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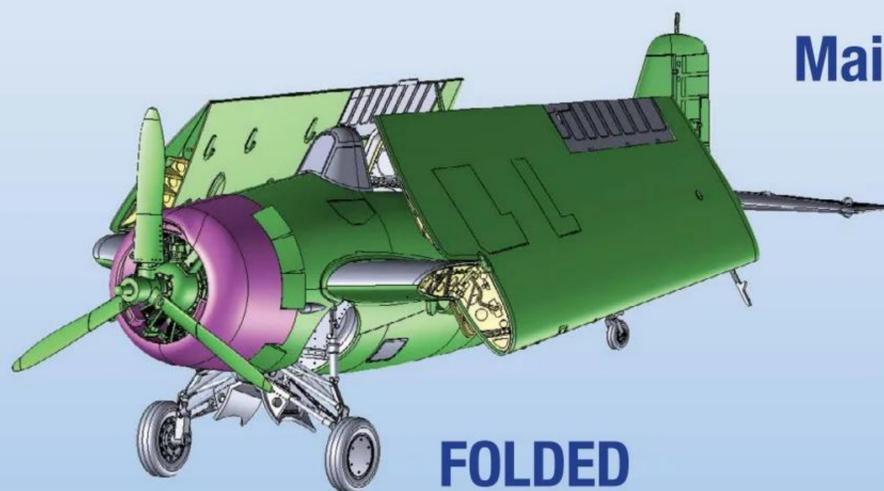
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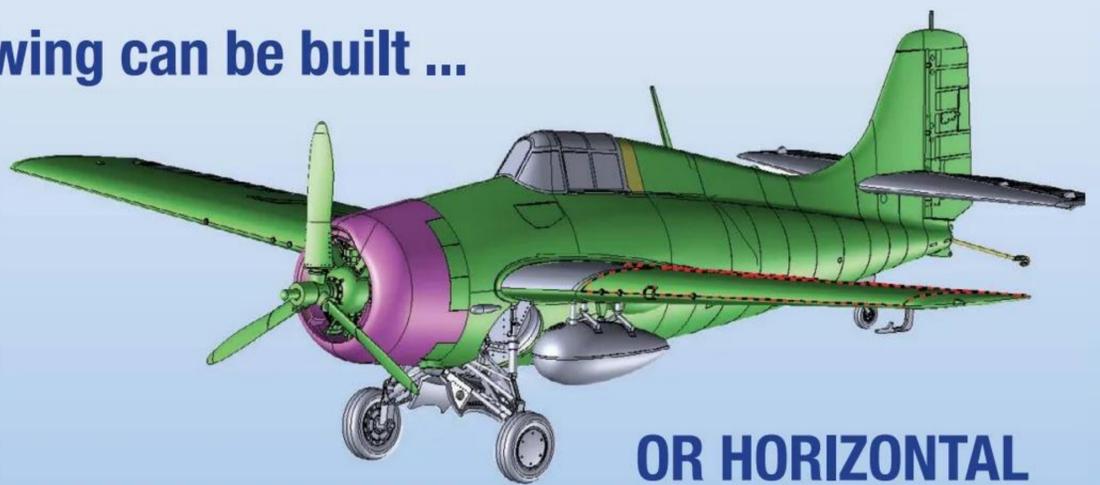
1/48 USN F4F-4
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FROM THE EDITOR

By Aaron Skinner

Rooms full of inspiration

In July Tim, Kendra, and I attended the IPMS/USA National Convention in Madison, Wisconsin — just down the road from *FSM* headquarters. There were more than 2,600 models in the contest rooms alone, and you can see the gallery of more than 150 photos we shot at FineScale.com/show-galleries.

Wandering the tables at a show of this magnitude is both humbling, because there is so much talent on display, and inspiring, because that many great-looking makes me want to hit the workbench and build a kit from my stash.

I also spent a little time in the large vendor room — less time than I

wanted to, but more time than was good for my wallet. I came home with a couple of 1/48 scale kits: the Airfix Bristol Bulldog and Special Hobby L-4 Grasshopper. Not the best news for my pile of unbuilt kits. But I started the L-4 as soon as the show was over. Does that mean I can argue that it never went into the stash?

How many of you attended the Nationals? Email and let me know what you thought and what you bought.

Happy modeling!

editor@finescale.com

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Editor, Scale Modeling Brand Group Tim Kidwell
Assistant Editor, Digital Kendra Bell
Assistant Design Director Scott M. Krall
Editorial Associate Monica Freitag

ART & PRODUCTION

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Kristi Rummel
Email: kristi.rummel@firecrown.com
Phone: (608) 435-6220
Ad Production
adservices@firecrown.com

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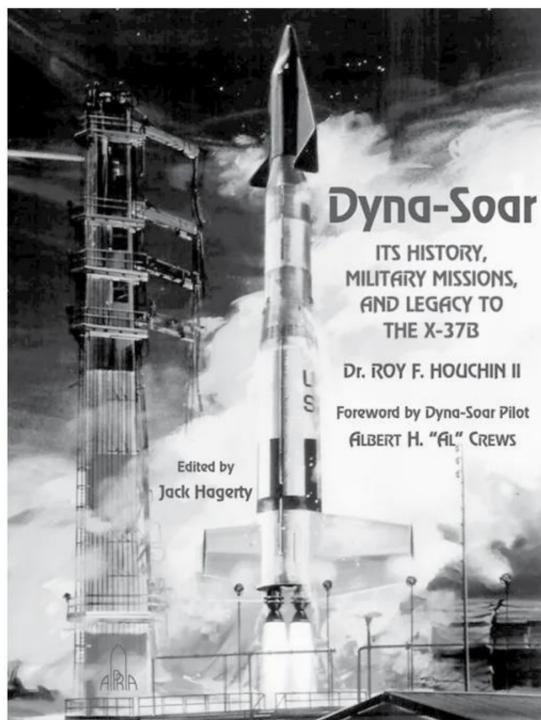
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Rob Schmitt looks on as Luci Colasante finishes a Cretaceous Creations 1/10 scale styracosaurus bust. She learned to prime, mask, and paint freehand with an airbrush and also apply washes and pigments. The finished model hit the contest tables after the class.

Paying it forward

At the recent 2024 IPMS/USA National Convention, TAG Team Hobbies held a dinosaur painting class. Just before we were started, a gentleman asked if there was any room in the class for his daughter. Luckily, there were a few slots left and he registered her for the class.

Luci was a 12-year-old girl who had little experience with an airbrush but was excited to try. She listened intently to everything that was presented and took all the suggestions to heart. At the end of the class, Luci was extremely proud of her dino and rightfully so. So proud that she entered it in the contest and took home a First Place award!

That's what it's all about my friends!
— Rob Schmitt
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Ed.: We couldn't agree more, Rob! We were lucky enough to meet Luci at the convention and we photographed her dinosaur for the FSM Show Gallery, which can be seen on FineScale.com/galleries. We look forward to seeing where she goes from here. — Aaron Skinner

It all adds up and works together

I like that *FineScale Modeler* magazine covers a little of everything! I mainly build World War II U.S. stuff, but I have learned techniques, ideas, tips, and tricks from other subjects such as Axis vehicles, British vehicles, cars, boats, Gundam, and more. It's amazing how many things can cross between multiple subjects. In the end, we all enjoy and love this great hobby ... that is until the next tiny piece goes flying across the room into oblivion.

— Derek Southerland
via YouTube

Ed.: Thanks, Derek! Our philosophy is you can learn something from any model genre! — A.S.

Loving the magazine

I've just been listening to the presentation Tim Kidwell and Aaron Skinner gave at the 2024 IPMS/USA National Convention and wanted to say how good it was. Very thoughtful, very thought provoking.

Until recently, I was one of your overseas subscribers. I lived in England and had been getting your magazine through the post for some years. Going back many years, I had picked up copies of your magazine when it was available on the newsstands and wanted to give it another try. Unfortunately, I was not able to renew my subscription, due to various circumstances including moving house, but hope to start again before too long. I have thoroughly

enjoyed the mix of subjects you cover such as techniques, the advice, the range of views that come across in the magazine, and especially the humor that shines through.

I agree with you, this is an amazing time to be making models. Sometimes it is all too easy to harken back to previous ages and think scratchbuilding was king and "look at these kits now, everything is supplied." But then I take another look at myself and think, "Look at these kits. They are fabulous and I can make things I could only dream of producing bad versions of when I was younger!" The scope of subjects is also excellent at exciting the imaginations of new modelers, be they young or old.

— Michael Warren
via email

Ed.: Thanks, Michael. Every now and then, as I'm working on a model of a subject I could have only imagined building 40 years ago, I am thankful for the hobby's evolution. — A.S.

Evolution or extinction

I am re-reading all the *FSM* issues cover to cover starting with Issue No. 1. The magazine has changed a lot over time, but so have we all. The changes in the magazine reflect changes in the readers and the industry. The strategies you are using as editors to keep the magazine relevant make total sense.

I have no doubt that my approach to building/painting and all the skills that go into completing any given project have improved because of what I have learned in *FSM* and because of the amazing range of aftermarket parts and finishing products now available. So, I will continue my journey with *FSM* to stay current.

My biggest fear is that the printed page will disappear, just like local hobby shops, because online content and online selling are the cheapest means to reach the largest audience. But reading, like building is tactile. Keep printing and keep changing. If you stop evolving, extinction is inevitable.

— Paul Clarry
via FineScale.com

Ed.: Thanks, Paul! The plan is to evolve! — A.S.

Weathering vs. over-weathering

Just want to say that since my reentry to modeling, I have noticed a disturbing trend of over-weathering models. Edges that look like they are worn are realistic, because these vehicles are home to the crew. But utmost care is taken of them. So, if it looks

like it's been submerged in a river for a hundred years, it is just not real world. Dirt and mud happen but not to the extreme. Don't get me wrong some of these models look great but aren't real world. The result is newcomers think you have to rust and chip everything to the extreme. Looking at my library on World War II, I find examples of vehicles in combat, and it is hard to find even a few of the examples as weathered as some of the models I see in *FSM*. I have the book *Charging Knights of the Eastern Front*. The pictures show that battalion's vehicles in combat and look like they just came off the assembly line.

I think more articles on basic weathering help a lot, but those on extreme weathering that are actually detrimental.

– Clinton Gaskill
via YouTube

Ed.: Hi Clinton! A lot of weathering comes down to style, what looks good to your eye, and what you want to accomplish. Scale modeling is an art, there are no two ways about it, and

what one person likes is not necessarily going to be the next person's entree of choice. These decisions are and should be left up to the modeler. At FSM, we provide the information for how to accomplish a task. Within that there is a whole spectrum of choices to be made and a lot of room for artistic license. The most important thing for any modeler should be that you are enjoying your hobby. – Tim Kidwell

Silver primer may be the ticket

Fun tip: If you are dealing with a kit molded in a bold color like that red Chrysler body Tim used as an example in the video about priming, spray the plastic with silver paint first, then prime it. I don't know why — maybe you can research it — but the silver paint kills the plastic color and it will not bleed through.

– Chad Truss
via YouTube

Ed.: That's very true! Silver does kill the plastic color and it is an excellent light blocker, too, useful when lighting models. –T.K.

Looking for AH-1 cockpit colors

I've been looking for a paint scheme for an AH-1S Cobra attack helicopter. I was in the U.S Army and trained as a weapons tech. I remember the body color as medium or dark olive drab. What I'm trying to find is the interior colors of the cockpit. I'm building a Revell 1/72 scale AH-1S TOW Cobra and the interior instructions are vague about the Federal Standard colors to use. There appear to be four grays and trying to get the right colors spot on is what I'm trying to achieve. Can you help me?

– Santiago C. Borjas
Harlingen, Texas

Ed.: Research indicates most helicopter interiors were Dark Gull Gray FS36231. There can be differences in shade depending on the material this is applied to. Beyond that, instrument panels are black and the seats olive drab or olive green. If you need it, the color of the exterior was likely U.S. Army Helo Drab FS34031 or Dark Green FS34084. Send us a photo when it's done! – A.S.

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IPMS/USA National Convention photo gallery

Modelers from all over the world gathered in Madison, Wis., for the IPMS/USA National Convention. With more than 2,600 models on the contest tables, an exhibit-only section, and huge vendor room, attendees had plenty of eye candy to stare at. *FSM* editors picked more than 150 models to photograph, including ships, cars, tanks, figures, aircraft, sci-fi, and Gundam, and you can see them all. Visit [FineScale.com/show-galleries](https://www.finescale.com/show-galleries) to see photos of some of the best models of 2024.



FineScale Modeler Weekly videos are back!

Don't miss *FineScale Modeler Weekly* Season 3! *FSM* brings you in-box reviews of new kits, tool and modeling advice; answers your questions; models from recent model shows we've attended; and have a fun time discussing all manner of scale-modeling topics. Visit [FineScale.com/videos](https://www.finescale.com/videos) to see all the most recent season's episodes. And be sure to leave a comment or your own tips to help other viewers!

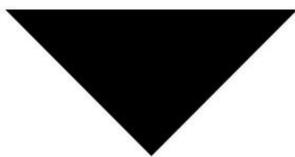


Boeing AH-64 Apache helicopter walkaround

FineScale Modeler visited EAA Airventure and took close-up photos of many aircraft with popular model kits currently available, like the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter. Let us help you see the details you've been trying to perfect on your next model! Visit [FineScale.com/online-extras](https://www.finescale.com/online-extras) where you can find more than 60 photos showing you everything from rivets to rotors and wheels to missile launchers on the Apache.

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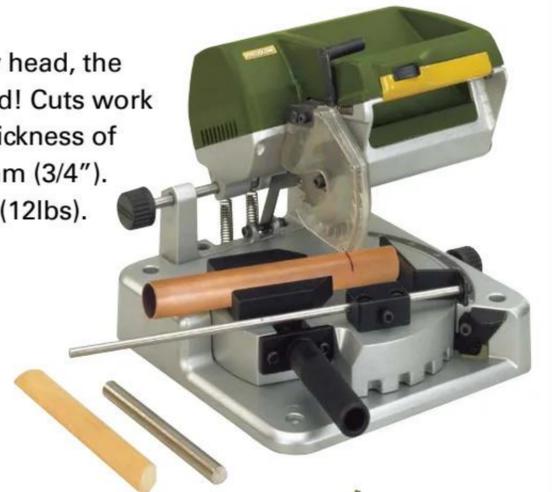
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AIRCRAFT

1/32 SCALE

Yakovlev Yak-3 "Normandie-Niemen Hi-Tech", No. SH32067, \$69 from Special Hobby.

1/48 SCALE

WWII US B-26B Marauder Bomber w/ USAAF Pilots & Ground Personnel (D-Day 80th Anniversary), No. 48322, \$159.99 from ICM.

Supermarine Spitfire Mk. XVI High Back, No. 8286, \$49.99 from Eduard.

Messerschmitt Bf 109G-6 Erla, No. 84201, \$34.95 from Eduard.

Fw 190D-9, No. 84102, \$34.95 from Eduard.

Bell P-39Q Airacobra, No. 40010, \$42 from Arma Hobby. **WBR**

Hawker Hurricane Mk.IIB Trop, No. 40008, \$50 from Arma Hobby.

MQ-1C Gray Eagle UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle), No. CP4808, \$51 from Clear Prop!

Culver PQ-14A, No. CP4815, \$45 from Clear Prop!

F-86A Sabre, No. CP4824, \$TBA from Clear Prop! **WBR**

P-47D-25RE Thunderbolt advanced kit, No. 48001, \$TBA from MiniArt.

P-47D-28RA Thunderbolt Pacific Theater of Operations, No. 48022, \$TBA from MiniArt.

F4F-4 Wildcat "Battle of Midway" USN, No. 12355, \$36 from Academy/Model Rectifier Corp.. **WBR**

1/72 SCALE

Romanian Barbarossa PZL/IAR P.11F & PZL.23 Karaś (2 in 1), No. 72530, \$30 from IBG Models.

Mi-17 in Polish Air Force, No. 72907, \$TBA from IBG Models.

PZL. P11a Hungarian Colors, No. 72526, \$16 from IBG Models.

P-51B Mustang Deluxe Set (dual kit), No. 70069, \$37 from Arma Hobby.

F-35C Lightning II, No. 551469, \$69.99 from Italeri/Model Rectifier Corp. **ASW**

SH 89/CASA C.212 ASW & Maritime Patrol, No. SH72402, \$32 from Special Hobby.

1/144 SCALE

Boeing 737-400 Colombian Air Force, No. 12639, \$23 from Academy.

ARMOR

1/35 SCALE

M3 Stuart (Early Prod), No. 35412, \$TBA from MiniArt.

StuG III Ausf G May-June 1943 Alkett

Prod., No. 35341, \$TBA from MiniArt.

SdKfz 234/2 with Luchs turret (interior kit), No. 35416, \$TBA from MiniArt.

Austin 1918 Pattern British service Dunsterforce interior kit, No. 39023, \$TBA from MiniArt.

Sankas WW2 Wehrmacht Ambulance Trucks (3 kits), No. DS3523, \$122 from ICM.

M1097A2 Humvee, No. 35435, \$76.99 from ICM. **WBR**

SdKfz 234/1 Schwerer Panzerspahwagen. Early Mod. (interior kit), No. 35410, \$TBA from MiniArt.

1/72 SCALE

DAC Mk.II British armored car, No. 72145, \$23 from IBG Models.

StuG III Ausf G May/June 1943 Prod, No. 72107, \$TBA from MiniArt.

SHIPS

1/350 SCALE

Russian FFG Project 20380 early production, No. 6012, \$54.95 from Takom.

Russian FFG Project 20380 late production, No. 6013, \$54.95 from Takom.

Type 192 & Type 192/A Harbor Tugboats, No. 6011, \$27.95 from Takom

PR23370 Multifunctional Boat & PR21980 anti-sabotage Boat, No. 6014, \$27.95 from Takom

FIGURES

1/35 SCALE

Dardanelles Campaign 1915, No. DS3520, \$33.99 from ICM.

US Soldiers with WLA motorcycles, No. 35422, \$TBA from MiniArt.

Modern Cafe Visitors Set 2, No. 38090, \$TBA from MiniArt.

German tank riders Set 2 (resin heads), No. 53024, \$TBA from MiniArt.

MISCELLANEOUS

1/24 SCALE

Fuel & Oil drums 1930-50's Set 1. German Type, No. 24009, \$TBA from MiniArt.

1/72 SCALE

Luftwaffe starter car and transport crate for engine (Jumo 213 included), No. 72547, \$14.99 from ICM.

AIRCRAFT DETAIL SET

1/48 SCALE

Spitfire Mk. XVI High Back photo-etched detail set, No. 8286-LEPT, \$16.95 from Eduard.

Fw 190A-2 photo-etched metal set, No. 82146-LEPT, \$12.95 from Eduard.

B-24J Liberator landing gear (for HobbyBoss), No. 48458, \$28.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

MiG-17F landing gear (for Ammo), No. 48459, \$19.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

Hurricane Mk.I/II landing gear (for HobbyBoss), No. 48460, \$18.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

A-10C Thunderbolt II landing gear (for Great Wall Hobby), No. 48461, \$24.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

1/72 SCALE

P-51D-5 Mustang photo-etched set, No. 70171-LEPT, \$10.95 from Eduard.

