



FineScale Modeler®

July/August 2023

SCI-FI DETAILING

LIGHT AND
ACCURIZE A
FUTURISTIC
CAR p.22



Ricardo Decoba corrects
Fujimi's 1/24 scale *Blade
Runner* spinner before
wiring it for lights.

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- PAINT A VIETNAM WAR HUEY p.14
- IMPROVE A SPANISH LEOPARD p.46

**BONUS
ONLINE
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PAGE 3**

USN TBD-1 Devastator

100%
NEW
TOOLING

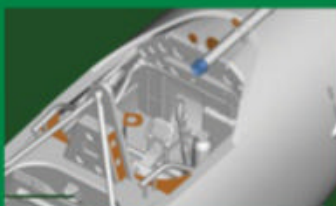


The Navy Takes to the Air

The TBD-1 Devastator (02226) was the U.S. Navy's first all-metal monoplane, torpedo bomber to operate from an aircraft carrier. Also, the Navy's first plane with hydraulically-controlled, folding wings for parking on a carrier deck. Joining the fleet in 1937, it saw action during the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway. 130 Devastators were built. From its highly detailed engine through its more than 18" wingspan, MRC-Trumpeter's replica is the real thing... in 1/32 scale

A few of the kits finely honed details:

- A first of its kind completely enclosed cockpit
- Landing gear with accurate hydraulic rod and brake line
- Tail hook
- A nose-mounted 7.62 mm machine gun and a rear facing dorsal turret gun
- Spot-on engine detail
- Cockpit fire extinguisher
- Pilot gunsight
- Radio coil
- Two 50 lbs. bombs, one MK 13 torpedo
- Photo-etched pilot harness & cockpit details
- Grooved rubber tires
- Masking for window panes included
- Two decal options



Note the meticulous attention to accuracy in the cockpit, folding wing hinge, undercarriage, and air-cooled, radial piston engine.

MRC 

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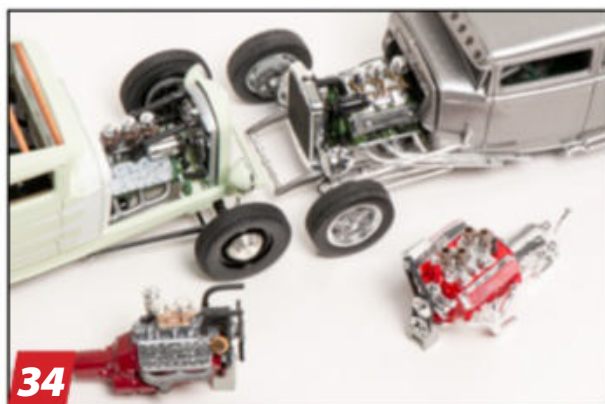
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By Aaron Skinner

Gatekeeping has to stop

In an episode of *FineScale Modeler Weekly*, Tim Kidwell and I responded to a, well, not so much a question as a concern raised by a few readers. They questioned some of the creations seen in the magazine and on the website and their right to be called models. One referred to anything other than armor, military aircraft, and ships as fringe subjects and another said he didn't want to see 3D-printed models in the magazine because his joy came from piecing together parts crafted by kit manufacturers.

In response, we said that modeling was modeling. As long as you were replicating an object historical, fictional, or fantastical from any material, you are a modeler.

The first reader's point denies the basic history of the hobby in which major manufacturers, like Aurora and AMT — far from fringe kit makers — produced models of sci-fi and fantasy subjects, including Universal monsters and *Star Trek* ships, from the hobby's earliest years.

The second correspondent's point runs counter to the idea that scratchbuilding is modeling, something with which many a hobbyist would take exception.

If the hobby is to thrive and expand, this kind of gatekeeping must stop. It has gone on for too long and has split the hobby in the past, creating the NNL show on the car side and AMPS for armor builders. Remember how and when you got started building. Not why you do it today, but what

drove you to hit the hobby shop with your allowance every week or month to buy another kit.

Encourage people by asking how they did something and answer questions about how you did something else.

We are not alone in our idea about what modeling is and how the divisiveness needs to end. You can read several letters we got in response in Scale Talk starting on the next page.

* * *

When we edit an issue of the magazine, each of the stories in it is read by another staff member. After proofreading the stories for this issue, Tim said, "I love those stories that make you want to go to the workbench and try out the techniques." One of the most common questions we get from potential authors is what kind of stories *FSM* wants, and I think that response sums it up exactly. Good, chewy how-to that other modelers can use on a future project. It doesn't have to be a massive months- or years-long project to make the cut. Inspiration is great, but information is better. If you have a particular way of doing something that you can describe in detail and photograph each step, we want you for the magazine. Email story ideas or questions to the address below.

Happy modeling!



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What is modeling responses

Ed.: In an episode of FineScale Modeler Weekly, Tim Kidwell and I addressed the question, "What is modeling?" and we asked viewers and readers to respond. Here's a sampling of those comments.

— Aaron Skinner

I just watched your video on "What Qualifies as Modeling" and wanted to say that I couldn't agree more. At its core, modeling is replication of something real or imagined. Designing parts yourself, whether by hand or for 3D-printing, is just a different level of detail some people use the same way some modelers use aftermarket resin details. 3D-printing is a medium, like all the other materials (PC, PS, wood, PE, resin, etc.) that go into our kits and dioramas and does not inherently affect the definition of what is and isn't a model. If you designed a model as a single piece in CAD, printed it, and painted it, that's still modeling, too; CAD is also a medium for replication.

Subject matter is irrelevant; you can replicate something that exists only in your imagination. I would definitely say that the people who built the props of the *Enterprise* or *Millennium Falcon* for film are modelers. Number of parts is also irrelevant. Painting *Warhammer* figurines is absolutely modeling. The effort to achieve a particular level of realism or fantasy painting a figure is no less significant than trying to do so with an aircraft you had to build yourself.

The more inclusive we are about what modeling is, the more people we'll attract to the hobby. Those fresh faces will bring fresh perspectives and techniques from their own experiences and professional skill sets. This will benefit us all by leading to new tools, new techniques, and, best of all, new subject matter!

— Josh Wurzel
Bay Area, Calif.

I recently acquired a resin 3D-printer, and, being capable of using 3D-modeling software, I decided to improve several parts of a 1/72 scale F-4E Phantom kit I'm working on. Modeling those parts probably took more effort and time than scratchbuilding them and definitely more effort than buying third-party upgrades like resin and photo-etched metal. I would say that

3D-printing parts and even the whole model is definitely modeling.

I think modeling is defined more by the results than the means by which you accomplish them.

— Marcos Szargiki
via YouTube

I build many different types of model kits, from many genres and in many different materials. I have built in plastic, wood, resin, vinyl, styrene, and probably some



materials I don't even know the name of. Regardless, so many things fall under the category of model building and we should respect all of them.

— David, Plastic Imagination Workshop
via YouTube

I think modeling is anything that is put together and painted, no matter the subject.

— John Treloar
via YouTube

Modeling is what you make of it, but it needs to be fun. Because why have a hobby that is not fun? I have been building kits for more than 50 years and still build mostly plastic models, but I have also built resin and all photo-etched metal as well as a couple [of] 3D-printed kits. While there is a sense of satisfaction in building a kit with several hundred parts, a great finish on a simple resin bust or 3D-printed kit with few parts is also rewarding.

— Scott Builds Them All
via YouTube

I'm 51 years old, and have built aircraft, armor, cars, and *Warhammer* 40K models. Currently, I'm painting Catalyst Game Labs *Battletech* miniatures. I couldn't care less what you think about my hobby! I'm gonna keep doing it and think that you should do the same!

— Robert Griffin
via YouTube

If it's plastic and you build it, it's modeling to me, whether it's sci-fi, ships, auto, armor, aircraft, etc. I build it all. I've even got some Gundam kits.

— Gordon
via YouTube

Pining for Model Master enamels

I've been building models for about 65 years. Admittedly, my early years did not include painting, but through the years, I have come to like enamels — specifically Testors Model Master paints. There was a good selection of colors, they airbrushed well, and I only needed one type of thinner. When Testors shut up shop, I felt it was time to switch to acrylics. After all, my modeling buddies told me they were better, smelled less, and cleaned up with water.

At my local hobby store, Testors' absence was soon filled by a selection of acrylics and their older, smellier brothers, lacquers.

I quickly discovered moving to acrylics wasn't that simple. First, the color selection didn't seem as good, and they were often geared to Gundams. Different brands of acrylics don't always play well with each other, have different thinning requirements, and don't cover or airbrush the way enamels did. If I couldn't find the shade I needed, I ended up getting a lacquer and the required brand thinner.

I'm bracing myself for an onslaught of "Have you tried Brand X paints, they're the ones I use all the time" comments, but I'm still unraveling acrylics and lacquers. I'm learning, but I pine for the days when I used enamels. Things were so much simpler then.

— Jim James
Winter Garden, Fla.

Ed.: I get it, Jim. When you find a paint you like that produces consistent results, it can be hard to let go. Acrylics have many advantages, but each is a little different and the learning curve can be steep, especially when it comes to thinning and airbrushing. Not to jump on the "Have you tried" bandwagon, I have become a big fan of the lacquers (you'll sometimes see them referred to as acrylic lacquers) that have found new prominence recently. While thinning ratios differ between brands, most of them can be used with Tamiya Lacquer Thinner or Mr. Color Thinner, both of which are relatively easy to find. And with so many brands, including Tamiya, Mr. Color, Hataka, AK Interactive Real Color, SMS, and MR Paint, the range of colors is bigger than Model Master. — A.S.

Reader Tip



Here's the box of parts trees in a Dragon 1/35 scale Panzer IV before Eric prepped it.



Once he's done tagging and bagging the parts, there's a lot more room to move.

Organizing parts at the bench

I am an armor builder, so my kits often have 20, 30, or even more sprues. Here is my three-step process I call "Tag & Bag" (also the name of a seminar I present):

1. Lay all the sprues out on a big table. Pick up each sprue, snip all the pour tabs from the parts and add a piece of white tape emphasizing the sprue letter/number for easy recognition. Put the sprue back down on the table.

2. Working through the instructions, step by step, I find, snip, and bag (in a plasticine bag) all the parts for a given step or set of steps. When required, I use colored Sharpies to delineate parts that look identical (but aren't) by marking both the part and the image of the part in the instructions so later I will know what I am looking at. While I do this, I make the build decisions regarding options, process order, etc., so when I am done, I have a set of marked-up instructions, a small pile of plastic baggies of "uncleaned" parts, and a baggie marked "Unused Parts," which, as the name implies, holds everything remaining. No more sprues, and I am ready to go ... almost.

3. I put the baggies and instructions, PE sheets, decals, etc., back into the box, and wait for an opportunity to "clean" the parts — this may be a group get-together, a hotel room in front of the TV, or on the LIDO deck on a cruise ship (see images). I pick up each bag and pour everything out into a tray, clean the parts with knives/sandpaper, drill any holes I need per the marked up instructions, etc. The beauty of this step is that it is totally portable — I can do it anywhere, with just a few tools and an Optivisor. As I finish each baggie, I pick up the next one and repeat. When I am finished with all



Eric cleans up parts from one of his tagged and bagged kits while on a cruise.

the baggies, I return them to the box and mark the box "CLEANED" before placing it back up on my stash rack. If I do this on a trip, I check the sharp stuff (knives/drill) and leave the model box behind, bringing only the tools and a my bag of baggies.

When I'm ready to build the model, I take it down from my stash, pull out the baggie for the first step(s), and go. The build decisions have been made, the parts have been cleaned, and the sprues, oh yeah, they're way gone. I can finish a complicated armor model in half the time that it used to take, even counting the time it took to tag and bag the parts. Plus, I always have something productive to do when I am away from my work-bench.

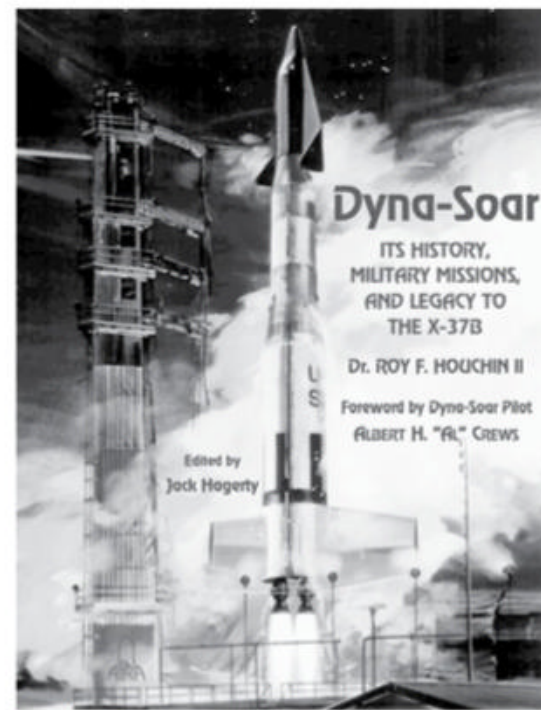
— Eric Christianson
President, IPMS Seattle

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Remarks on the Bomarc

I was excited to see the build article on the Bomarc missile by Jim James in the May/June 2023 issue. I have a long standing interest in this missile, along with the SAGE radar/computer system that controlled it for air defense.

Jim gave a lot of helpful information in his article, but there is one major set of errors he introduced: He gives a set of two different size fan blades to add to the center body and the two ramjets.

While the fan blade art provided was very nice and may be useful elsewhere, neither the Bomarc rocket boosters nor ramjets had fans. In the Bomarc A series, the center body housed a liquid fuel rocket (hydrazine and nitric acid) to boost the missile to ramjet ignition speeds of around Mach 3. The later B model replaced the liquid fuel rocket with a Thiokol solid rocket booster in the center body. Neither rocket system had any internal fan structures.

Likewise, the two sustainer Marquardt RJ43 ramjets do not have any fans in the intake or exhaust. The inlet spike and shape of the internal area ramp design of a ramjet engine compress the air without fans.

Again, overall this was a very helpful article in tips for updating this 1950s vintage kit recently re-released by Atlantis Models.

– Tom Dougherty
Ayer, Ma.

Ed.: Thanks for writing, Tom. I forwarded your email to Jim and here's what he said:

"Glad that you found the article useful and appreciate your comment about ramjets and main engine. To be honest, I was more interested in filling the gaping holes in the engines than striving for accuracy. My unfamiliarity with the actual workings of the Bomarc led me to the simplified solution of the fan inserts."

Hey, we've all been there before when we find out that bit of info after the model was finished. – A.S.

Got a comment, question, or tip?

You can send them to editor@FineScale.com, or visit the "Contribute to FSM" link under the "About Us" tab at FineScale.com.

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Canada's biggest model show just got bigger!

HeritageCon 15 packed the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Mount Hope, Ontario, with a record-setting 1,003 models exhibited on the contest tables. Among the capacity crowd jockeying to see the models and shopping the vendor booths were *FSM* editors looking for exciting models to share with you. See the superb scale tanks, planes, cars, ships, Gundams, and more by visiting FineScale.com/show-galleries.



The nuts and bolts of building armor models

Are you a beginner looking for advice for building a tank model? Maybe you've been away from the hobby for a while and need help getting back into armor modeling. Whatever your skill level, *FineScale Modeler* is here for you! Visit FineScale.com/how-to and let *FineScale Modeler* Editor Aaron Skinner lead you through building a model tank, step by step, from initial assembly through painting, decals, and weathering.

FineScale Modeler DLC

Make sure to download the April 2023 *FSM* DLC. Every installment features the sorts of scale modeling how-to stories you've come to expect from *FineScale Modeler* in a downloadable PDF package. Subscribers and e-newsletter recipients automatically receive an email announcing when the latest *FSM* DLC has been published. Never miss an installment by visiting FineScale.com/DLC to see all the *FSM* DLC issues available for download. Non-subscribers, visit KalmbachHobbyStore.com to buy *FSM* DLCs from our digital newsstand.



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Vultee Vanguard Mk.I/J 10 from Dora Wings, No. DW48050, \$TBA.



Hurricane Mk.I from HobbyBoss, No. 81777, \$57.99.

1/144 SCALE



USN F-14A VF-84 Jolly Rogers from Academy, No. 12626, \$13.50.



Airliner DC-8-32 from X Scale Models, No. X144002, \$34.99.

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M50A1 Ontos with interior from Takom, No. 1019, \$136.95.

1/35 SCALE



PzKpfw III Ausf N with Winterketten from Takom, No. 8011, \$TBA.



BAZ-6403 with ChMZAP-9990-071 trailer from Trumpeter, No. 01086, \$211.95.



T-55AD Drozd from Takom, No. 2166, \$TBA.



Scammell Commander with 62 tonne crane Freuhauf semi-trailer from HobbyBoss, No. 85527, \$254.99.

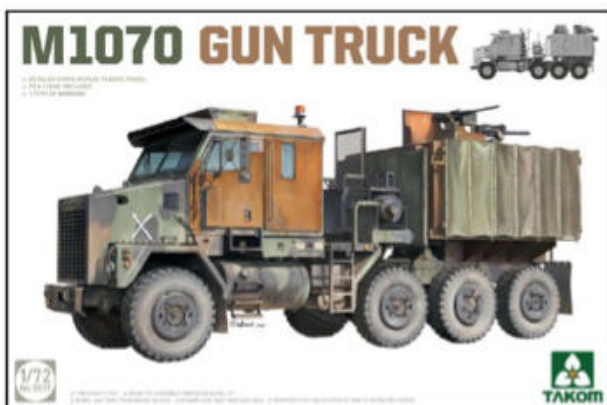
1/72 SCALE



152mm ShkH Dana vz.77 from HobbyBoss, No. 82941, \$65.99.



URAL-4320 (Military truck of the Armed Forces of Ukraine) from ICM, No. 72708, \$23.99.



M1070 Gun Truck from Takom, No. 5019, \$46.95.



BM-21 Grad MLRS of the Armed Forces of Ukraine from ICM, No. 72707, \$23.99.



15U175 TEL of RS-12M1 Topol-M ICBM complex from HobbyBoss, No. 82952, \$190.99.

AUTO

1/20 SCALE



Porsche 935 Martini from Tamiya, No. 20070, \$50.

1/24 SCALE



'78 Chevy Blazer Pulled Pork Pulldozer from Revell, No. 14532, \$29.75.



Gone Finshing (1980 Ford Bronco with bass boat and trailer set) from Revell, No. 17242, \$48.99.

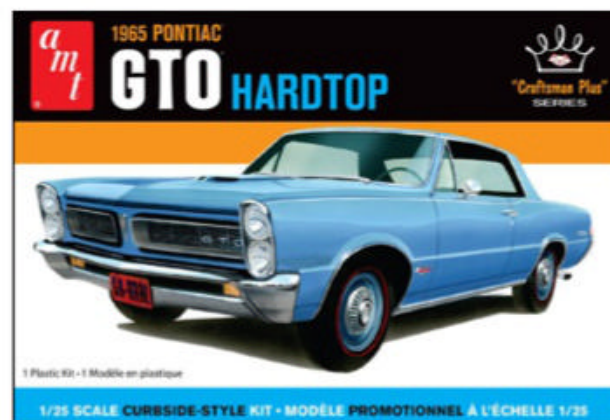
1/25 SCALE



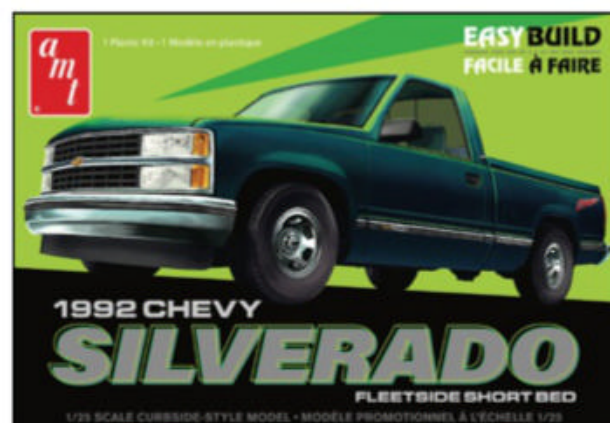
Kenworth W-900 dump truck from Revell, No. 12628, \$76.95.



'99 Chevy Silverado street pickup from Revell, No. 14538, \$38.95.



1965 Pontiac GTO hardtop from AMT, No. AMT1410M, \$31.99.



1992 Chevy C1500 Silverado fleetside short bed from AMT, No. AMT1408M, \$31.99.

1/32 SCALE



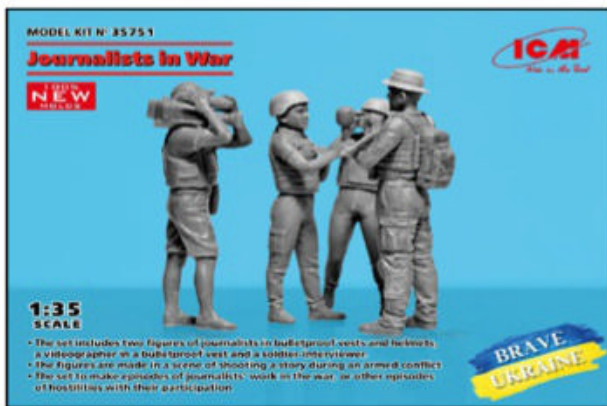
Chevy Bison from Revell, No. 17471, \$40.

FIGURES

1/35 SCALE



German Infantry set (late WWII) from Tamiya, No. 35382, \$16.50.



Journalists in War from ICM, No. 35751, \$23.99.



Panzer Crew France 1944 from MiniArt, No. 35364, \$TBA. Contains four figures.



German Soldiers in Cafe from MiniArt, No. 35396, \$TBA. Contains models of four figures, two tables and four chairs.

SCIENCE FICTION

1/35 SCALE



Lost In Space Chariot from DH Hobby, No. 1410, \$46.99.

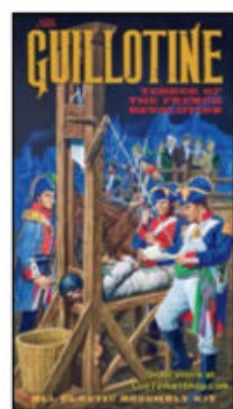
SHIPS

1/144 SCALE



KFK Kriegsfischkutter from ICM, No. S.012, \$44.99.

OTHER



Guillotine - Terror of the French Revolution from DH Hobby, No. 1462, \$39.99.

