

PLUS | COLORFUL SPEEDBOATS YOU CAN BUILD

FineScale Modeler

March/April 2025

HOW TO
PLANT
SCENERY

MOSS | GRASS | SHRUBS | TREES

P-8A POSEIDON USN

(1/144)



U.S. Navy's multi-mission maritime aircraft



-- ALL NEW TOOLING! --



The aircraft's design is similar to the commercial 737-800 airliner. It was purpose-built as a multi-mission aircraft for the U.S. Navy. Deployed for long range anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare, reconnaissance, intelligence, search & rescue, and surveillance.

Equipped with an infrared sensor turret and advanced radar, it is also capable of air-to-air refueling. Depending on the mission, the P-8A Poseidon can be armed with torpedoes, Harpoon anti-ship missiles and other weapons.

P-8A POSEIDON Kit (12635) features:

- All New Tooling
- Weapons bay and landing gear bay can be built open or closed
- AGM-84 Harpoon anti-ship missiles and MK54 Torpedoes included
- Interior weapons bay features are precise, assemble it with five MK54 Torpedoes
- Detailed cockpit features realistic instrument panel, well contoured seats, control sticks and back plate
- An example of Academy's attention to detail are the varied antennas on the fuselage and nose, including an INMARSAT antenna on the tail
- Assemble with up to four pylons on the wings



FOUNDED BY ROY C. GELBER

MODEL RECTIFIER CORPORATION
360 Main Street, Suite 2, Matawan, NJ 07747 • 732-225-2100 • www.modelrectifier.com



■ Train Controls ■ Model Railroad Accessories ■ Plastic Model Kits ■ Scenery ■ Educational Kits

CONTENTS

March/April 2025 /// Vol. 43 /// No. 2

FEATURES

- 10 Coax out a Cougar**
Building Kitty Hawk's 1/48 scale
F9F-8T better
RICARDO DACOBA
- 18 Print-quality photos with
your smartphone**
Yes, it's possible. Here's how you do it.
TIM KIDWELL
- 22 Trees for the forest moon**
Vegetation and an Endor base for a
1/48 scale AT-ST
KOSTAS GEORGIU
- 34 Make your ship's grate**
Don't let an ill-made hatch be the
downfall of a first-rate model
TONI LEVINE
- 40 Field a StuG**
Simple weathering and groundwork
propels the vehicle
IVAN MOMCILOVIC
- 46 Churn some water**
Ideas for modeling 1/25 scale
drag and ski boats
TIM BOYD



KIT REVIEWS

- 54 Clear Prop! F-86A Sabre**
- 55 ICM M1097A2 Humvee**

Scan the QR code for
more reviews online at
[FineScale.com/reviews](https://www.finescale.com/reviews)



IN EVERY ISSUE

- 4 Scale Talk**
- 9 New Products**
- 30 Show Gallery**
Midwest Scale Madness and MMSI
- 58 Classic Car Kits**
AMT 1963 Pontiac Bonneville
convertible

FROM THE EDITOR

By Aaron Skinner

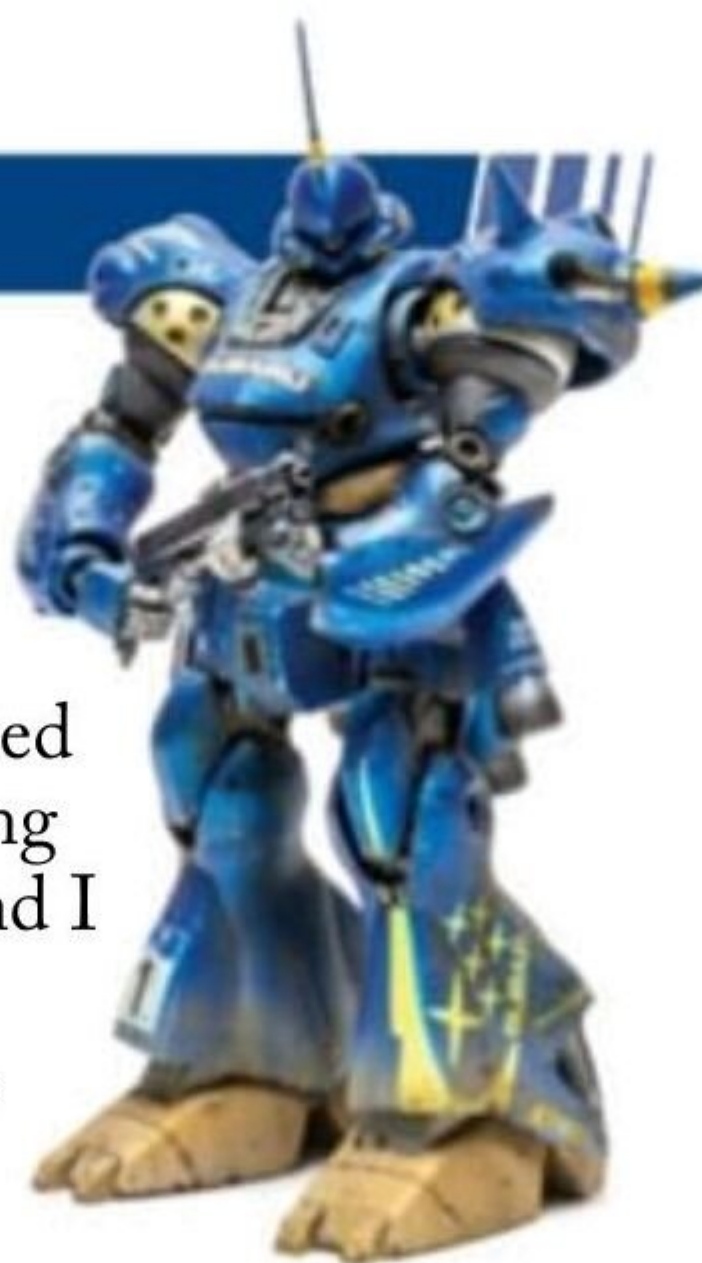
Seriously fun!

When Tim Kidwell suggested we build Gundam mobile suits in auto racing liveries for the Build a Model Month "24 Hours of Le Modeling," I was, to put it mildly, hesitant. Not because it was Gundam, which I like. Or, as you might expect, the idea that we would build them on a 24-hour live stream.

No, my concern was pulling off the concept. Could I adapt decals from a 1/24 scale Subaru rally car to fit a 1/100 scale MS-18E Kämpfer? Trying to visualize the finished project brought more questions than answers. Honestly, the same doubts and internal debates hamper every one of my projects. Given that this was a 24-hour live build, I had no choice but get stuck in. Three weeks later, the finished Subaru Subazaku

WRC, or Weaponized Rally Cat, is watching over me as I type, and I am pleased with the result. No, I'm more than pleased. It looks good, and I had a blast. Figuring out which techniques to use, what modifications to make, and how to weather it were so much fun — as it has been ultimately with every build that piqued my interest and subsequently my anxiety. I need to learn to let go and just build. Thank you, Subazaku!

editor@FineScale.com



FineScale Modeler

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

ART & PRODUCTION

Design Director Tom Danneman
Illustrator Kellie Jaeger
Production Director: Kelly Kramer Weekley
Production Coordinator Sue Hollinger-Klahn
Operations Specialist: Melissa Valuch

REGULAR CONTRIBUTING MODELERS

Tim Boyd, Paul Boyer, Andy Cooper, Raúl Corral, Chris Cortez, Marcos Cruz, Frank Cuden, Ricardo Dacoba, Chuck Davis, Walt Fink, Tom Foti, Phillip Gore, Jari Hemilä, Caleb Horn, Ted Horn, Joe Hudson, Anders Isaksson, Jim James, Mark Jones, Mark Karolus, Andy Keyes, Rick Lawler, Rafał Lebioda, John Maher, Ivan Momcilovic, John Plzak, Darren Roberts, Mike Scharf, Cookie Sewell, Bob Steinbrunn, Don Suratos, Nico Suratos, Karel Sutt, Matthew Walker, Ilya Yut

FIRECROWN

Chief Executive Officer: Craig Fuller
President: David Bradford
Chief Strategy Officer: Keith Beckman
Chief Commercial Officer: Preston Brown
Chief Operations Officer: Nicole McGuire
Chief Financial Officer: Lan Phan
Controller: Amanda Joyce
Vice President, Creative: Barry Carpenter
Group President, Hobby Division: David Carr
Group President, Aviation Division: Lisa DeFrees
Group President, Marine Division: Glenn Sandridge
Editorial Director: Meg Scarbrough
Vice President, General Counsel: Darren Caputo
Human Resources Director: Suzie Matoh

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

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

RETAIL ORDERS & INQUIRIES

Selling *FineScale Modeler* magazine or products
in your store:
Email: terri.meunier@firecrown.com

CUSTOMER SALES AND SERVICE

Phone 877-246-4847
Outside the U.S. and Canada 847-313-3921
Customer Service
FineScaleModeler@Omeda.com

SPECIAL EMAIL & WEB ADDRESSES

Ad Sales adsales@FineScale.com
Letters to the Editor editor@FineScale.com
New Products monica.freitag@firecrown.com
Reader Gallery fileupload.Kalmbach.com
Reader Questions questions@FineScale.com
Reader Tips tips@FineScale.com

Copyright © 2025 Firecrown Media Inc., all rights reserved. This publication may not be reproduced in any form without permission. Printed in the U.S.A. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for new subscriptions and address changes. Single copy: \$8.99 (U.S.). Print + digital subscription rate: U.S.: 1 year \$52.95. Canadian: Add \$6.00 postage. Canadian price includes GST, payable in U.S. funds. All other international: Add \$10.00 postage, payable in U.S. funds, drawn on a U.S. bank. BN 12271 3209 RT. Not responsible for unsolicited materials.



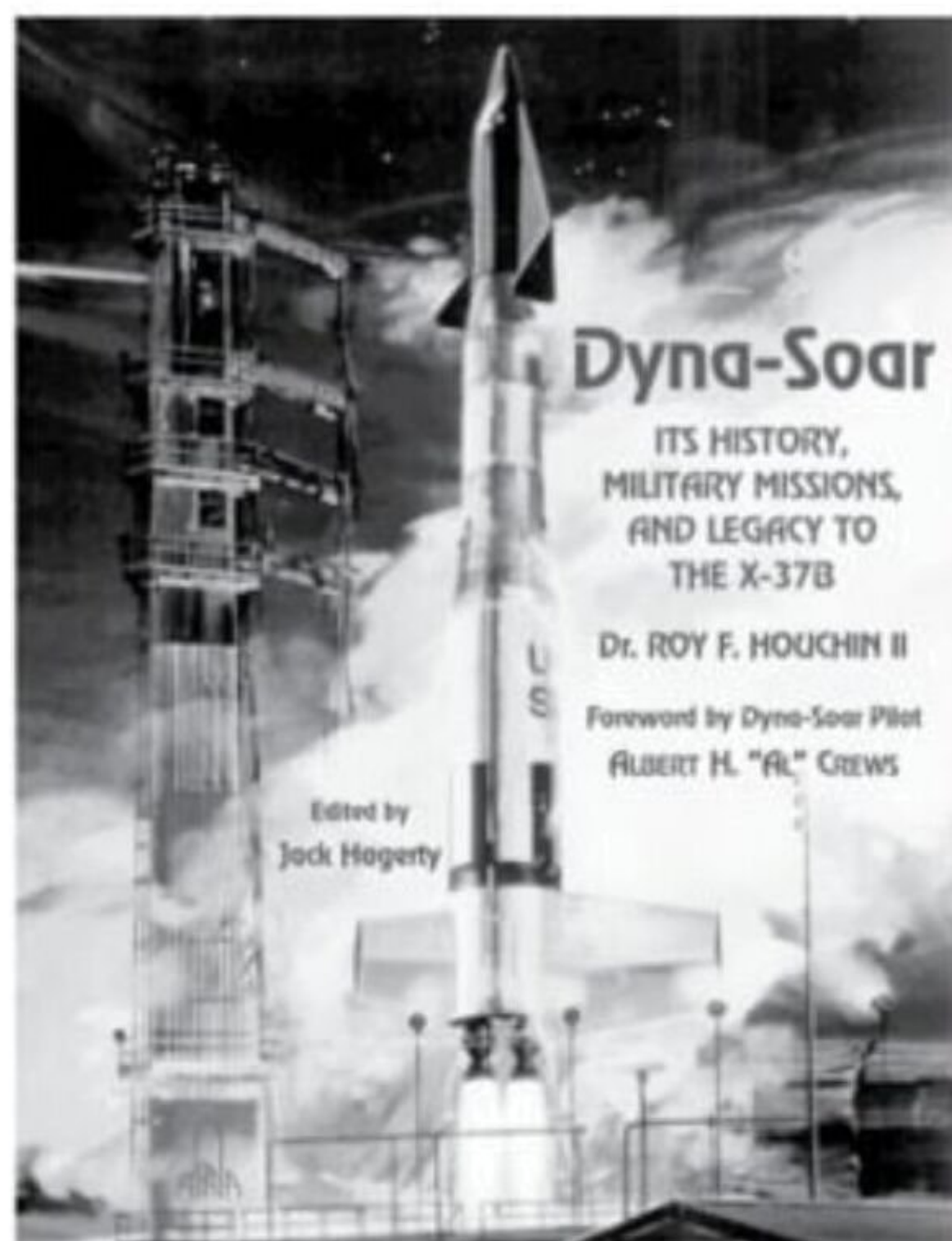
FIRECROWN



ARA Press
The Spaceship Enthusiasts'
One-Stop Data Shop!

Dyna-Soar: Its History, Military Missions and Legacy to the X-37B

Five years in the making by Air Force historian Dr. Roy Houchin, with full access to all official documents, this will be the definitive work on the program for some time to come.



- Foreword by Dyna-Soar Pilot Al Crews
- PART I - THE DYNA-SOAR PROGRAM
- PART II - THE DYNA-SOAR VEHICLE
- Glossary of Acronyms and Program Names
- Appendix - The Modeling World
- Hundreds of photographs and illustrations, most in color
- Dimensioned Drawings of the Dyna-Soar and Boosters.
- 215 Pages, 80 lb. coated stock
- Smythe-sewn Hardcover binding

Only \$39.95! (plus shipping)

Please visit our website to order on-line.

Credit Cards and PayPal accepted.
Call or write "info@arapress.com" for shipping options.

Sales Tax added for CA orders



ARA Press
785 Jefferson Ave.
Livermore, CA 94550
(925) 583-5126
www.arapress.com

SCALE TALK

Your voice in *FSM*

Weathering issue reception

I'm writing to let you know my thoughts on the January/February 2025 *FineScale Modeler*: I can only say I'm disappointed. An entire issue devoted to one subject, in this case weathering, is not good. I look forward to each new issue but was very disappointed to not find a single really meaty article about a model I find interesting. Instead, it was a boring how-to issue on weathering. One article on weathering and then a variety of other builds would be much better. Due to the merging with the auto modeling magazine and dropping to only six issues a year make it imperative to provide more variety in each issue. I literally read this issue in five minutes and am hoping the next is better.

– James Senecal
via email

Ed.: Sorry you didn't get more out of it. – Aaron Skinner

I've been subscribing for 10 years and this issue was far and away your best issue ever. All the weathering tips in one issue and better yet, concise guidance on surface prep, cleaning up mishaps, and application techniques.

This is the one issue over 10 years that I will keep at my workbench. So much more useful than the build stories that can blend together.

– Eric Kintzer
Menlo Park, Calif.

Ed.: Thanks, Eric! We were hoping the issue would become an indispensable workbench tool. – A.S.

I just got the latest issue of *FSM* in the mail today. I really liked how the whole issue was dedicated to weathering.

Instead of having to look here, there, and everywhere for different techniques you put them all in one place. And each technique was done on a different genre of model kit.

This is a well done issue that I'll be able to reference again and again.

– Chad Truss
Crystal, Minn.

Ed.: Thanks, Chad. It was a fun issue to work

on and the response has made all of the hard work worthwhile. – A.S.

I just finished reading the January/February *FineScale Modeler* cover-to-cover, and I thoroughly enjoyed this issue. I have been modeling for a long time, and I have never seen so many techniques presented in such a clear and concise manner. For those of us who are visual learners, the photos accompanying each article clearly illustrate the key steps in each technique. This is a great guide for anyone who wants to add some new stuff to their bag of building tools. Thanks for producing such a well-planned and executed edition.

– George Blair
Georgetown, Texas



Ed.: You're welcome! We wanted to make these essential techniques easy to access. – A.S.

With the price of my subscription, I felt I needed to express my opinion about this issue. I am a nearly 71 year old modeler, have been a model builder since the 1950s. I work in aircraft, autos, and monsters. This current issue fell flat for me cover to cover. No

model reviews, little in the way of beautiful builds, mostly drab articles on weathering, and a final page of uninteresting, vintage metal models. This issue just lacked its usual luster for me, almost a throwaway issue out of a very pricey subscription. I have a huge collection of my custom builds in my hobby room and always look forward to each issue of *FSM*, but this issue just didn't deliver its usual enjoyment for me! I'm sure many were thrilled, but I just was not one of them, it completely missed the target for me. Bet I wasn't alone on this.

– Dave Meiklejohn
Johnstown, Pa.

Ed.: You are right, Dave. Many were thrilled, and you weren't alone. – A.S.

I have been reading *FSM* from day one, and I have to say that the January/February 2025 issue is by far the best issue ever published. I have been building models for over 70 years, but I am anxious to put these techniques into practice. The whole issue is

DISCOVER THE WORLD'S OLDEST HOBBY

SET SAIL ON A JOURNEY OF HANDS-ON CREATION



Shaping, building and fastening wood and metal brings historically accurate ship models to life. No other hobby provides the sense of accomplishment and pride of building a timeless model that might be a family legacy or a museum piece.

**FREE 48 PAGE CATALOG
WITH ORDER**

\$69.99

+ \$9.50 USA SHIPPING
A \$149.95 VALUE

MUSCONGUS BAY LOBSTER SMACK WOOD KIT



1:24 SCALE
SKILL LEVEL 1
LENGTH 15-1/4"
WIDTH 3-7/8"
HEIGHT 15-1/4"



self-certified

Combo Tool & Paint Set: Tweezers
3 Paint Brushes • Four 1oz Paint • Wood Glue
Hobby Knife & Blade Set • Clamps & Sandpaper

Muscongus Lobster Smack Kit: Full-Size Plans.
Illustrated Construction Manual • Laser Cut Basswood Parts.
Complete Fittings Set Includes Sails, Blocks & Rigging. • Display Stand

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER BY MAIL.