P-51D Mustang photo-etched set, No. 70172-LEPT, \$12.95 from Eduard.

P-51D-5 cockpit print, No. 672363, \$19.95 from Eduard.

AIRCRAFT DECALS

1/48 SCALE

Witchcraft B-24J wartime markings, \$15.50 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/32 \$22; 1/72 \$11; 1/144 \$7.50.

Spitfire Mk.V G-AISU 1947 Version, \$11 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/32 \$13.50; 1/72 \$9; 1/144 \$6.50; 1/24 \$17.50.

1/72 SCALE

British Airways Landor 777-200s, \$70 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/100 \$33; 1/144 \$19.50; 1/200 \$15.50; 1/400 \$7.50; 1/500 \$7.50.

Air France A380s, \$97.50 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/100 \$60; 1/144 \$33; 1/200 \$17.50; 1/400 \$11; 1/500 \$9.

Northwest Cargo "Billboard" 747-200Fs, \$38 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/100 \$22; 1/144 \$15.50; 1/200 \$11; 1/400 \$7.50; 1/500 \$7.50.

Eurowings CRJ900s, \$33 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/100 \$19.50; 1/144 \$11; 1/200 \$9; 1/400 \$7.50; 1/500 \$7.50.

Arajjet 737 Max 8s, \$44 from Draw Decal. Also available in 1/100 \$24; 1/144 \$15.50; 1/200 \$9; 1/400 \$7.50; 1/500 \$7.50.

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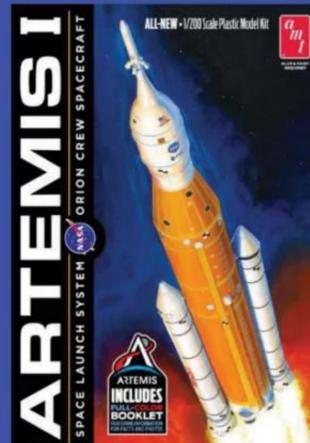
Dracula



The Creature



2001 Space Station



Artemis I Rocket



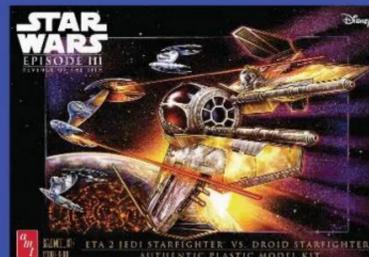
1961 Moon Suit



Star Trek TNG - Enterprise D



Star Trek II - USS Reliant



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Make a G-27

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look less

How to apply faded and worn paint effects to a cargo lifter

BY RAFAŁ LEBIODA

SPARTAN



Living in Poland, we have seen increased air traffic over our heads of military transports carrying equipment to Ukraine to support that country's defense since the Russian invasion in February 2022.

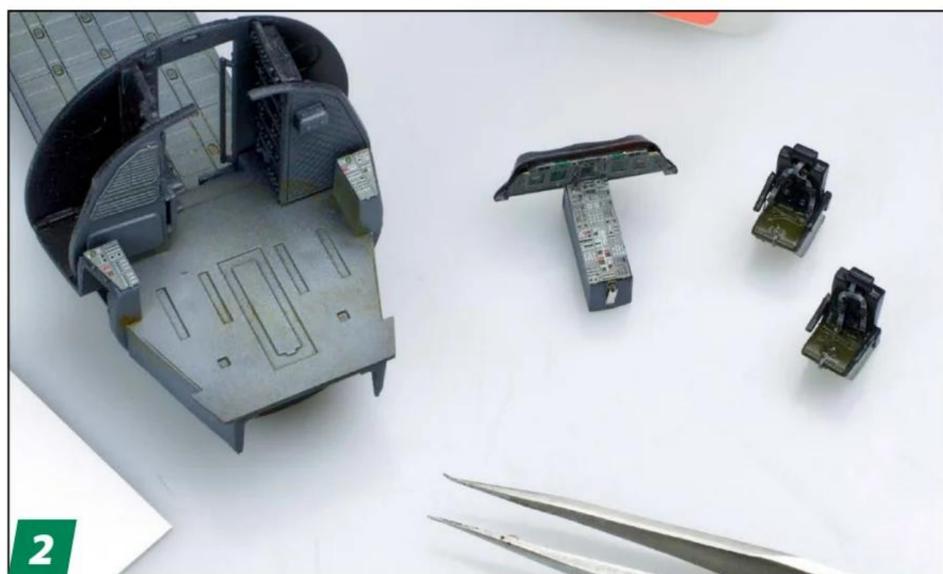
Seeing them inspired me to build one of these aircraft, which led me to the Italeri 1/72 scale C-27J Spartan (No. 1402). This Italian-built, twin turboprop entered Italian air force service in

2006 and is operated by 17 other countries including the United States where Spartans are active in the Coast Guard and Army Special Operations Command.

In addition to adding some aftermarket detail to the kit, I wanted to use the large airframe — the finished model is 12 inches long with a more than 15 inch wingspan — to try some different finishing techniques to model an operational aircraft.



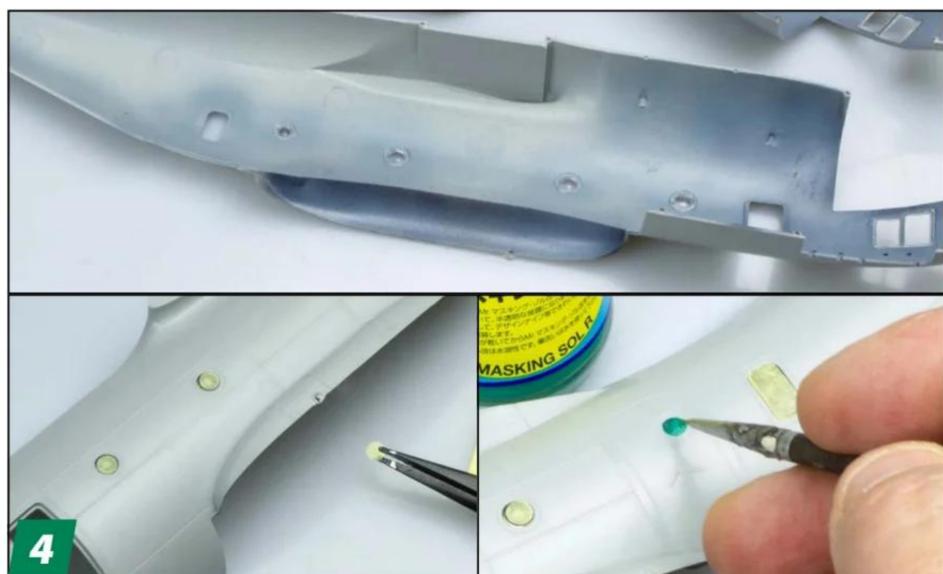
1 I assembled the interior with Mr. Hobby Mr. Cement S, a quick-drying liquid glue. After priming with Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black (No. SF288), I airbrushed the floors and walls with a mix of Mr. Hobby FS36118 Gray (No. H305) and FS36231 Gray (No. H317).



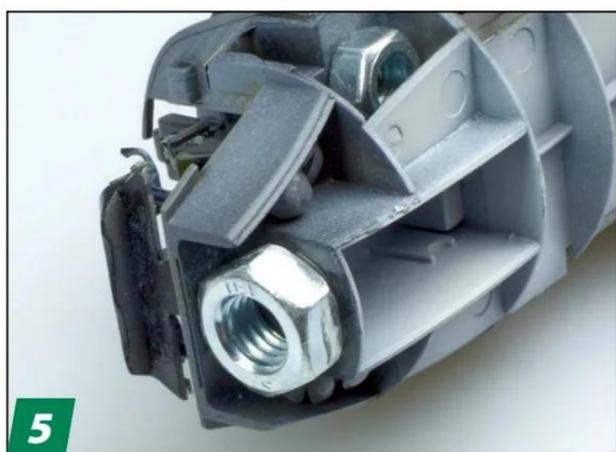
2 The cockpit is OK as molded, but I replaced much of the molded panel detail with pre-painted, photo-etched metal (PE) from Eduard (No. 73682). I sanded the panels and consoles smooth and attached the PE with superglue.



3 To give the cockpit and cargo bay the appearance of use, I applied Ammo Oilbrusher Earth (No. A.MIG-3514) thinned and blended with Enamel Odorless Thinner (No. A.MIG-2018).



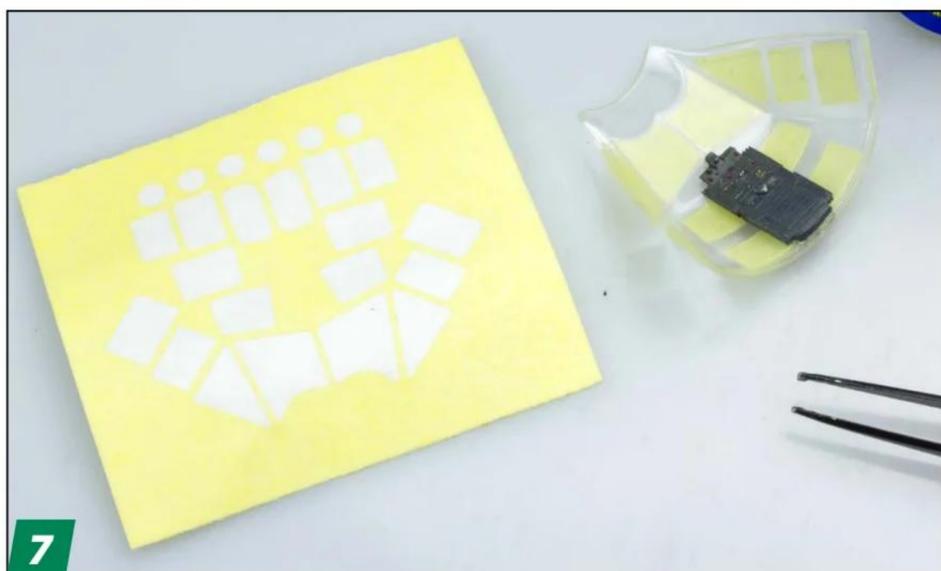
4 Before closing the fuselage around the interior, I glued the cabin windows into the outer wall with Revell Contacta Clear (No. 39609). Next, I protected the clear parts with Eduard masks (No. CX281) and Mr. Hobby Mr. Masking Sol R (No. M-133).



5 Before closing the fuselage, I glued a metal nut under the cockpit and forward of the nose gear bay to keep the Spartan properly grounded.



6 I clamped the large fuselage halves with rubber bands to ensure they stayed together as the glue set. I used Mr. Hobby Mr. Cement S, which penetrates deep into the joins and provides a strong bond. After sanding the seam, I applied Mr. Dissolved Putty (No. P119) and sanded it smooth; this can take several applications.



7

Using more of the Eduard pre-cut masks, I prepped the cockpit for painting. Next, I attached the overhead console inside with clear part cement before gluing the canopy to the fuselage and blending it into the body with Mr. Dissolved Putty and careful sanding.



8

To check the seams, I sprayed them with black primer between applications of putty and sanding. The Spartan I was replicating was fitted with a refueling probe, which was one of the final additions to the fuselage along with the various sensors and counter measures.



9

The upper half of the wings is a single piece and the largest part in the kit. With the lower halves, it sandwiches the ailerons to leave them movable. Clamps made sure the joint was solid.



10

Gaps on the wing seams are especially annoying, so I applied Mr. Dissolved Putty and smoothed it initially with a sanding sponge. I followed that by wet-sanding the leading and trailing edges with progressively finer grits, checking the work with black primer.



11

After I joined the fuselage and wing, I filled gaps with Mr. Dissolved Putty, which was rapidly becoming an essential tool for building this model. Sand, prime, putty, repeat.





12

When I attached the horizontal stabilizers, I was careful to check their alignment to maintain the Spartan's geometry. As expected, a little Mr. Dissolved Putty was needed to eliminate gaps.



13

To paint the turbine intake and exhaust, I airbrushed Mr. Hobby Flat Black (No. H12) as a base for Mr. Color Super Metallic 2 Super Titanium (No. SM205). To hide the nacelle interiors, I airbrushed them FS36118 Gray.



14

As had become the norm, I painted the nacelle seams with Mr. Dissolved Putty. One of the advantages of this stuff is it can be applied accurately with a fine brush, minimizing sanding. After attaching them to the wings and checking the seams, I sprayed the airframe with Mr. Surfacer 1000.



15

Next came pre-shading, but rather than using just black, I use browns and blues in layers to affect the topcoat. I airbrushed thinned paint along panel lines and edges, keeping the pre-shading translucent so the effect isn't too stark.



16

To add variation and weathering, I airbrushed Tamiya Hull Red (No. XF-9) through a Hobby World stencil (Effect 07). I used thin brown and blue on top of the wings, horizontal stabilizers, and the upper fuselage, including a little on the sides.



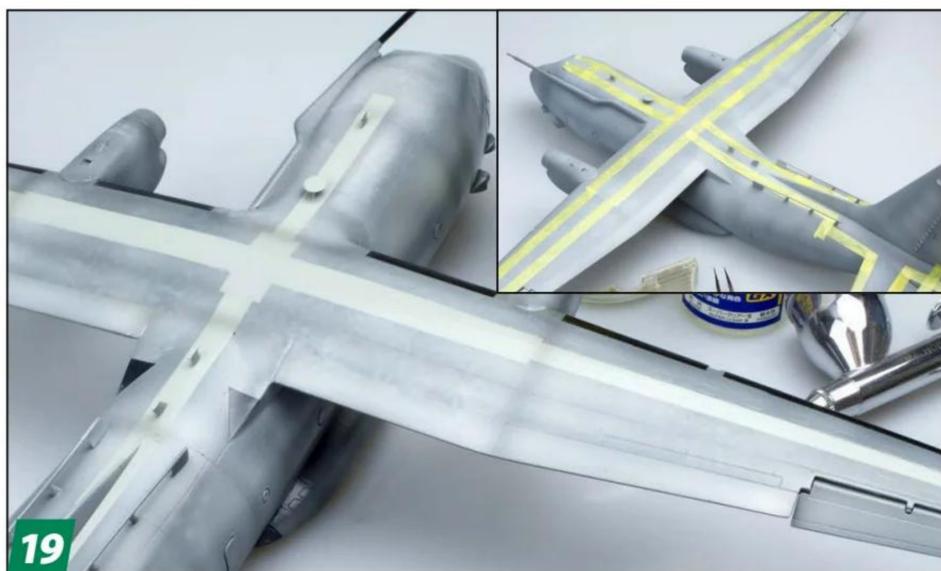
17

For camouflage, I airbrushed the entire model with Mr. Hobby FS36495 Light Gray (No. H338), starting from the bottom and working up. I laid down several thin, even, paint layers. Next, I focused the spray on the centers of individual panels to post-shade them.



18

I used the stencil again to airbrush more lightened gray over the upper surfaces for more wear and fading. I applied this effect to the upper fuselage, wing, tailplanes, engine nacelles, and a little way down the fuselage sides.



19 Rather than use the kit decals for the walkways, I masked them and airbrushed a mix of Mr. Hobby FS26440 Gray (No. H325) and Off White (No. H21). I sealed the paint and prepared the surface for decals with several thin layers of Mr. Color Super Clear II (No. GX100).



20 The markings for the Italian aircraft I was building proved challenging. I applied Mr. Mark Setter Neo (No. MS234) on the surface and then positioned the marking with gentle pressure from a cotton swab. Once the decal was in place, I brushed on Mr. Mark Softer Neo (No. MS233).



21 To bring out the panel lines and add a little dirt, I used Ammo Oilbrusher Dark Mud (No. A.MIG-3508), Earth (No. A.MIG-3509), and Dark Brown (No. A.MIG-3512). Some of these were decanted and brushed along panel lines while others were dabbed and stippled.



22 After letting the Oilbrusher dry for a few minutes, I removed excess with a soft cloth slightly damp with mineral spirits. Especially stubborn areas required a cotton swab and the solvent, which also worked to blend some colors, especially underneath the plane.



23 Dry pigments in shades of black, dark brown, rust, and sand applied with a medium brush enhanced the grime around the engines and the underside of the wings near the exhausts.



24 Painting and weathering complete, I carefully removed the masks and revealed a view into the nicely detailed cockpit.

FINAL THOUGHTS

WITH MAJOR HANDLING OUT of the way, I attached fragile items, wheels, landing-gear doors, landing lights, and props, as well as replacing a number of antennas underneath that were broken during painting. My Spartan was done and looked ready to haul cargo. It was fun to try some different techniques to make this large model look different than the norm. **FSM**



Two vehicles, five figures, **ONE SCENE**

It doesn't take special skills to build a 1/35 scale Normandy diorama

BY IVAN MOMCILOVIC

War stories often feature near misses or escapes from death that seem all-too-miraculous. When I built an ICM 1/35 scale Marder I on an FCM 36, officially the 7.5cm PaK40(Sf) auf Geschützwagen FCM(f), I decided to represent just such a scene.

Part of the impetus for this was the kit itself. It is well detailed, but I was disappointed that the gun is in

one fixed position, and the fighting compartment doors are molded closed. These limited the kit's diorama or display options, but it could easily represent a self-propelled gun abandoned by its crew. From there, the diorama developed to include British troops and their truck as well as a "lucky" German soldier whose war may be over but who narrowly escaped death thanks to his helmet.





1 The ICM Marder I goes together quickly. Working out of the box, I assembled most of it in preparation for priming and painting.



2 As a foundation for painting both the Marder and the truck, I primed with Vallejo Hobby Paint Black (No. 28.012). It produces a smooth surface from the spray can, but be sure to use in a well-ventilated space.



3 Following a pattern I found online, I airbrushed the Marder's camouflage with Tamiya acrylics. For the base, I used Dark Yellow 2 (No. XF-88). The stripes are Red Brown 2 (No. XF-90) and Olive Green (No. XF-58). I wanted it to look like typical, field-applied camo.



4 After sealing with Tamiya Clear (No. X-22) to protect the paint from the oil and enamel weathering, I applied decals and picked out details. I added heavy chipping in the paint. I assumed the vehicle, like many in France, was camouflaged with foliage, so scratches from the branches would be common.



To break up the surface and blend the camo colors, I applied dots of green, brown, and buff artist oils and blended with thinner and a fine brush. I left this to dry for 24 hours to ensure the next layer didn't affect it.



6 I flowed on a wash of thin, brown artist oils. Before inserting the ready rounds into the rack, I colored them using Spectrum Noir metallic markers. Alcohol-based, the markers are easy to use, don't leave brush strokes, and the color lays down nicely.



The kit features vinyl tracks that I airbrushed with Ammo Tracks Primer (No. A.MIG-2007). I applied the metallic highlights using a Spectrum Noir silver marker.



Using a fine brush, I painted lines of Ammo Streaking Grime (No. A.MIG-1203) from the top edges down the sides. Drawing it down the surface with enamel thinner on a small, flat brush removed most of the color and left thin, barely visible stains.



Around the running gear and lower hull where mud would collect, I brushed on Ammo Acrylic Mud Dark Mud Ground (No. A.MIG-2104). Over this, I applied Ammo Splashes Damp Earth (No. A.MIG-1754) to add different shades and textures to the deposits. A fine brush and enamel thinner blended the products and produced realistic results.



