



Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

September 2022



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END OF A RUSSIAN TANK

by Bill Menzie

Wham!!! A Russian TM-62M mine exploded under the right track of the T-90 tank. The powerful blast severed the track and launched one entire axle across the ground. The stunned crew was not injured. After checking the damage, the commander immediately radioed for extraction of his crippled tank. But before a retrieval could be made, along came an Ukrainian infantryman firing a British-made NLAW (Next Generation Light Anti-tank Weapon) missile into the turret. The internal blast unseated the turret and set the tank ablaze.

I was fortunate to find several color photographs of this one particular tank scene. Zvezda's 1/35th T-90 model kit was used to replicate the demolished armored vehicle.

Lower Hull

The fire was mostly internal, but the roadwheels on the right side were also burned. I sanded off the tires, leaving only the steel wheels exposed.

The heat also weakened the torsion bars. Since these bars run across the width of the hull, both left and right axles were compromised. This had the effect of lowering the hull. The result resembles the photos of the wreck.

The mounting flange for the ejected axle assembly was improved by drilling a large opening surrounded by small holes for the flange bolts. The torsion bar was a spare Panther part.

(Continued on page 6)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ Sept 7 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ Sept 17 - *SuperCon 2022*, Bob Duncan Community Center, Arlington, TX
- ◆ Oct 1 - *Capital Classic 2022*, Travis County Expo Center, Austin, TX
- ◆ Oct 5 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ Nov 2 - AABS Club Meeting
- ◆ Nov 10 to 13 - *MillenniumCon 2022*, Wingate Hotel & Conference Center, Round Rock, TX



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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*	Eric Choy	Ian Candler
July	Bob Bethea	Craig Bland
August	Dave Bourland	Bob Bethea
September*	Rick Herrington	Bill Menzie
October	* KIT AUCTION *	Ted Paone
November	Mike Maloney	Ted Andreas, Jr.
December*	Mike Bird	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. I am back in the great state of Texas after a trip to Michigan. Susan, who is not yet retired, was unable to go on that one.

The purpose was to attend a reunion of my wrestling team from my old High School in Shelby, MI. I got to meet with my former teammates and other wrestling teams from the past. One person of interest was the coach who started the wrestling program at Shelby. He was also my coach during my time on the team. I realize that this has nothing to do with our great hobby except, we also get to make contacts and friends as we gather together at various shows and other events. The importance of community cannot be overstated. Thanks so much for the readers' indulgence.



Coach Gary Darling receiving a souvenir from Texas.

The Austin show is coming up (October 1st). At our last meeting it was mentioned that we may not be able to compete with our last group project. Hopefully, we will get an update on that issue.

Another thing to consider is whether or not we want to compete our yet to be completed USMC project at IPMS Nationals. I am sure that Len Pilhofer can get me an answer as to the requirements to do so. At this time, I believe we only have to have one IPMS member to enter such an entry. At any rate let us

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continue the discussion on our end and then we will know whether or not to pursue this possibility.

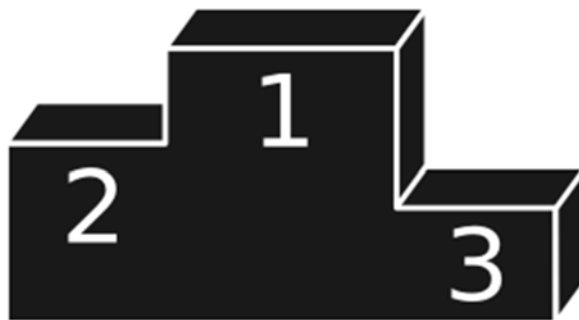
We are looking forward to the meeting on September 7th. In the meantime, remember to always

keep building and painting. You all make our club one of the best.

Ted Andreas, Jr.
President



OR



Quarterly Contest This Month!

The theme of our next quarterly contest in **September** is the ongoing **War between Ukraine and Russia**. Let's see some Javelin actions against evil Russian 'Z' machines!!!



