



SPRUE EXAMINER®

Newsletter of The Austin Scale Modelers Society

May 2015
www.austinsms.org

Kitty Hawk's 1/48 AH-1Z by Floyd S. Werner, Jr., IPMS 26266

The AH-1 Cobra, the world's first attack helicopter, originally developed in 1967 and deployed around the same time frame, has evolved into a modern bad ass helicopter. The latest version is the United States Marines AH-1Z Viper. The helicopter has changed its skins more than a real snake. The latest incarnation of the helicopter is just like it was in the 1960s, built around the same airframe as the UH-1Y. With 85% compatibility of components the Huey and Cobra will minimize the logistics footprint on the United States Marines maintaining them. The new Cobra is the first production version to sport a four-bladed main and tail rotor.

Before I begin this review and in the interest of full disclosure, I must point out that I am on the staff to review Kitty Hawk's helicopter designs. I advise on kits and the accuracy of the CAD markings. I accept all responsibility for any mistakes with the kit.

(continued on page four)



Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS) is a chartered chapter of International Plastic Modeler's 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 author. It is intended for educational purposes only. ASMS does not endorse the contents of any article.



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<http://www.williamsbrothersmodelproducts.com/planes.html>

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<http://www.centexscalemodelers.org/>

Phil Brandt (in memorium)	Jack Johnston
Eric Choy	Mike Krizan
Angie Forster	Mike Poole
Jeff Forster	Aaron Smischney
Russ Holm	Rick Herrington
Rick Willaman	

Upcoming Events

Model Shows

Cajun Model Fest, Baton Rouge, Louisiana	5.16.15
http://www.brscalemodelers.com/	
ScaleFest, Region VI IPMS Convention, Grapevine, Texas	5.30.15
www.ipmsnct.net	
The Tulsa Show 2015, Tulsa, Oklahoma	6.5/6.15
http://www.hmsneo.org/	
SoonerCon 2015, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	6.13.15
https://www.facebook.com/IPMSMETROOKLACITY?_rdr	

Local Club Meetings

Hill Country Outlaws Model Railroading, King's Hobby, Austin, TX	6.13.15
Austin Armor Builders Society, Austin, Texas	6.3.15
http://www.austinarmorbuilders.com	
Austin Model Cars, King's Hobby Shop, Austin, Texas	6.4.15
CenTex Scale Modelers, Killeen, Texas	5.21.15
http://www.centexscalemodelers.org/	
Lone Star Figure Modelers, San Marcos Library, San Marcos, TX	6.6.15

Other Events

Build-N-Bull Day, King's Hobby Shop, Austin, Texas	6.20.15
Close Assault: 1944, Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas	5.23/24.15
www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org	

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 and his email address is: www.models4troops@gmail.com

Jon is accepting any and all contributions and is sharing them with all of the active programs around the country.

ASMS Officers & Chairpersons

Randy Bumgardner, President
president@austinsms.org
Aaron Smischney, Vice-President
vicepresident@austinsms.org
Eric Choy, Finance Minister
treasurer@austinsms.org
Mike Lamm, Secretary
secretary@austinsms.org
Ben Morton, Newsletter Editor
editor@austinsms.org
Randy Bumgardner, Show Coordinator
showcoordinator@austinsms.org
Mike 'Hollywood' Gilsbach, Webmaster
webmaster@austinsms.org
Milton Bell, IPMS/USA Coordinator
chaptercontact@austinsms.org
Tim Robb, Membership Coordinator
tim.rob主@mccoys.com

Randy's Windsock**Randy Bumgardner**

Welcome to May! Holy crap, it's already May! This year is flying by, and my modeling production bears that out. A couple of Spitfires that I wanted to finish in February still think it's January. Both of those kits sit unfinished in the spray booth. Oh well. At least I'm making *some* progress.

By the time you read this the first ASMS field trip of the year will be in the history books. We had a great time at Williams Brothers Models and learned a lot about how kits are manufactured.

I want to extend a big thank you to Daniel Brett and Sarah for letting us invade the shop and for taking the time to show us what goes on behind the scenes. In addition, the BBQ after the field trip went over pretty well as I didn't have much in the way of leftovers. I made sure that folks took some home with them. We all had fun eating and sharing conversation in a laid back atmosphere. Now, let's get planning for the next one. Fredericksburg anyone?

ASMS members made a good showing at the IPMS/Houston ModelMania show in April . I'm not sure on the award count, but we did have a good presence at the show. Houston put on an excellent show as usual and everyone had fun. IPMS/North Texas is hosting ScaleFest later this month on May 30th. This is the annual regional show for our IPMS region, Region VI. Anyone want to carpool with Ziggy and I ?

This month's guest speaker, General Peter Bonanni of the Virginia Air National Guard, will be postponed a bit due to scheduling issues. Instead, Eric Choy will regale us with tales of his recent trip to Japan, and his hobby-related adventures. He had some fun and we will too, vicariously through Eric.

That's all I have for this month.

Go build something and show it to us! Even if it's not finished.

Randy

***Fiddly Bits*****Frank Seibert**

A Sprue Drive commences. During the ASMS field trip to Williams Brothers Models, Daniel Brett noted that he can and does recycle plastic sprue from other kits. With that in mind, please keep all your unwanted and **unpainted** sprue trees for later collection in a small box by the door. A collection box has been established at King's Hobby Shop. Next time you journey to your local hobby shop, bring that recyclable material with you and deposit it in the recycling bin.

Don't forget that ASMS has a most prolific modeler of the year award. As the title implies, the member that builds the most models in the course of 2015 will be, by definition, The Most Prolific Modeler of the Year. You are required to bring said models to a club meeting for Show-N-Tell, in order to qualify. Being the most prolific modeler will help immeasurably with the Member of the Year award.

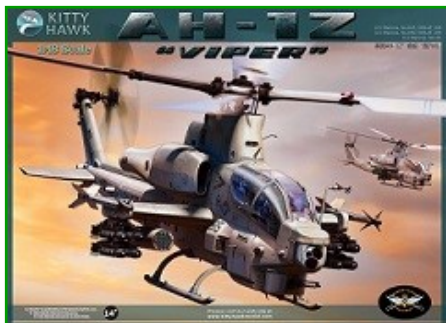
Program Note: General Kenneth Wisian will return at our June club meeting to finish his presentation. General Wisian is the commanding officer of the Texas Air National Guard. His previous appearance was cut short due to time constraints. The Junet meeting will also be our next quarterly model contest. Please bring *only* entries for the contest. Save your Show-N-Tell stuff for another date and time.

Frank



Packaged in a cardboard box with a removable lid, the kit is neatly packed inside. Four sprues of light grey plastic contain all the parts that are flash free. All the panel lines are crisp and nicely engraved. The rivet detail is quite nice and restrained.

There is a single sprue of clear plastic that is packed into its own cardboard box to prevent damage. The main canopy is broken down into five pieces. A ball



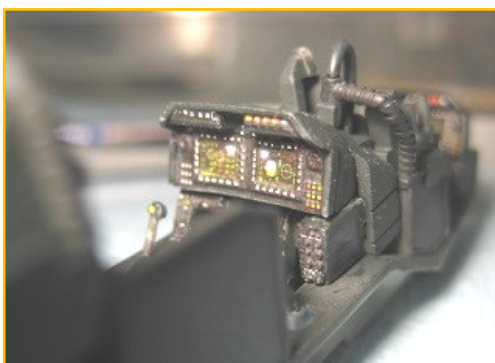
bearing weight is included as well to keep the model from being a tail sitter.

The instructions are printed in color on the front and back cover. There are 18 pages that

are easy to understand. There is also a fret of photo etch that would rival anything Eduard has to offer.

There are two decal sheets. The first one has the grey markings and the other one has the full color markings. One note, the full color markings of black, red and gold are beautiful but the serial number on the airframe is not quite right. The serial number as printed is 168000 and should be 168800. This is a very minor thing, but I missed it.