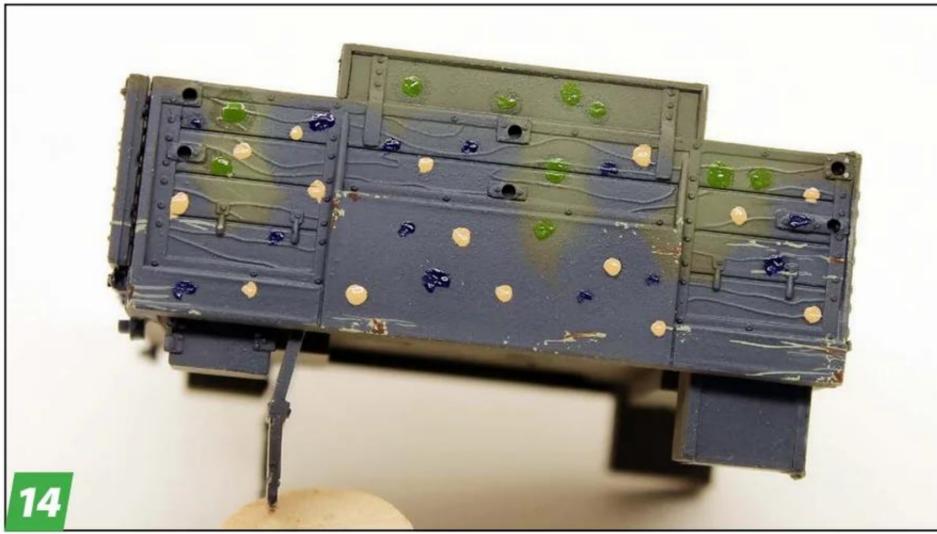
For the British truck, I built Italeri's classic Chevrolet 15 CWT, a kit that's been around for decades. Despite its age, the truck goes together quickly and easily.

Over a primer coat of Vallejo Model Paint Black, I airbrushed the first camo color, DOA British SCC No. 14 Blue Black. It covers most of the truck including all of the top and much of the lower body. DOA appears to be out of business, but several other companies make British army colors. I especially like LifeColor's rendition of the shades.



Over Ammo Camouflage Masking Putty (No. A.MIG-8012), I airbrushed DOA Light Green G5 on the truck and Khaki Green G3 on the cargo bed cover. Over a layer of Tamiya Clear, I applied the colorful decals.

I hand-painted details and added scratches over the vehicle with a fine brush and black, brown, and light green acrylics.



14

Just like I had done on the Marder, I applied a dot filter to the truck. This time the artist-oil colors used were blue, green, and buff, and they were blended with a fine brush and thinner.



15

I used the same dot-filter technique inside the cab, but instead of blending the oil paint down, I stippled them into and around the surfaces.



16

To weather the windshield, I masked the wiper arcs — which are mounted up top — on each pane with paper and airbrushed Ammo Nature Effects Light Dust (No. A.MIG-1401).



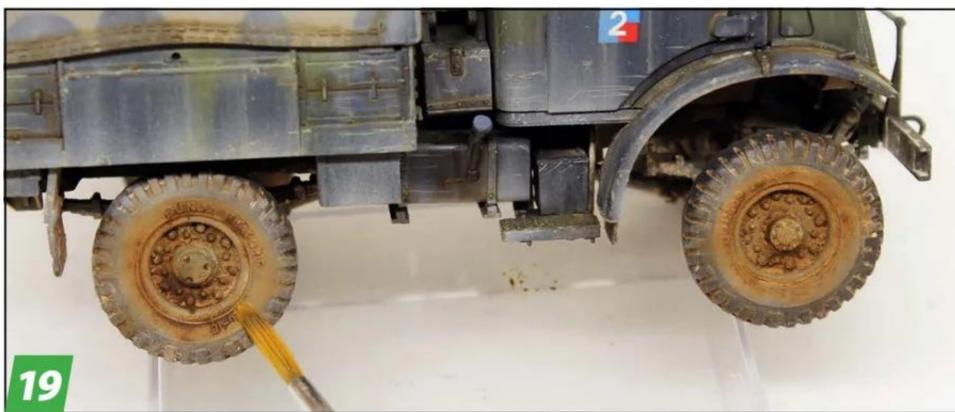
17

I used the same enamel product to add rain-streaked dust on the roof, hood, and sides, applying dots along edges and blending them with thinner and a small, flat brush.



18

A pinwash of dark-brown artist oils flowed along panel lines, door outlines, cargo-cover stitching, and around hinges helped bring out the kit's nicely molded details.



19

To match the muddy road on the diorama, I dirtied the wheels and underside of the truck with Ammo Pigment Europe Earth (No. A.MIG-3004) and Dark Earth (No. A.MIG-3007). After applying them with a brush, I flowed on a little alcohol to set the powder and adjusted them with a brush. When the pigments were dry, I added a little Ammo Dark Mud Ground for contrast.



21

Given the rain in Normandy during summer 1944, it made sense that mud would splash onto the truck. I flicked Ammo Splashes Dry Steppe (No. A.MIG-1751) and Wet Ground from a paintbrush onto the body around the wheels.



20

On the saddle tanks, I brushed Ammo Engine, Fuel, & Oil Fresh Engine Oil (No. A.MIG-1408) around the filler pipes to show gasoline spilled during hurried refuels.



22

To enhance the paint chipping, I applied Ammo Striking Rust Effects (No. A.MIG-1204) to the affected areas and blended it with enamel thinner on a fine brush. The effect is almost like a filter.



23

For the final touch, I mixed Ammo Airfield Dust (No. A.MIG-3011) and alcohol and brushed them over the windshield, windows, and the lower sides of the cab. When it dried, I removed and blended it with a paintbrush to produce a natural and realistic dust film.



24

I started the diorama with a tree I planned for the roadside. The trunk is a small decorative wood piece covered with putty and textured with a hobby knife. For branches, I superglued a few HO scale Scenic Express SuperTrees branches (No. EX0214) to the trunk.



25

I painted the trunk and branches dark brown. For foliage, I used Noch Light Green Leaves (No. 07142), which look great in 1/35 scale. I soaked the branches on Ammo Sand & Gravel Glue (No. A.MIG-2012) and then sprinkled the leaves over them.



26

I made the wall from foam shaped with a hot-wire cutter. After slicing off a thin layer of the foam in a couple of areas, I carved a brick pattern into these spots to show damage. I primed the plaster areas with white and bricks with a rust shade. Bullet holes were pressed into the foam with toothpick.



27

After shaping the base from foam, I carved a cobblestone texture into one side with a hobby knife. On the other, slightly raised side, I applied Ammo textured ground for an earthy effect and added static grass with a static-grass applicator. The wall was painted a yellowish shade and glued in place. I sprayed everything but the wall with black primer.





I base-coated the road with various shades of gray and painted bare ground Tamiya Dark Yellow (No. XF-60). The grass and other vegetation with several shades of green. After that, I glued the tree in place and added a few tufts of grass and small bushes.



I hand-painted individual cobblestones with darker and lighter grays, black, buff, and cream. It looks stark now, but as you'll see, subsequent steps will tone it down considerably.



Using pigments — Europe earth and dark earth applied dry and then wetted with alcohol and dabbed into place — I blended the base elements together. You can see what I meant about the cobblestones now!



To tie the Marder into the location, I used the same materials I employed for the tree to camouflage the self-propelled gun. This was a common practice for German vehicles in Normandy.



I used figures from Rado, Soga, and Royal Models for the British Tommies and their German captive. Ultimately, the standing soldier will hold the helmet that saved the German's life as if to say, "Mate, you are one jammy bastard!" (Jammy is slang for lucky.)



FINAL THOUGHTS

AFTER SECURING THE VEHICLES and figures on the base, I called my little scene done. I'm extremely happy with the result, especially since it started with me trying to find a way to include the ICM Marder I in a way that would use its limited display possibilities. The whole thing proves that it doesn't take any special skills to make a neat scene and tell a story. **FSM**

Attack the Dendrob



Have you ever dreamt of building the colossal Bandai HGUC 1/144 scale RX-78GP03 Gundam “Dendrobium” but felt intimidated by its sheer size? Well, fret no more, because I have you covered.

Released in 2002, many consider the Dendrobium to be the most expensive Bandai High Grade kit to date, and it is the second largest kit, beat only by the HGUC NZ-999 Neo Zeong, making it a “holy grail” for many modelers. How big is big? When finished, the Dendrobium stands 13¾ inches tall with a 17¼-inch by 39-inch footprint!

Inside the enormous box are 46 parts trees housed in two separate boxes (helpfully labeled Container A and Container B) with lists of the runners within. Not a quick build, the key to success is to break up this huge kit into manageable steps. I’ll also offer tips and tricks for handling its size while still achieving a top-notch paint job, including paint selection, airbrushing techniques for large surfaces, and applying shading to make your Gundam Dendrobium truly pop.

Let’s get started!

Build and paint an enormous Gundam kit

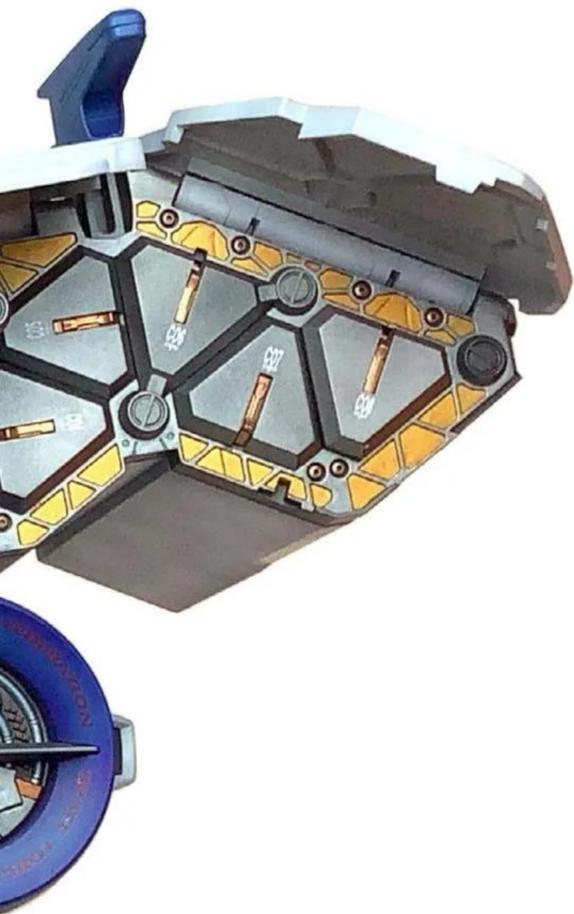
BY NICO SURATOS

ium!



1

Aside from the 46 runners, the kit also includes metal plates that ensure the center of mass is in the middle of the constructed model. Five sets of differently sized screws are also provided for extra strength where needed.



2

Even with the kit's huge size, assembly is as normal as it gets. I recommend using the two-cut method when removing parts from the sprues, especially for large parts. First, remove the part from the tree with a double-bladed nipper, but do not cut close to the part.



3

Come back with a set of single-bladed nippers to remove the majority of the nub, leaving about 1mm between the part and the end of the nub. This prevents stress marks and accidental gouging. Do not cut flush with the part, even with a single-blade nipper.



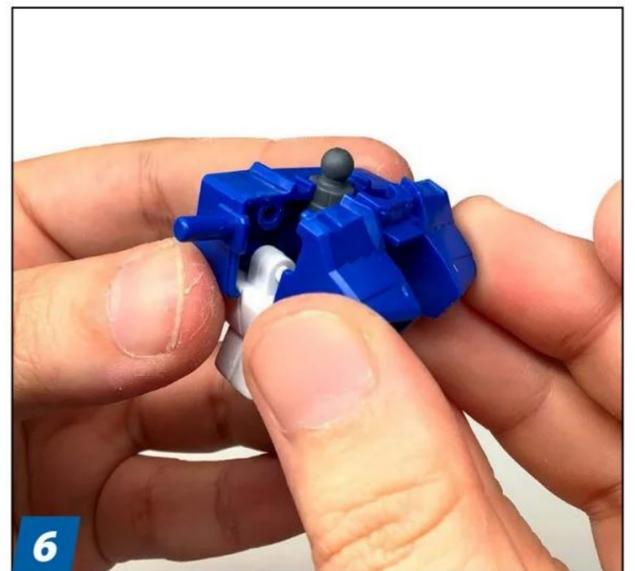
4

Now, on flat surfaces, sand away the rest of the sprue attachment nub with a 400-grit sanding stick before smoothing out the spot with 800- and 1000-grit sticks. Sanding gives you more control over eliminating the sprue gate compared to cutting flush with a nipper.



5

For curved or rounded parts, use sanding sponges instead of a sanding stick. Flexible sanding sponges easily conform to the shape of the plastic and you're less likely to deform curved areas when working on them. Otherwise, the process is the same as in Step 4.



6

Once all the sprue gates have been removed, it's time for initial assembly. Yes, for many modelers, this may seem counterintuitive, but you're going to assemble your Gundam and then disassemble it before painting.



The reason to build the model and then pull it apart? It gives you a chance to assess the model, check for mistakes or areas that need fixing. It also gives you the opportunity to make sure the parts fit together perfectly.

PRO TIP



To make disassembly easier, I snip many of the male attachment locators (about half) at a 45-degree angle. Gunpla parts connect via friction, so removing a portion of the male locators reduces said friction, making it easier to disassemble the parts for customization and painting.



However, don't build everything during the initial assembly on a big Gundam model. Some parts are trickier to disassemble than others, and some become impossible to pry apart. When you identify those parts, leave them be.



After inspecting the built up subassemblies, I was confident that everything fit well. With that, I pulled the model apart to prep for painting. You do not need to disassemble those parts that are going to be painted the same color. This will help you avoid extra work.

PRO TIP



Deepen panel lines on all the parts. Re-scribing panel lines with a scribing tool as shown here creates definition and depth and helps pinwashes flow into the panel lines when applied later on. It has the added benefit of preventing the washes from overflowing and smudging during cleanup.

PRO TIP



The Dendrobium kit dates back to 2002, and seams and mold lines are often found at the center of parts. Sometimes gluing and removing seams, especially when parts can be different colors, doesn't work. Instead, disguise seams as a panel line. It's as easy as scribing a line next to the seam or widening the seam with a 1mm wide chisel.



13

When you're finished re-scribing panel lines, give the parts a bath in warm water and dish soap. After handling, assembly, disassembly, they're bound to have picked up a little bit of ick. Best to get it off before applying paint.



14

Parts can be air dried, but I like to use tea towels and non-moisturized tissue paper to dry each one by hand. Sure, it's tedious, but I prefer this process because I can remove water hiding in crevices that won't evaporate quickly otherwise. When they're dry, attach each part to a paint clip and group same-colored parts together.



15

Even though it's a huge model, I'm going to recommend airbrushing over spray cans or hand-painting. For me, it's just the better option both for money and time spent. The colors I chose are AK Interactive Grimy Grey (No. AK11008); Vallejo Metal Color Magnesium (No. 77.711) and Burnt Iron (No. 77.721); Vallejo Premium Metallic Red (No. 62.044); Vallejo Model Metallic Air Steel (No. 71.065) and Copper (No. 71.068); Vallejo Game Air Chainmail Silver (No. 72.753), and Vallejo Mecha Color Pure White (No. 69.001).

Thinning my paint

I USE A RATIO of 3 parts paint to 1 part thinning sauce. Thinning sauce consists of 70% Vallejo Thinner (No. 71.261) and 30% Vallejo Airbrush Flow Improver (No. 71.262). Adjust the ratio depending on the consistency of the paints. Generally, yellows and reds have a thinner consistency right out of the bottle compared to darker cooler colors like blue, so you might use a 4:1 ratio. Remember, you're looking for the consistency of skim milk.

Post-shading with colors

YOU CAN POST-SHADE with any color. Because I used a gray primer, in Step 18, I was able to eliminate spraying a base coat before proceeding with white. But let's say you wanted post-shade a blue part. Spray your blue base coat over the primer. Then lighten the base color slightly and airbrush it in the center of the part or panels on the part and let the darker color show through at the edges to create shadows and depth.

On large parts, post-shading really shines, and that's why it works well with models in 1/35 and 1/48 scale. For your typical 1/144 scale Gunpla model, the effect can be difficult to control because the panels are so small. The effect can easily look cartoony. However, it is an important technique that you should know how to use.



16

Big kits soak up a lot of primer. I use hardware-store, spray-can acrylic primer like Bosny or Krylon. Just make sure the primer you use is compatible with plastic. Always use a side-to-side or up-and-down motion when spraying with a can, and never start or stop on the parts.



After letting the gray primer cure, it's time to airbrush base colors. For those large pieces, use an airbrush with a big needle and nozzle. I'm spraying through a Harder & Steenbeck Infinity CRplus with a .4mm nozzle at around 30 psi giving me wide coverage. I can control the air with a dual-action trigger, so I'm not always adjusting air pressure at the compressor.



To shade white parts, I paint the center of the panels and let the paint fade toward the edges to allow the gray to show through. Then I mist white over the whole part to blend and smooth out the gradient. This technique is called post-shading or panel lightening.





19

Here's an example of a part after post-shading. This technique adds depth to the parts, and you don't want it to be too even. By refining the painting, you can smooth out the shading or turn up the contrast. I prefer uneven shading for a more distressed look.



20

After applying your base colors and shading, spray a protective coat of gloss varnish. This seals the paint and creates a smooth finish for water-slide decals to adhere to. I use Vallejo Mecha Gloss Varnish (No. 27.701) thinned 1:1 with Vallejo Thinner.



21

I always opt for aftermarket markings when finishing my Gunpla models. The two main choices are water-slide decals and dry transfers. I used a set of water-slide decals from DelpiDecal, a Korean brand that specializes in designing alternatives for Bandai's decals.



PRO TIP

22

A big kit like the HG Dendrobium has big decals, and those don't easily fit into mugs or decal trays. I recommend using a wet palette as a decal tray for those large markings. As usual, cut out the decal, get it wet, and wait for it to move easily off the backing paper. Some decals will have placement guides, others you can place wherever you want.



23

For small decals, I typically roll a cotton swab over the top to get them to settle. Larger decals can be fussier, and I will apply a two-part decal setting solution like Tamiya Mark Fit and Mark Fit (Strong) to help them adhere and settle into place over details and panel lines.



24

After you've applied decals, seal them under a coat of gloss varnish and let it dry. This protects them from handling. Next, make those panel lines pop with Tamiya Panel Line Accent Color pinwash. Do this all over the Dendrobium to bring out those details. Yes, the Accent Color will flow across some decals. When you're finished, clean up any overflow or mistakes with mineral spirits or lighter fluid and a cotton swab.

USING DECAL SETTING SOLUTION

FSM WALKS YOU THROUGH THE STEPS of using 2-part decal setting solutions, explains what each part does, and gives you tips and tricks for using them correctly.



