mike Lamm showed up with a 1/72nd scale Matchbox kit of the Glouster Gladiator. Mike noted that this is his first time rigging a bi-plane. He used that "stretchy stuff" for the rigging. I think it's called EZ line.



Spencer LeBlanc had a couple of 1/1000th scale Starblazer Garmillas warships on the prowl. These Bandai kits are from the anime series *Space Battleship Yamato*. Don't fret! The actual craft won't be among us until the 22nd century.



Rick Herrington had two kits on display. A 1/72nd scale Eschi kit of an Israeli M60 with blazer armor and an 1/48th scale Fujimi model of the Me109 G-6. Rick notes that he has been experimenting with chipping and streaking techniques on the 109.





Mike Gilsbach won **Model O' The Month** with his 1/48th scale Bandai *Star Wars* Snowspeeder. I think that's Dak in the rear seat. Mike has built several of the Bandai *Star Wars* kits. He noted that the fit of this one wasn't quite as good as some of Bandai's other offerings in this series.

The Bf 109 E3 is the 1/72nd scale Tamiya kit.



It would appear that Bob Bethea has *finally* moved on from Viking figures. The Panzer I F is the Flyhawk kit in 1/72nd scale built out-of-the-box. The Panzerbefelwagen I is depicted as if under attack. The figures are from New World Miniatures while the tank is the 1/35th scale Tamiya model.

Roy



Modelmania 2016 by Cesar Herdez

Model mania 2016 was held on April 23, 2016 in the Stafford Centre (Stafford, Texas). The contest theme this year was "Vintage Kits." A vintage kit was defined as any model kit produced prior to 1975. You did need to bring along the kit instructions or box art as proof of the pudding. So to speak.

The theme judge, Don McFetridge of Houston IPMS has written a short treatise about the selection process for this year's theme award. But after I read it, it seemed to me that these criteria could apply to any contest. A link to that article is included here:

<http://www.ipms-houston.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Modelmania-Theme-Award.pdf>

It is worth repeating the criteria for judging from time to time, as someone always seems to get all wrapped around the axle when they don't win something at these model contests. From personal experience, I can't attest to a tinge of disappointed when I don't win something, but as someone once said, "you pays your money and you takes your chances."

The Houston club reports that there were nearly 550 entries from 127 contestants. Lots of vendors were present and shopping was fast and furious.

It may just be me, but I find that the selection at the vender tables at our regional shows is a little on the stale side. I often don't find much that I can't live without. Then again, it's not like I really *need* any more kits to not build.

There is a more thorough run down on the Houston IPMS website about this year's contest and I encourage you to visit.

http://www.ipms-houston.org/?page_id=4043

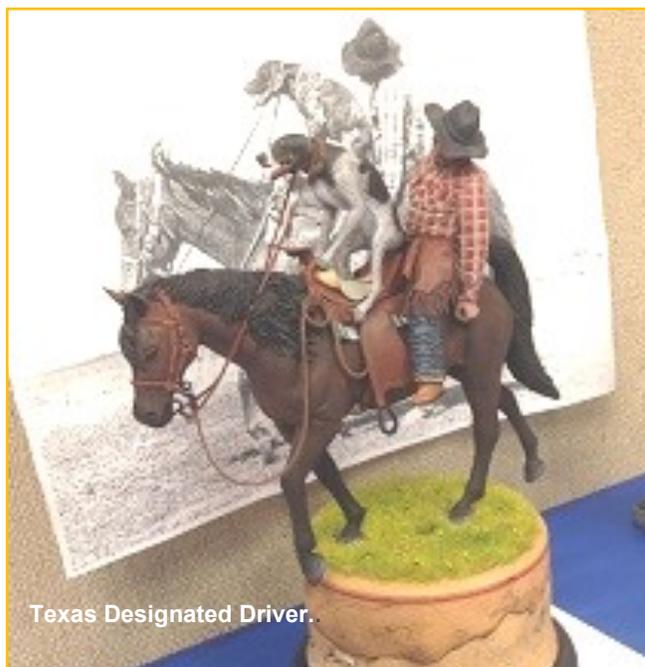


Until then, here are some of the entries at ModelMania 2016.