The construction begins in the cockpit. The cockpit is a beautiful rendition of the real thing. The instrument panels



have some great relief and would respond well to painting. Kitty Hawk offers you instrument decals as well.

The Multi Function Displays are shown in the powered up mode which is really neat, especially if they fit. After painting them flat black I added the decals right over the relief. I just tamped them down and applied Solvaset and let them sit overnight. The decals conformed perfectly with the plastic parts and looked awesome. I especially like the look of the multi function displays.

I built most of my cockpit and then painted it various shades of black. There are decals that go on other components in the cockpit. I did notice that there are two other decals that aren't called out. One is the circuit breaker panel on the pilot's right side.

Once done, the cockpit received some dry brushing and some Mig Pigments for some dirt and wear to bring out the detail.

Remember, even when deployed these helicopters are relatively new. Kitty Hawk calls out Dark Gull Grey for some of the interior. A few of these pictures show that the grey on the floor of the cockpit and other areas are all flat black. You can't go wrong.

The engines are next. They are really good representations of the real thing. Out of the box, they are very convincing. Since I was going to build my kit with all the doors and access panels closed the bulkheads still need to be added. I just set the engines aside at the beginning. It did take a little tape to ensure that the fuselage fit the bulkheads matched up. That is important as the rest of the fit of the engine access panels are built off of that.



Part D50 does have a gap when added but it is not an issue as it is hidden so save yourself some time by not filling the gap. In step seven the photo etch mesh covers are added. The instructions call out PE5 but it should be PE9. PE5 goes on the engine access doors C6 and C7.

The fit of the fuselage halves with the cockpit was flawless. I didn't need any filler. Various parts are added to the fuselage and they all fit perfectly. The engine inlets are done. There is a little bit of a mold mark inside the intake. This was easy enough to take care of with

Perfect Putty. Some of the photo etch parts added now will need to be bent slightly. I used my Small Shop Photo Etch Bending & Rolling Deluxe Brass Assist tool. It is an expensive tool but so worth the money. The turret assembly is next. I was going to use the Master barrels that are available. However, when compared to the kit parts I elected to use the kit parts as they fit perfectly and were suitably thin.



One thing that I didn't quite like on the model was that the turret should be open on the bottom and the innards of the gun should be visible. I have plenty of Monogram AH-1Fs kits so I cut the gun off of one and hollowed out the turret and inserted the Monogram guts into the resulting hole.

Werner's Wings is working on a CAD version of this turret. Doing this modification took the space for the nose weight supplied by Kitty Hawk and forced me have to move it to another location in the nose.

The kit FLIR is molded in clear plastic. I added some mylar film on the inside of my FLIR. They were attached with Future. One I backed with Tamiya Smoke and Tamiya Clear Orange on the other. This added a nice touch even though they would be near invisible once assembled. The fit of the parts was really good and a couple of swipes of a sanding stick cleaned up the seam.

The fuselage has detail added in plastic and photo etch. Again, there is some photo etch that has to be bent. Without the bender from The Small Shop this bending would not be easy!

It was at this point that I had to decide whether or not to have access panels open. I wanted my helicopter all cleaned up with the panels closed and the doors opened. After that decision, I didn't add anything in the ammo bay. What I should have done was

add the weight at this point, but the build was progressing rapidly and I was caught up in the moment and forgot.

The engine doors DO NOT touch the bulkheads at the middle. Add the doors so that they fit with the fuselage and then adjust them to fit to the other door. This enables them to fit perfectly with the front inlet and the aft exhaust.

Moving onto the wings, Kitty Hawk mentions the need to make a hole for the wingtip Sparrow missiles, but the holes are already there. If the missile rails are not added, then the holes will need to be filled. My aircraft had the rails fitted. I opened up the holes in the wing for the Hellfire and the 19 shot pods. This is one part where Kitty Hawk could have done better showing which holes required opening.

The exhaust fits perfectly. I did hollow out the area where the inlet on the side fits. This area is slightly visible though the opening. It is better to hollow out the center and then add the side inlet.

I built up the tail boom next instead of the blades. I test fitted it to the fuselage and again, a perfect fit. I then realized that I didn't add the weight to the nose. Doh!



I was able to glue the weight in from the back of the fuselage. I would need a little more weight which I added in the front prior to adding the FLIR turret assembly. I added the driveshaft cover and glued it to the

tail boom. That was a slight mistake. I added the tail boom to the fuselage.

Then I added the large photo etch piece, PE2, and discovered that my driveshaft cover was ever so slightly off. Nothing I could do but live with it. What I should have done, was add the photo etch part and then add the driveshaft cover and move it into place.

Now was the time to add the photo etch parts. The key here is to remove all the attachment points. If this is done, the photo etch will fit perfectly. Some parts will need some slight bend to blend into the parts.

Adding the glass pieces was easy enough and they fit perfectly. I was going to have my doors opened so I left them off. I was needlessly worried that the windows wouldn't fit.

There is one issue with the armament if left unused. The seven shot pods are mounted on an angle. This is incorrect. Just mount them the same as the 19 shot pods on Part 41 and 42. My Hellfire launchers were going to be empty but they fit nicely.

My rotor blades and tail rotor blades fit well. This is the first part that needed some filler with the bottom side of the blades needing just a little bit. All the canopy pieces were masked off and the canopy area was sprayed Tamiya Flat Black. Then the whole model was sprayed with Alclad Grey Primer, my primer of choice.

After fixing the areas that needed attention, which were surprisingly few, it was time to paint. Painting the model proved to be interesting as this was my first Marine 'grey' aircraft. (Proving that there are more than Fifty Shades of Grey).



I pre-shaded my model with Tamiya NATO Black. Not only did I highlight the panel lines but I also used the color here and there in a random pattern. This was the first level of the random pattern. Once dry I decided to

paint the lower color which is FS36375. I used AK's new paint. It was a resounding success. I really like the paints. They sprayed well and were sturdy enough to stand up to most handling. I'll use them again. I had some other colors of grey that I used here and there to break up the monotone look.



On the upper surface I used AK's Blue Grey (FS35237) but found it too blue for my liking so I over sprayed it with Model Air Barley Grey. This allowed me to break up the monotony of the color. I also used some of it to touch up places on the lighter portion of the camouflage, just like the Marines do.

My subject aircraft had some old markings overpainted on the tail boom with a very light grey. I used some light grey from AK's Naval Aviation set.

I was going to use flat black for the wing walk areas but only a few Cobras have that. Others have a grey wing walk. The Werner's Wings decals mention which aircraft had black wing walks. Mine did not have black ones. I chose a Tamiya light grey and masked off the areas that needed it.

Masking off the landing gear anti-skid areas was tedious but a necessary evil. They came out really nice. I painted the non-slip areas with Gunze Metallic Black. When I do my next Viper I'll paint these before I add the skids to the kit. It is easier to do without the wings in the way.

The entire model was then sprayed with Future to prep for the decals. I thought the Kitty Hawk decals were a little dark, but not too bad. However, I had options. I produce Werner's Wings decals and I wanted to try them out on the model for advertising purposes and just because they're cool. I elected to depict an aircraft that was well used and had some combat time.

One of the options has the markings overpainted and it had a dragon on it. That was my candidate.

The decals, both the Werner's Wings and the Kitty Hawk ones, worked well. I used the Kitty Hawk decals for most of the stencils and the Werner's Wings for the aircraft markings and a few stencils. The decals were sealed with Alclad Flat. They were both so thin that they didn't need a gloss coat to level them out.

It was time to start weathering. The first thing I did was to add a SIN filter of Blue for Panzer Grey on the upper camouflage. This brought back a slight blue tint to the color. I tried to use the filter on the lower color but it was too blue. I had to overpaint those panels that I did the test on. That worked out better than I expected and it broke up the monotony. Funny how things work out!