FINAL THOUGHTS

NOW, AIRBRUSH A CLEAR coat with your choice of finish — gloss, satin, or flat. I chose a satin (semigloss) topcoat. Finally, it's time to put all those parts together and assemble this monster. With the final touches complete, the 1/144 scale Gundam Dendrobium stands out in any collection. Remember, patience, planning, and the right tools are all you need to tackle any modeling project, no matter how big! **FSM**

**NOE TREVINO
VALPARAISO, INDIANA**

The only modification Noe made to Vulcan's 1/35 scale Mk.VIB light tank was replacing the tracks with vinyl runs from a Tamiya Universal Carrier kit. He painted the vehicle with Tamiya acrylics.

On June 15, 2024, modelers from across the upper Midwest traveled to McHenry, Illinois, for the Northern Illinois Model Contest or NIMCON 12. Hosted by the IPMS/Lakes Region Scale Modelers, the show was in a new venue, McHenry VFW Post 1600, and featured 292 models. Here's a selection for your viewing pleasure!

**► BOB SHEEHAN
ELMWOOD PARK, ILLINOIS**

This 1/10 scale figure of Naru, the hero of the 2022 *Predator* franchise film *Prey* was printed from a file at 3DWicked.com. Bob base-coated it with acrylics and used artist oils for washes and details, adding the design on the young warrior's tunic using a stencil.





◀ **ERIK HJELMBERG**
NOVI, MICHIGAN

The Vargas 1/72 scale Fortin Aubriot-Gabet is barely more than 1 inch long, but Erik airbrushed it with Tamiya acrylics, weathered with pigments, and placed it on an acrylic base. So, what is it? A 1915 French prototype tank powered by electricity from an external source, hence the cable at the rear. Only one was built.

▶ **KEVIN STOVER**
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

To show a modern Type 212A German submarine as it might look at a dock, Kevin added rope to the deck using scale lines from Syren Ship Model Company. He painted the vessel with acrylics and weathered it with artist-oil shading and pastel streaking.



◀ **ETHAN SMITH**
WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN

For a Warhawk with the 45th Fighter Squadron in the South Pacific, Ethan painted a Hasegawa 1/48 scale P-40N with Mr. Color lacquers and weathered with a brown wash.



WonderFest 2024 broke another record on June 1 and 2, 2024. The contest room at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky, was bursting at the seams with 1,118 models of spaceships and sci-fi vehicles, fantasy and horror figures, and mechs.

**PHILIP SEGAL
CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA**
Ever wondered what lurked inside a Dalek's armor? Philip's cutaway model exposes all the mechanicals as well as the mutated Kaled creature from Doctor Who's greatest nemesis. He scratchbuilt some details for the Jeff Funk Design 3D-printed resin model using watch parts, wire, and metal tubes and painted with Mr. Color lacquers using Aztek Dummy masks.



**► JAMES LEWIS
BLANCHESTER, OHIO**
James painted five Ignis Art Miniatures 1/10 scale bust figures from Slavic legends (from left), Wilkołak, Bies, Borowy, Lesza, and Mokosz, with Vallejo Model Color acrylics, including colors from the Fantasy-Pro Fairy Flesh Set. He replaced the wings of the dragonfly on Lesza's hand with clear plastic and scratchbuilt a butterfly on Bies' hand.





◀ **WILLIAM FOWLER**
CHESTER, VIRGINIA

William dispatched War Rocket *Ajax* to the contest tables with a 3D-printed kit that he customized using parts he designed and printed for accuracy and lighting. The main finish on the ship from *Flash Gordon*, the 1980 film, is Alclad II Pale Gold over Tamiya Gloss Black lacquer. For variation, he accented some panels with Vallejo Red Gold and emphasized the panel lines with Alclad II Black Primer & Microfiller.



▲ **TOM CLARK**
TONEY, ALABAMA

The camouflage pattern Tom applied to a Hasegawa 1/35 scale Ma.K PkH 103 Nutcracker gives it its nickname, Krieg Frosch or "War Frog." He airbrushed the hover-tank with Ammo acrylics, used washes for fluid leaks and streaks, and applied wear and dust with pastels.

◀ **ABBY BLACK**
CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE

To represent Jinx closer to the end of the animated Netflix TV series *Arcane: League of Legends*, Abby painted the DaRax 1/4 scale bust with red irises and plenty of graffiti added to the base. "I painted her eyes first," Abby says. "Then I masked off her clothing, some parts of her hair, and her eyes, and painted her skin with an airbrush. I hand-painted everything else."



**▲ CLIF DOPSON
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA**

Clif doesn't know who produced this model of Minas Tirith or exactly what scale the *Lord of the Rings* city is, but he says it was a PLA 3D-print that needed lots of work. He scratchbuilt the base and the mountain behind the city and painted it with acrylics, inks, and oils to look as if bright light is hitting one side and it is twilight on the other.

**◀ DINA ARZAPALO
LARGO, FLORIDA**

Employing a conversion set from Ugh! Models with a Polar Lights 1/1000 scale *USS Reliant*, Dina produced a unique Federation ship, *USS Peregrine*, that mimics the sensor profile of a Romulan warbird. She painted the ship with Mr. Color lacquers for the Aztec pattern and Tamiya acrylics for details.

**► JUSTIN BIEFELD
SELLERSBURG, INDIANA**

A fan of *Gundam Endless Waltz*, Justin built a Bandai 1/100 scale Wing Gundam Zero adding parts from a Wing Gundam Snow White Prelude kit to enhance the wings, made a custom base, and applied 196 custom decals. He painted the Mobile Suit with Citadel and Vallejo acrylics and Gundam markers and said it represents the final scene where the pilot uses full power to complete the mission and end the war even though it will kill him.



TAKE A BREAK *with an* AB-41

No aftermarket, just a few scratchbuilt details improve a 1/72 scale AFV

BY BART CUSUMANO

Sometimes, I get tired of all the aftermarket hoopla. Not only the expense of photo-etched metal (PE) and resin sets, but working with them becomes almost a mind-numbing tedium.

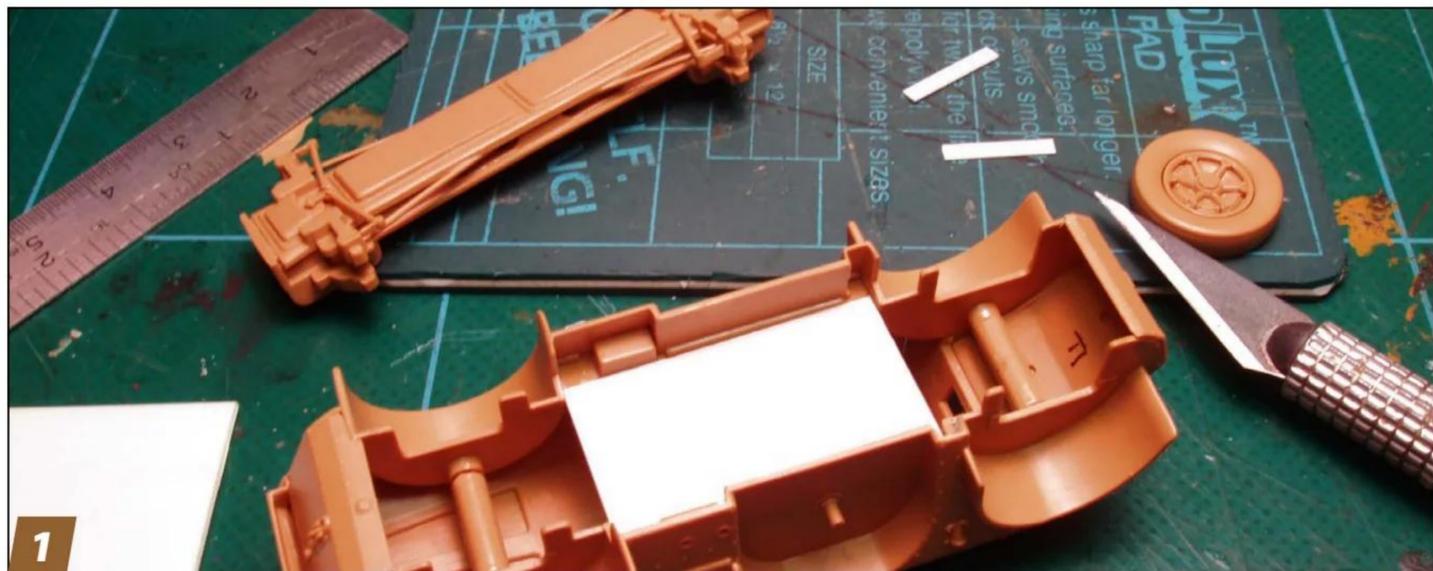
To get past that, once in a while I take a break and see what I can do without the aftermarket, see what I can do with what is in the box and a little homespun help.

The world of 1/72 scale armor has exploded in the last couple of decades with well-detailed and molded kits becoming widely available. The fidelity to scale in some of these kits must be seen to be believed and some even include PE. Looking for something simple, I grabbed Italeri's 1/72 scale Autoblinda AB-41. The parts are clean and delicately detailed. While several hatches are molded separately, I buttoned the armored car up for an easy build. Best of all, the kit is quite accurate in outline and requires just a few simple tweaks to turn it up a notch.

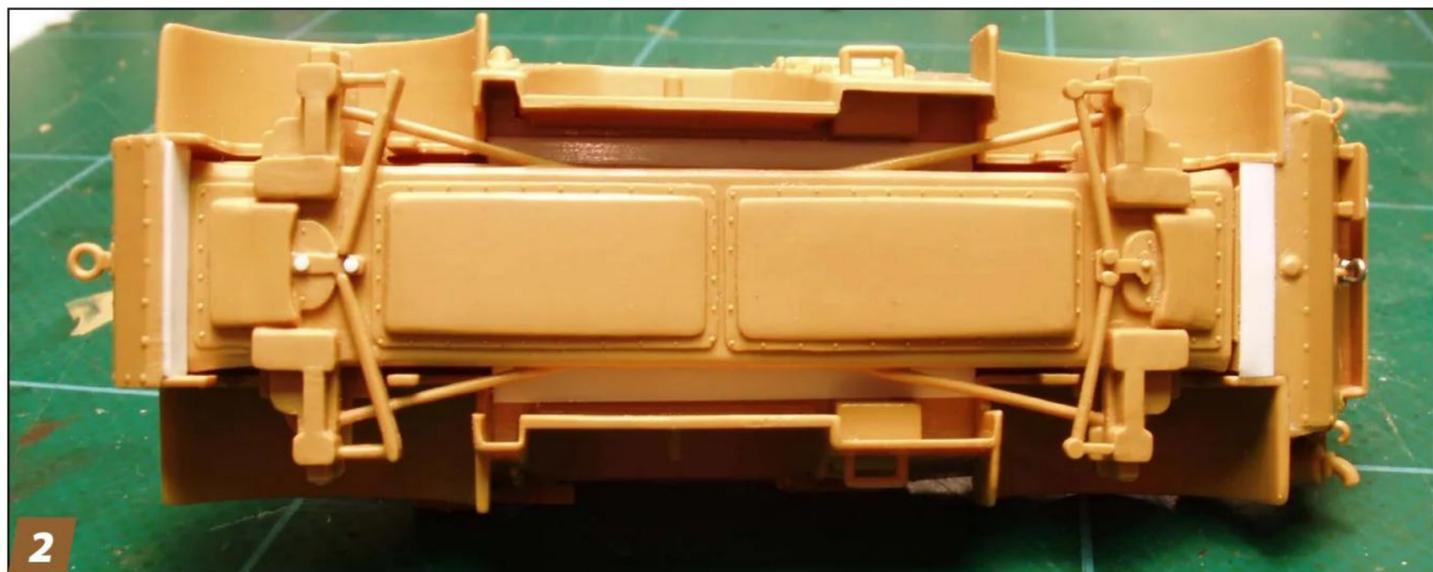


CONSTRUCTION

Openings under the hull mean it is possible to look inside from underneath, not a great idea for an armored vehicle. I cut styrene sheet to blank the openings starting with a large one for the center section between the wheel arches.



Two smaller pieces of styrene cover openings at the front and rear. From there, I built the kit pretty much according to the instructions but left off the tires and wheels to facilitate painting and finishing.



At the front, I made new mounting plates for the width indicators. After cutting .010-inch styrene strip cut to size and gluing it in place, I added tiny rivets made using a punch-and-die set. The poles are brass wire cut to length and topped with the balls trimmed from the oversize kit parts and drilled out for the wire.

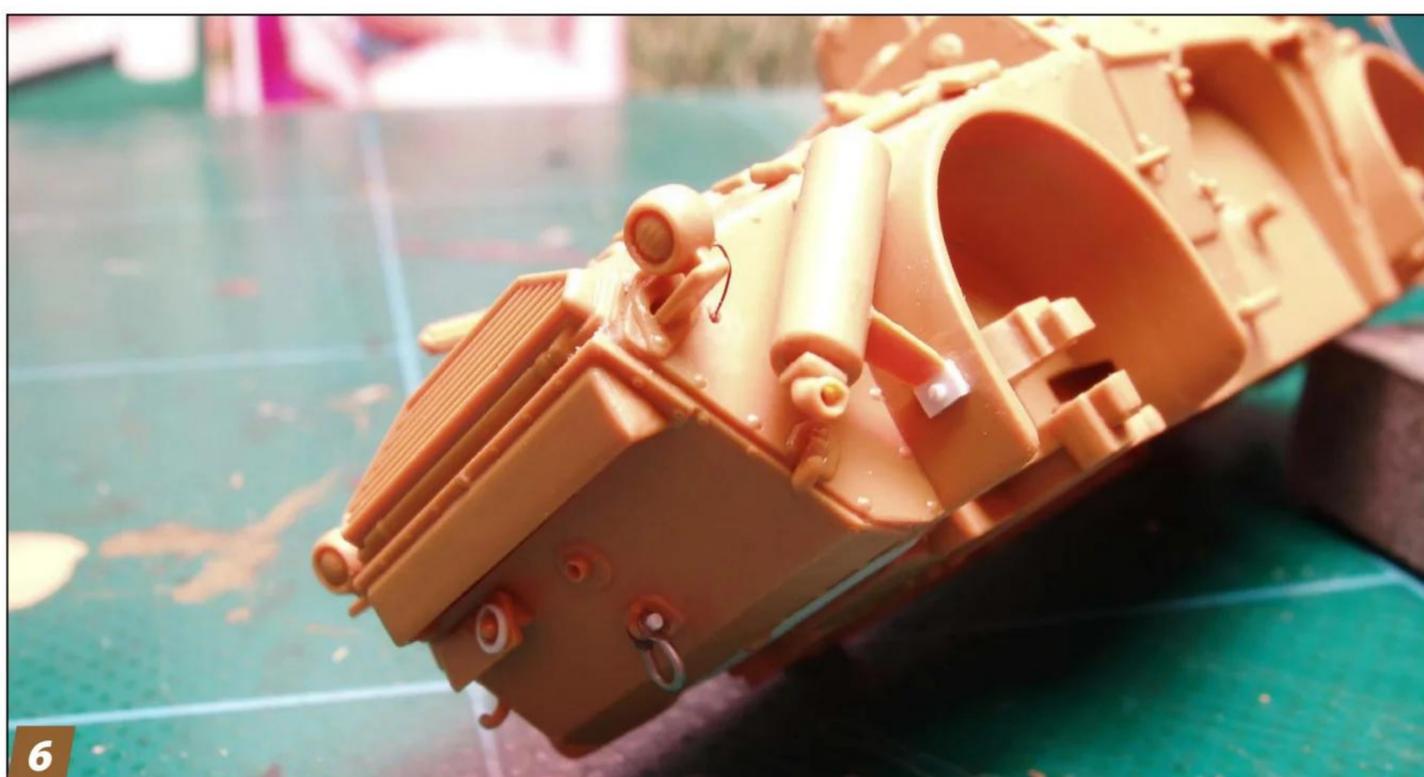


Italeri nailed the shape of the horns on the right front fender, but they are molded solid. I drilled into the center of each horn and used a small cutting burr chucked in a rotary tool at slow speed to avoid melting the plastic to widen the openings. Once I was comfortable I had gone as far as possible with the burr, I refined the openings by twisting the tip of a new No. 11 blade in the horns.

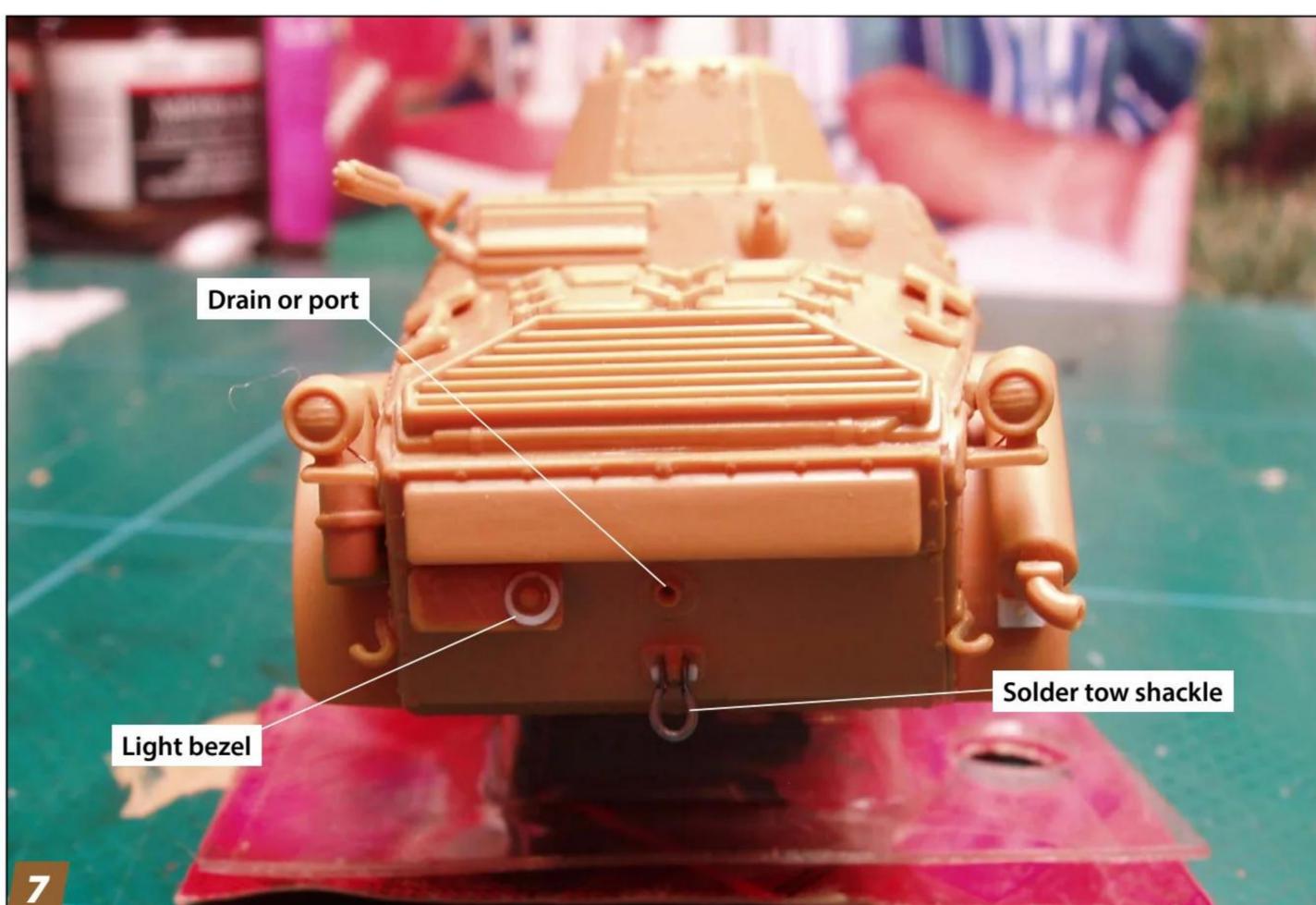




On the left side, I added a small styrene disc to the fuel-filler nozzle to match photos. In retrospect, I wish I had replaced the oversize step rails on both sides under the hatches with copper or brass wire.



