



ASMS

AUSTIN SCALE MODELERS SOCIETY



SPRUE EXAMINER

Banshee Gundam Review

By
Ziggy
Downs-Bumgardner



FJ-3 Fury Reviewed
by Ron McCracken



Milleniumcon!

Texas' Biggest Historical
Miniature Wargame
Convention

plus

- On The Table
- Old Rumors and New Kits
- The Cotton Report



News • Articles • Features • Opinions • Advice • Humbug



WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 3 The President's Notepad – By Aaron Smischney

Page 4 Mobile Suit RX-O Unicorn Gundam 02 Banshee Review

– By Ziggy Downs-Bumgardner

Page 9 Sword's 1/72nd FJ-3 Fury - By Ron McCracken

Page 12 The Cotton Report: Winter is coming... - By Rick Cotton

Page 14 On The Table - by Flanged End Yoke

Page 17 Old Rumors and New Kits:

Page 17 Shipping News – by Rick Herrington

Page 19 The Air Report – by Ron McCracken

Page 21 It Figures – by Michael Lamm

Page 26 Tracked Topics – by Rick Herrington

Page 29 Sundries - Golzar Shahrzad

Page 33 Milleniumcon - by Rick Herrington



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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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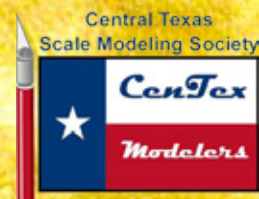
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IPMS/USA Support the Troops Initiative

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



El Presidente

By Aaron Smischney

Greetings fellow modelers!

It was good to see y'all at the Christmas party. I want to thank Mike Krizan for hosting, it was a good time.

We were able to give Bob King his lifetime membership award and he was very grateful. He told us that when the club was started it was by a diverse group of different modelers, each having different interests from autos to figure painters, airplane guys and tank aficionados. They had the goal of coming together to help each other be better modelers. It was heartwarming to think that this germ of an idea has blossomed over the years, and that that spirit continues on in our fellowship. I knew when I first joined the club I had found a good one, with everyone being helpful and no judgment based on skill or subject interest. I like how we all can share ideas and learn from each other. Let's keep it up!

Well that about wraps up 2018. Elections are around the corner. Make sure you pay your dues so you can vote for your officers!

Till next time, go build something (or paint a shelf queen)!

Aaron





Mobile Suit RX-O Unicorn Gundam 02 Banshee Review

By Ziggy Downs-Bumgardner



Introduction

The Gundam universe is expansive to say the least, and there are just a select few (hundred) different Gundam types or grunt type suits you can buy. Some are amazing, some are... eh. Bandai's Master Grade line of Gunpla kits has always had exceptional



models. They do require a certain amount of engagement, but, probably 99.9% of the people reading this have that level of engagement. So y'all should be fine! Anyways, when I heard that Bandai was going to release a Master Grade Banshee version Ka, I was all over it. The Rx-02 Banshee is one of my favorite suits from the Universal Century timeline, if not all of Gundam.

Mobile suit Background

The Rx-02 Banshee is a full psycho-frame Mobile Suit (MS) developed by the Earth Federation Space Forces (EFSF) during the Laplace Incident in UC 0096. The Psycho-Frame is a technology that builds on the brainwave-to-machine code translator known as Psycommu into the atom-level of the metal frame of a Mobile Suit. This allows a Newtype pilot to control the mobile suit as if it were his/her own body with limitations. It was made from the plans the Vist Foundation handed over to the Federation to help capture the key to Laplace's box (the Rx-0 Unicorn Gundam). It incorporates psycho-frame throughout the whole body, which glows a bright orange when active in "destroy" mode. It almost entirely lets the pilot control it through thought alone.

Like its' white counterpart, the Unicorn Gundam, it has two modes. It has a single horned configuration (Unicorn mode), and, when the NT-D is activated, it looks more like a traditional Gundam type MS with the orange psycho-frame showing between the

armor (Destroy mode). It boasts a black and gold color scheme with a spiked horn and collar. For armament it has a high powered beam rifle, a hyper bazooka, 4 beam sabers, and a shield which also incorporates psycho-frame like the main mobile suit.

Model description/review

The MG Banshee Ver. Ka is a very good kit, it has an almost accurate transformation between Unicorn mode and Destroy mode (the only exception being the head due to the size restrictions), and an opening cockpit hatch. I locked mine in the Unicorn mode (glued all the moving armor sections together) which actually helped keep the kit more solid and I honestly prefer the look of the Banshee in Unicorn mode so, I mean, I could care less about the Destroy mode. The head of the Banshee is my favorite part of the design. The spiked horn and the gold face mask with the 2 "teeth" on it and the red eyes. It almost has a sense of being evil.



The head went together fairly well. The way you start is by assembling the Gundam type face and sliding it back to leave room for the face plate to slot into the pegs for



the transformation. Since I locked mine in Unicorn mode, I just glued the pegs into the slots so they stayed secure, then it has you plug in the V-fin/horn. It comes with 3 separate versions of the V-fin, one that's fixed open in the standard twin horned Gundam look, one that's fixed in Unicorn mode, and a transformable one that has a hinge in the middle. I used the one fixed in Unicorn mode. A word of warning when cutting them out: the gold parts in this kit are plated, so be careful when cutting the parts from the sprue. Under the gold color of the plating, it's just clear plastic, so it leaves some not so good nub marks if not cleaned up properly (as can be seen in image).

The sides of the head, due to transformation, are held on by a single peg, which after time can wear down. So I recommend making the peg thicker or gluing them on. Lastly, I put the golden crest on the "forehead" of the Gundam. The torso was more intricate due to how the transformation makes it work. First you build up the cockpit with the choice to put an optional 1/100 pilot figure in it, then I built up the gray frame parts that make up the base structure. The layer of clear orange parts is next to make up the psycho-frame. After that, I put the black/dark navy armor on top of that. For the collar and cockpit hatch, it gives the option to do the anime version which has the golden collar and a golden top of the cockpit hatch, or the manga/light novel version, which is the same collar and cockpit hatch as the standard Unicorn Gundam. I went with the

anime version, mostly because I prefer the look of the gold on the torso more than the plain look.



The arms are fairly easy to construct. It was mostly building the gray frame and then layering on the navy/black armor. The forearms are the only parts with the transformation, even then it's only a slight one, so locking them in Unicorn mode wasn't really that big of a deal.

The shoulder armor was one of the more finicky parts to build on this kit. Almost every little piece on the shoulder moves for the transformation, and after a few transformations the top armor piece gets



loose due to being held onto the main shoulder frame bit by 4 not so large tabs. I glued the tabs into the armor even though I don't plan on transforming it, just to be safe.