To enter in our quarterly contest, you must be a member in good standing (i.e. you need to pay your 2022 dues!!!) The prize for the first place winner is USD \$40. Everyone who participated in the contest (except for the cash prize winner) is eligible to win the drawing of Trumpeter's 130mm A-222 Bereg kit.

There is no limit to how many model you enter as long as your entry wasn't placed in our previous quarterly contests.



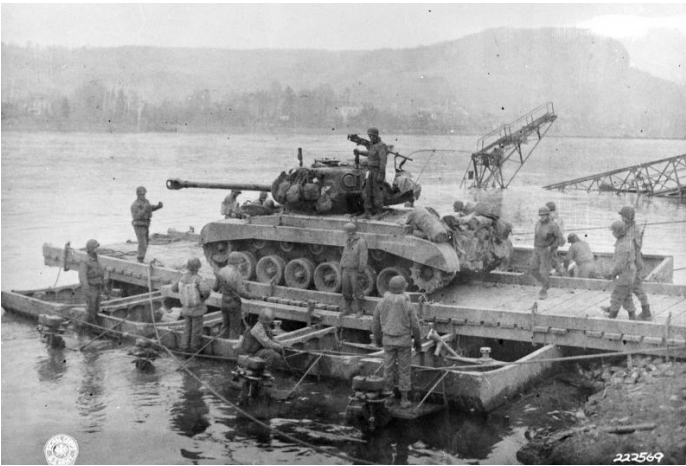
U.S. M26 Pershing

A couple years ago I bought the book *Spearhead* by Adam Makos. It was an interesting read. One of the points made was that during the Battle of the Bulge the US 3rd

Armored Division (3rd AD) was badly mauled in the fighting. In that combat the division lost more tanks than what they were able to destroy of the Germans.

The Sherman was not held in high regard by the tankers featured in *Spearhead*. And as the 3rd AD was rebuilding and replenishing its tank forces, among the replacement tanks were a few of the new M26 Pershing tanks.

The M26 featured a powerful 90mm main gun that was far more effective than the Sherman's 75mm gun or the upgraded 76mm long barreled replacement for late model Shermans. It also had a completely different suspension system and much thicker armor when compared to the Sherman.



A Pershing of the 14th Tank Battalion of the 9th Armored Division about to cross the Rhine River.

When production of the Pershing ended, 2,202 examples had been manufactured. Of the first forty to come off the assembly line, twenty were sent to Fort Knox for training purposes, and twenty were sent to Europe. Those were spread out in small numbers to various U.S. Armored Divisions.



An 8th Armored Division Pershing at the end of the war in Europe.

The effectiveness of the Pershing during the last stages of WWII in Europe is difficult to accurately

assess. One of the reasons is that it arrived late in the war and in small numbers. Another factor is that by this stage, German armor was badly depleted, and the Pershing had limited tank vs tank action. 'Fireball' is an example of a Pershing knocked out in an ambush. Nevertheless, the Pershing featured in *Spearhead* had success during the street fighting in Cologne, Germany. In a later action, that example proved able to take more punishment than what a Sherman would have survived. Overall, the Pershing was well received by US tankers.



'Fireball,' a destroyed 3rd AD Pershing.

After World War II, the Pershing would again see action in the Korean War. Ironically, late model Shermans in many cases were more effective than the Pershing. While its 90mm was better able to knock out the T-34s used by the North Korean, the Pershing was prone to engine and drive train failure. The typical terrain in Korea was too rugged for the Pershing to be highly successful.



Pershing tanks and a Sherman preparing for action in Korea.



Negotiating the Korean terrain.

As a result of that deficiency, the M46 superseded the Pershing. Interestingly, the M46 at a glance looks like a Pershing. However, it features a more powerful engine and drive system than the M26. It also started a line of tanks referred to as Pattons.



