

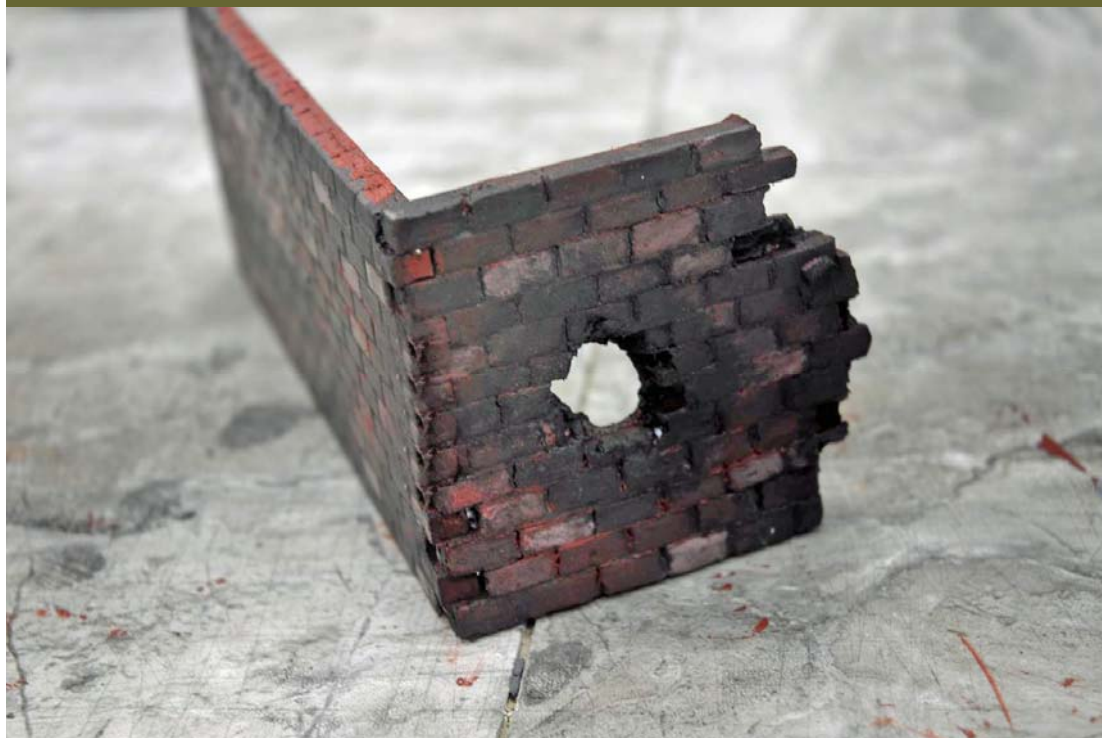


# Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

April 2022



## Inside this issue:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| CALENDAR OF EVENTS                                     | 2  |
| UPCOMING PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS AND NEWSLETTER ARTICLES | 2  |
| FROM THE TURRET  | 3  |
| TANK IN FOCUS: RENAULT FT-17                           | 4  |
| BORESIGHT PREVIEW                                      | 5  |
| 2022 1 <sup>ST</sup> QTR/WHITE ELEPHANT CONTEST WINNER | 8  |
| MEMBERS SHOW & TELL                                    | 8  |
| IJA TYPE 4 CHI-TO PROTOTYPE                            | 9  |
| JOIN AMPS TODAY  | 13 |
| NEW ON THE BLOCK                                       | 14 |
| ABOUT US   | 14 |

## CREATING BRICKS FROM FOAM

by Kevin Hutchison

For those of us that build dioramas, the quest for realistic looking components is never ending. With the advent of new materials, this quest gets easier, but sometimes you find a new application for an old tried and true material. This article is a good example of that. I will demonstrate how to use simple blue insulation foam to create realistic looking brick walls.

Giving credit where credit is due, the basic idea for this technique came from a YouTube video by "Night Shift." If you haven't seen any of his videos, you

should take a few minutes and check him out.