I wired the lights at the back with fine copper wire glued into holes drilled into the lamps and the hull. I hollowed out the exhaust pipe with the same technique I used on the horns. To improve the bracket for the exhaust, I added a styrene sheet extension with a punched bolt head where the kit part meets the right rear fender.



Using a fine bit, I bored out a drain or port on the rear plate. There's a backup or formation light on Part A28, but photos show the kit omitted a ring around the lens. I added it by double-punching one from styrene sheet. I started by punching a hole slightly smaller than the outer diameter needed. Then I carefully centered the hole under the die for the outer diameter and punched again. For the last fix, I sliced off the molded tow shackle with a No. 10 blade, taking care not to damage the mount. I shaped fine solder around brass rod for a new loop, gently flattened the ends with flat-nose pliers, superglued it to the mount, and added punched styrene-disc fasteners to the sides.

PAINTING

I primed the model with a dark brown mixed from out-of-production Testors Model Master Italian Dark Brown (No. 2111) and Flat Black (No. 1149) enamel. This color helps show construction miscues that need to be fixed before final painting and adds depth to the camouflage. For me, this is an essential step in finishing small-scale armor to avoid a toy-like appearance for the finished model.

Playing around with mixes of Humbrol Sand Matt (No. 63) and Brown Matt (No. 186), I achieved a shade that my uncle,

who served in the Italian army in World War II, said looked right. The exact ratio remains a mystery to me to this day! I know I started with sand and added brown until it looked right to my eye.

I airbrushed this mix in the centers of panels, leaving edges and corners dark brown.

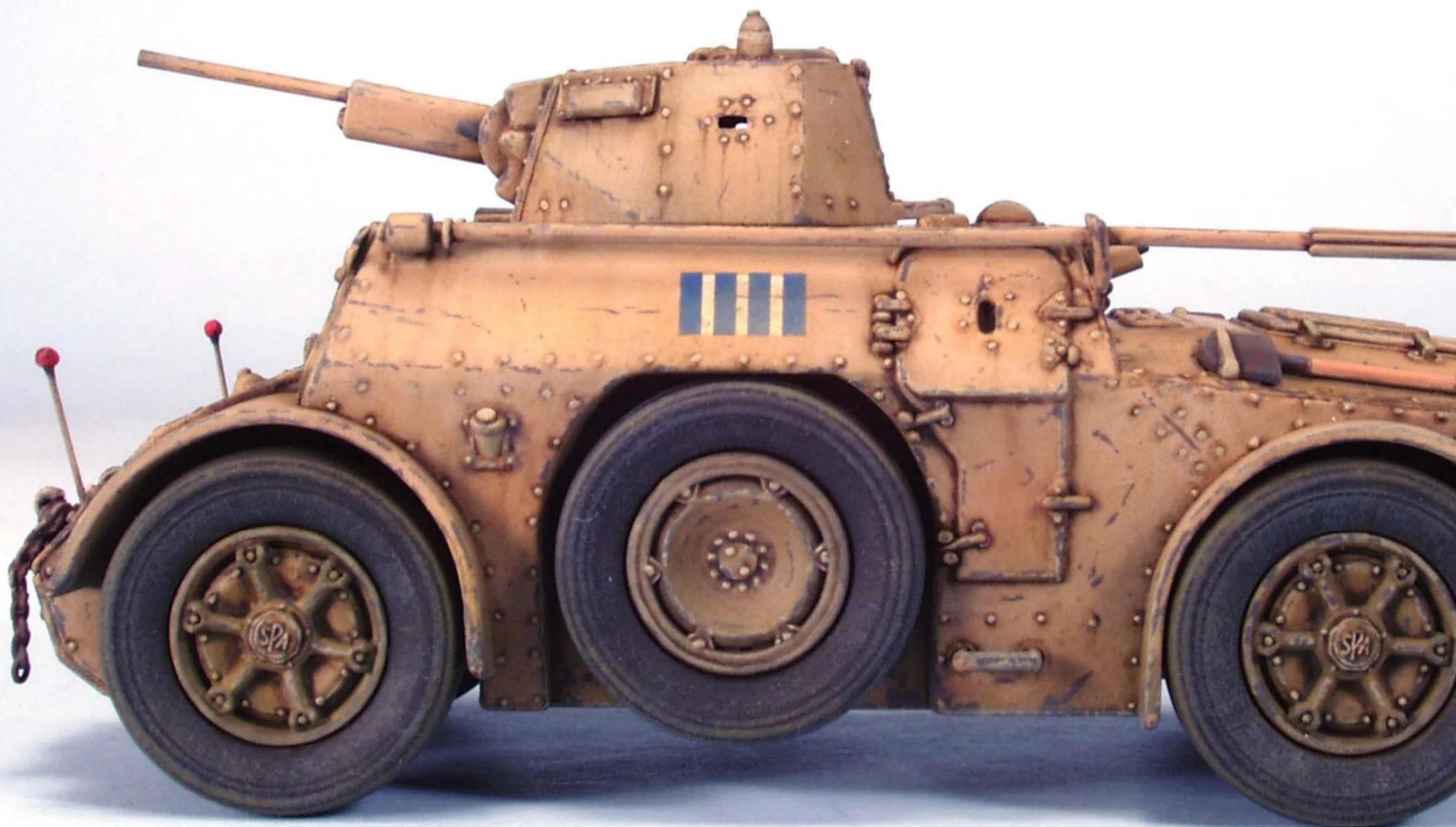
A light mist coat followed to blend everything, but I took care to not cover or obscure the shadows.

After lightening the camouflage color with Humbrol Pale Stone Matt (No. 121)

— I prefer this to using white because it produces warmer tones — I sprayed the centers of some panels and horizontal surfaces to produce fading and highlights.

I painted the wheels using the same layers as the hull before hand-painting the tires flat black, starting with a thin mix of the enamel flowed along the edge between tire and rim for a clean demarcation.

Mistakes can be removed using a clean brush and clear thinner. Once this step was dry, the rest of the tire was carefully brush painted flat black.



DECALS

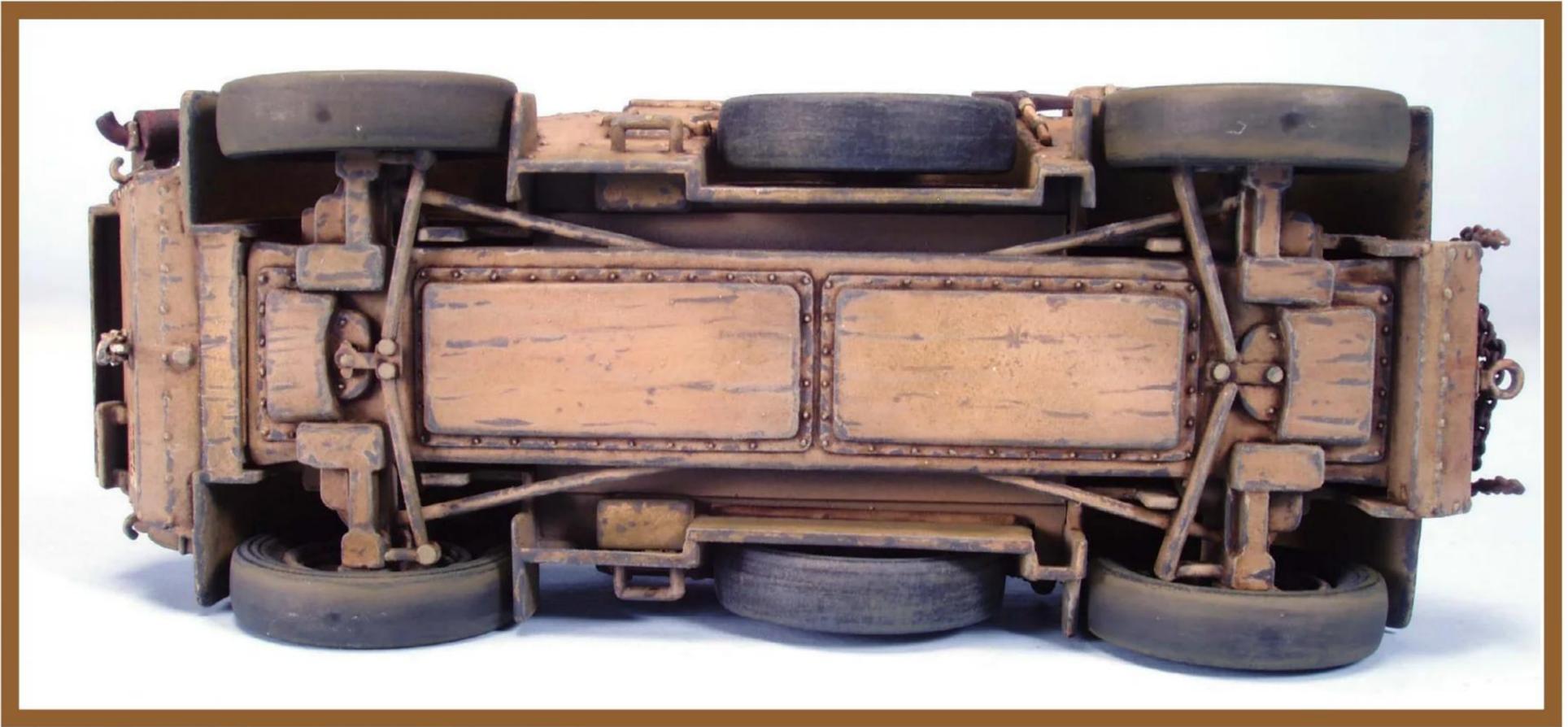
The kit decals provide markings for four vehicles. I chose the Regio Esercito, Libya, 1942 option that complemented the sand camouflage and lacked the big Italian tricolor markings I always see on models of this vehicle.

If you hate applying decals, this is the kit for you — it required just four. Given that small number, I hand-brushed Pledge Floor Gloss (PFG) onto the locations for each marking and let it dry for 48 hours.

Microscale Micro Set and Micro Sol settled the decals.

By the way, I use an easy trick to remember the order to use Microscale decal solutions: The letter E comes before O, so Micro Set is first and Micro Sol second. Hey, it works for me! I sealed the dry decals with more PFG, let the model sit another 48 hours, airbrushed Testors Dullcote in preparation for weathering, and set the model aside for a week.





WEATHERING

I started with a pinwash of raw umber artist oils thinned with regular paint thinner, not turpentine. Dullcote will stand up to thinner, but not turpentine. Using a fine-tipped brush, I flowed the wash into recesses and around raised details, working small areas one after another. When the wash was dry, I feathered the edges into the surrounding panels using a clean brush damp with clean thinner. Using artist oils makes this refinement easy because it feathers better than enamels. Feathering also spreads out the pinwash to give the vehicle a dirty appearance. Pinwashing is tedious compared to over-all washes, but it offers more control.

To highlight details, I added pale stone and a tiny bit of Humbrol White Matt (No. 34) to the camo color. Using a fine-tipped brush, I carefully painted protruding details, such as rivets, hinges, and frames. This mix was also carefully dry-brushed along edges.

Pale stone was also dabbed onto flat horizontal surfaces and worked in with a clean brush and clean thinner as a filter to produce a faded, sun-beaten appearance.

For vertical grime streaks, I turned to thin, raw umber artist oil — think tinted thinner rather than thin paint — and a fine brush. You can also add tiny dabs of raw umber to the tops of vertical panels and pull them downward with a thinner-soaked brush. This produces a heavier streak and should be used sparingly.

I added scratches, scrapes, and wear on edges with Humbrol Tank Grey Matt (No. 67) on a fine-tipped brush. Adding a little pale stone to this dark gray varied the scratches for less uniformity. I think I may have gotten a little carried away with this step, but photos of the vehicles show they were pretty beat up.

To tone down the scratches and add dirt ground into the paint by the crew, I dry-brushed Humbrol Dark Earth (No. 29) on select areas. A little bit goes a long way here.

I dry-brushed the tires with a mix of Humbrol Light Grey Matt (No. 64) and tank grey, followed by a glaze of thin dark earth. Dry-brushed dark earth blended the various layers.

The final steps involved picking out details with appropriate Humbrol colors.

FINAL THOUGHTS

WITH JUST A FEW SCRATCHBUILT improvements, the little armored car model has a much better, scale appearance. It was a simple project that I really enjoyed working on. While I will continue to use PE and resin aftermarket items for future projects, going without such things won't prevent me from building kits that don't have those kinds of extras available. **FSM**

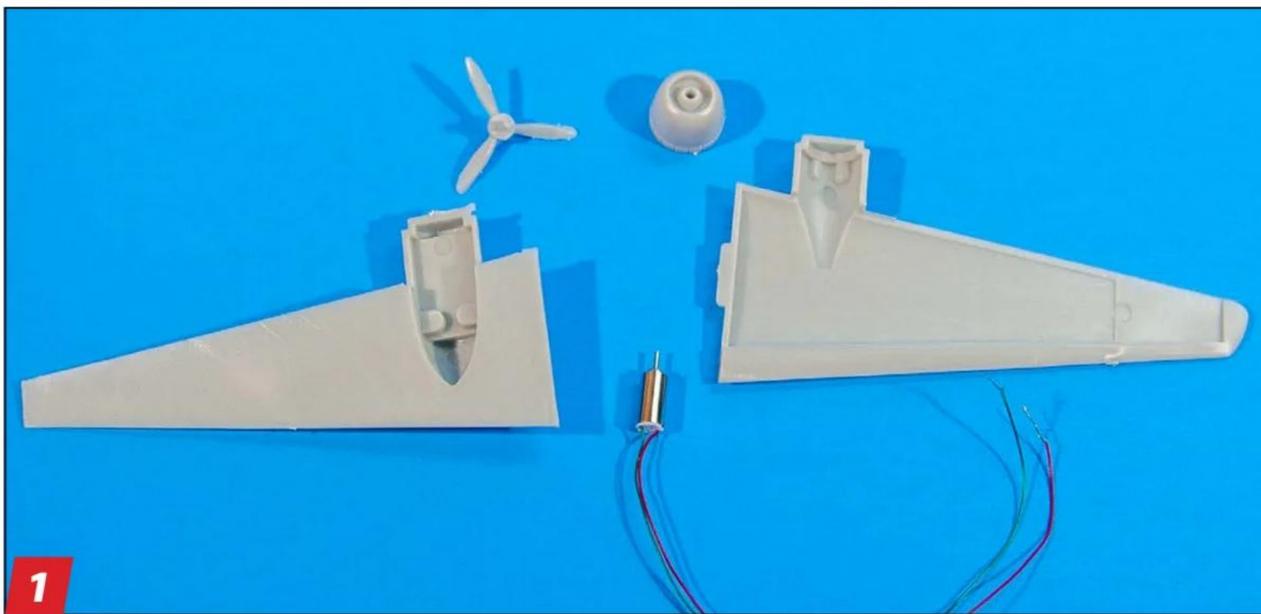


Motorize a Betty

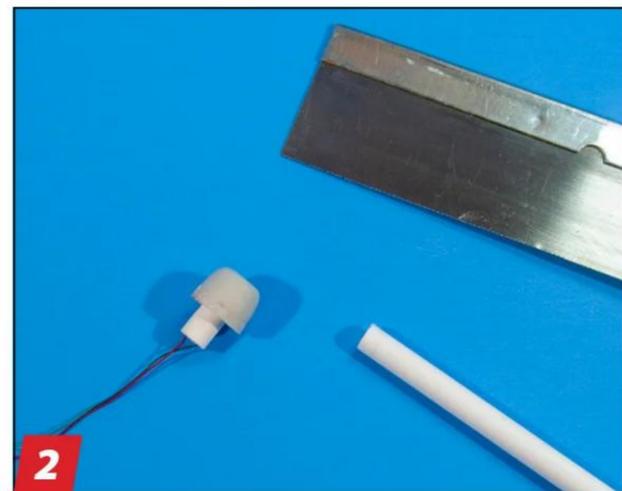
Power-up a small-scale bomber

BY ALFONSO PEREIRA

Every now and then I get the itch to try different ways to make an otherwise straightforward model stand out. Sometimes I will add scratchbuilt or 3D-printed parts. Other times, I have installed lights or motors to animate a model. I have used small electric motors to spin the propellers on single-engine airplanes before, but I had never done that on a model with more than one powerplant. I wanted to give it a spin, and I thought Minicraft's 1/144 scale G4M Betty was the perfect test subject. The parts count is relatively low, and the model is easy to assemble.



1 Space is always a concern when it comes to adding motors. Luckily, the kit's engine nacelles are hollow and leave plenty of room for small motors I found on Amazon.



2 I found styrene tube with an internal diameter that matched the motor case, so I could slide the motor inside the tube for a snug fit. I glued a length of the tube to the back of each cowl to serve as motor holders.



3 Using a rotary tool, I ground away plastic from inside the nacelles to accommodate the added width of the styrene motor holders. I also drilled a small hole next to the wing attachment point to route the wires from the motors into the airplane body.



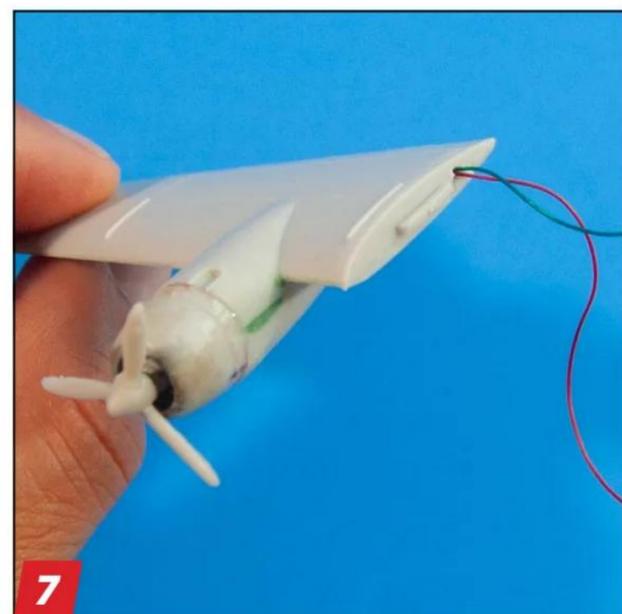
4 After tacking each wing in place, I marked the holes in the wings on the fuselage halves and drilled corresponding holes to run wiring.