A burnt umber artist oil wash was added to the panel lines. This was also used on various panels to represent oil residue. Mig Pigments black was used to represent the exhaust stains as well as discoloration in the areas that the mechanic would work.

While this all sounds nice and pretty it was not all rosy. I didn't let the wash dry completely so I had 'clouds' in the area where the pigments reacted with the wash. I had to go back in and repaint these areas. I added the exhaust staining a second time, as well. I was surprised at how nice it turned out. With all that, the weathering was done.



It was time to add all the small pieces. The AADS Boom, or whatever the Marines call that pitot tube on the left side, required that I drill a hole. What is nice about this part is that it can be placed in any position. I placed it at an awkward position so that there would be no question in a judge's mind that it was purposely placed that way.

The armament was added to the under wing area. I chose the Hellfire launchers on the inner weapons stations and the 19-shot pods on the outer ones.

The gun built up beautifully and a coat of Testor's gun metal made it ready for the model. I left off the chaff dispensers as the aircraft wasn't armed up.

The canopy sections fit like a champ. Next time, I will add the support struts to the canopy. Final painting of little things was done before the rotor blades were added. The tail rotor assembly was added next.



The main rotor assembly was added last. I decided to glue the swashplate (circular thingy where the rotor attaches) so that it would not rotate. I did this so that there would be little stress on the links but, more importantly, because the swashplate was loose and moved around too much for my liking. Once that was done adding the blades and aligning the Pitch Change Links (actual name) to the holes was easy.

With that the model was done. This is my first Kitty Hawk model and I was impressed with the finished product. Kitty Hawk is to be commended for a superb model. The fit was nearly perfect, with filler only being required on the bottom of the main rotor blades. .

The kit isn't perfect but what is? I apologize for missing the ammo box and the lower part of the turret while proofing the CAD work. (I'll do better on the UH-1Y.)

The Werner's Wings decals were awesome, but what else *would* I say?

But I'm biased. You be the judge.

Floyd



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

The first entry in this month's column brings us a wonderfully simple explanation about the complicated processes that are involved with the current technology as it relates to aircraft missile tracking. My personal thanks to David Goudie for providing this much needed and long overdue explanation.

<http://www.military.com/video/guided-missiles/advanced-weapons/missile-guidance-how-does-that-work-again/4020348406001/>

I have been working on a model of the WACO CG-4A assault glider for some few days now. I happen to have also been working on the same project at a recent model building day with the Lone Star Military Miniatures Modelers folks. (That club should think about a shorter name.) Someone at the build day let it be known that there is, in fact, an assault glider museum in beautiful Lubbock, Texas that might be worth a field trip.

The Silent Wings Museum has an airworthy WACO in their collection as well as numerous memorabilia from that era.

www.silentwingsmuseum.org

This being the year of the 70th anniversary of V.E. Day, many governments are commemorating the liberation of Europe those many years ago. The Russian government also celebrated V.E. Day with a large military parade.

One item of interest is the introduction of the latest Russian designed battle tank, the T-14 Armata. This tank represents the newest Russian design since the Cold War. Maybe we should start a pool to see who comes up with the first injected molded kit!

www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32478937

Milton Bell has provided a couple of links that should be of interest to, all but I'll let him explain.

If you have ever built an Airfix model, you will probably remember the paint call-outs. Actually, they are just numbers for the most part, and you have to know which Humbrol paint they refer to. It can be a little frustrating since Humbrol isn't necessarily the most

popular or often used model paint over here. There is help, however, in the form of a paint chart that gives the equivalent paint color or FS reference for just about any paint you can buy. And some you wish were available locally!

There are several similar charts out there but I like this one pretty well and I just noticed that Brett Green on HyperScale recommended it. I recommend you bookmark the site since you will probably use it for other model paint brands.

http://www.ipmsstockholm.org/colorcharts/stuff_eng_colorcharts_humbrol.htm

This next link is to an interesting story of the Polish pilots in the Battle of Britain. The video uses clips from the Battle of Britain movie but with Polish actors and subtitles for the story. You needn't worry, as it does have English narration.

Polish pilots were some of the top aces during WWII as was Squadron 303 in that battle. This is also a great history lesson.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptijNcDanVw&feature=em-subst_digest-vrecc

Not to be outdone by some tired old YouTube videos, Mike Lamm has sent a link to a YouTube Channel.

This channel is the work of Martin Damek. He is a wonderful modeler and has some nice instructional videos on different modeling techniques. Of interest, is the one on detailing aircraft cockpits.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC53hZgZPIQmKWFRFSpxbSxw>

There was a recent discovery off the coast of California. Seems someone had misplaced a WWII aircraft carrier and parked it on the ocean floor off the coast about even with San Francisco. This report from NPR should give you all the information you seek on this 'radioactive' aircraft carrier.

www.npr.org

Jean-Michel





Monthly Program Schedule

Month	Presenter/Subject
May	Gen. Peter Bonanni Virginia Air National Guard
June	Quarterly Contest
July	Milton Bell/TBA
August	Rick Herrington/TBA
September	Quarterly Contest
October	Randy Bumgardner/TBA
November	Bob Bethea/TBA
December	Quarterly Contest

If you are interested in giving a presentation at a future ASMS meeting, contact our Vice-President/Program coordinator Aaron Smischney.

vicepresident@austinsms.org

A couple is lying in bed. The man says, 'I am going to make you the happiest woman in the world...'

The woman replies, 'I'll miss you.....'

Courtesy of David Goudie

IPMS/USA 2015 National Convention July 22-25, 2015 Columbus, Ohio



The International Plastic Modeler's Society 2015 National Convention website is available to peruse.

There is a lot of information there and more will be added as the actual event approaches.



More information about the National Convention may be obtained at:

ipmsusa2015.com

Telling A Tale by Rick Cotton

The house sits, an empty shell, its floors blasted out some time back by artillery. Two tired, dirty, bedraggled Waffen SS troopers sit in a corner of the wreckage, sharing cigarettes and ersatz coffee. Their badly battered SDKFZ 251 halftrack is parked close beside the building, under the half-wrecked porch, to hide it from the prowling Typhoons and Thunderbolts, of which there seem to be more and more of, every day.

Just a short break, a little smoke, and then it's back on the road, trying to find a way through the hedgerows, back to the east. To Germany. To an uncertain safety. Unbeknownst to the two Germans, a lone US para-trooper crawls in the muddy ditch next to the halftrack. He grips his Tommy gun, and fingers a grenade as he listens to the Germans talking. It is the moment of truth.

One moment. That's what a diorama should be. A depiction of a single moment. For a clearer definition, let's go to that exciting sheet of bathroom reading, the Official Contest Rules: "The strength of story shall be the primary factor in the judging of all dioramas." Huh? "Strength of Story?" What's THAT? But...but...I have 300 bucks worth of resin figures, and a \$200 resin building, and.....

No matter, Bucko. If it doesn't tell a tale, it's not a diorama, and it shouldn't place. At least, that's the way the rules read.

Of course, this might not be exactly true at the shows. I've seen diorama after diorama packed with exquisitely-painted figures, beautifully done vehicles, and fantastic scenery...all with absolutely no tale to tell...win at shows, over and over. As much as IPMS likes to harp on that storyline thing, well a kiss is still a kiss, a sigh is still a sigh, and decal film and seams are still decal film and seams. The fundamental things apply, as the judges go by. Play it again, Sam, at the next contest. It will probably win again, and yes, we'll always have Paris.

Soldiers marching past a tank are not a story, at least not a compelling one. The only story I hear is "slog, slog, slog." A lot filled with junk cars, or for that matter, new cars is not a story. A ship steaming next to another ship is not a story. Aircraft being maintained by a group of mechanics are not a story.

There is a great difference between a STORY and a SCENE. Model railroads have scenery; that doesn't make them a diorama.

Something else needs to happen, to be told, to be surmised from what you see. A diorama should create questions in the mind of the viewer: what will happen next? Who gets "greased" in this moment? Who wins? Who loses? What are they thinking?

