



Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

November 2016



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LITTLE TANK FOR LITTLE VENICE

by Bob Bethea

The AMX-13 has always intrigued me due to the oscillating turret with the gun affixed to the top half and the trunnion below it, allowing the whole thing to move up and down.

This way the French was able to put a larger gun in the turret of the relatively small and light vehicle. With its autoloader, the size of the crew was reduced to three.

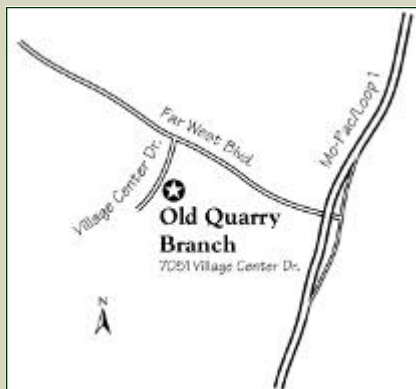
The tank must have worked well as over 7,700 were produced with about half being exported to numerous small nations, including Israel who actually used them in combat. The original

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Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) meets at 7PM each month at the **Austin Public Library Old Quarry Branch**. Our next meeting is on

November 2, 2016

Annual dues for full membership are USD \$12 to be collected at each January meeting. Upon receipt of payment, a membership card will be issued. This card is valid for one year, and it entitles holder to discounts at various local hobby shops in the Central Texas and San Antonio areas.



Sabot Away! is the official newsletter of AABS and is published twelve times a year on/before each monthly meeting. Any inquiry on subscription issues or assistance on article contribution please contact editor Eric Choy via email aabsco@gmail.com.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of AABS.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ November 2 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ November 12 - Lone Star Military Miniature Society Modeling Day Shady Hollow Community Center, Austin, TX
- ◆ December 3 - **AABS Christmas Party**
- ◆ December 7 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ January 4, 2017 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ January 28 - CALMEX XXXI Recreation District 1, Westlake, LA



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Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

| Month | Program Presentation | Newsletter Article |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| January 2016 | Ted Paone | Rick Herrington |
| February | Kevin Hutchison | Ted Paone |
| March* | David Davis (Guest) | Alex Gashev |
| April | Aaron Smischney | Rod Bell |
| May | Dave Bourland | Russ Holm |
| June* | Bob Bethea | Greg Beckman |
| July | Ted Andreas, Jr. | Eric Choy |
| August | Ian Candler | Ian Candler |
| September* | Rick Herrington | Ted Andreas, Jr. |
| October | Kit Auction | Joe Fisher |
| November | John Talley | Greg Beckman |
| December* | Eric Choy | Bill Menzie |
| January 2017 | Worth Haggerton | John Talley |

Here is a list of members who are responsible for providing articles for the newsletter and program presentation at our monthly meetings.

Please note any member may contribute as many articles as he wants any time. The purpose of this schedule is to ensure we have at least one article in the newsletter each month.

Prompt submission of your article is much appreciated. The deadline is always **11:59PM on the last Wednesday of the previous month** (e.g. Rick Herrington's article for January was due on the last Wednesday of December).

* Quarterly contest month



From the Turret

The annual club auction went smoothly at last month's meeting. Many thanks to everyone for donating armor model kits, accessories, and books. Bidding and purchasing of items were also much appreciated, especially when bidding on items that you brought as a donation in the first place. I know a few things were added to my collection unexpectedly.

I'll focused my inspirational history review on the 75th anniversary of events the unfolded during November of 1941.

Although not directly related to the history of armored forces, it seems completely appropriate here in America to remember the Japanese fleet that attacked Pearl Harbor in December of 1941 sailed from its home port on November 26th, 1941. Not the day that will live in infamy, but a decided turning point in U.S., Japanese, and world history.



German PzKw IV near Moscow in 1941.

Looking at more directly related subjects, the Germans were pushing hard for Moscow in November 1941 as temperatures dropped to minus 12 degrees Celsius. Although reaching the outskirts of Moscow, the Germans were ultimately stopped from entering. Amongst all of the units the Soviets threw into the defense, ski troops were used against the Germans for the first time.

During this same period, the British launched Operation Crusader in an effort to drive Rommel back from Tobruk and relieve the on-going siege of that port city. After a tense period of mobile armor battles in the desert, Rommel was finally compelled to withdraw.



A British Crusader passes a burning German PzKw IV during Operation Crusader

I am scheduled to present at the November club meeting, so get your magnifying glasses out because I like the small-scale stuff. I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the meeting!