The hands are the hands used on the Master Grades from 2005-2012 before Bandai changed to the finger swap kind like on the more recent master grades and the articulated fingers on most 2.0 kits. They have a peg in the palm which matches up with a slot in the weapons handle, which makes for a secure connection to hold the weapons.



The waist unit is very secure, with it only having 1 main area of transformation to destroy mode (excluding the “skirting” around the waist). It has two “O” shaped slots on either side so that the hip joints can peg in for the articulation. The skirting around the waist is fairly simple, mostly it has the gray frame piece then the orange psycho-frame then the black/navy blue armor plating on them.



The legs are intricate, especially the lower legs. It's really a matter of making sure everything looks exactly like it does in the instructions due to the transformation. The thighs have a sliding mechanism in them that needed me to put them on in the destroy mode position then AFTER I finished the leg I could put it in Unicorn mode. When I was gluing the mechanism on the right, it wouldn't stick like I really wanted it to, so I put a clamp on it to hold it. It didn't really work. The clamp slipped a little and it let the joint slide just enough to pull the half dry glue so it was kinda stringy. I cleaned



it up the best I could, but you can still see the white on the inside of the panel it left behind.



The Banshee has (technically) 3 types of weapons and 6 total: Beam Rifle, Hyper Bazooka, and 4 Beam Sabers. The Beam Sabers come in one piece and slot into the backpack and tab into the forearms. Both the Beam rifle and Hyper Bazooka have extra ammo packs and a tab on the back so they can slot into the backpack for storage as seen in the anime. Every weapon has a slot in the handle that corresponds with a tab in the palm of The Banshee's hand. The connection is pretty secure in most cases, but some kits can hold the weapons better than others (it's mostly just a "your mileage may vary" sorta thing)

It's a tall mobile suit when it's finished. It towers over most other MasterGgrades by at least a head or two, and the poseability is good. The arms can do a full 360 at the

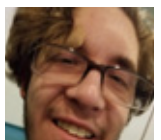


shoulder and come out about 90 degrees. The elbows can do more than a 90 degree double-jointed bend with a swivel at the waist. The hips can move up more than 90 before the waist skirts get in the way and the knees can do a 90 bend. The foot can pivot side to side and up and down. So with this you can take down any Zeon Mobile Suit in a snap

I highly recommend this kit to any modeler who is willing to try and put a little effort into this. I know I'm not the best modeler out there, and I can see a lot of stuff other people would complain that they could do better To those people I say "buy the kit and do it yourself".

I hope this has been informative (maybe) and remember,
Go beyond, PLUS ULTRA!

Ziggy





Sword's 1/72nd FJ-3 Fury Kit Review

By Ron McCracken



Sword's new releases of the FJ-2 and FJ-3 variants of the Fury series finally fill the last remaining voids in kit availability for the Fury line in this scale (although admittedly, the Siga kit of the FJ-1 is getting hard to find). Quite aside from other considerations, these kits are welcome for that reason alone, and they shape up into very nice little models. But as is typically the case with limited-run kits, you will need to put in some extra work.
Photo 1

The FJ-3 was a redesign of the FJ-2 intended to correct the most serious flaw of the earlier variant, which was a lack of power. A Wright J65 powerplant was substituted for the J47 of the FJ-2, and the nose intake was deepened noticeably to accommodate the larger engine. Otherwise, the

airframe remained much the same, right down to the slatted wings. The first FJ-3, BuNo 135774 first flew on Dec. 11, 1953. Evidently, the Navy felt it had finally found the day air superiority fighter it was looking for, as the FJ-3 was the most numerous of the FJ series.

The 45th airframe (BuNo 136118) and all subsequent were fitted with additional store stations under the wings. At least the first 235 airframes (based on analysis of photos) were built with slatted wings. But after that the slats were eliminated, and the wing chord increased (much like the late F-86F). All the rest of the production run of 538 aircraft had this configuration, and most of the earlier airframes had unslatted wings retrofitted. Early production aircraft had smooth-skinned

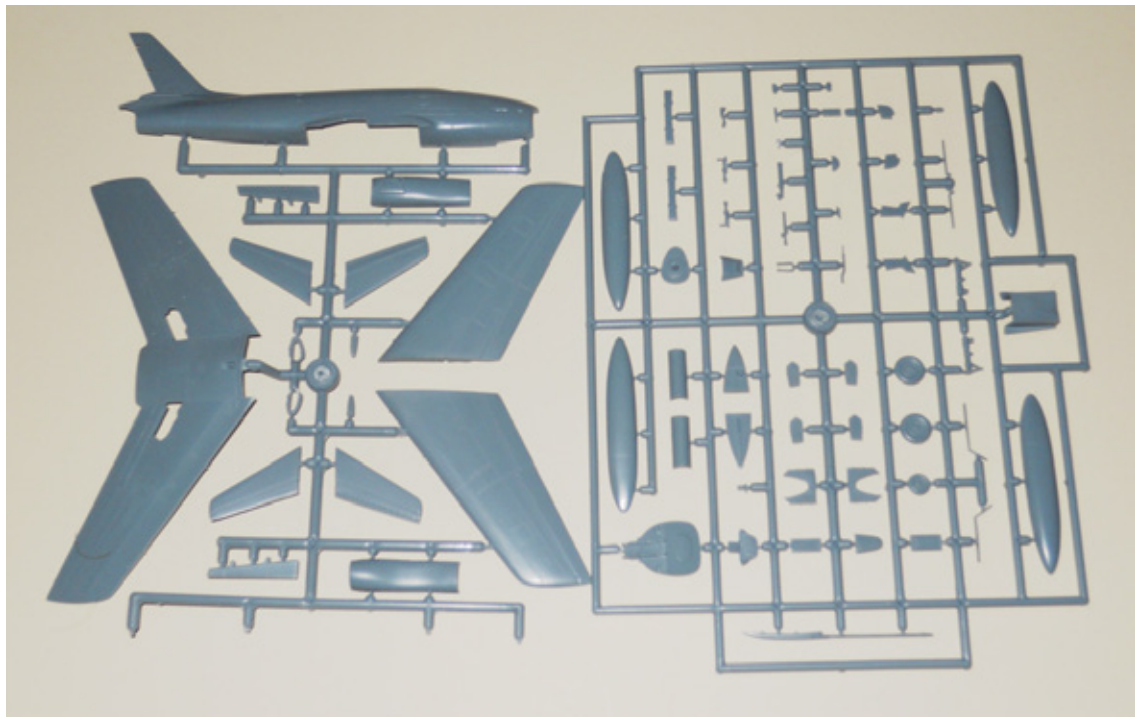


rudder and elevators, but at some point these were replaced with externally-braced surfaces. By 1956, two of the underwing stations had been equipped to carry AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles. Aircraft so equipped were re-designated FJ-3M. Having discussed the history of the subject, it is now time to describe the kit.