The best diorama I ever saw was one of the smallest and simplest ever, created by a great figure modeler here in Texas, one Bob Bethea. A genial, joking,

likeable sort, quick of mind and speech, Bob is one of those guys who should have his own 15-minute radio show every morning. He doesn't think like the mass of drones out there, and his work reflects it.



This diorama features a small boy, about 8 years old or so, who has dressed himself as a pirate, with toy sword, pirate hat,

and boyish grin on his face, standing in what he surmised as a roguish pirate pose. He faces a full-length mirror, on the other side of which was an elaborately costumed, full-size buccaneer, posed in the same exact way, looking back at him. The title: *Terror of the Seas!*

It is an absolutely masterful, charming, totally believable depiction of a boy's playful fantasy of himself as a Black-beard-type swash-buckler, and it deservedly won, hands down.



What a story! Bob Bethea actually took us all inside the mind of an eight-year-old boy, with an active imagination, a wooden sword, and a mirror.

Many, many of us looked at it, took a quick mental trip back to childhood when we had done the exact same thing as the boy....and it made us all smile. Bravo, Bob. Well done. THAT'S a diorama!

A three-dimensional story, played out in modeling skill and execution. Not just a tank on a patch of dirt, with three guys walking past. No, a slice of life, and it needs to look alive to be a real diorama. It needs to SAY something, to tell a tale that needs no words.

Look at the dioramas at the next show you go to. What are they saying? Are they saying anything?

Look...and tell me what you hear.

Rick



WANTED!

The Sprue Examiner editorial staff continues its sponsorship of The Sprue Examiner newsletter contest.

This year-long contest challenges all members of Austin Scale Modeler's Society to compete against each other. All members of ASMS are vying for the coveted prize of having their club dues paid for by the editorial staff for the upcoming year (2016).

The contest rules are very simple: whomever sends in the largest number of items for publication in the newsletter during the course of 2015 wins.

Those items can include anything that may be of interest to the modeling public. These can range from websites, photographs, articles, essays, articles, cartoons, reports on new kits, articles, etc. All items submitted to the newsletter editor qualify whether or not that item is published.

Please send all submissions to :
editor@austinsms.org

40 Grams by Ben Morton

Austin Scale Modelers Society held the first club field trip in early May. A number of club members journeyed to Williams Brothers Models in Round Rock, Texas to get a first hand look at what goes into actually manufacturing an injected molded model.

Each ASMS member was afforded the opportunity to mold a 1/48th scale Ford Flivver. Everything from the processes that go

into manufacturing a model and the machinery (a TOYO ES molding machine) involved to quality control, packaging the sprue with decals and instructions, boxing and finally shrink wrapping the whole thing for shipment out the door.



Everyone not only received a kit but each completed kit was adorned with a special commemorative label noting the date and person responsible for manufacturing that kit. Very cool! Actually, the plastic sprue was still a tad warm. Maybe awesome would be better?

Williams Brothers Models is now owned by Daniel Brett. Many moons ago, Daniel drove to Southern California. Using his 401K retirement funds he bought the Williams Brothers Model Company in boxes from Lorraine Williams. He loaded it all up himself and transported the whole kit and caboodle to Central Texas.

Over the next several years he taught himself injection manufacturing, molding machine maintenance, mold restoration, and dozens of other critical skills required to operate such a unique business. All the while, reestablishing the Williams Company as a reliable supplier. Larry and Granger Williams began the Williams Brothers Model Company and the company roots are



in the RC airplane business. A more complete history of the early company is available via:

<https://www.modelaircraft.org/files/WilliamsGrangerandLawrence.pdf>

Many, including myself, that are involved in this hobby have never really understood how plastic sprues are



made. Most plastic manufacturing is done in far away countries. The uniqueness of having a model kit manufacturer in our own back yard affords us

the opportunity of seeing first-hand just what is involved in the process of manufacturing a model kit.

Williams Brothers Models has concentrated on molding kits of the between the wars aircraft, mostly in 1/48th scale, with a fascination for the



early air racers: the Gee Bee, Northrop Gamma, Thompson Trophy racers, etc. These are unique aircraft kits and often the only injected molded kit of their type. A few of the kits do have some minor fit problems but the level of detail and authenticity is very good, even outstanding in many kits.

The supplied building instructions with line drawings in scale are a wonder to behold. Both for the level of detail and pertinent history for each type of aircraft. Williams Brothers also manufactures a line of 1/8th scale highly detailed radial engines. Mike Poole purchased a Pratt and Whitney WASP. Mike noted, "that



Everyone pay attention. There will be a test!

every single nut and screw is represented thanks to the Brothers access to a unit in the San Diego Aerospace Museum. The information on the box lists 289 parts!"

One aspect of the tour unfamiliar to some was that the Williams Brother's tools are made of soft aluminum. The Williams Brothers saved a fortune on tooling costs by using aluminum instead of steel. As mentioned by

Daniel Brett, this is a nice compromise between the tool (mold) longevity and cost given Williams Brothers production volumes.



Daniel measures out 40 grams of molding material.

In the case of Williams Brothers Ford Flivver, the molding process begins with 40 grams of thermo-plastic rubber.

This material is sold in bulk or can be recycled plastic sprue that is pulverized into small pellets.

There is a large hopper on the top of the molding machine that holds a goodly supply of this raw material. This material is heated and deposited into a screw conveyor that in turn forces or injects (hence the name) the molten material into a pre-positioned mold of the kit parts.

After molding and extraction from the aluminum mold, a initial visual inspection of the complete parts sprue is made. That parts sprue is then taken to another area where it is placed on a shadow card. The shadow card is simply an outline of each part that should be on the parts sprue and its exact silhouette. Some of the shadow cards currently being used are originals.



After ascertaining that all the parts are there and no missing bits, the sprue is combined with building instructions, decals, and placed in a plastic sleeve which is then inserted into a box that is sealed with shrink wrap. If your unfamiliar with shrink wrap, then let it be enough that it is a super-secret process (even magical) that is not to be shared with just anyone.

After the tour and a thorough inspection of Williams Brothers Model's manufacturing facility, those in attendance adjourned to the home of Randy Bumgardner and the vivacious apiarist Leona.

Randy had prepared some grilled (ribs), roasted pork and chicken, and otherwise cooked animal flesh (BBQ) along with some appropriate side dishes (two types of potato salad, beans, and a superb cole slaw!) which we proceeded to consume with the gusto of a hound dog.

As is custom at these kinds of affairs, there was much snappy, good-humored banter and commiserating about our collective adventure. As is also customary at our gatherings, one tends to find out a little bit more information than you might really need to know about fellow club members. The episodes involving one ASMS club member's adolescent experimentations with home-made gun powder and napalm, come to mind.

But in their defense, appropriate safety considerations were paramount throughout the course of those experiments. After all, when you experiment with flammables, you always do so outside. And, at no time was anyone ever in any *real* danger. Other than the neighbor's yard...

ASMS's first official field trip to Williams Brothers Models was a resounding success! From all the reports that I have received, a good time was had by all, not to mention the acquisition of some new knowledge.

Thoughts are already being given to the next ASMS field trip. Please feel free to contact your elected representative with any suggestions. Perhaps something inside, as the temperature will soon be rising.

Finally, much appreciation and a warm thank-you to Daniel Brett for his forbearance and generosity in allowing a number of ASMS club members to descend upon him and his place of business. Ham and cheese sandwich, anyone?

Go build the your model.

Ben



Editor's Note: For a complete listing of available kits and products from Williams Brothers Models please visit their website:

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

Quarterly Contest Schedule

ASMS holds four quarterly model contests throughout the year. There is prize money for first, second and third place at each contest. Prize money is provided by King's Hobby Shop and ASMS. Thanks and appreciation to King's for their continuing support of ASMS. The dates and themes for 2015 are:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Subject</u>
June 18	Open any subject/any era
September 17	Bondo Special*/ Open

*This contest features any kit from the estate of Phil 'Bondo' Brandt or any subject/any era. The Bondo Special winner will receive a plaque whilst the open contest will feature first, second, and third prizes.