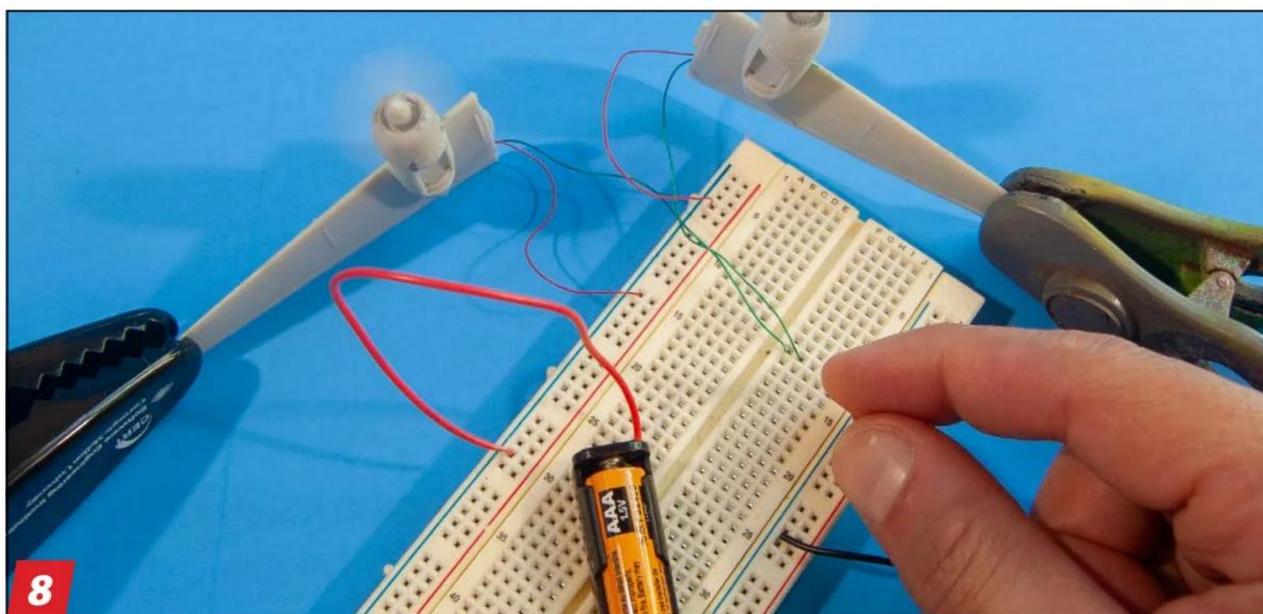
5 The kit propellers have a shaft that inserts into the face of each cowl. I didn't think I could drill a hole in the shaft precise enough for the motor shaft and provide solid contact to not come apart as soon as I turned the motor on. Instead, I snipped each shaft off flush with the spinner.



6 Next, I drilled a hole into the back of the spinners and glued in lengths of copper tube that fit perfectly over the motor shaft and ensured a good connection.



7 When it was finally time to close the wings, I made sure to thread the wires for the motors out of the holes in the wing roots. While, I was at it, I glued the gear doors in the closed position.



8

Since the motors will not be accessible with the wings assembled, I tested them by wiring them to a breadboard and a AAA battery. So far, so good!



9

To route the wires into the airplane from the power source, I planned to use a section of styrene tube as a conduit that would double as the display stand. After taping the fuselage halves together, I drilled a hole in the bottom to receive the tube.



10

The kit does not include any crew — a problem for an aircraft that is supposed to be flying. So I modified model railroad figures to fit the seats. I painted the cockpit tub, added the figures and instrument decals, and glued the fuselage together.



11

When I attached the wings, I used tweezers to fish the wires from inside the fuselage and guide them out through the hole for the display stand.



12

I added the vertical and horizontal stabilizers, masked the cockpit and engines, and installed the display tube. The model was ready for painting.



13

I painted the display tube black and masked it to use as a handle to paint the Betty. Next, I airbrushed the yellow leading edges and the white tail tip, added more masking, and sprayed the underside aluminum, the top side dark green, and the props brown with yellow tips. Decals and light weathering with washes and pastels followed before I attached the clear parts.



14

Looking for a base that could support the model and hide the battery, I determined an upside down tuna can was perfect. I drilled a hole in the bottom the diameter of the styrene tube support and another in the side for a power switch.



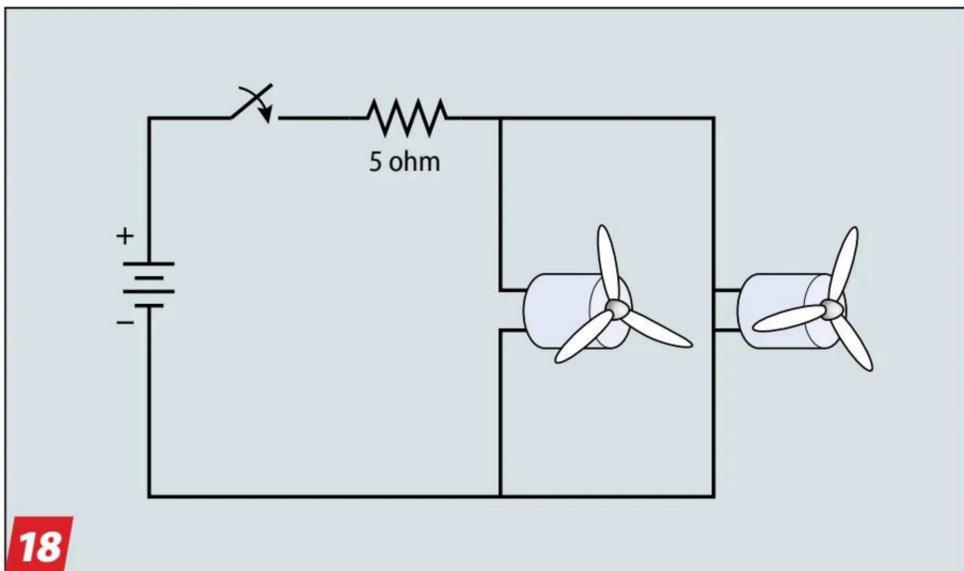
The inverted tuna can worked well, but it didn't look great. I sprayed a coat of textured gray paint over it, hoping to hide its origin, but it ended up looking like a tuna can coated with textured paint.



To make the base a bit more appealing, I thought a Japanese Rising Sun emblem would be appropriate. I designed one in a CAD program to fit the can and 3D-printed it.



Once it was primed and painted, I glued it to the top of the can and called the base done. What a huge improvement!



All that was left was to finalize the connections. After some trial and error, I added a 5-ohm resistor in series to the battery to limit the current and slow the propellers to a more realistic speed. Both motors were connected in parallel to the 1.5V AAA battery, and the power switch completes the circuit. All the components fit in the space under the can with room to spare.

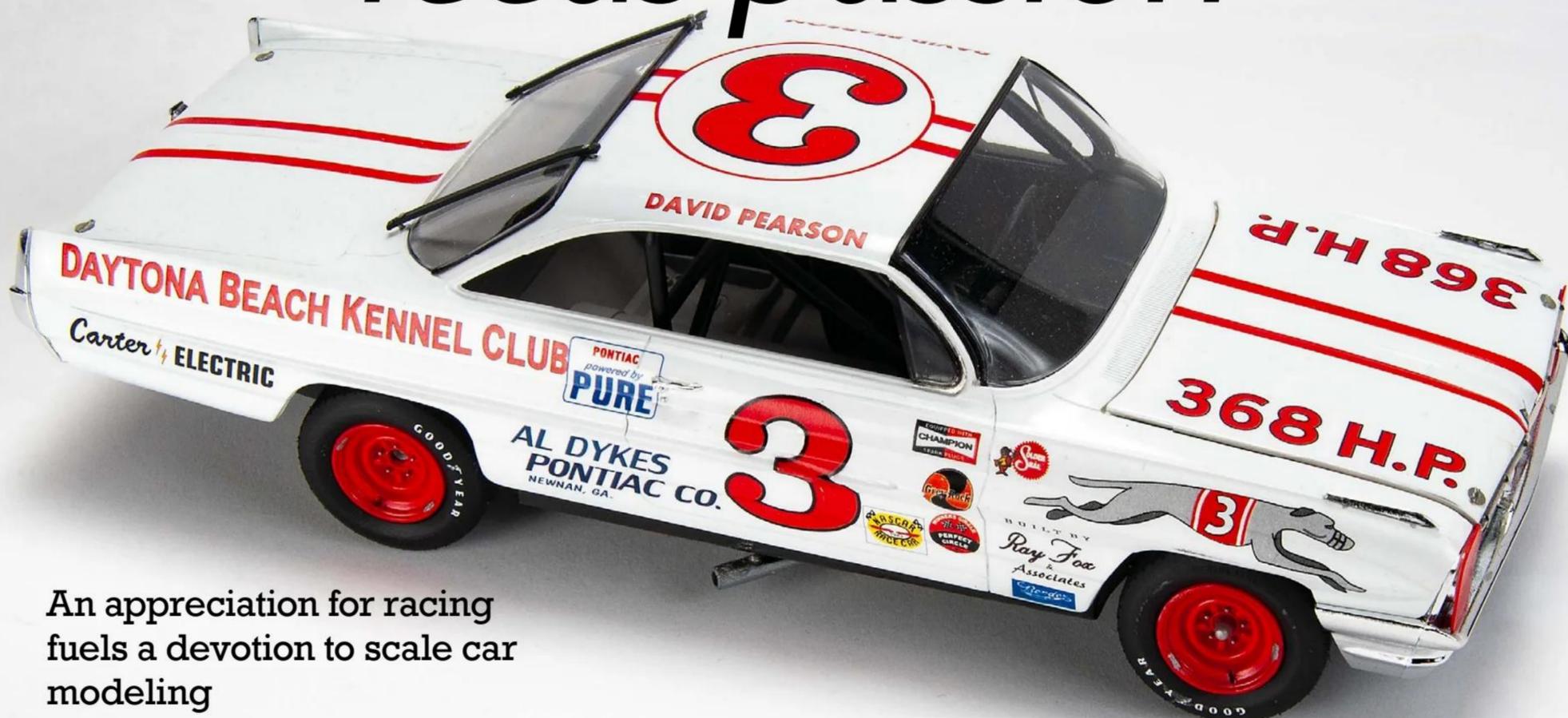


FINAL THOUGHTS

I THREW THE SWITCH to the ON position and my Betty took off! This was a fun project, which required a bit of problem solving to complete. While there were some challenges to install and power two electric motors inside a small airplane, ultimately the process was not much different from motorizing a single-engine model, which of course means that now I am thinking about trying this on a three-engine airplane. I have my eye on a Savoia-Marchetti SM.79 Sparviero bomber! **FSM**

PASSION

feeds passion



An appreciation for racing fuels a devotion to scale car modeling

BY TORBEN ROTHGEB
AND TIM KIDWELL
PHOTOS BY TIM KIDWELL

David Pearson 1961 Pontiac Catalina

David Pearson had his breakout season in 1961 winning the Firecracker 250 at Daytona, the Charlotte World 600, and the Dixie 400 in Atlanta. He finished 13th in the standings despite driving in only 19 of the 52 races that season. I modeled Pearson's No. 3 1961 Pontiac from a Moebius Models kit. The rims, tires, roll cage, and decals came from Plastic Performance Products, I used Pro Tech hood pins, and I installed Detail Master seat belts inside. The fire extinguisher, rear-end belt, and exhaust dumps all came from other NASCAR kits, and I scratchbuilt the window straps, seat bolster, rear-end cooler, valve stems, and headlight covers.

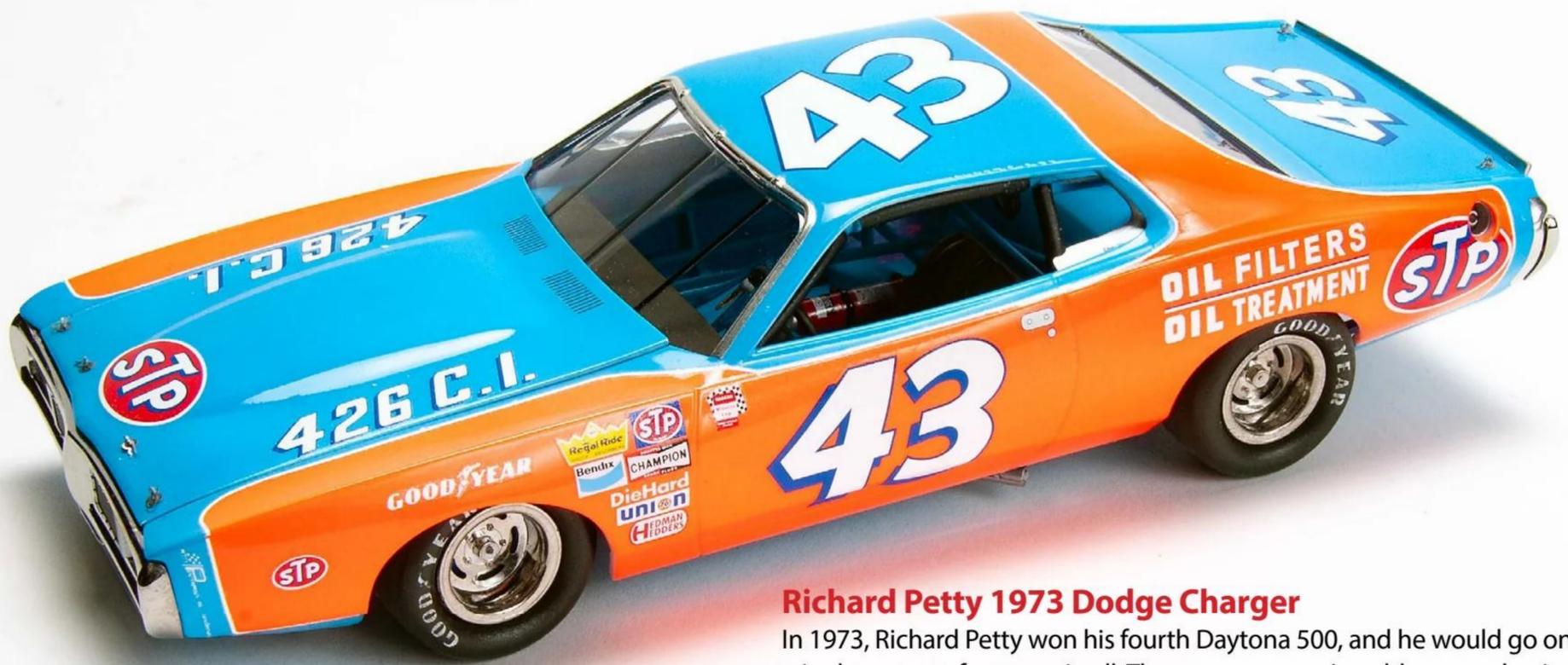


“Race cars have always captivated me,” Torben Rothgeb says of his favorite scale modeling subject. “I love the different paint schemes with bright colors and graphics.” Is it any wonder? Growing

up within a two-hour drive of the Indianapolis Speedway and attending his first Indianapolis 500 at 14, the roar of engines and the smell of gas and burnt rubber made an indelible mark. But while

CART can be fun, it was NASCAR that captured Torben's everlasting attention.

The scale-modeling bug bit Torben in 1981 after completing his first kit, a Monogram 1966 Chevrolet Chevelle. Cars



Richard Petty 1973 Dodge Charger

In 1973, Richard Petty won his fourth Daytona 500, and he would go on to win three more for seven in all. There was no way I could pass up having one of "The King's" chariots in my collection. I built a Salvinos JR Models (Salvinos) 1/25 scale Richard Petty 1973 Dodge Charger box stock and painted that famous livery with MCW Super Blue and Vermillion Neon.

Cale Yarborough 1977 Chevy Monte Carlo

Cale Yarborough drove his No. 11 1977 Chevy Monte Carlo during the 1979 and 1980 race seasons for Junior Johnson — the last two he'd drive for that owner. All told, the partnership yielded three championships in a row and 55 wins total. Built from a Salvinos kit, I removed material from the passenger-side and driver's windows, the taillight panels, and the opera windows. The rims and tires came from an AMT NASCAR kit, and I took the engine, seat, and fire extinguisher from an '80s Monogram NASCAR donor. I completed Yarborough's ride with photo-etch hood pins and seat belts.



were obviously a passion, and his older brother was already building models, so it was natural he'd give it a try, too. But mix that with watching races at places like Indy, Watkins Glen, Pocono, and Road America, and seeing the real cars in action, you have powerful fuel for a hobby.

Over the years, Torben has balanced his model-building and hosting *The Tiny Car Podcast* between his career as a schoolteacher and his responsibilities as a husband and parent. He found the best therapy and escape from stress was styrene.

"Instead of laying on the couch, I sit at my workbench and the problems drift away as the aromas of lacquer paint and glue fill the room," Torben says.

With two kids in college and two more on deck to leave, Torben finds that he has more time for modeling the closer he gets to being an empty nester.

A model "usually starts with the 1/1 car and who drove it," Torben says. "I like to build race cars that were very successful or have iconic paint schemes." For him, the

models Torben builds offer him another avenue to enjoy the motor sport. His favorite model cars are those that are in the planning stages and slated to hit his workbench. "[A] race car is the perfect combination of art and speed. Building these replicas is me chasing the drama at a much slower pace."

At the beginning of a build, Torben determines what level of challenge he's looking for. If his subject hasn't been kitted by a major manufacturer, he'll sand resin and cut plastic to fit conversion parts. Should details not be up to snuff, scratchbuilt air cleaners, rear-end coolers, rear-window safety bars, exhaust headers, and exhaust dump pipes aren't a problem. And if he's looking for something less rigorous, a Salvinos JR Models Next Gen NASCAR or Indy kit hits the spot.

The likes of Detail Master, Scale Model Speedway, Pro Tech, Model Car World, details have all made their way into Torben's builds at one time or another. He's also taken to using 3D-printed parts,

availing himself of the myriad offerings found online. One old-school item Torben is known for using is Pledge Floor Gloss (PFG), now out of production and once known as Future Floor Polish.

"I mix it with pastel chalks and use it as a filter to bring out details on natural metal surfaces and to add a little shine," Torben says. "I also apply it to Bare-Metal Foil to provide a sharper separation line and as a sealer." And he likes that PFG prevents fogging on clear parts he may have to attach with superglue.

Yes, racing subjects are Torben's favorite, but he's been known to go beyond the track and build hot rods, pickups, and muscle cars, too. Those and his race cars have won numerous accolades over the years at shows like NordicCon, Mid-American Nationals, and the Nebraska Challenge. Still, he's a race fan at heart, and that's what gobbles up most of his attention in the hobby.

"My models tell a history of racing," Torben says. "My passion for racing is communicated through my builds."



Wood Brothers 1971 Mercury Cyclone

Only two drivers have won the Daytona 500 and the Indy 500, Mario Andretti and A.J. Foyt. The latter joined this select club in 1972 driving the Wood Brothers No. 21 1971 Mercury Cyclone. The body for this model came from a Model King re-pop in the early 2000s. I stretched a Banjo Matthews rear-steer chassis from an AMT NASCAR kit to fit the longer wheelbase of the 1970s race car. After some minor body modifications, I fit a 429 under the hood and outfitted the interior with a fire extinguisher and gear shift. I scratchbuilt the exhaust dumps, rear-window straps, taillight panel, engine compartment tin, and fuel overflow pipe. Model Master Burgundy Red Metallic provided the proper roof color and the markings are PowerSlide decals.

