



# Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

February 2019



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## A Sino-morphed Ha-Go

by Eric Choy

**T**ype 95 "Ha-Go" light tank was the most numerous armored fighting vehicle used by the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) during WWII. Despite being thinly armored (12mm thick) and lightly armed (one 37mm anti-tank gun and two 7.7mm machine guns), it was good enough to take on light infantry units. However, it

was utterly useless against any medium tank fielded by the US or Commonwealth. In fact, it couldn't even run away fast enough; its top speed was about 18 mph (not that any self-respecting Japanese soldier would ever attempt to do in the heat of a battle!).

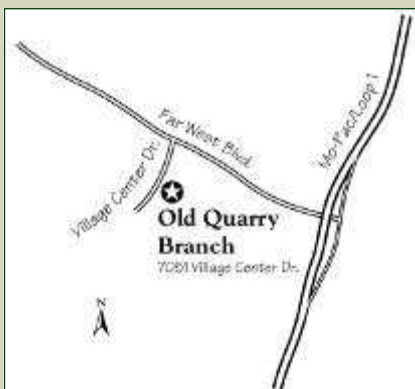
In case you wonder, I did not seek out this 1/35<sup>th</sup> FineMolds kit on my initiative. It came to me as a White

*(Continued on page 5)*

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

**February 6, 2019**

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](mailto: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

- ◆ February 6 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ February 16 - ModelFiesta 38, San Antonio Event Center, San Antonio, TX
- ◆ March 6 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ April 3 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ April 27 - Modelmania, Stafford Convention Center, Stafford, TX



### AABS Officers May 2018 – Apr 2020

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iancandlermedia@gmail.com

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fisherjoe2014@gmail.com



## Schedule of Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

Month	Program Presentation	Newsletter Article
January 2019	Mike Lamm	Greg Beckman
February	Ian Candler	Mike Lamm
March*	Eric Choy	Eric Choy
April	Bob Bethea	Bob Bethea
May	Dave Bourland	Greg Beckman
June*	Chris Chany	Ted Paone
July	Ted Andreas, Jr	Ted Andreas, Jr
August	Rick Herrington	Rick Herrington
September*	AMPS Judging Review	Chris Chany
October	Kit Auction	Bob Bethea
November	Aaron Smischney	Greg Beckman
December*	Alex Gashev	Russ Holm
January 2020	Mike Maloney	Kevin Hutchison

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. Greg Beckman's article for January 2019 was due on the last Wednesday of December).

\* Quarterly contest month



### From the Turret

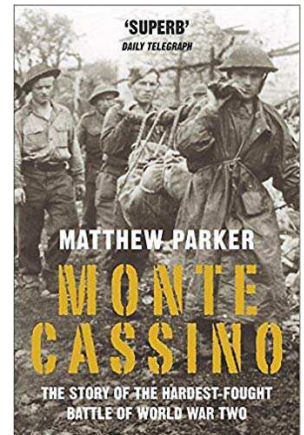
Greetings! Please remember the Sherman tanks are due this month. Our veep Ian plans on having a club display at the San Antonio show even though the group build category is no longer available as a competition item.

By the time of our meeting, Bob Bethea and Henry Nunez will have concluded another painting workshop at Andrea's depot in Cedar Park. It should be another great one.

We are now well into the new year with January just about gone as I am writing for February's column. So, after a long break, we are in the competition

season again. Even though most of the shows are of the IPMS variety, we can benefit from the critiques and help prepare for our show in September this year. At least that is what I am hoping to be true!

As I wrote last month, a great deal was going on in World War Two seventy-five years ago. In February 1944, it seems that most of the fighting was a continuation of what was started in the month prior. The Allies were still trying to take Monte Cassino in Italy, and the Germans were inflicting horrendous casualties on every unit that attempted to breach their line of defense. The bombing of the monastery accomplished little. In fact the ruins made the German position even more defensible. Matthew Parker makes that point in his book *Monte Cassino*, and I am sure it has been made by other writers/historians as well.



*(Continued on page 4)*



It is that time of the year again. Please have your club \$12 dues ready at the next meeting. For those who prefer to make a mail-in payment, our treasurer's address is:

**Eric Choy  
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



## Veep Talks



**Deadline: February 6<sup>th</sup>**

## Sherman Tank Group Build

Here is the latest list of members participating in our Sherman group build:

Ted Andreas, Jr.	USMC M4A2 Iwo Jima
Bob Bethea	M4A3E2 Jumbo
Andrew Bodin	M4A3
Greg Beckman	M4A3E2 Jumbo
Chris Chany	USMC M4A4 POA Korea
Eric Choy	Egyptian Sherman
Ian Candler	British Mk.III North Africa
Rick Herrington	M4A1
Russ Holm	British Firefly
	M4A3 ETO
Mike Lamm	M4A3E8
Mike Maloney	M4A1 Centipede Tracks
Ted Paone	M4 with Bulldozer
Keith Townsend	M51 Super Sherman

Please bring in your participating Sherman to our **February Meeting** on **Feb 6<sup>th</sup>** so we can make plans on arranging a display at this year's *Modelfiesta* in San Antonio. Thank you all!