December 17 White Elephant
(Any model received at the annual ASMS Christmas gift exchange.)

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Williams Brothers 1/72 Northrop Gamma by Tim Robb, IPMS 34705

I picked this kit up at our 2014 summer picnic and auction. What I had in mind for it was giving it to one of my nephews at our four day family reunion. But, alas, video games rule. None of my nephews was interested in doing something that required as much time as building a model kit.

So there I was at the reunion and when I found some time on my hands in between group activities (read: this old fat guy was not about to go fry himself in the mid-afternoon Texas sun at the river with the kids), I said "Aha! I have models to build."

And I then commenced construction on three of the kits I had brought along to give away to nephews. This Williams Brothers Gamma must be the most interesting of the three to me because it is the first of the three finished. I like Golden Age aircraft, and this fits the bill. I especially like the "park bench" ailerons shown on the box art.



This will be an easy review to write because all the main stuff about the kit is printed in bullet point style on the kit box. The Gamma is a 1933 John K. Northrop design and one of the very earliest all metal mono-planes. The "park bench" ailerons allowed for full span flaps on the trailing edge of the wings.

Big flaps and big wings enabled this aircraft powered by a 785 horsepower Wright radial engine to land as slowly as 40-55 mph depending on load, altitude and temperature. That is SLOW for a big high-powered airplane, wingspan 47' 9-1/2".



The kit provides options to build one of four airplanes. An early single seat and a late passenger version of Frank Hawk's Texaco Sky Chief, and an early and late version of Lincoln Ellsworth's Polar Star.

Compared to the Sky Chief, the Polar Star was powered by a lower power Pratt & Whitney single row radial engine, and both early and late versions had two-seat cockpits.

The kit parts include options for both engines and cowlings, two and three blade props for the different power plants, two different canopies and fairing combinations, two tail wheels, and optional side windows for a passenger compartment.



The differences between the four airplanes and the construction steps to build each are excellently covered in the kit's directions.

I chose to build the early version of the Sky Chief because I liked the lack of fuselage windows, the spatted tail wheel, and the colorful Texaco star marking on the wing. And I dig the "park bench" ailerons with both shovels.

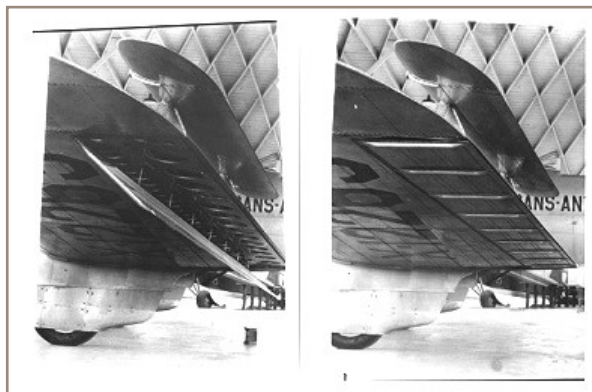
Assembly is straightforward. The wheel pants to wing joints require careful filling and sanding. I concentrated on avoiding my usual ham-handedness so I would not over sand and lose the proper shape of the wheel pants.

The overall fit of the parts is good. Surface detail is very finely raised panel lines. Very finely raised. Engine detail is good. The instrument panel(s) are represented by decals which could be better. On the single seat cockpit airplane the instrument panel is not visible after the canopy is on.

When the model was ready for paint, I primed it flat black and then glossed it with Future (now PFM), then sprayed it all over with Alclad II Aluminum (A).

At this point I had a question that was not answered in the kit instructions. Were the elevators and rudder fabric covered or metal covered? I would paint them a lighter shade of silver if fabric covered.

Daniel Brett of Williams Brothers is a member of our club and I guessed correctly that he would know. He does know!



They are metal covered and he emailed me original factory photos to show me! Now THAT is service from the kit manufacturer.

The last comment in this review is on the "Invisi-clear" decals printed by scale master. I put them on right over the Alclad using no setting solution at all and they worked beautifully.

Two of them broke into two parts while being pushed onto the model from the paper – no big deal, just slide the two pieces in place against each other on the model. None shattered. The clear film carrier became truly invisible when dry.



I must say that I enjoyed this build quite a lot. It's a nice kit featuring four options of an historically significant Golden Age aircraft.

Go Build a Model!

Tim



[Photos courtesy of Milton Bell]

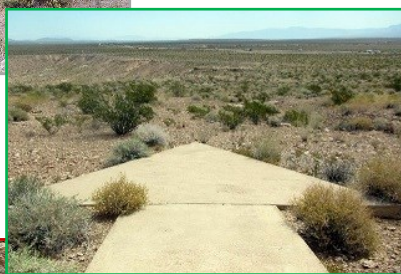
Interested In Time Travel?

**Meet Here Last
Thursday, 7PM**

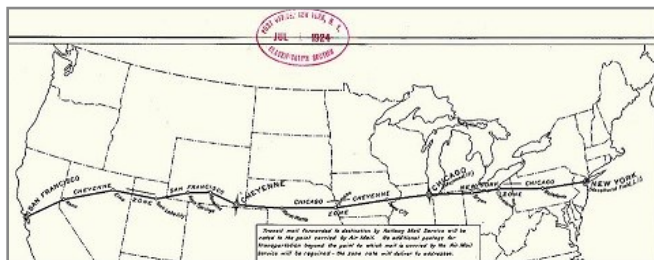
[Courtesy of David Goudie]

Forgotten History by Dan Hickox

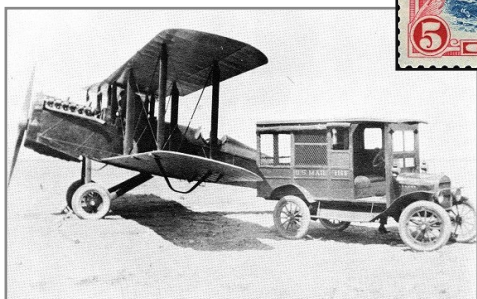
All over the country, 70-foot concrete arrows can be found in remote locations. Follow them, and they'll lead you out of the desert.



They come courtesy of the United States Postal Service's Air Force and will direct you all the way across the continental United States.



They were constructed in 1924 to guide postal planes in the right direction as they carried



mail from coast to coast.

These old planes couldn't rely on radio as much at the time, so they used these arrows, along with beacon towers, to navigate.

The arrows and beacons bisect the United States from San Francisco to New York City. The towers were 50 feet tall and fixed with gas lights that could be seen from ten miles away in order to help lost pilots find their way.



This is a model of the arrows and towers in their heyday.

World War II brought new advances in radio technology that effectively made the towers and arrows system obsolete. The towers were mostly dismantled.

There has been an effort to restore and preserve some of them, however. Like this one in New Mexico complete with its generator shack.



This is a pretty cool piece of history, even if it was short lived. To think of those early postal pilots navigating like this from coast to coast is mind blowing.

Dan



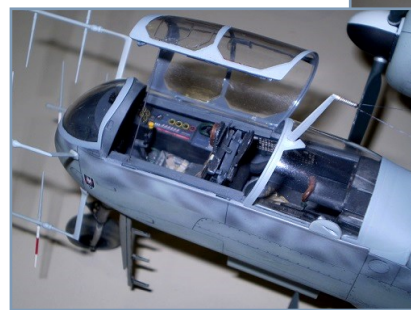
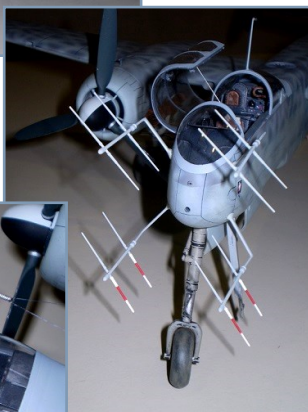
And The Winner Is... by Roy Lothbrok

Austin Scale Modelers Society held the first of four model contests at the April club meeting. As is our wont, these contests are held once a calendar quarter. Due to scheduling issues the first contest was held this past month instead of in March. There were 21 members present with 22 entries from eleven members.