ModelExpo
Serving Modelers Worldwide Since 1976

BUY ONLINE 24 HRS. 7 DAYS A WEEK.
WWW.MODELEXPO-ONLINE.COM/MYFINESCALE
OR CALL TOLL FREE: 1-877-900-8327
(Mon - Fri, 9am - 6pm Eastern Time.)

Clip and fill out the information below and send with payment total to :
Model Expo, 1155 NW 159th Drive, Miami Gardens, FL 33169
Make payment to Model Expo Inc.

Send Qty. # MYFineScale Lobster Smack with Tool & Paint Set:
\$69.99 + USA shipping \$9.50, For \$79.49 Total

Name: _____ PH # _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

(Florida Residents Only, Add 6% FL Sales Tax to order total.)

full of things I have been afraid of trying. Thanks for the great issue!

– Chad Richmond
Pinson, Ala.

Ed.: Glad you liked it and hope you have fun giving these techniques a whirl. – A.S.

Just got the January/February 2025 issue via Zinio. That's a lot of weathering information and most welcome! Thank you, thank you, nicely done.

– Jim James
Winter Garden, Fla.

Ed.: Thanks! Maybe we'll to it again. – A.S.

What the faux pas?

I greatly enjoyed Greg Kolasa's article on kitbashing an F-4J from the Vietnam War in the March/April 2023 *FSM*, but I was dismayed to find a glaring mistake on the cover. It is a well-known and widely accepted rule that any word starting with the letter "F," when used in conjunction

with "Phantom," must always be spelled with a "Ph." I was surprised the editors at *FSM* would ignore this time-honored tradition, as "Phorging a Phantom" is clearly the correct spelling. Despite this aviation faux pas, I thank you and your staff for your otherwise consistently great work.

– Teri Holter
Winter Park, Fla.

Ed.: Phar phrom phorgetting the rule, we made a deliberate choice to ignore it to elicit letters like this from Phantom phans. Mission phulphilled!

What keeps you in the hobby?

We've probably all been asked what our first model was or how old were we when we started building. Most of us have been modeling for years, probably decades, so maybe the question should be what has kept you in the hobby? We've probably also tried other endeavors to consume our free time that, for whatever reason, haven't had the longevity that modeling has. So, what

keeps us coming back? I have several reasons, in no particular order.

Friends: The vast majority of my friends are from the modeling community. The actual act of modeling, for the most part, is done a solitary endeavor. People I have met going to contests and swap meets or even online forums is the best way we have of sharing our passion of the hobby. Whether you're into aircraft, cars, tanks, or whatever, we can all relate and share techniques, experiences and ideas.

The kits: The quality and selection of available kits gets better and better. The level of detail out of the box for today's kits is incredible and the amount of stuff available in the aftermarket to take them even further ... OMG! You could easily spend more on aftermarket accessories than you did for the original kit.

The precision of fit is also so much better than it has ever been. And the variety of subjects is amazing! Short run injection kits and now 3D-printing have made obscure subjects feasible.

EXCLUSIVE CONTENT AT FINESCALE.COM



ACME Southern Nationals photo gallery

Can you believe it? Modelers entered 836 scale models into the ACME Southern Nationals in Cartersville, Georgia! With so many on the tables, it became a near impossible task to choose which models to photograph from among the deserving competitors. But we persevered and now you can see our selection of the splendid scale auto marvels on offer. Visit [FineScale.com/show-galleries](https://www.finescale.com/show-galleries) and enjoy!



FineScale Modeler Weekly videos are back!

If you haven't been paying attention, we've been rolling through the latest season of *FineScale Modeler Weekly*. Don't miss opening and looking inside the latest kits, discovering (or rediscovering) tools and techniques for use at your workbench, and hanging out with the *FSM* staff as they discuss what scale-modeling news has them buzzing. Join us at [FineScale.com/videos](https://www.finescale.com/videos) for all the latest *FSMW* fun!



Let *FSM* help you build better scale models

Visit [FineScale.com](https://www.finescale.com) for all your scale-modeling, how-to needs. No matter if you're wondering whether to buy that latest kit you've heard so much about, how to achieve better results from your airbrush, painting figures, weathering tanks, or getting that perfect look for your model's base, *FSM* has you covered. It doesn't matter if you're new to the hobby or a seasoned veteran, go to [FineScale.com](https://www.finescale.com) and let us help!

Add the shrinking global marketplace where you can now order something from just about anywhere on the planet with a couple of clicks of a mouse and the possibilities are nearly endless.

Downtime: It's my time to relax, my quiet time where I can get lost in the task at hand. Sure, there can be moments of frustration when something doesn't go to plan, but that's all part of the fun. How to work around a fit issue, mask a complex paint job, or modify something to make a different variant.

There are so many facets to the hobby that keep it interesting. And best of all at the end of it, you have something to show for the time you've spent.

What is it that keep you coming back to the modeling bench?

– Mike Klessig
West Bend, Wis.

Ed.: That's a great question, Mike! Two things keep me coming back to the workbench: new challenges and the satisfaction of finishing a project. There's always something new to try, a path to go down that I haven't followed, even if I'm building in a genre I feel comfortable with and know a lot about. After finishing a model, there's nothing like sitting back and looking at what I've accomplished. There's a sense of pleasure, that any difficulties encountered were worth it, even if the model didn't turn out as envisioned. – Tim Kidwell

Ed.: For me, modeling is about relaxation and stress relief. My time at the bench is my chance to focus on a task and forget everything else for a while. It is great therapy. The history and technology of the subjects is a big draw, too. – A.S.

More on our post-shading video

Ed.: We had a few questions on the Scale Model Basics video "How to post-shade a model." Here they are with a few answers that may even be helpful.

Presumably the lighter shades are more heavily thinned, right? I notice you're putting the nozzle up really close for those final layers.

– @TochirO
via YouTube

Ed.: I thin the paint slightly but not substantially more, and I will dial the pressure down a few PSI. Mostly it's about working relatively quickly and keeping the brush moving. – A.S.

For the final painting step, did you add white to the desert yellow that was already in the cup?

– @hangerbird
via YouTube

Ed.: While I will sometimes do that, I prefer to pour any paint left in the cup back into larger mixing cup and alter it there. It makes it easier to ensure the changes are consistent. It can be hard to match a shade in the cup – A.S.

How would one shade a multicolor model, even one with decals? I am trying to build a night diorama and need to darken the model without losing the details.

– @vf111Sundowner
via YouTube

Ed.: I have never post-shaded after decals. The closest I have come is adding a drop of the camo color to the clear flat I use after the decals on armor to help blend the markings.

As far as the first part of the question, after each layer and before removing the masks, spray lighter shades of each color. Some modelers will lighten the inner areas of the color, but I prefer to stick to lightening panel centers, so I will airbrush the color across the mask edges if they fall across a panel.

As with any of these techniques, there are few hard and fast rules, and it is more about the effect you are trying to achieve and what looks good to you. – A.S.

You don't [post-shade]. If you want to see how models are done realistically, look at how the visual effects guys do it.

– Jim Small
via YouTube

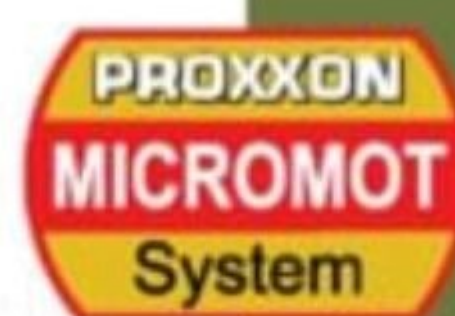
Ed.: Sure, you can look to the visual effects guys for guidance. But there is a big difference in how a model looks under studio lights and with all of the post-production work and how a 1/35 or 1/72 scale model looks under fluorescent lights in a contest room or a display case. The idea of techniques like post-shading is to give a sense of how light plays on paint and panels. We have never said you have to use any of these methods. Model what you want in whatever way makes you happy! – A.S.

Resin-casting clay?

I watched the *Scale Modeling Basics* video about casting a two-part mold. I was wondering what type of modeling clay was used to make the first part of the mold. Where is the clay available from?

– Michael "Mic" Harris
via email

Ed.: Assuming you are referring to the blue stuff used to support the parts inside the mold, it came with the RTV set from Alumilite. Most RTV sets provide this kind of material. You can also buy it separately. Look for a molding clay that says it's compatible with silicone so it won't contaminate the mold. – A.S.



PRECISION POWER TOOLS FOR YOUR INTRICATE PROJECTS

MICRO Mill MF 70. With continuously variable spindle speeds from 5,000 – 20,000rpm. Small and beautiful!

With special, balanced motor for vibration-free work at high speeds and thus perfect for even the smallest milling cutter. Size 340 (13 25/64") x 225 (8 55/64") x 130mm (5 7/64"). Weight 7kg (15.5lbs). Comes with six steel collets to cover 1.0 (1/32") – 3.2mm (1/8") and step clamp set.

The PROXXON MICROMOT system features more than 50 high-quality power tools and a huge selection of matching accessories.

Please contact us for a free catalog.

PROXXON

www.proxxon.com/us

PROXXON Inc. – Hickory, NC/USA – Email: sales.us@proxxon.com



EVERGREEN CA ADHESIVES



- Thin, Medium and Thick in ½ and 1 ounce bottles
- 2 ounce Accelerator with pump top
- 2 ounce Remove Debonder with spout top

evergreen scale models

visit us at www.evergreenscalemodels.com

Toll Free (877) 376-9099

[EvergreenScaleModels](http://www.EvergreenScaleModels.com)

ATLANTIS
TOY & HOBBY

- Classic Kits
- Top Quality
- Made in U.S.A.

"Preserve the past. Build the future."

Ships • Vehicles • Figures • and more!

We have the largest bank of ORIGINAL injection molds on the East Coast. Our kits are manufactured with precision and pride, here in the U.S.A. Ask your hobby shop for Atlantis kits today!

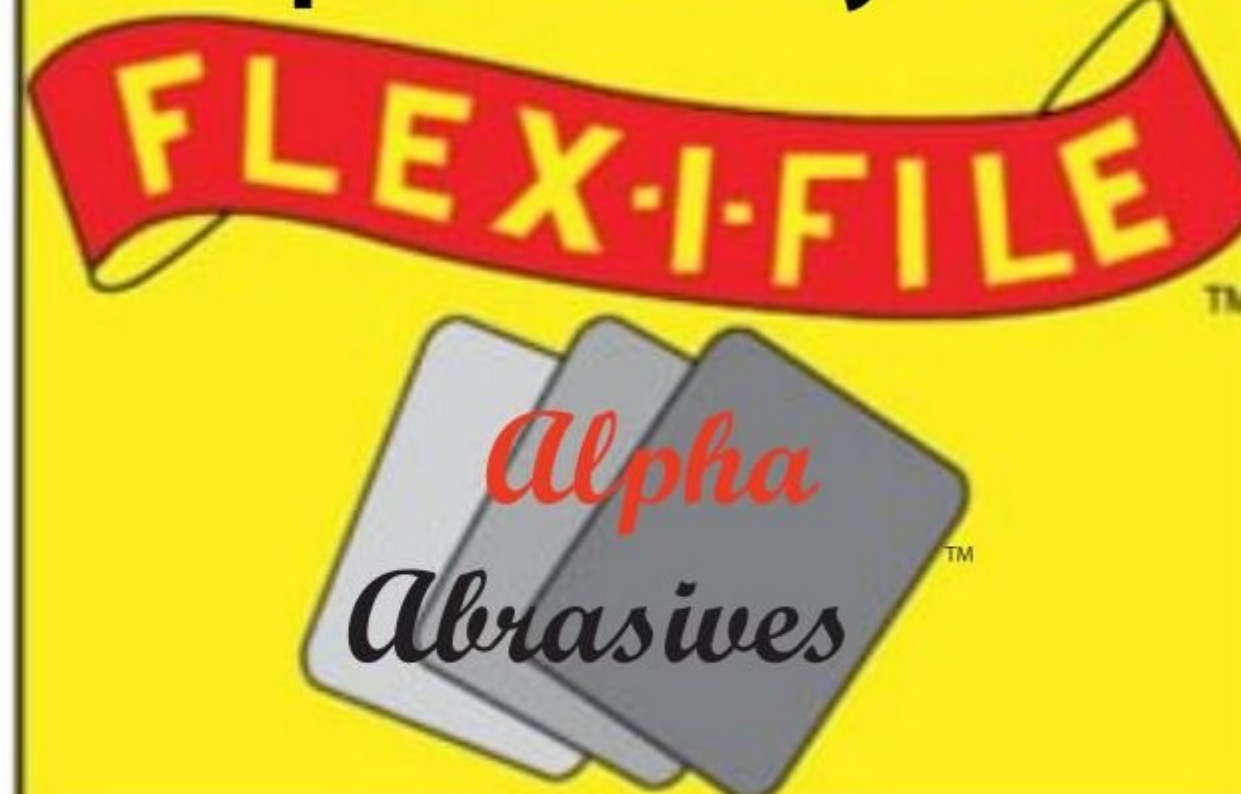
Visit us online: www.atlantis-models.com

Atlantis Toy & Hobby, Long Island, NY 531-485-9533 info@atlantis-models.com

**Order
ONLINE**
flex-i-file.com



**Speciality Abrasives
Unique Hobby Tools**



Non-toxic • Non-flammable • Easy to Use • 0% Shrinkage • Waterproof • Superior Strength & Detail

AVES® Products will Blow you Away!

Make sure Apoxie® Sculpt is in your Arsenal!

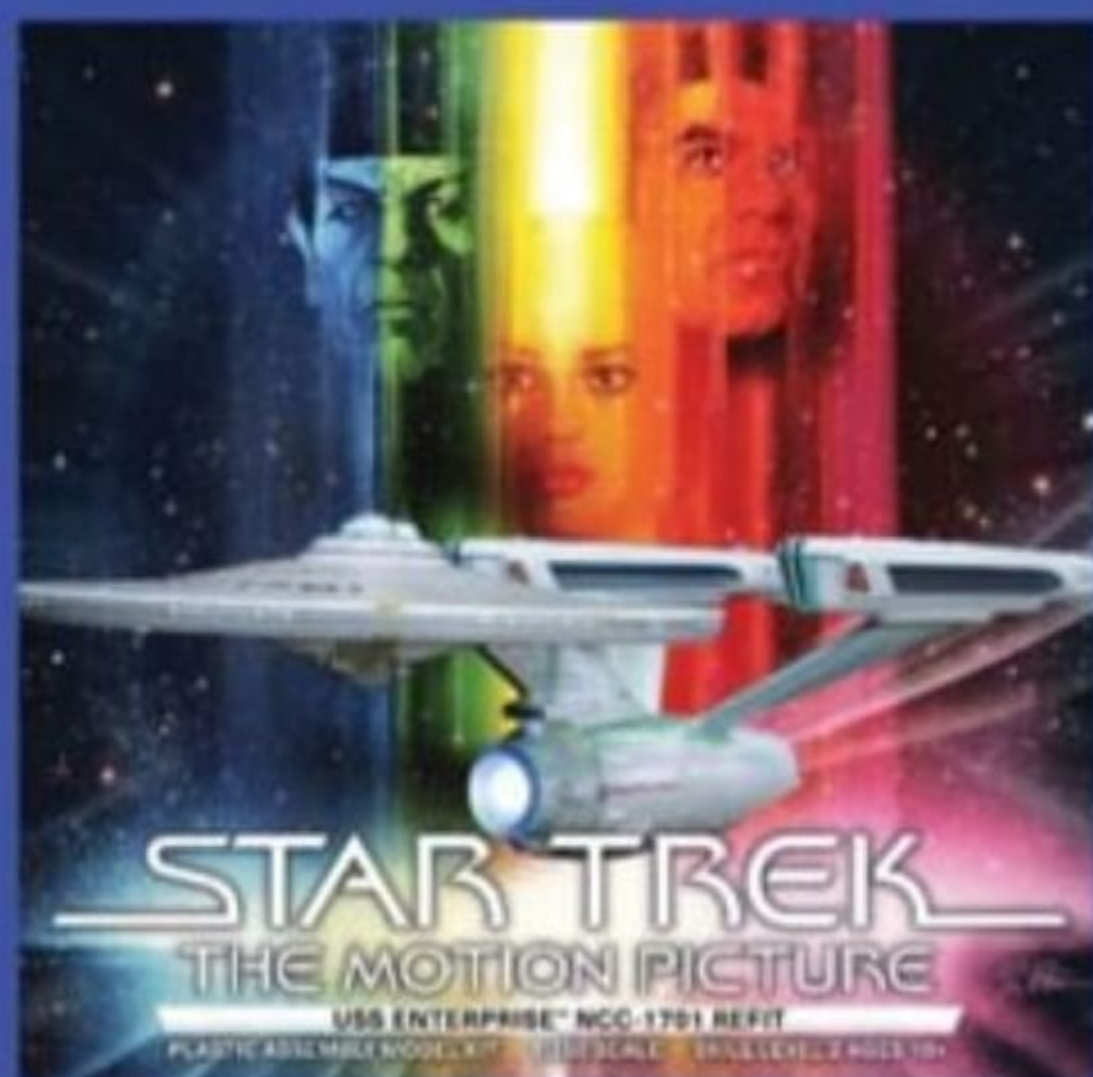
- Your aid in customization & fabrication.
- Perfect for figurine conversions, original sculpts, kit bashing, tanks, trains, boats & planes.
- Create your own tarps, coats, bedrolls, ground work, rocks, etc.
- Apoxie® Sculpt adheres to: vinyl, plastic, resin, kits, wood, metal, ceramic, glass, polymers, foam, fiberglass & more!
- Ask your hobby shop to carry Aves® products!
- Visit our web site for more information.



