

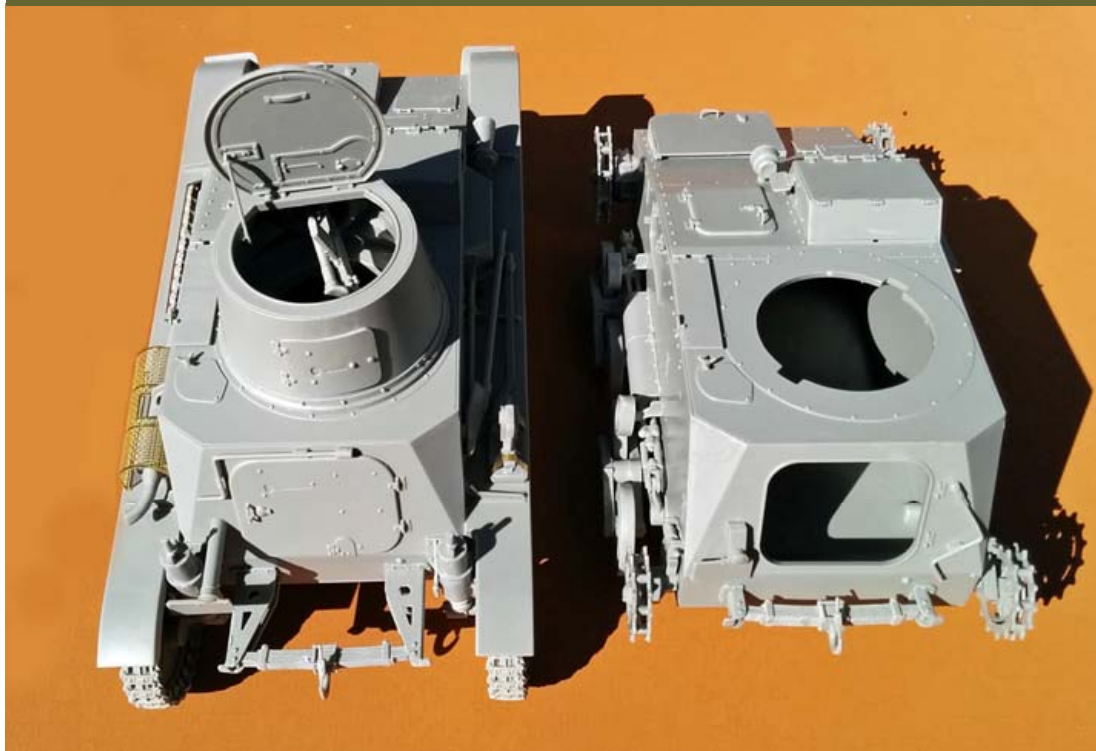


Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

March 2018



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Japanese Type 94 Tankettes (Early & Late) Part I

by Bob Bethea

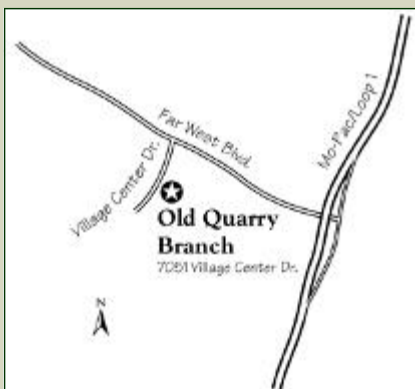
Who would have thought that Takom would pick such iconic and interesting vehicles to model and that they would do such a great job on them. I guess because they're so small in real life, it will only do them justice in 1/16th scale!

(Continued on page 5)

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

March 7, 2018

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

- ◆ **March 7 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **March 10 - LSMMS Modeling Day** Shady Hollow Community Center, Austin, TX
- ◆ **April 4 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **April 28 - Modelmania 2017** Stafford Centre, Stafford, TX
- ◆ **May 2 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **May 3 to 5 - 2018 AMPS International Convention,** Dayton, OH



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Schedule of Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

Month	Program Presentation	Newsletter Article
January 2018	Greg Beckman	Chris Chany
February	Kevin Hutchison	Kevin Hutchison
March*	Bob Bethea	Bob Bethea
April	Ian Candler	Ian Candler
May	Aaron Smischney	Greg Beckman
June*	Alex Gashev	Joe Fisher
July	Ted Andreas, Jr.	Ted Andreas, Jr.
August	Rick Herrington	Rick Herrington
September*	Ted Paone	Ted Paone
October	Kit Auction	Dave Bourland
November	Russ Holm	Dane Sherry
December*	Eric Choy	Eric Choy
January 2019	Mike Lamm	Greg Beckman

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. Chris Chany's article for January was due on the last Wednesday of December).