*Ian*

*(Continued from page 3)*

Meanwhile, Winston Churchill expressed his displeasure at the stalemate in Anzio. Field Marshall Alexander was told to insist on a more aggressive approach on the part of the commanders directing Anglo-American operations from the Anzio beachhead.



*Field Marshall Alexander and General Truscott.*

In reality, the Germans were making a massive effort to wipeout the beachhead. The Allied forces were struggling just to hold on, let alone breakout at this time. However, General Lucian Truscott was ordered to assume command in Anzio as

General John Lucas was relieved of his command for failing to take swift action to break out of the Anzio beachhead.

Even with the change of command, it would be a long battle before the Allies would march into Rome.

Well, I'm signing off for now! In the meantime, keep building and painting!

**Ted Andreas, Jr.**  
President

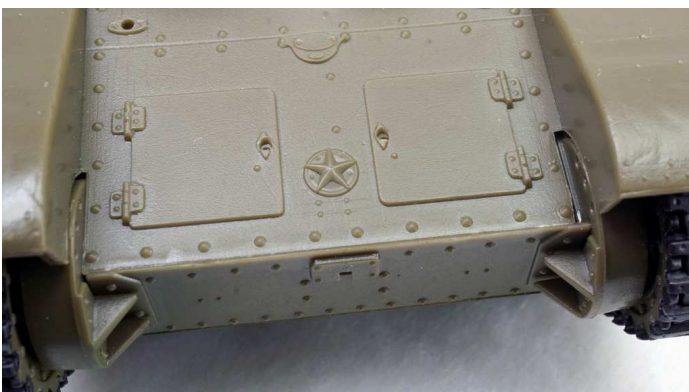
*(Continued from page 1)*

Elephant (WE) gift exchange some years ago. Since I was absent from our Christmas party last year, I can build any one of my WE kits. So this is my effort of trying to avoid my \$10 “voluntary donation” and reduce my “to-finish” pile.

## Construction

It's hard to believe the FineMolds kit is over 27 years old. It was considered a state-of-the-art production when it debuted in 1992, and for the longest time it was the only game in town until DML's versions (early and late) came along in 2013. What even more amazing is FineMolds is STILL cranking out this quarter-century-old kit as late as last year!

Unfortunately, longevity is not necessarily a good thing in plastic modeling. The mold of this FineMolds kit is no longer fine after all these years, and the parts really show their age. Clearing up took longer than usual for a Japanese produced kit. Part fit ranged from average to poor. I had to deploy putty in several areas to fill in gaps.



For those modelers who cannot build without aftermarket details, Eduard made a PE set (35032) that has been discontinued but is still widely available. Since my aim was to avoid the \$10 penalty, I wisely skipped the expense of the PE set. However, by chance at a local show I picked up a brass barrel made by FineMolds for this kit in a bargain bin. It only cost me a couple of bucks, so it didn't hurt my wallet that bad.

The kit's rubber band tracks are cruel and not acceptable by today's standard. At first I could only think of two remedies: white metal (Friul) or plastic (Modelkasten) track set. I told myself “self, either one of them is gonna burn a \$40+ hole in your wallet!”

But then the next best solution presented itself while I was searching for Friul tracks on eBay: a seller decided to unload the DS tracks of his DML Type 95 kit at a bargain price of \$9.99! Woohoo! A few clicks and days later, I received the tracks in the mail. They fit perfectly on my FineMolds kit. Sorted!



## Painting

Since I wanted to get this kit done pronto, I was in no mood to do any of the elaborate multi-color camouflage schemes Japanese tanks were famous for during WWII. One day while flipping through our friend Russ Holm's book on Japanese tanks, I spotted the color profile of a postwar Type 95 used by Communist China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). Apparently many Japanese equipment



captured by the Soviets in Manchuria were given to the PLA to fight against Nationalist forces in the Chinese Civil War (1947-49). The single color paint job seemed easy enough, and the white band around the bottom of the turret (no idea what it signified) should not pose any challenge to my average modeling skill, so I settled on “sinomorphing” my Japanese tank.