1/35 SCALE



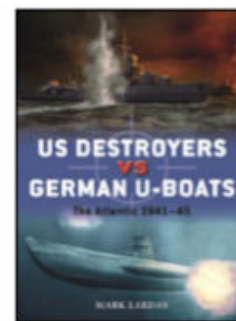
Fuel and oil drums from MiniArt, No. 49007, \$TBA. Contains 20 fuel drums.

BOOKS

1/35 SCALE



Russia's Five-Day War - The invasion of Georgia, August 2008 from Osprey Publishing, by Mark Galeotti, soft cover, 64 pages, 8 color artworks, ISBN: 9781472850997, \$21.



US Destroyers vs. German U-boats The Atlantic 1941-45 from Osprey Publishing, by Mark Lardas, soft cover, 80 pages. Color illustrations throughout, including profiles, technical drawings, battlescene artworks, maps and photographs. ISBN: 9781472854100, \$23.



South China Sea 1945 - Task Force 38's bold carrier rampage in Formosa, Luzon, and Indochina from Osprey Publishing, by Mark Lardas, soft cover, 96 pages, 60 B/W photos, 14 pages of illustrations, ISBN: 9781472853110, \$25.



Soviet tanks in Manchuria 1945 - The Red Army's ruthless last blitzkrieg of World War II from Osprey Publishing, by William E. Hiestand, soft cover, 48 pages, 40 B/W photos, 8 pages illustrations, ISBN: 9781472853721, \$20.



Panzer Reconnaissance from Osprey Publishing, by Thomas Anderson, hard cover, 288 pages, all B/W photos, ISBN: 9781472855022, \$50.

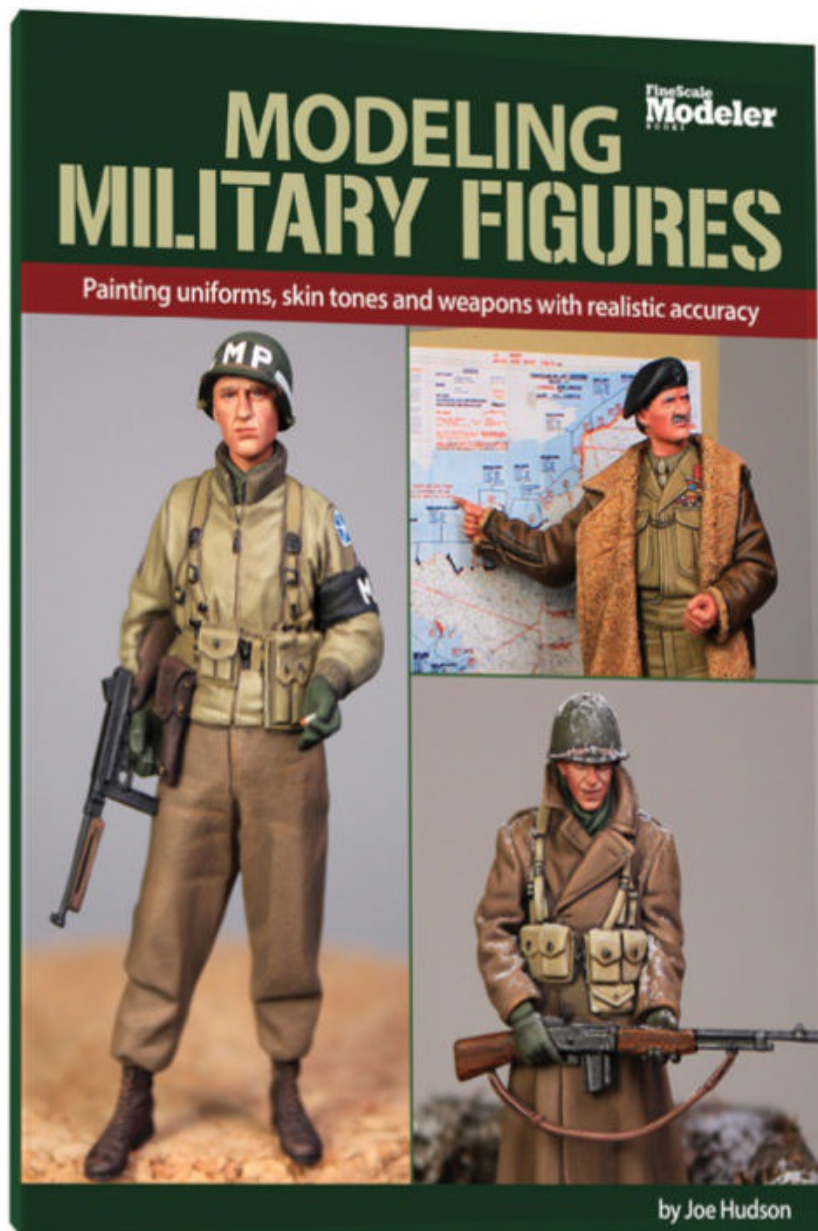


Nakajima Ki-49 Helen Units from Osprey Publishing, by George Eleftheriou, Jim Laurier and Gareth Hector, soft cover, 96 pages. Color artwork plates and maps; B/W and color photographs and illustrations, ISBN: 9781472854490, \$25.

96 PAGES + 15 PROJECTS!

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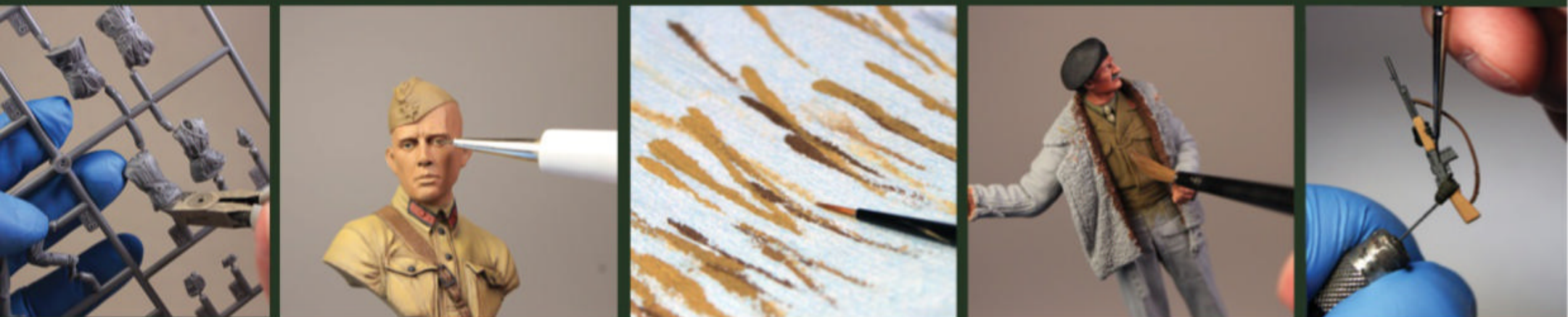


Get the most out of your figure modeling with this all-new project book from award winning modeler and long-time *FineScale Modeler* contributor, Joe Hudson. *Modeling Military Figures* explores building and painting World War II figures in various scales with step-by-step instructions for over 15 projects.

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GOOOOOD MORNING VIETNAM!

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If you're planning on modeling a UH-1, David Doyle's book *The Huey in Vietnam* is a great resource for superdetailing projects and will provide outstanding inspiration for dioramas. Part of Schiffer's Legends of Warfare Aviation series, the 112-page hardcover brims with photos of Huey gunships and transports in combat. Pick up your copy at Kalmbach Hobby Store for \$19.99.

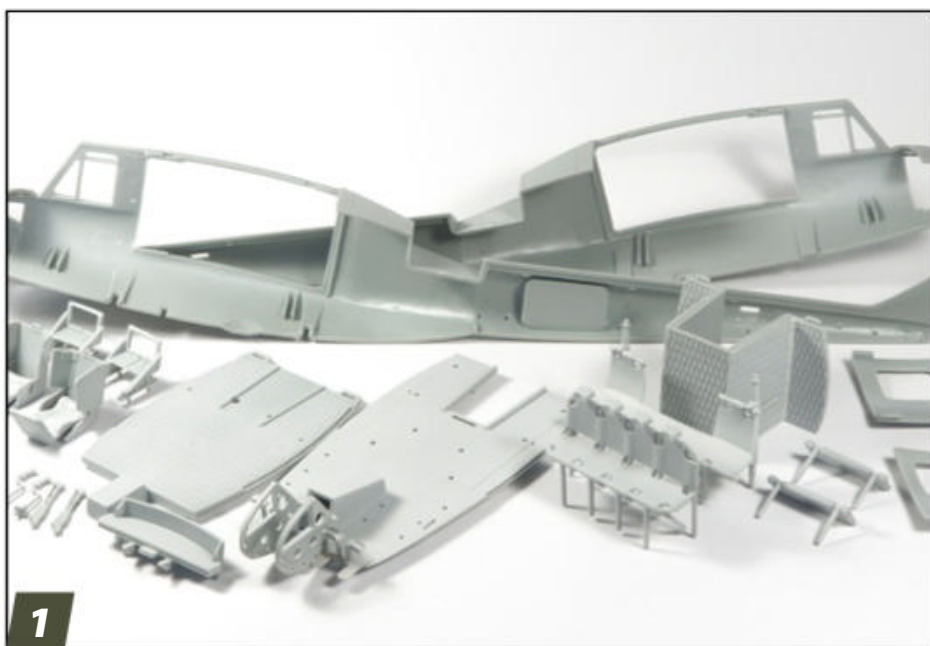


**Finishing Dragon's 1/35 scale UH-1D for
Southeast Asian service**

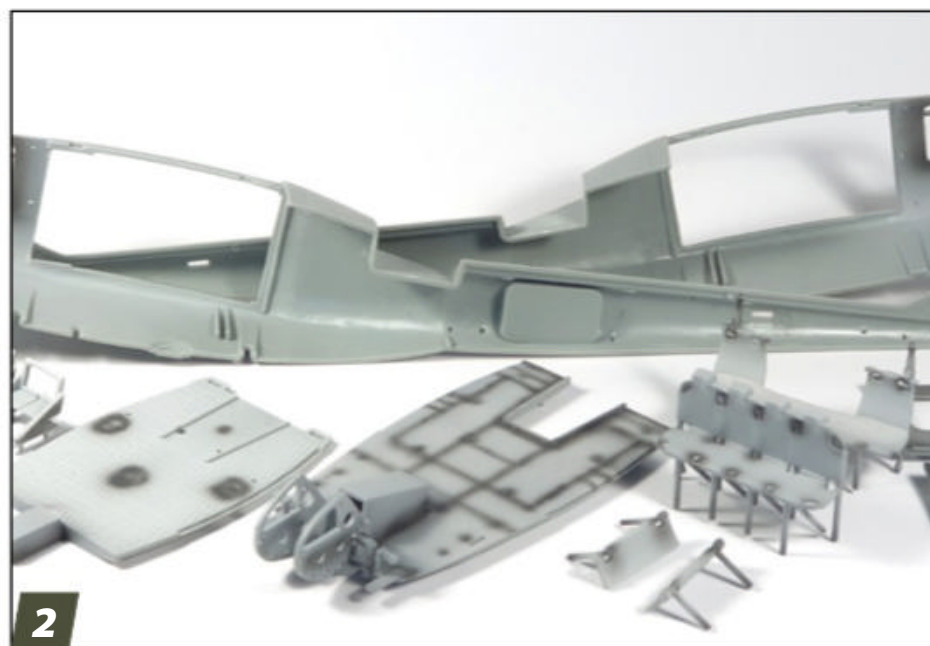
BY KEVIN OTTENS

The Huey is by far my favorite helicopter, especially the longer body UH-1D. It and the earlier versions were widely used during the Vietnam War.

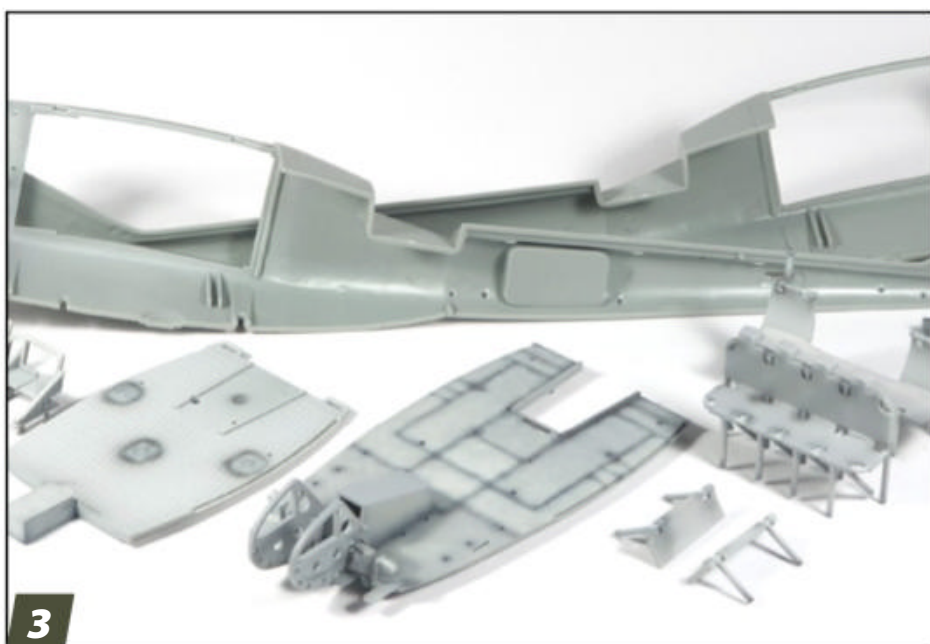
Dragon offers the only 1/35 scale UH-1D with a kit that originated as a Panda Models release in 2002. It's not great, with thick plastic and clunky moldings, but Dragon added photo-etched metal (PE) parts that improve many internal and external details. There are also figures in the box.



1
After dismantling the subassemblies and cleaning the parts with 70% isopropyl alcohol to remove grease and other impurities, I airbrushed the subassemblies with Vallejo Gray Surface Primer (No. 73.601).



2
To paint the interior parts, I airbrushed Vallejo Model Air Light Gray (No. 71.050), pre-shaded details and recesses with fine airbrushed lines of Model Air German Grey (No. 71.052)



3
I added lighter shades sprayed in a marbled pattern, starting with a mix of equal parts Vallejo Model Air Light Gull Gray (No. 71.050) and light gray, followed by straight light gull gray, and topped with a mix of equal parts light gull gray and Model Air White (No. 71.001).



4
I base-coated the pilots' seat armor with Vallejo Model Air U.S. Olive Drab (No. 71.043), pre-shaded with Camouflage Dark Green (No. 71.019) for shadows and a mix of 3 parts olive drab and 1 part Medium Yellow (No. 71.002) for highlights. A drop of white brightened high points.



5
For the seats, Vallejo Model Air Sand Yellow RLM79 (No. 71.278) served as the base, Camouflage Pale Brown (No. 71.035) as shadows, and mixes of sand yellow with U.S. Sand Yellow (No. 71.028) and white as highlights.



6
The instrument panel builds from two pre-printed PE parts: a back panel with all the gauges and the front with the bezels and openings. To represent glass, I painted the gauges with AK Interactive (AK) Wet Effects Fluid (No. AK079), and enamel gloss used to create water stains.



7 I painted the rear seats with Vallejo Model Color Bronze Green (No. 70.897) and dry-brushed with Yellow Olive (No. 70.892). After adding the PE belts, I used thin Ammo of Mig Jimenez (Ammo) Oilbrushers Olive Green (No. A.MIG-3505) and Field Green (No. A.MIG-3506).



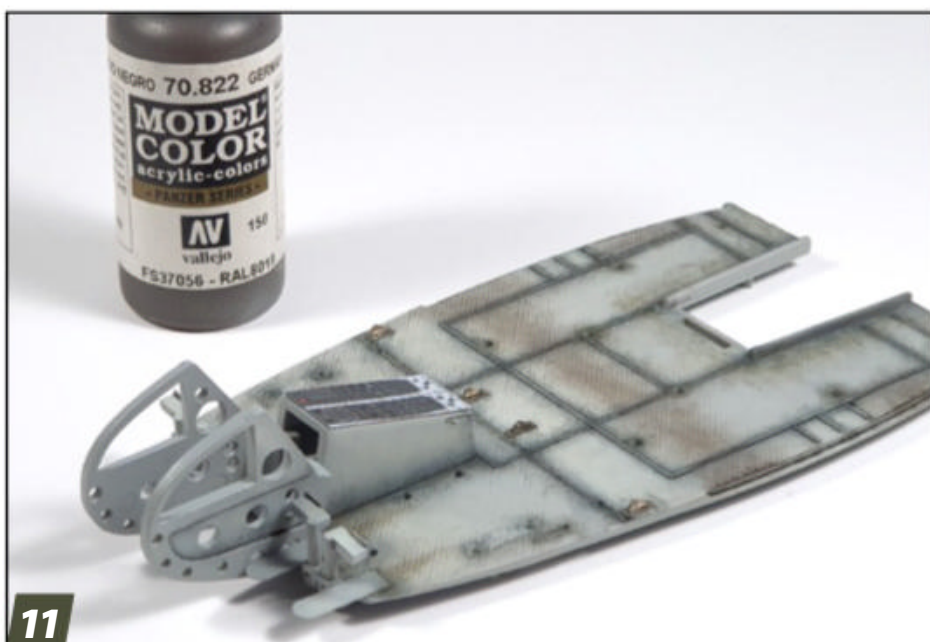
8 I enhanced the floor with a pinwash of Ammo Dark Wash (No. A.MIG-1008) flowed along the lines between the plates.



9 To further boost the plates, I applied slightly thin AK Neutral Grey Wash (No. AK677) around the edges and blended it towards the center of each.



10 I dabbed AK Wash for Interior (No. AK093) almost as a filter in areas where grime and dirt would likely accumulate.



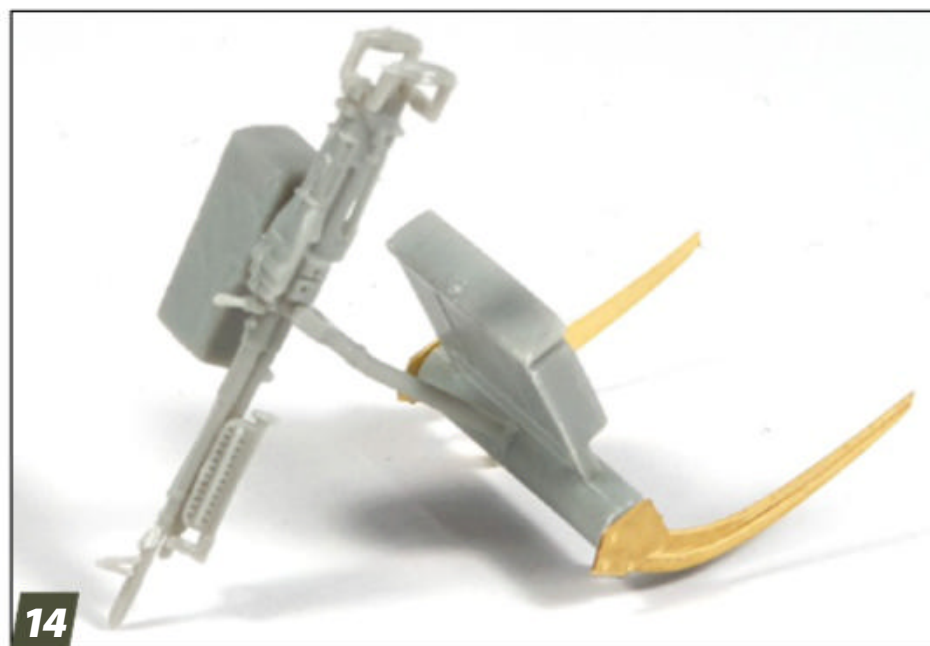
11 Lightly airbrushed Vallejo Model Color German Camouflage Black Brown (No. 70.882) showed dirt and mud tracked into the cabin by troops boarding and leaving the helicopter.



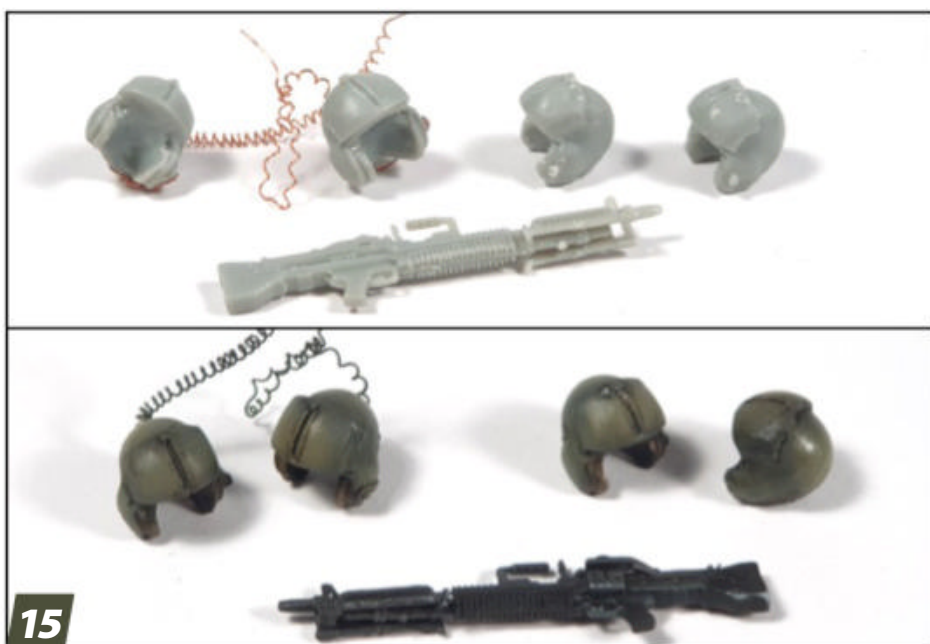
12 To show paint worn down to metal from foot traffic, I lightly dry-brushed Vallejo Model Color Natural Steel (No. 70.864) over the camouflage black brown. Rubbing a 9B pencil over the natural metal scuffs added the final sheen.



After assembling the interior, I sandwiched it into the fuselage halves and attached the skids, engine cover, and various roof details such as the antennas. I filled large gaps with Milliput two-part epoxy putty and smaller gaps with AK Modeling Grey Putty (No. AK104).