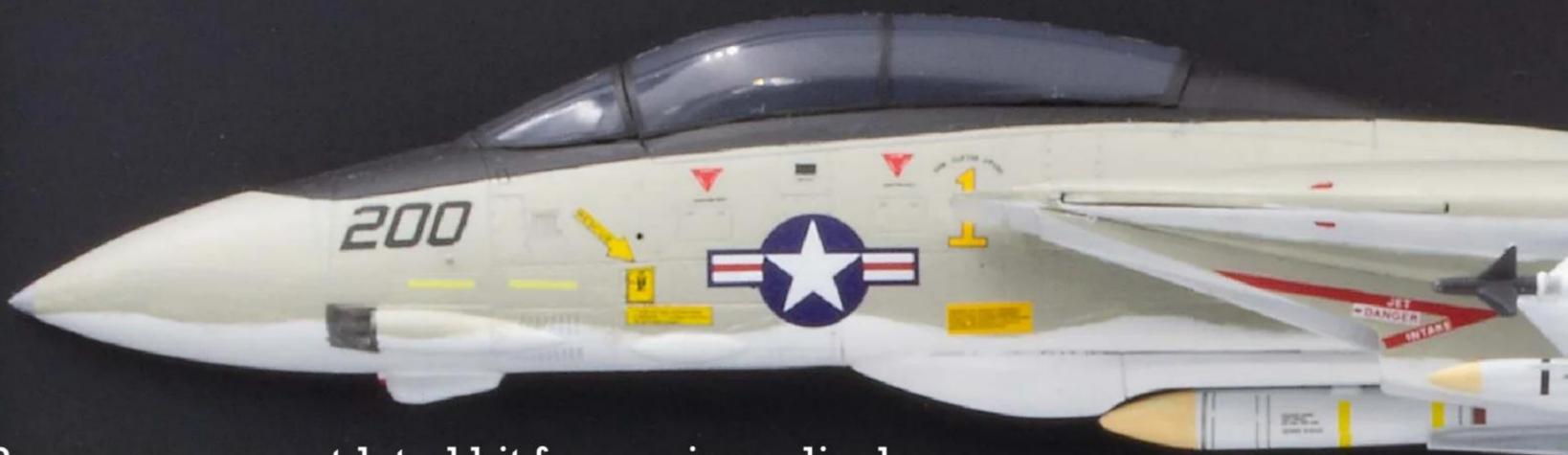
Wrangler Ford Thunderbird

In 1982, Dale Earnhardt took a sabbatical from Richard Childress racing and spent time piloting the Wrangler No. 15 Ford Thunderbird for Bud Moore. Engine woes kept him out of championship contention, but he did manage to win at Darlington, Nashville, and Talladega in his two-year stint. Monogram released its 1/24 scale Wrangler Thunderbird Grand National Race Car in the early '90s, and reviewer Drew Hierwater mentioned that the front of the car was 5 scale inches too long. Shortening it proved to be a time consuming task, so, after I finished, I had a friend cast the body in resin for any other square-bird projects I might have in the future. Yes, the shorter body fit the Monogram chassis. Other than photo-etched metal hood pins and chrome nine holes, the car is box stock. I used Tru-Match No. 3 Yellow and Tru-Match No. 3 Blue for paint with PowerSlide decals. **FSM**



HANG T

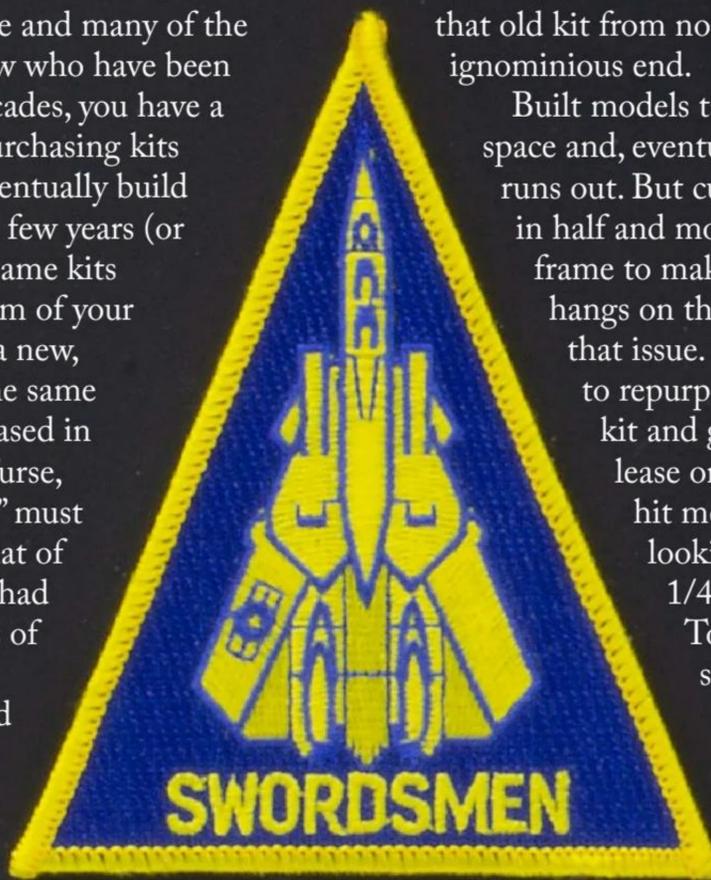
you've been



Repurpose an outdated kit for a unique display

BY DARREN ROBERTS

If you are like me and many of the modelers I know who have been building for decades, you have a penchant for purchasing kits assuming you will eventually build them. Fast forward a few years (or decades), and those same kits languish at the bottom of your stash, often because a new, modern tooling of the same subject has been released in the meantime. Of course, said new “wunderkit” must be purchased. So, what of that old kit that you had such good intentions of building? Is it irredeemable? Should it be consigned to the scrap heap? What if there was something that could actually be done with it? With that dilemma in mind, I happened upon an idea that could save



that old kit from nothing short of an ignominious end.

Built models take up shelf space and, eventually, that space runs out. But cutting the model in half and mounting it on a frame to make a plaque that hangs on the wall alleviates that issue. It is a great way to repurpose an outdated kit and gives it a new lease on life. This idea hit me while I was looking at a Fujimi 1/48 scale F-14 Tomcat in my stash. When it was released, it was a must-have kit, but looking at it objectively, it clearly lacks in every area compared to newer kits. But it was just the thing for this project.



WHAT KIT

hanging on to



Background: © Luminis/Dreamstime.com



1 Using tape, I marked the center of the fuselage where it would be split for display. With the tape as a guide, I scribed a progressively deeper line down the middle of the upper fuselage and then finished cutting the fuselage in half with a razor saw.

2 I employed the same process to divide the lower fuselage so it matched the upper section and formed a perfect half of the airframe when they were glued together.



3 A pair of sprue cutters helped me remove the wing pivot mount on the fuselage. Snipping this off would allow me to fit the wings on the airframe after painting.

4 I also glued the glove vane into the closed position; it was rarely used on operational Tomcats and removed completely on later variants.

5 After gluing the upper and lower fuselage halves together, I added the intakes and mounted the gear doors in the closed position. It took several doses of putty and Mr. Surfacer to blend these parts.



6 The kit's radome was a single part, so I placed tape along the center line to guide a scribe followed by a razor saw to split it along the vertical axis. I placed sandpaper on a flat surface and dragged the radome half across it to smooth the edge.



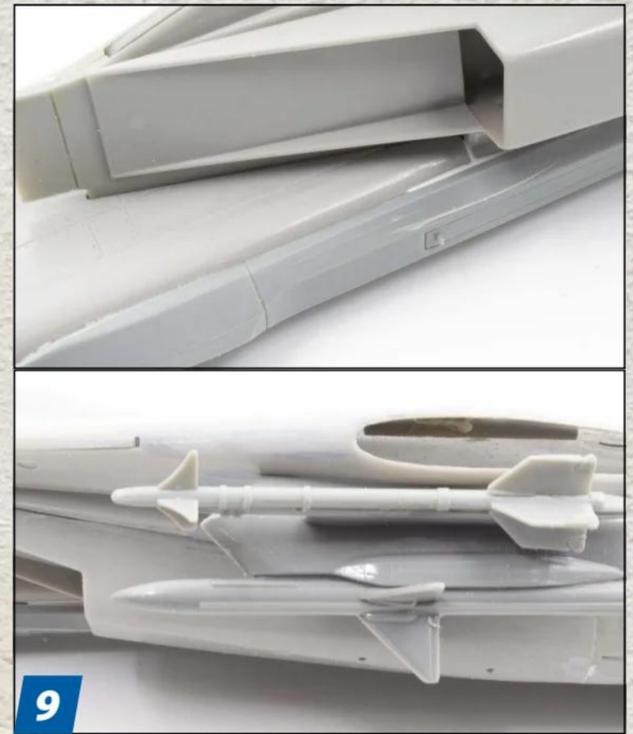
7

Thankfully, the forward fuselage was molded in left and right halves making one part of the project simple. I glued the prepared radome to the port half and filled and sanded the join.



8

The canopy framing comes separately from the clear canopy, so I halved it. After attaching the forward and rear fuselage sections, I glued the port half of the frame to the body.



9

The Phoenix pallets and the shoulder pylons were poorly molded, so I substituted parts from a leftover Monogram F-14. That kit also supplied the ordnance for these stations.



10

There was little reason to have the gears that allow the wings to open and close together, so I cut that section from the port wing.



11

I sprayed the leading edges of the wings and tails with Tamiya Tamiya Bare Metal Silver (No. AS-12), I masked the leading edges with Tamiya tape and trimmed the mask to shape, taking care not to damage the plastic.



12

To apply the early Tomcat camouflage, I airbrushed the underside of the plane as well as the top of the control surfaces and the vertical tail with Alclad II White Primer and Microfiller (No. ALC306).



13

Extensive masking was required to demarcate the white underside, including carefully cut wavy lines. It's at times like this I wish I owned stock in Tamiya masking tape.



14

For the upper color, I airbrushed Mr. Color Light Gull Gray (No. C11). After more masking, I sprayed the black panel around the cockpit and the walkways on the intakes.



15

After attaching the wing, stabilator, and vertical tail, I applied markings for a VF-32 Tomcat aboard USS *John F. Kennedy* in 1976 from a Furball Aero-Design decal sheet (No. FDS-48010). I sealed the paint and markings with a coat of Mr. Color Flat Clear (No. C182).



16

The canopy needed to be cut in half to fit the display. Using tape as a guide, I carefully scribed a groove along the separate canopy and windshield. Then I slowly divided the clear parts using a fine-toothed razor saw to avoid cracking the clear plastic, which is more brittle than the gray parts.



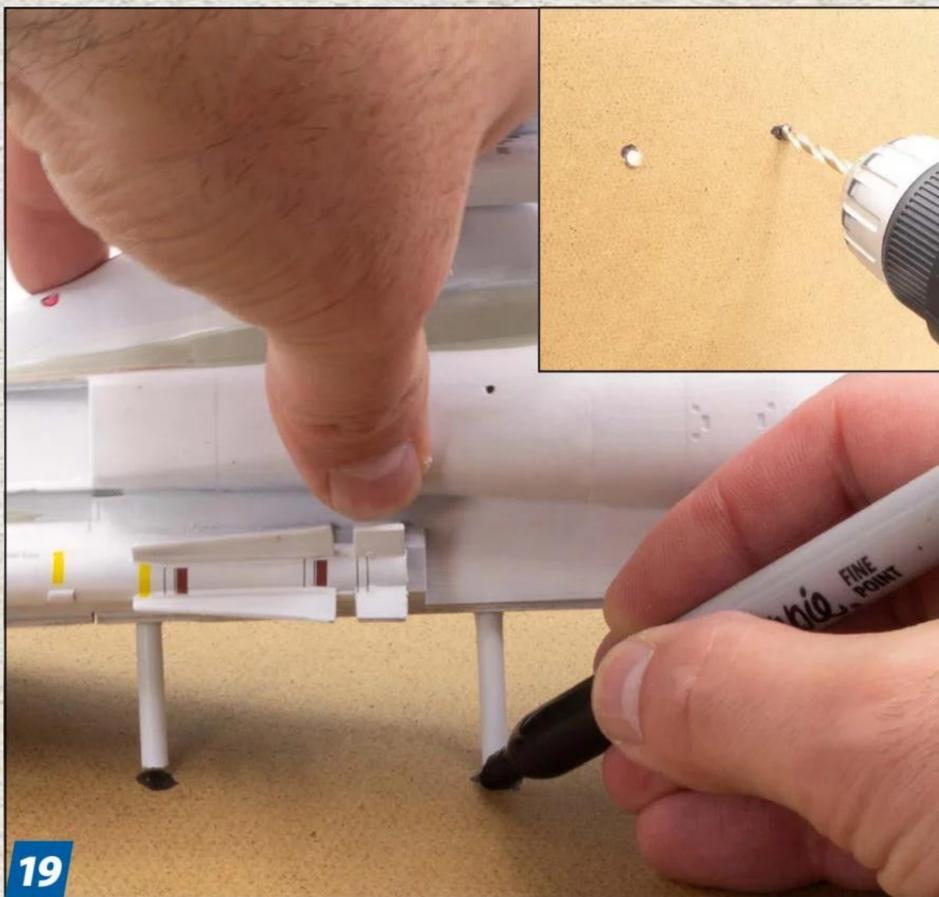
17

Rather than worry about trying to cut the cockpit parts and seats in half, I sprayed the inside of the canopy and windscreen with Model Master Acryl Engine Gray (No. 4749). After masking and painting the external frames black, I glued the canopy in place.



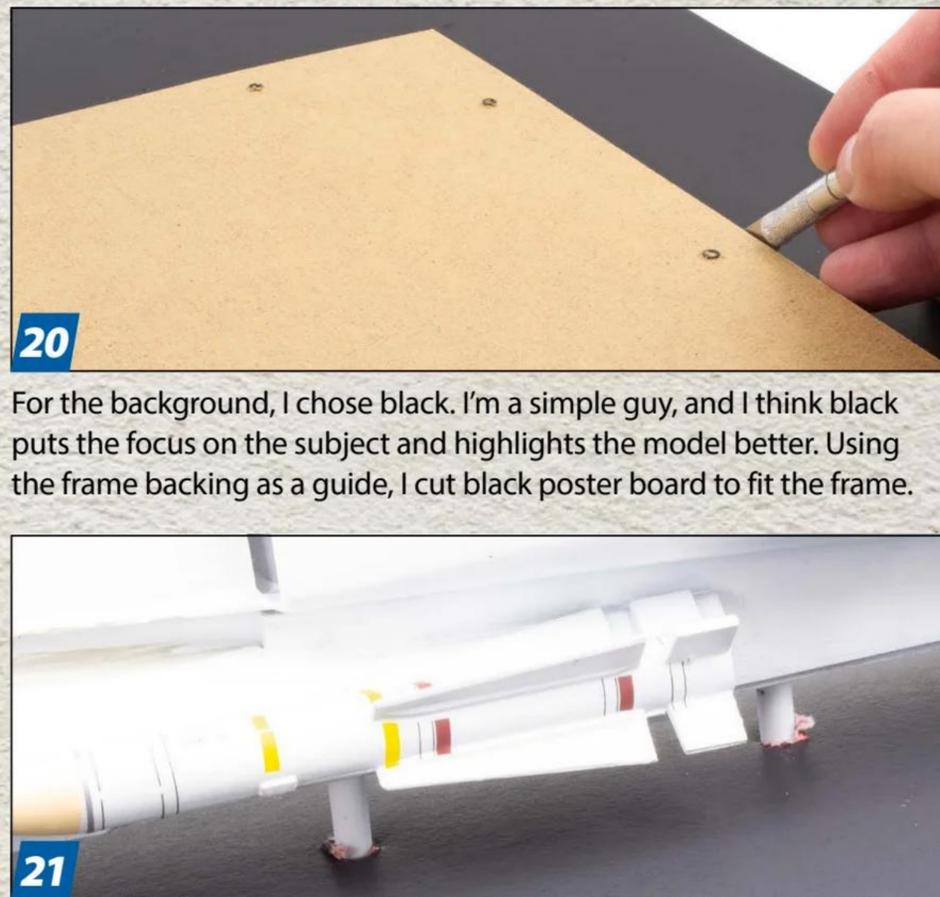
18

I glued two pieces of 4mm-diameter styrene rod inside the fuselage and reinforced both with copious amounts of superglue to make sure they weren't going anywhere.



19

For the display, I removed the glass from a 17-inch x 11-inch picture frame. Holding the rods against the frame's backing, I marked their locations with a black Sharpie. Now, I could drill matching holes to mount the plane.



20

For the background, I chose black. I'm a simple guy, and I think black puts the focus on the subject and highlights the model better. Using the frame backing as a guide, I cut black poster board to fit the frame.



21

After gluing the poster board to the backing and opening the locating holes in the board, I slipped the rods through until the model rested against the background. To secure the model to the display, I applied superglue to the posts.



22

To finish the display and add context, I dug through my collection and found two VF-32 patches and the classic Navy Tomcat logo. I covered the back of each patch with double-sided carpet tape and trimmed off the excess with a hobby knife. Then they were attached below the fighter.



FINAL THOUGHTS

With all three patches in place, my wall plaque was complete and hanging in my man cave. Using this method, I'll be able to create a nice collection of 3D Tomcat profiles, use up all those kits and decals I've collected, and have the space to display them all in my workshop. **FSM**

ICM Martin B-26B Marauder



To my knowledge, the all-new ICM 1/48 scale Martin B-26B Marauder plastic model kit is the fourth Marauder in 1/48 scale, after Aurora, AMT, and Monogram.

The sturdy box contains 348 plastic parts; a 24-page instruction book with ICM paint references; and beautifully printed decals for three aircraft, one olive drab over neutral gray and two in natural metal, all three sporting invasion stripes. The parts show no flash and minor mold seams. Surface detail is limited to narrow panel lines and Dzus-fasteners. There are no photo-etched metal details, but you won't miss them because the plastic parts are so fine. My kit's canopies were crystal clear.

The soft, flexible plastic means antennas and gun barrels bend rather than break if accidentally tweaked during construction. Mold lines were located near the edges of the fuselage and vanished as I eliminated seams. Others showed up on the lower bomb bay doors; I left these alone. During painting, I discovered faint sink marks on the wings above the main gear bays and under the guides for the wing spars.

When assembling the stunningly detailed interior, look several steps ahead for clarification because the instructions can be vague. At times, it was tough to tell where the arrows were pointing, and I was confused regarding the orientation of some of the parts. For example, I installed a bulkhead (Part C2) upside down but realized the mistake before the glue set. (The horizontal line is not where the floor meets the bulkhead, but for the turret support.)

ICM doesn't provide nose weights, but the instructions recommend adding 50 grams to the empty compartment aft of the cockpit. I added wheel weights totaling 56 grams to keep the nose wheel planted.

After closing the fuselage, I slipped the optional closed bomb doors into the open-

ing to mask the fully loaded bomb bay for painting. Unlike the Monogram kit, there were no fit issues with the tail. The one-piece upper horizontal stabilizer sets the dihedral without fuss.