Lets get started. You will need a few basic tools and materials:

1. Single edge razor blades
2. Straight edge. I prefer a clear scale so I can see the entire piece of foam while cutting
3. 1/8" hard styrene
4. Sharp pencil
5. Acrylic primer
6. Acrylic paints
7. Spackle
8. Paper towels
9. Tamiya black panel wash
10. Q-Tips

\*Optional: Hot wire foam cutter

(Continued on page 6)



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ April 27 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ April 30 - *Modelmania 2022*, Stafford Convention Center, Stafford, TX
- ◆ ¿May 4 - AABS Club Meeting?
- ◆ June 1 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ June 4 - *Scalefest 2022*, Grapevine Convention Center, Grapevine, TX
- ◆ June 18 - *OKC MetroCon 2022*, Council Road Baptist Church, Bethany, OK



### AABS Officers Jan 2021 – Dec 2022

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## Schedule of Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

| Month        | Program Presentation   | Newsletter Article |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| January 2022 | N/A                    | Dane Sherry        |
| February*    | N/A                    | Rick Herrington    |
| March        | White Elephant Contest | Greg Beckman       |
| April        | Ryan Hilton            | Kevin Hutchison    |
| May          | N/A                    | Eric Choy          |
| June*        | TBA                    | Ian Candler        |
| July         | TBA                    | Craig Bland        |
| August       | TBA                    | Bob Bethea         |
| September*   | TBA                    | Bill Menzie        |
| October      | Club Auction           | Ted Paone          |
| November     | TBA                    | Ted Andreas, Jr.   |
| December*    | TBA                    | Joe Fisher         |
| January 2023 | Officer Election       | Mike Maloney       |

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 February is due on the last Wednesday of January).

\* Quarterly contest month



## From the Turret

Greetings! I hope all is well with our members and their families. Susan and I are working our way through this school year. For me this will be the last one as I have a retirement date at the end of May.

We had a good meeting in March. Bob Bethea won the White Elephant competition against a lightly contested field (see page 8). Nevertheless, his work was worthy of the award.

We also had a guest: **Connor Chenoweth** introduced himself as the proprietor of **Ground Zero Hobbies** in Cedar Park. He graciously offered to have us meet at his store for our April meeting. Eric will provide more detail.

We have decided to change the normal date of our meeting for the month of April to **the last Wednesday of the month (April 27)**. The reasoning for this temporary change is to give our modelers more time to complete their entries for our club build.



If you have completed your mobile AA model, I will be available to receive it at the meeting for transport to the Houston show on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April.

Once again, we will need ten models to compete. So far, we have nine commitments:

1. Bob Bethea: Hungarian Nimrod
2. Bob Bethea: Cold War era ZSU-57-2
3. Mike Stevens: M42 Duster
4. Stuart Wetterschneider: M16 (quad 50. cal)
5. Eric Choy: Flakpanzer Gepard
6. Rick Herrington: Flakpanzer IV
7. Kevin Hutchinson: Sdkfz 7/1 quad 20mm
8. Craig Blend: Sdkfz 7/2 37mm gun
9. Ted Paone: M16A1

Let's see what we can work out at the next meeting. In the meantime, keep building and painting. You all make our club one of the best.

**Ted Andreas, Jr.**  
President

It is that time of the year again. Please have your club dues (\$12) ready at the next meeting. We accept cash, check, or PayPal ([payaabs@gmail.com](mailto:payaabs@gmail.com). Please add \$1 more to cover processing fees). 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 **Austin Armor Builders Society** (or **AABS**)







## Renault FT

The featured tank of the month is the Renault FT, more commonly referred to as the FT-17. However, that designation only came into being after World War One.

Although the British are credited with the first development of tanks and the pioneers of armored warfare, the Renault FT was the first tank manufactured with its weapon systems mounted in a revolving turret. Other designs of WWI did not have turrets. By today's standards, only armored fighting vehicles with a main gun in a turret and a track system would be considered as tanks.