The kit provides just one fixed M60 for the door gunner rather than two as would have been typical.



I collected the pilots and crew and ground their heads from the helmets with a round bit in a rotary tool. Copper wire wound around a small drill bit produced the headphone wires. I also built an M60 machine gun to arm the door not equipped with the fixed position.



After dipping the windows in AK Glass Coat Gauzy Agent (No. AK893), I glued them in place with Ammo Ultra Glue (No. A.MIG-2031), which dries clear and leaves almost no residue before masking them for painting.



To prepare the plastic for painting, I sprayed the body with Vallejo gray primer and the rotors with Vallejo Black Primer (No. 70.602).



I airbrushed the body with Vallejo Model Air Camouflage Dark Green (No. 71.019) as a base for the camouflage.



To begin post-shading, I airbrushed Model Air Camouflage Black Green (No. 71.018) along panel edges and around raised details.



For the darkest shadows, such as door outlines, hatch edges, and vents, I airbrushed a mix of equal parts of Vallejo Model Air Black (No. 71.057) and Camouflage Dark Brown (No. 71.042).



Next, I mixed equal parts camouflage dark green and Model Air U.S. Olive Drab (No. 71.043) and sprayed it randomly inside panels for a slightly lighter marbled effect.



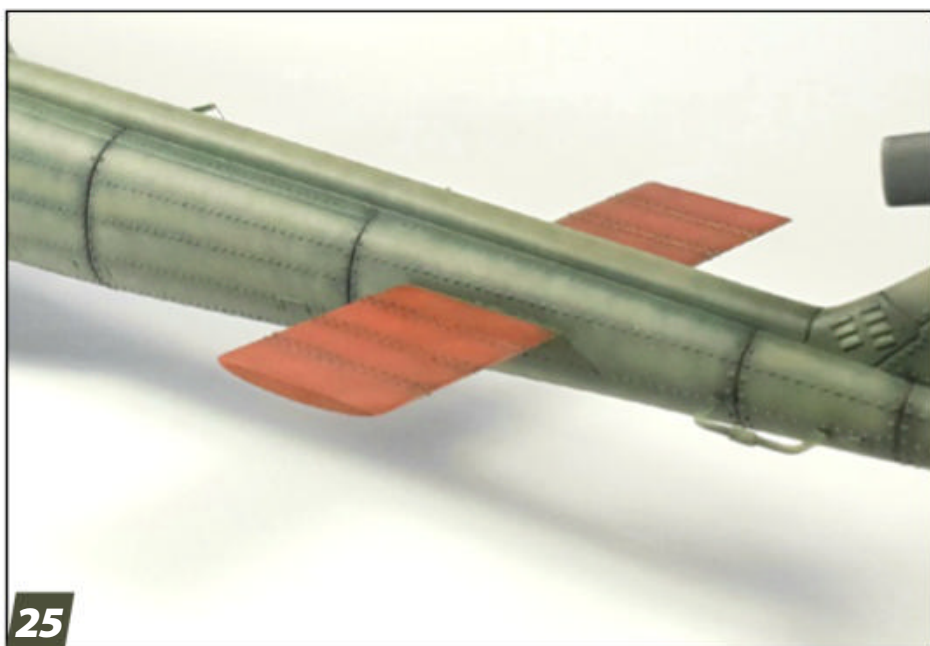
I added 20% Model Air Light Green (No. 71.006) to the previous mixture and sprayed this on the upper three quarters of the helicopter. I focused on panel centers and marbled this shade rather than applying even coats.



Furthering the zenithal effect, I airbrushed panel centers on the upper half of the helicopter with a mix of equal parts Model Air Medium Yellow (No. 71.002), White (No. 71.001), and U.S. olive drab. As a final layer, I added a little more white and yellow to the mix for the top.

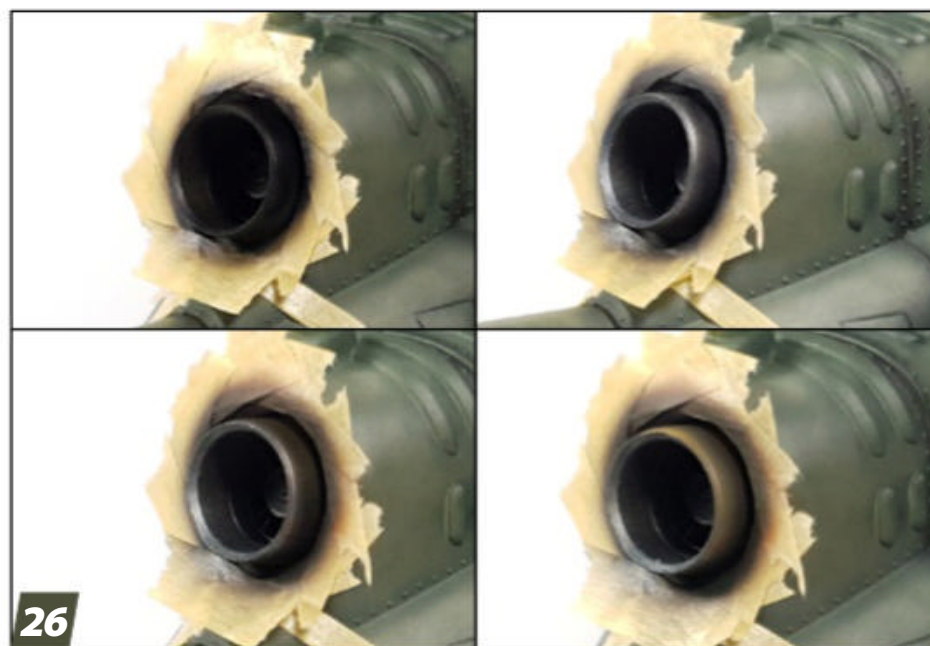


Over a base coat of Model Air Black Grey (No. 71.056), I sprayed Black (No. 71.056) along the rows of rivets on the antiglare panel, followed by progressively lighter mixes of black, black grey, and white.



25

I painted the stabilizers with Vallejo Fire Red (No. 71.084) varying the density of the paint to make it appear marbled.



26

I base-coated the exhaust black (upper left) followed by an equal mix of Model Air Gun Metal (No. 71.072) and black (upper right). Next came a thin layer of 1 part Burnt Umber (No. 71.040) and 4 parts thinner (lower left) and, last, a mix of Wood (No. 71.077) and Orange Rust (No. 71.130).



27

I added the decals patching omissions on the kit sheet with markings from my spares box. That included the yellow step stripes behind the main doors and the stencils behind the pilots' doors. The sheet also provided the stripes for the rotors, but I painted them instead.



28

After sealing the decals with a coat of Vallejo Polyurethane Satin Varnish (No. 28.652) and stripping the masks, I was ready for more weathering. I flowed thinned Abteilung 502 Black (No. ABT110) oil paint into deeper recesses, like door and hatch outlines, vents, and panel lines.



29

I mixed another wash using Abteilung 502 Sepia (No. ABT002) oil paint and applied it as a pinwash around smaller details, like rivets, hinges, and handles.



30

To enhance the camouflage color, I thinned Abteilung 502 Olive Green (No. ABT050) oil paint and applied it along the edges of each panel. Using a round brush slightly dampened with enamel thinner, I feathered the paint towards the center of the panels.



31

I tinted the cockpit's overhead windows by airbrushing Tamiya Clear Green (No. X-25) onto them after masking.



32

I mixed Vallejo Model Color White (No. 70.951) and natural steel for an aluminum shade that I lightly brushed around door edges, handles, hinges, and rivets.



33

For the rotor head, mast, and actuators, I applied AK Shafts and Bearings Grease (No. AK2032); Aircraft Engine Oil (No. AK2019) and Landing Gear Wash (No. 2029). **FSM**



Light a SPINNER

Add details and LEDs to a
Blade Runner police cruiser

BY RICARDO DACOBA



Patrolling the dystopian future (of 2019!) seen in Ridley Scott's 1982 film *Blade Runner*, the blue spinner has become a classic sci-fi vehicle. Created for the movie by acclaimed neo-futurist and industrial designer Syd Mead, the idea has been replicated and paid homage to in numerous subsequent movies, TV shows, and comics.

Although kits of the vehicle have been produced in vinyl and resin, it wasn't until 2011 that Fujimi produced one in injection-molded plastic. Characterized by generally good exterior detail,

Fujimi's 1/24 scale kit has a couple of mistakes inside and the wheels are completely smooth with no tread on the tires. I set about to fix those flaws and light the police car without using aftermarket parts.



Background: © Scharfsinn86/
Dreamstime.com



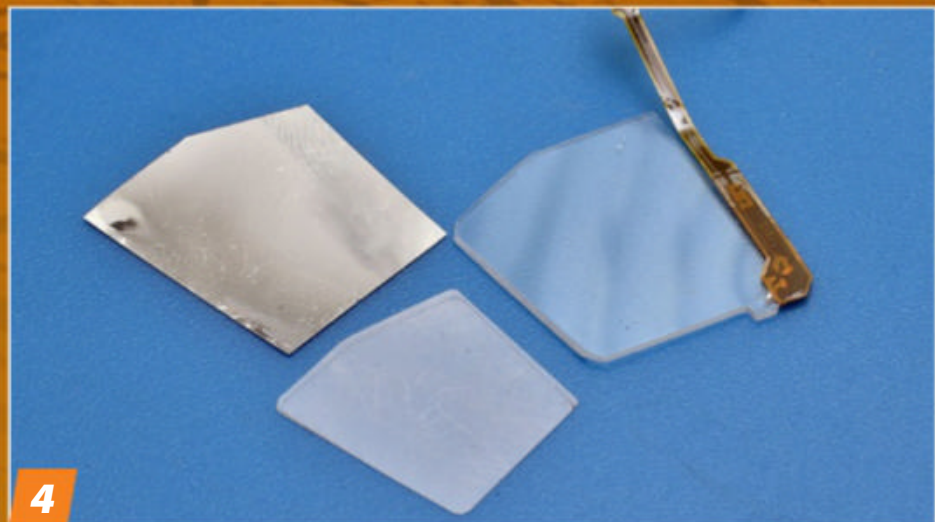
1 First things first, I needed to remove interior details that will be replaced. Using a pencil, I defined the areas of the cabin to be cut away.



2 The floors were initially removed with a cutting disc in a rotary tool, before I refined the edges with a flat file.



3 On top of the instrument panel sits a lit projection screen — for a HUD, maybe. I cut the solid-molded screen open so I could fill it with translucent material that could be backlit.



4 To illuminate the screen, I adapted lighting parts from the viewscreen of a camera I had discarded. I was able to disassemble the backlight and cut it to the required shape without problems.

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5 At the rear end of the body, I drilled open the center of the taillight/nozzle assembly for lighting.



6 With the intention of illuminating the dashboard and instrument console, I made silicone molds of the kit parts so they could be reproduced in translucent resin.



7 Although the reproductions are not totally transparent and have certain imperfections, the main requirement is for light to pass through unpainted areas.



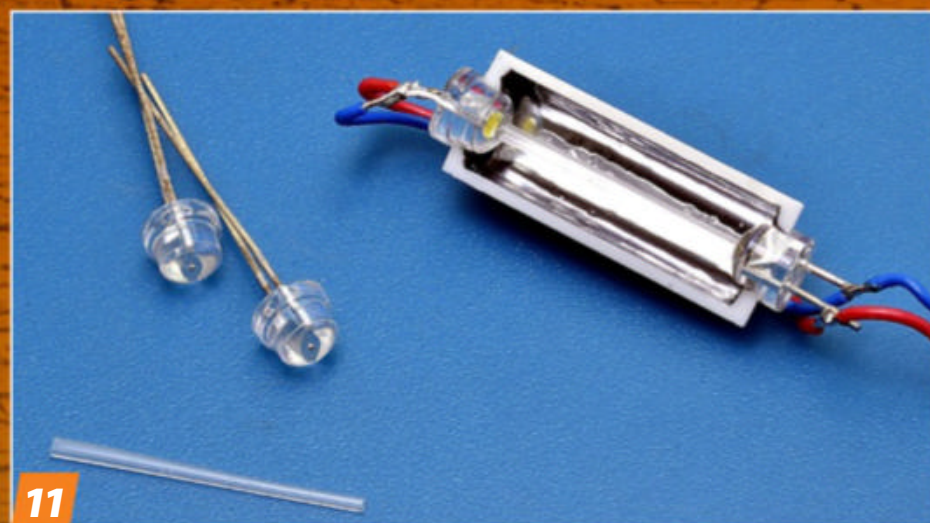
8 The back of the passenger compartment (right) doesn't capture the look of the on-screen vehicle, so I scratchbuilt a replacement with styrene sheet (left). I cut the center console from the kit part and glued it onto the new bulkhead.



9 I carefully opened the vents and rear side windows. The diagonal side segments at the rear wheel well were replaced with translucent plastic because I hoped to illuminate them, an idea I later gave up due to lack of space. In any case, this modification gave extra realism.



10 To illuminate the tubular headlight between the wheel extensions, I stretched the ink tube from an empty pen over a flame until it matched the desired diameter.



11 I opened holes in either end of the headlight's two parts to accept white LEDs and glued them in place with the stretched translucent tube between them. Self-adhesive chrome on the solid plastic backing reflects the light forward.



I hollowed out the solid gumballs with a spherical bit in a rotary tool and shaped LEDs to fit taking care to avoid working parts. The negative lead of each LED — they all go to a common ground — was retained to double as a support, but I cut the positive nearly flush with the underside of the LED and soldered on fine wire. The LEDs were inserted into the gumballs and the spaces filled with transparent epoxy resin.

12

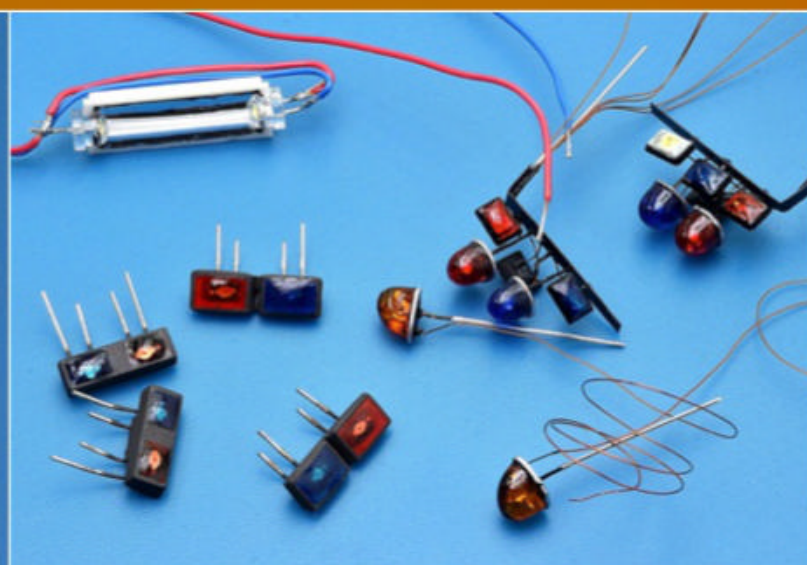


13

There are flat red and blue lights on the light bar and under the car. I used high-luminescence red and blue LEDs for each, filing them down to fit the kit parts.



14



For the lenses, I dyed transparent resin blue and red and applied it to the respective lights filling each to the rim. I finished the lights with black or silver paint.



15

To reduce the visual impact of the connections as much as possible, I made the bracket for the roof lights with copper sheet, which serves as the common ground for the negative posts from the LEDs.



16

There are consoles with lights in the doors. Because of size of the lights and the limited space, I opted to illuminate them using fiber optics that could be run from the rear of the vehicle where more space was available.



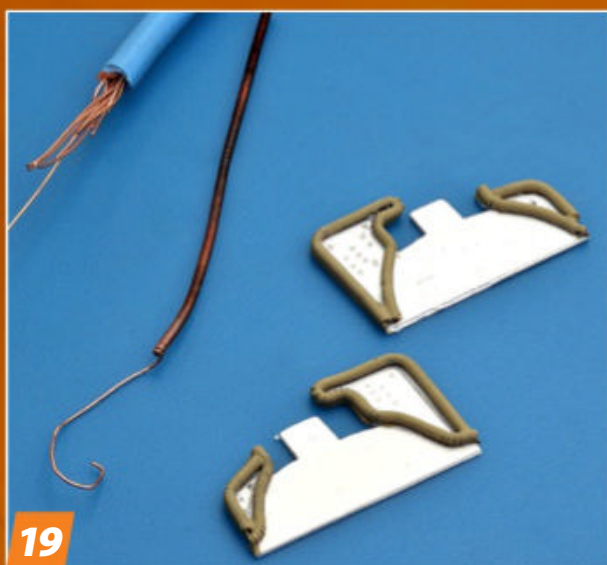
17

I cut the underside at the aft edge of the passenger compartment to facilitate assembly and painting. I would leave the rear section removable to access electrical connections and the batteries.



18

As a precaution against light leaking through the white plastic, I painted the interior of the vehicle with Tamiya Black (No. X-1).



19

I made the backrests behind the seats using styrene sheet. On the full-size filming set, they were outlined with a ridged tube; I simulated it with fine copper wire wound into a spiral, glued in place, and coated with liquid putty.



20

To light these parts, I inserted carbon fiber into holes drilled into the plates. Gathering those into copper coils gives them the appearance of being properly bundled behind the bulkheads.



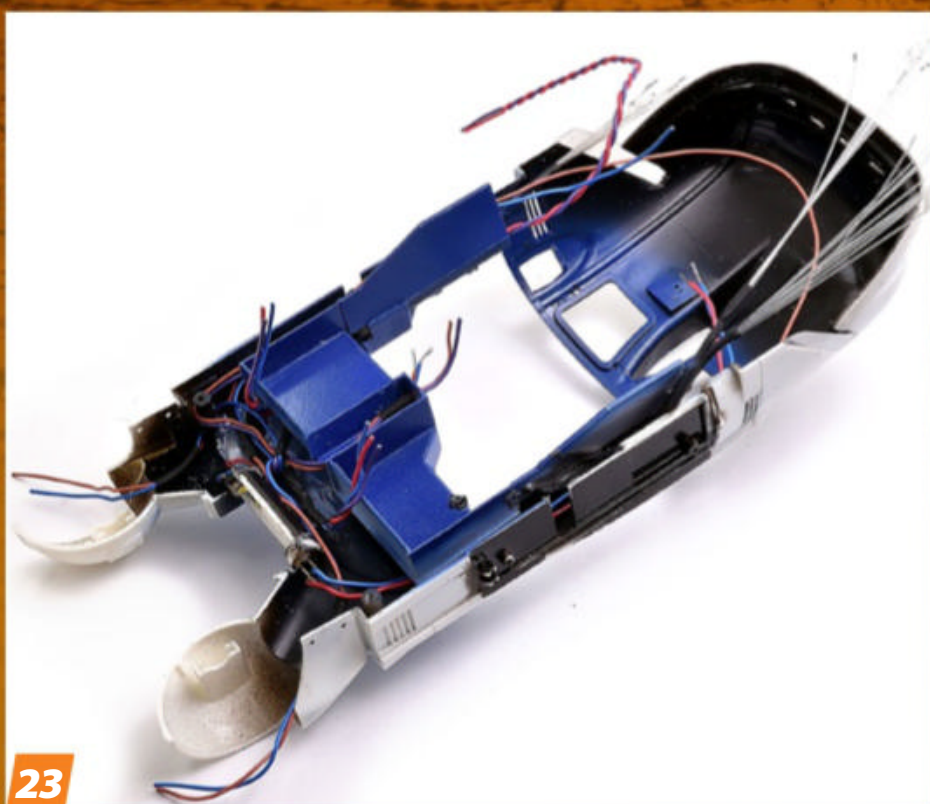
21

I airbrushed the interior parts with Humbrol Blue Matt (No. 25) lightened with a little Sea Blue Gloss (No. 47).



22

To represent carpeting on sections of the floor, I added micro balloons to the paint before airbrushing. The micro balloons produce a slightly rough texture like car floors. The same covering was applied to the rear bulkhead.



23

With the interior painted, I began installing the LEDs and running wiring in preparation for closing the body.



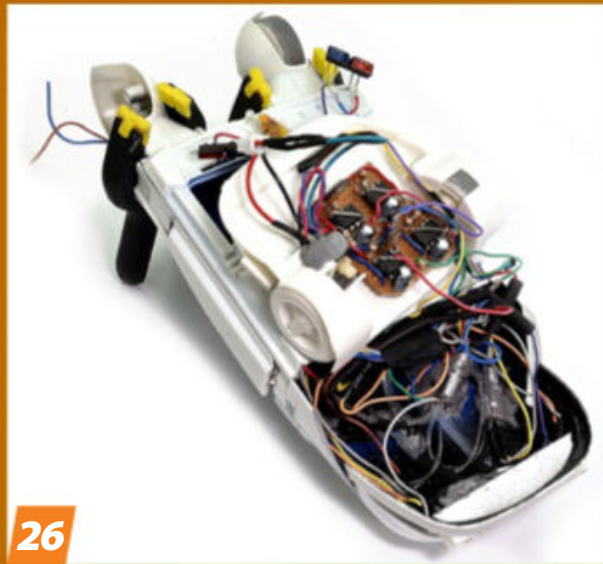
24

Here you can see the LEDs installed for the driver's control panel and the dorsal fin. The latter was fitted with a reflector to produce an even and diffused light.



25

To power the fiber optics, I made tubes by wrapping aluminum sheet around a screwdriver. After inserting a LED at one end and a bundle of optic fibers at the other, I sealed them with epoxy resin.



26

Although the fit is a little tight, there is enough space inside the Spinner to hide the wiring, electronics, and fiber optics.