This shrimp boat diorama by Hugo Garcia, reportedly one of Richard Kern's favorites. It did win Best Ship Diorama.





Texas Designated Driver..



Lil Coffin by Guy Beaudette won Best Automotive as well as the theme award at Modelmania 2016. Photo courtesy Houston/IPMS.

Cesar



[Photos courtesy of Ric Gonzales, unless otherwise noted.]

Old Rumors / New Kits 2G

Randy Bumgardner, Rick Herrington, Mike Poole, Golzar Shahrzad, Aaron Smischney

It Figures

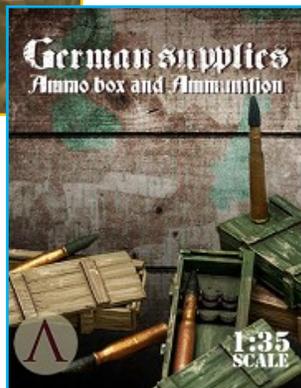
Welcome all to this month's It Figures, my snappy new title for figure news you can hopefully use.

Let's start off with some figures from WWII.

Evolution has released images of a new set they are coming out with of Soviet troops and they look excellent!



Sergey Traviansky is one of the premier sculptors on the planet for 1/35 figures, and these are up there with his best. Lots of great character and perfectly sculpted for painting! The accordion guy is one I can't wait to see painted up! These should be out in the next few months.



Scale 75 is releasing more 1/35 scale figures of WWII Germans as well as some stowage accessories. Scale 75 is better known for their fantasy subjects (and usually in 75mm scale). We will see how well their WWII line goes. One thing for sure is that they produce quality stuff.



In the fantasy realm, my favorite new release is from Midnight-Miniatures titled "Find your way." It looks like an interpretation of a certain hobbit to me. This bust (or half figure in this case) is sculpted by the very talented Lucas Pina and is limited to 200 copies. More information is available here:

<http://www.midnight-miniatures.com/>

Those are my highlights for the month. Get painting!

Aaron



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<http://www.hillcountryhobby.com/index.html>



<http://www.hobbytown.com/>

Armor

Greetings armor fans, and, hello to all you armor curious!

I like to do these articles last minute, much to our editor's consternation, because there is always a new release right when the article is due. I want to be as hot off the presses as I can get. Here is the latest.



Amusing Hobby was recently showing off the box art and test builds for their Conqueror. Dragon released a sub-par version of this kit not that long ago, so, there is a lot of hope riding on this one. The Conqueror was one of the last of the heavy tanks and stared down the Soviets in Berlin for many years. Amusing can be hit or miss, but I'm crossing my fingers on this release!

More news from the Shizuoka Hobby Show. It looks like AFC Club may be gracing us with a new tool M113! This vehicle saw many years of service. It's nice to see big hitters like AFV Club giving us a modern tool of this vehicle.



Speaking of tanks in service for decades, Miniart has announced a T-54B. It looks like it has a turret interior as well!



Dragon has announced a weird one, an Egyptian Sherman with AMX-13 turret. Maybe I should finish the kit-bashed, scratch-built one I started two years ago but have yet to paint?



Here is one I am excited about, HobbyBoss has announced the T-1. This was the first tank built in the Soviet Union and previously only available via some horrible Eastern European kits. (I know. I have one.)

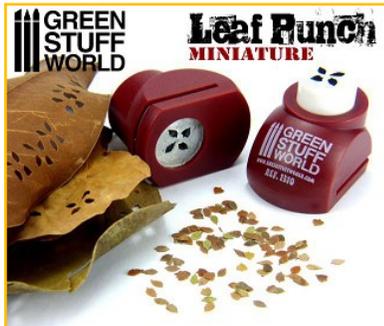


Bronco is about to grace us with a new Sturmgeschütz.



I'll leave you with something not specifically armor related but neat as heck! Make your own leaves! Brilliant! If you check out Green Stuff World they have tons of great diorama tools and supplies.