*Renault FT in Bovington Tank Museum (Wikipedia)*

In the early days of WWI, French industrialist and automobile pioneer Louis Renault was approached by the French Army to build a tracked armored fighting vehicle. He declined citing that his company had no experience building tracked vehicles. He was also concerned that his business enterprise was hard pressed to meet contract demands for war time use vehicles.

In 1917, he was again asked by the French military to produce a tank. This time he accepted the

challenge. Skipping over a remarkable story of development, the FT was the result of Renault and his company's efforts. By this time, French strategists were considering the possibility of assaulting German front lines with a large number of light tanks instead of a smaller force of heavier tanks. The FT produced by Renault and other licensed factories would be the tank for that job.



*Renault FT-17 in Belgium (Wikipedia)*

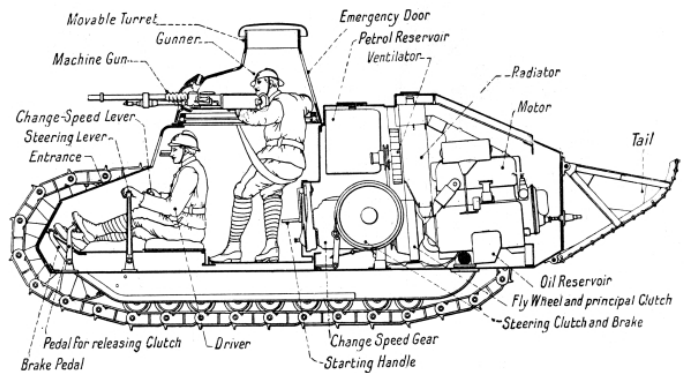
Originally, the FT turret was to be a cast steel type with only a single machine gun. Before production was ramped up, it was decided that some of the FT tanks should be equipped with a cannon instead. Initial attempts to create a dual-purpose turret from a casting failed. A turret made of rivetted steel plates was used on early models. That turret could mount either a machine gun or a 37mm cannon. Later



attempts to create a cast metal turret that could be used to carry a machine gun or a cannon succeeded.

The Renault FT first saw action on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 1918. Its usage was successful during the Third Battle of the Aisne. However, the thirty tanks involved in the assault of the German defenses had to withdraw due to a lack of infantry support. Tactics were not well-developed regarding infantry, artillery, and armor mutual support at this point in history.

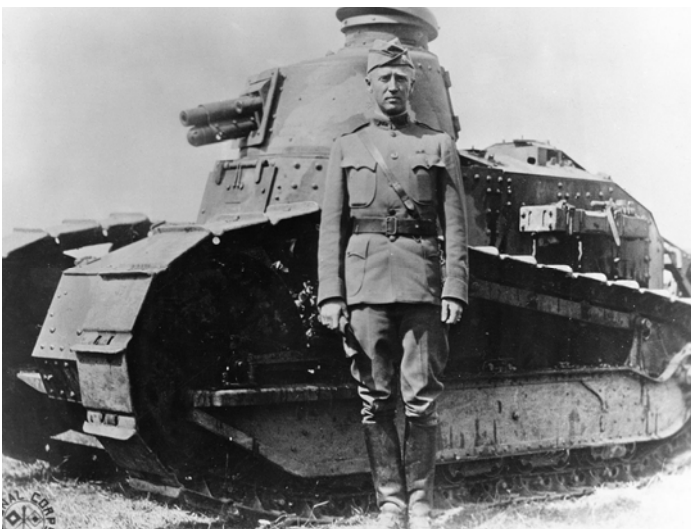
Over 3,000 Renault FT tanks would be manufactured before the war ended. When the U.S. entered the war,



DIAGRAMMATIC SECTION OF A FRENCH LIGHT (OR "MOSQUITO") TANK.

it was decided that some FT's should be built in America under the designation of M-1917, but the U.S. failed to meet the planned production timeline. No M-1917 tanks would roll off production lines until after the war ended in November 1918. The American Expeditionary Force in France was quipped with French Renault FT tanks.