Leave the side gun packs off until after applying the decals if you opt for marking Option 3, *Big Hairy Bird*.

The engines comprise 27 pieces each, and if they don't sit correctly on the firewall you may have forgotten a part.

Assemble the main gear legs after painting. The instruction's arrows are misleading: Parts F18 and F19 should only be glued to the shaft of the gear leg and at an angle to allow the leg to attach with forward rake and connect to the extension jacks (parts G22, G24, G25, and G27).

My typical clear parts glue did not work well to attach the kit glass. Gator's Grip held for about 24 hours, and then the parts dropped into the fuselage. Elmer's White Glue never set at all. I performed surgery under the rudder to access and re-mount the small windows above the elevators (parts H18 and H19). I also had to reattach the nose cone twice, along with remounting the nose gun's ammo box. I finally settled on Evergreen Canopy Glue, which worked extremely well.

Exceptional describes the overall fit — mostly. Seams inside the cowls needed work, but they are mostly hidden by the engines. Butt-joining the multipart cowls is tricky, so I used the firewalls to assist alignment. The worst were the main gear doors. I used clamps to hold them tight to the front and rear hinges as the glue set. Then I filled the gaps between the middle two hinges and the doors with superglue.

I had trouble applying the fuselage markings. The codes kept folding over on themselves and several decals set as soon as they touched the model. I was eventually able to refloat these and position them cor-

rectly, but remnants of ink are still visible where they first landed. Using a photocopy of the decal sheet, I was able to trim the unused codes to repair the damaged ones.

The panel lines are so fine that an enamel wash would not flow by capillary action. Instead, I flooded the surface which stained the underlying aluminum paint and made the airframe look dirty and well-used.

The finished ICM 1/48 scale B-26B Marauder plastic model kit scales out a little large compared to the specs of the B-26B-55 listed in *B-26 Marauder in Action* (Squadron/Signal, ISBN 978-0-89747-119-0), but almost perfect for the B-26C-45. I spent 80 hours assembling the kit. While it was a long build, it was not a difficult one. The fit is on par with the best kits. The level of detail is phenomenal. It may have taken longer to build than Monogram's Marauder, but it was a lot more fun!

— Andy Keyes



Kit No.: 48320 **Scale:** 1/48 **Mfr.:** ICM, icm.com.ua (Sample courtesy of mfr.)
Price: \$154.99 **Comments:** Injection-molded plastic (gray and clear); 348 parts; decals **Pros:** Incredible level of detail — it seems as if every part is represented **Cons:** Every little part is represented (I deserve combat pay for half a dozen skirmishes with the Carpet Monster)



AMT 2021 Dodge Charger Pursuit

Simple and to the point: The completely newly tooled AMT 1/25 scale 2021 Dodge Charger Pursuit police car plastic model kit is, in my humble opinion, the best-engineered kit from AMT to date. I had the pleasure of building the R/T version a year ago, so I had an idea of how much fun this one was going to be.

The kit offers 160 nicely molded parts. No need for much cleanup.

The first three steps have you build the Hemi engine, consisting of 19 parts. I assembled the engine halves, heads, and front of the engine and painted them as a unit. The rest of the parts were painted separately and then attached to complete a fine-looking powerplant. You'll attach the air filter later in the build, so don't worry.

When building the interior, pay careful attention to the instructions. You'll need to

drill two holes to install the bracket to hold the cruiser's laptop along with the four holes that accommodate the two emergency lights in the rear. The holes are marked to make the positions easy to find. Drill and test-fit everything before you paint these parts for a cleaner finish.

The chassis has plenty of detail and looks terrific when finished. You'll find three heat shields, a three-part muffler and separate muffler tips, front and rear suspensions, and skid plates. The chassis is my favorite part of the kit.

You have a choice of two sets of rims that also include four small hubcaps. Front and rear disk brakes with caliper detail need to be installed before gluing the realistic tires. You can either install the tires and rims on the completed chassis or leave them until the end.

The separate front and rear body fascia need to be installed after mating the chassis to the body, but after you attach the lights and other details to them. There's no need to paint the transparent red rear lights but be aware that you'll have to place several decals before affixing them. The headlights and taillights don't need much glue, a testament to the kit's engineering.

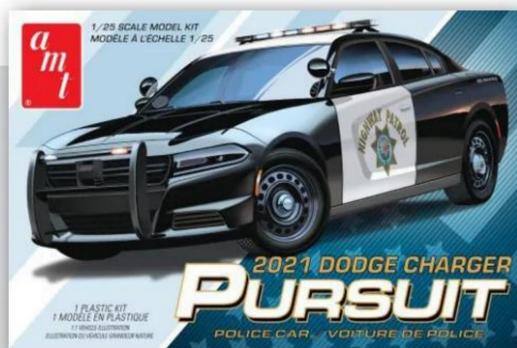
Choose between two light bar options and drill the pre-marked roof locators to hold it. You are also provided with two searchlights that need to be placed on the A-pillars. Unfortunately, these holes are not marked. Drill carefully before painting the body. There is also a push bar that belongs in front of the grille. Similarly, you'll have to drill two small holes to mount the push bar to the front end. The installation of the front, rear, and side windows is a breeze and something I found satisfying.

The decal sheet provides two California Highway Patrol logos for each side, two different numbered logos for the roof, California license plates, and small items for the exterior of the car. For the interior, you get three different laptop screens and other details.

You'll have a few leftover parts meant for the original issue of the 2021 Charger, so don't think you've missed something.

Overall, I found building and finishing the AMT Dodge Charger Pursuit as enjoyable as the civilian version. With so many aftermarket decals available, there's plenty of potential to build your own version of this widely used police car. If you're a first responder fanatic, this plastic car kit is a must-have!

— Marcos Cruz



Kit No.: AMT1324M **Scale:** 1/25

Mfr.: Round 2, round2corp.com (Sample courtesy of mfr.) **Price:** \$32

Comments: Injection-molded plastic (white, clear, transparent red, chrome); 160 parts (4 black vinyl tires); decals

Pros: Well-engineered **Cons:** None come to mind — near perfect!

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Academy Panzer I Ausf B & Motorcycle



The new Academy Panzer I Ausf B and Motorcycle joins the company's other German World War II tank kits paired with a Zundapp motorcycle and sidecar. This match can seem a little strange because the Zundapp was not available during the early part of the war when the Panzer I was used. However, they are two fine kits if taken separately.

Assembly starts with the Zundapp motorcycle and sidecar. I found building the wheels and forks challenging. Make sure to pay attention to the callouts for locating the wheels in relation to the fenders. The front fender supports require deli-



Kit No.: 13356 **Scale:** 1/35

Mfr.: Academy, academy.co.kr (Sample courtesy of Model Rectifier Corp., model-rectifier.com) **Price:** \$39

Comments: Injection-molded plastic (dark yellow); 308 parts (10 photo-etched metal); decals **Pros:** Well-engineered kits with excellent figures and decals **Cons:** Tiny, delicate parts easily broken during assembly; no interior detail for the turret

cate gluing as they just butt up to the bottom edge of the fender. The rest of the motorcycle goes together well, although I kept the sidecar and saddlebags separate to ease painting.

The motorcycle figures are the best I've seen from Academy. The driver's pose fits the seat perfectly, and the rider snuggles easily into the sidecar. I left the latter's left foot off to ease placing the figure in the sidecar; it can't be seen, so it's fine. Be sure to leave the MG34 off until you seat the rider or you'll need to break it off to get him in. I did manage to snap both handlebars during assembly, but it actually helped when I added the driver to ensure his hand was firmly on the grip.

Turning to the Panzer I, note the addendum to correct the placement of the running gear in Step 14.

The lower tub fits together well, and I added the running gear, per the addendum, before placing the nicely molded link-and-length tracks. I deviated from the instructions by adding one less link on the top rear set of links.

Because the fenders were molded onto the top superstructure, I painted the lower hull assembly to ease painting the tracks.

For the upper hull, again, assembly was straightforward and the fits excellent. The guide for placing the photo-etched metal parts (PE) don't appear until the end with the painting guide. Be careful! The PE parts are tiny and easily broken. However, placement is a snap.

Academy supplies a half-figure for the commander with two options for the head (early war beret or a service cap after the

Polish campaign). Despite placing the commander in the open turret hatch, you can see around the figure into the bare interior. If I was to build this kit again, I would add scratchbuilt details to address that gap.

Academy gives you five marking options for the Panzer I, including three for the Polish campaign, one for the Lowlands campaign in Denmark, and one for the French campaign. I chose the first option in the early war dark gray and brown camouflage and colorful turret numbers. I used Tamiya paints for the main camouflage colors and Vallejo for the details.

I was extremely pleased with the decals in this kit. With a little help from Micro Sol, they settled perfectly over complex surface details. They even included the stenciling for the fire extinguisher! Finally, I used an artist-oil wash to weather the hull and Rustall and a pencil to weather the tracks.

There is only one set of markings for the Zundapp motorcycle, but they went down nicely. Academy includes decals for the uniforms, adding a nice level of detail. Be warned, they are extremely small and a challenge to place properly. However, there are extras in case you make a mistake, like I did. Academy thinking ahead!

I enjoyed building the Academy 1/35 scale Panzer I Ausf B and Motorcycle plastic model kit. Well-engineered, it was reasonably easy to build despite the many small parts. I spent 35 hours building my tank and bike with most of the time focused on painting. Because of the small, delicate parts, I would recommend this for at least an intermediate modeler.

— David Nelson

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By Tim Boyd

Tamiya Ford Sierra XR-4i

A popular model manufacturer showed love for an unlikely car with a 1/24 scale kit

In one of my first “Classic Kits” columns in *Scale Auto* magazine, I featured Tamiya’s Mercedes-Benz 500 SEC kit. The kit was most notable for being the company’s first, fully detailed kit in 1/24 scale, meaning complete under-hood detail with a stand-alone engine assembly and full front and rear suspension assemblies. Prior to that release, Tamiya concentrated on curbside and motorized Japanese domestic market (JDM) products.

Tamiya’s 500 SEC kit was very well received in the growing, early 1980s, adult-facing, model-kit market, and several other full-detail kits soon emerged from the Tamiya development team, including the Ford Sierra XR-4i.

In European and overseas markets, the Sierra was Ford’s midsize offering. Replacing the Ford Cortina and Taunus nameplates, the Sierra reflected Ford’s emerging emphasis on aerodynamics. Like the 1983 Thunderbird stateside, the Sierra’s styling was, at first, considered controversial by many. That impression

only increased when Ford unveiled the XR4i, its range-topping, sporty offering featuring a dual spoiler in the rear. Under the hood was Ford’s respected 2.8-liter, 60-degree V6, though this was replaced with a turbocharged 2.3-liter EFI I4 when the XR4i Sierra was subsequently imported to North America as the Merkur XR4Ti and sold through the Lincoln Mercury dealer channel.

Tamiya’s exceptional kit started under the hood with a 12-piece V6 rendered entirely as a separate assembly — a welcome departure from some of today’s kit offerings wherein only the most visible portions of an engine’s top and bottom are portrayed. Engine compartment accessories followed with seven additional components that were positioned either in right- or left-hand drive configurations. The turntable front suspension and independent rear suspension, again rendered in complete detail, comprised another 20 parts.

The interior, with both left- and right-hand instrument panels, came with sepa-

TAMIYA 1/24 SCALE FORD SIERRA XR-4i

Kit No.: 2452

First Introduced: 1985

Current Value: \$35 to \$65

rately molded rear seats and a handbrake. The front bucket seats, though, were molded with a hollow rear section that would require remedial action by the kit builder. The kit exhibited Tamiya’s typical exterior detail, even extending to separate locations for the left- and right-hand drive wipers. Another neat feature was a two-position, moveable, clear moonroof.

There were no plated parts, but the clear parts included lenses for all front and rear lighting. The decal sheet added an instrument panel gauge graphic (rare for kits of its era) and a graphic treatment for the rear quarter windows. The decal sheet offered three license plate options, but none represented the U.S. market.

For experienced kitbashers, the kit provided the basis for replicating the American Merkur XR4Ti. The biggest alteration involved swapping in the 2.3-liter turbo engine from Monogram’s 1/24 scale Mustang SVO or 1987 Thunderbird Turbo Coupe kits.

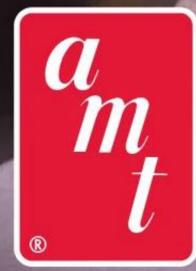
Even from today’s perspective, Tamiya’s Sierra XR-4i was an outstanding model car kit, setting a standard, particularly in under-hood detail, that stands above even some of today’s newly developed kits. It does not appear that the kit was ever reissued in factory-stock form. If the subject interests you, this is a kit well worth searching out and adding to your stash. **FSM**



KUSTOM KRUISERS



Layin' Low

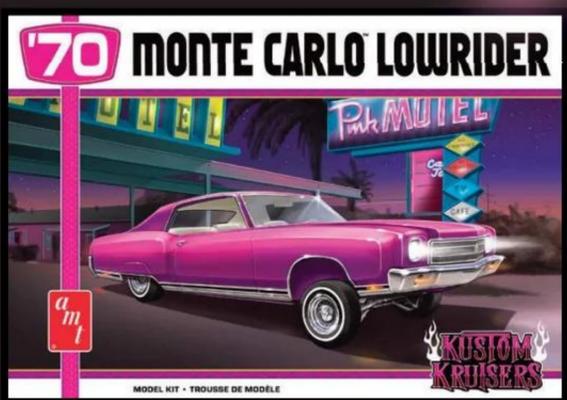


AMT hits the switches on the new '70 Monte Carlo Lowrider!

Lay it all out with the new AMT '70 Monte Carlo loaded with lowrider features. "Switch" it up with 1 of 5 different suspension setups that can be mixed or matched. This kustom kruiser also includes a 454 V-8 engine, authentic dashboard, detailed interior with bucket seats, spoke wheels, and whitewall tires. Plus the ALL-NEW custom decal sheet is packed with decals sure to have your ride looking right. So bounce on over to the Pink Motel and get your '70 Monte Carlo Lowrider by AMT, when they hit shelves next month!

Model Kit Features:

- ◆ 1:25 Scale, Skill level 2, paint & glue required.
- ◆ 126 total parts
- ◆ Molded in white, clear, and transparent red with chrome-plated parts.
- ◆ Black Vinyl Tires
- ◆ Built size: 8.0 inches long
- ◆ Ages 10+
- ◆ 5 possible suspension setups

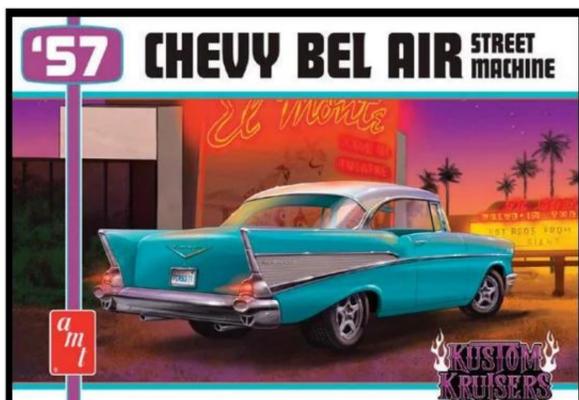


1970 MONTE CARLO LOWRIDER
#AMT1458M (1:25 SCALE)

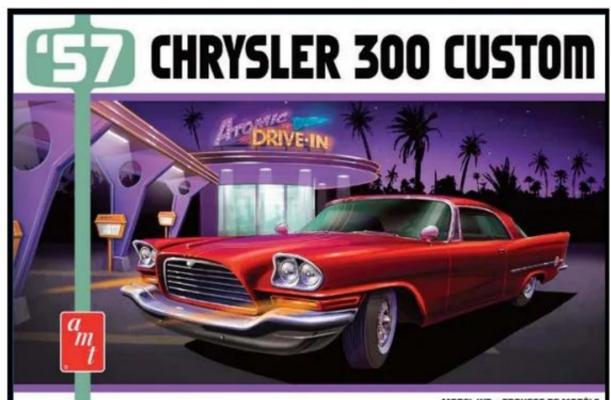
Grab the latest and greatest plastic at: autoworldstore.com!



1960 CHEVY APACHE PICKUP TRUCK
#AMT1444M (1:25 SCALE)



1957 CHEVY BEL AIR
#AMT1460M (1:25 SCALE)



1957 CHRYSLER 300 CUSTOM
#AMT1447M (1:25 SCALE)

1/72 scale plastic model assembly kit

Item 60793

LOCKHEED MARTIN F-35B LIGHTNING II

This model kit recreates the state-of-the-art F-35B Lightning II in easy to manage and display 1/72 scale. It inherits many of the detailed features first seen in our 1/48 scale re-release. Thanks to extensive research of the full-size subject, the B variant of the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II model is poised to be the definitive model in 1/72 scale!



Wingspan: 148mm, fuselage length: 215mm.



About the F-35B Lightning II

Developed under the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program, the F-35 integrates multiple functions into its design and there are three types: the F-35A conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) aircraft, the F-35B short takeoff, vertical landing (STOVL), and the F-35C carrier takeoff and landing (CV). The F-35B was developed as a successor of the AV-8B Harrier II. The F-35B is recognized as the aircraft which accomplished both supersonic flight and STOVL by the 3-bearing engine duct nozzle and lift fan, and following the F-35A, the F-35B deployment started in 2015. The first F-35B to see action was an aircraft belonging to the U.S. Marine Corps VMFA-211 "Wake Island Avengers" in Afghanistan, in September 2018. Not only the U.S. and the U.K. but also Italy employs the F-35B. The Japan Air Self-Defense Force also plans to launch a new fighter squadron with the F-35B from 2024 onward. As the F-35B can be operated from both aircraft carriers and airfields featuring short runways, many countries are considering its deployment, and the F-35B looks set to become a significant presence in the skies across the world.

KEY POINTS

- The kit recreates the vertical landing and can be assembled in two ways; landed or hovering and ensures superior assembly with dedicated angled door parts.
- The parts faithfully depict a hovering aircraft with downward engine nozzle and opened doors.
- Features realistic renderings of half-open two inner weapon bay doors and interior details such as ribs and pipes.
- The nose landing gear and main landing gear can be depicted as extended (for hovering) or retracted (for landing).
- The lift fan is integrated with nose landing gear bay, and the variable vane underneath is recreated in detail.
- Shorter than on the F-35A, the engine nozzle is recreated by a single part.
- The 3BSM (3 Bearing Swivel Module) is faithfully recreated with a dedicated parts breakdown for this kit.
- RAM (Radar Absorbent Material) are molded into fuselage surfaces.
- Clear parts recreate canopy and EOTS fairing under the nose.
- Includes parts for AIM-9X Sidewinder x2 and AIM-120C AMRAAM x2.
- Y-shaped air intake duct for highly advanced stealth characteristics.
- Detailed cockpit, landing gear bays and roll posts.
- Martin-Baker US16E ejection seat.
- RCS (radar cross section) enhancers affixed to top and bottom sections during basic training exercises.
- One pilot figure with the helmet mounted display (HMD).
- A stand is included to use if you are making a hovering model.
- Comes with 5 marking options from a total of three countries (United States Marine Corps, Royal Air Force, Italian Navy).
- Includes masking stickers and a painting guide.