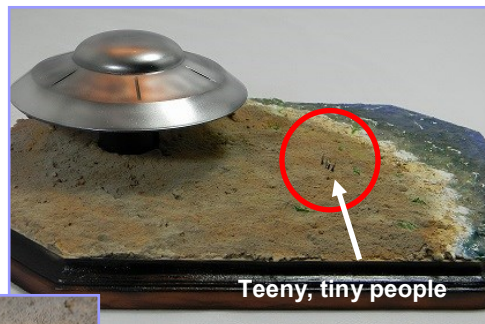
ASMS has, instituted a modeler of the month award this year. This honor goes to whomever wins first in our quarterly contest. Not only that, but the club member that wins the fan favorite at the Show-N-Tell segment of our regularly scheduled monthly club meetings is automatically named modeler of the month. Those modelers will return with their award winning entries at our December meeting to be named (or not) modeler of the year.

As of this writing you don't actually *win* anything, except maybe bragging rights. But, it being us, that probably won't get you very far. There may be an anthropological study in there somewhere? Stay tuned. Here are the winners for our first quarterly model contest of 2015.

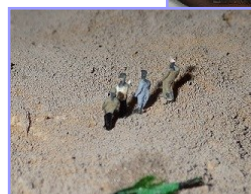
First prize goes to Chuck 'Obi-Wan' Konefsky for his 1/32nd Revell He-219.



Second place went to Rick Herrington's for his *Earth versus Flying Saucers* diorama with teeny, tiny people. He just might have come in first were it not for his neglecting to paint any faces on those teeny, tiny people. Live and learn. Avid readers of the Sprue



Teeny, tiny people



Examiner may be interested to know that Rick's diorama will be featured in a forthcoming issue.

Third prize, which was the subject of much heated debate and prolonged voting, went to Bob Bethea. Bob beat out Bill Delk with his 'Bonnie und Klaus' diorama. His 1/48th scale Tamiya Citroen diorama depicting a German version of Bonnie and Clyde's demise turned out to have the edge over Bill's Revell Jedi Starfighter.



Congratulations to all of our winners and much appreciation to King's Hobby Shop for



their continuing support of ASMS. Their assistance with the funding of the awards for our quarterly contests is most welcome and greatly appreciated.



Roy



[Fun Fact: Building WWII model aircraft is way easier then building WWI model aircraft.]

Stash Reduction 2.0 by Mike Lamm

It has been over a year since my self-imposed moratorium on adding new kits to the stash (see: Sprue Examiner, Aug. 2014) and I thought I'd give an update on how it's going. Two words: not well.

I guess it's not as bad as it could have been. In fact, I've managed to reduce my abundance of older, less accurate kits for a somewhat nicer selection to work from, and my stash is still not visible from space. In fact, the stash isn't even visible from the front door of my house, so that's a positive.

I also don't have to keep it in an undisclosed location, since it doesn't take up more than one closet. In fact, it only takes up a little more than a shelf on my work bench, and less than half a shelf in a closet in my work space (aka, the guest room).



In the world of stash collections, I'm what some may call a piker, small-time, a rookie. However, I've recognized a potential problem and I'm trying to take it head on from the start. To keep this small collection from growing into an overwhelming stockpile, I developed a simple list of rules to live by in an effort to keep the stash to a manageable size, while at the same time, having enough available subjects to keep my interest piqued.

The list of rules was covered, in detail, in the August 2014 newsletter, but for those who don't remember, or don't want to go look at the old newsletter, here is a quick breakdown.

- Rule 1 – Work by scale from smallest to largest (i.e. 1/144 to 1/24).
- Rule 2 – Aftermarket items don't count as a kit (i.e. decals, etc.).
- Rule 3 – Rule 1 may be changed depending on mood.
- Rule 4 – Figures don't count as kits.
- Rule 5 – Kits acquired via raffle, door prizes, or as gifts are allowed.
- Rule 6 – Defines what "completing" a kit means to me.
- Rule 7 – I can only purchase new kits when the stash is down to single digits
- Rule 8 – I can have no more than 6 works-in-progress at a time.

Studies show that repeating goals out loud, and to others, helps us to actually follow through and accomplish those goals. So, every morning, I look in the mirror, repeat this list of goals out loud to myself and finish it with "...and gosh darnit, people like me!"

Now let's see how I did over the first 12 months of "the rules".

On March 28, 2014, I had a total of 30 kits in the stash. One year later, on March 28, 2015, I had completed 27 kits (22 built, 2 sold, 3 trashed). Those are some pretty awesome numbers and I should be down to just 3 left; however, my current stash level as of March 28, 2015 is 23 kits! So where'd I go wrong? Let's take a look.

The problem seems to be tied to two of the rules in particular. First, let's look at Rule 5. Between door prizes, and presents, I've picked up an additional 8 kits. On a positive note, the majority of these have been built. However, building a newly acquired kit doesn't allow me to work on one in the stash. The old Catch-22.

Maybe I'll put a message out to loved ones that I'd prefer new underwear, or socks, and that they can hold off on new kits for awhile. After all, nothing beats a new pair of underwear, right?

Unfortunately, the real culprit is my own lack of will-power and failing to follow Rule 7. The draw of plastic to a modeler is a tough one to resist. I've done a fair job of avoiding the usual online temptations of Ebay, Squadron, Sprue Bros., etc., with their constant sales, and eye catching cover art. Still, I can't say I've been able to avoid them completely.



I'll also blame my job a little too. After all why should I take all the blame? When I can, I like to pack a kit into the bags when I'm on a trip. The only problem is that 1/48 kits don't fit into luggage very easily, so I'll go looking for a new 1/144 or 1/72 scale kit to tuck in somewhere.

Then there are the consignment shelves at King's Hobby Shop. I have to say, going through those kits scratches that itch I can't reach. The variety of subjects and scales, the vintage kits for which I tend to have a weakness for, and those "can't afford not to buy it" prices. However, I can't help but see the irony of buying kits from the consignment shelf, while at the same time trying to reduce my own stash.

I will say that Rule 8 is a good one to have, and one that I've stuck to this entire year. Over the past 12 months, I've never had more than five works-in-progress at any time, and for about a day, I even had...wait for it...no works-in-progress on the bench. I'll admit, there have been times where all the kits I'm working on were at a point when they needed paint, or filler, or sanding, but I was in the mood to glue something together (other than my fingers). During these times, I may have reluctantly painted something to get it moved along, but more often than not, I just held off working on a kit until I was inspired to do what needed to be done.

Anyone who has seen my completed works at show-n-tell will know that I have a lot of "vintage" kits in the collection, and that I'm relatively new coming back to the hobby. My skills are not nearly at the level of the majority of people in the club, but I enjoy building kits, researching the modeling subject, improving my skills, and seeing the awesome work that others bring to the table every month.

I build for my own enjoyment. My kids think my hobby is silly, my wife is indifferent, my mother says it reminds her of when my father and I would build kits at the kitchen table (I think of those times every so often too), and other than members of the model club, and readers of this newsletter, I don't admit or tell many others about my hobby. I don't want them to think I'm weird, or worse, really weird.

I like to believe that I picked up each one of the kits I have for the sole purpose of building it, not to let it sit in a corner to gather dust, or remain in its packaging.

So I'll continue to work at reducing the stash, and try to stick to my 8 simple rules, but if the first year is any indication, this is easier written in a journal than done.

So, what's your stash reduction strategy? Take it from me, just building a model, or two, is a good start.