During the inter-war years, Renault FT tanks would be used around the world. By the time WWII started, the FT-17 was declared obsolete but was still being used. Vichy France in Morocco would use some against the U.S. Army led by General Patton during Operation Torch in 1943. They were hopelessly out-matched by American Shermans and Stuart tanks.



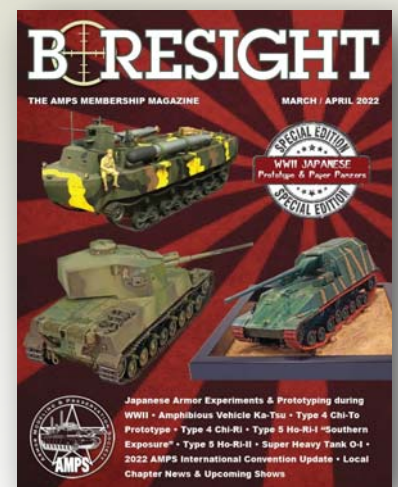
Major George Patton in 1918 (Wikipedia)

Ted

## AMPS Boresight (Volume 30, Issue 2)

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

- ♦ Japanese Armor Experiment & Prototyping during WWII by A.J. Daverede
- ♦ Type 4 Chi-To Prototype by the Editor
- ♦ Type 5 Chi-Ri by Bob Bethea
- ♦ Southern Exposure by Scott Conner
- ♦ Ka-Tsu, Japan's Amphibious Vehicle Project by Chuck Aleshire
- ♦ IJA 150t Super-Heavy Tank O-I by Roy Perez
- ♦ Type 5 Ho-Ri-II by Bob Bethea
- ♦ 2022 AMPS International Convention Update by Ashley Abernathy
- ♦ Local Chapter News & Upcoming Shows





(Continued from page 1)

Your first step is to cut a piece of foam to form your wall. I recommend cutting your wall “blank” 1/4” to 1/2” oversized. The edges have a tendency to chip, and this will give you material to trim in your final step.



The easiest way to cut your foam is with a hot wire foam cutter. I realize this is a big expense (around \$80), but it’s a very useful tool to have for a diorama builder. If you don’t have one, you can rough cut the foam with a razor blade and sand the wall to its final thickness.

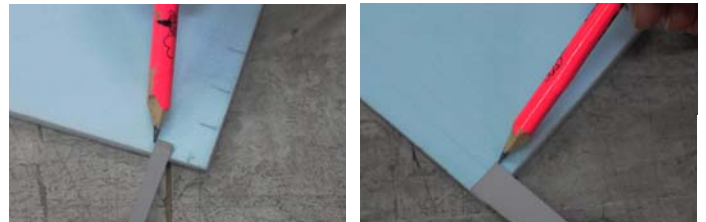


The next step is to use your styrene to make two tools that will help you keep your bricks uniform and in scale. You will need one tool that is the width of the brick and one that is the height of your bricks. These tools will not only be used to measure your bricks but they will be used to form your mortar lines.



Figuring out the size of these tools is the real trick. If you do even basic research, you will find many opinions on “standard” brick size. My rule of thumb is to make some test bricks and place figures next to them to determine the correct size. For this article, I made the bricks slightly larger than I would have for 1/35<sup>th</sup> scale so they were easier to see.

With the new tools in hand, you can start laying out the brick wall. Mark your vertical and horizontal measurements. After you have all four sides marked on the edge of your wall, you simply connect the dots! Remember to offset each row of bricks.