* Quarterly contest month



From the Turret

I can remember hearing “time goes faster the older you get” when I was a kid, but back then I thought that it was just an excuse, or an expression, used to explain why something was forgotten or left undone. Now I’m looking back at the month of February and thinking “What in the world did I do with my month?”, and I have no answer. I hope you all had a more productive month and found time to enjoy modeling.

We had a good time at the meeting in February. Thanks go out to everyone making it possible by bringing in the results of your work and sharing with us all. Special thanks go to **Kevin Hutchison** for showing us some great techniques for creating scaled cable and wire. I’ve said it a hundred times, but I’m always surprised at just how much special knowledge exists in this club.

Now on to finding sparks of inspiration in history. I could cover the expected 75th anniversary of The Third Battle of Kharkov, in which the Germans showed they still had significant biting power after Stalingrad, but it’s likely that you have seen the classic images from that battle many times. Instead, let’s take a look at the 100th anniversary of the German 1918 Spring Offensive, or *Kaiserschlacht*.

In an effort to defeat the Allies before the American juggernaut could fully deploy, the Germans launched a massive offensive on the Western front in March of 1918. The offensive was largely made possible by the release of millions of German soldiers after an armistice was signed between Soviet Russia and the Central Powers.

The Germans also had developed new infantry and artillery tactics that would yield them great tactical gains, including the furthest advances made during the war on the Western Front since the original invasion of France in 1914. Although in very limited numbers, the Germans debuted their A7V tanks in the battle, providing us an interesting bit of armored history.



A German A7V rolling down a street in Roye on March 21, 1918.



The end result of an A7V in combat during the 1918 Spring Offensive.

Since I don’t have a clue what I did with my time over the last month, I have to live vicariously through each of your projects. Therefore I’m looking forward even more to seeing what you’ve been up to in the last few weeks.

John Talley
President



**KEEP
CALM
AND
PAY YOUR
DUES**

It is that time of the year again. Please have your club dues (\$12) ready at the March meeting. We accept cash, check, or any major cryptocurrency (no, not really!).

For those who prefer to make a mail-in payment, our treasurer Eric Choy's address is:

**13213 Marrero Drive
Austin TX 78729**

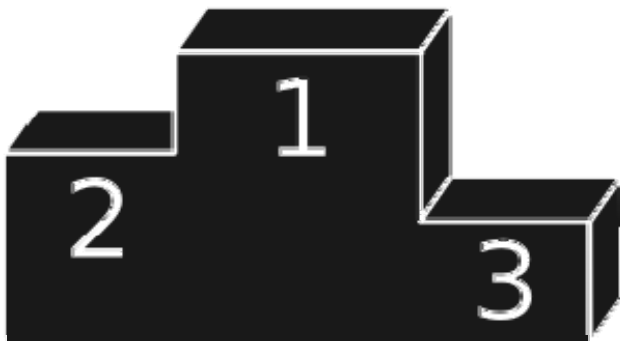
Please DO NOT send cash by mail. Be sure your check or money order is made payable to "AABS."

Some members may notice his dues are slightly higher than usual. That may be a result of the incurrence of last year's White Elephant (WE) contest penalty. As we all aware there is a \$10 mandatory "donation" to the club treasury if one fails to build his WE kit.

**SPECIAL
OFFER**

If you are interested in joining **AMPS**, our national organization, we are still offering a **50% dues sharing** to each paid local member. Simply bring **\$15** to sign up and AABS will pick up the rest of the tab.

Hurry! This limited time offer will expire at the end of our March meeting!



**March Is Quarterly
Contest Month!**

Bring in your finished model this month to win U.S. Treasury issued greenbacks! Our quarterly contest cash prizes are **\$40, \$30, and \$20** for the first, second, and third place winners.

