



# Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

May 2022



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## About Flaking Time!

by Eric Choy

**D**uring WWII on the Western Front, more German tanks were destroyed by tactical air strikes than by Allied infantry or armor units on the ground. The residual fear of *Jabo* attacks deeply influenced Germany's post-war armor tactics and tank design. That might explain the reason for the inclusion of a 20mm AA gun in the turret of the joint US-Germany MBT-70 project (insisted by the Germans in their proposed Kpz.70, Bundeswehr version of the MBT-70). *Flakpanzer Gepard* (German word for cheetah), the subject of this article, was another good example of a modernized version of the WWII-era *Wirbelwind* Self Propelled Anti-aircraft Gun (SPAAG).

The mold of Tamiya's 1/35<sup>th</sup> *Gepard* kit dated back to 1977 (yes, 45 years old!). It was a follow-up on their Leopard I kit released in 1975. Both kit shared many common elements (and inaccuracies!), such as the lower hull, wheels, and rubberband tracks. This kit was one of my contributions to the club's SPAAG group build.

Construction was pretty straightforward. I did not encounter any issues except for minor cleaning of seams here and there. It was ready for paint after spending a few days gluing all the parts together.

I built this kit 100% out-of-the-box, including the rubberband tracks. One nice thing about the kit-provided sideskirts is they hide the problem of the tracks not hugging all the road wheels and return rollers. Beware if

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ **May 4 - AABS Modeling Night**, Austin Public Library Old Quarry Branch
- ◆ **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
- ◆ **July 6 - AABS Club Meeting**



### 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	AMPS 2022 Int'l Show	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

**G**reetings! I hope all is well with our members and their families. Susan and I got back last Saturday evening from Houston's *Modelmania*. We had a great day, and for the third time in a row, AABS won first place for our club entry in the Group Build category. We were in the running for Best Miscellaneous but got beat this year by Richard Kern's *Wee Willy* (his words, not mine).



I want to thank member **Mike Maloney** and his friend **Dan Vreeland** again for building our display. We got a lot of positive comments about it. As we know the base or collection stand should not be considered when judging the models, but ours definitely had the "wow" factor.

This year we ended up with seven models to go with our display. Our seventh model came from a new member **Mike Haar** of Sun City. He just retired from civil service and had served on Fort Hood for a

number of years as a Physician's Assistant (or more simply, as a doctor). He provided us with a well-done Academy M163 with scratchbuilt camo nets rolled up and attached to the vehicle. Thanks Mike and to all who helped the club win once again.

I do think at our next meeting we should discuss our next effort. Apparently, we need more time to prepare for this type of competition. Hopefully, it will be easier next time if we get started earlier.

I should mention member **Ian Candler** also had a great day at this year's *Modelmania*. I lost track of how many medals he won, but I know his witch figure received the Best Figure award. Congratulations to Ian!

As a final note, we had a great meeting at **Ground Zero Hobbies** in Cedar Park. Many thanks to owner **Connor Chenoweth** for hosting us. We will meet there again in June.



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(Photos of our meeting at GZH were taken by Dane Sherry)

If you have not been to Ground Zero Hobbies, check the store out as soon as you can. It's well worth the trip.

In the meantime, remember to always, keep building and painting. You all make our club one of the best.

**Ted Andreas, Jr.**  
President



## German Mk.V Panther

The featured tank of the month is the Mk V Panther. The Panther, like the Tiger series of tanks, was designed and built to counter Russia's KV-1 and T-34 menace.

The first production model was the Panther D. This tank first saw action during the Battle of Kursk. It was rushed from the factory to the front, and as a result, it did not perform well in initial combat.



*A Panther D heading to the front (Wikipedia)*

The problems with the engine and transmission were worked on until reliability issues no longer greatly

reduced the number of Panthers available for combat. It became a very effective weapon system.

Interestingly, the model D was superseded by the model A, which was a much-improved version. Panthers of three different variations (last was the model G) would serve Germany in Italy, Northwest Europe, and all along the Eastern Front.



*Panther ausf. A on the Russian Front (Wikipedia)*

The Panther had a crew of five tankers, and like most crew served weapon systems, the proficiency of the crew was crucial to combat efficiency. German tankers were generally regarded as among the best in the world.