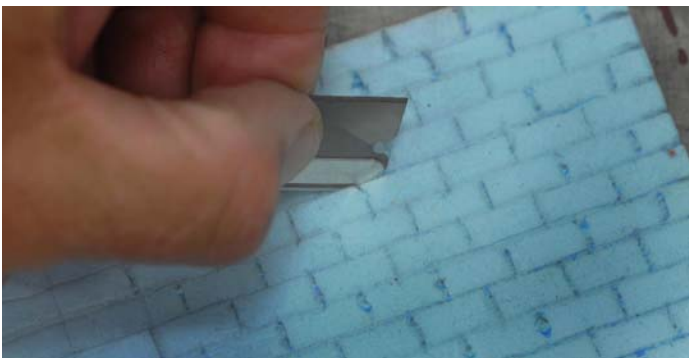
Once you have your grid lines drawn, it’s time to start scoring each row of bricks. Be careful as you score the rows not to cut through the foam. Slows and steady wins this race. If, by chance, you do cut through your wall, a piece of masking tape will solve that problem.





# Sabot Away! The Newsletter of The Austin Armor Builders

After you have your first cut done, you want to either flip your razor over and use the back of it to widen the cut you have made or use one of your styrene tools to form a gap that will act as a mortar line. It may take you running the tool through the cut two or three times to get the desired results. Again, slow and steady wins this race.



Once you're happy with the look of your wall, it's time to prime and paint. It's important to use acrylic primer and paint for the first steps in the painting process. If you don't, you run the very real risk of dissolving the foam itself.

A quick coat of primer and you're ready to paint. I used red oxide primer in keeping with the brick color. The colors in my palette reflected all the variations I have seen in contemporary brick walls.



One tip here: keep everything lighter than what you want your finished color to be as the next two steps will darken everything down.

Two other things about painting the individual bricks: random color is the name of the game, and don't obsess about neatness. The next two steps will fix little mistakes.

After your bricks are printed, it's time to use your spackle which you have tinted gray with acrylic paint. Before you start this step, make sure your base coat of paint is 100% dry. Here I have coated the entire wall with the tinted spackle and wiped away half to show the results. A damp paper towel does the trick here. Be sure and rub the spackle in to every groove you have created.



After the spackle has dried, it's time for a quick black wash. This step brings the entire project together. I use Tamiya black panel line wash to unify all the colors and weather the wall. This is the only non-acrylic paint I use in the process, but at this point the foam has been sealed and the wash will not have any adverse effect. I prefer using Q-Tips to apply the wash and paper towels to remove it.

Now that your basic wall is done, you can trim it to size and add any battle damage or additional wall sections. If you have taken your time to measure your bricks, fitting sections together should go smoothly. Battle damage is easy to add with a sharp razor.



I hope the next time you have a diorama that needs that realistic brick wall you will give this technique a try.

**Kevin**



## 2022 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr / White Elephant Contest Winner



**1st Place:  
Bob Bethea**

*Panzer I Training Vehicle*



## Members Show & Tell

**Bob Bethea:**

1. NVA ZSU-57-2 (*Takom; work in progress*)



2. Hungarian Nimrod (*HobbyBoss; work in progress*)



**Greg Beckman:**

*Soviet T-100 Heavy Tank (Trumpeter)*



**Eric Choy:**

*PLA Type 59 (HobbyBoss+Italeri; work in progress)*







# Type 4 Chi-To Prototype

By Eric Choy

According to Scalemates (scalemates.com), FineMolds first released two versions of the 1/35<sup>th</sup> IJA Type 4 Chi-To Medium Tank back in 2012: the factual prototype model (FM32), and the “what-if” planned production model (FM33). The shape of the turret is the major difference between the two kits. I chose the prototype kit to model because I like the captured markings that comes with the kit (photo 1).

I also purchased two detail sets recommended by the instructions: an aluminum gun barrel (MG-72) and a photo-etched (PE) detail set (MG-74) (photo 2), both also made by FineMolds. The barrel was most welcomed as it saved me the trouble with the kit-supplied two-part barrel. The PE set, on the other hand, turned out to be mostly unnecessary. More on that later.