Sword has kitted the FJ-3 in both subvariants, the FJ-3 and -3M. Both kits depict the later, unslatted wing, which means a dark blue early paint scheme is out of the question, unless you decide to sacrifice an FJ-2 kit's wings to the cause. Alternate parts are provided for both early smooth-skinned and later external rib tail surfaces. The detachable wing-mounted air refueling boom is included, with the mounting holes flashed-over. Decals are provided for an aircraft of VF-21 on the USS Forrestal having smooth-skinned tail surfaces, an aircraft of VF-191 on the USS Yorktown with ribbed tail surfaces, and an aircraft of VMF-333, also with ribbed tail surfaces. The decals are ultra-thin, but require great care in applying them lest they fold over on themselves while sliding them off the backing. My technique for the smaller decals is to dampen a fingertip, then put the decal, backing side up, on the finger tip and slide the backing away, leaving the decal itself on your finger. Then you just press the decal onto the model.

The kit is molded in Sword's typical medium-soft blue-gray plastic, with a good quality injection molded two-part canopy, and a two-part resin ejection seat. Surface detail consists of fine, recessed panel lines.

Kit engineering is unremarkable. The wings are cast in three parts, two upper wing surfaces and a one-piece lower wing that fits into an opening in the underside of the fuselage. Horizontal stabilizers attach by a simple butt joint to the sides of the rear fuselage. Here, you'll have to exert some care in placement, as there is no obvious indication of where the parts should attach. The cockpit consists of a tub floor and sidewalls, a rear bulkhead, and an instrument panel. Raised details are included on both the side consoles and the main instrument panel. Fit within the fuselage is excellent.



Construction is typical of most limited-run kits. Mating surfaces of components benefit from a few passes over a sheet of 220 grit sandpaper placed on a flat surface. This trues the mating surfaces and provides a tighter joint. Also, again like most limited-run kits, there are no alignment aids to assist during assembly.

There is one decision you need to make regarding your final configuration (canopy open, or closed) regarding part number 22, which closes in the area behind the cockpit bulkhead. If you want the canopy closed, cement the part in place upside down (with the raised rib down rather than up).



sliding canopy together using white glue, then tape the canopy in place in the closed position. This allows you to see exactly how high and wide the ledge needs to be. You'll be (unpleasantly) surprised.

The second, less serious problem is the trailing edge of the wing, which is much too thick and takes a fair amount of work to reduce to an acceptable thinness. Also, you'll find it necessary to reduce the height of the main gear well walls a bit to get the wing halves to come together without forcing.

The kit instructions make no mention of nose weight. Trust me you'll need some. Fortunately, there is ample space for it in the area ahead of the cockpit and above the intake duct.

Otherwise, the canopy won't fit tightly to the fuselage.

A two-piece intake duct leads back to the rear cockpit bulkhead. That's sufficient to allow an open intake. I recommend smoothing out the join line between the upper and lower halves before assembling the ducting to the bulkhead. You will find it necessary to use a bit of putty around the seam between the front of the duct and the nose of the fuselage.

A two-piece tailpipe is provided, but I substituted a length of 1/4 inch diameter Evergreen styrene tubing, to avoid having to smooth out seams inside the tailpipe.

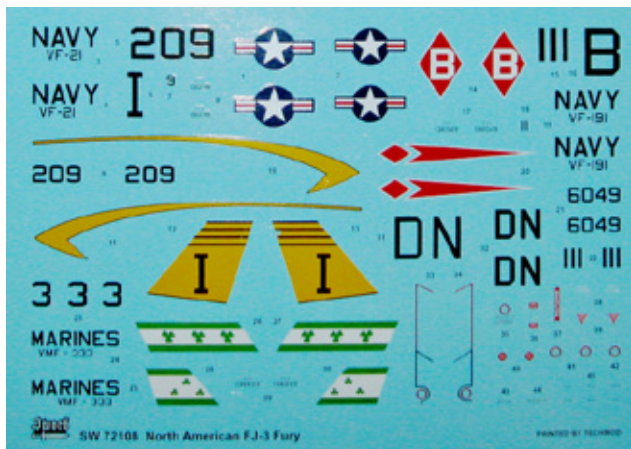
The kit disappoints in two respects. First and worst is the windshield. There is no ledge upon which to place the windshield part, and there should be. If you simply cement the windshield to the upper fuselage, it does not meet the sliding canopy properly. The only cure is to build your own ledge using strip styrene faired in with putty of some sort. As an aid to doing this construction, I suggest temporarily sticking the windshield and

The kit includes clear wingtip navigation light covers, and the instructions would lead one to believe the recesses for these covers are provided. Well, they aren't, not even a panel line to suggest the proper size of the cutout. So, you'll have to "wing it" and carve out your own – either that or just simulate the covers with red and green paint.





I also have a recommendation regarding your assembly sequence. Rather than cement the wing halves together, then cement them to the fuselage, as specified in the instructions, I suggest you temporarily fasten the fuselage halves together, position the lower wing in place on the fuselage underside, then cement the upper halves of the wing in place, using the fuselage as your alignment jig (be careful not to accidentally cement them to the fuselage at this time). The reason is, if you get an upper wing half even slightly out of position, you'll have a significant fit problem when the time comes to permanently assemble the wing to the fuselage. Don't forget to drill out the mounting holes for the refueling probe (the outer pair in the port lower wing half) if you intend to use it. Ditto for the holes for the missile pylons if you are building the -3M version.



The kit provides two large drop tanks with the seam along the horizontal centerline. But rather than cast the tail fins on one of the halves, they are provided as a separate part that fits around the rear of the tank. Rather than deal with filling the rather gross seam involved here, I recommend filing a recess in the lower tank half, then cutting a new fin from .015" sheet plastic that extends all the way across. This will result in a far easier and cleaner tank assembly.

To sum things up, Sword has released a decent and much-desired kit of an important U.S. Navy jet fighter. Given a bit of work, it builds up into a very good model. I recommend it for anyone with a serious interest in the FJ family of jet fighters.

Ron



The Cotton Report:

Winter is coming...

By Rick Cotton

"The tests came back positive. It's Basal Cell Carcinoma. Skin cancer."

Not the way I had planned starting my Tuesday morning. This word from the dermatologist threw my entire day in the trash, mentally. Apparently, the small red spot on my arm, no bigger than the end of a pencil eraser, was a bit more to worry about than I had thought.

Now, basal cell is common, millions of us get it, and it is a very slow-growing, easily-treatable form of cancer. 98% cure rate, I am told. Only the elderly who have let it go for many years, or those with compromised immunity are at serious mortality risk from it. Normally, it is cut off, or frozen off, or killed with electricity. It is not a death sentence, in the vast majority of cases.