Elefant with Custom
Apoxie® Sculpt Zimmerit
by Joe Porter

P.O. Box 344
River Falls, WI 54022
1-800-261-2837
www.avesstudio.com

©AVES 2003



BIG! ST:TMP Enterprise 1:350



Classic Enterprise 1:1000



Star Trek Lower Decks Cerritos



Star Trek Allies & Adversaries



Strange New Worlds Enterprise



Star Trek TNG - Enterprise D



Star Trek Models

Model kits, detail sets. Star Trek, Star Wars & more

Shop at www.CultTVmanShop.com

Catalog now available \$6 - Phone: 770-797-5533

AIRCRAFT

1/48 SCALE

Spitfire Mk. IXe No. 8288 \$49.95 from Eduard.

Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II No. 61127 \$88 from Tamiya.

Boston III/A-20 B/C Havoc No. 2656 \$73.99 from Italeri.

XF5F-1 Skyrocket No. 12363 \$26 from Academy.

AH-1G Cobra and M8A1 US landing mat No. 48298 \$59.99 from ICM.

I-153 Luftwaffe with pilots and ground personnel No. 48094 \$41.99 from ICM.

Ki-21-Ib Sally with Japanese pilots and ground crew No. 48197 \$112.99 from ICM.

P-51B/C Mustang with dorsal fin No. 82108 \$49.95 from Eduard.

Junkers-Larsen JL.6. military service No. 48013 \$TBA from MiniArt.

1/72 SCALE

F4F-4 Wildcat Operation Torch No. 70065 \$24 from Arma Hobby.

Turbolet L-410U VP No. 2148 \$49.95 from Eduard.

Bf 109G-14 No. 70161 \$24.95 from Eduard.

ARMOR

1/35 SCALE

SdKfz 234/3 Schwerer Panzerspahwagen Stummel No. 53001 \$TBA from MiniArt.

SdKfz 234/3 with 2cm Schwebelafette 38 No. 35431 \$TBA from MiniArt.

SdKfz 234 with MG151 drilling No. 40014 \$TBA from MiniArt.

Chevrolet 15 CWT (D-day) No. 233 \$49.50 from Italeri.

LVT-4 Water Buffalo No. 6752 \$59.99 from Italeri.

M1097A2 Humvee cargo carrier No. 35436 \$76.99 from ICM.

German 3T Cargo truck, 6-36S mid-production PMQ600-TYPE No. 35449 \$TBA from MiniArt.

M3 Stuart diesel early production No. 35417 \$TBA from MiniArt.

AUTOS

1/12 SCALE

'69 Chevy Camaro Z28 No. 07727 \$153 from Revell.

1/24 SCALE

Opel Blitz fire truck No. 3966 \$46.45 from Italeri.

Stranger Things Billy Hargrove's '79 Chevy

Camaro Z/28 No. 07728 \$43 from Revell.

Model A Standard Phaeton (1930s)

American passenger car No. 24051 \$79.99 from ICM.

1/25 SCALE

1988 Daytona Shelby Z No. MPC1009 \$33.99 from MPC.

2023 Ford Bronco Outer Banks Edition

No. AMT1345M \$34.99 from AMT.

'69 Ford Falcon modified stocker

No. AMT1446 \$37.99 from AMT.

Stranger Things Jimmy Hopper's '85

Chevy KS Blazer No. 07724 \$TBA from Revell.

'29 Ford Model A (hot rod pickup) with California street chopper No. 04565 \$34.95 from Revell.

1970 Shelby GT-500 No. 14563 \$28.95 from Revell.

1/35 SCALE

L1500S German tow truck No. 38054 \$TBA from MiniArt.

SHIPS

1/700 SCALE

PLAN Type 094 Jin-class SSBN No. 87024 \$TBA from HobbyBoss.

SCIENCE FICTION

1/2500 SCALE

Star Trek Allies & Adversaries ship set No. AMT1443 \$52.99 from AMT.

FIGURES

1/35 SCALE

Paint workers with accessories No. 38094 \$TBA from MiniArt.

Workers with concrete mixer No. 38077 \$TBA from MiniArt.

1/48 SCALE

German and Italian pilots with DAL soldiers - North Africa No. 49018 \$TBA from MiniArt.

MISCELLANEOUS

1/24 SCALE

Jerry can 20-liter US type No. 24006 \$TBA from MiniArt.

1/35 SCALE

2cm Flak 38 — WWII German AA gun

No. 35717 \$27.99 from ICM.

Universal Military Pod & M8A1 US landing mat No. 53201 \$59.99 from ICM.

Alcohol bottles with boxes No. 35665 \$TBA from MiniArt.

1/48 SCALE

Luftwaffe Airfield Equipment No. 48409 \$31.99 from ICM.

AIRCRAFT DETAILS

1/32 SCALE

F-100 C/D/F Super Sabre landing gear for Trumpeter No. 32187 \$34.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

1/48 SCALE

Spitfire Mk. IXe photoetch set for Eduard No. 8288-LEPT \$14.95 from Eduard.

A-10C LööK for GWH No. 644280 \$12.95 from Eduard.

Fairey Gannet AEW.3 landing gear for Sword No. 48465 \$23.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

P-39 Airacobra landing gear for Arma Hobby No. 48466 \$20.95 from Scale Aircraft Conversions.

1/72 SCALE

Bf 109G-14 photoetch set No. 70161-LEPT \$10.95 from Eduard.

F-4E parachute print for FineMolds No. 672382 \$29.95 from Eduard.

AIRCRAFT DECALS

1/24 SCALE

Spitfire Mk.V G-AISU Race 40 1951 version No. Spitfire-05C \$17.50; 1/32 \$13.50; 1/48 \$11 1/72 \$9 and 1/144 \$6.50 from Draw Decal.

1/72 SCALE

US Airways Dark Blue Scheme 737-400s No. 737-213 \$38; 1/144 \$13.50; 1/100 \$25; 1/200 \$9 and 1/500 \$7.50 from Draw Decal.

BOOKS

Potez 63-11 France 1940 \$11.99, softcover, 16 pages, scale plans, color profiles, ISBN: 9788367227728 from MMPBooks/Casemate.
Henschel Hs 126 Luftwaffe \$11.99, softcover, 16 pages, scale plans, color profiles, ISBN: 9788367227735 from MMPBooks/Casemate.

Coax out a **COUGAR**

Building Kitty Hawk's 1/48 scale F9F-8T better

BY RICARDO DACOBA





The only foreign user of both the F9F Panther and Cougar was the Argentine navy, which purchased 28 F9F-2B Panthers and two F9F-8T Cougars in the late 1950s and early '60s. The two-seat Cougar trainers served until June 1971, and one of them became the first aircraft to break the sound barrier in Argentina. I wanted to build that particular plane as part of my collection of Argentine aircraft and the only game in town for a 1/48 scale two-seat Cougar is Kitty Hawk. The company is out of business now, but the kit can still be found online and in some stores. It has decent detail, but assembly is complicated with a multipart fuselage. A key to success when building certain kits is evaluating the parts and deviating from the assembly sequence indicated in the instructions. This is one of those kits.





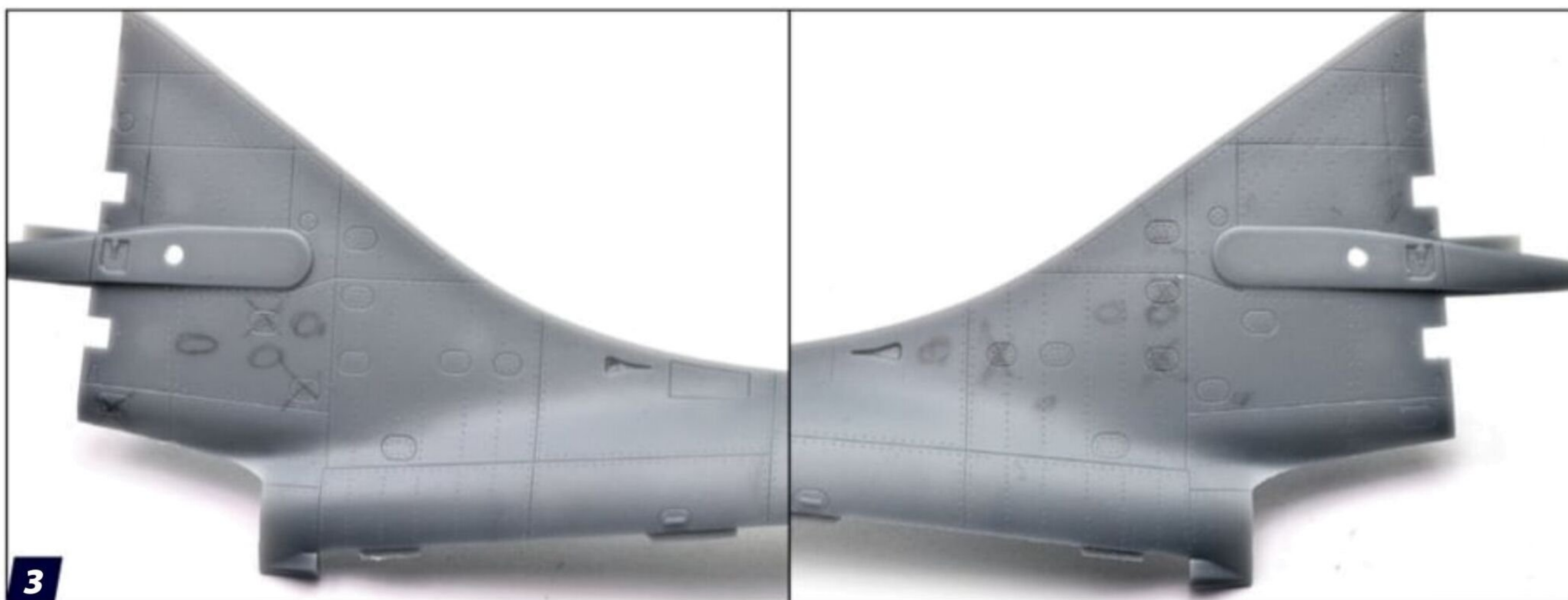
1

Rather than building the front, center and tail as separate subassemblies, I created fuselage halves. The nose and tail were simple enough because they are split along the centerline, but the center is divided into upper and lower sections. I cut the upper center part into three sections and left off the middle part with the tracks for the canopy's sliding section for the moment. I joined the three parts for each side with superglue and reinforced the backside of the joins with styrene strip.



2

A notable omission are the spring-loaded boarding steps on the port side of the nose. I marked them with a pencil and then opened the areas with a drill bit and knife.



3

Photos revealed that many of the molded maintenance and inspection hatches on the tail need to be removed or relocated. I filled the unwanted ones with superglue and talcum powder and scribed new ones using a metal template as a guide.



4

The wing roots, which include the air intakes, are separate and that made alignment difficult. Working inside of the joins, I superglued them in small sections so I could ensure the correct fit and position as I went.



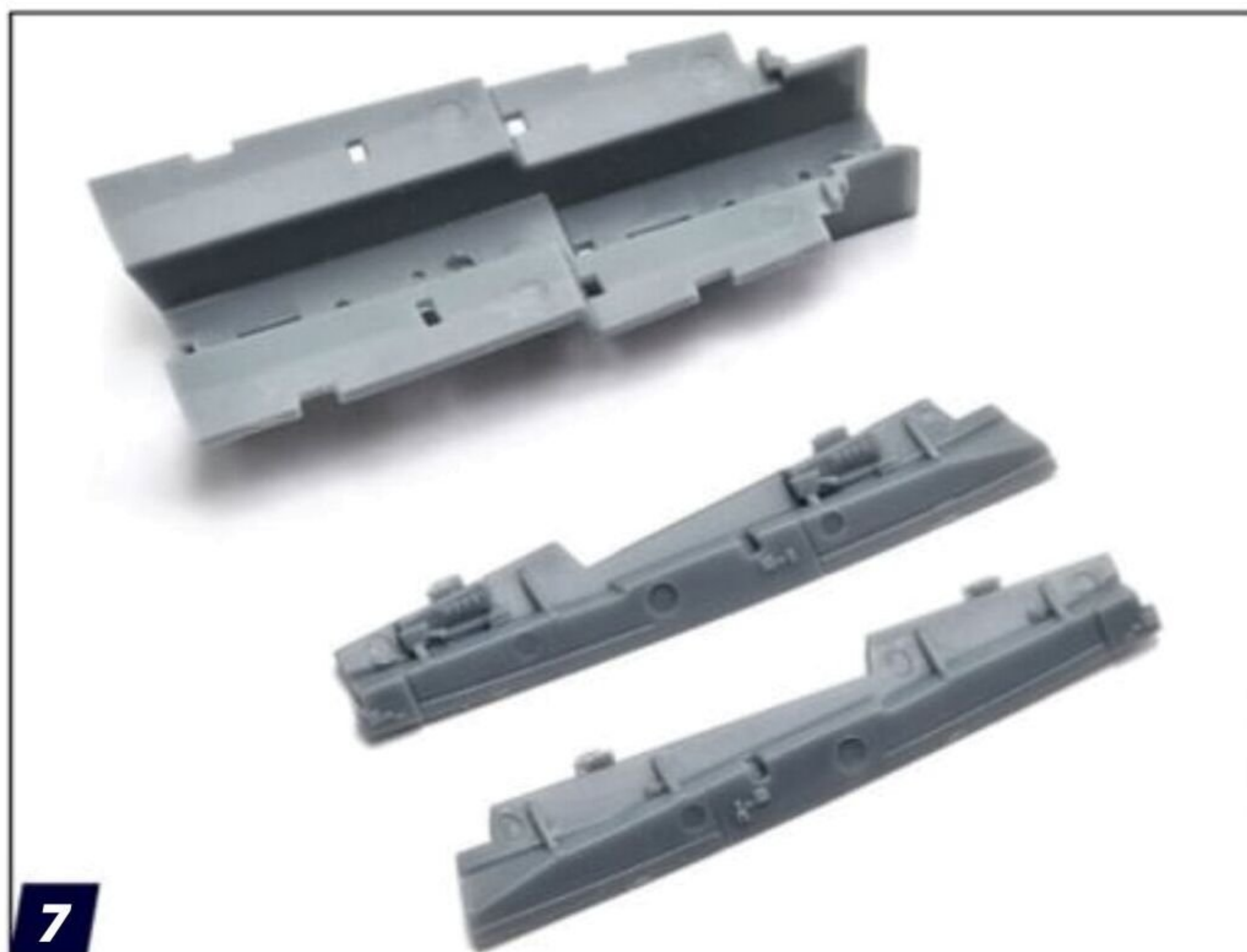
5

I wanted to pose the ventral flaps drooped to match those on the trailing edges, but they are molded closed. I traced the molded outline with the tip of a hobby knife and removed about half the thickness of plastic. Then I used a cutting burr in a rotary tool to carefully remove material from the back until the flaps could be popped out.



6

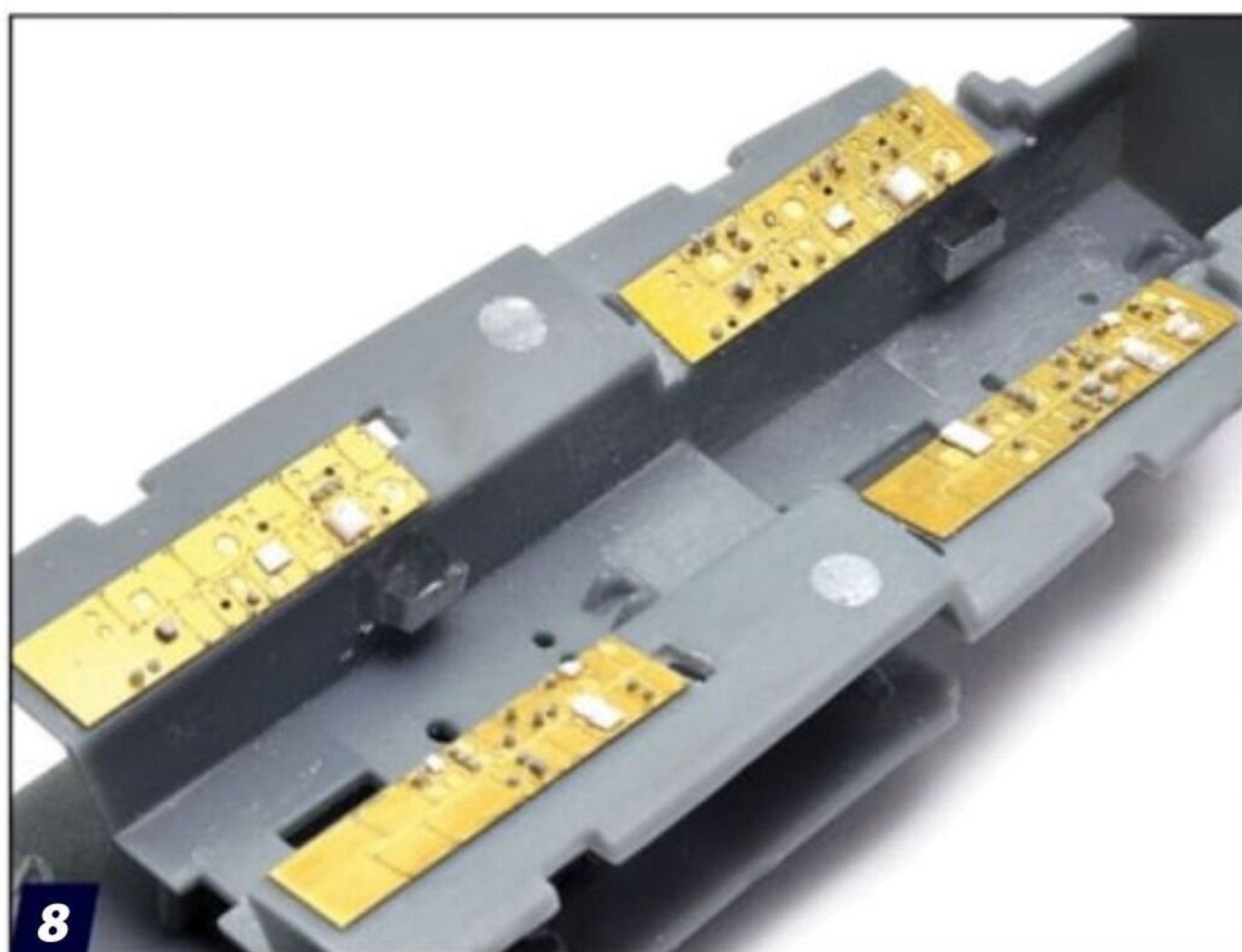
I used resin flap bays leftover from a previous project, securing them with two-part epoxy. I base-coated the bays with white in preparation for a layer of red later.