01



02

## Construction

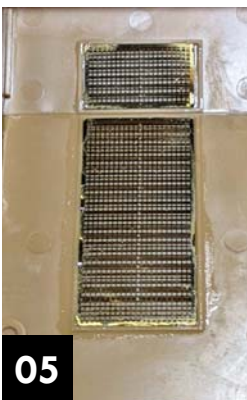
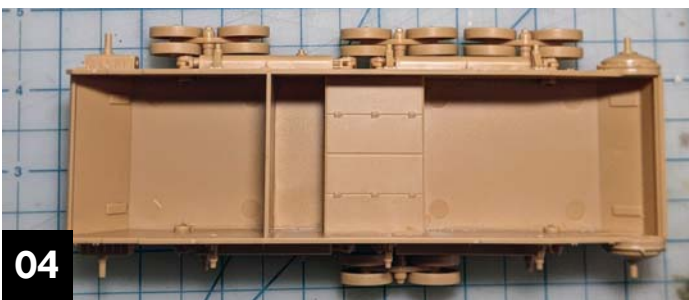
The Chi-To chassis is basically a lengthened Type 3 Chi-Nu with one extra road wheel on a swing arm between the second and third two-wheeled bogies on each side. Assembling the entire suspension was



easy and trouble free, but there were lots of wheels to clean (photo 3).



During the test fitting of the road wheels, I noticed not all of them were touching the ground. To fix the problem, first I glued down all the level ones to establish a baseline (photo 4). Then I dealt with the misbehaving ones by bending the swing arms ever so slightly with a pair of pliers. Be very careful with how much force to use as the plastic used by FineMolds is quite brittle. I snapped one off by accident and was lucky it was an arm to a single road wheel but not a bogie. I was able to superglue it back in place.

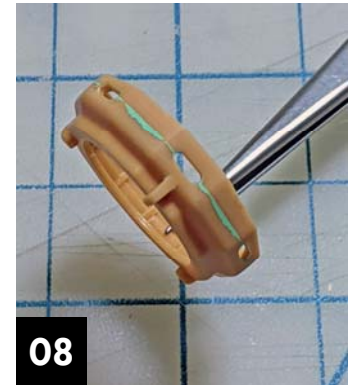


Next I tackled the parts to the lower hull. As I mentioned earlier, the advantage of PE over the kit-supplied plastic parts was minimal, so I only used the engine screens on the fret (photo 5).

The instructions show three headlight options: you can install one, two, or three lights.

I went with three just because the boxart shows three. I left out the lenses (in clear plastic) and headlight covers until all the painting was done.

The turret is made up of five parts (photo 6). At first I was worried about the fit, but everything turned out okay. The same cannot be said about the commander copular (photo 7). I had to putty and sand away the gap between the upper and lower parts (photo 8).



While the injection plastic cables look okay, I did not use any as I planned to have the tank placed in a towing position. But just for fun I opened up one of cable clamps (photo 9).





FineMolds includes a jig to ease the bending of the PE muffler screens. That's a nice touch, but I did not install the screens because the mufflers needed to be painted first. Based on my last experience with FineMolds' Type95 *Ha-Go*, I don't want to spend too much time painting the muffler either; you won't be able to see much of it after the screen is in place.

My *Chi-To* kit comes with link-and-length tracks with instructions on a separate sheet. I understand this is a new feature FineMolds added to its *Chi-To* kits since 2020. If you happened to have an earlier run of this kit, you probably have rubberband tracks (too bad, so sad). I had no trouble with the link-and-length tracks, but I found by slightly bending the "length" sections (TR1, TR3, and TR4), I got a better fit for the entire run on each side.

Since I decided not to show any interior, I did not build the detailed gun breech supplied in the kit. After I glued all the hatches shut, my *Chi-To* was ready for paints.

## Painting, Weathering, and Decaling

I was all out of my favorite *Brite Touch* automotive primer, so I had to use the more expensive Tamiya Gray Primer (photo 10).