But it does make one think.

I found myself in the closet last night, staring at the stash of kits piled in there. Pushing 300. Ships, planes, armor, enough to keep me busy for years. But, how many years do I have? Maybe we would all like to know the answer to that question...or then, maybe we wouldn't.

My family's males typically last into their mid-80's. My father had stomach cancer and only made it to 70, but his diet was way different from mine. He was always prone to stomach troubles, as I have never been. Hopefully, his problem was an aberration. Most of my predecessors got to about 85 or so. With modern medicine, I can probably plan on doing the same, with any luck at all.

But I will need to make some changes, including regularly scheduled visits to the dermatology clinic from now on. My diet could use some work. Need to wean myself off beer (gasp!), fried foods and



all bread, as they have done nothing good for my waistline. I need NordicTrack time. So be it. Don't we all?

But there are about 285 unbuilt kits in my stash. About 90% are good ones that I want to actually build one day. The rest can go, be donated, whatever. Let's say, about 260 kits, divided by 25 years or so until my estate sale – that means I need to average about 10.5 builds per year to build them all. That's probably a bit high, but close enough. I need to look at each and every kit and say to myself, "is this something I plan to invest some time in?"

Therefore....

I have decided to stop buying kits. No more. I have enough to last me, and do not need to acquire any more plastic. I might buy photoetch, or resin to finish them with, but my model kit collection is now officially complete. I might trade, but no more buying. This is the first change, but definitely not the last.

The second change involves my beloved wife, and taking care of her should I not reach that magic number of 85. Therefore, I have created a spreadsheet of every unbuilt kit in my collection, each marked with a number she could reasonably get for it at a given model show. Who cares what I paid for it, or what retail would be. That means exactly zilch at a show, and vendors who do not realize that go home with most of their merchandise and a sour attitude about "slow sales". I want her to be able to compete with the other vendors, unload it all at a reasonable number, and not get robbed. I think we all should do this, and if a fellow member should, unfortunately, have an estate sale, we should, as a club, pitch in and help his relatives get decent return for the stuff. It's the decent thing to do.

I laid in bed last night staring at the darkened ceiling, and thinking about these things, and the answers have given me some peace of mind, and that's a good thing. The realization that we are all very mortal is not pleasant, but having a plan to take care of those we leave behind is very reassuring to my spirit. I am a person of faith, and believe

in my heart that life goes on beyond The Veil, so I am not worried about that at all. I have placed my very imperfect and sinful soul in God's hands...and hope in His Son and His mercy...and that's OK.

Life will go on, and that's a good thing. I have many models to build, that's a very good thing. I will probably have time to build most of them, that's fantastic. I will have time with Sweetie, with my modeling friends, with my work, and with life in general. That's a very good thing.

If this tome is a bit darker and depressing to you, I apologize, but this weighed heavily on my mind as nothing else has in many a year, and the answers have given me peace, which I wanted to share. We all face The Veil one day, and we can either be ready for it, sort of ready, or, unhappily, go kicking and screaming through it. That last one is not my plan.

My plan is to believe, to live, to build, to enjoy, to love, to see, to do, to feel, to taste, to smell, to hear, to laugh, to smile, to swear only when absolutely necessary, and to not take cr*p too seriously. Life's too short not to live.

So be it.

Rick





On The TABLE

By **Flanged End Yoke**

It was a light turnout as far as models go in November.

Ziggy Downs-Bumgardner brought in three nice Gundams this month:

The first was a Bandai 1/144th scale Zaku II.



The next was a biggie. A Bandai 1/100th scale oo Qan T Full Saber.



The last Gundam was a Bandai 1/144 Sazabi.

Say 'Hi boys'!



Bradley Becker brought in his completed Dragon 1/35th PZKW III Befehlswagen with Ostketten tracks.



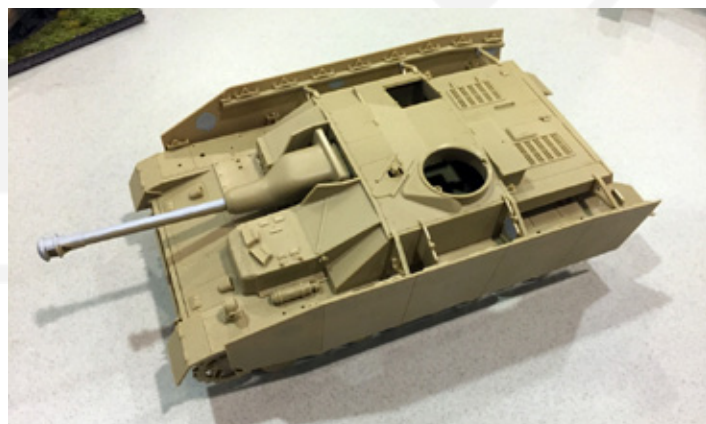
Bradley also brought in a couple on in progress projects. The first was his 1/16th Takom FT-17.



The second was a 1/35th AFV club M113.

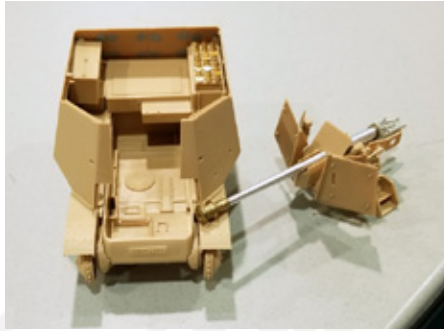


Alex Gashev brought in his in progress Tamiya Sturmgeschutz IV in 1/35th scale.





He also brought in his 1/35th Trumpeter Marder I in progress.



Rick Herrington brought in some 25mm figures picked up at MilleniumCon. There was a cowboy sheriff, a Terminator Endoskeleton and a Cyberman from Doctor Who.



Rick also brought in a 1/35th Asuka M4A1 with Epox-E putty sandbags.



Tim Robb brought in his in progress 1/72nd scale Mig 27.



Last but not least Dave Edgerly brought in an in progress 90mm Andrea Templar.



Dave claimed the Model of the Month with his 1/35th Industria Mechanica HornetHopter "Zeppelin Hunter".



Dave scratch built the launch platform that the model sits on,

the steam catapult system,



and the prime mover for the platform.



Well done Dave!



Jeff Forester thought the club might like to see a sample of the kit that was reviewed in the news letter Trumpeter's HMS Exeter.



Thanks to everyone who shared their work with the club.

Flanged



2/16/2019

Alamo Squadron's 'ModelFiesta 38'

San Antonio Event Center
8111 Meadow Leaf Drive, San Antonio, TX78227
Show Theme - 'Record Breakers!'
www.alamosquadron.com/modelfiesta

CLUB QUARTERLY CONTESTS:

December

**White Elephant Contest
&
Model**



ASMS MEETING

Third Thursday each month

7:00pm - 8:45pm

at the

Old Quarry Branch Library

7051 Village Center Dr.

Next meeting December 20th, 2018

No Reservations Neccessary!