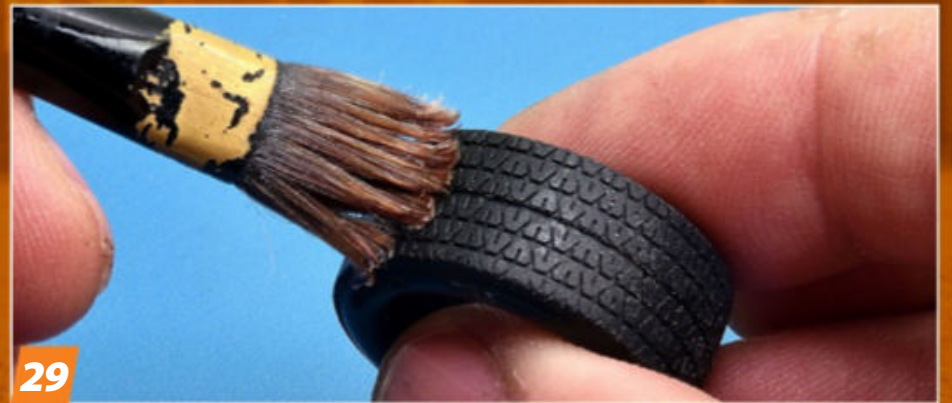
27

There are lights inside the front-wheel covers, so I painted the insides black and applied self-adhesive foil as reflectors. Three LEDs soldered together (one for the middle and one each for the upper and lower edge) light the covers.



28

I couldn't stand to see the Spinner with smooth tires, so I got creative to add tread. A tire from a Tamiya 1/24 scale Ferrari Testarossa had similar dimensions to the Spinner, so it would be my pattern for a mold.



29

First, I brushed a thin layer of petroleum jelly onto the rubber tire to serve as a mold-release agent and allow the silicone mold to come away easily leaving accurate detail.



30

To cast the mold, I used single-component silicone, the kind used to fix glass, mixed with baby powder for a firmer consistency and to speed setting. I stirred the components together to achieve a homogenous consistency.



31

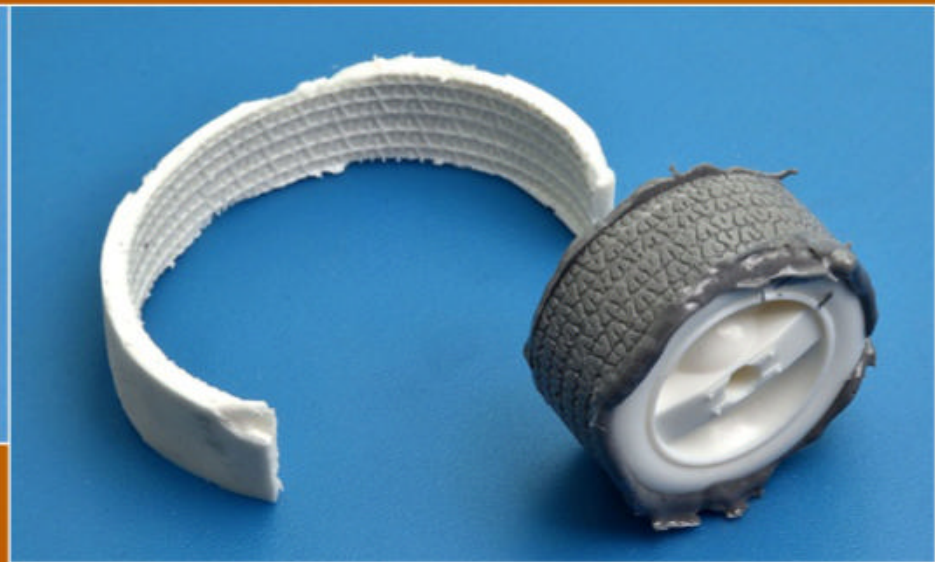
I slipped the tire over an appropriately sized handle, in this case a marker, applied the silicone mix to the part, and pressed it into the tread. Lastly, with the silicone applied, I wrapped paper around the tire and held it in place with tape. After the silicone cured, I had a flexible mold.





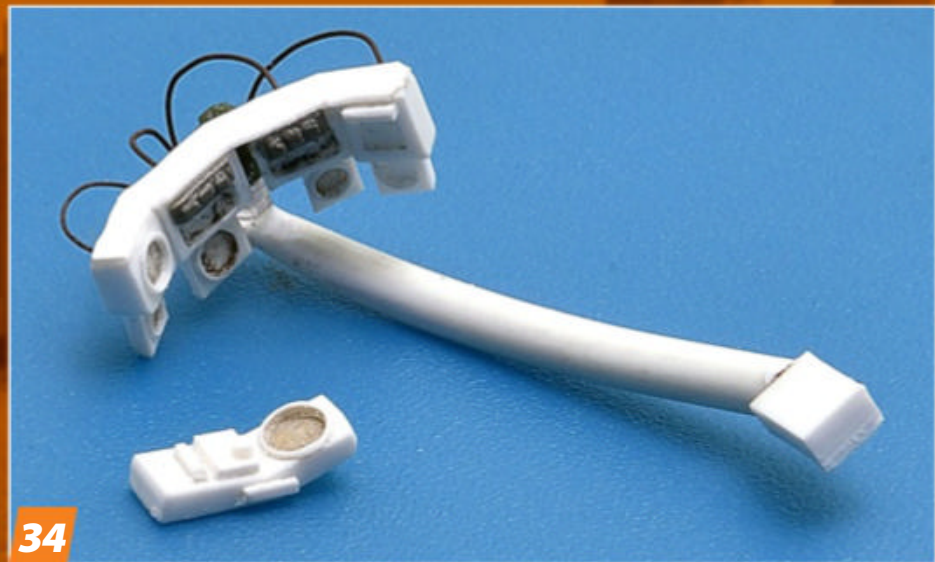
32

After applying a thin layer of epoxy putty to the mold, I wrapped it around a wheel and held it in place as it hardened. Then I removed the mold and cleaned up the tread edges with a file.



33

The results were not perfect, but for wheels that are only partially visible on the finished model, they sufficed. I painted and weathered them in preparation for installation.



34

The kit omitted an instrument console suspended above the center console and what appears to be a cell phone on a post in the passenger footwell. I made both using styrene.



35



The kit's seats were simple, so I replaced them with epoxy putty cushions and styrene sheet head rests to match the on-screen vehicle. After painting them metallic blue, I flowed on a black wash.



36

After masking, I airbrushed the body with Tamiya Metallic Blue (No. X-13) followed by a thin layer of 2K automotive clear. I applied the decals and two more light coats of the 2K clear, wet-sanded to remove imperfections, and applied a little polish to finish.





To maintain the transparency of the yellow bands on the sides, I airbrushed a thin base coat white acrylic followed by a layer of yellow just heavy enough to show the color but still appear transparent.

Weathering helps sci-fi vehicles look used and lived in. I used colored pencils to draw scrapes and worn spots on the interior.



It always seems to be raining in *Blade Runner*, so I added streaked grime to the body, including the underside, by airbrushing a tan-gray acrylic mix through a photo-etched metal template designed for creating wood grain. Applying this effect on the clear cover helps tie it into the overall vehicle and prevent it looking like a toy. With that, my spinner was ready to take to the gloomy skies of Los Angeles looking for wayward replicants. **FSM**





DOUGLAS SCOTT

FOUNTAIN INN, SOUTH CAROLINA

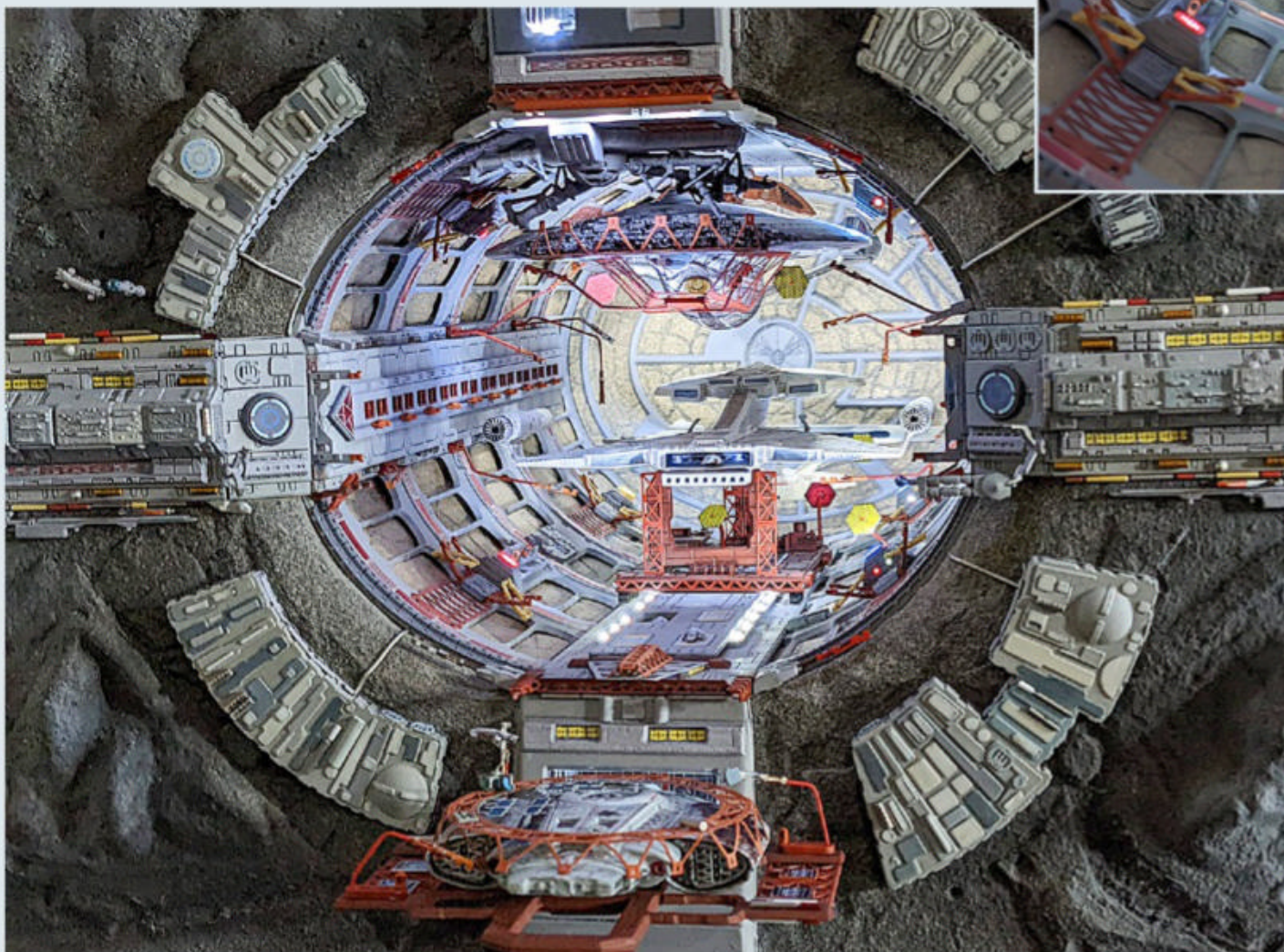
Douglas built his Academy 1/350 scale *Cutty Sark* out of the box. He painted with Vallejo acrylics using a combination of airbrushing and hand-brushing to get it just right. To give the sails a weather-beaten appearance, Douglas blended shades of white and tan with an airbrush. After noticing that the molded flags at the top of the masts were out of scale and lacked decals, Douglas cut them off.

► ARIEL HORTON

VERNAL, UTAH

For her second solo build, Ariel built an Airfix 1/48 scale P-51D kit. Not a fan of military paint schemes, she does like modern-day racers, the more colorful the better! So, she made this “what-if” Jelly Belly-sponsored aircraft. Ariel plans to build *Miss America* and Amelia Earhart’s red Lockheed Vega next.





◀▲ **MIKE WALSTON**
HIGHLANDS RANCH,
COLORADO

Mike's impressive *Star Trek* space dock is made from a plaque, styrene stock, and engraved styrene sheet. He finished the outer wall with Krylon Stone Textured spray paint, built the inside with parts from his spares box, and designed decals on CorelDraw. He added scaffolding using Metal Earth photo-etched-metal kits, a kitbashed a *McQuarrie*-class starship with a Polar Lights 1/2500 scale *Discovery* engineering hull, and an AMT 1/2500 scale *Enterprise-B* saucer section. Also included is an AMT 1/2500 scale *USS Enterprise-A*.



JASON HALDEMAN
GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY

Jason built this Tamiya 1/35 scale Jagdpanther back in the '90s. He painted the model in what he calls an "attempt at winter camouflage" and finally staged and photographed it in 2021. Can't beat the real deal for a snowy background!



▲ **JOHN ANGULO**
CITRUS HEIGHTS, CALIFORNIA

John used an Italeri 1/35 scale M24 Chaffee for his take on Telly Savalas' "Sgt. Guffy's Bargain Basement Tank" from the 1965 movie *Battle of the Bulge*. He built it straight out of the box with Tamiya and Vallejo paints, Verlinden and aftermarket stowage, and a handwritten name.

► **WILSON MANSON**
NEWBURY, WEST BERKS, ENGLAND

Wilson wanted to experiment with creating a beach scene, so he built Zvezda's 1/72 scale Medieval Lifeboat out of the box and scratchbuilt groundwork using common craft materials and real sand.



▼ **JAMES L. MARTIN**
CHILLICOTHE, ILLINOIS

James built this 1/48 scale Lockheed U-2C spy plane from an AFV Club kit and finished it with Vallejo Model Air black acrylic and Model Master enamels. The pilot is a 1/48 scale resin SR-71 figure modified to fit. He built it to represent CIA Article 360 as flown by Francis Gary Powers on the fateful mission of May 1, 1960, when he was shot down over the Soviet Union. James found the aerial photograph on the display base on the internet and had it sized and printed by a local print shop.



▲ **AUSTIN RICH**
BURLINGTON, KENTUCKY

Austin, 12, was excited to share pictures of his Bandai 1/144 scale MS-06F-2 Zaku iiF2. He painted it with Vallejo acrylics sprayed through a Badger Patriot gravity-feed airbrush. Austin took a chance on his first effort weathering, using hairspray to chip the paint, and he's happy with the result. We think he should be proud!

◀ **LEELAN LAMPKINS**
ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

This 3D-printed model of the latest movie version of Godzilla came from Etsy and was comprised of 10 pieces, including the base. Leelan painted it with Stynylrez primer and craft acrylics. He thinks this kit turned out better than the Aurora Godzilla he built as a kid in the 1970s!



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Details make all the difference when personalizing a hot rod

BY TIM BOYD

Two of today's most popular hot rod kits are the Revell 1/25 scale Ford 1929 Model A roadster and 1930 Model A five-window coupe. Accurate, fun to build, full of options, and largely reflective of the latest trends in the 1/1 scale hot rod world, they are also, once again, widely available. Such popularity means

many modelers build the kit and that can make it tough for your hot rod to stand out from the others parked around it.

What can you do to make this kit truly your own and give it your own spin?

Plenty. You might go with a simple alteration, like different hubcaps and taillights, or get

Revell's 1/25 scale Ford Model A roadster and coupe hot rod kits feature multiple building options straight from the box (top two). However, you can do so much more to make a scale model traditional hot rod project your own, like the four models in the foreground.



ambitious and drop in a new drivetrain or swap the rear suspension. Maybe you go so far as to adapt a different Model A body, like a Tudor, woody, or pickup cab.

No single story can show the smorgasbord of options, but let's catalog a number of them, along with sources for parts, and get the ideas flowing. Kitbashing skills, experience swapping parts and adapting assemblies from other kits, and knowledge of simple bodywork will be helpful. Then again, everyone has to start somewhere. Generally, easier modifications are shown first, followed by progressively more difficult alterations.

Enough talk. Shift your creativity into overdrive, have some primo, kitbashing fun!

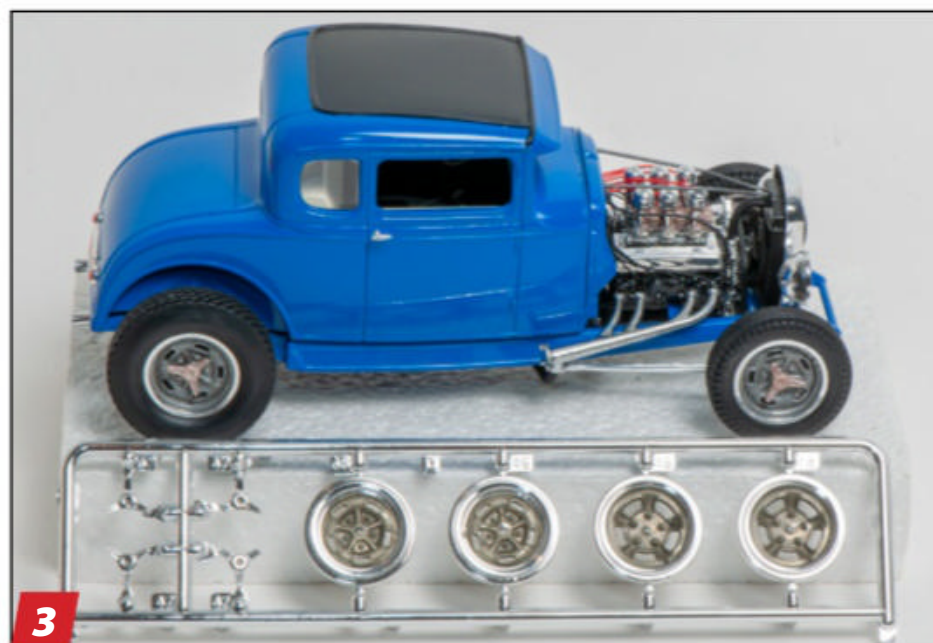


Revell's newest Model A hot rod kits broke cover in 2015 and have just recently been reissued. The two original kit issues (nos. 85-4322 and 85-4326) are on the left; the latest versions (nos. 85-4463 and 85-4464) are on the right. You can use the modifications discussed in the following pages for all these kits.

SIMPLE PARTS SWAPPING AND PERSONALIZATION



Enhance the included Revell 1946 Ford hubcaps with thinned red paint (A). You can find 1941 Ford hubcaps (B) in an AMT/Ertl 1941 Ford woody stock (No. 30051). Other options include 1940 Ford Standard (C) and De Luxe (D), and 1948 Ford (E) hubcaps from same model year kits.



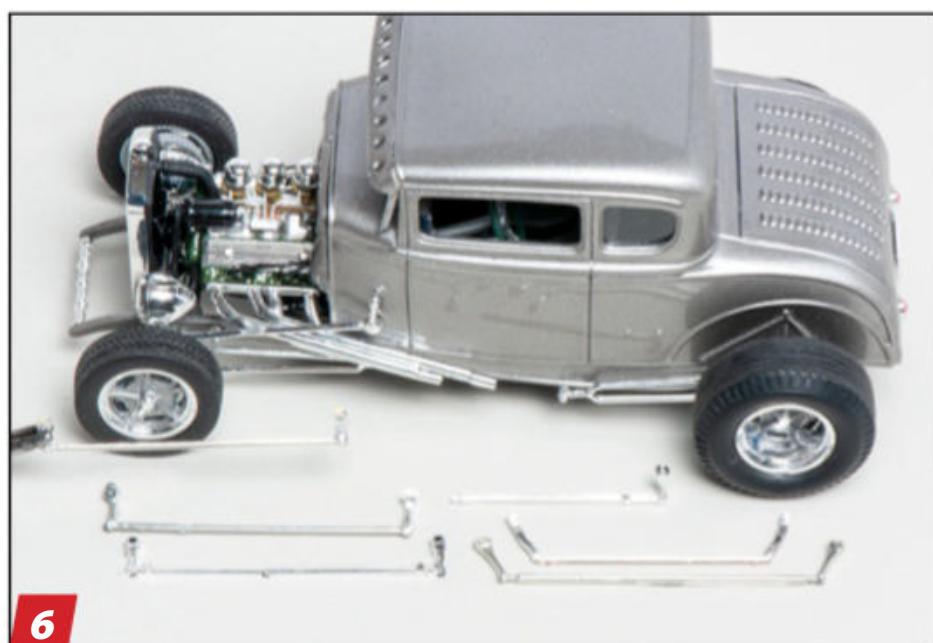
The coupe and roadster kits have different styles of Halibrand/Salt Flat wheels for the front and rear. Paint the recessed centers with a flat metallic color of your choosing. Or use a second set of the front wheels on the rear tires for a matching set, as seen on the model here.



The Model A hot rod kits have different front and rear tire sidewall and tread patterns (left). For matching patterns, replace the rear tires with the *front* tires from reissued Monogram Black Widow hot rod kits with a copyright date of 2010 or later (nos. 85-0060 or 85-4324; right).



The front frame horns of 1932 Fords connect to a tubular spreader bar (included in the Model A kits). Some hot rod builders replace this spreader bar with an engine camshaft. In 1/25 scale, use parts found in the AMT Chevy and Pontiac Engine Parts Pack (No. AMT-PP011/24).



Some traditional hot rods utilize a cowl-mounted steering setup. To do this, cut down and position front suspension tie rods as seen here. Or you can install an under-dash, cowl-mounted steering box from a Revell Slingster dragster (No. 85-4997) or sprint-car model kits.

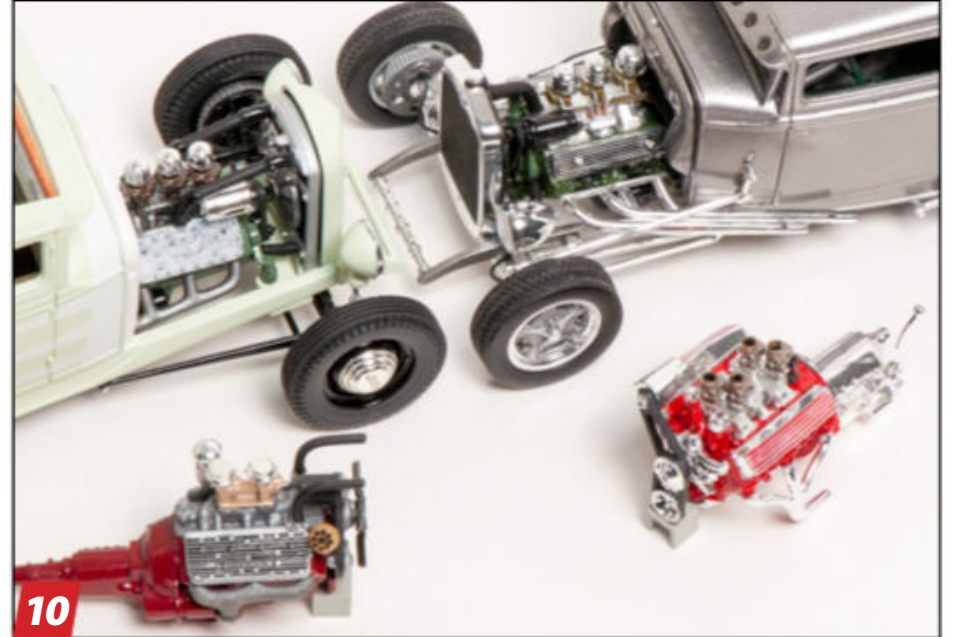


Instead of using the supplied decals, paint your interior parts with an insert color and then mask — I like to use Bare-Metal Foil for this. Coat the foil and surrounding color with flat clear to prevent bleeding and follow up with the second upholstery color of your choice.