Some time back at a show I bought a set of Mr. Color Late War IJA Camo by GSI Creos, and I finally had a chance to use them. The base color for the lower hull is Hay color (TC15) darkened with Ground color (TC13). For the rest of the tank it was sprayed



the same Hay color straight out of the bottle. For zenithal light, I used Mr. Color *Dunkelgelb* (39) to lighten Hay for the top surfaces and the muffler screens. The mufflers were painted in a rusty color and received a dark brown pin-wash. The tracks were hand-painted with Tamiya Dark Iron (XF-84) enamel (photo 11).



Usually after the paints dried, I spray a coat of Future to prepare for decaling. In the case of this model, the markings made by GIs were the last addition to the tank, so I needed to weather my tank first.

I sprayed the entire model with a semi-gloss clear and used artist oil dot filtering (photo 12) to depict some light discoloring. Then I applied a coat of Future and affixed the decals. FineMolds' decals are quite thick. I had to use Solvaset to "melt" them down and applied multiple coats of Future and Flat Clear to make the carrier film disappear.





After allowing a day for the wash to dry, the entire model received its first coat of Flat Clear. Highlights were then hand painted with Reaper acrylics. Before I sealed everything in with another coat of Flat Clear, I sprayed on light layers of dust with Tamiya Flesh (XF-15) and Buff (XF-57) on the lower hull.

The two Type97 tank heavy machine guns supplied by FineMold are nice, but I happened to have a better option: the ones from DML's Type 97 Chi-Ha (6870) are even better. They were base-coated with Mr. Color Dark Iron (214) and drybrushed with Iron (212) to bring out the details.

Next I attached the muffler screens, the headlight lenses and covers, periscope clear parts, and the "handle bar" on top of the turret. I then gave the entire model a pin-wash with Tamiya Panel Line Accent Color (Dark Brown) to accentuate recess and shadow areas (photo 13).

The last step was to give the tracks some silvering with a weathering pencil. *Voilà*, finished!



## Epilogue

I really enjoyed building this FineMolds Chi-To kit. I highly recommend it. If you intend to build one, get the barrel also but not the PE!

*Eric*

*(Editor: For more info on this Type 4 Chi-To tank and other WWII Japanese paper panzer projects, check out the current issue (v30n2) of AMPS Boresight.)*



# JOIN AMPS TODAY

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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| <b>MEMBERSHIP TYPES</b>   | <b>1 Year</b>                     | <b>2 Year</b>                   | <b>3 Year</b>                    |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Regular U.S.              | <input type="checkbox"/> (\$30)   | <input type="checkbox"/> (\$55) | <input type="checkbox"/> (\$80)  |
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\*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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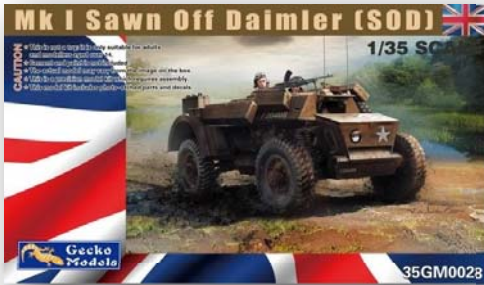
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All payments must be made in U.S. funds. **AMPS** accepts payments by check and money order, as well as PayPal. To join using PayPal, just visit the **AMPS** website:

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

# New On The Block



Due any day now is Tamiya's next quarter-scale release: British MBT Challenger 2 (Desertised). Yay, TOTS rules!

Prior to the beginning of the current Ukraine-Russia conflict, a small batch of Zvezda's new 1/35<sup>th</sup> T-62 reached our hobby stores. It received many positive reviews. Some say this might be the most accurate T-62 kit in the market!

Two new interesting 1/35<sup>th</sup> British subjects from Gecko Models: WWII turretless regimental command car Sawn-Off Daimler (SOD) Mk.1 (top) and the next generation CVR(T) Scimitar Mk.2 (bottom) deployed during Operation Herrick in Afghanistan.

## 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 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. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town trips to museums and modeling events. Every odd-numbered year AABS hosts the biggest armor modeling show 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.

For more info, please visit [www.austinamps.org](http://www.austinamps.org)