Like the Tiger tank, the Panther did require a great deal of maintenance. Probably considerably more than tanks of simpler designs.



*A Panther crew posing for the camera (Wikipedia)*

More than 6,000 Panthers were built, and they served the Germans from 1943 to the end of the war in 1945. France briefly used 50 Panthers after the war to equip two tank regiments. They were eventually replaced by ARL-44 in 1950.

The Panther has often been hyped as the best medium tank of WWII. Even though some may disagree, almost all critics acknowledge it as a very formidable AFV. In the end, however, the Panther did wind up on the losing side. Many Panthers would end up like the one below.



*Working on a road wheel (Wikipedia)*



*Destroyed during the Battle of the Bulge (Wikipedia)*

**Ted**



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you want to replicate a historically correct Gepard in Bundeswehr service, do not install the sideskirts. They were used only on demo and export (e.g. Dutch and Belgian) versions. Zee Germans preferred their cheetahs running “commando” style!



Instead of a monotone Olive Drab suggested by Tamiya’s instruction, I opted for a more exciting three-tone camo scheme. I happen to have Takom’s Gepard kit (released in 2016), so I utilized its color guide to help me with the placement of each color. Tamiya NATO colors (Green, Brown, and Black) were used throughout. The 35mm Oerlikon barrels were painted Gunze Mr. Metal Dark Iron (214) and drybrushed with Iron (212).

The Tamiya decals must be at least 30 years old because they shattered when in contact with water! So I nicked a few markings from my Takom kit. In case you wonder what “WFOR” means, it stands for Wetina Forces, the opposing side in Bundeswehr’s training and war exercises (we call it OPFOR in the



US Army). “Wetina” is the name of a fictitious nation zee Germans came up with after the Warsaw Pact broke up in 1991.

Due to the time constraint to meet the Houston’s Modelmania deadline, I only applied a pin-wash on the deepest panel lines and proceeded to paint on the highlights. Real Gepards apparently didn’t get out much as most photos I have seen show hardly any dirt on them. So I made my model a bit dusty by spraying on a fine layer of Tamiya Buff and Flesh and called it done.

As I was putting on the final flat coat, Germany announced taking fifty Gepards out of storage to help with the Ukrainian war effort. I wonder what color scheme and markings will be used on these Teutonic cheetahs fighting alongside with Soviet-made Shilkas!



Eric



**IPMS METRO OKLAHOMA CITY**  
In association with **SOONER AMPS**  
Presents

# OKCMetroCon 2022

**Saturday, June 18th, 2022 9am-4pm**  
**Council Road Baptist Church**  
Building is named "The Cube" north of main church building  
7903 NW 30th Bethany, OK 73008

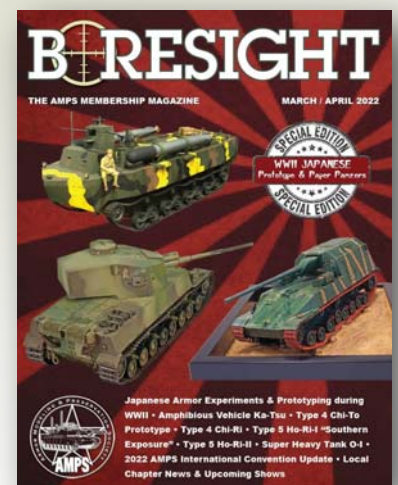
Theme:

**1942**  
**"Turning The Tide"**

## 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**





# JOIN AMPS TODAY

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



## NEW ON THE BLOCK



Tamiya's 1/35<sup>th</sup> M18 Hellcat is finally here! What a fantastic kit!



Blitz, the "eco" line of Takom, has a new kit of an Ersatz M7 out in 1/35<sup>th</sup> scale. This is a StuG III disguised as an M7 HMC during the Battle of the Bulge. Otto Skorzeny's Panzer Brigade 150

was tasked to infiltrating American positions to create as much havoc behind enemy lines as possible and capture key bridges.



Paracel Miniatures has just released this five figure set of an Vietnam War-era US medic team. It is available in three different scales: 1/35<sup>th</sup>, 1/48<sup>th</sup>, and 1/72<sup>nd</sup>.



Need a Panzer III J in 1/16<sup>th</sup> scale? Look no further as Das Werk has one out already!

### 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)