7



One of the kit's problems is large ejector-pin marks that will be visible if left unaltered. This is especially obvious on the cockpit tub and consoles. I filled them with a mix of superglue and talcum powder; after sanding, it's as if they never existed.



8



The kit's photo-etched metal (PE) side console panels have decently engraved detail but lack volume. I fixed this shortcoming by adding buttons and knobs made from styrene rod and sheet.



9

Unable to find Martin-Baker A5A seats used on Argentine Cougars, I modified a pair of resin Martin-Baker Mk.7 seats designed for an F-4 (left). The work involved cutting off the bottom, sanding away most of the side detail, trimming the top, and adding styrene sheet detail.



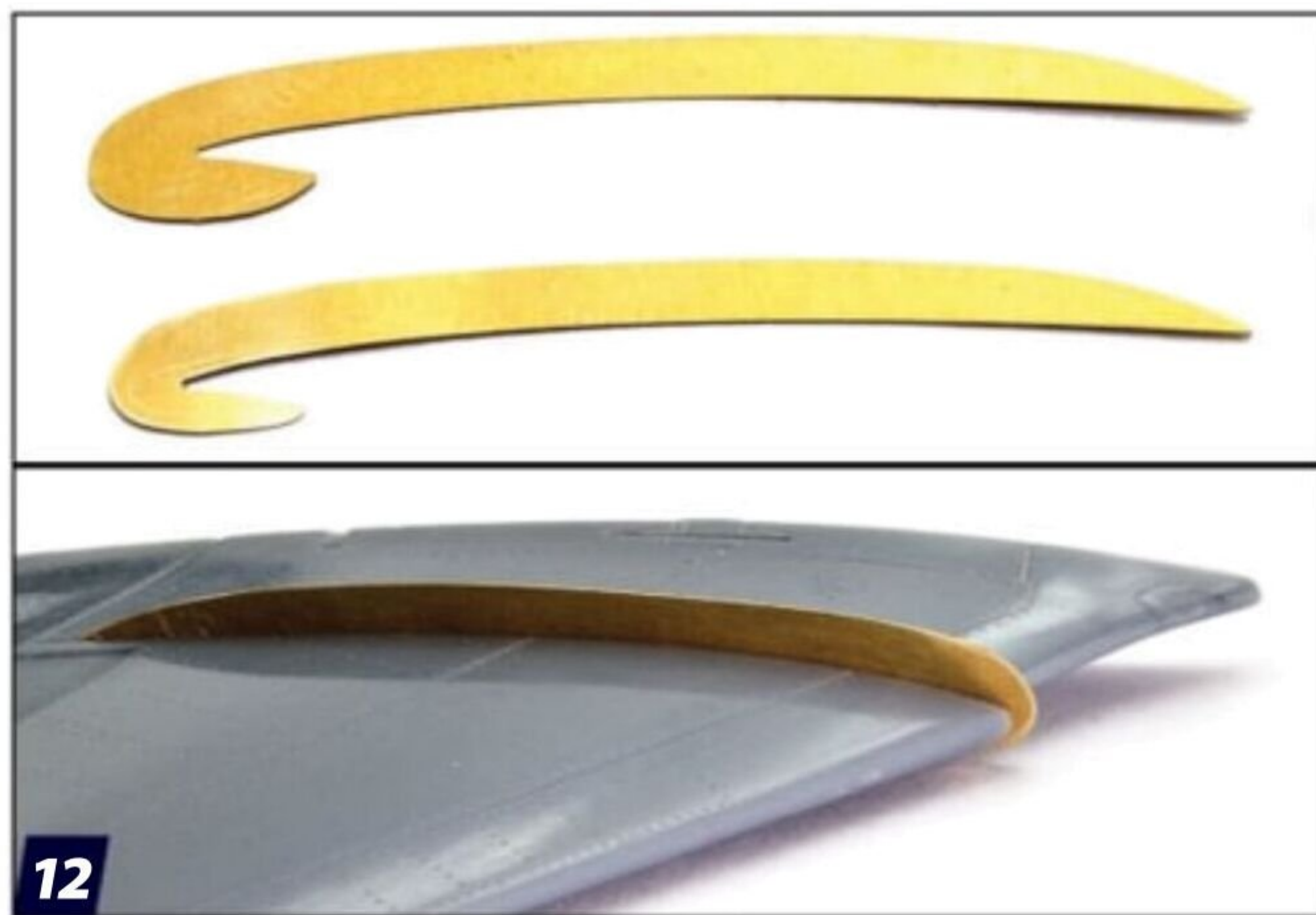
10

The fit of the kit's clear leading-edge landing light was poor, so I replaced it with a clear sprue. After filing a tip to fit, I glued it into the opening, cut the sprue off, and sanded and polished it to shape. It takes patience, but the result is a light that looks like it is part of the airframe.



11

The kit mistakenly has a matching landing light on the starboard wing. So, I used the same technique with gray sprue to fill the opening and blend it into the leading edge.



12

The kit's PE wing fences showed the wrong contour (top), so I reshaped the front and lower side with a diamond file.



13

I cut out the recessed flaperon/flaperette bays molded into the top of the wings and backed them with styrene sheet. The spoilers are supplied in PE, so I bulked them up with styrene sheet and details. The inside of the speed brakes received the same treatment.



14

I prepped the outer wings for painting with the pylon attached and the flaps tacked in place. After painting, I will reattach the flaps in a lowered position.



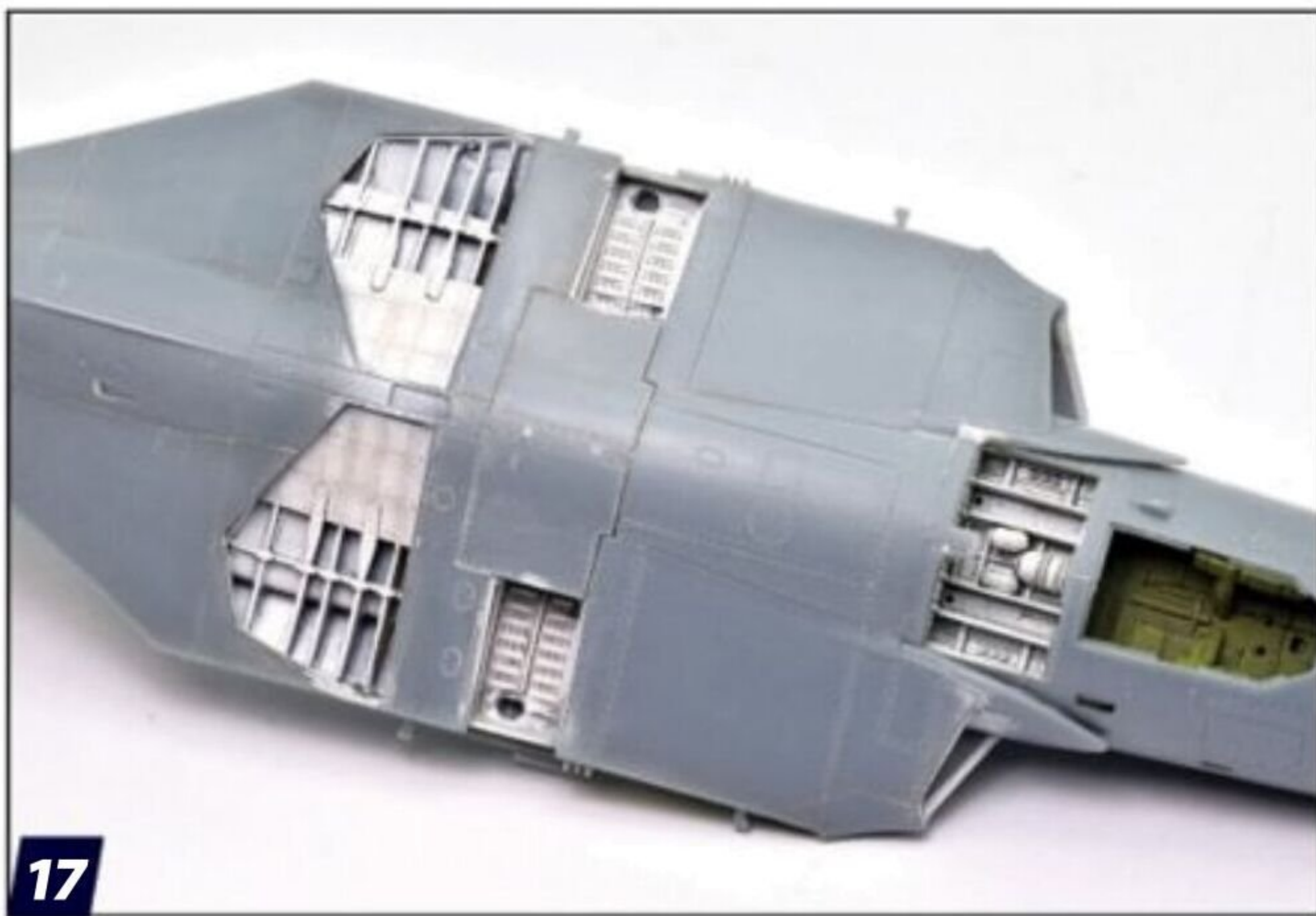
15

Test-fitting showed the best way to attach the single-part lower rear fuselage was supergluing it to one of the fuselage halves before installing the cockpit and nose gear bay.



16

Many hours of work and a significant amount of superglue were required to close the fuselage. This is, without a doubt, not a kit for beginners.



17

Contemporary photos show that Argentine Cougars main gear bays and speed-brake bays painted white while the nose bay was zinc chromate green with white inside the doors. The inside of the flaps and their bays as well as the inside of the speed brakes will be painted red.



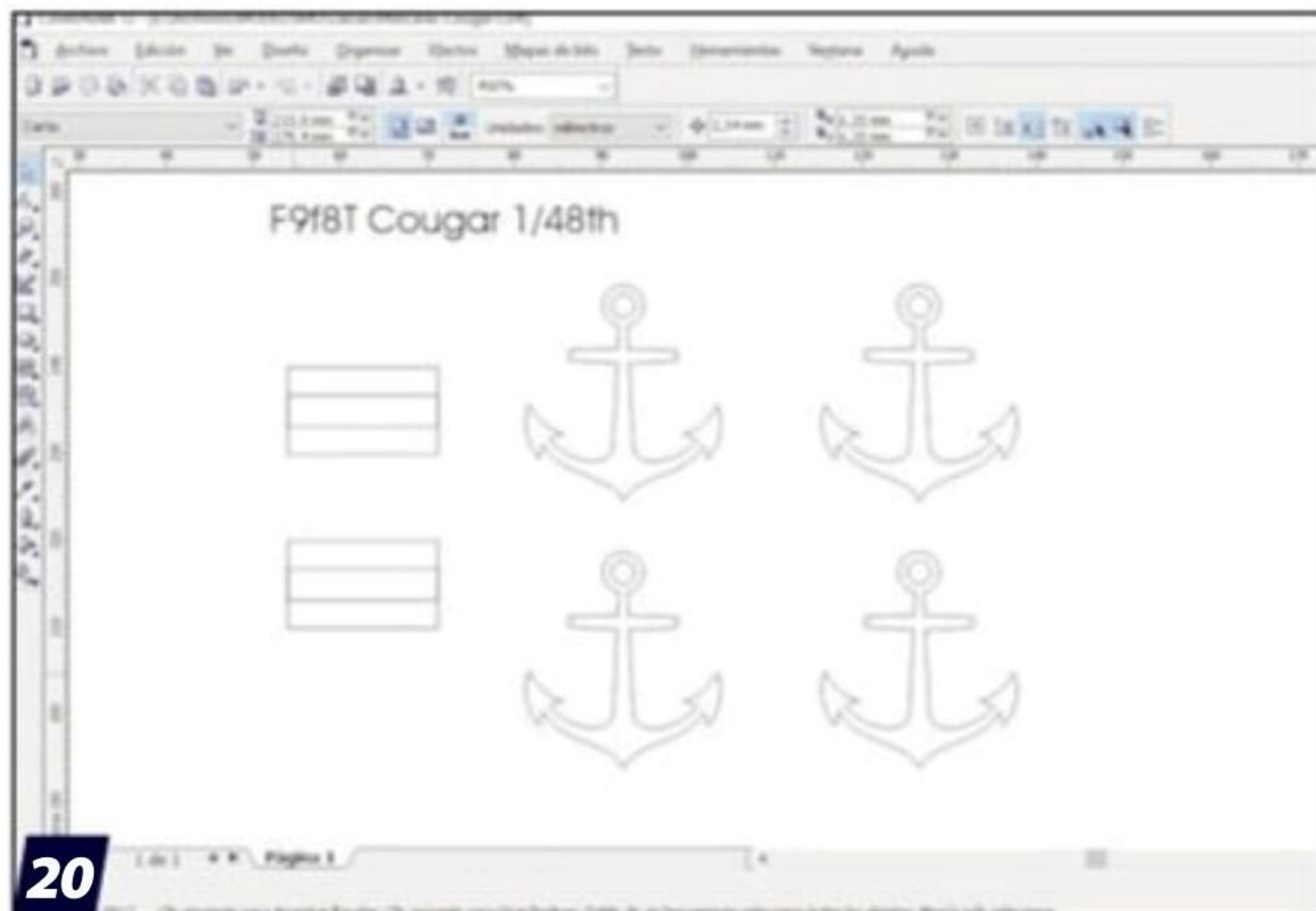
18

To remove the mold seam on the canopy's sliding section, I sanded it with progressively finer sanding pads from 3200- to 12000-grit. I finished by rubbing down the area with Tamiya polishing compound to restore the shine.



19

Argentine Cougars wore Gloss Sea Blue (FS15042) overall. I used a long out-of-production Humbrol color, but most major paint ranges have an equivalent shade.



20

The Argentine anchors supplied as decals in the kit don't even remotely resemble those on the real plane. Instead of using them, I designed my own using vector software and made adhesive masks.



21

I airbrushed the anchors in four positions with Tamiya White (No. X-2), making sure to mask the entire area around the marking to protect the sea blue from overspray. Once the masks were off, I painted the hole at the top by spraying sea blue through a circle template.



22

In preparation for decals and washes, I airbrushed the subassemblies with two coats of clear gloss acrylic. It is important to let this layer dry for a couple of days before doing anything else.



23

The aircraft is dark, so it made sense to me to apply a wash of light ochre tempera to highlight panel lines and rivets.



24

When the tempera dries, the excess can be easily removed with a slightly water-damp cloth.



25

I posed the wings folded with the flaps down and the flaperon/flaperette raised. Note that the anchor insignia repeats in the bay below the flaperon/flaperette.



26

To add the seals around the canopy panes, I applied thin strips of white decal for the straight sections and painted the curves at the corners freehand.



27

The kit provides no internal intake details. To cover the omission, I made FOD covers out of styrene sheet and painted them red — a nice spot of color on the plane. The "Remove Before Flight" tags here and elsewhere on the model were made from strips of thin paper.

FINAL THOUGHTS

NOT ONLY WAS KITTY HAWK'S 1/48 SCALE

F9F-8T ridiculously complicated to build, but it also had many inaccuracies and omissions, so producing a good replica with it was a real challenge. But it is a beautiful plane, and there are many options for a two-seat Cougar. I'm pleased with how it came out and it fills an important gap in my Argentine aviation collection. **FSM**



Print-quality photos **WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE**

Yes, it's possible.
Here's how you do it.

BY TIM KIDWELL



If you visit FineScale.com, you'll find our photo guidelines. In them, we steer potential contributors away from using smartphones to photograph their models and model projects for publication. Digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) cameras have a wider range of capabilities, readily shoot in RAW, and take better photos in general. However, proficiency becomes a challenge as does the expense. Believe it or not, not everyone owns a DSLR. However, just about everyone owns a smartphone.

Modelers use smartphones to snap photos of their models all the time. And for upload to Facebook or Instagram or to share via text or on online forums, these are often good enough. However, for print there are considerations like photo size, color correction, and depth of field. All of

these can be handled readily with a DSLR, but they take a little more doing with a cellphone. But you can do it. Let's begin with your equipment.

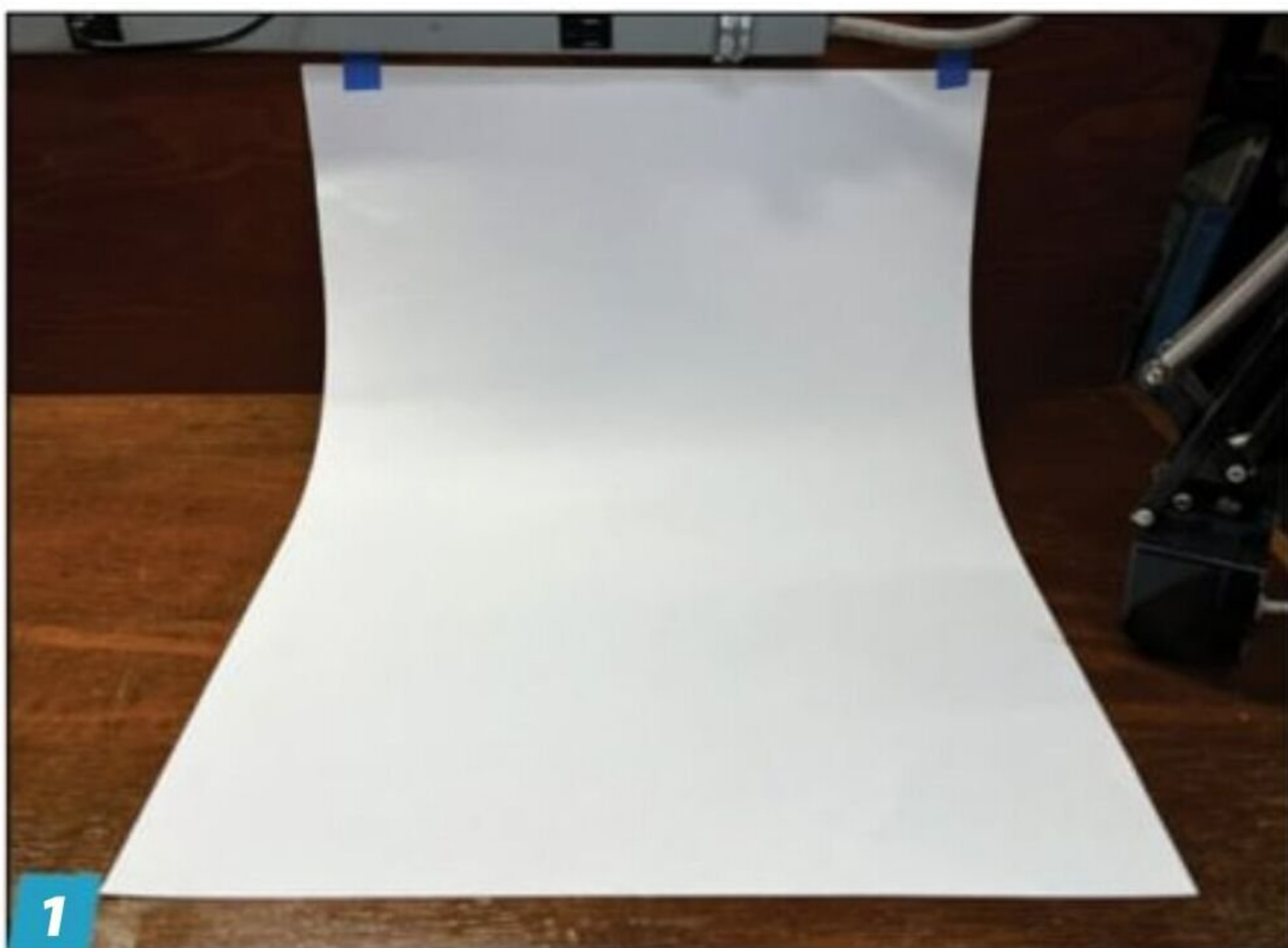
YOUR SMARTPHONE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Like the early point-and-shoot cameras, cellphone cameras are, first and foremost, about ease of use. All you need to do is point and click. Many of the features that you would find on a DSLR camera are stripped away and handled almost entirely by software. The size of a smartphone's lenses and digital sensor (what would have been film in older cameras) are restricted by the size of the phone. Manufacturers have made more and more sophisticated software to help compensate for the small physical parts as well as supply editing capabilities.