Mike

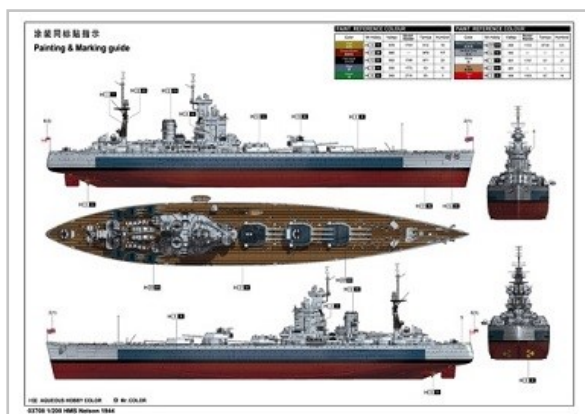
Old Rumors/ New Kits 2G

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

Shipping News

Here's the shipping news for this month.

Going from large to small, scale wise, in 1/200th is the Royal Navy battleship HMS Nelson (1944) from Trumpeter. This is the design with all the main armament forward of the bridge structure.

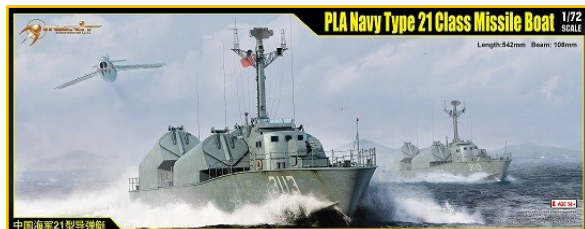


Revell of Germany has a limited release kit of the North Cormorant Oil Rig. This limited release is something big and unusual from Revell, an oil rig for your model room.



The pictures of the built kit look toy-like but with the proper paint job and weathering it could look pretty realistic.

There is never that much in the realm of 1/72nd, but Merit International is attempting to remedy that situation with a People's Liberation Army Navy Type 21 Missile Boat.



There are a couple of items in 1/350th scale. The Royal Navy battleship HMS Dreadnought (1918), from

Trumpeter and the Imperial Japanese Navy Aircraft carrier Kaga, from Fujimi.

Last but not least, from Dragon we have...wait for it...a DKM German destroyer Z-32. I think Dragon is close to having made every German destroyer type there was in 1/350th scale. How about an Admiral Scheer or a Lutzow in 1/350th?

In the somewhat unusual scale of 1/720th, Revell will soon be releasing the Admiral Hipper. This cruiser kit has been released several times, under the Blucher name (insert Young Frankenstein sound effect, here!) and the Admiral Hipper. The actual kit is a mixture of both German cruisers.

Finally, in the more common scale of 1/700th, Revell has a Fletcher Class destroyer. Hasegawa has the Imperial Japanese Navy Light cruiser Tatsuka and Trumpeter has the Royal Navy battleship HMS Malaya (1943).



DreamModel has the Russian Project 1232 Zubr Class Laca Air cushion assault vehicle.



That's it for this month. Pick a kit from that stash and build it!

Rick



Aarmor

Greetings armor fans and hello armor curious!

Let's start off with a weird one. I bet no one would ever expect the interwar Škoda PA-II "Turtle" armored car to ever be kitted in plastic. But guess what? Now we will have TWO options (Takom and HobbyBoss) for building this thing.

Is it coming or going? I guess the answer is, yes?



My money is on the offering from Takom. Both kits are 1/35th scale.

Also coming down the pike from HobbyBoss is the very early T-18 tank. This is another very interesting tank that previously was only available via very poor Eastern sourced kits.

Once again, we have fans of *World of Tanks* to thank for this one. The T-18 is one of the first tanks you get in the Russian "tank tree" on your way to getting T-34 and JS-2 tanks. This looks like it has some great details! Fans of inter-war and early armor should expect it in the next few months.



Do you have too much space in your modeling room? Trumpeter is here to fix that with a 1/35 scale M983 HEMTT combined with a M901 launching station!

The kit is a new tooling and is rumored to include a complete cabin interior, engine and transmission with lots of parts and photo etch. This one could be a show stopper; you just need to find the space to build it.



Those are my highlights. I'll have more for y'all next month!

Aaron



Miscellaneous

As long as you are in an armor mood, Flyhawk Models has a 1/72nd ditty of the Pz. Kpfw I Ausf F (late). This is the Panzer I with the cool overlapping running gear. This injected molded kit comes with photo etch and with two figures from Caesar Miniatures. This Panzer was previously available in resin from Armory.



Aaron mentioned the Škoda kit coming soon from Takom. Takom also has an anti-aircraft artillery piece that may be of interest, a 1/35th scale 12.8cm Flak 40 Zwilling.



This thing looks *totally* wicked!

This next Hasegawa kit has been previously available but is now being marketed with some additional bits. The Shinkai 6500 manned research sub now comes with some deep sea critters; a giant squid and a giant isopod. You never know what you'll find in the briny depths.



Kovozavody Prostejov, a Czech Republic company, has some new 1/72nd scale aircraft kits.

They have a series of P-51's in various guises. A P-51 B with Malcolm hood, a Mark III, and a C model.

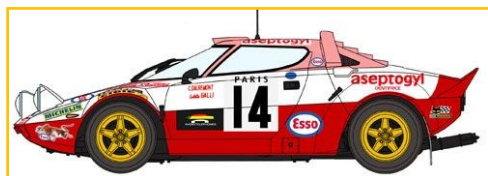


They are also showing a Piper I-4H/J in RAAF markings. These are all new kits made "from metal molds".

For Egg Plane fans, Hasegawa comes to the rescue with an F-15 Eagle in JASDF 60th anniversary markings. There are two kits in the box. Best hurry, these releases are usually limited.

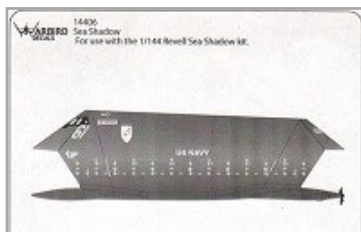


Should you be a diehard Monte Carlo rally fan, Hasegawa has got that covered, as well.



The Lancia Stratos HF is soon to be available in 1/24th scale.

If you have a copy of Revell's 1/144th Sea Shadow Stealth Boat in your stash, Warbird Decals has got ample reason for you to dig it out and commence to building.



This decal sheet has all the appropriate markings for the Sea Shadow.

Bat Project has a 1/72nd scale WWI aircraft that will definitely keep you busy at your work bench. An injected molded Gotha GL VIII with Maybach engines is coming to a retailer near you.



Lukgraph has two new kits headed our way. The first is a 1/32nd scale Curtiss A-3 Falcon. The kit comes with markings for four different aircraft. Lukgraph also has a 1/72nd Norman Thompson N.T.2B flying boat with three separate engines and multiple markings. Both of these are resin kits.



For something a bit out of the ordinary, Model Wheels has an Aerosan Sever-2. This is an injected molded kit of an unusual vehicle even for an Aerosan.

If you have a 1/144th scale Curtiss C-46 kit lying about and no good ideas about markings, Lima November has arrived with markings for the Fred. Olsen Lines. This decal sheet has all you need for this Norwegian Airlines carrier. Window masks are included.



Um, what next? Oh! UM has an injected molded 1/48th scale 37mm anti-aircraft gun, Model 1939. Happy sky-sweeping!

They also announced a 1/72nd M7 105mm howitzer motor carriage.



Micro Mir usually delves into smaller scale stuff but has announced a 1/35th scale Triton M-1 Soviet midget sub. This is a resin, full hull kit.

If you're still in a quandary about what to model for Nationals in order to garner the IPMS/Canada special award, look no further. Canuck Model Products has helicopter decal markings for a CH-124 '50 Year' Special Sea King. This is the one with the yellow-gold splashy markings. The decals come in either 1/72nd or 1/48th scale.



Golzar



Aircraft

So, here we are in May... and the big news, I mean really big news, is the latest 1/32nd scale release from Tamiya. Yep, Tamiya came out of left field with the announcement of a De Havilland Mosquito FB.VI for a July release.