Don't forget your favorite Charity!

ASMS Club Dues Are Due!

Annual ASMS club dues are \$25.00/individual
or \$30.00/family.

You may bring your dues to a club meeting or remit same
to Eric Choy, 13213 Marrero Drive, Austin, TX., 78729.



OLD RUMORS/NEW KITS

Rick Herrington, Randy Bumgardner, Aaron Smischney, Golzar Shahrzad

Shipping News

By Rick Herrington

...and so happy Christmas. I hope your Christmas shopping efforts are rewarding you with treasures for family and friends and sometimes yourself. Here are some ship building suggestions for your gift list. Let's start off with 700th scale.

1/700

Pit Road (kit designer for Trumpeter) has three new battle wagons. The first two are very welcome and are British.

HMS Barham in her 1941 appearance is up first.



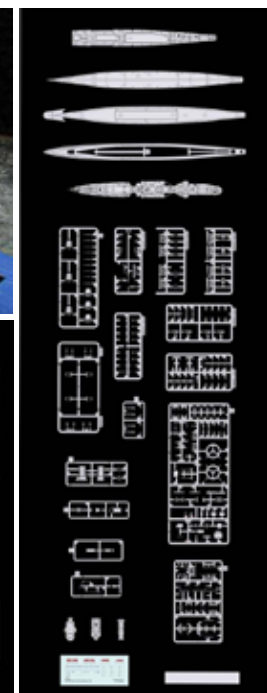
HMS Renown is next.



Last of the battleships is a USN offering the USS West Virginia. The model depicts her in late war after she was upgraded.



Flyhawk continues their Keigsmarine releases with the German light cruiser Königsberg. To my knowledge this ship has not been released in plastic although there are resin offerings. Flyhawk also has plans to release the other DKM light cruisers Karlsruhe and Koln.



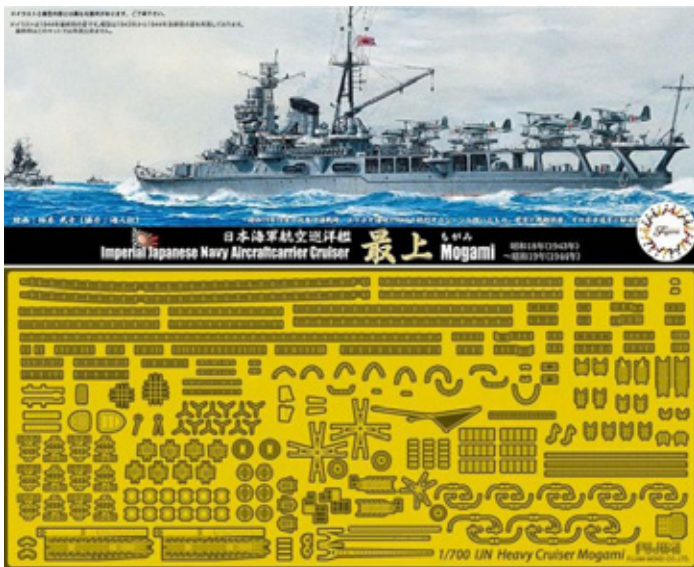


Fujimi is up next with a new re-box of their IJN aircraft carrier Soryu. This one includes two photo etch frets and a wooden deck included in the kit.

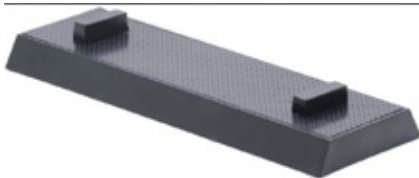


Fujimi is also releasing the cruiser/aircraft carrier IJN Mogami as she appeared in 1944. This one also includes photo etch.

Mogami started her life as a regular cruiser. She was severely damaged in the battle of Midway and her re-build changed her into a half cruiser/aircraft carrier hybrid. Due to the refit she was able to carry 10 aircraft.



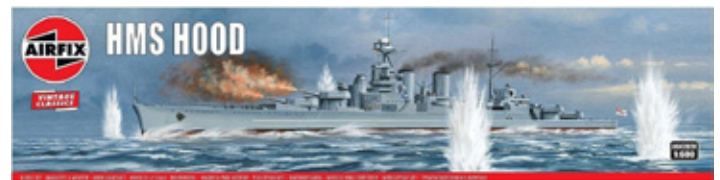
Next up- by Fujimi is the IJN battleship Kongo.



Trumpeter's new release in January will be the modern US aircraft carrier USS Constellation.

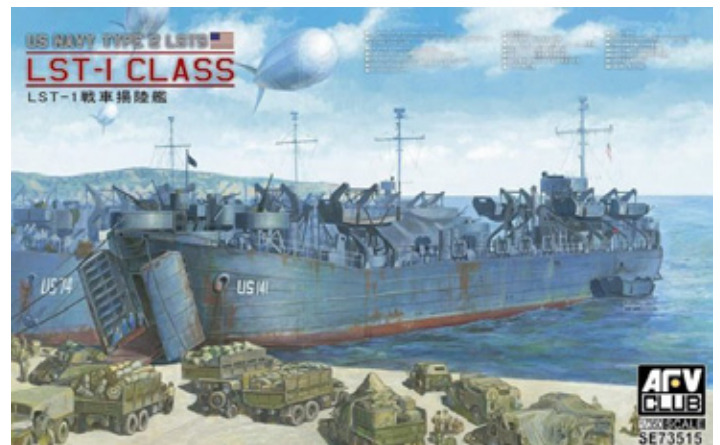


Our friends at Airfix are re-releasing their long in the tooth 1/600th HMS Hood. These kits are not quite as detailed as the Trumpeter ones but if you want to build a piece of modelling history this kit is for you. It is also close to half the price of the Trumpeter kit.



1/350

Only one release in 1/350th scale this month. AFV known for their armor kits is releasing an LST-1 (Landing Ship Tank) and a set of vehicles to go inside your LST.