What you're looking for in a smartphone is the highest possible megapixels (sensor resolution). With most smartphones, including iPhones, 12MP sensors have become the standard. The iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 16 have a 48MP sensor for the main camera. With Android phones, you'll have to do some research, but companies have been pushing the limits on sensor capabilities. For instance, Samsung Galaxy S20 Ultra and later have a 108MP or larger main camera. Needless to say, if your camera doesn't have at least a 12MP sensor, it's probably time to upgrade.

BAD BACKGROUND, BAD PHOTO

Taking photos of your in-process progress is not the same as shooting beauty shots of your finished model. Still, you'll find certain considerations in common. The biggest is



1 Tim uses heavy drawing paper for process shots at his workbench. Having it as a station nearby allows him to set up his camera and move from his work mat to the sweep and back again without much fuss.



2 This is the sweep and lighting setup in the *FineScale Modeler* photo studio. You can find backdrop kits online that will allow you to have a wider, taller shooting area like this, but they require a lot of space.



3 A couple of PVC uprights, a stringer to run between them long enough to accommodate your roll of background paper, and two bar clamps to hold the rig upright and you have a portable photo booth perfect for beauty shots — or process shots if you have the room to leave it up.



4 A combination ring light and tripod with a cellphone mount. Search online for many similar options. Photo/ Ulanzi

the background. While there is something to be said for the candid photo of your hands working on your model with a self-healing work mat behind them, those work mats often come with a multitude of guidelines, paint smears, wash stains, and glue marks. That's saying nothing of the tools, sanding sticks, and other detritus cluttering the workbench.

While this might indicate a normal person's modeling home, in a photo, it can at best be distracting; at worst, the background noise can make the process you are trying to communicate indecipherable. Similarly, you want your model to be the focal point of beauty shots. Unless you're planning to use your model in an ad for granite countertop, skip the kitchen prep station.

The best background for your photos will be a smooth, neutral-colored, seamless

backdrop. You can readily find and buy rolls of photography background paper in various widths online. Even though you may want to consider something like that for your beauty shots, setting up a sweep on your workbench for process shots can be as simple as taping one end of a large sheet of 100# artist paper to the back of your workbench for a smooth, creaseless backdrop clear of any clutter, **1**.

When picking a color, white or cream work best. Light gray can also be appropriate. Avoid textured backgrounds, anything metallic or reflective, and strong colors like orange, yellow, blue, or red. All of these will make color correction much harder and cause considerable color shift of the subjects you're photographing. Black does a good job of silhouetting model figures in beauty shots, but it should not be

used as a background color in process shots — it's just too dark.

If you want to set up something a little bigger or more permanent, you can easily find background kits online ranging from tabletop options made for photographing jewelry that would be suitable for process shots to large, floor-standing setups that would work with all but the largest of scale models, **2**.

Alternatively, you can build a system yourself. It's easy and can be a lot of fun. We use a simple, portable system we made from ½-inch PVC conduit and elbows and a couple of bar clamps. Probably bigger than what you need in your workshop, but you get the basic idea, **3**.

A warning: Some of you will be tempted to use a bedsheet, pillowcase, or blanket as a backdrop. Do not do this. Believe me, it



LED panel lights can be more expensive than a single ring light, but buying a couple will provide you with a bit more flexibility in how you light your model, allowing you to adjust light placement and heat to suit your particular situation and needs. However, you could always ...



... go with simple brooder lamps for far less money. They don't look "pro," but they can definitely do the job. Photos/Ulanzi; Lowe's



A tripod will help you take steady, consistent photos shot after shot. Search online for one that suits your workshop best. Photo/Ulanzi

will look like you hung a bedsheet behind your model and then took a photograph, no matter how much you iron it. Leave the bedsheet on your bed.

LEARN TO USE LIGHTING

Just like you want to have good lighting in your workshop so you can see what you're building, so, too, do you want your photo area well lit. Even though you may have substantial light in your workshop, it's probably a good idea to have lights specific for your photos.

One easy route you can take to provide better lighting is to pick up a small ring light. Manufacturers make ring lights specifically for use with cellphones, and for

less than \$60, you can have ring light with a cellphone mount and tripod that will sit comfortably on your workbench, **4**.

Certainly, you can always decide to go high-end and purchase LED panel lights and small tripods that you can adjust for light temp and color, **5**. Moving toward the other end of the spectrum, you could go old-school and get a couple of brooder lamps from your local hardware or farm-supply store and equip it with fluorescent or LED bulbs, **6**. If using multiple light sources, make sure the bulbs are the same in each lamp or the lights are set to the same settings. If they are different, color correction will be more difficult.

If using an LED light with adjustable color and brightness, choose settings between 5000K and 6000K (daylight has a color temperature of 5500K). If using bulbs, 200 to 300 watts or equivalent should work under most conditions. Just make sure they are daylight balanced.

STEADY, NOW

For sure, the software aboard your smartphone can do a lot to eliminate movement, but you want the sharpest images possible when taking photos of your models. Do yourself a favor and invest in a tripod. If you purchased a ring light designed specifically for use with your phone, there's a good chance it has a mount built in. If not, you can find cellphone tripods from \$15 to \$150 with a quick internet search.

Look for a tripod that can easily fit in your space and comes with a mount specific for cellphones. If you think you'll have to stand your phone on the floor, you'll want either a telescoping central pole or extendable legs that will allow you to pick the perfect height. If you're planning to

have your tripod on your workbench, then you can go with a more compact tripod meant for tabletop shooting, **7**.

DIVE DEEP INTO SETTINGS

Become versed with your cellphone camera settings. When you open your camera app, you will notice numerous options, like turning on the flash, live photos, photo ratios, contrast, a timer, and more. Get to know what these do for you and how they change the appearance of your photos. Here are three settings to consider at the outset:

1. Check if your cellphone supports RAW files. The latest phones typically do. If yours doesn't, your next best option is to use HEIF/HEIC. Despite being relatively new and developed for better compression and better fidelity than JPEG or PNG files, HEIF/HEIC files can be exported and converted by most photo software. As a last resort, JPEG and PNG files can be used, but they suffer from poorer image quality and less color information than the other options. On the upside, JPEG and PNG are widely supported.

To adjust photo format on an iPhone: Open Settings>Camera>Formats and then choose the one you want. On an Android, open your camera app, tap the gear icon, locate the options for image quality or format, and choose the preferred format.

2. Learn to change exposure manually. Sometimes, no matter how well you set up your lights, something might be off. On an iPhone, tap the screen to focus. You'll see a square appear with a sun next to it. Drag your finger up and down on the screen and you'll be able to adjust the exposure, brightening or darkening the photo. The process is similar on Android phones — tap and hold on the screen until an adjustment



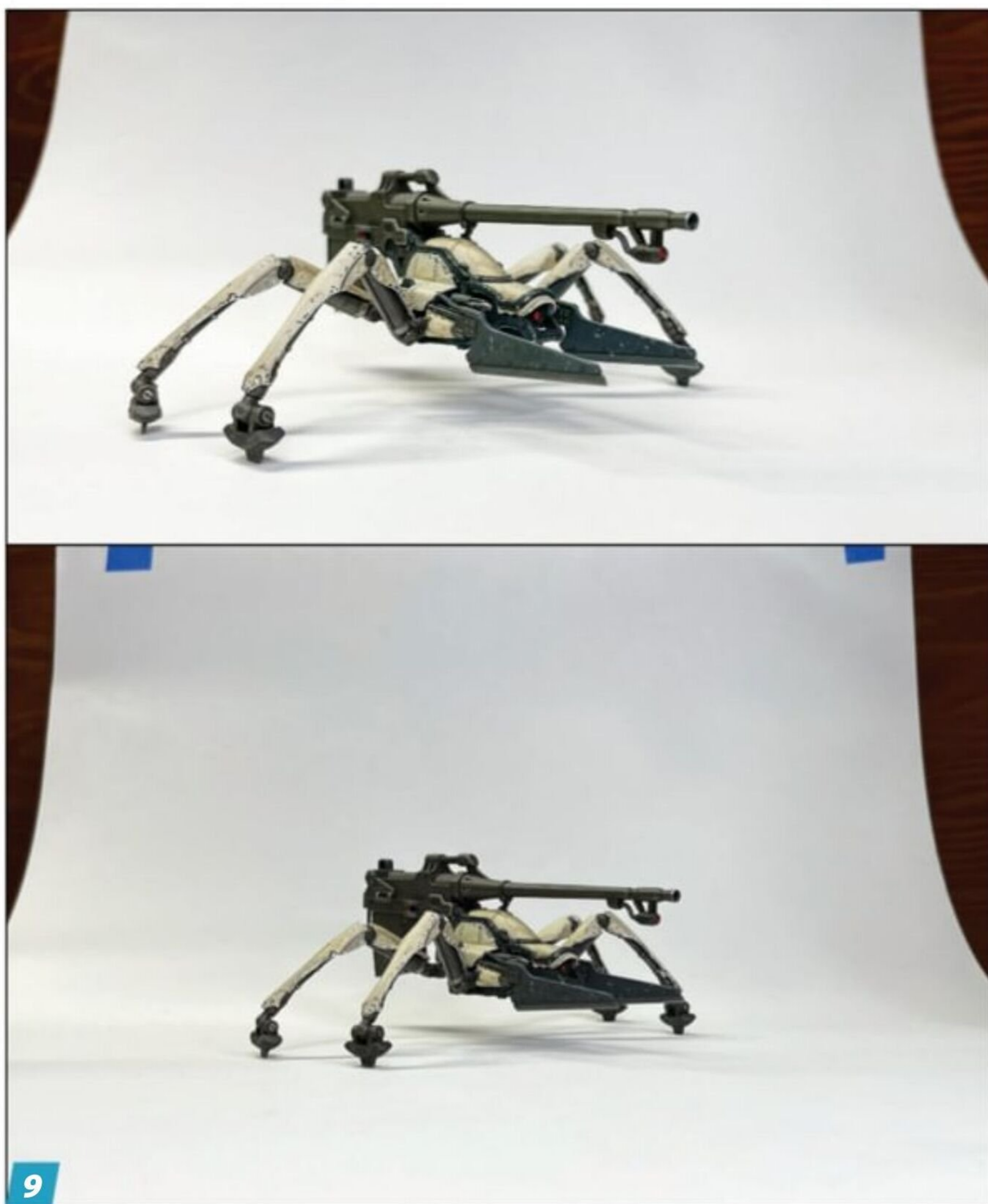
Rather than adjusting exposure after you've snapped your photo, you can adjust it while taking the picture. On an iPhone, the slider appears next to the focus box, and you can drag it up or down and see the change.

bar with a sun icon appears and use the slider to adjust brightness, **8**.

3. Use your camera timer. It can be difficult to shoot photos by yourself. Sometimes you'll need to have both hands in the frame to demonstrate a process, or it's just not feasible to click the shutter at the same time as you hold the part with the other hand without getting a blurry shot. Whatever the reason, get familiar with the camera timer. It allows you to choose a delay — for example 3 or 10 seconds — and then position yourself in frame before snapping the photo.

SHARP SHOTS

When taking beauty shots, you want your whole model in focus. For this purpose, do not use Portrait mode. This forces a shallow depth of field and blurs the background, which will often blur the part of your model furthest from the lens. Instead, use your normal camera mode and ease away from your model. Closer does not mean in focus or more detail!



In the top image, you can see the photo gets soft (out of focus) toward the back end of the cannon and the far rear leg. And even the cannon muzzle is soft. This is because the cellphone is too close with poor depth of field. In the bottom image, after moving back, more of the model is sharp, and even though it's smaller, it can be enlarged because it is in focus.

Divide the model into thirds visually and pick the point between the first and second third. Use that as your focal point and make slight adjustments from side to side, up and down, or back to bring as much of the model into focus as you can, **9**.

Sometimes, the model is so large or complex that getting everything in focus in a $\frac{3}{4}$ shot is not feasible — this often happens with long models like large-scale ships and trucks with trailers. At that point, look for interesting ways to pose the model to help make the required depth of field shallower or an angle that allows you to get most of the model in focus, typically with more sharpness nearer the lens.

FINAL THOUGHTS

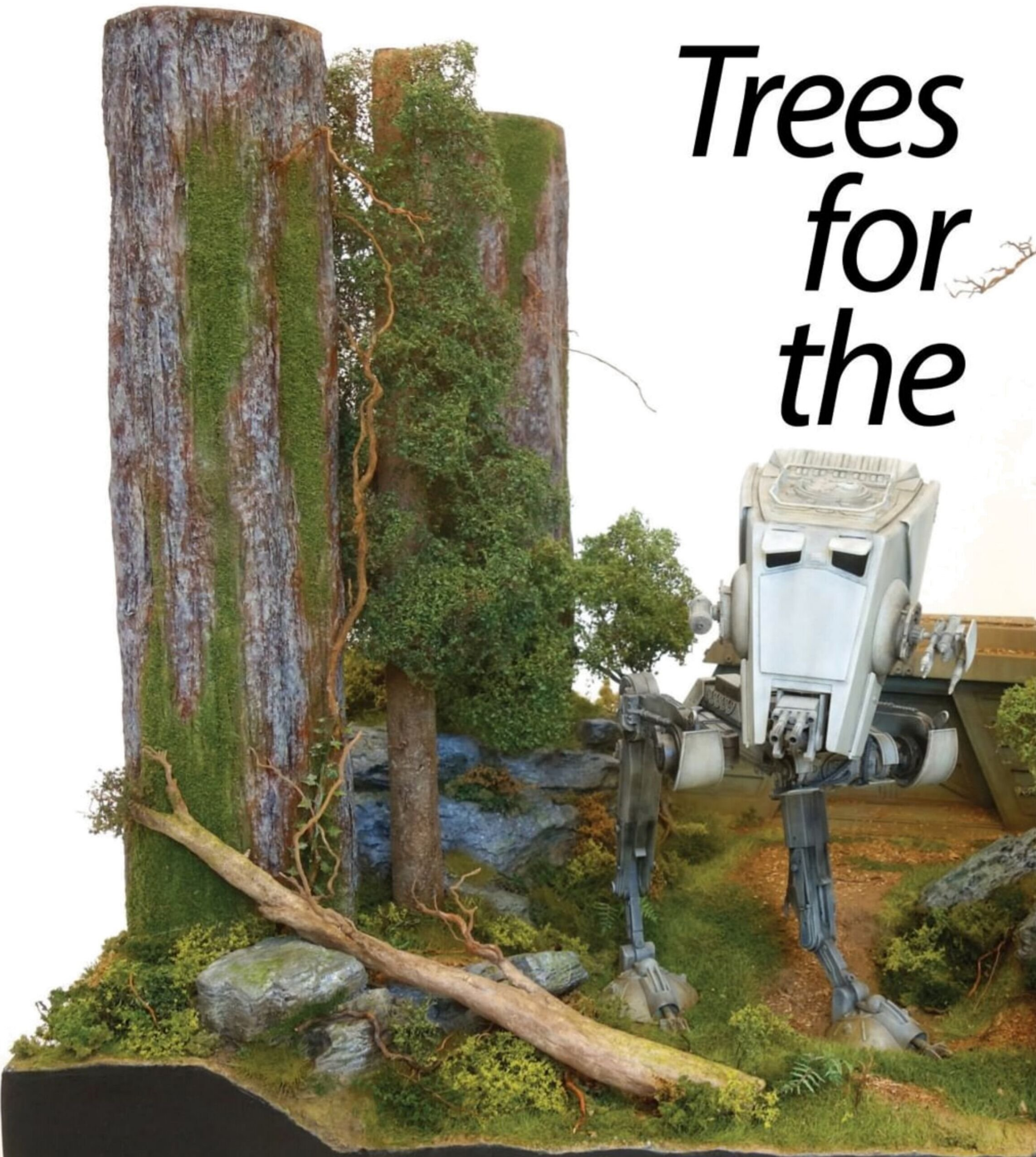
Yes, it is possible to take print-quality photos with your cellphone (most of the photos for this story were taken on my

iPhone 13), but it takes practice and learning the ins and outs of your particular phone. Remember, when taking process shots, you can leave your phone in one spot at a 45-degree angle to where you'll be shooting, move your hands into the frame, snap the photo, and get back to work.

Take photos from low, mid, and high angles for beauty shots, and always take more than one photo (burst mode helps with this) from a particular angle to make sure you get one that is in focus and usable.