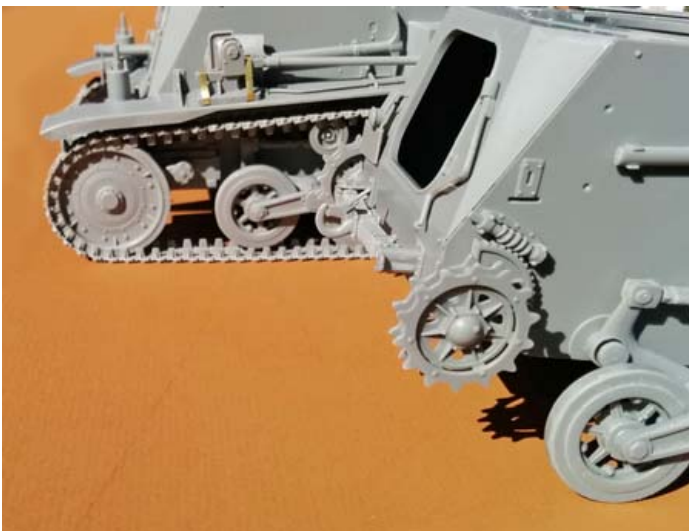
To enter you must be a member in good standing. Any model that has not placed in previous quarterly contests is eligible to win. The "no sweep" rule is strictly enforced (i.e. each contestant is eligible to win only ONE of the three cash prizes listed above).

If you like to participate but haven't paid your 2018 dues, please do so before our meeting or the show-and-tell session.

(Continued from page 1)

The size of a Volkswagen bug, the Type 94 was designed as an infantry support vehicle and NOT as a tank in the traditional sense. Its role was to bring ammo, food, and water to frontline troops under light armor and a machine gun for self-defense. They even towed tracked trailers, though none is provided in either of these kits.

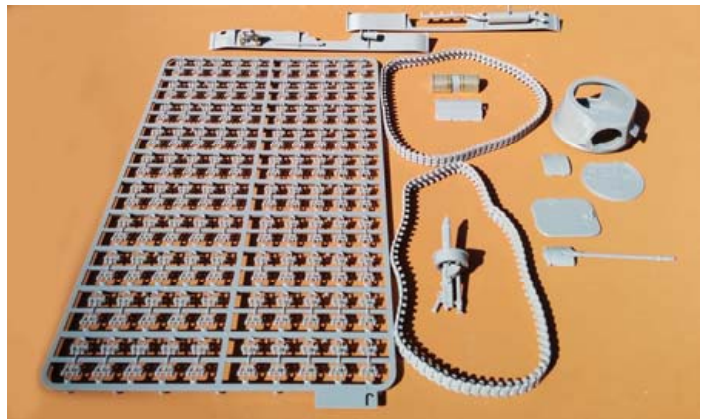
The Japanese found that the narrow tracks and suspension on the early model had little flotation on soft ground causing it to bog down easily. The later version had a large trailing idler to put more track on the ground and distribute its weight better. It generated a bumpier ride but better flotation. As the war progressed, the armor strapped Japanese eventually used them for recon and even as tanks on the pacific islands where they met the American forces.



Takom has provided us with beautiful kits of BOTH versions. Most of the parts of both kits are identical except for different idler setups and rear of the vehicles. All Hatches are separate with underside detail, perfect fit, scale thickness, and often separate hinges. Unfortunately, no interior is provided for either kit.

The Suspension can be made workable and is interesting in that they provide separate plastic tires to allow painting them separately. I glued my tires

on and used the other side of the wheel with less of a gap as I build my tanks completely before I paint them. The drive sprockets have great detail and fit perfectly into both the single link and the "rubber band" tracks provided in each kit.



As both types of tracks were provided, I used the flexible "rubber band" tracks on the Late model and the single links on the Early model to see how each worked and looked. Each side requires 85 links on the Early model but more on the Late. Both sides of track are provided on one large sprue. In 1/16th scale, each link is the size of an 1/35th Panzer IV link showing the tiny nature of this vehicle.