Tamiya, who usually plays its cards close to the chest, surprised most modelers with this release. Given that they usually space out their large scale releases a bit farther apart, I was expecting something towards Christmas or even next Spring. And, at that, I was

expecting a single engine fighter. I'm certainly not complaining as I am already on the waiting list at King's Hobby Shop.



Kitty Hawk is continuing their roll out of big scale stuff. They have announced a 1/32 Bell P-39Q Airacobra. Well, this certainly might send my Special Hobby P-39s packing, with their stubby short fuselages.

The CAD images look good, but then, they always do.



Also up for release is Kitty Hawk's sister to the OV-10D, the OV-10A, due out in August. Let the Southeast Asia schemes roll forth!

I believe this is the version that is used by the California Department of Fire. These aircraft are used as spotters for fire bombers and to direct on the ground fire teams. That would look cool!



Finally, in our short tour of new stuff, HpH is releasing a 1/32 Macchi M5 flying boat. Per usual for HpH, this kit will be a short-run resin kit with loads of detail.

It certainly is an esoteric choice of subject that will please the Italian aircraft modeling crowd and the flying boat modeling crowd.



It will certainly make the Italian flying boat crowd bubble with joy.

If anything is announced during the 2015 Shizuoka Hobby Show, going on this week, I'll be sure to share it with you in June.

Until then, go build a model.

Randy



Automotive

It is all about Model Factory Hiro this month. These folks are on a tear with some great new models coming out this Spring in new scales and price ranges.

May's big new 1/12th offering is really special. If someone asked me what the hottest thing on four wheels is I'd have to say,

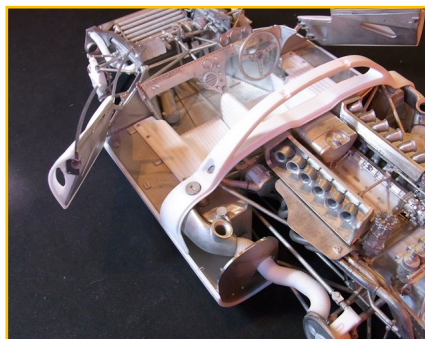


for me, it's always been the Ferrari 330 P4.

This short Youtube clip shows the car pictured ripping silk in the sweep-

ers of a closed circuit. Incidentally, I always wondered where that silk euphemism had come from.

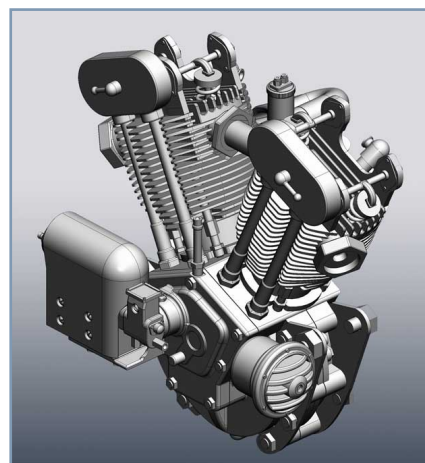
This video really captures the high-pitched open exhaust wail which sounds much like a piece of delicate fabric being "ripped" in two.



With nearly 400,000 views it's really good: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awArTC8iQ3Q>.

If that video didn't stir some animal spirits there's no hope for you as a bona fide car fanatic. MFH is releasing their 1/12th multimedia version of the Ferrari 330 P4 spyder this month for 75,000 Yen (\$625.00). If your display area is big enough and you can justify a year or so of leisure time required to build this, you're in for a spectacular model that will form the centerpiece of an autosport collection! No coupe has yet been announced but if the past is a predictor, expect a coupe version announcement in the months ahead.

Late breaking news: yesterday on the Model Factory Hiro website, an all-new 1/9 scale subject was announced for release in July. It's no secret that Mr. Hiro has an interest in English and American motorcycles.



The announcement teased us with a CAD model for an engine that I believe is the JAP liter twin as configured for the 1931 Brough Superior SS100 infamously linked to Lawrence of Arabia's untimely end. This is the Rolls Royce of motorcycles and a big departure from anything Hiro has done to date. I'll have much more on it next month.

What else is coming out? Certainly no new tooling but there are some old things being dusted off and polished up for another round in the injection machine this month

Round 2 Models continues to redo their old AMT box art this month with the 1941 Ford Woody Street Rod.



In addition to new spiffy packaging, you still get a complete flathead engine, wood-grain decals, and a bonus surfboard all included in this 1/25th scale kit for about \$30.00. This is an old tool but the body's wood paneling is well done and would be an inexpensive way to try your hand at wood graining using artist's oils. Look for it in the next week or two.

I try and note what automotive subjects are gaining in popularity at the model shows I attend and I can't help noticing a growing interest in big rigs. Talking with builders and searching the internet has revealed a healthy aftermarket in multimedia detail sets and conversions.

With any luck, maybe the plastic manufacturers will notice and cut some tools for vehicles produced in this century!



For now, Revell is reissuing their '70s era Marmon Conventional this month with a new set of "Stars and Stripes" decals. The Marmon brand was a successful car maker in the early years with the marque even capturing an Indy win in 1911. Unfortunately, time and ruthless competition relegated the make to commercial trucks. In the final years they simply customized and rebranded other manufacturers' products.

This kit makes a great looking truck and only you will know it's really a Peterbilt 359! The 1/25th Revell Marmon Conventional includes 317 parts and is out now for a measly \$90.00.

How about a 1/25th Auto Transport Trailer to go with that Marmon 359? Revell also announced this two foot monster for release in May. It will hold as many as six standard sized vehicles and can be configured with loading ramps, extended or fully secured, for the next leg of the journey.



If you have several nice contest veterans that don't get out much, this trailer is a great way to get them out of retirement and back in public. The 160 piece Auto Transport Trailer has a standard kingpin and will latch to any big rig of similar scale. It's out this month for about \$40.00.

Unless you were 10 years old and living in Japan in 1967, this next entry may seem a bit obscure. The styling disaster in the photograph is a TV car, based on a '57 Chrysler, from the series Ultra Seven.

I wasn't sure what Ultra Seven was about but the vehicle intrigued me, so I Googled it: *"In the not-too-distant future, the Earth finds itself constantly under attack from extraterrestrial threats. To combat them, the Terrestrial Defense Force (TDF) establishes the Ultra Guard, a team of six elite members who utilize high-tech vehicles and weaponry. Joining their fight is the mysterious Dan Moroboshi who is secretly an alien from the Land of Light in Nebula M-78, Ultraseven."*



So it turns out TDF doesn't stand for Terrible Design Failure after all. This car looks even worse from the back but I've humiliated it enough. Fujimi has recently reissued the kit for around \$20.00 but it's only available through Japanese suppliers. Dress up your TDF POS-1 with a fret of photo-etch available separately through Studio 27. You know you want one!

That's about all the news fit to print this month in automotive so I'll turn it over to my cohorts to tell you about all of the wonderful NEW TOOLING up for release.

Mike





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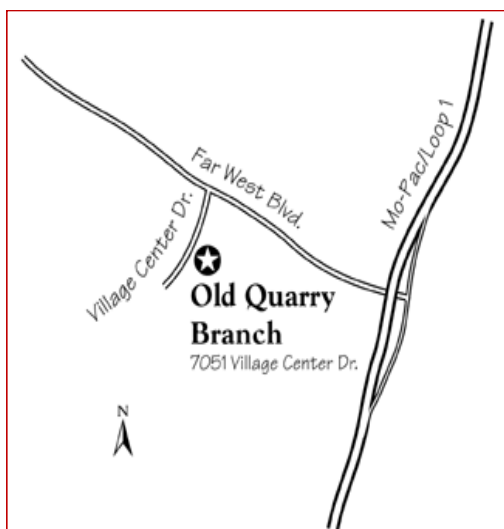
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**Austin Scale
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c/o 1228 W. San
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