Lastly, if you're shooting for yourself, experiment with editing tools to alter colors, framing, and the like. However, if you're shooting for publication, do not alter the original files. Provide them, along with a photo of a gray card taken in the lighting you used for the photos, to the publication unedited. It will handle color corrections and any photo editing on its end. **FSM**

Trees for the



ENDOR CAT AND MICE
STAR WARS
EPISODE VI
RETURN OF THE JEDI

FOREST MOON

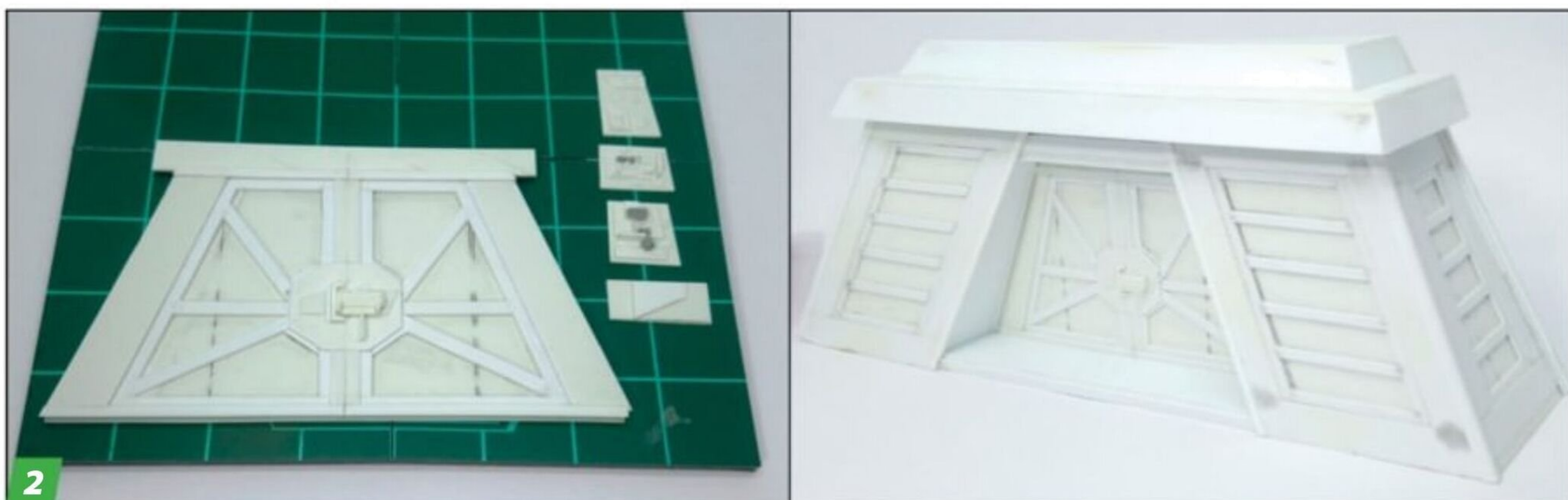
Vegetation and an Endor base for a 1/48 scale AT-ST

BY KOSTAS GEORGIU

In the January/February 2025 *FSM*, I detailed and weathered a Bandai 1/48 scale AT-ST. My plan then was to place it in a scene from the third original *Star Wars* movie, *Return of the Jedi*, with Rebel soldiers drawing an Imperial Scout Walker away from the bunker housing the shield controls. The soldiers were kitbashed from existing figures, but I had to scratchbuild everything else.



Referring to photos, I built the Imperial bunker entrance with Evergreen styrene, layering sheet and strip to replicate details from the movie.



For the blast doors, I built the basic shape and I added a few details for interest. On the right side of the entrance, there were control panels and boxes that I built with bits of styrene and parts from a Dragon 1/700 scale destroyer on styrene sheet.



After adding details to the roof and priming the bunker entrance, I airbrushed it with AK Interactive Real Colors FS35109 Aggressor Blue (No. RC234). I faded the color with a thin mix of AK Real Colors Flat White (No. RC004) and aggressor blue on panel centers. A light dusting of the lower surfaces with thin AK Real Colors Egyptian Desert Sand (No. RC101) started the weathering.



To dirty things up more, I brushed mineral spirits onto every surface and applied raw umber artist oil, blending it and creating streaks on vertical areas. This was repeated in multiple layers until I was satisfied with the results. AK Enamel Track Wash (No. AK083) enhanced the stains and streaks and emphasized details and I applied colors from AK Dust & Dirt Deposits Set (No. AK4060) for accumulated dust on horizontal surfaces.



5



6

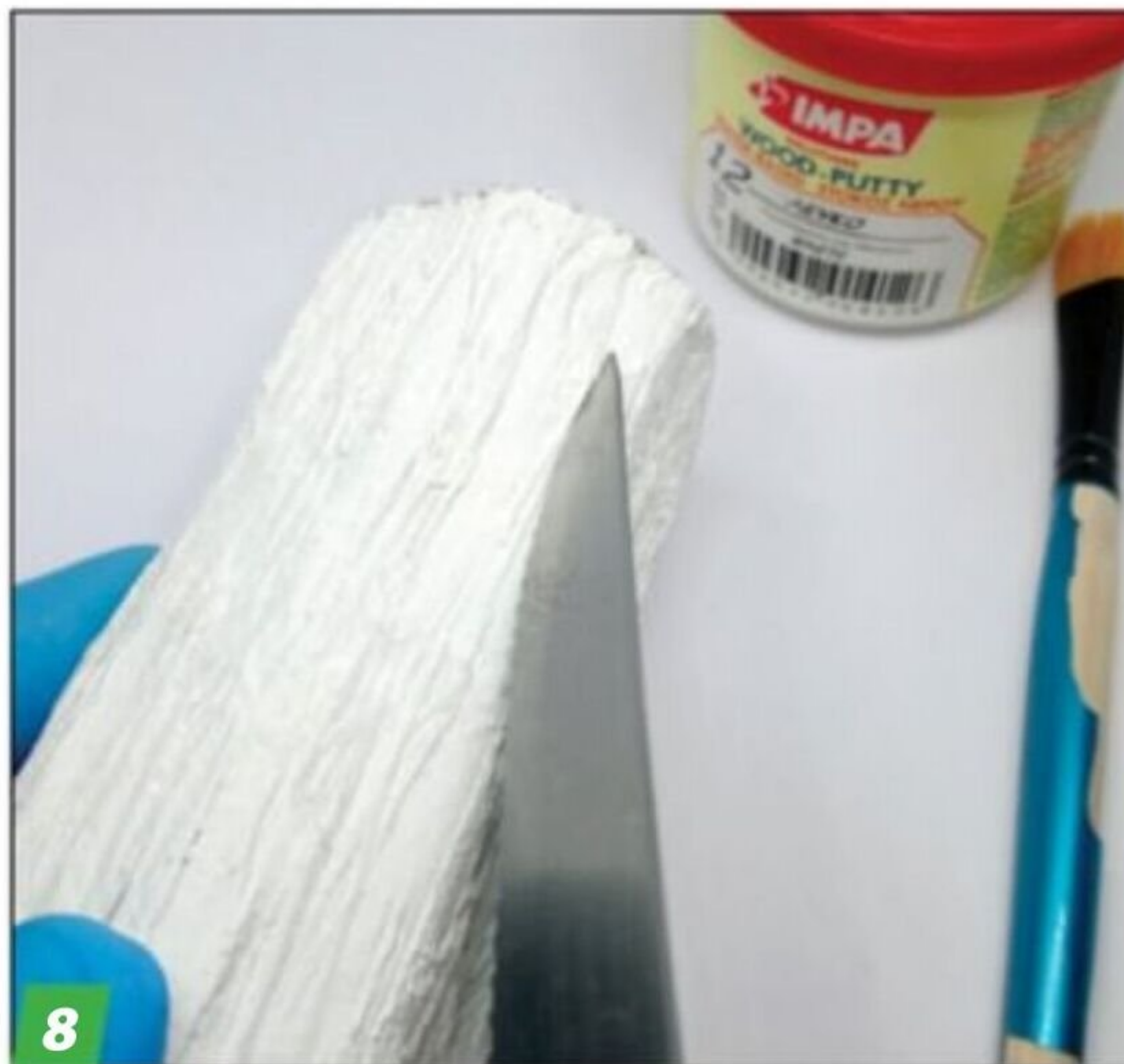
To make the core of the giant sequoia trees, I glued strips of balsa wood along their edges. Using a razor, I tapered them narrower toward the top and cut out irregular sections along the length for a natural trunk.

For an initial layer of bark, I applied strips of newspaper soaked in white glue thinned with water. This ensured the trunks were lightweight and durable. I left them to dry thoroughly.



7

The next layer was strips of paper towel also soaked with thinned white glue. This layer was soft enough that I could form vertical wrinkles imitating bark texture.



8

When the glue-soaked paper towel layer was dry, I applied a thin layer of wood putty and formed vertical striations in the still-wet putty with a knife.



9

To enhance the bark, using a craft knife, I carved more vertical lines into the putty after it dried.



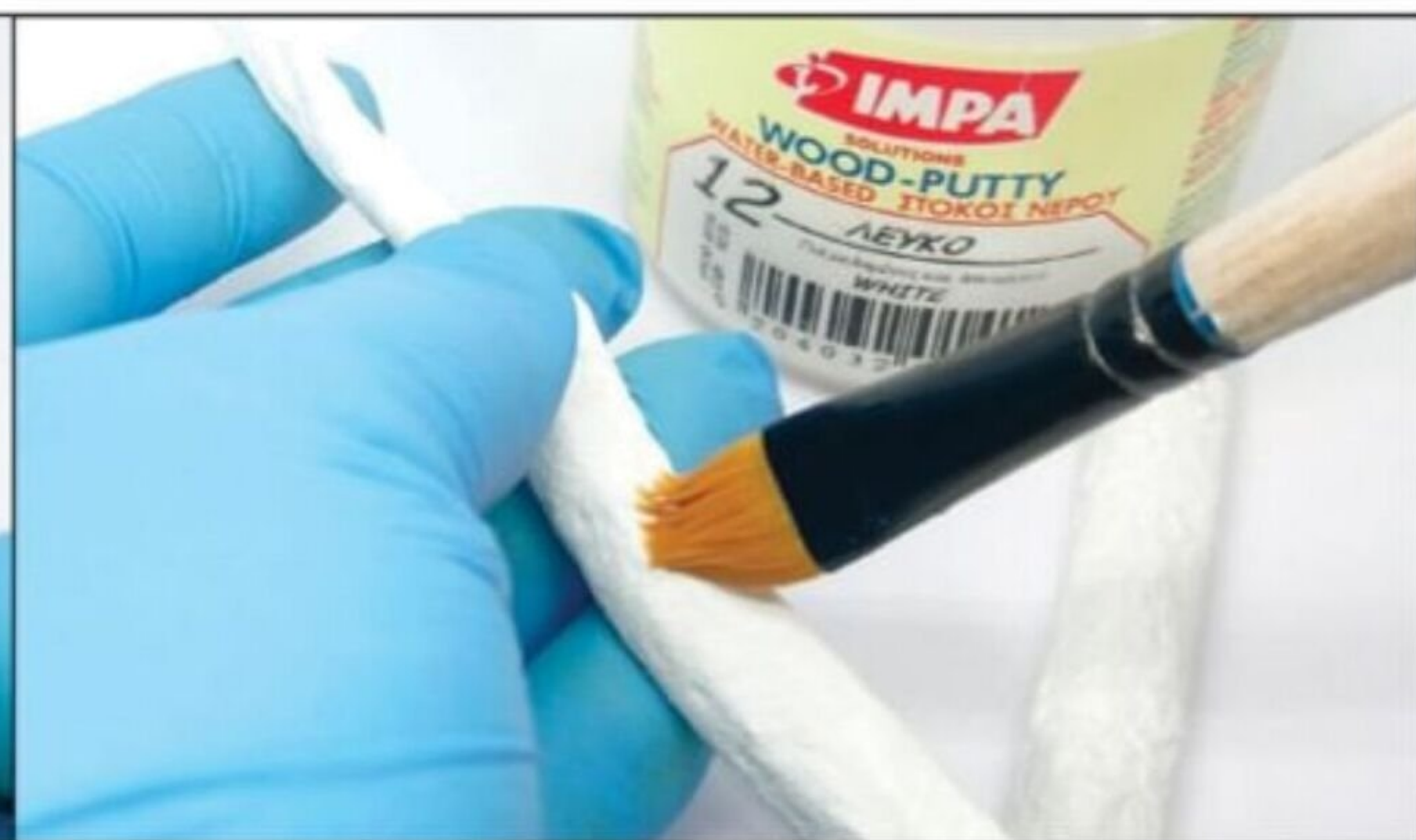
10



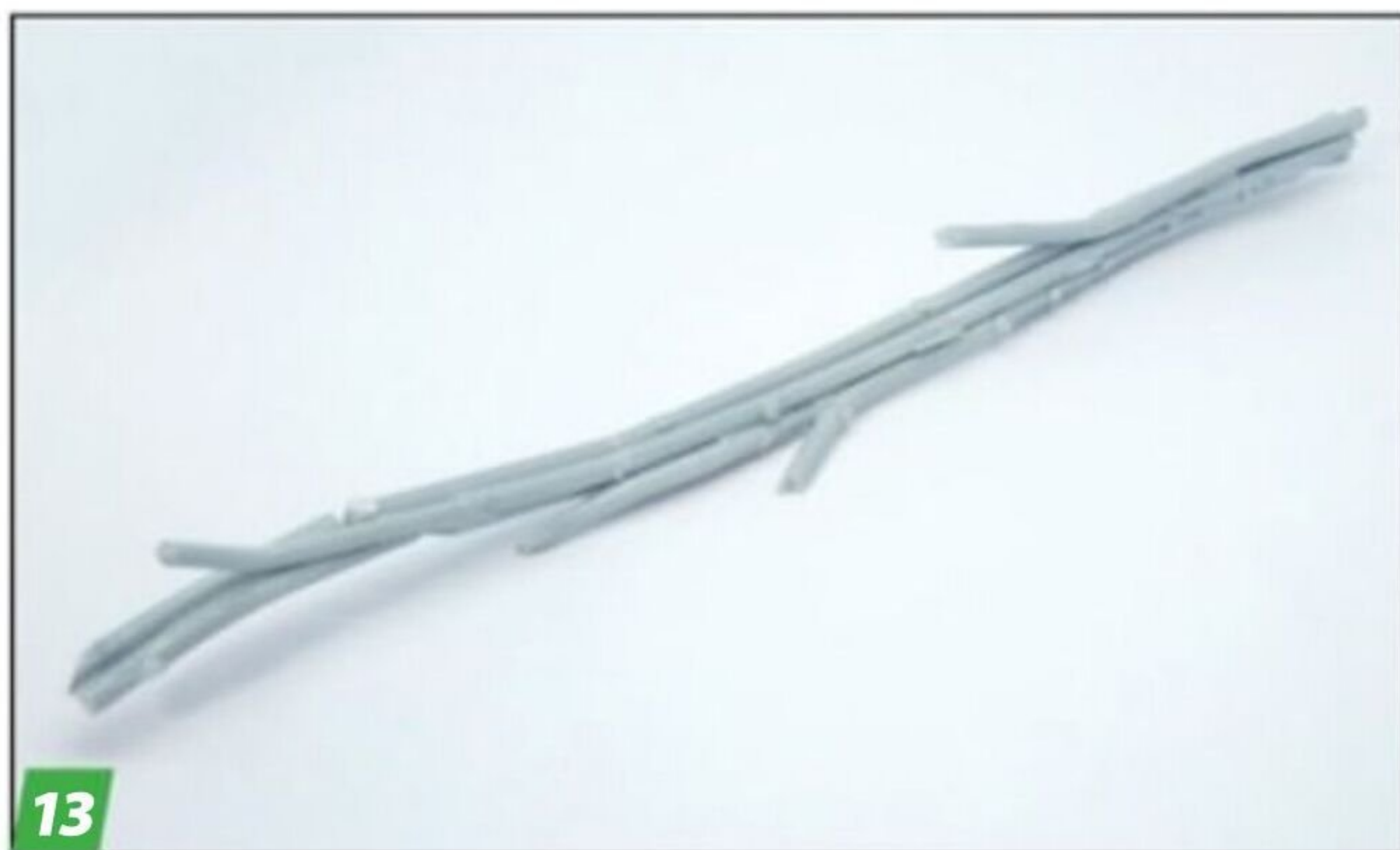
To vary the texture on the trunks, I brushed on a little AK Terrains Light Earth Acrylic paste (No. AK8021). The paper had sagged in places because of the moisture of previous steps creating interesting holes and crevices.



I sanded a square balsa strip round for the trunk of a smaller conifer. A small fallen trunk was made the same way.



I added the first layer of texture to the conifer and fallen log with toilet paper worked over the surfaces with thin white glue. After it dried, I stippled on wood putty to build up the texture.



The fallen tree in the foreground was made using scrap sprue from the AT-ST. After applying glue to join them, I bent and formed the softened plastic for a natural appearance.

After covering the styrene structure with glue soaked toilet paper followed by stippled-on wood putty, I drilled small holes to accept tree roots for branches.



I scribed the inside of a piece of thin cardboard multiple times so I could easily bend it into a tube. With the ends torn jagged, I rolled it to look like a rotten hollow log. I covered it with glue-soaked toilet paper followed by a layer of AK Light & Dry Crackle Effects (No. AK8033) that was carved with a knife while it was still wet.



I painted all the fallen trees the same way, starting with a base-coat mix of Tamiya J.A. Grey (No. XF-14) and Red Brown (No. XF-64). Next, I applied AK Real Colors S.C.C. 2 Brown (No. RC035) and bursts of Real Colors FS34151 Light Green (No. RC028) for moss.



For the two smaller fallen trees, I flowed on a filter of tan enamel and a wash of thin raw umber artist oils. When everything dried, I added spots of Naples yellow oil paint and blended them all with thinner.



To differentiate the big hollow log, I applied washes of burnt sienna, burnt umber, raw umber, and green artist oils. This made the wood look rotten and wet in places and reddish in others producing a realistic, rotting trunk.