The track links needed minor sprue attachment point cleanup, and each had a punch out mark on the center of the inner pad which becomes invisible once built. Even though they didn't snap together, they still fit together firmly. The "rubber band" tracks were unusual in that the Late model needed longer tracks than the Early. Takom ingeniously provides the standard Early model tracks in both kits, and added an extension section for the Late model. They glued together easily and are beautifully cast. You can hardly see the joins once the section is added.

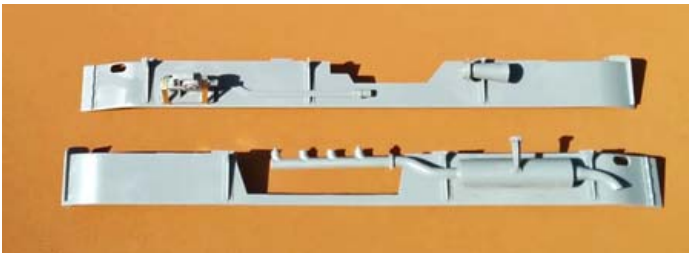
The turret is identical for both Early and Late versions and has the same exceptional fit as the rest of the kits. The two large hatches and two tiny hatches are all



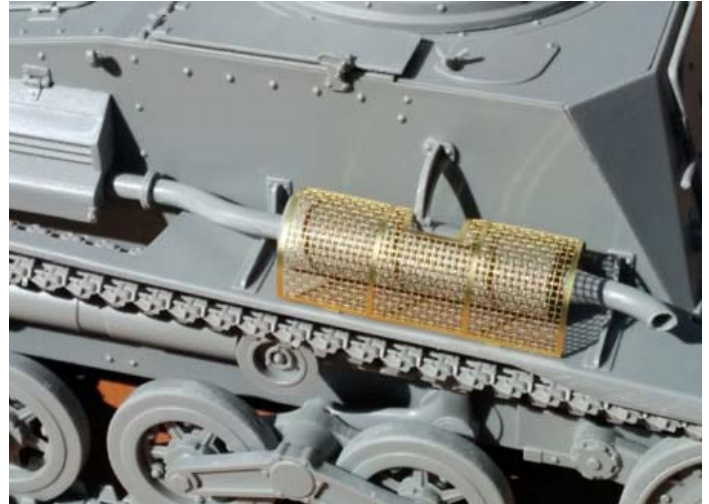
separate and fit very well. The only difference in the two versions is the different styles of machine gun in each, showing the evolution of Japanese armament. Now THAT is attention to detail!



All exterior handles, wing nuts, and tools are exquisitely molded and included. All fit perfectly. I attached the single link track to the wheels before adding the fenders to ease the construction. On the "rubber band" tank, I left them off for painting and completed the tank with fenders. The fenders are the only fiddly parts but eventually fit perfectly on both versions.



No interior or engine are included for either kit, presumably to keep cost down. I hope they plan a drop-in kit to add those details as they are very obvious in this scale with the large hatches.



Each version comes with a different crewman on a separate sprue. The Early version has a very static tanker in a "GI Joe" pose in winter overalls with fur collar, winter boots, and mittens. The Late version has a 3/4 figure without calves and feet. It is designed to rest on a stand in the turret holding onto the open hatch. He is a little stiff but usable.



Both figures are well proportioned and have nicely sculpted Asian faces with good tanker helmets. Straps and buckles are well defined. They are useful for showing scale and how small the vehicles actually were in reality.

The Early model comes with full-color five-view artwork and decals for two options. The Late version also has different color schemes and marking options. Paint color callouts are for Ammo of Mig paints. All the artwork is beautifully rendered, and I found all the schemes to be documented in my own reference books.

In Part II of this article, I will be painting the vehicles with a combination of Tamiya and AV Vallejo IJN colors for tanks. The figures will be painted with Vallejo, Scale 75, Andrea, and Reaper acrylics.