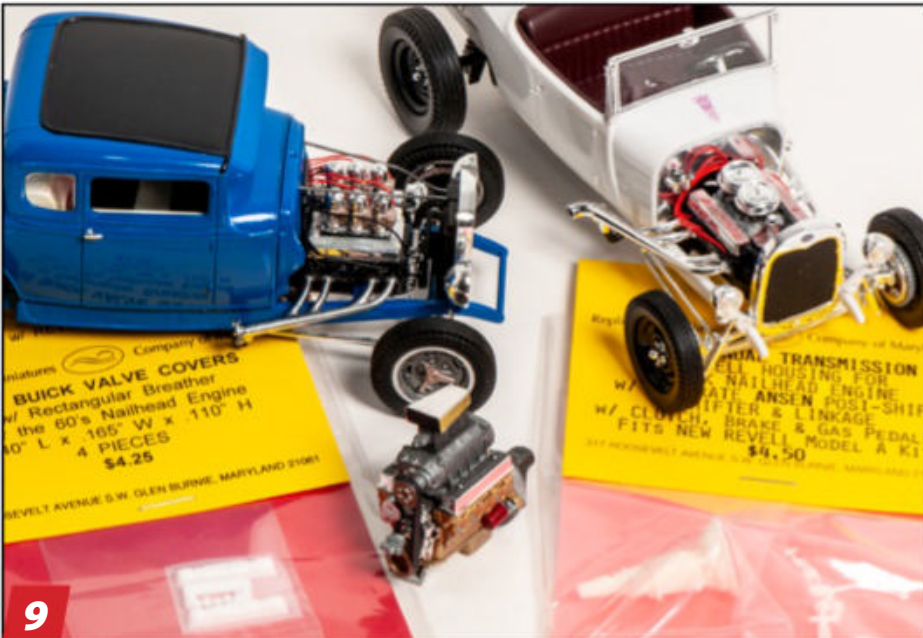
8

Revell provides two taillight choices: 1939 Ford teardrops and 1948 Chevy lamps. Also popular are 1950 Pontiac circular taillights found in the AMT/Ertl 1934 Ford five-window coupe (No. 38254) and Revell 1932 Ford roadster (No. 14524) and older Rat Roaster kits (No. 85-4995).



10

Swap the kit engines. **Left:** Ford flatheads, Revell 1932 Ford sedan (No. 85-2062; top) and AMT 1949 Mercury (No. AMT654/12; bottom). **Right:** early OHV V8s, Revell 1950 Olds Custom (No. 85-4022; top) and Cadillac 354 Parts Paks (No. 85-7252) or Revell Ed Roth Outlaw kits (bottom).



9

Enhance a Buick "Nailhead" V8 with paint detail, spark-plug wiring, and fuel lines (left) or adapt an AMT/Ertl 1966 Buick Riviera (No. 30083) dual four-barrel carb and manifold to it (right). Aftermarket offers options, or replace with a Revell 1/25 scale Tony Nancy 22 JR (No. 85-1224; center).



11

Upgrade to a Columbia two-speed rear diff from an AMT 1941 Ford woody (No. 30051), Revell 1940 Ford Standard coupe (No. 85-2387 or 85-4371), or Monogram 1940 Ford Deluxe convertible (No. 85-5961). A fully correct conversion requires a stock Model A rear crossmember (found in AMT 1929 Model A roadster and woody pickup kits or Revell 1929 Model A pickup and 1931 woody or Tudor sedan kits).

AFTERMARKET RESOURCES

Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland (no website; call 410-768-3648 for a price list)

The Model Car Garage, www.modelcargarage.com

Altered States, asmodels@aol.com

Drag City Casting, www.facebook.com/dragcitycasting/

Note: These are independent manufacturers and availability of various parts may vary.



12

For an old-school differential and suspension, take Halibrand Quick Change diffs from another 1/25 scale kit. Or combine Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland Quick Change parts and transverse rear springs with a rear crossmember from one of the kits in Step 11.

BODY ALTERATIONS



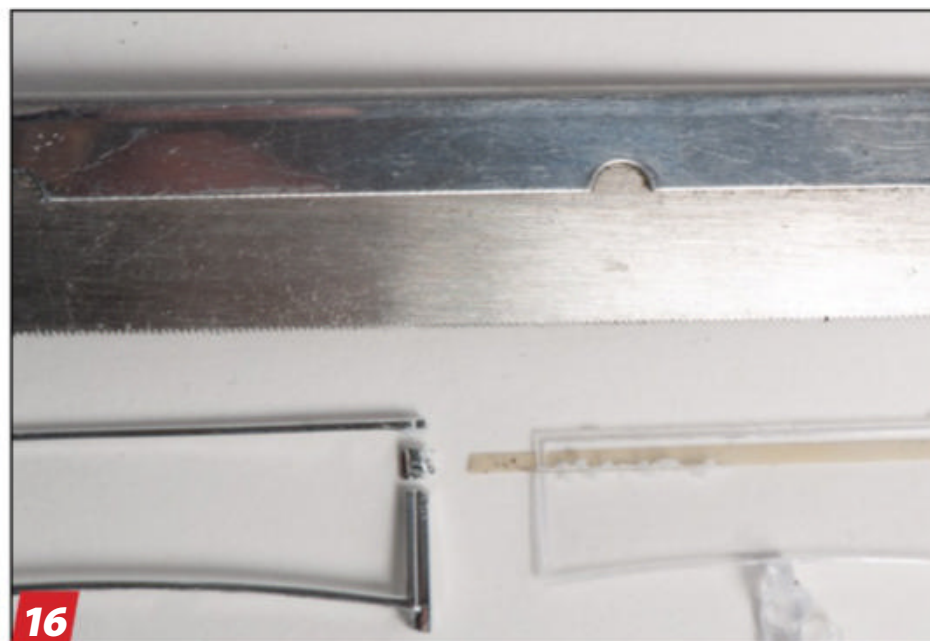
13 The Revell Model A hot rod coupe kit's firewall (Part 35) projects too far into the engine compartment (left). You can correct this with an aftermarket resin replacement part (right) from Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland (No. P-169).



14 The top body section the Revell Model A coupe kit has a moderate, 3-scale-inch chop out of the roof pillars. Aftermarket vendors, like Altered States, provide both factory stock and extreme chopped tops that can be swapped in to the Revell body without alterations.



15 Some full-scale hot rods have exposed wooden roof bows. This process involves removing the molded flange in the Revell kit's roof and cutting thin braces from wood. Stain the braces before installation and attach with 5-minute epoxy. Visit [FineScale.com/How-To](https://www.finescale.com/how-to) for a Snapshot tutorial!



16 Chopping the roadster windshield is an easy customization. Remove equal lengths of the vertical pillars where they meet the windshield top crossmember with a razor saw. Remove an equal amount from the clear windshield part. Touch up the cut areas with Molotow Liquid Chrome.



17 The design of the radiator for the channelled roadster (Part 64) pushes the front grille too far forward relative to the front tires. To fix this, slice the radiator along the red lines shown here. Discard the portion on the left and mate the remaining radiator/electric fan part to the Model A grille.

ADVANCED MODIFICATIONS



18

Most Model A highboy hot rods are built on 1932 Ford frame rails; this is how the Revell Model A hot rod kits are designed. To place it atop a Model A frame, use most of the interior parts from the highboy option in the Revell kit while employing either the kit's Z'ed Model A frame or the frame in original AMT and Revell factory stock Model A kits.



19

You can modify the radiused rear fender well openings on the Revell roadster body (right) to replicate a stock Model A body. AMT's original 1929 roadster body (left) shows the correct opening location with incorrectly recessed line braces. The corrected Revell roadster body is on top painted red. Visit FineScale.com/How-To for a Snapshot tutorial!



20

Companies have issued many 1/25 scale Model A kits over the years that provide a number of body options. Some likely candidates are the MPC 1929 Ford woody/pickup 4 in 1 (No. AMT1269M/12), Revell '31 Model A woody (No. 85-7637), Revell-Monogram '31 Ford Model A sedan hot rod (No. 85-2169), and Monogram 1929 Ford rat rod 3 in 1 (No. 85-4932).

FINAL THOUGHTS

MIX AND MATCH the ideas shown here — and come up with new ones of your own! — to add flavor and personalization to Revell's excellent Model A hot rod kits. The models shown below were built with Revell Model A hot rod kits combined with different bodies and other modifications presented. The *Extreme Z'ed* Tudor sedan (left) has a much-modified Model A frame and the "skeleton" interior from the five-window coupe kit. The pickup uses the Revell Model A coupe kit's 1932 Ford frame and the floorboard from the roadster kit.

No matter the customizations, you'll be sure to attract the attention of fellow hot rod enthusiasts, because in 1/25 scale, just like with the real deal, details make the difference. **FSM**



Weather **WOOD** *and* **METAL**

Simple techniques add realism to a sharp shadowbox scene

BY KOSTAS GEORGIU



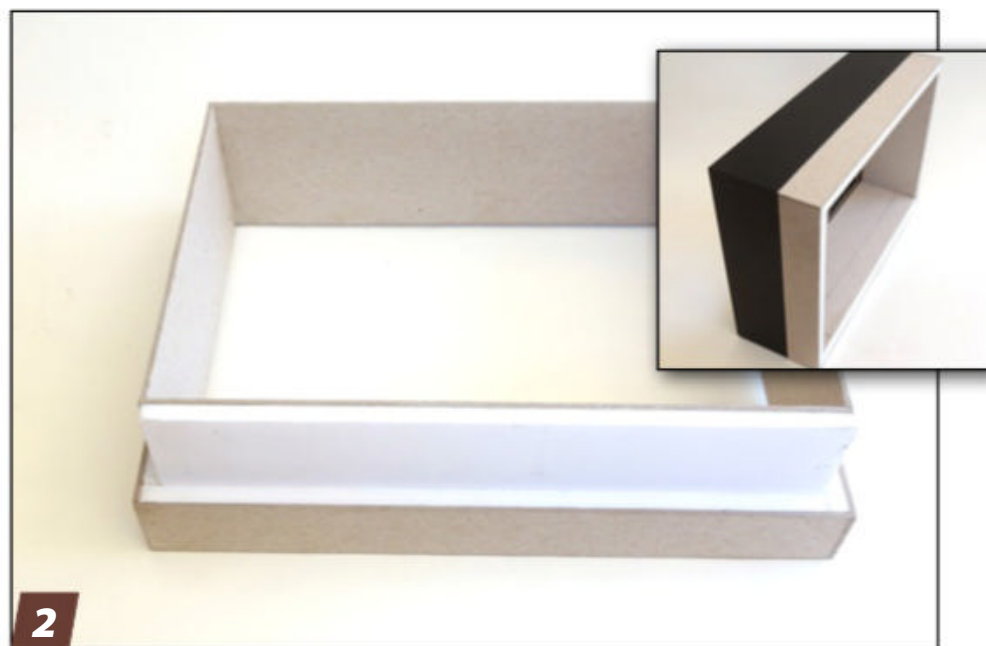
I wanted to try my hand at a type of diorama I've seen a few times recently — boxed scenes built into custom picture frames. It can be challenging to re-create a scene in a tight spot, but done right, plenty of atmosphere can be produced.

My vision was a long abandoned wooden building deep in the woods, so I employed several techniques to weather the components.



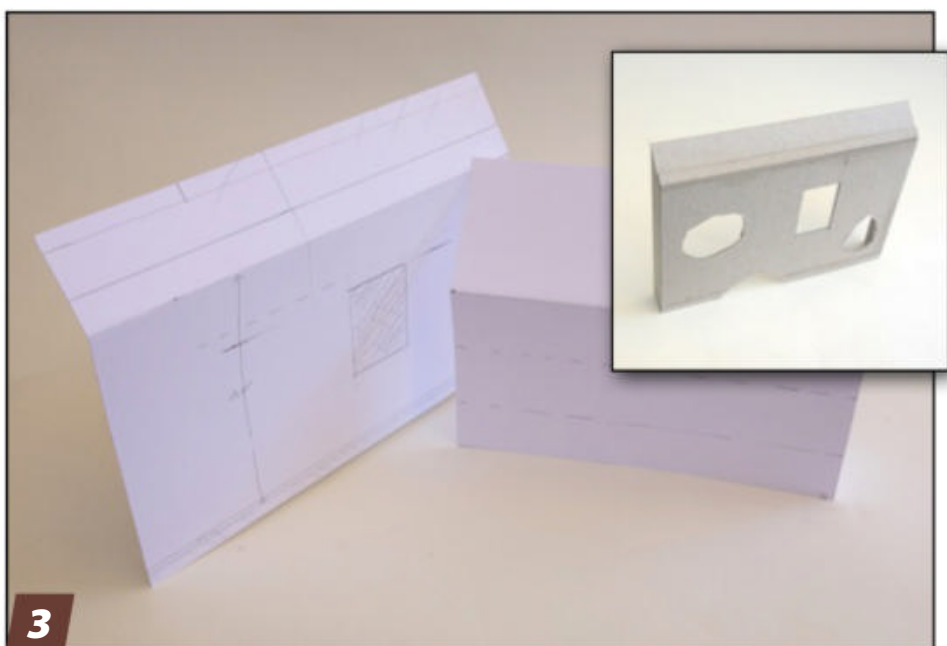
1

I chose a deep picture frame to house the diorama. Those sold for shadowboxes work well.



2

To line the frame and extend the scene, I build a box of 5mm foamboard clad with 1.5mm cardboard for added strength and support. It slips into the frame and the double-laminated section butts against the rear.



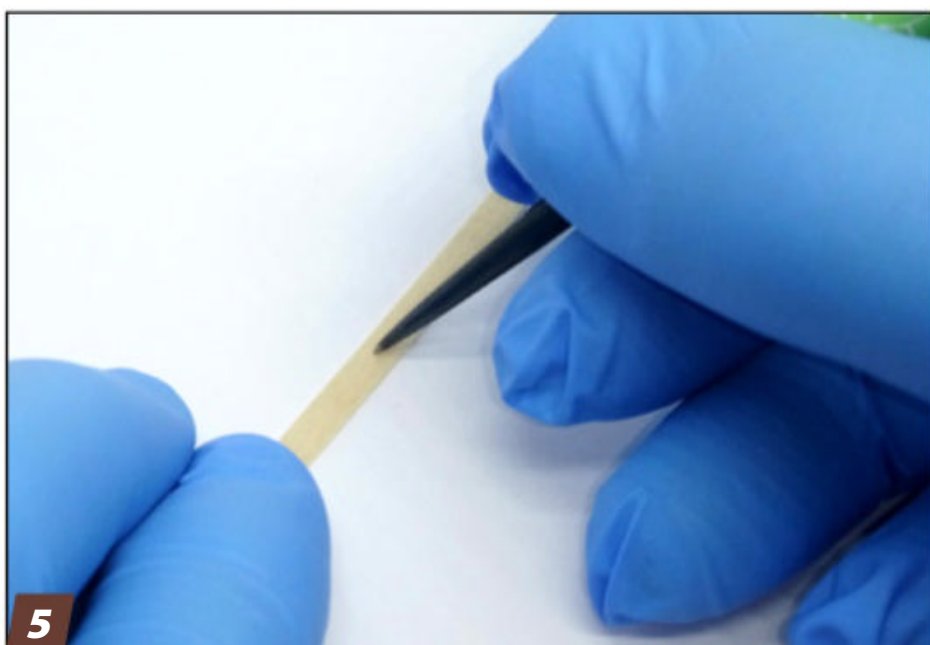
3

After making several mockups of the cabin to help set its size, I made a base for the wall and roof using 1.5mm cardboard.



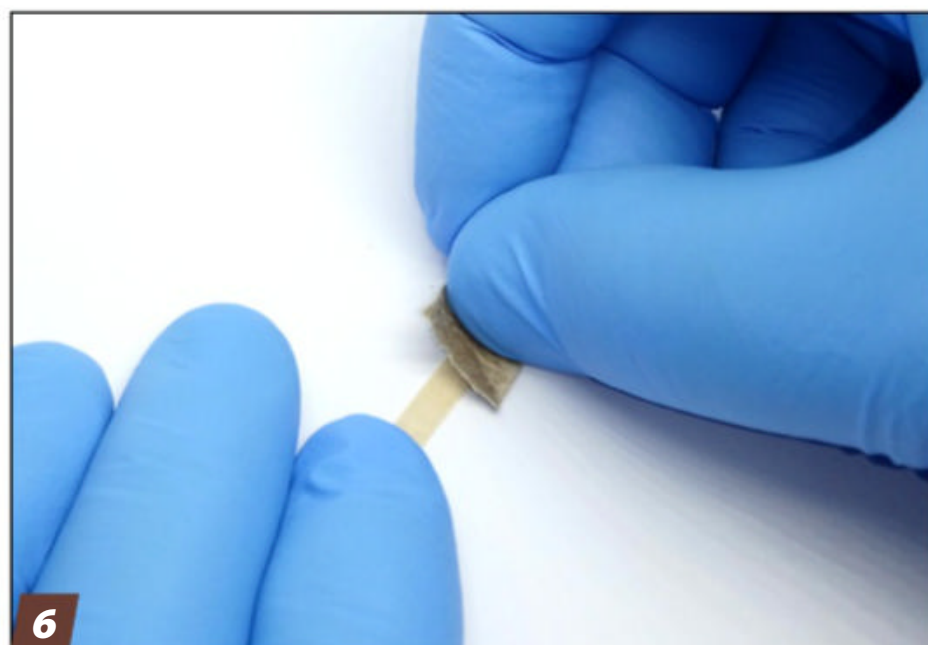
4

For the wall planks and roof supports, I used basswood typically found in the wooden model ships department at hobby stores. Avoid balsa because it is too soft and may break under tension.



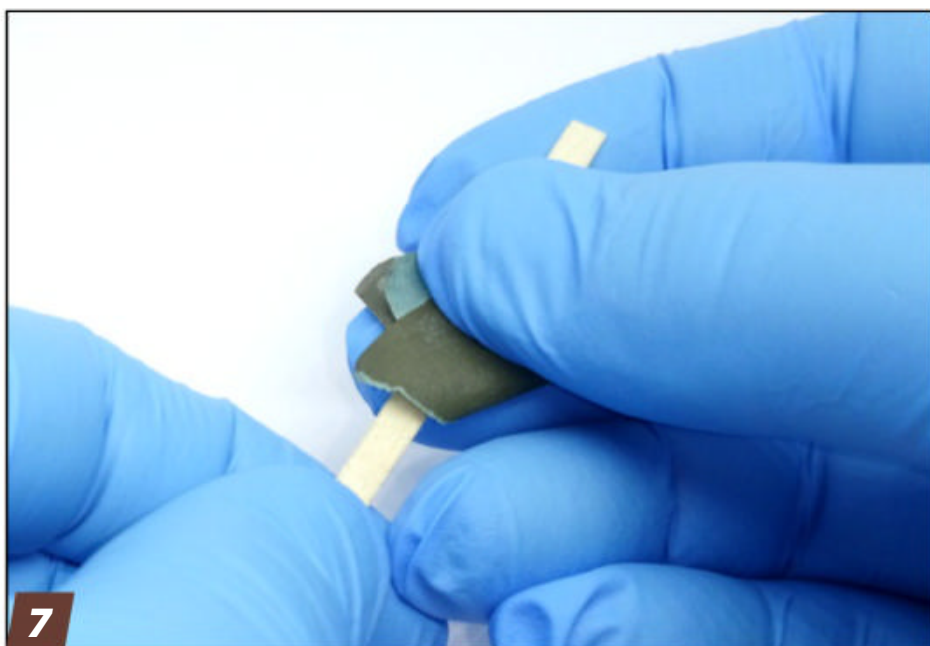
5

I started the wall by scribing wood grain onto the strips. Work carefully and don't press too hard.



6

Drawing 140-grit sandpaper along the length of the planks blended the scribed lines and added shallower grain.



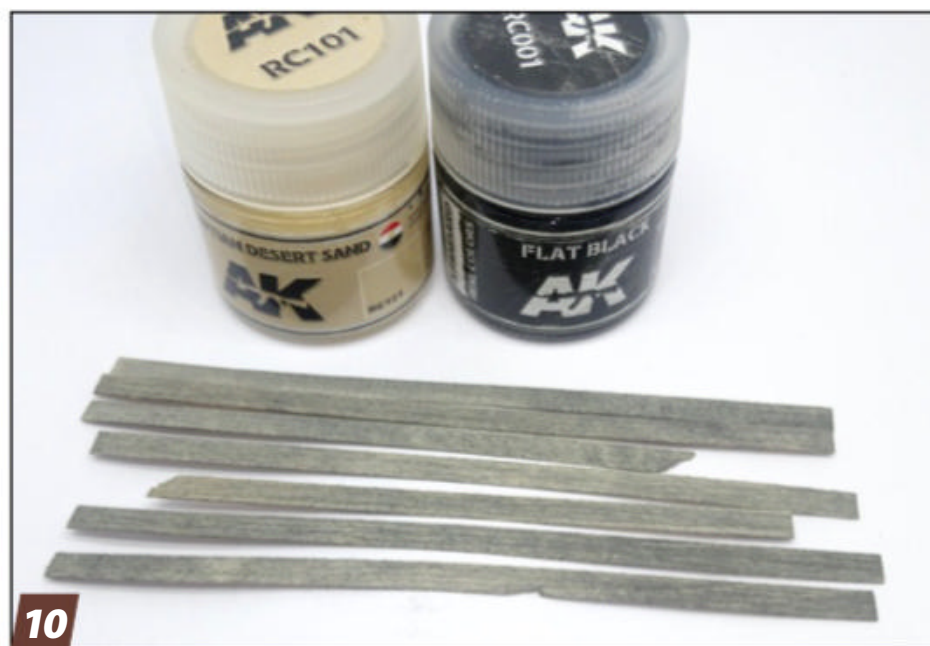
7 If the effect appeared overdone, I smoothed it with a light sanding using 400-grit sandpaper.