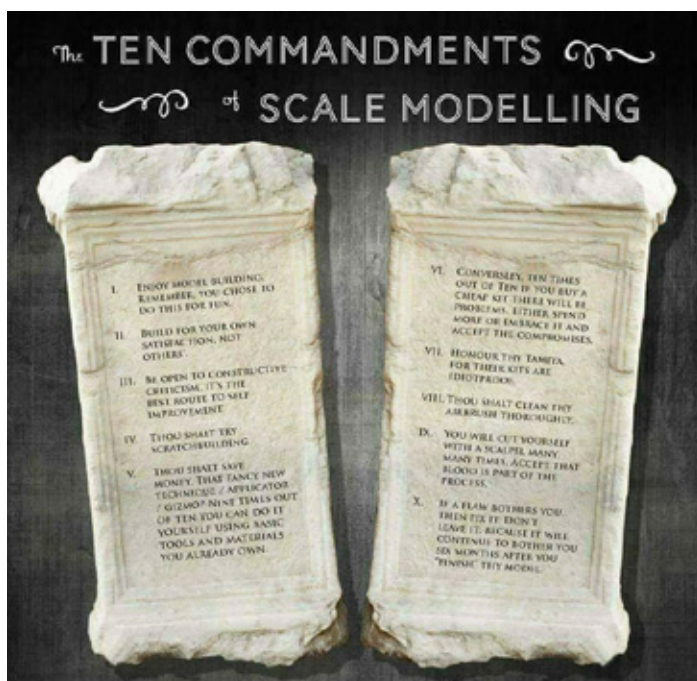
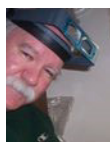
Last on the list. Yes, I checked it twice. (Sorry, couldn't resist) Lindberg is re-releasing its 1/82nd scale US Coast Guard Patrol Boat.



That's it for this month. Hopefully you'll find a ship kit under your tree.

Merry Christmas.

Ricardo



The Air Report

By Ron McCracken

Starting off with the ever-popular House-Stuffer (1/32nd) scale, we have the Hobby Boss B-24J Liberator, kit 83211, due out this month.



Moving on to 1/48th, Eduard is coming out with several offerings:

- ProfiPACK Kit No. 82121 - Tempest Mk.V Series 1, with Eduard sprues, color photo-etch parts, painting masks, and six decal operations.



- Limited Edition kit of Austro-Hungarian fighter aircraft Albatros D.III OEFFAG 153 and 253 in 1/48



scale. The Dual Combo style kit offers one 153 Series and one 253 Series aircraft, with color photo-etched parts, painting masks, and no less than nine decal options.



• Weekend edition kit of a Fw 190A-4 version with four guns in the wings. It features Eduard plastic and two decal options.



Tamiya is releasing a new Spitfire Mk I (kit 61119). It features improved surface features, detailed



cockpit, photo-etched parts and includes painting masks. Three marking options are provided.

Fine Molds has announced two new releases:

• Kit FB26 Mitsubishi Airspeed Record Aircraft Ki-15 Kamikaze



• Bf-109G-6 with tropical air filter in Reggia Aeronautica markings - 1/48th



In braille scale we have another Eduard release and one from Aoshima.

Limited edition 1/72 scale kit of WWI French fighter aircraft SPAD XIII, with Eduard sprues, color photo-etched parts, painting masks, and four decal options.





Aoshima is releasing a kit of the JGSDF Japanese Observation Helicopter OH-1 Ninja. The kit also includes a towing tractor and crew man.



Ron



Article and Presentation Assignments 2018

Monthly Newsletter Article:

December Bob Bethea

Monthly Meeting Presentations:

December Ian Latham

It Figures

By Michael Lamm

The end is near...at least the end of the year is near, and with that comes the last installment of It Figures for 2018. Have no fear, I'll be back next year to provide your monthly update on the world of scaled down people.

First off, from Paracel Miniatures, is a modern take on the conflicts in the Middle East. Paracel has a vast line-up of modern subjects in realistic poses that are not your typical "pointing at something" or "standing next to something" poses. This one shows a middle-eastern tanker taking a moment to spend time with his cat. More than likely, he's intended to be sitting on some sort of former Soviet armor, so what would be more appropriate than him holding a Russian Blue? The full figure miniature is cast in one resin piece, so no assembly required, just start painting right out of the box. I can hear the purring now. There are 3 subjects in this series of "Arab tankers", but I found the cat pose the most interesting.



<http://www.paracelminiatures.com>



Next up, is a new release from Bravo6. This company has a number of soldiers with cameras poses, and their latest release is of a German tanker with a 35mm camera. I've always thought the cameraman figure was a nice touch to add to a diorama. Adding a photographer can really complete a scene and tell a story, and this photographer looks great. He's posed with the typical wrap jacket issued to tankers and holding a German 35mm camera. The figure comes in 6 parts and includes an extra camera. Say "Käse!"



<https://bravo6.diorama.ru/>

Andrea Miniatures is creating a new line of WWII figures to complement their incredibly popular Iron Cross line, this time with a more American-theme, the Purple Heart line. The first release is a U.S. Marine (1945). The addition of excellently sculpted American subjects is great to see, since there always seems to be more interest in German figures for this time period. This figure is well equipped with a BAR and Thompson submachine

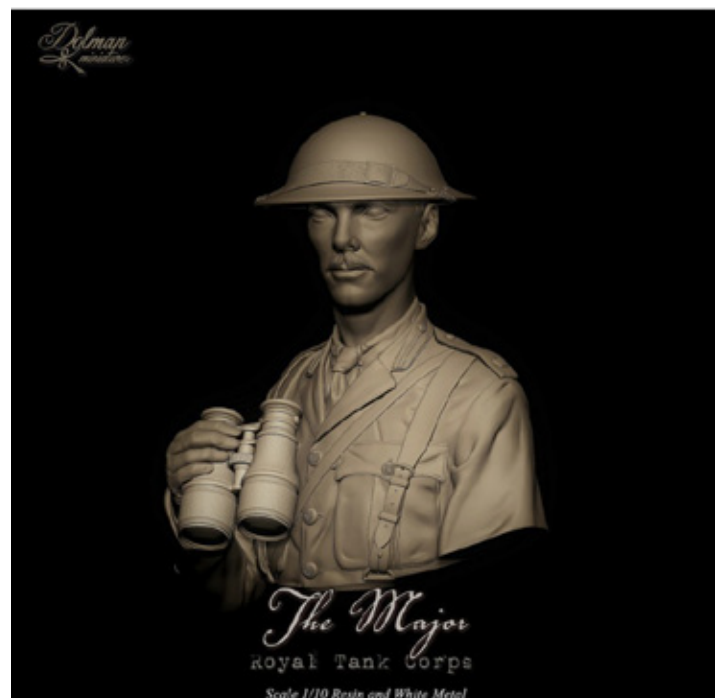


gun slung over his shoulder, and comes with a base and two heads. It's available in all the major scales from 1/16 to 1/72.



<https://www.andreadepotusa.com/>

Dolman Miniatures just released a 1/10th bust of a British Major in the Royal Tank Corps from World War I. This nicely detailed resin and white metal bust includes two choices of headgear. A soft officer's cap or metal helmet. His uniform is very nicely detailed from his tucked in tie to his crisp collars and pocket flaps. (Editor's note: Looks a lot like Benedict Cumberbatch)



<https://dolmanminiatures.com>



Alexandros Models has added a new figure to their 54mm line of figures from the Marcomannic Wars (Germanic tribes along the Danube) by sculptor, Adriano Laruccia. The white metal figure comes in 10 pieces and depicts a Centurion surveying a battlefield, or thinking of his family far away, holding his helmet in one hand. In this case, the helmet is in the appropriate Imperial Gallic I style.