An M26 on display at "The Korean War Corner" at Fort Hood, TX. (Photo by author. Copyright pending)

Ted

(Continued from page 1)

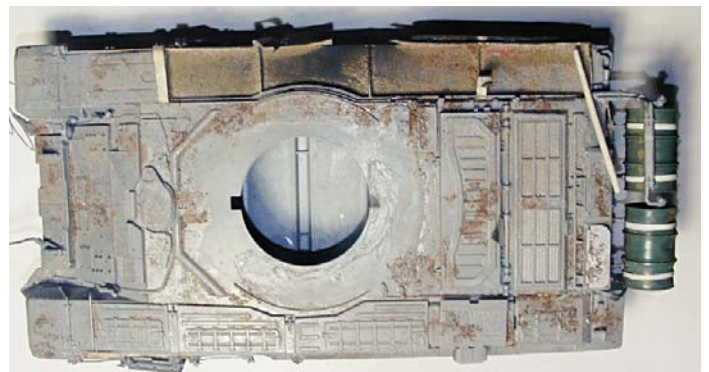


Upper Hull

Except for the small delicate parts, the hull was put together per the instructions. A major discrepancy was evident after I studied the real tank in the photos. Three of the four fuel cells on the right fender should be missing. On the model, all four cells are molded in a single piece. After some major surgery and fabrication, I managed to match the T-90 in the photos. I can only guess why these fuel cells were removed prior to deployment of the tank. The two fuel drums on the rear could certainly compensate for the lack of fuel capacity.

To make the remnants of the rubber side skirts, I soaked typing paper in diluted wood glue and let it dry. I crumpled small pieces until the size and shape approximated the originals in the photos. I brushed on more glue. When dry, it has a consistency of plastic. I have found this technique works well when

making tarps, clothing, or other non-metallic materials.



The Turret

I followed the instructions for the turret assembly. The right side stowage box shows damage from the missile strike. To duplicate the damage, I cut away portions of the box, then glued on bits of plastic card at the appropriate bent angle. Smaller bits were added followed by filling the gaps until a satisfactory replica was achieved. Unlike the real tank's box, I glued the top on to hide the thick sides on the kit stowage bin. Assembly was fast and easy with a good fit.

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Per photos of the real tank, the left side IR missile suppression jammer is missing. A final touch was to remove the (burned) canvas "shroud" on the main gun and add the replicated hardware underneath.

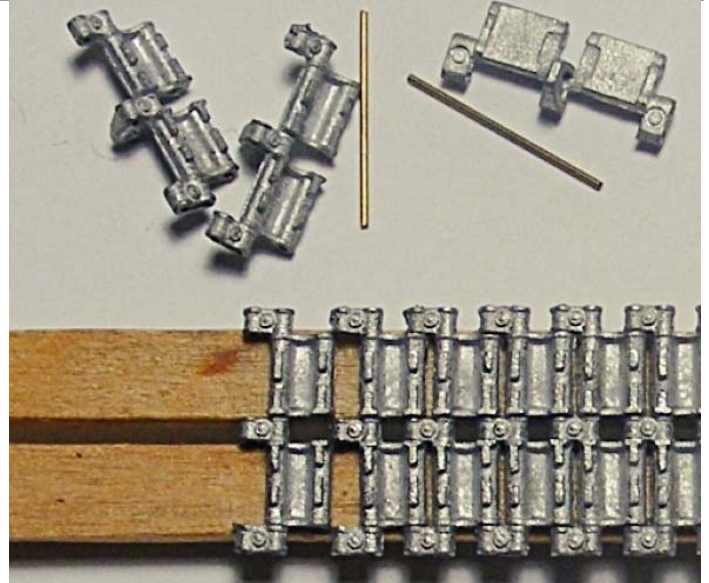
Like the hull, the turret was given some ash buildup with liquid glue, fine sand, and pulverized dirt. Once it's painted, the effect is very striking.

The turret was also blown a little out of position as the photos show. After removing the turret guide/keys that lock with the upper hull, I made a lopsided collar from Green Stuff epoxy putty. The collar was sandwiched between the turret and hull to achieve the out of kilter look.