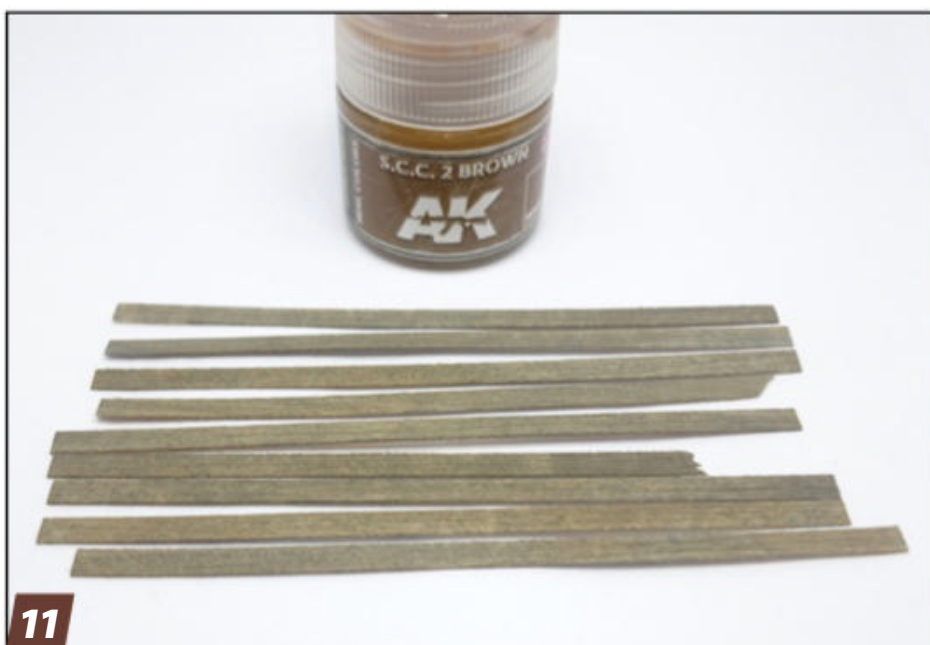
8 Using fine steel wool and a toothbrush, I removed fuzz from the wood.



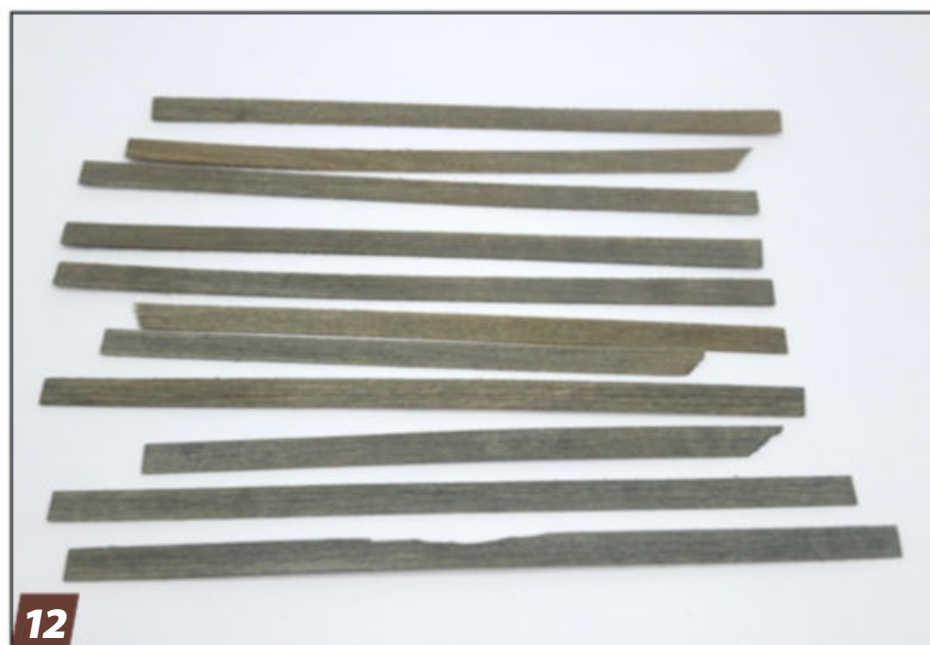
9 The goal of these steps is to make the planks look realistic, with subtle grain rather than the exaggerated effect that can look cartoony.



10 To age the wood, I used washes mixed from AK Interactive (AK) Real Color lacquers thinned with alcohol. I started with Flat Black (No. RC001) followed by Egyptian Desert Sand (No. RC101).



11 For tonal variation, I applied a wash of S.C.C. 2 Brown (No. RC035), a reddish shade.

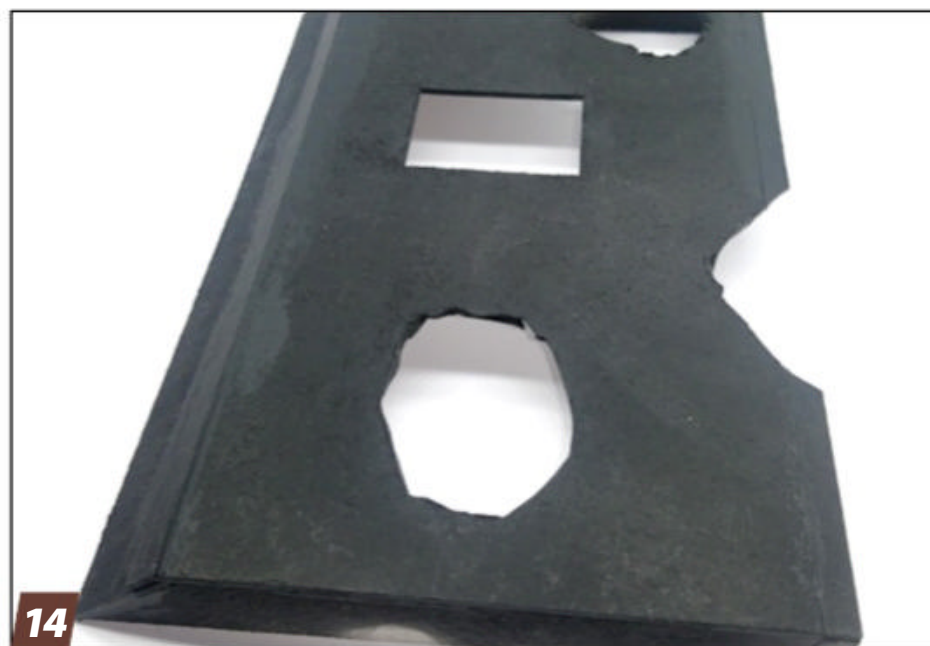


12 I repeated the black wash to pop the wood grain after the other layers.



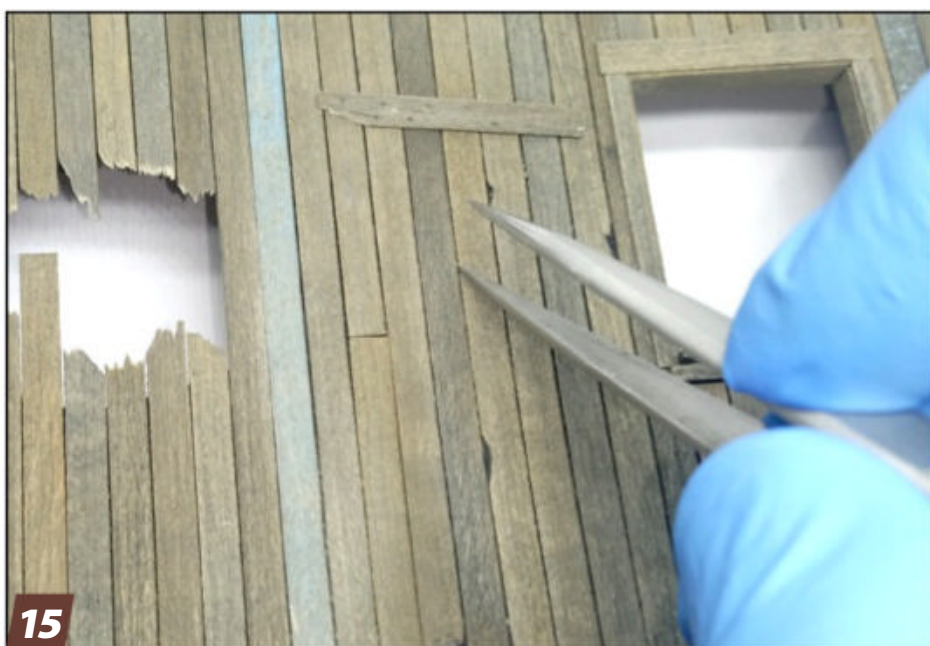
13

I dipped a chunk of sponge into an acrylic paint — in this case Vallejo Model Color Sky Blue (No. 70.961) — and dabbed it on a couple of the planks so they looked like they've been repurposed from somewhere else to repair missing siding.



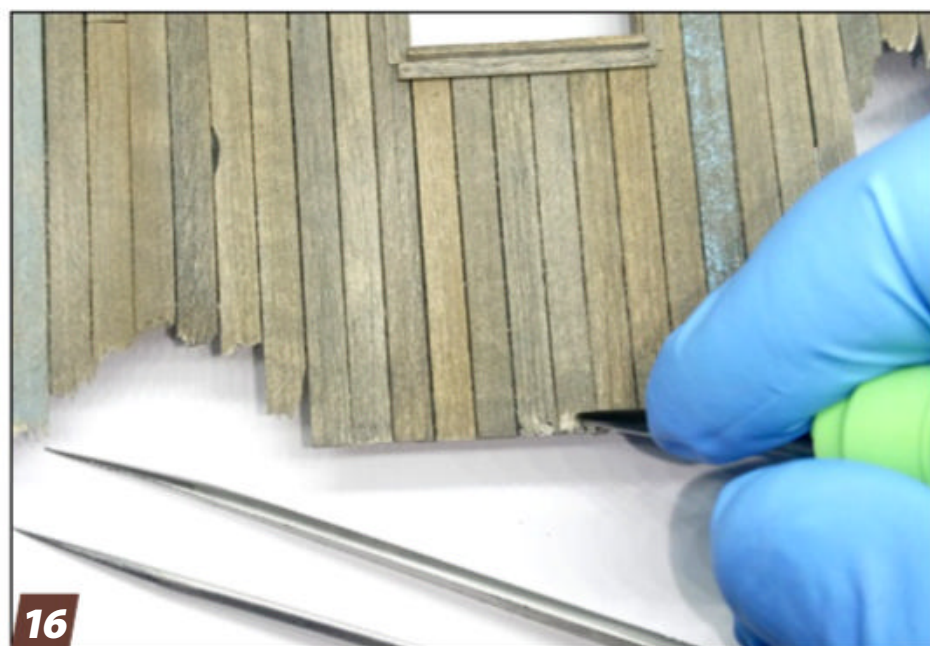
14

The cardboard base for the building was sprayed black to hide gaps between the planks.



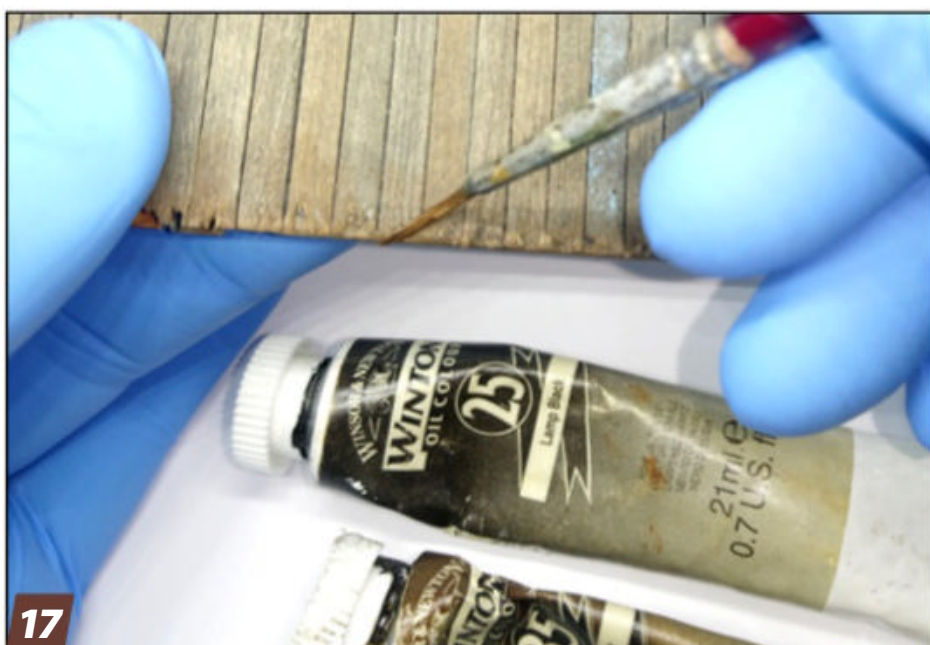
15

I attached the planks to the cardboard with white glue, taking care to ensure that the color of each didn't match the one next to it.



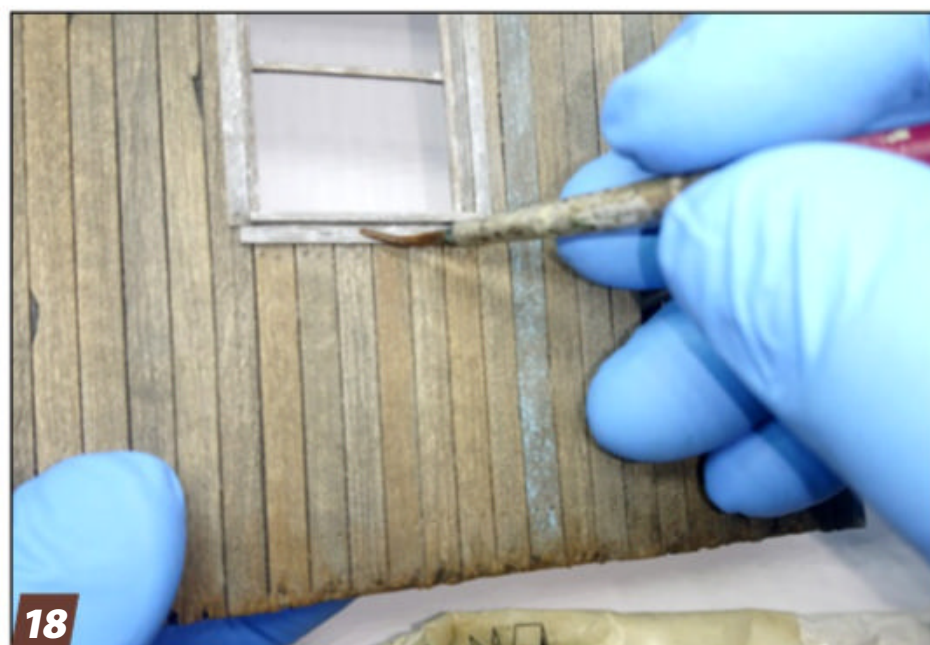
16

After framing the window with more basswood strips, I chipped and damaged the lower ends of the planks with a scribe to show the effects of exposure to long-term moisture.



17

I added further damp weathering to the plank ends with black and raw umber artist oils.



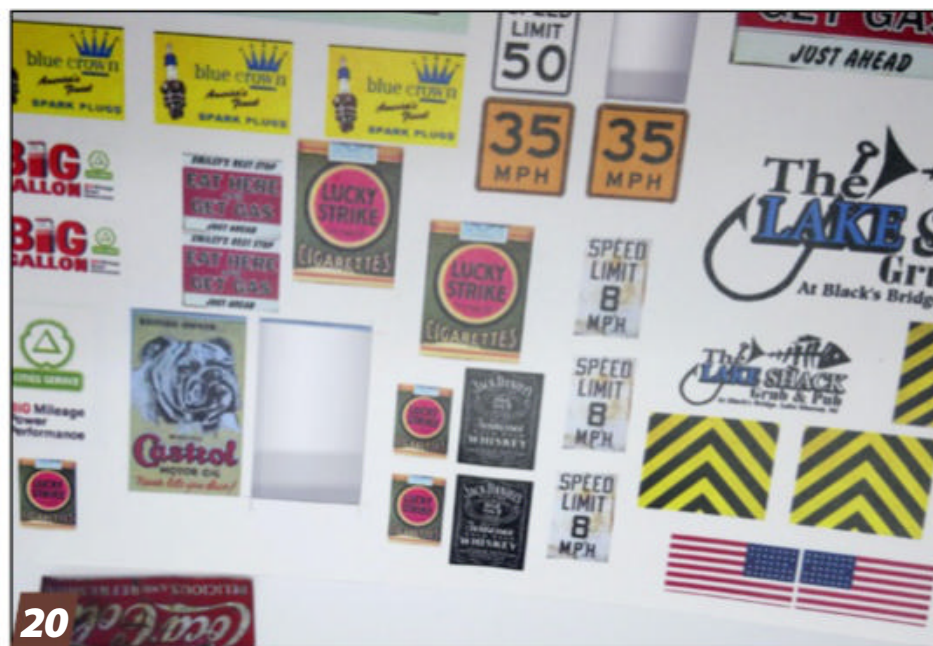
18

To contrast the window frame, I lightly brushed on white oil paint, so the finish looked old and distressed.



19

To model nails, I gently pushed a scribe into the wood.



20

For the Coca-Cola sign used as a makeshift awning over the window, I cut it from a sheet of printed signs I had in my spares.



21

I glued planks to the roof trusses before attaching shingles cut from basswood strip and weathered the same way I weathered the planks.



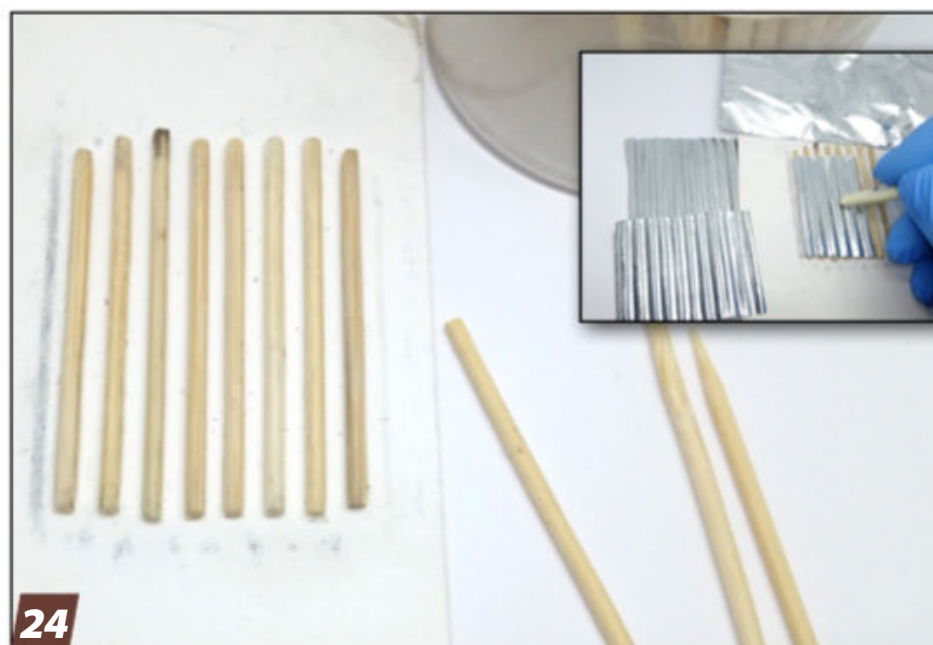
22

To drape an old tarpaulin over the right side of the roof where shingles are missing, I painted a section of paper towel with a mix of Vallejo Model Color Sunny Skin Tone (No. 70.845) and White Grey (No. 70.993) followed by burnt umber artist-oil washes.



23

Using white glue mixed with water, I pressed the paper into and over the trusses and planks with a brush. More artist-oil washes followed.



24

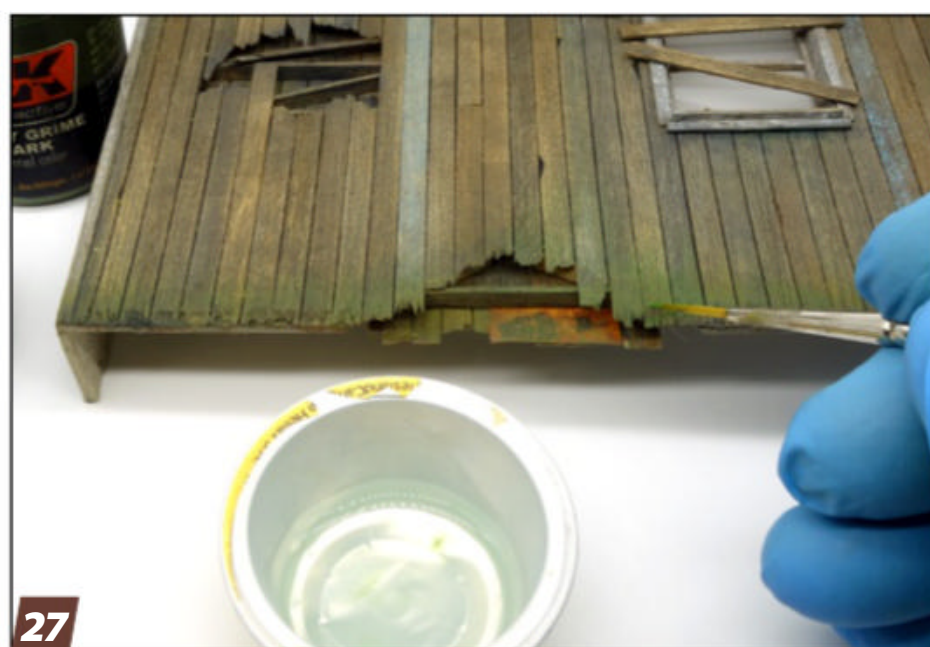
To make corrugated tin panels for part of the roof, I glued eight toothpicks, evenly spaced, onto styrene sheet. I pressed heavy aluminum foil cut from a food container over and between the toothpicks with a brush handle.



25 After priming with gray spray paint, I applied a corroded base with AK Crusted Rust Deposit Dark (No. AK4113) and Medium Rust Deposits (No. AK4112).