I started by spraying my model with Tamiya primer. But instead of the usual Gray, I used White. The reason was simple: once I masked and sprayed the rest of the tank green, I had an instant white band around the turret! I’m all for easy when it comes to painting my models.

The base color that I chose for my model was Gunze Mr. Color Russian Green 2 (136), a pretty close interpretation of late war 4B0, in my opinion. To create some color modulation, I mixed in some Dark Yellow (39) to the base color for highlights.

I once read inside the real tank the interior walls were covered with asbestos (yes, the cancer causing stuff!) and painted either light gray or dull silver. Being lazy and in a hurry, I handbrushed the interior with Testors Silver.

The tracks were painted with Tamiya’s new Dark Iron (XF-84), a brownish metallic color perfect for any steel-based tank tread. I love this color so much that I’m stocking up the enamel version now!

A coat of Future sealed everything in place, and I was ready for decaling.

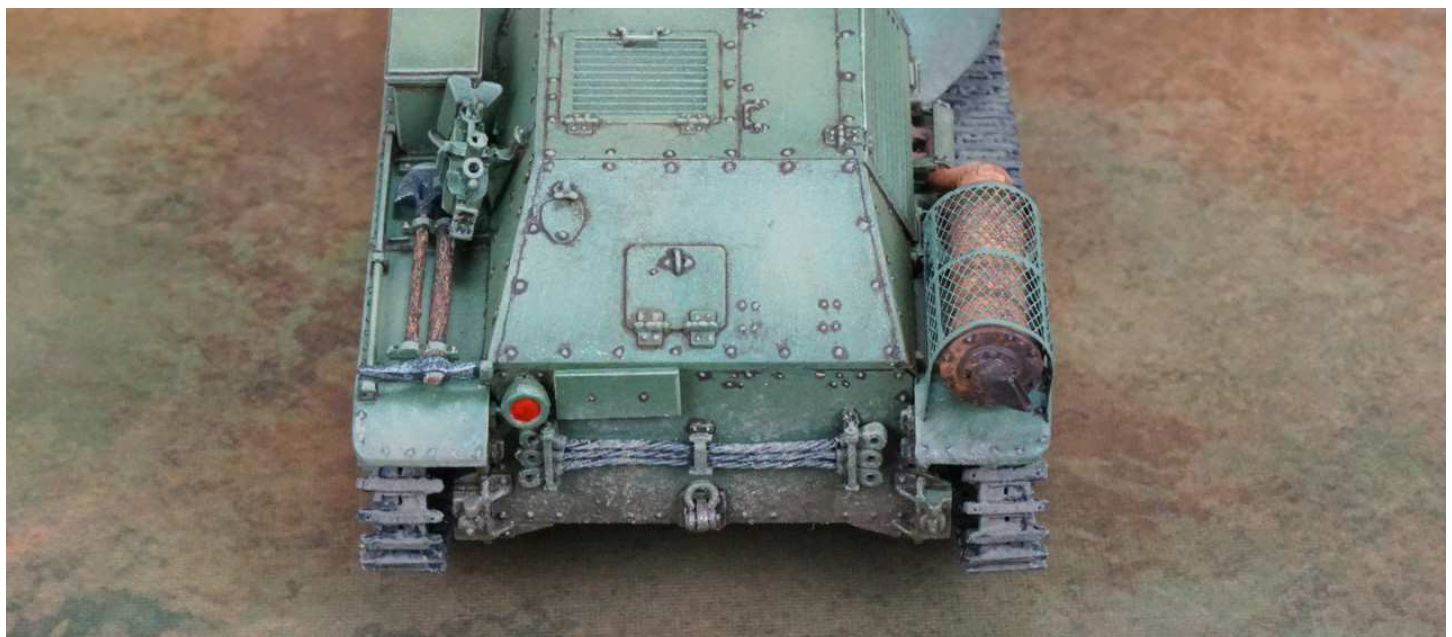
### **Decals**

The markings on my tank all came from various sources. The PLA emblems on the turret were taken from an old Tiger Wing decal sheet with the bars of the PLA Air Force insignia removed. I got the white numbers on the hull from Italeri’s M24 Chaffee kit.

### **Weathering**

Next I applied filters using SIN products Brown for Dark Green (P245) and Gray for Bright Green (P246). Pin wash came next. Call me old-fashioned, I still prefer artist oils for washes, although I’m now slowly getting the hang of Tamiya’s Panel Line Accent Colors. Maybe there’s hope for me yet.

Once the wash was completely dried, it was time to make my model dirty. Utilizing different sets of mud paints, I was able to create various kinds of mud (darker color for the wet soil and lighter one for





dried/arid earth) on my model. I highly recommend that everyone give these paints a try. Pay no attention to what brand to get, and just buy what you can afford. One manufacturer's product is just as good as the others.



