



Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

October 2022



Inside this issue:

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	2
UPCOMING PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS AND NEWSLETTER ARTICLES	2
FROM THE TURRET	3
TANK IN FOCUS: FRENCH AMX-13	4
WINTERBLITZ 2023	8
2022 THIRD QUARTERLY CONTEST WINNER	9
AMPS BORESIGHT PREVIEW	9
MEMBERS SHOW & TELL	10
GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS PAST	11
JOIN AMPS TODAY	13
NEW ON THE BLOCK	14
ABOUT US	14

ONTOS:

IT'S A MARINE THING!

by Ted Paone

Ontos means “thing” in Greek and is an apt title for the M50A1 light armored tracked anti-tank vehicle (can we actually call it a tank?). One of the strangest vehicles ever fielded in battle by U.S. forces, the Ontos mounted six massive 106mm Recoilless rifles, giving unprecedented firepower to a vehicle weighing in at less than 10 tons.

Available Kits

There are several kits of the Ontos. In the mid-1950s Renwal made a 1/32nd version which was re-popped by Revell in the early 1980s. When the Academy 1/35th version came out about 10 years ago, Carl Leidy, a now-deceased member of our club, gave me his Revell kit. It is kind of chunky and not very accurate, so it ended up as a shelf queen in my collection.

Kirin came out with a 1/35th scale resin version before the Academy kit. The Academy kit is now out of production

(Continued on page 5)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ **Oct 1 - Capital Classic 2022**, Travis County Expo Center, Austin, TX
- ◆ **Oct 5 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **Oct 15 - Turbo Dork Expansion 5 Launch Party and Model Contest**, LionHeart Hobby, Kyle (10am to 6pm)
- ◆ **Nov 2 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **Nov 10 to 13 - MillenniumCon 2022**, Wingate Hotel & Conference Center, Round Rock
- ◆ **Dec 3 - AABS Xmas Party**
- ◆ **Dec 7 - AABS Club Meeting**



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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. It is a good time to be in Texas as opposed to Florida. Let us hope the storm in the gulf does not turn out as bad as predicted.

By now you have probably heard from Eric that Ground Zero Hobbies has closed. That is unfortunate. It also seems to be a sign of the times.

We are glad that Eric has been proactive and we have a venue to meet at, for the October meeting. I would remind everyone to bring their AA models to the Austin show, but by the time you get this newsletter, that event will have passed.

In the realm of our IPMS counterparts, planning for the national show is still ongoing. We meet via Zoom



Steven Draper, Director of the National Mounted Warrior Museum

once a month and Len Pilhofer is moving his chess pieces from the state of New York. I hope our AMPS members are making plans to attend.

In November, I have been tasked to write the featured article. It will be about the newest museum in the Fort Hood area, the **National Mounted Warrior Museum**. If there is any interest, we might consider inviting the museum director or the head of the museum's foundation to be a guest speaker at one of upcoming meetings.

You all make our club one of the best. See you at the next meeting.

Ted Andreas, Jr.
President



Annual Kit Auction

The annual kit auction will be held at our next (October) meeting. This auction is our club's only fund raising activity. All monies collected go straight into the treasury for our biennial show and other club activities. To participate in this auction, please bring:

- A few unwanted kits in your collection that are complete and haven't been started.
- Your cash-filled wallet (or your checkbook).

Remember, your friends and fellow modelers will be bidding on these items. Be considerate and don't bring a kit that has missing parts or has been partially glued/painted!



French AMX-13

When discussions take place about great tanks from post-World War II, the French AMX-13 is probably not considered as one of the best. Nevertheless, it did feature some significant innovations and an attempt to make tank crews more effective.



Wikipedia Photo

The AMX-13 was produced from 1952 until 1987. The initial production version weighed in at thirteen tonnes. Thus, the designation 'AMX-13' (a tonne is roughly equal to 2,205 pounds).

The turret was different from other designs in that the top half elevated with the main gun. Also, the AMX-13



Wikipedia Photo

was among the first tanks to use a revolver type magazine for the main gun. That feature allowed it to send six rounds of HE or AP shells down range in quick succession.

Placed in service at a time when many nations were beginning to deploy main battle tanks, the AMX-13 followed the old doctrine of using a variety of tanks. the AMX-13 was essentially a light tank.

The Israeli Defense Force acquired AMX-13 tanks from France in 1956. At that time, France was the only country willing to sell tanks to Israel openly. This was the first modern tank for the IDF. Even though it was a light tank, the IDF used them in an MBT role because it had very few tanks available.