<http://www.greenstuffworld.com/en/>



Until next time, tanks a lot!

Aaron



Aircraft

It's already May. The year is just flying by. This month we've got some new stuff that was announced at the Shizuoka Hobby Show in Japan. The show is currently underway, but I'll let everyone know what has been announced so far.

First, from Tamiya, is an announcement that has caused both joy and consternation on the planet wide internets. This summer they will begin shipping a 1/48th scale F-14A Tomcat. Yep. An accurate, great fitting kit that many of the Naval Aviation Modelers have wanted. The downside, so state the naysayers, is the lack of separate (posable) slats and flaps.

I haven't seen many pictures of Tomcats on the ground with the slats and flaps deployed. That is unless it's a maintenance scene, or immediately after touchdown.

The naysayers bemoan the fact there isn't much underwing ordnance contained in the box. Here again, in most images, the Tomcat isn't loaded up. In my opinion, I prefer the cleaner lines without all the hangy stuff. You be the judge when it hits the shelves.

This July, ICM will bring us a newly tooled 1/48th scale MiG-25RBT. This is the tactical re-con version of the MiG-25 and it will make an interesting model of this iconic aircraft for someone's shelf.

ICM, in their 2016 catalog, have also shown a new Ju 88A-4 and Ju 88A-14, both in 1/48th scale. We can compare these to the Dragon Ju88s released all those years ago.



Wingnut Wings had their 1/32nd scale Sopwith Camel on display at Shizuoka. As usual, the detail is phenomenal, and the fit is awesome. Don't get too much, or any, paint on the faces of the parts or the fit will head south fast. That's how tight the tolerances are. I'm only joking. A little.



Platz will be releasing a new-tool 1/72nd scale F-15J MSIP I Eagle sometime the future. It will be cool if they include one or two options for the special anniversary markings in addition to the line jets. I'm not sure about the actual release date as my Japanese isn't very good.



Platz is also releasing new-tool kits of the T-1B in 1/72nd scale and a 1/144th scale C-1. If you really like the JASDF aircraft, these are for you.

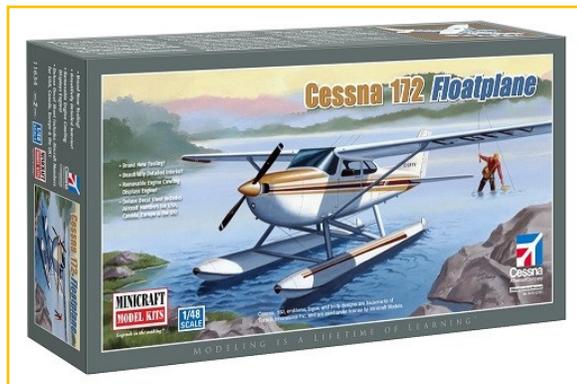
Platz was also showing off their 1/72nd scale Heinkel He 219A-7. Upon examining the images from the show, this is a very nice looking kit. One of the signs for the kit also contained the Dragon logo. I'm not sure what role they played in the kit. Perhaps as a distributor?

There was a bit of levity at the show as well. Zvezda was showing off their nicely detailed 1/72nd scale Sukhoi Su-27SM "Franker B" with some well detailed armament. I'm not sure when NATO changed their designation for this aircraft, but I trust Zvezda did their due diligence.



They also brought along their new 1/72nd scale MiG-29 (9.13) to show off as well. The small scale Russian modelers will certainly enjoy the release of the new MiG-29 as well as that new "Franker" coming down the pike.

One neat thing that caught my eye was at the Minicraft booth. Actually, it was two neat things. I'm not sure if they are new-tool kits. I suspect they are not. Minicraft was displaying sample boxings of 1/48th scale Cessna 172.



They had the version with floats and the version with land-based gear. Both kits contained marking options for two aircraft. I hope they are new tool kits.

And one last thing for our Austin modeling friends. King's will be receiving the new Airfix Gloster Meteor F.8 this week. Be sure to hotfoot it down there to see what all the hubbub is about and pick up one or two.