26 Washes of Mr. Hobby Rust (No. H344) acrylic, Humbrol Natural Wood (No. 110) enamel, AK Light Rust Wash (No. AK046), and burnt umber artist oil added variations, shadows, and highlights.



27 As a final step on the building, I applied mold and algae on the lower reaches with AK Slimy Grime Dark (No. AK026), an enamel product I mixed with enamel thinner.

FINAL THOUGHTS

WITH THE BUILDING DONE, I added groundwork, trees, and shrubs in the foreground and placed everything into the frame. Looking at the finished scene feels as if you are glimpsing a dilapidated house deep in the woods — in a 3D photo. Framed dioramas can be used for scenes both rural and urban as you can see in another one of my creations at left. **FSM**

More at [FineScale.com](https://www.finescale.com)

YOU CAN READ and download PDF Snapshots detailing how Kostas made trees and shrubs for his shadow-box diorama at [FineScale.com/How-to](https://www.finescale.com/How-to).

Finish a **SPANISH LEOPARD**

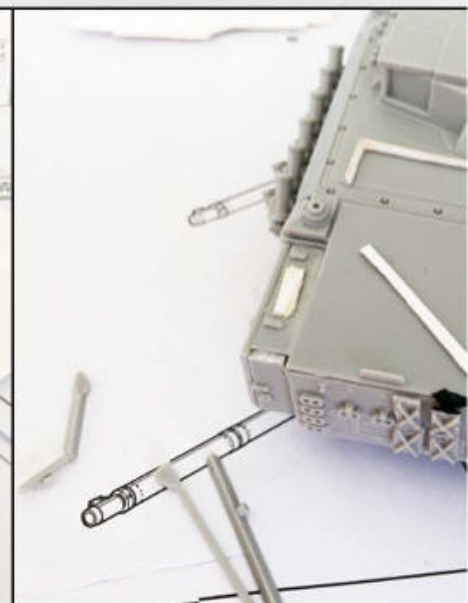
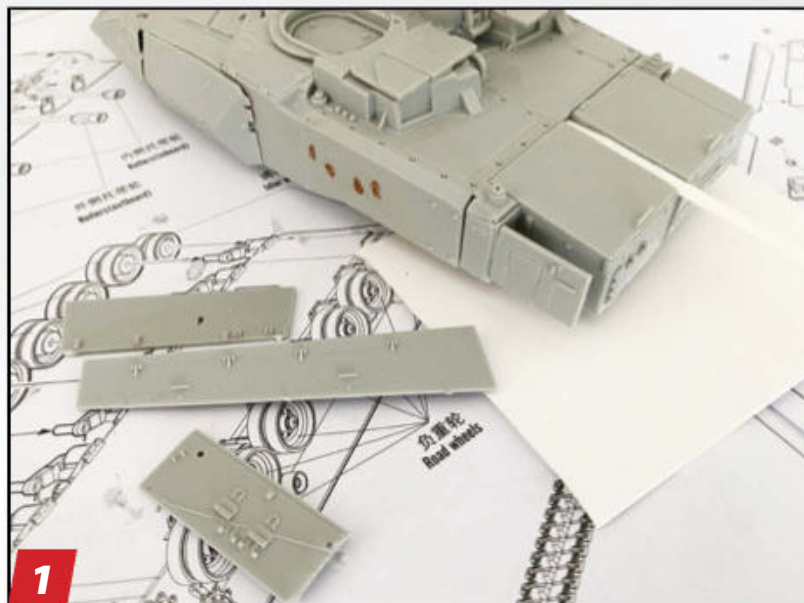
Build a HobbyBoss 1/35 scale
Leopard 2E mostly out of the box

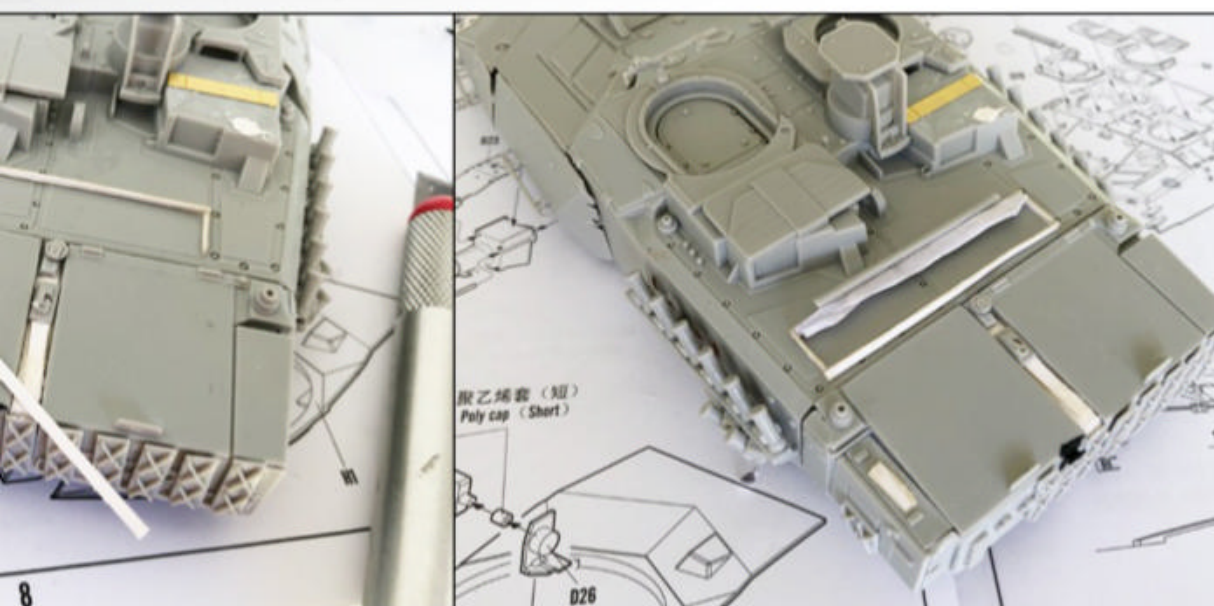
BY RAUL CORRAL

When Spain sought a replacement for its army's M60 tanks, it settled on the German designed Leopard 2. In addition to surplus German 2A4s, they built more than 200 of their own, designated the 2E, which is similar to the 2A6 with some differences mostly in the turret and targeting.

Looking to add one to my collection of Spanish military vehicles, I picked up HobbyBoss' 1/35 scale kit of the 2E. It's pretty good, but it misses some of the features unique to the Spanish tanks. I could have picked up an aftermarket turret for the 2E but instead decided to make a few modifications and work pretty much straight from the box.

To accurize the turret, I referred to photos and cut new parts from scrap plastic leftover from an aftershave package. It included filling the gap between the bustle stowage bins and adding a canvas-covered rack forward of the bins.



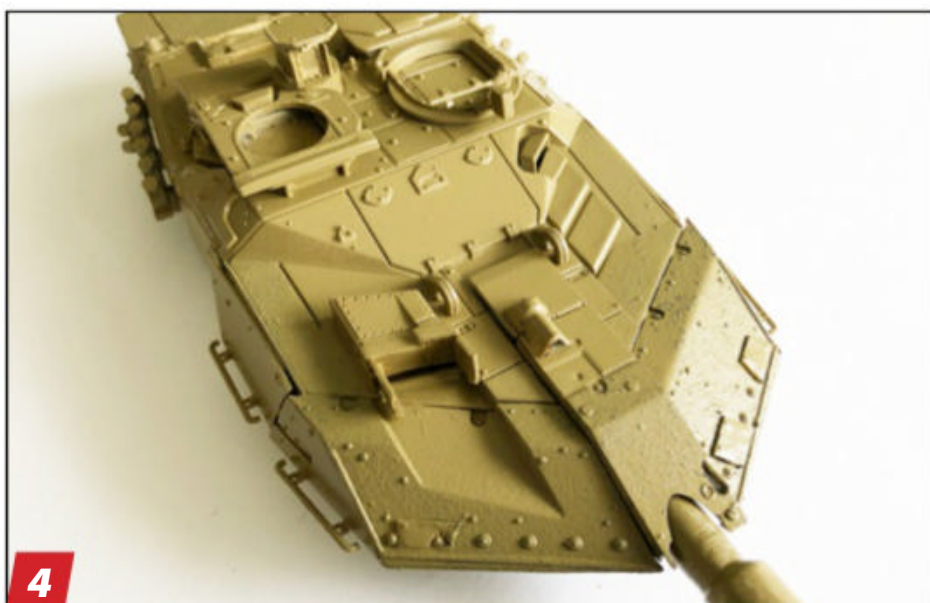


I added three plates to the armor at the front of the turret with styrene sheet. For the large bolts that secure them, I applied dots of thick enamel paint with the tip of a sewing needle.



3

The rest of the turret and hull went together easily, but the kit lacks a distinctive feature: patches of nonskid texture on many horizontal surfaces. I replicated them by brushing on thick enamel paint — any color works — and stippled it with an old brush for texture as it dried.



4

Rather than priming with black as I normally do, I airbrushed a base coat of Ammo by Mig Jimenez (Ammo) Spanish Green-Khaki (No. A.MIG-0031), the camouflage color used on modern Spanish army vehicles.



5

I darkened Vallejo Model Color Black Grey (No. 70.862) with Spanish green-khaki to post-shade edges, borders, and recesses.



6

Next, I mixed Ammo Zinc Chromate Yellow (No. A.MIG-0221) with Spanish green-khaki to highlight panel centers. The result was a single-color camouflage in a variety of shades.



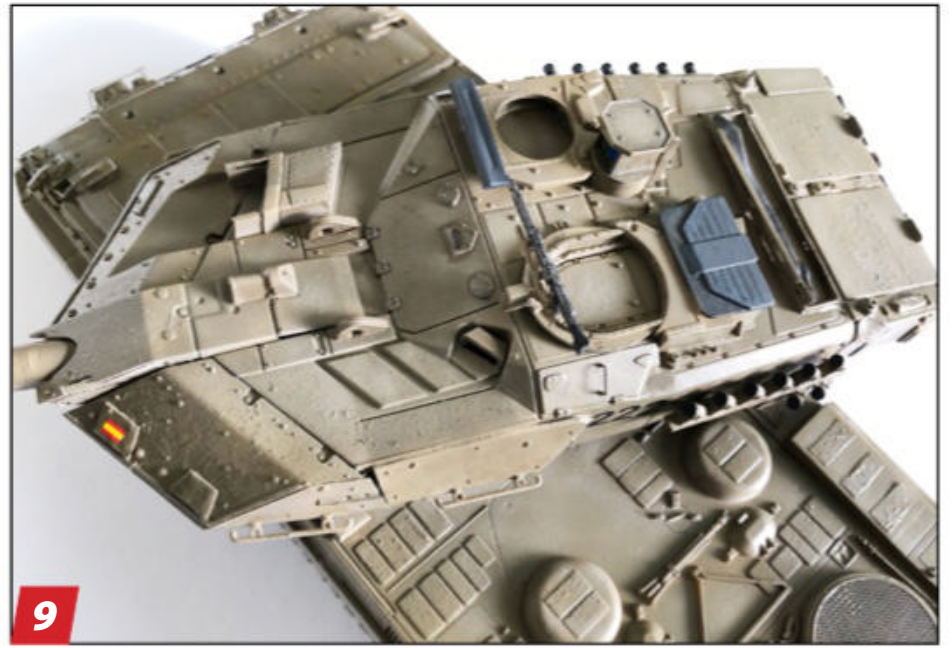
7

To make the loader's MG 3 machine gun look right, I painted the stock and handle with Humbrol Flat Black (No. 33) and the metal parts with Humbrol Metalcote Gunmetal (No. 27004).



8

I hand-painted components such as the hatch covers, track grousers, and smoke grenade launchers using a variety of Humbrol dark grays and blacks.

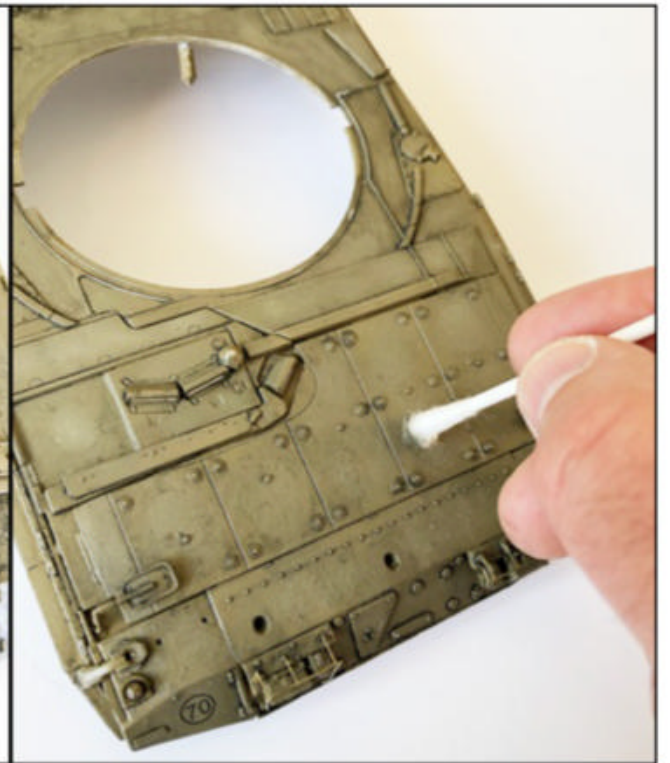


9

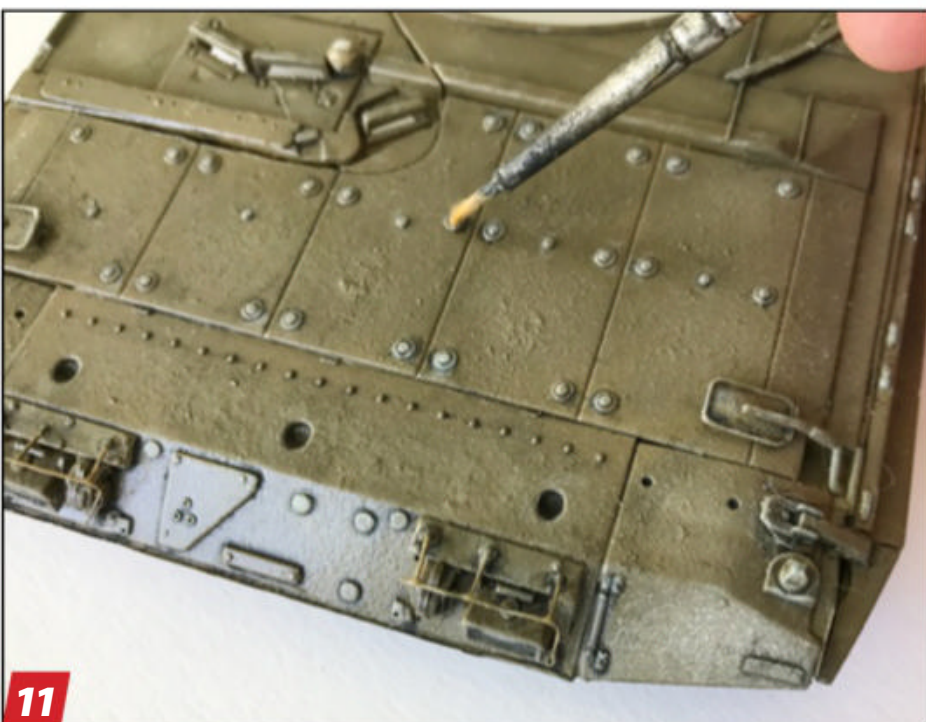
Between layers of Tamiya Clear (No. X-22), I applied decals from FC Modeltips (No. FCM35207) for a Leopard from the 61st Regimiento de Infantería Acorazada (Armored Infantry Regiment) "Alcazar de Toledo."



10



Now I was ready for my favorite part of modeling military vehicles — weathering. I started by flowing and brushing on AK Interactive (AK) Enamel Wash for NATO Camo Vehicles (No. AK075). Don't worry about staying inside the lines. Wait until the wash dries, and then you can remove excess and refine the wash with a cotton swab damp with clean enamel thinner.



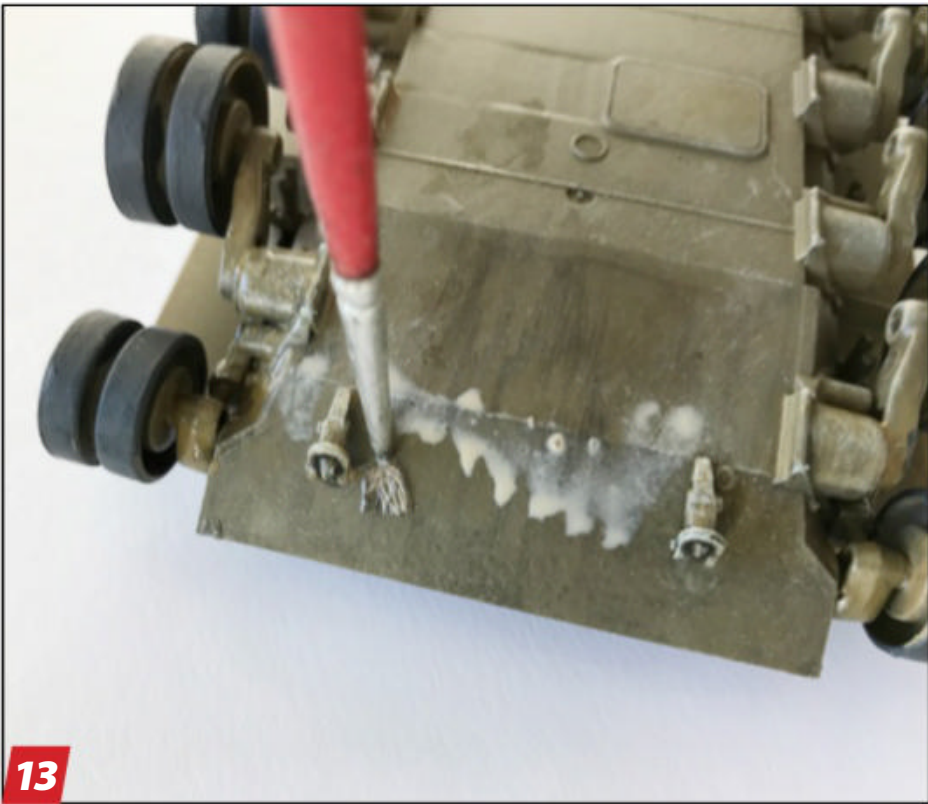
11

I dry-brushed the tank with a mix of 7 parts Humbrol NATO Green (No. 75) and 3 parts Flat White (No. 34). It highlighted not only the molded surface details but also the nonskid texture I added.



12

To outline some access hatches and add scratches in the paint, I drew a soft, graphite pencil along recessed lines and across the paint.



13

On the lower hull, I applied several washes of AK Rainmarks for NATO Tanks (No. AK074), using a brush to drag the light enamel down and produce dust and dirt streaked by water.



14

After another thin coat of Tamiya Clear, I painted the lenses on the weapon optics and vision blocks with Revell Clear Blue (No. 32752) and Gloss Black (No. 32107) respectively.



15

Satisfied with the weathering and detail painting, I airbrushed the model with several coats of Humbrol Matt Varnish (No. 49) to dull the gloss and give it a proper military finish.



16

I airbrushed the vinyl tracks with Tamiya Flat Black (No. XF-1), hand-painted the metallic connectors with Humbrol Metalcote Polished Steel (No. 27003). Then, I picked out the rubber blocks with Vallejo Black Grey.



17

The red centers on the road-wheel hubs add a nice spot of color on an otherwise dark subject. I painted them with Vallejo Model Color Red (No. 70.926) on a fine-tipped brush.



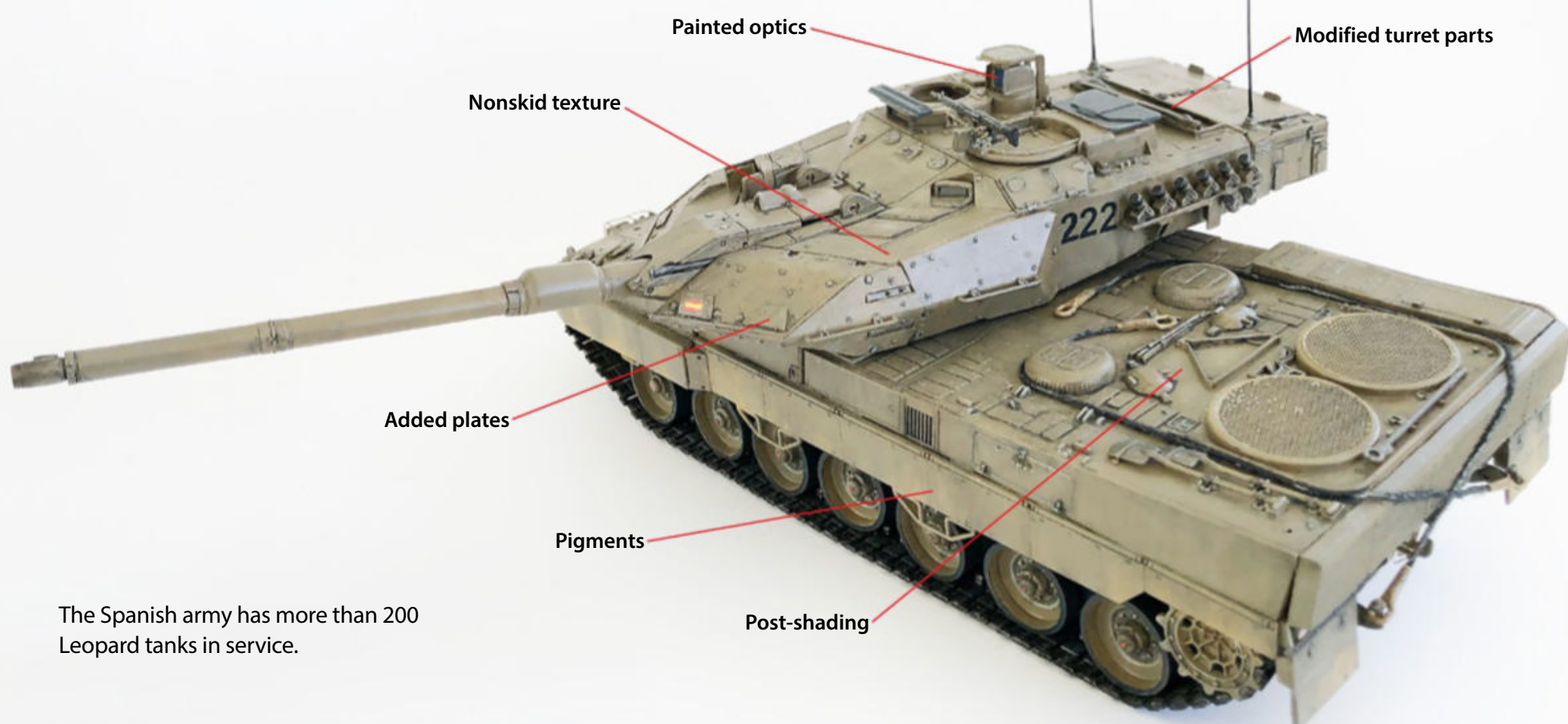
18

All lights at the rear were painted with a sewing needle using Revell Clear Red (No. 32731) and Gloss Yellow (No. 32112). I also hand-painted the tow cables Humbrol Metalcote Gunmetal followed by dry-brushed Humbrol Silver (No. 11).