An IDF AMX-13 (Wikipedia Photo)

During the Six Day War of 1967, many of the IDF AMX-13 tanks were knocked out as Israel had gone on the offensive. The tank was too lightly armored to be used as a main battle tank.

The Indian Army had some significant successes using the AMX-13 during the Indo-Pakistani War. In these cases, the AMX-13 was often used in a defensive mode. Pakistani M-48's were frequent victims of Indian AMX-13 tanks used in defensive ambushes.

In spite of significant deficiencies, the AMX-13 was noted as a dependable tank. The chassis and suspension were simple and rugged. Initial models produced with 75mm main guns were upgraded to



An AMX-13 captured and used by Pakistan during the Indo-Pakistani War

include a 90mm gun. Eventually, later models carried 105mm main guns.

In post-World War II armored clashes, the AMX-13 was not up for usage as a main battle tank. If it would have been limited to the role it was intended to play, armor support for lightly armed paratroopers, it probably would have had a more impressive legacy.

Ted

(Continued from page 1)

and is hard to find. Recently I was at King's Hobby, and there was one sitting on the shelf for me to snatch. Bob Bethea also gave me one which he had built and primed for this article.

Construction

Even though the Academy kit is relatively new (2010), there are some issues with the engineering and assembly. The chassis and suspension went together in a couple of afternoon building sessions during this year's ReaperCon. The instructions are not totally clear on the placement of some parts. Each 106mm recoilless rifle consist of eleven to twelve parts (with or without the .50cal spotting rifle), and the fit was not great. However, with a little fiddling, they went together well.

Alignment of the rifles on the turret is poorly engineered as there are no alignment pins. Care must be taken to make sure they are all pointing in the same direction. The suspension is squashed, but Steve Zaloga found it too much of a project to rebuild. He did add some parts to make it more accurate that triggered my OMS (Obsessive Modelers Syndrome).

There is a modicum of PE parts included in the kit. Most of which replace the plastic parts for more realistic thicknesses. I bent the exhaust covers over dowels to get the right curvature. There is no interior, not even the loader's cushion. This is an older kit, so most of the aftermarket accessories are out of production.

Painting

I decided to experiment using zenithal highlighting underpainting on Bob's model. First, the model was primed in black. Next, I sprayed grey primer from a 45 degree angle leaving the shadows black. Then I topped it off with white, sprayed directly from above. Since I was going to paint it Marine green, I sprayed a yellow directly on top of the guns and the turret to make them "pop" under the green coat. I used Model Air Forest Green for the base coat. The highlighting showed up well. I wasn't satisfied with the color so I lightly sprayed the upper hull with a black green, and I think it looks more like I wanted it. The final color is not a match for Vietnam Marine green, but I figured I'd dirty it up pretty good. This second coat wiped out a lot of the underpainting highlights.

I tried a new pin wash technique by painting a thin line with clear water around the area to be outlined, let it dry a little, and then apply the Vallejo Panzer Grey wash. This is the easiest way I have found to do a pin wash.

I reinforced the shadows and added grease and oil drips with washes of Nulm Oil and Agrax Earthshade from Citadel paints. Using Bob's favorite mud, sanded tile grout, I "painted" it on the lower hull following a photo that I had. I then painted the lower hull and running gear with orange brown to reflect the red soil and added splashes of a lighter browns and tans to reflect the drying mud on the upper part of the hull. For some, I flicked the paint on. I was kind of sloppy, but it looks good.

There is one step I forgot before starting weathering: the decals! Most of the photos of Ontos in Vietnam that I saw had minimal markings anyway. Note to self: decals before weathering!

I painted the machine gun with grimy black, a Poly S Black Grey. It was a popular color, and I now have a Micro Mark version of it. I use it for tires and weapons. Highlight on the weapons was done with graphite (pencil lead), and it looks really good.

For contrast, I painted the tools and jerry can a different color. After that, I dullcoated the model with AK Acrylic flat to prepare for a few pastels. I use Doc O'Brien's Weathering Pigments I bought many, many years ago. There are 20 colors of intense pigment which can be mixed for various stains. It has a heat released adhesive in it, grind it in and it is fixed. They can be also applied wet. The colors stand up to a final clear coat. I use these instead of oil filters.