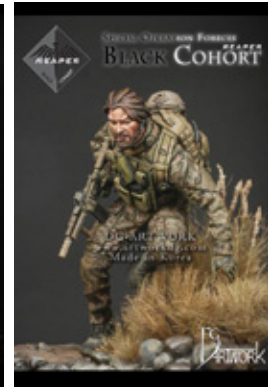
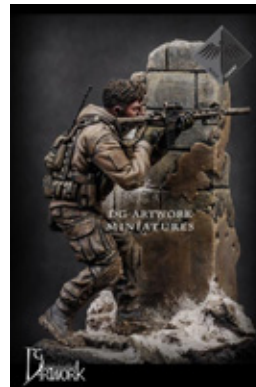
The Centurion was an officer in the Roman army and a symbol of their authority was their vitis, or vine stick. This figure's vitis is tucked into his belt, and was a symbol of his authority, as well as a tool for carrying out any punishment. If you've seen the 2000 movie "The Gladiator", the opening battle depicts the final battle of the Marcomannic Wars, which took place across present day Germany and into Slovakia.



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

Editor's Note: Here are a few additional figures I ran across when perusing the Oracle. (WWW) Let me apologize up front for not being as thorough as Mike is by providing web links. That's what Google's for right?

DG Artwork has two more modern releases. Both are in 75mm. The first is a Raccoon Operator. The second is a Soldier of Fortune Black Cohort.



Another modern warrior release is in store from ICM. ICM is releasing a 1/24th scale Seal Team Fighter. As this one is labelled #1 there are probably going to be more.





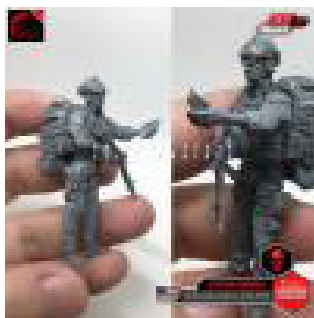
Assault Models has a set of modern Brit paratroops and a set of USMC tankers. Both are in 1/35th and would be great for any Afghanistan scene.



Our friends at Alpine just released a 1/16th scale US Airborne figure. If you've ever built an Alpine figure you know how superb they are.



Yufan Model has their own 1/35th Seal Assault Team release. From the images it looks pretty realistic. Yufan also has a figure of a Seal using a Satellite phone in 1/35th.



If you're worried about crew for your 1/35 Italeri Schnellboot your worries are over. Aero Bonus has begun to release German Naval figures in 1/35th scale.





Nuts Planet has three new releases. Two are in 1/24 scale and one is in 1/20th scale.

The first in 1/24 is an Advance Heavy Gunner.



The second in that scale is Stranger JD.



The new 1/20th scale release is called Anti-Robot Squad.



Heroes and Villains is releasing a 1/12th scale bust of Holmes and Watson. Holmes does not look like Benedict Cumberbatch.



Atlantis is re-releasing the old Revell kit of the Phantom and the Witch Doctor. Phantom was a character from comic strips and comic books during the 50's. He first appeared in the 30's.

The kit is in 1/8th scale. The drawback? A whole lot of purple to paint. Photos 21 and 22





Finally AlphaMax has a cool looking FlakBike in 1/18th scale. Here's a couple of photos of it.



That does it for this month, and year, so now go build a model and add a figure to it. Or just assemble a model and get it painted. You won't regret it!

Mike



Tracked Topics

By Rick Herrington

We'll start with 1/72nd scale armor.

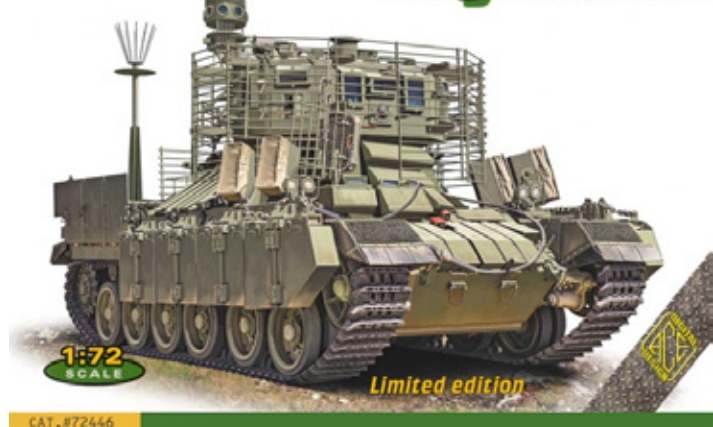
Ace is coming out with a couple of new subjects. The first is an IDF Centurion Shot Kal Alef circa 1973.

IDF Centurion Shot Kal Alef 1973



Second out from Ace is another IDF subject. This is the Israeli Heavy APC Nagmachon. This might be a tough build in this scale with all the slat work.

IDF heavy APC Nagmachon





ModelCollect is releasing a Russian heavy truck the MZKT 7930.



T-Model, a company I'm not familiar with is releasing an M1A2 SEP with M153 Crows 2. The kit includes a metal barrel, stowage, and a crew member.



1/48th is up next. Only one new one this month. Tamiya is offering a kit of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) Maneuver Combat Vehicle Type 16. They are also releasing it in 1/35th scale.



Moving on to 1/35th scale. Lots of new kits for Christmas.

Meng is continuing with their "all things Panther" is releasing an Ausf D.



For you Canucks Meng is releasing a Canadian Mexas Leopard with dozer blade.



Sticking to modern subjects, RFM is releasing a modern German Bundeswehr IFV, the Puma.





Finally in 1/35th for you armored car fans out there. Copper State Models is releasing an Italian Lancia 1ZM Autoblinda. From the advanced pictures this one looks to have an interior.



In 1/16th scale Tamiya is releasing late model Jagdpanther.

PANZERJÄGER "JAGDPANTHER"
Set No. 173 (DISPLAY MODEL) 1/16 SCALE BIG TANK SERIES NO. 10 GERMAN TANK DESTROYER JAGDPANTHER LATE VERSION (DISPLAY MODEL)
TAMIYA



In even bigger scale Tamiya is re-releasing their 1/25th Radio Control Panther A. Finally, something to scare the cat with.



That's it for this month. Take a model out of that stash and build it!

Rick



Sundries

By Golzar Shahrzàd

MiniArt seems to release an accessory kit every week. They aren't really that close together but they do come out with some regularity. Case in point with Miniart is a new collection of diorama accessories with the release of a 1/35th scale Concrete Mixer Set.