The Tracks

Instead of using the kit-supplied link-and-length plastic tracks, I purchased a white-metal set on eBay. It came with tiny brass pins. I was unable to push the pins all the way in because the hidden through holes wouldn't align. The solution was to drill holes slightly larger to create a "funnel" to steer the pins. There are 80 links per side. I made an assembly jig out of coffee stir sticks.



The Fuel Drums

The kit-supplied fuel drums were replaced with Tamiya drums because it was easier to duplicate the big dents. The hold-down straps were made from plastic card. I utilized the kit parts to detail the drums.

Painting

Everything was primed Flat Black with rattle can spray paint. This is a good starting point for a burned hulk as it looks like soot!

Using my reference photos, I lightly airbrushed Cavalry Brown on the model with a fine random mist. I wanted to have the black undercoat showing. A heavier coat was concentrated on the more intensely burned areas on and around the turret.

The next color was Light Rust sprayed on and near the turret. By misting one color onto another color, you can modulate from dark to light without an obvious transition line. A rule of thumb is to use lighter rust tones where the fire burned hottest.

Orange Rust was the next color followed by Yellow Ochre. Next, I misted a layer of Russian green to get the unburned factory color. Use care because you still want rust traces to show through.



Lastly, I used thinned MiG Dark and Brown washes to highlight tiny details. I also used thinned washes of MiG Rust to spread and blend the rust effects. Flat Black was sprayed to simulate soot deposits.

Ashes to Ashes

Charred debris on the tank is evident in the photos. They were non-metallic items consumed by the fire. I glued lightly crushed kitty litters on top of the heavier ash deposits. This debris had also collected on the glacis plate and the partitions of the right fender. The kitty litters were brushed with a gray paint followed by a small dab of white to make them look like burnt charcoal.

Groundwork

A shredded paper product was used to make the basic groundwork. While it was drying, I made an

impression of the plastic track runs. I covered the surface with pulverized dirt from my backyard. I also made a crater where the mine went off and disabled the tank.

For the final touch, I was going to add some grass to my groundwork, but what I bought was no good. Maybe for a future show I'll have better grass and a Ukrainian soldier taking a selfie!

Bill

AMPS Boresight (Volume 30, Issue 4)

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

- ◆ **The Best of Luchs** by Bruce MacRae
- ◆ **O Sprue Brothers, Where Art Thou** by Editor and Richard Kern
- ◆ **Book Review: English Sources on Japanese Armor** by Steven Andreano
- ◆ **A Long Overdue Kit Review of Tamiya's 1/48th Scale Churchill Crocodile** by Eric Choy
- ◆ **Know Your Officer**
- ◆ **AMPS Local Chapter News & Upcoming Shows**



AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The daughter of our long time member **Russ Holm** has a 1:1 tank ammo collection, and she now wants to give it up for good. These shells are NOT REPLICAS but real practice/spent ammos. All are inert and harmless. Here are photos of them:



Because of the sheer weight of these items, it is impossible to carry them all to our meeting. However, Russ can have your editor bring in individual piece(s) that anyone is interested in buying (or inspecting before purchase). Please contact **Eric** (aabsc@gmail.com) on or before Sept 6th.

Don't miss the chance to own these fabulous historical relics at most reasonable prices!

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NEW ON THE BLOCK



Too bad this Takom 1/35th M114 Early & Late w/Interior does NOT come with any figures! The scene depicted in the boxart is a great idea for a Vietnam War vignette.



Das Werk's 1/35th U.S. 155mm Howitzer M1918 is here finally! This is the same WWI era French gun used by USMC during WWII.



CMK's new 1/35th Ukrainian soldier with NLAW (left) must be the guy who knocked out Bill Menzie's T-90 in this month's newsletter! Also new is the Javelin anti-tank missile (top right).



Vespud Models is a relatively new company specialized in 1/72nd armor. We have seen some very interesting subjects so far: Leopard 2A7+, Maus, A34 Comet, and Jagdpanther G1.

Their latest releases include back-to-basic Panther Gs and the F variant (shown above) with IR scopes.

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