FINAL THOUGHTS

AS A FINISHING TOUCH, I added a little dirt and dust around the lower hull and running gear by brushing on tan pigment from a Revell Weathering Set (No. 39066). I enjoyed building HobbyBoss' Spanish Leopard, accurizing a few details, but sticking mostly with what was in the box. **FSM**



The Spanish army has more than 200 Leopard tanks in service.

FSM experts build and evaluate new kits

Academy A-10C Thunderbolt II



There are three 1/48 scale A-10C kits on the market, and you might be asking, “Which one is the best?” Academy’s is the newest, so let’s see how it stacks up against the HobbyBoss and Italeri offerings.

When opening the box, you’ll see it packed with trees of light gray plastic. Academy provides the aft fuselage as a single, slide-molded part marked with fine recessed panel lines and raised rivets. Most kits split this area in half, risking damage to or the elimination of surface detail through filling and sanding. Three faint mold seams are visible, but I removed them easily by lightly scraping them with a No. 11 blade. The same process was used for the engine nacelles. Such awesome engineering!

Sharply molded clear parts include a two-part canopy, lights, and optics for some of the weapons. Precut masks make painting your A-10C a breeze.

Decals and color diagrams show four marking options with multiple serial numbers for 11 possible aircraft. All are in the current scheme of dark ghost gray over light ghost gray. Three are from the 75th Fighter Squadron, the “Flying Tigers,” with one in a heritage scheme honoring the 23rd Fighter Group that grew out of the American Volunteer Group. The last options are for aircraft from the 25th Fighter Squadron, the “Assam Draggins.”

Construction starts with the nose gear bay, which builds from separate sides and upper panels. Individual hoses, actuators, and bulkheads finished the well.

The cockpit is well-appointed and detailed, and the multipart ejection seat looks great, but I wish Academy had included seat belts. There is a pilot with optional arm positions, two styles of helmets, and a separately-molded oxygen hose. The completed cockpit nestles into the forward fuselage, another example of the kit’s

terrific engineering. Separate top and bottom panels finished the forward fuselage before I added the aft fuselage. There appeared to be a slight difference in diameter between the front and rear, but it’s not apparent on the completed model.

The wing assembly has separate flaps and decelerons (aka, split ailerons). The flaps simply click into place. Ejector-pin marks are apparent inside the decelerons, and they were deep and difficult to eliminate, so I posed the ailerons closed. There are also ejector-pin marks on the weapon pylons, but they pretty much disappear with primer and paint. The only fit issue I had was with the rear fairings where the fuselage meets the wings. Other manufacturers mold this right onto the fuselage, but Academy created these separately, and they need a touch of sanding to fit tightly.

The engines look great, with fan and turbine blades and the engine exhaust halves. Detailed landing gear legs get weighted tires.

The weapons and targeting systems are nicely detailed and fit well, but there are few options, with only one loadout shown in the instructions. Ordnance includes a pair each of AIM-9M Sidewinders, AGM-65 Mavericks, GBU-54s, GBU-12s, and LAU rocket pods, as well as an AN/AAQ-28 Litening targeting pod and an AN/ALQ-184 electronic attack pod. A center-line fuel tank is also provided.

I finished my Thunderbolt II as a 75th Fighter Squadron aircraft at Bagram Airbase, Afghanistan, in 2014 with Vallejo acrylics. Closed wheel-well doors are included; they aren’t called out in the instructions, but they work great as masks.

Beautifully printed, the decals settled into and around surface detail with little

encouragement. Note that the walkway decals are mislabeled: H and F, which are for the horizontal stabilizers, should be G on the placement guide. I didn’t catch the discrepancy until I placed them on the wings. I should’ve paid more attention here.

Academy’s 1/48 scale A-10C plastic aircraft kit was a pleasure to assemble. Other than the pesky ejector-pin marks, it is a high-quality model. I wouldn’t offer it to a beginner, but if you have built a few kits, it won’t be an issue.

So, it remains to answer the question: Which 1/48 scale A-10C is the best? Academy. It’s not perfect, but any minor shortcomings are eclipsed by the fit, engineering, surface detail, and building experience.

— Caleb Horn



Kit No.: 12348 **Scale:** 1/48

Mfr.: Academy, academy.co.kr (Sample courtesy of Model Rectifier Corp., modelrectifier.com) **Price:** \$69

Comments: Injection-molded plastic (light gray, clear); 319 parts; decals, precut masks **Pros:** Wonderful engineering and surface details; good fits; great decals **Cons:** Deep ejector-pin marks inside decelerons; no seat belts

Takom M48A3 Mod B



The M48 Patton tank served in many conflicts in the mid to late 20th century and has been, with upgrades, used by many countries around the world. Takom's new 1/35 scale M48A3 Mod B plastic model kit comes with posable hatches, multipiece tracks, clear parts, and markings for four vehicles (two U.S. Army, one South Vietnamese army, and one Marine).

All the suspension parts are added to the lower hull. Don't glue the torsion bars in place until you've checked alignment. Do not glue suspension arms K32 and K33, letting them float free, until Step 4. After the upper hull is attached, you'll install the engine deck, exhaust grilles, and gun lock. I left off the driver's periscopes until final painting.

After painting and installing the road wheels, I checked the alignment and then painted the lower hull.



Kit No.: 2162 **Scale:** 1/35

Mfr.: Takom, takom-world.com (Sample courtesy of mfr.) **Price:** \$73.95

Comments: Injection-molded plastic (light gray, clear); 1,249 parts (4 photo-etched metal parts; string); decals

Pros: Good overall detail and assembly

Each track link comprises six parts that I painted on the sprue. Takom supplies a jig for assembly. As per the illustrations, I left C1 guide horns and C2 track pins on the sprue to help align the track blocks. The area to apply glue to the track blocks is quite small, so be careful. I used Tamiya Extra Thin Cement for this job.

The instructions say 78 links per side; for me, the final count was 80. There isn't any give in the tracks to stretch them over the sprocket and idler. I resorted to holding the hull and installing the track and sprocket together — not easy. Building and installing the tracks alone took 20 hours.

The fenders will need to be modified to accommodate the air cleaners. The kit doesn't provide positive locators to hold these assemblies in place, so I inserted them into the side of the hull and adjusted them accordingly. Then I painted them along with the upper hull.

For the turret, the first thing you'll need to do is drill holes and remove brackets before attaching the grab handles and hatches.

Many parts go into the commander's machine-gun turret, including clear vision blocks that you'll need to mask for painting. Like the air cleaners, the turret basket has no positive attachment point. I superglued the photo-etched metal parts first and then attached side piece D31 to bottom D72. I went around, glued the other side, and then the back.

While building the bracket for the searchlight, the rod (Part T20) fell apart in my hand. I replaced it with a .028-inch brass rod. The molded-in alignment ring for the mirror is a bit low, and the bottom

piece would not fit correctly. Trimming it off helped.

I finished my M48A3 for the U.S. Army 1st Battalion 77th Armor Regiment "Steel Tigers" B Company. The decals laid down nicely. I spent 60 hours building and painting this kit. Because of the complexity of the tracks, I can only recommend it to experienced modelers.

— Tom Foti



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MPC 1968 Dodge Coronet convertible

MPC released its original 1968 Dodge Coronet convertible plastic model kit in 1969, and I built it as a kid. I don't remember anything specific about it other than that I painted it just like the box art and was rather proud of it. But this isn't a reissue — a re-pop in common parlance. No, this is an all-new tool of the old kit.

The parts are molded in white. As you might expect from a new tool, the details are crisp, and flash is non-existent. The clear parts are like crystal, and the chrome is mirror bright. A new decal sheet provides lots of vibrant markings including three "bumblebee" stripe options. And if all that isn't enough, a nice little utility trailer with accessories is included, too!

The kit's 440 Magnum V8 engine assembles in the typical way, with the block and automatic transmission split down the middle. All other parts are separate except for the starter, which is molded into the block. You have the options for the stock engine or the race engine with fuel injection and headers. Generally, the parts fit well, but positioning is a little imprecise on some. I clipped off the locator pins for the intake manifold to help it line up better.

For tires, you get a nice set of bias plies with pad-printed whitewalls, a pair of drag slicks, and two smaller tires for the trailer. You can choose between stock wheels or custom mags, but the kit contains only four of each. Whatever wheel you use on the car, you need the others for the trailer (or raid your spares box).

If you choose the stock exhaust, drill the corresponding holes in the

chassis pan. I followed up with a coat of Mr. Color Gunship Gray (No. 305) for the base color and then added a little overspray of the body color. Next, I installed the exhaust and the single-piece rear axle/springs/driveshaft.

The front wheels mount with small plastic pins that didn't seem too secure. Round 2 may have mixed up the wheel backs on two parts. The lengths of the stubs are different for the front and rear wheels. The pins for the front wheels are slightly larger than the metal axle for the rears. I had a front wheel that I had to drill to fit on the pin and one rear that fit loosely on the axle.

The interior includes a floor, separate side panels, bucket seats in front, rear seat, dash, steering wheel, and console. If building the racing version, you get racing seats for the front and a roll bar. Molded details on the door panels and seats look good, and seat belts are molded on the stock seats.

The nicely-molded body features crisp details, and the mold seams were a snap to clean up. The bumblebee-stripe decal laid down well, but the side pieces are long and needed trimming. Also, the R/T decals don't match the molded R/T on the body sides or grille.

During final assembly, don't glue the rear tabs for the interior up tight against the inside of the body shell. The interior will sit too high, and the convertible boot won't sit flush with the body.

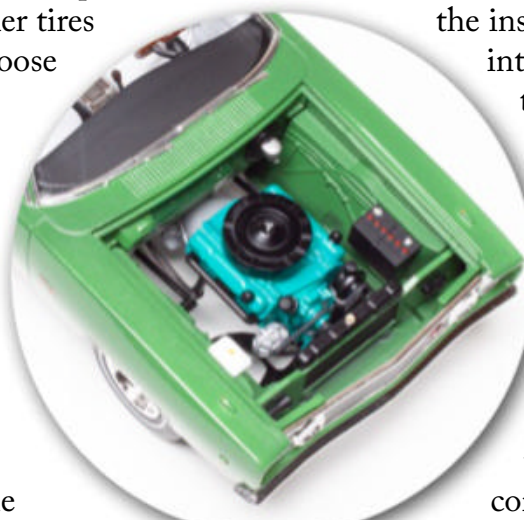
Before mating the chassis to the body, I chamfered the locator holes to aid in aligning the holes to the pins.

With the car complete, I turned to the trailer. I assembled mine completely, except for the

axle and springs, and painted the unit as a whole. In hindsight, it may have been easier to build after painting. Accessories include a toolbox, floor jack and stands, a fuel can, and a four-way lug wrench. I reworked the fuel can quite a bit, changing the handle area and adding a cap made from a piece of sprue because it had nothing.

I have mixed feelings about the new MPC 1/25 scale 1968 Dodge Coronet convertible kit. If you're looking for a nostalgic build, I think Round 2 knocked this one out of the park. It builds really well, with no fuss. But it feels like a vintage kit, just with all-new parts. If you're going to make a new tool, why not make it up to today's detail standards? For example, get rid of the molded-in windshield wipers and similar concessions. It's nice to have a new kit, but the Coronet leaves me wondering what it could have been.

— Mike Klessig



Kit No.: MPC978 **Scale:** 1/25

Mfr.: Round 2, round2models.com
(Sample courtesy of manufacturer)

Price: \$37.99 **Comments:** Injection-molded plastic (white, chrome, clear, transparent red); 151 parts (1 metal axle; 8 black vinyl tires); decals **Pros:** Crisp molding; no flash **Cons:** Some imprecise part fits

AMT Star Wars: The Bad Batch Havoc Marauder

Round 2 has just released the AMT 1/144 scale *Havoc Marauder*, the main ride of Hunter, Omega, and company from the streaming animated Disney+ series *Star Wars: The Bad Batch*. Molded in gray plastic, the kit features snap-together construction, posable wings, excellent surface detail, and the option to finish the model with the landing gear extended or in flight.

The small instruction leaflet features good, clear assembly diagrams and, as usual for Round 2's sci-fi offerings, full-color painting and marking diagrams are inconveniently printed on the sides of the bottom box. A small decal sheet provides markings for the black areas around the cockpit and several other small markings.

I started by cleaning up the wings and

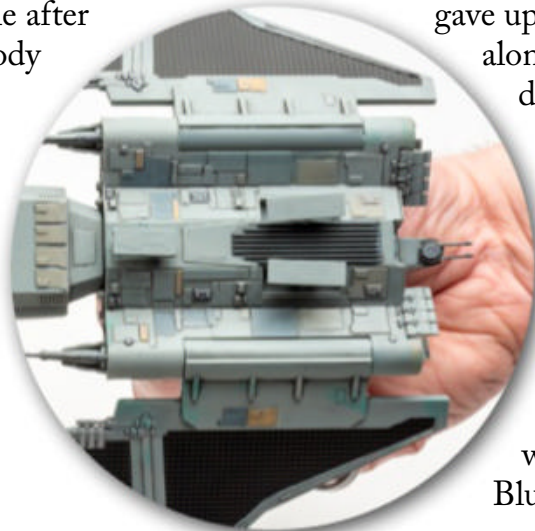


top "sail" panels and adding the hinges (parts 24 and 26) to the wings. Take care when handling these parts because you can easily damage the small guns and probes.

Despite it being a snap-together kit, I used Tamiya Extra Thin Cement on all the non-moving joints. I had a few small gaps around the nose's side panels (parts 4 and 5) that I filled with putty.

You can clean up the seams on the connecting piece between the nose and the main body, but you don't need to because they aren't visible after installation. The main body halves fit together well and required only a touch to clean up the seams.

Although I assembled the main guns, I left them off until final assembly. A piece of thin styrene sheet filled a small gap where the rear blister (Part 14)



met the fuselage. I left off the rear canopy and engine grates until I'd finished painting and weathering.

I base-coated everything Tamiya Medium Sea Gray (No. XF-83) — the closest thing I had to Haze Gray (No. TS-32). Then I masked and painted all the various panels using colors close to those called out if I didn't have the actual color on hand. Once done, everything received a coat of Mr. Color Gloss Clear (No. 46) to prepare for the decals and weathering.

The decals were the biggest disappointment in the kit. Thick (probably to survive handling by inexperienced hands), I was able to get the black panels on the nose to lay down with Microscale Micro Sol. However, no amount of setting solution would make the stripe decals for the wingtips conform to the details. I eventually gave up and left the stripes off, along with the tiny stencil decals.

Admittedly, I was a bit hesitant to add the suggested teal highlight color, but after re-watching a few episodes, it is pretty noticeable on the ship. I used Vallejo Green Sky (No. 70.974) mixed with just a touch of Medium Blue (No. 70.963), and I think

it added just the right touch.

In all, I spent about 13 hours building my *Havoc Marauder*. Of course, most of the time was spent painting and weathering the model. While even a novice modeler should be able to assemble this kit, it takes a bit of experience to do the paint justice.

— John Plzak



Kit No.: AMT1348 **Scale:** 1/144

Mfr.: Round 2 Corp, round2corp.com (Sample courtesy mfr.) **Price:** \$39.99

Comments: Injection-molded plastic (gray); 47 parts (1 cast metal); decals

Pros: Option to display with gear down or in flight **Cons:** Thick decals; painting and marking instructions printed on the sides of the box

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By Tim Boyd

AMT 1964 and 1965 Imperial hardtop

A different car market allowed kit makers to offer obscure and unusual topics

From the late 1950s to the early 1970s, AMT and JoHan negotiated yearly contracts with automakers to design and produce 1/25 scale dealership promotional giveaways. This allowed those companies to affordably produce spin-off promotional assembly kits each year that resulted in kits of real cars that otherwise would have never seen boxings, including luxury brands Cadillac, Lincoln, and the Chrysler Imperial.

Imperial hardtop and convertible 1/25 scale kits debuted in 1959 as otherwise identical kits under both the SMP and AMT brands. The follow-up 1960 Imperial kit was newly tooled and carried on through 1963 with yearly design revisions, including adaptations to add an engine in 1962. SMP branding alone appeared on these kits in 1960-61, while both AMT and SMP branding graced the otherwise identical 1962 kits. (With AMT's purchase of SMP in 1962, the SMP brand disappeared thereafter).

For the 1964 and 1965 model years, Imperial kits featured an all-new body design and individualized box art for the first time, with unique top, side, and end panels. The kits' customizing versions were attributed to famous customizers Gene Winfield (1964) and George Barris (1965). The simplified promo-style chassis plate first introduced in 1960 continued, while the 413 V8 engine was carried over from the 1962/63 kit tooling, featuring non-stock dual-quad four-barrel and ram-induction options. (Both hardtop and convertible kits were produced for both model years.)

Beyond factory stock, the 1964 kit's 3-in-1 building options included a "Parade"

AMT 1964 & 1965 IMPERIAL HARDTOP

Kit Nos.: 6824-150; 6825-150

Introduced: 1963, 1964 respectively; never reissued

Present Value: \$130 and \$135

version with fender flags and side and rooftop step plates. The custom version included front and rear roll pans paired with slender bumpers and five grille and lighting options to fit into the split front recesses. At the rear, quad exhausts fit below the license plate. Inside, options included a Dictaphone with writing table and a shortwave radio set.

For 1965, model builders were offered an annual kit of the Imperial hardtop for the last time. The unique box art continued, this time

adding an impressionistic country-club-themed watercolor background. The kit otherwise carried over from 1964 mostly intact except for the new factory-stock grille and rear treatments. The custom version featured a grille texture predicting that of the real 1966 Chrysler Imperial, along with additional choices for the no-longer-split grille openings. Inside was a swept-back instrument panel and console treatment with instrument detail.

The full-size Imperial entered a third year without major changes. AMT's resulting 1966 Imperial kit was marketed in convertible form only. This time the custom version was credited to the Alexander Brothers, and it carried over the optional El Camino-like car-pickup parts that first appeared in the 1965 convertible kit. AMT lost the 1967 Imperial promo contract to JoHan and chose to rerun the existing 1966 kit tooling with minor changes as the *Hero* TV-licensed property (released in 1967) and the *Western Pickup* (released in 1968) — both with changes that prevented builders from assembling a factory-stock Imperial.

Today, AMT's 1964 and 1965

Imperial hardtops enjoy status as classic kits for being the end of the hardtop line and the exquisite box art illustrations that approach

fine-art status. **FSM**





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2021 FORD BRONCO FIRST EDITION
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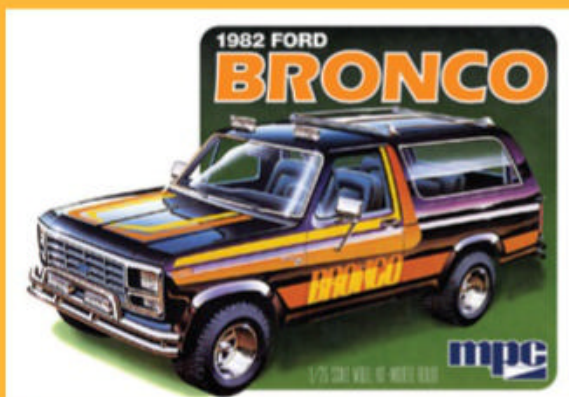


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#MPC991 (1:25 SCALE)



"GOLDEN HAWK" '81 JEEP CJ
#MPC986 (1:25 SCALE)



'92 TOYOTA 4X4 PICKUP
#AMT1425 (1:20 SCALE)

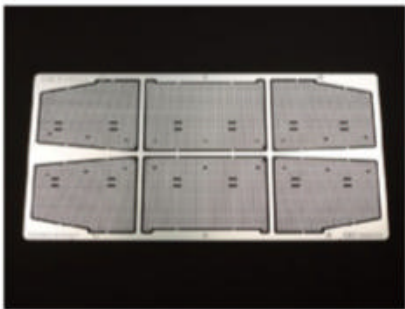
IV/70(A)

Item No. 35381

This model kit recreates the Panzer IV/70(A), which appeared at the end of WWII to counter the increasing strength of allied mechanized forces. To shorten its development cycle as much as possible, the hull was based upon the German Tank Panzerkampfwagen IV Ausf. J, which was under production at that moment, combined with the fixed fighting compartment with L/70 7.5cm long barrel gun of the IV/70(V) Lang. Extensive research was made of a full-size example, and the result is this faithful depiction of the bulky form and powerful gun in 1/35 scale.



Features realistic depictions of surface sections such as cast gun shield and rolled steel fighting compartment walls.



Large photo-etched parts authentically capture mesh Schürzen.



Includes one torso commander figure.



The hull is based upon the German Tank Panzerkampfwagen IV Ausf.J kit (35181) with new slide molding on sides, and late production fuel port hatch and return roller support frame recreated in detail.



Main gun moves - elevation/depression and traverse - accompanied by sighting device.



Assembly type depictions of lightweight tracks have one-piece straight sections.

TAMIYA PAINT
SUGGESTED FOR THIS PROJECT

SUGGESTED FOR THIS PROJECT

Item 81788 **XF88**
Dark
Yellow 2

Item 82156 **LP56**
Dark
Green 2

Item 82155 **LP55**
Dark
Yellow 2

Item 81790 **XF90**
Red
Brown 2

Item 81789 **XF89**
Red
Brown 2

Item 82157 **LP57**
Red
Brown 2



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