On a base made from .5mm thick foamboard, I attached chunks of broken polystyrene foam with white glue to layout the basic shapes and levels of the scenery. Newspaper soaked in thin white glue was draped over the foam to smooth the groundwork and protect it from solvents used to paint and weather the base.



Chunks of tree bark made realistic scale rocks. After placing them, I blended bark into the groundwork with glue-soaked toilet paper that filled gaps. Wood putty applied over the paper filled small gaps and started the ground texture.



As final layer for the groundwork, I brushed on AK Terrains Light Earth (No. AK8021), an acrylic paste with small particles for texture. After breaking up some leftover plaster, I sprinkled the resulting "stones" over empty spots and set them with thin white glue mixed with a couple of drops of dish soap to break the surface tension. Larger chunks were blended with wood putty.



22 I glued the large trees to the base and sprayed everything with automotive primer. This stuff is a bit thicker than the primer I typically use for models, but that was advantageous because it filled minor gaps and reinforced all the elements.



23 I sealed the pine bark rocks with wood putty before painting them with AK Real Colors Cream White (No. RC002) and airbrushing a light coat of S.C.C. 2 Brown over the dirt and the trunks.



24 To color the ground, I applied Humbrol Ivory (No. 41), Khaki Drill (No. 72), and Natural Wood (No. 110) enamels blending them wet-on-wet with thinner. Titanium white artist oil dry-brushed straight from the tube followed by earth-colored washes colored the rocks.



25 I brushed burnt umber oil paint into the cracks and crevices on the trunks to create shadows and contrast.



26 After deciding where to add grass and other vegetation, I airbrushed thin AK Light Green to fill any voids under the foliage to come.



27 I attached the bunker entrance to the base using AK Light Earth paste. Painting the area around it with the colors used elsewhere on the base blended it into the groundwork.



28 A mixture of Model Scene 4.5mm Spring (No. 004-01) and Early Summer flock (No. 004-03) was sprinkled over white glue on select areas with a static-grass applicator. Over it, I scattered a mixture of various fine turf colors from Woodland Scenics to add volume.

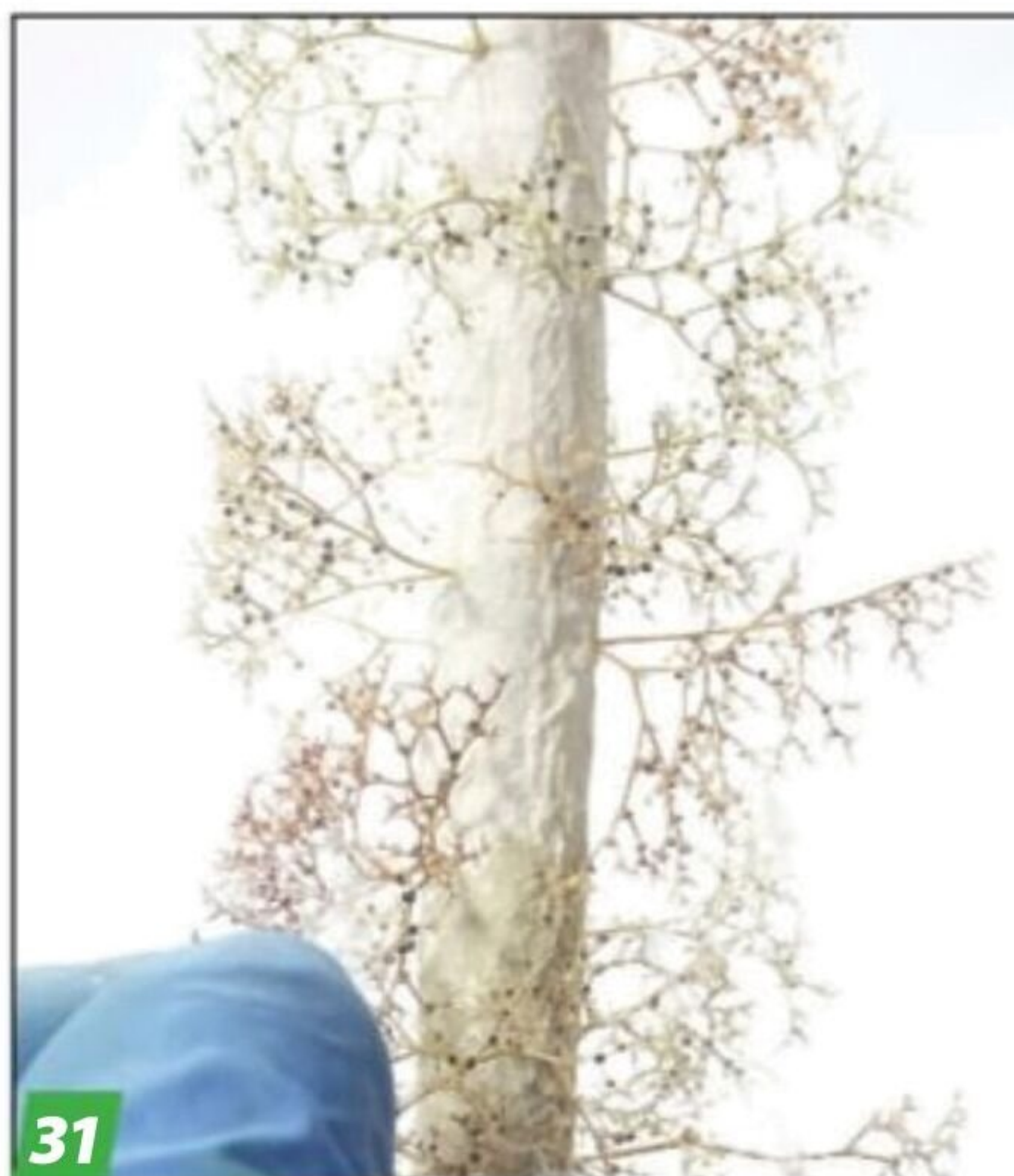


29 I used bushes from several companies, including Ammo, Woodland Scenics, and Heki, in addition to making some from twine and Woodland Scenics Fine Turf painted green. Roots from trees were used to simulate dead branches, and I ran real leaves collected from a nearby park through a kitchen blender to cover several spots with fallen leaves.

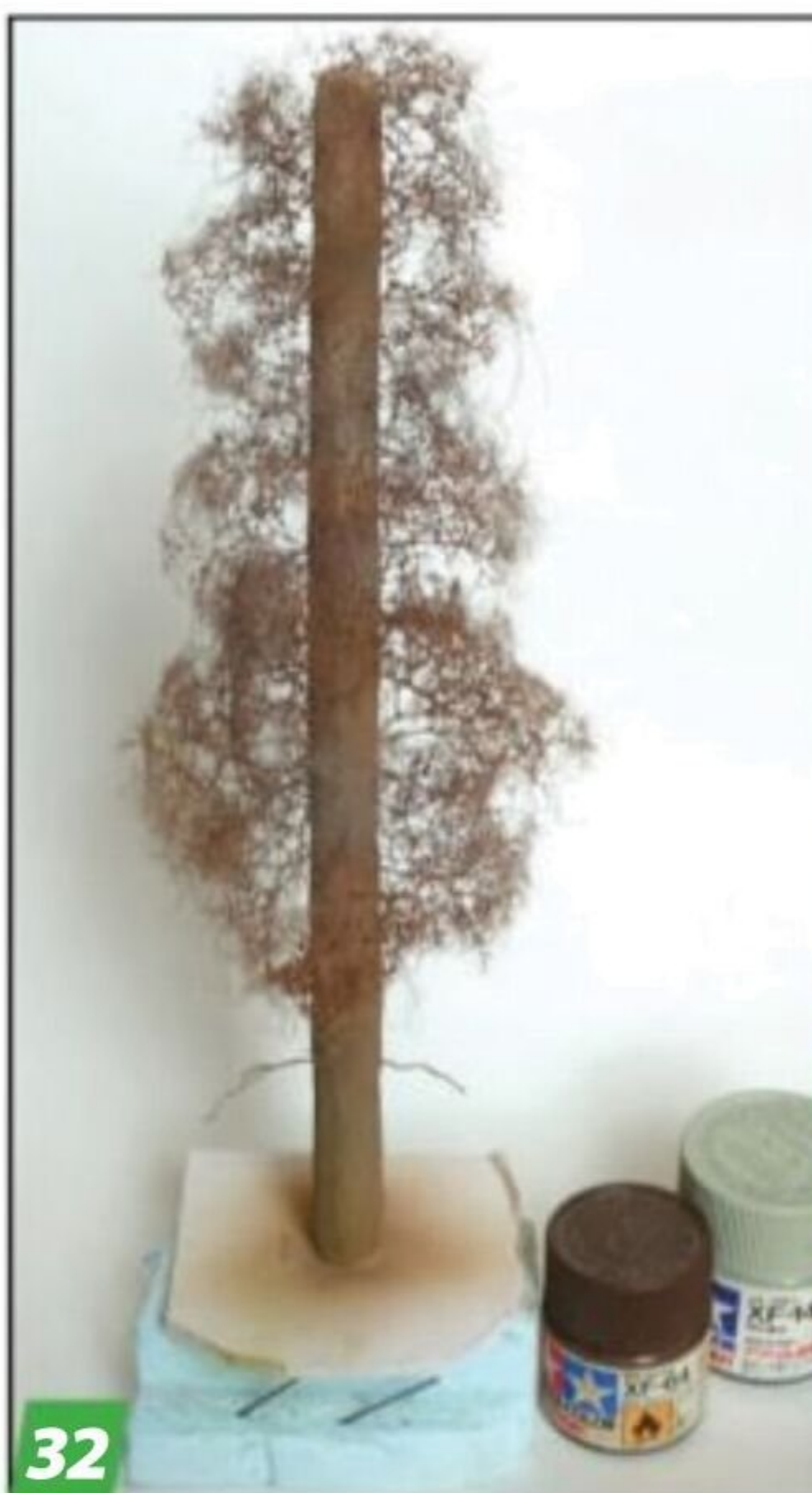




The ivy and the ferns are Model Scene paper products. Before adding them, I used yellow and green watercolor pencils on the leaves to make them look more realistic. The same mixture of Woodland Scenics Fine Turf used on the ground was applied to the trunks for moss.



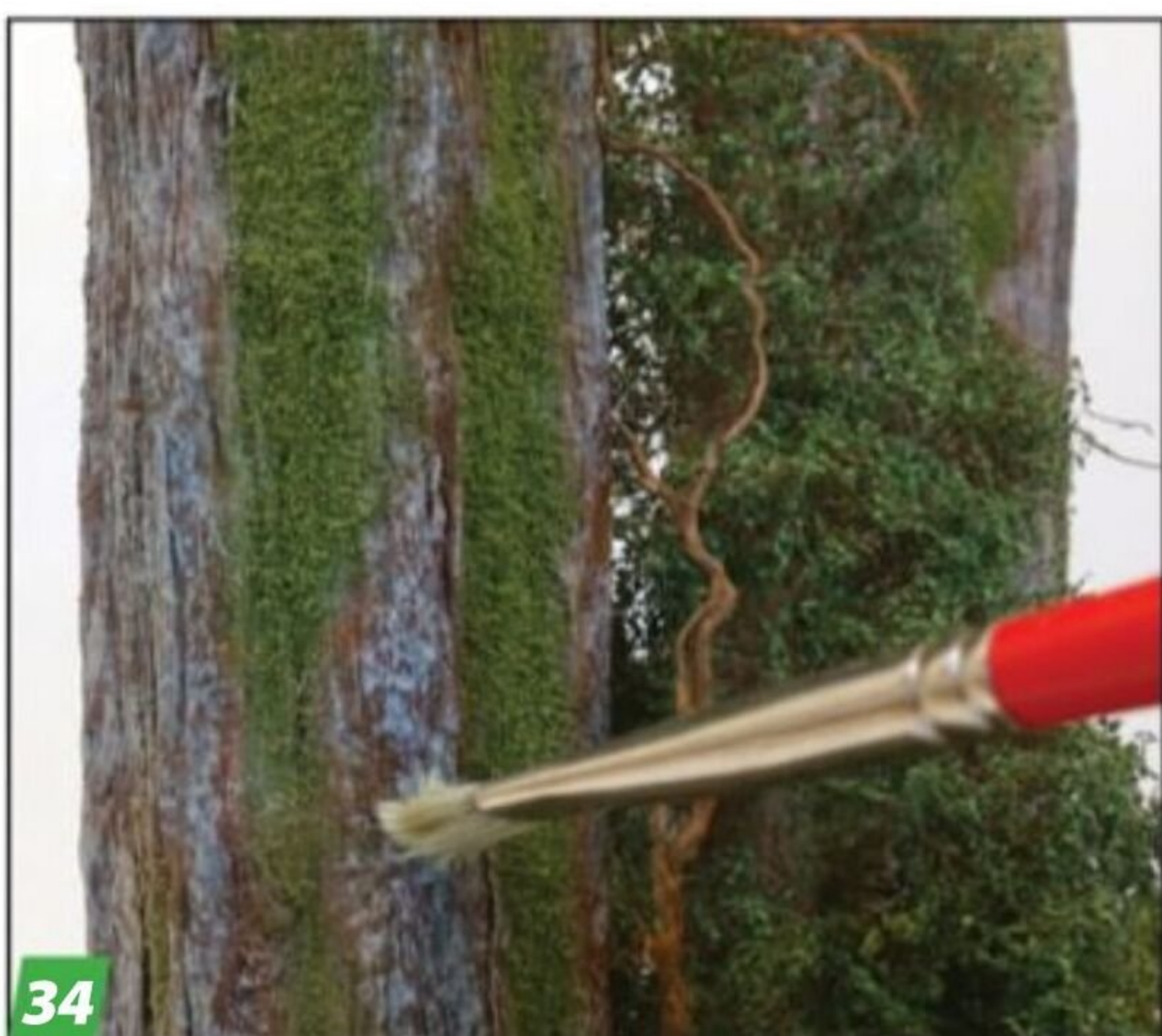
I drilled holes in the previously shaped conifer trunk and superglued in pieces of seafoam for branches. Smaller trees were made using seafoam branches with wood putty on the lower parts for texture. Fine synthetic fibers secured with hairspray formed smaller branches.



Small trees were painted with Tamiya Red Brown and J.A. Grey and AK S.C.C 2 Brown, before I coated them with spray adhesive and added Noch leaves. Varying the color from tree to tree added realism.



I brushed AK Slimy Grime Dark (No. AK026) on the trunks and the rocks to simulate moisture and used an airbrush to hit hard-to-reach spots.



I thought the big sequoias lacked life, so I applied dark gray, yellow, and white acrylics to the bare bark using a flat brush and vertical strokes. I started with the darkest shade and worked progressively lighter.

FINAL THOUGHTS

ADDING THE AT-ST and the figures finished the scene. The big challenge for this diorama was the height differences between the trees, the AT-ST, and the figures. The scene needed a balanced design to exploit these differences and emphasize the giant trees and imposing Imperial walker compared to the figures. I wanted viewers to experience the same sense of scale they did watching the scene in *Return of the Jedi*. **FSM**



PAUL JOHNSTON
ADELL, WISCONSIN

This Hasegawa 1/72 scale P-47D Razorback was parked on Paul Johnston's "shelf of doom" for 10 years because he was intimidated by the tail decals. He decided to go for it, and it turned out wonderfully!

DREW BENDLER
HARTLAND, WISCONSIN

Drew Bendler built his Trumpeter 1/700 HMS *Renown* out of the box, adding only rigging and the anchor chains. He hand-painted and airbrushed the camouflage scheme with Scalecolor paints.



**RICK "DOC" BUIKEMA
CLINTON, IOWA**

Known for his demolition-derby builds, Rick "Doc" Buikema took his scratch-bash skills and built a post-apocalyptic "survival vehicle." Basically built from his spares box from a range of kits, the 1/25 scale tracked marauder has working lights and wears spray-paint camouflage.



◀ **ROB SCHMIDT
BLUEGRASS, IOWA**

It's always good to see a Galaxie Ltd. resin kit. Here, Rob Schmidt built a 1/25 scale 1948 Chevrolet Aerosedan, added a visor from an AMT 1950 Chevy pickup, and that delicious factory-fresh finish is ScaleFinishes enamels.



▼ **JOHN ENG
APPLETON, WISCONSIN**

This massive Hellboy bust from Mark Warthing was painted by John Eng. He primed and airbrushed layers of acrylic colors. With the base down, John came back with artist oils to fine-tune his half-demon superhero.



**KYLE HARRIS
HOBART, INDIANA**

A Zaku Warrior's day just turned ugly as he rides flaming debris back into Earth's atmosphere in Kyle's exciting diorama. After removing some of the armor from a Bandai 1/100 scale Gundam mobile fighting suit and building up the exposed frame underneath, he painted it with lacquers. All of the base is scratchbuilt.


**► JOHN JEFFRIES
FREEPORT, NEW YORK**

Modeling an English archer in the service of Sir John Hawkwood in 14th century Italy, John painted a 100mm Dolman figure with Scale 75 Scalecolor tube acrylics.

VICTORIA C. GEIS

SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA

Victoria painted a 50mm Susan Pevensie from *The Chronicles of Narnia* with Vallejo acrylics, layers of shading and highlights. Dark washes and mud finished the arrow-slinging heroine with an epoxy putty base, real dirt, and a tree made from a real root.



▼ TOM BORRELI

ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

You can hear the opening of Iron Maiden's "The Trooper" looking at Tom's beautifully finished model of Eddie, the band's mascot. He painted the 75mm Michael Kontrakos figure and base with acrylics and some artist oils for the wood on the flagstaff. "You'll take my life, but I'll take yours, too!"



▲ TATIANA GAPACHENKO

LONDON, ENGLAND

Tatiana hand-painted the designs on a Tsarsoldiers 54mm Joan of Arc banner and horse tackle. The entire figure was finished with acrylics. **FSM**

Make your **SHIP'S GR**



**WANT MORE
STORIES LIKE
THIS?**

FOLLOW THIS

QR CODE to
get the new

*FSM Ship
Modelers'*

Handbook and discover the
secrets of modeling masters.