You can never get just one, there are too many markings out there to choose from.

Alrighty then! That's it for me for this month. Go build something, so you can make room for these new kits.

Cheers,

Randy



Miscellaneous

Fujimi has an addition to their high school fleet with the Chibi-Maru Kagero-class destroyer Harukaze. The High School Fleet is akin to the Gurls und Panzer takeoff. It would appear that it is patterned after an anime series: *The High School for the Dead*. This is an injected molded kit in 1:700th scale.

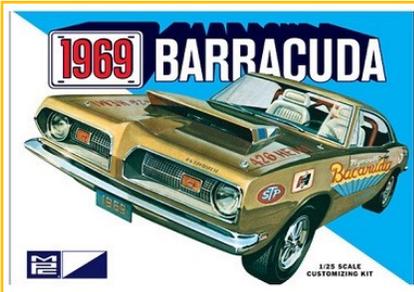


Hät Industries has a plastic kit of the Gardner gun, an early machine gun invented in 1874. The design was developed by Pratt & Whitney. The 1:72nd scale injected kit comes with five figures.

Hät Industries does a lot of war gaming things and usually molds their kits in soft vinyl. This kit is reported to be in a hard plastic. I suspect that the figures are the soft version.



ACE has a new 1:72nd scale APC for your modeling pleasure, the Soviet BTR-70.



MPC has been re-issuing things of late and the newest entry is a 1:25th scale Plymouth Barracuda. You need not listen to Heart as you build, though.

Legend Productions, a Korean company, has a IDF Droid ATMD (anti-tank missile defense) to enhance your Merkava. The 1:35th scale kit has eighteen resin and nineteen photoetch bits.



To help enhance this accessory item is Tetra Model Works, also Korean.



They are offering 1mm x 1.5mm PVC tubing.

ARK Models, a Russian company, has a couple of kits coming soon. Both are in 1:72nd scale and both have some resin bits. They are the Kamov Ka-50 and a Pak FA T-50.

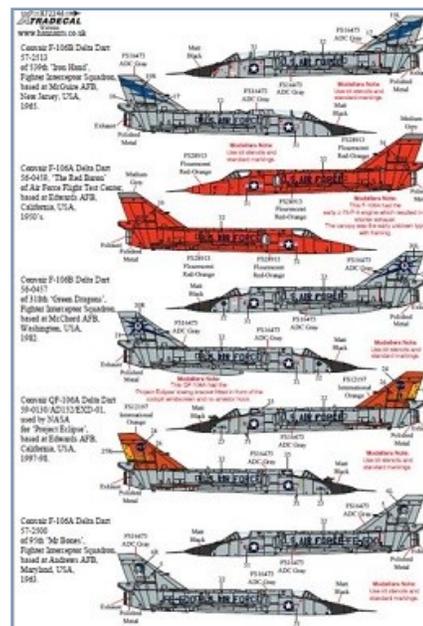


If you are on the lookout for some alternative markings for that 1:72nd scale F106 you have laying about, XtraDecal has the answer. They will soon be offering a decal sheet for the F-106 A/B. This is labeled as Part I, so you might expect others in the future.

For fans of all things British, there is a new book of Cold War Jets headed your way. This volume covers fourteen different aircraft types operated by the RAF from 1945-2010 with 280 full color profiles.



The suggested price is £7.99, so I'm thinking it is a soft cover edition.



Not to be outdone, Authentic Decals has some digital camo schemes in both 1:72nd and 1:48th scales.

These are kit specific aircraft decal sets. The newest is for the MiG-29. The set comes with the digital camo as well as appropriate stenciling. There are no cool F-15's at the moment.



Designed by Pawlygin A. and Golubov V.
The Decal Design, The Logo and Cover Design is a property of Olimp Model Group and its affiliates.

MiG Productions keeps devising new ways to separate you from all your modeling accessory dollars. They have added a line of rigging material for naval vessels or antenna.