John Talley
President



(Continued from page 1)

75mm gun was a French copy of the Panther gun used by the Germans in WWII.

Takom produces five versions of the AMX-13 so far. The kit I bought was one with a 90mm gun.



Construction

The kit is very cleanly cast in gray plastic with no flash or punch out holes. It has a clear sprue for the vision devices which can be added after paint to avoid masking. The lower hull is cast as a single tub to avoid alignment problems.

A universal photoetched brass sheet is included which covers all three kits, although some items were not needed for the version that I built. One of the most thoughtful items is the gluable vinyl dust cover that is included to simulate the canvas covering the gap between the upper and lower halves of the turret. It is very flexible, and it glues easily. It fits perfectly and is sculpted to look like the real thing. No turned barrel is included.

Individual link tracks are provided with about six extras. They are easy to clean up and fit together, but need glue to hold them, a la magic tracks of DML. They work very well, fit perfectly around the drive sprockets and look the part.

In general the kit fit very well and the details are exemplary, especially compared to the old Heller kit that I built back in the 1980's. Some issues arose about part placement, but a look forward to the next stage usually showed the correct placement. The

photoetched bits used were appropriate for the screening and the headlight guards, but installing the sides of the storage bins seemed strangely difficult (TP 4 and TP5).

In my opinion it could have been cast in plastic. The majority of the parts were plastic and, they went together easily. They were appropriately small parts, but none of the absurdly minuscule ones that some companies feel are necessary.

Installing the photoetched headlight guards was a challenge. The instructions do not show that each flap needs to be turned before gluing to the plastic structure, and the plastic contact points are small and delicate. It made them a bit of a chore, but they look terrific and in scale when finished.

Instead of following the instructions of gluing the dust cover to the bottom half of the turret first, I glued it to the top part as that is the most visible joint and the one that needs to be the most accurate. That worked perfectly. Once it dried, I added the top to the bottom half and glued all around the base. Holding the glued dust cover down on the lower turret for five minutes made another perfect seal. Oh, was I happy!



All three hatches can be attached open or closed. I closed mine as I have no French tanker figures to adorn them, and none were included in the kit. The searchlight on the turret can be attached either stored alongside the turret or on its pillar at the back of the turret. The kit comes with a clear lens, as do the four front hull lights.



All bars and handles on the turret are in scale and easy to clean to a round cross section. The barrel is a two piecer, cut down the middle. The fit is so fine that I just glued the two parts together taking extreme care with the alignment. When the glue dried, I was able to scrape and sand it to an acceptable roundness with a minimum of putty. Quite nice. A turned barrel would be nicer, but after all this is modeling, not just construction.

The barrel clamps for the front of the hull were the most confusing parts of the build. They can be constructed folded down or clamped to the barrel. Take your time and use logic on placement of the folded posts, as there are no later pictures showing details of placement.



Painting & Decaling

The kit decals allow several French and one Venezuelan scheme. The Venezuelan roundel is multicolor and unconventional, and it hooked me.

For priming I used the cheap stuff from local auto parts stores (Brite Touch or Touch N Tone). I found it smoother, stronger, and flatter than Tamiya's. Plus it cost only a third of the price! It also dries almost immediately as it "shrink-wraps" the model. I used it on all my armor, figures and planes.

After letting the primer dry for a day, I airbrushed an even coat of acrylic Olive Drab as a shadow coat, quickly followed by panel fading with Olive Green, and finally adding the highest highlights with a mixture of Olive Green and Dark Yellow, all from Tamiya. Subsequently, I airbrushed Tamiya Dark yellow for the stripes, highlighted in the centers (panel faded) by a mixture of Dark Yellow and Flat White.



Once the paints dried, I airbrushed on a coat of Future Floor Wax and added the decals. That was followed by another coat of Future to seal the decals for weathering. Next were the pin-washes made with thinned Burnt Umber oil paint around all raised detail, corners and indented details. After the oils were dry, highlights were carefully touched up over the high points with Vallejo Acrylics, in this case Iraqi Tan mixed with white. White was added to that mix for a final set of highlights on the very top points. The more colors you use, the more realistic a model looks.





Weathering

The only references I could find on the Internet of this tank in this scheme were Parade photos, so I minimized the weathering to light dusting of the running gear with various ground oil pastels. Note that painting tanks like figures with highlights and shadows pays dividends with viewers loving the results without knowing why they look so realistic. Chat with some figure painters before painting your next tank and you will find that your results will surprise you.