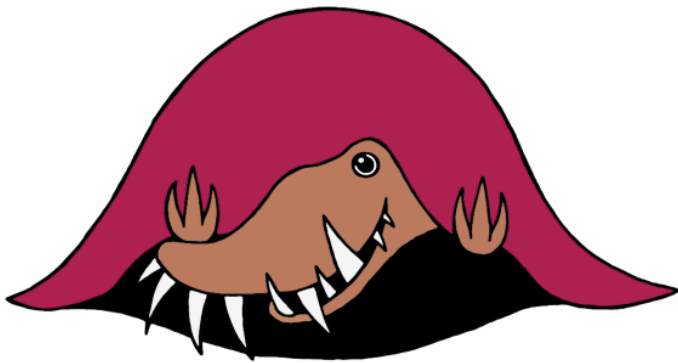
I cannot recommend these two kits too highly. I love the subject matter, the scale, and the fit. The kits each have approximately the same parts count as 1/35th kits, but the parts are big that they don't get lost as easily. The detail is great, and the engineering is perfect. The choice of tracks, great instructions, minimal photoetched parts, and even the addition of figures make these super kits in my eyes.

I built BOTH of them in only four long days. One was for the single link track. After I built the first one, I could not stop and wanted the experience repeated. You can't often say that about any plastic kit.

My thanks go out to the generosity of Takom for providing the review samples.

To be continued...

Bob



Starving the Carpet Monster

by Ted Paone

Beware the *Jabberwock*, warned Lewis Carroll. “Beware the hungry carpet monster” rejoins most any modeler. For years I have built bedrooms, living rooms, and sometimes kitchens, and almost every model had at least one piece fell from my table. It would often disappear into the carpet, sometimes forever, defying the vacuum hose covered with a stocking. So when I built my hobby room in a spare bedroom, I wanted to starve the carpet monster. Since I could not replace the carpet with a hardwood floor or something, I had to improvise.

On the Floor

1. **Cover the carpet** – I bought a chair mat, actually two, to cover the area under my desk. They overlap rather than abut so there is a trap which

has to be checked if anything hits the floor. They are not perfect as a falling piece of photoetch can bounce and skitter and even end up on the carpet. They also make it easier to roll my chair around.

2. **Search with a strong flashlight** – I got one of those free Harbor Freight multi LED flashlight. When something hits the floor, I put it on the floor and shine the light sideways. The part may reveal itself by casting a shadow.
3. **Build a wall** – not to keep anything out but to keep your parts from skittering away. A cloth covered chain defining your perimeter will effectively stop most bouncing parts. It doesn't have to be very tall as none of those parts have a 31 foot ladder.
4. **Suck it up** – Use a handheld vacuum to suck the part from the floor. If you keep the dirt chamber clean, it is easy to find the part. Otherwise, wrap a stocking around the nozzle. This is good for getting into tight areas or those hidden from view.

On the Desk

My desk is a chaos while I am working. Currently I have a GPA in the work station, three figures being reposed, and am sculpting a turtle and frogs for the diorama. I'm gluing plastic and photoetch, filling seams, performing surgery and messing with putty. While working, the pieces are scattered across the desk. I have to keep them off the floor.

1. **Give your desk an edge** – My desks are a combination of homemade using a very heavy solid door (possibly from one of the wards at Austin State Hospital) where I do my painting and a smaller, lower desk where I build. I put corner molding around three sides of the desk so nothing falls off that way. Learned this the hard way, don't ask but also don't look for a tow hook on that early Sherman I built when I first finished my room. The front does not have the molding so I can clamp a vice to it.
2. **Improve your vice** – I inherited a Black & Decker Workmate Hobby Center from my dad, the doll furniture builder, which, since mounting on a lazy susan, is my go-to work station. But it takes up almost all of my worktable. When I need more table space, I use my cheap Chinese Pan Vice knockoff which clamps to the front of the table. The problem is the model is suspended half over the floor. One slip and the part drops. Sometimes it would land on the desk, sometimes not. I cut a slot in a large plastic can lid to fit around the mount and now the piece has some place to land. It saved my bacon the first night I put one on. Later I got a larger cover and now I have a 6" circle of safe.
3. **Keep things organized** – My desk may look like chaos with half naked women here and drying parts there, but there is order to this chaos. I purchased a bunch of square and rectangular drawer organizers at the dollar store. Pieces that are not immediately being worked on are placed in these organizers. At night, if possible, I put away the sub-assemblies. A large model may require more than one box, but I don't rely on the flimsy cardboard boxes the model comes in.
4. **Keep your tools in a row** – I may be working with three or four knives, a saw, two tweezers, files and sanders, some clamps, and other tools of mass destruction. I made some dividers which I can drop my tools in. These are channels made of .040 x .125 strips glued to a .060 substrate. I build them up in sets of 5. The channels are wide enough for a large knife handle. I then practiced putting tools in the channels after using them. I'm getting better.