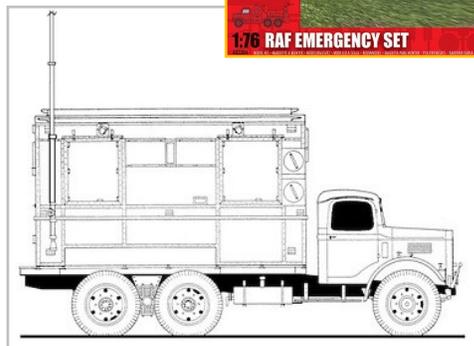


This rigging material comes in super fine (0.01mm), fine (0.03mm), and medium (0.02mm) thicknesses. This looks to be an EZ line kind of product as it is stretchy. You get two meters (6.5 ft.) of material in each packet.



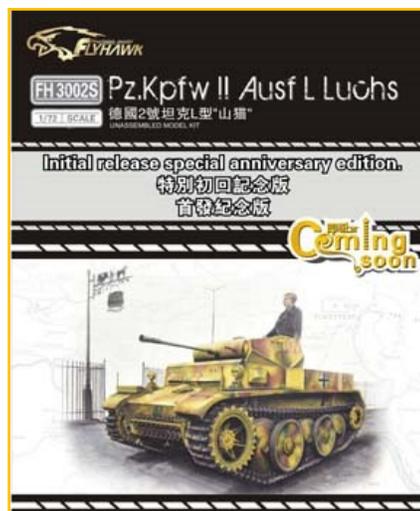
Armory Models has a new 1:72nd scale T-18. This resin and photoetch kit is of the Soviets first light tank.

To help round out your aircraft ground equipment, Flight Path UK has a conversion set for the Austin K.6 3 6x4 RAF signals container. Most people would just call it a commo van. It is designed for Airfix's 1:76th scale RAF emergency set. The conversion kit comes with photo-etch and resin bits.



Flyhawk Models has a new entry in their expanding line of 1:72nd scale armor kits. This time it's the Pz.Kpfw II Ausf L Luchs. The initial release comes with a figure from Rabbit Club.

Rabbit Club tends to do pre-painted figures. There isn't any information on whether or not this one is unpainted or not. But if it is a pre-painted figure and that's a problem, some primer will solve that issue.



Go build the your model!

Golzar





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IPMS/USA Journal March + April 2016



- Dam Brudders - Carpetbaggers? Not Us!, by Bill and Richard Engar
- From Flushdecker to Fruit Freighter - Scratch-building a destroyer-turned-banana carrier in 1:700 scale, by Vladimir Yakubov
- Layers of Armor - A quick way to achieve depth in your figure's armor, by Gino Dykstra
- Just Drop It! - Taming Pegasus' kit of the F9C-2 Sparrowhawk to build the world's only dirigible fighter, by Chris Bucholtz
- A Darker Ride for the Dark Knight - Scratch-building a Subdued 1970s era Batmobile, by Dan Thompson
- You Dirty Rat – er, Hunchback! - Converting Lon Chaney into James Cagney, by Mark McGovern
- Spitfire? It might be an MJ-100! - Creating a Replica of a Replica, by Jordan Ross
- Dream Team - Creating a Tribute to the Colorado ANG's Display Team in 1:72, by Paul Kinney

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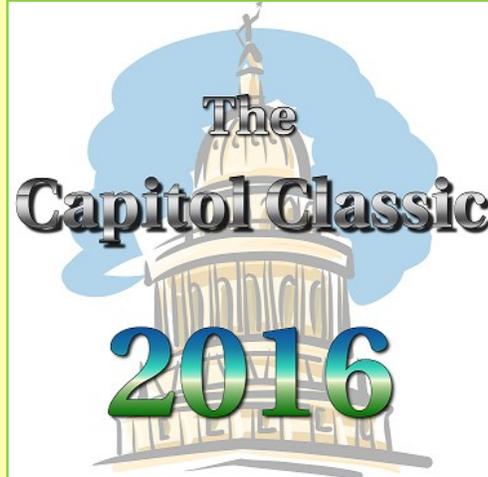
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