After I dullcoated everything, I “rusted” the muffer with artist oils and pastel chalks using the method described in **Joaquín García Gazquez’s** book *Oil Paint Techniques for Military Vehicles (Abteilung 502)*. I was very happy with the result. Unfortunately, one can

hardly see any of my handiwork after I installed the PE muffer grill included in the kit!

### And the Oscar Goes To...

Well, not only did I avoid the penalty, I won our white elephant contest with my “sino-morphed” Type 95. Modeling is also just like a box of chocolate, Forest. You never know what you’re gonna get!

**Eric**

# AMPS International Convention

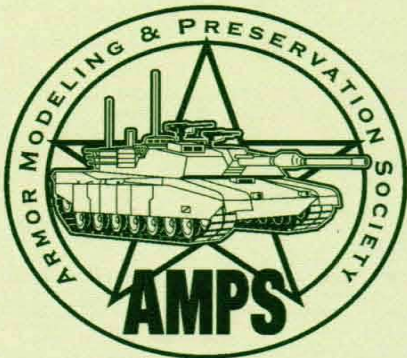
May 9-11

Adam's Mark Hotel  
120 Church St  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Brought to you by  
AMPS Niagara Frontier  
& AMPS Canada



SNOW



Our convention theme this year is "Snow." Join us in Buffalo for the biggest and best armor modeling event in the U.S. Enjoy vendors, seminars and a huge raffle. The display room is well-lit for viewing the models.

The outstanding venue is located on the shores of Lake Erie, adjacent to the Erie County Naval and Serviceman's Park with indoor parking and easy vendor access. The hotel is a full service facility.

Downtown Buffalo affords easy access to I-90, the Peace Bridge from the QEW/Canada, the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport and Amtrak.

Get the latest event, registration and schedule information at [amps-armor.org](http://amps-armor.org)



# JOIN *AMPS* TODAY

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Regular Rest of the World	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$40)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$75)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$110)
Junior (17 or under)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$15)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$30)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$45)
Family Member*	<input type="checkbox"/> ( \$ 5 )	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$10)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$15)

\*For anyone living at the same address with a regular active member. Family member DOES NOT receive an individual copy of *Boresight* but enjoy vendor discounts, website access, and can enter in the national competition as long as he/she is accompanied by the regular active member.



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All payments must be made in U.S. funds. **AMPS** accepts payments by check and money order, as well as PayPal. To join using PayPal, just visit the **AMPS** website:

[www.amps-armor.org](http://www.amps-armor.org)

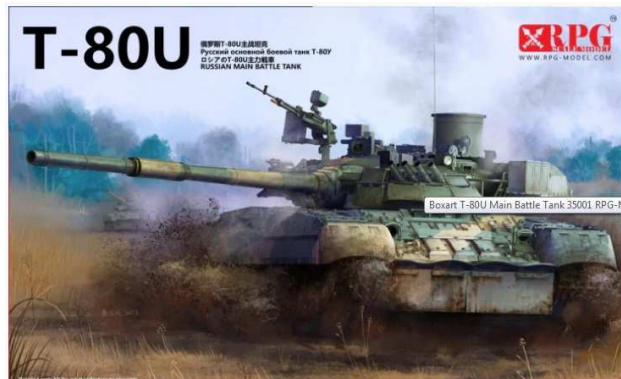
## NEW ON THE BLOCK



Next quarterscale kit from Tamiya is a JGSDF Type 16 maneuver combat vehicle, a scale-down version of its 1/35<sup>th</sup> brother released last year.



Old ESCI 1/9<sup>th</sup> Kübelwagen is back! Italeri has updated this 1970s classic with new parts and decals.



RPG, yet another new model company from China, has risen! Their kickoff product is a very well done T-80U in 1/35<sup>th</sup> scale.



MiniArt's Romanian TACAM T-60 SPG should be most welcomed by WWII modelers as this is the first injection plastic kit of the subject offered in 1/35<sup>th</sup> scale.

## AMPS Boresight (Volume 27, Issue 1)

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

- ◆ Meng ZSU-23-4 by Paul Webb
- ◆ A Dutch Treat: Scale Model Challenge 2018 by Chuck Aleshire
- ◆ Tool Humvee by John Tapsell
- ◆ A Sino-Morphed Ha-Go by Eric Choy
- ◆ 2019 AMPS International Convention Update
- ◆ Know Your Officer



## 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.”



AABS is the first 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.

19990424

We are on the web @ [austinamps.org](http://austinamps.org)



Greg Beckman's first finish model of 2019:  
Tamiya's M3 Scout Car in Soviet markings.