Coda

I had fun painting Bob's model of an Ontos. I got to experiment and succeed or fail without getting frustrated. Lessons learned:

- ◆ Decals before weathering. Spreadsheet of the steps in order?
- ◆ The grey zenithal highlight needs to be darker so there is more contrast to the white.
- ◆ I liked the effect of the yellow as the high highlight underpainting.
- ◆ I have to experiment to find a better Vietnam Marine Green. Maybe I should go to the USMC Museum again or find the photos that I took there.
- ◆ Watch out on the alignment of the guns on the turret. They all should be parallel, and there is no firm emplacement.

I'll be giving this model back to Bob, but since I went a little bit OMS on mine, I'll be painting mine later with the lessons I learned on Bob's in a different weathering scheme: in the rain.





References

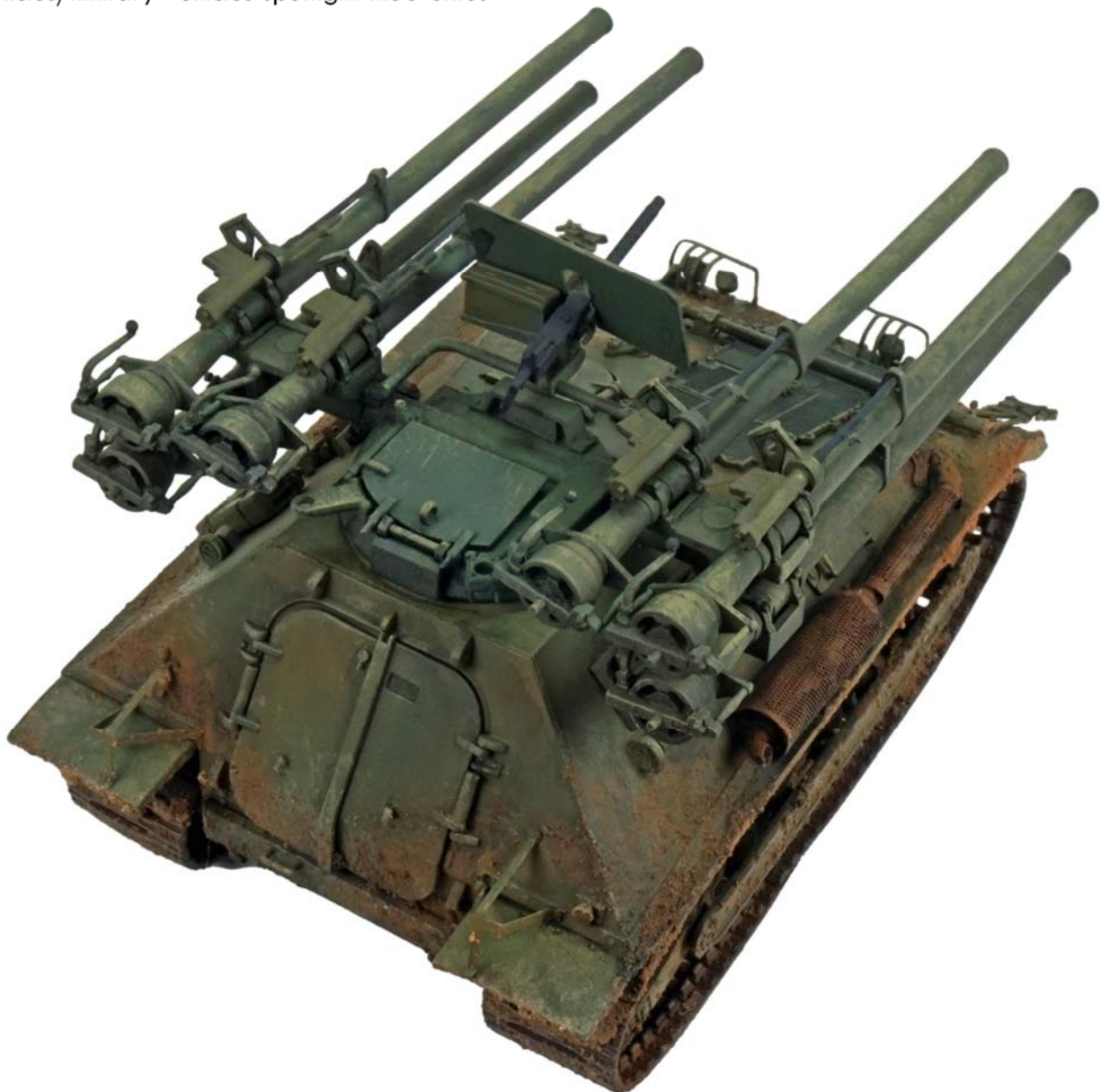
Here is a list of websites that I found information on the Ontos:

- <https://www.defensemedianetwork.com/stories/m50-ontos-the-forgotten-tank-killer/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M50_Ontos
- <https://www.usmcvta.org/>
- <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/article/weapons-the-m50a1-ontos/>
- <https://www.militarytrader.com/military-vehicles/military-vehicles-spotlight-m50-ontos>

- <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/reboot/monstrous-marine-corps-tank-destroyer-wrecked-havoc-vietnam-172737>

Kenneth W. Estes's book *M50 Ontos and M56 Scorpion 1956-1970 Tank Destroyers of the Vietnam War* (New Vanguard 240, Osprey Publishing) was a great help also.

Ted



SECOND ANNUAL WINTERBLITZ 2023

JAN
21ST

THEME:
1943 - THE
TURNING
POINT

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN GI
19124 HWY 6 COLLEGE STATION TX, 77845

2023 CATEGORIES

- 100 - Youth (all scales all eras)
- 200 - Classic Kits – (kits before 1979) basic build
- 300 - Artillery (all scales and all eras)
- 400 - 1/48 scale (all eras)
- 500 - 1/72 and smaller (all eras)
- 600 - Fully Tracked Origins to 1934 – (all scales)
- 700 - Fully Tracked Self-Propelled Vehicles 1/32 and 1/35 (Open Top) (all eras)
- 800 - Fully Tracked WWII Axis 1/32 and 1/35 (Closed top)
- 900 - Fully Tracked WWII Allied 1/32 and 1/35 (Closed top)
- 1000 - Fully Tracked Post WWII Thru 1990 (Korea, Vietnam, Cold War) 1/32 and 1/35 (Closed Top)
- 1100 - Fully Tracked Desert Shield to Present. (1991 - 2022) 1/32 and 1/35 (Closed Top)
- 1200 - Paper Panzer/Fictional (all scales)
- 1300 - Halftracks (all scales and all eras)
- 1400 - Armored Cars (wheeled) (all scales and all eras)
- 1500 - Soft-skins (all scales and all eras)
- 1600 - Motorcycles with or w/o Sidecars (all scales and all eras)
- 1700 - Misc. Military Vehicles and Support Vehicles (all scales and all eras)
- 2000 - Fully Tracked Full Interior (all scales and all eras)
- 3000 - Larger than 1/32 (all eras)
- 4000 - Friend or Foe (all scales and all eras)
- 5000 - Military figures (all scale scales and all eras)
- 6000 - Dioramas (all scales)

WWW.WINTER-BLITZ.COM

2022 Third Quarterly Contest Winner



Bill Menzie

"End of a Russian Tank"



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**





Members Show & Tell

Oscar Perez:

Our member down in the RGV got hooked on building Toon Tanks! He sent us these photos of his latest work:



**WORLD WAR
TOONS**



2019:



2018:



JOIN AMPS TODAY

NAME: _____

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ZIP CODE: _____ **COUNTRY:** _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPES	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year
Regular U.S.	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$30)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$55)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$80)
Regular Canada/Mexico	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$35)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$65)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$95)
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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AMPS

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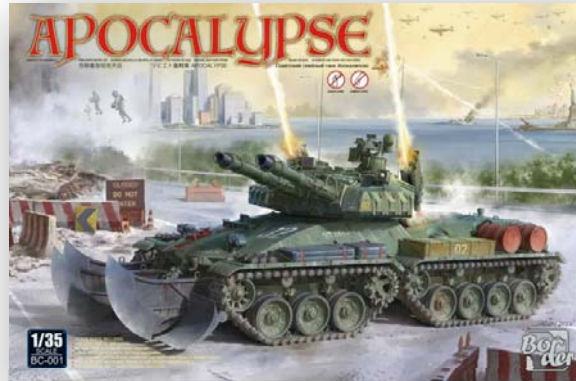
All payments must be made in U.S. funds. **AMPS** accepts payments by check and money order, as well as PayPal. To join using PayPal, just visit the **AMPS** website:

www.amps-armor.org

New On The Block



Rye Field Model (RFM) has a new 1/35th Leo 2A6 out. This kit comes with a full interior!



Oh my, check out Border's latest 1/35th scale "Apocalypse" MBT! Supposedly this is a snap kit with pre-colored parts and no glue is needed.



Another new Leo! This is Meng's 1/72nd scale interpretation of Bundeswehr's latest MBT.

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