This type of concrete mixer was a staple on job sites when I was growing up. The kit includes the aforementioned mixer along with bits and pieces for a wheel barrow, shovel, cement bags, pick axe, sledge hammer, and a cobblestone base to place it all on. This is one diorama accessory kit from MiniArt that will have uses beyond the obvious.





MiniArt also is releasing a companion kit for fans of Russian armor.

The KMT-5M kit represents the mine roller developed and utilized by Warsaw Pact armor units and will look great on any of the plethora of recent Russian armor kits.



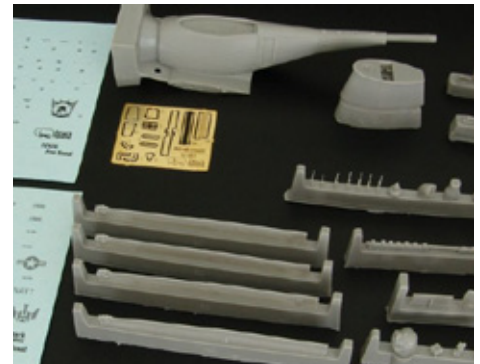
This stand-alone kit is in 1/35th scale and comes with two types of metal chain. The UPC barcode number for this kit is: 4620183312051. What is remarkable is that is the

number of parts in this new MiniArt kit. I jest! There aren't quite that many parts but there are lots of little bitty parts included for this very detailed kit.

tooled, injected molded kit features masks for the window frames, metal transfers for the mirrors, and a detailed interior. This is a curbside-style model, so no drive train or engine. Revell/Germany did release a snap build kit of the Ford GT not too long ago but it is safe to assume that Tamiya's version will really do justice to this remarkable car.



Brengun has some new stuff that is just now making its way to a hobby shop near you. [Remember: Support Your Local Hobby Shop.] On of the new items that caught my eye is a 1/72nd scale kit of the MQ-8B Fire Scout. The Fire Scout is one of a series of unmanned helicopters being field tested by the armed forces of the United States. This all resin kit comes with photo-etch for the fiddly bits and decals.



Tamiya is shipping a 1/24th scale model of the latest iteration of the Ford GT. Auto fans will remember the original car that dominated the Grand Touring circuit back in the day. This new-



This next item up for bid is available now but bears mentioning, particularly for Star Wars fans.



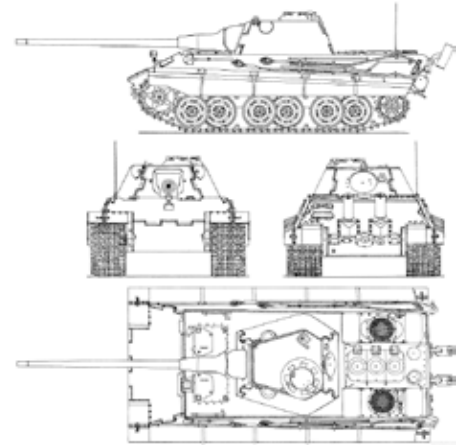
Bandai (not BenDee) has a Perfect Grade 1/72nd scale Millennium Falcon for your next modeling project.



The kit is based on the original studio model and features the original three-legged landing legs and comes with figures for Han, 'Chewie', and gang. As Perfect Grade would suggest, the kits features some exquisite detail.

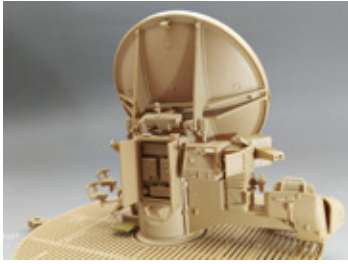


ModelCollect is a Chinese company that has made a name for itself with some nicely detailed and highly unusual armor kits. Some of their paper panzer chassis (E-50, E-75, E-100) are based on actually design studies done by the German in the later days of WWII. Most of those releases are in 1/72nd scale. ModelCollect is now venturing into the real world with a 1/35th scale E-50 Panther II.



Amusing Hobby is adding to their line of kits with a 1/35th scale 12.8cm Flak 40 that comes with a FuMG 39D ranging radar.





This is an injected molded kit that features both gun and radar in a firing position on the box art. You may have to fashion your own, as the firing position doesn't appear to be included with this kit. Sad!



HobbyFan has a 1/35th scale, M55 50. cal machine gun turret/trailer. The machine gun turret was used mounted throughout WWII and saw some used on a trailer mount in Korea but the M55 was all over the place as a point defense weapon during the Vietnam War. This is an all resin kit so buyer beware but you won't lack for uses of this nifty kit. And who knows, AFV Club may re-release it as an injected molded kit...one of these days.



Editor's note: I ran across a few more items that I hope been would be OK to me adding in to the column.

have you been searching in vain for that feline accent for your diorama? Never fear, Mathos Model is here with a set of 1/35th Gatos.



You know that Normandy scene with the German tanks trying to make it to the front covered in tree limbs?

Now you can re-create it courtesy of Mantis. They have released two sets of tree branches.



LEAFY BRANCHES
Limited Edition — for 1:35 scale
— HANDMADE, READY TO USE —

PINE BRANCHES
Limited Edition — for 1:35 scale
— HANDMADE, READY TO USE —

One is Pine branches and the other is Leafy branches.



Finally, are you a big boxing fan? How bout' a 1/10th scale action figure of "Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee" for your collection? Storm has released one just for you.



PROTOTYPE SHOWN. FINAL PRODUCT MAY BE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT.

Golzar



Milleniumcon

Texas' Biggest Historical Miniature Wargame Convention

By Rick Herrington

Recently I attended a wargame miniature convention in Round Rock. It was held at the Wingate hotel. I was curious to determine what exactly a Historical Miniature Wargame Convention was like.

A friend and I travelled to the convention and for the price of our address and e-mail were able to check out the convention as "Non-participants". We even were given badges that proclaimed the "Non participant" status. That was OK with us as we were just there to check out the vendors.





Everyone was very friendly as we watched the game play. I even had a vendor introduce me to his game and play a round for about thirty minutes.



There was a Star Wars space battle going on at one of the tables.



There were several rooms set up on different floors of the Wingate annex building.



As a participant you could play in games ranging from Viking combat to Star Wars space battles.

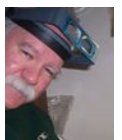


My friend and I stayed for a couple of hours and both of us found goodies to spend some cash on. I found a box of 25mm Cybermen figures (from Dr. Who) and a cowboy figure that were pretty cool.



It's always good to step out of your normal pattern, especially as a modeler. It was a fun day and I got to meet some nice folks and see a different hobby. I recommend it.

Rick



One of the games involved balloon busting and WW1 aircraft.



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