5. **Throw in the towel** – For a long time I have modeled with a towel in my lap, usually an old dish towel. It is there to protect my pants although sometimes it becomes a place to store my tools while working up close. It is also a handy parts catcher. Recently, I attached one to my build desk with tacks and cover my lap with it so nothing hits the floor.

Maintenance

I've never been organized. My bosses would complain till they would ask me for obscure document, and I pull it out of a pile (it didn't qualify as a stack). I just had to keep my office door closed and meet clients in the conference room. But as I got older, I found keeping my hobby things more organized or restoring organization from chaos has advantages.

1. **A place for everything, everything in its place** – When I built my hobby room, I built many custom drawers to hold knives, drills, and saws, but the tools were often left scattered on the desk or somewhere besides where they belonged. I started putting them up after I finished a project, carefully cleaning my brushes, changing blades and prepping for the next build. But the chaos would return as I left tools cluttering my desk, especially if I just might need it again. Recently I practiced putting away my tools each night or at least at the end of the weekend. This removes the chaos from the desk so I don't accidentally knock something off. Chaos diminished.
2. **Suck it up again** – Once a week I get the hand vacuum out to clean the floor, empty the dirt chamber into a box, and sort out the bits. It makes it easier to find anything that gets dropped.

The carpet monster still occasionally takes a bite when a photoetched part pings off my desk, but it is on a very lean diet. Now I have one less excuse for not finishing a model.

Ted



THE 2018 AMPS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION DAYTON, OHIO, MAY 3-5



That's right. THE armor modeling event in the U.S. is heading to Dayton, Ohio, the home of the **U.S. Air Force Museum!** Our theme this year is 'Mishaps and Oh Crap!' Tanks get in all sorts of predicaments, so we hope to see lots of creative entries.

Enter your models in the competition and get the feedback and reinforcement from your peers. You may even be rewarded with a Gold medal or be among the recipients of 14+ special awards.

Our seminars connect you with experts in the field that will inspire you to finish that stalled project. Enjoy presentations on military vehicle history and research.

Modeling vendors come from all over the U.S. and abroad so you will no doubt find that book, accessory or model you've been looking for.

Mike Reaves, Vendor Coordinator
semperfi03732@msn.com
706.594.7109

Glen Martin, Sponsor Coordinator
WalkerBulldogBoy@verizon.net

Dave Koukol, Event Chairman
Dave.Koukol@lpmsdayton.com
937.602.6033



Hope Hotel &
Richard C. Holbrooke
Conference Center
10823 Chidlaw Rd.
Area A, Gate 12A
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Please visit
amps-armor.org for
the latest event and
registration details.



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To join using PayPal, just visit the **AMPS** website:

www.amps-armor.org

NEW ON THE BLOCK



Cooper State Models, a mostly aircraft model company, just released their first 1/35th injection plastic kit: a WWI British Lanchester Armoured Car. So far I have heard/read nothing but praise of this kit. The instruction booklet looks like something from a Wingnut Wings product; it is that good!



This pair of 1/35th US Horsemen in Normandy '44 finally materialized after being on MiniArt's coming soon list for almost two years!



If you like model railroad and armor, you'll love the new 1/35th Soviet MBV-2 Armored Train from HobbyBoss. The finished model is over 22" long!

AMPS Boresight (Volume 26, Issue 1)

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

- ◆ **AMPS Officer Election**
- ◆ **Hex Turret T-34** by Greg Beckman.
- ◆ **M41 Walker Bulldog in Vietnam** by Dana Mathes.
- ◆ **2018 AMPS International Convention Update**
- ◆ **Revisiting Tamiya HQ** by Eric Choy.
- ◆ **Working with Photoetch (Part III)** by Mike Roof.



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 least one night talk tanks."



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.

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.

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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New AABS website coming soon...

Bob Bethea finally finished his 1/144th 80cm rail gun "Dora." Very impressive indeed.