After all detailing and before pastels I sprayed the vehicle with Krylon Matte Finish from the can (available at Walmart) which gives a far superior flat finish to the unreliable traditional Testor's Dulcote. Its matte finish allows the pastels to attach to the surface better and not be lost.

Afterthoughts

This is a nicely detailed kit of a supremely interesting

vehicle. It is not too complicated, and it builds up quickly. Most important, it looks like what it is supposed to represent. More markings options are bound to arrive from aftermarket companies, but the ones in the kit are representative and complete.

Highly recommended.

Bob

(Editor: Venezuela means "Little Venice" in Spanish. Most believe the name was given by European colonists in the 16th Century when the stilt houses along Lake Maracaibo reminded them of the city of Venice.)





ODDBALL ARMOR



SEPTEMBER 16, 2017



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NEW ON THE BLOCK



Italeri's new HEMTT variant is this 1/35th M1120 with a load handling system. A perfect companion to their container kit released earlier.



Thunder Model is a new Chinese company, and their first product is a 1/35th US Army Tractor (civilian model "VAI") made by Case Company, Wisconsin. We look forward to reading review of this kit.



Five GIs taking a break from war is the theme of MiniArt's latest 1/35th release. IMO this is one of the best figure sets from the Ukraine based model company.



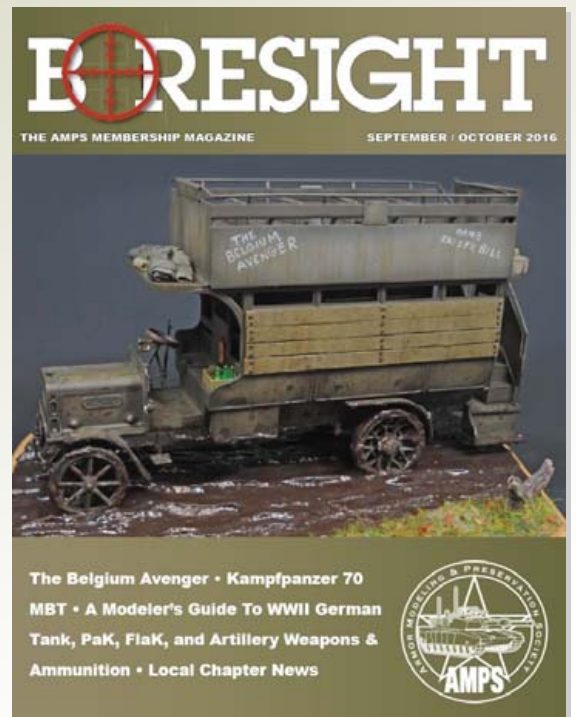
Four Angolan MiG-21s were among the first victims of the South African made G6 Rhino in 1987. I wonder if MiG kill marks are included on the decals for Takom's latest 1/35th kit.



AMPS Boresight (Volume 24, Issue 5)

The latest issue of *Boresight* is out. Here is a quick look inside:

- ♦ **The Belgium Avenger** by Chuck Aleshire
Making the best out of an ancient kit.
- ♦ **Kampfpanzer 70 MBT** by John Robinson
The MBT that never was.
- ♦ **A Modeler's Guide To WWII German Tank, PaK, FlaK, Artillery Weapons & Ammunition** by Dan Mouritzsen
- ♦ **Local Chapter News**
What's going on in the AMPS community.





About Us

The Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) started in 1999 when Don Jones, a member of the local IPMS chapter, decided "what a good idea to get out two nights a month, and on at least one night talk tanks."



At each monthly meeting, we talk tanks, swap kits, and share our building techniques and tricks. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town field trips to museums and modeling events. Every odd-numbered year AABS hosts the biggest scale armor modeling show in Texas that attracts some of the best armor modelers in the Lone Star as well as neighboring states.

AABS is the only scale model club in Central Texas devoted solely to armor modeling. We don't build planes because they are just plain! Our passion is armored fighting vehicles and military figures. Subject of our interest ranges from WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Middle East, to the most recent Gulf War Conflicts.

Since inception AABS is a local chapter of Armor Modeling and Preservation Society (AMPS), a national organization dedicated to the promotion of scale modeling and armored vehicle preservation.

To find out more about AABS, please visit our website or pick up a club flyer at your local hobby shop.

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We are on the web @ AustinArmorBuilders.com



Back in September at IPMS Fort Worth's Super-Con, your editor spotted Brian Mikulencek's 1/35th JS-3. Thanks to Bob Bethea's power of persuasion, we now can enjoy Brian's excellent work up close and personal.