Don't let an ill-
made hatch be
the downfall of
a first-rate
model

BY TONI LEVINE

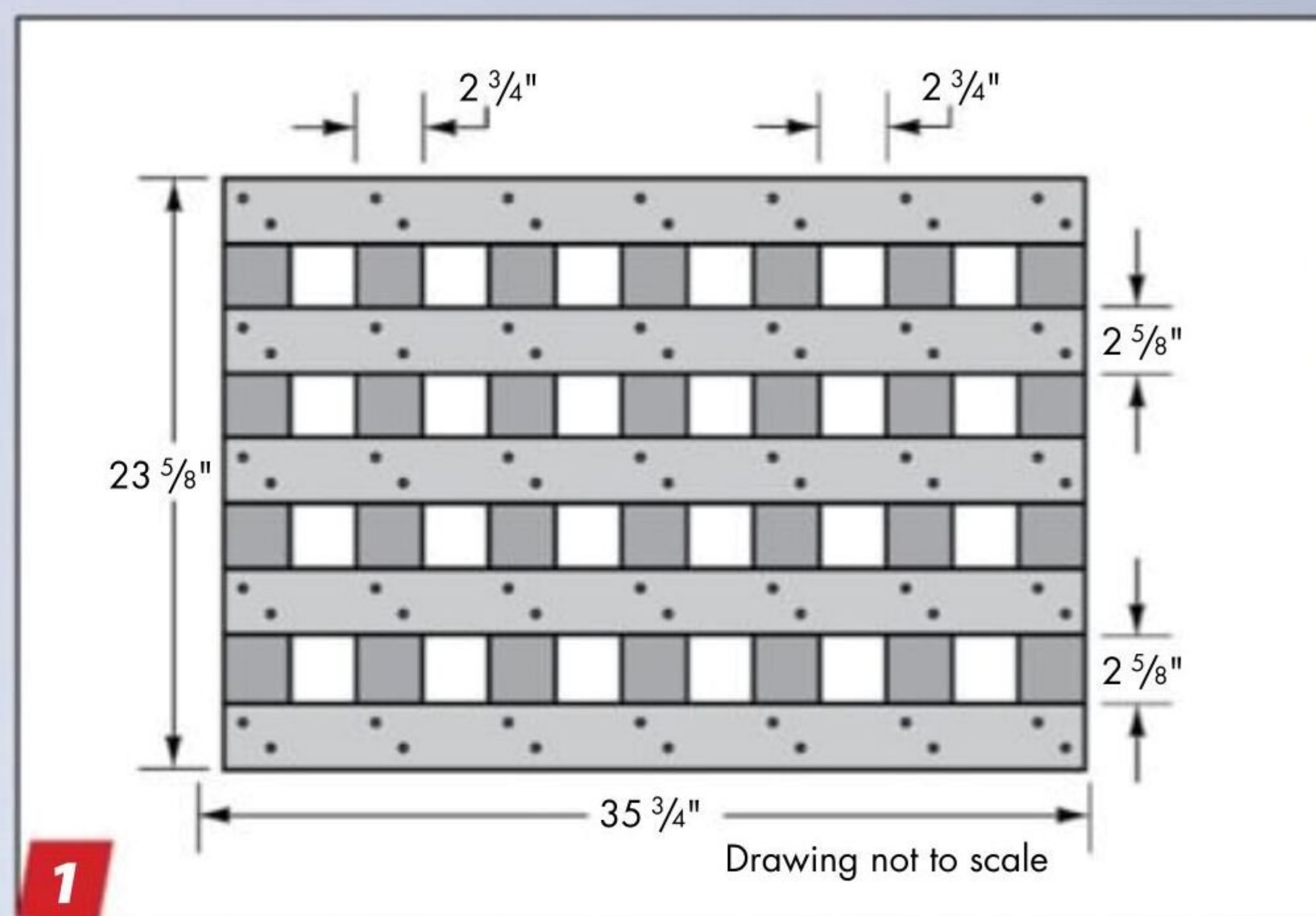
Much of model building involves thinking 10 steps ahead so you can construct and install seemingly simple items correctly. Hatches and gratings are two of those things. In a typical plank-on-bulkhead kit, there is a plywood subdeck with openings for masts, stairwells, and hatches. The instructions tell you to plank the deck and then make the hatch, only for you to discover that the grating

ATE



does not fit the hatch and there is only a sliver of deck planking on one side and whole lot on the other. To make matters worse, the grating openings are so large that your scale-sized foot would get trapped in it.

To avoid this whole matter, make your own gratings with prototypical openings and build the hatch around it. Then install the hatch and lay the deck planking. I'll show you how.



For an interior hatch dimension of approximately 24 inches x 36 inches, increase the space between and the width of the battens (shown horizontally) from $2\frac{1}{2}$ scale inches to $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches; increase the space between and width of the ledges (shown vertically) to $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches.



The picture shows all the materials needed to make a 1/48 scale 2-foot x 3-foot grating with its hatch. Do not attempt to make the grating from a softwood, like basswood; the teeth will break off. Make sure to cut all of your parts tall enough to accommodate the deck's camber.

Let's start with the basics

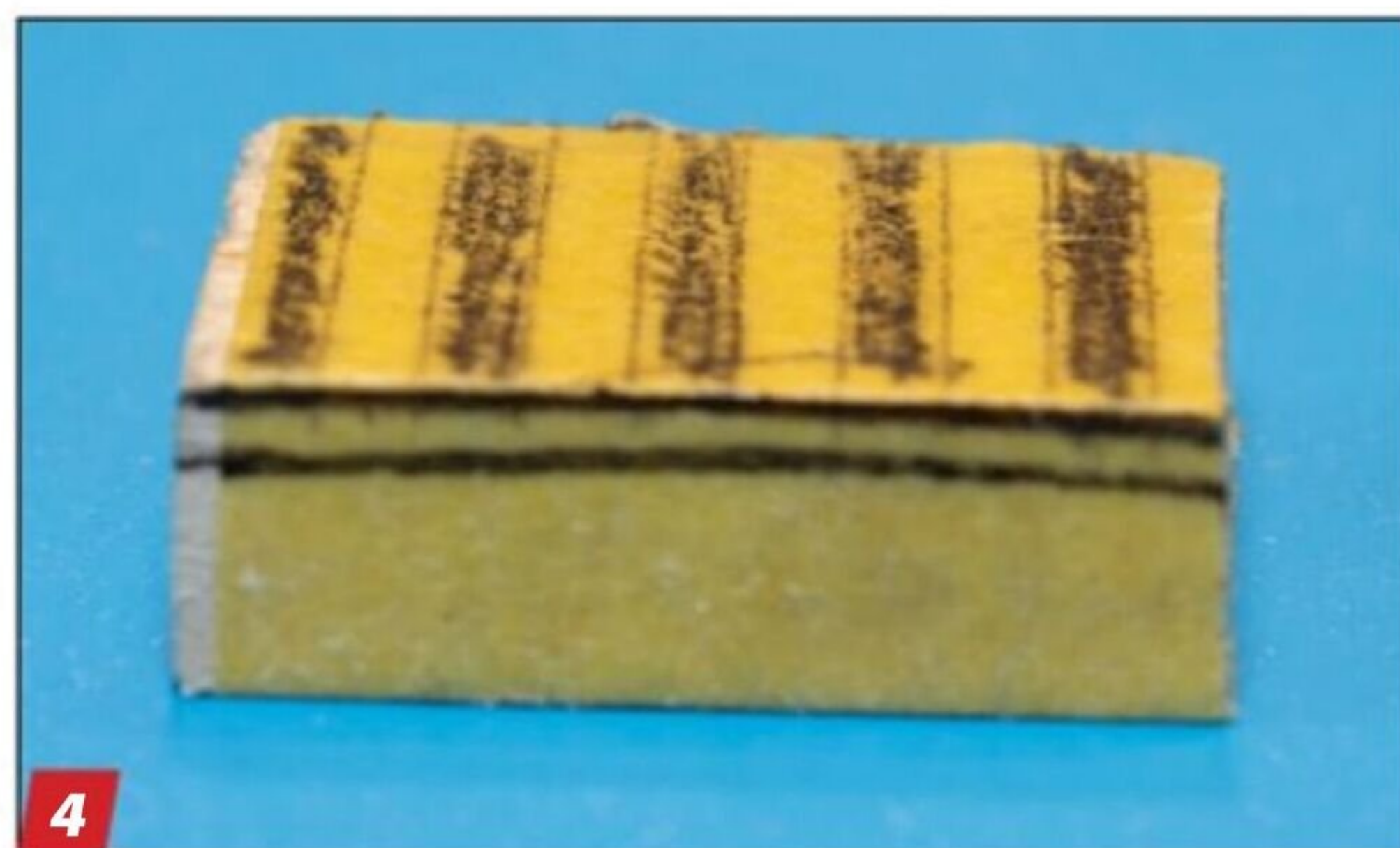
Kit grating often builds from strips with interlocking teeth. Real ship grates are made from two different shapes and sizes of wood — ones with teeth (called ledges) and thinner ones without teeth (called battens). Ledges are oriented athwartship (across the deck, starboard to port) and look similar to the strips you'll find in many kits. Importantly, the notches match the thickness of the battens. On a real ship, a ledge is 3 inches thick and a batten is $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. Both are approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and the openings between them are $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches square. (Because we work in various scales, all the numbers shown are full size.)

Start with the layout of the ledges and battens. The grate has a ledge at both ends, and every ledge has a notch at both ends to accommodate a batten. Measure the inside dimensions of your hatch. For this example, let's say the hatch is 24 inches wide and 36 inches long. The tooth + notch measurement is 5 inches. That gives us four tooth-and-notch pairs, a fifth notch and an extra $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

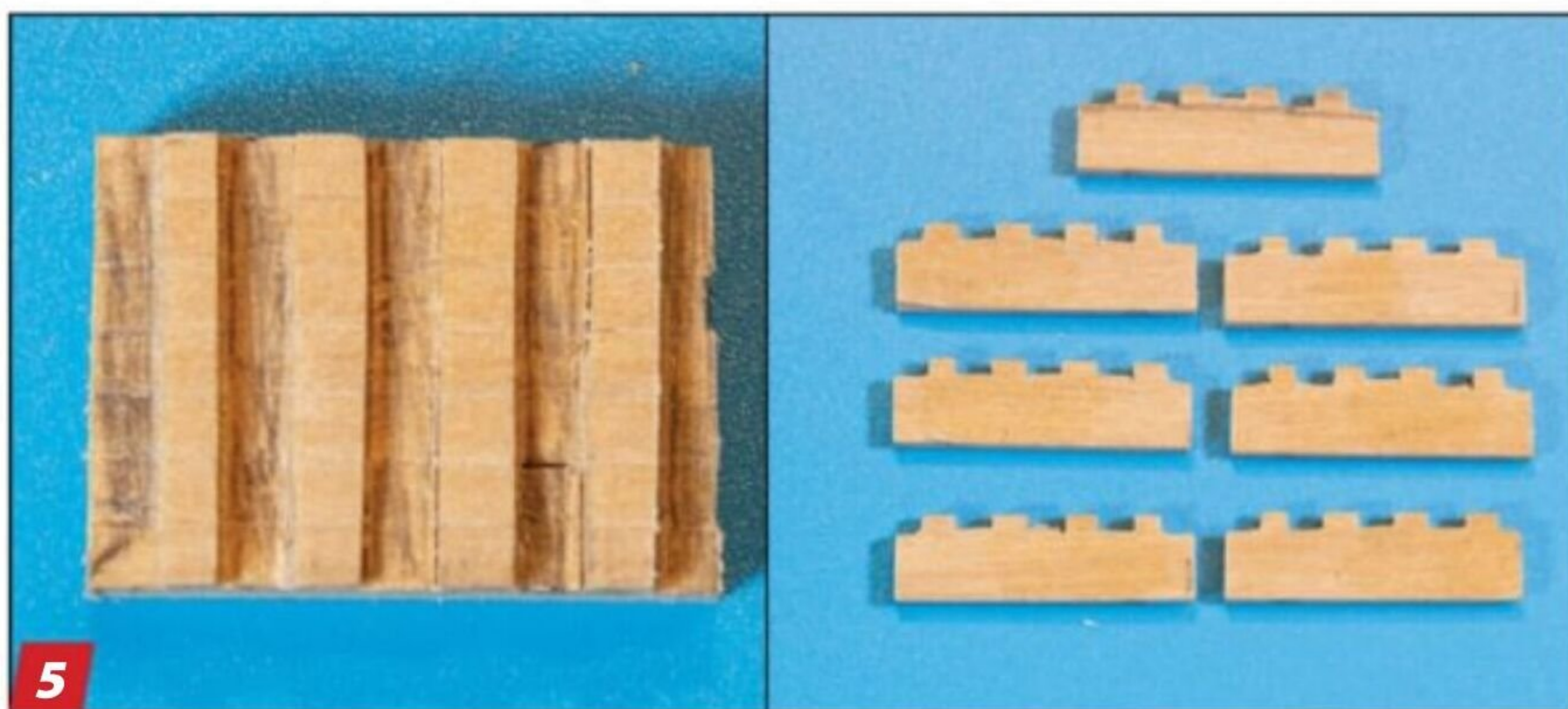
The solution is to either make the hatch $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches narrower or increase the size of the teeth and notches to $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches, for a width



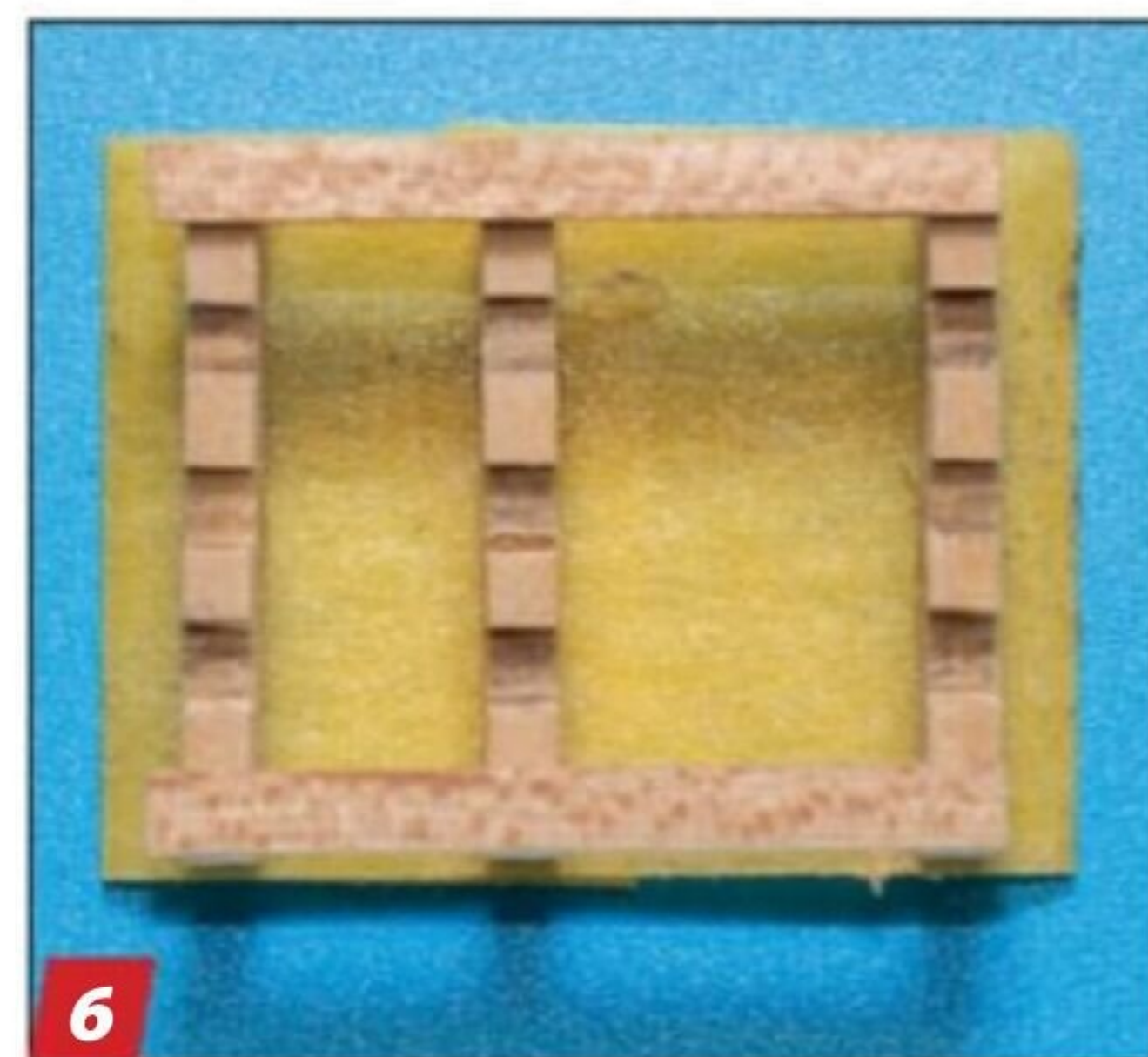
The ledge sandwich doesn't taste too good but works well for cutting notches and teeth in the ledges for the grating. The line drawn across the sandwich will help align the ledges when you dissolve the white glue holding them together.



Here, I've used templates to mark the camber (upper line) and the notch depth (camber less the batten thickness, lower line). On top of the ledge sandwich, I've marked the tooth-and-notch pairs plus an extra notch. Yes, there is wastage on both ends, but that's okay.



Removed the material for the notches with a razor saw and micro chisel. Make sure to work inside the lines you've drawn and then sand or file to the guide. Sawing on the line will create a notch larger than you need or want. Use 97% isopropyl alcohol to dissolve the white glue, separating the ledges so you can assemble the grating.



Using a square to maintain a 90-degree corners, glue the outermost battens and ledges to form a rectangle. Attaching the ledges to double-stick tape laid on a work mat helps minimize unwanted movement.

of $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches, which is what I did. Doing the same calculation for the length results in six ledge-and-space pairs, a seventh ledge, and an extra $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Increase the distance between and width of the ledges to $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches for a length of $35\frac{3}{4}$ inches, **1**. Perfect!

Camber, wood, and you

Before cutting any wood, you need to determine how much camber, or curvature, there is in the deck. Your kit plans should show this, but you can figure it out by tracing the top of a bulkhead onto a piece of paper. This same curvature is found in the ship hatches and grates. Cut your wood strips tall enough to accommodate the camber, **2**.

A table saw makes cutting notches into the ledges easier, but it's unnecessary. All you need is a simple razor saw.

First, cut strips of wood for the battens and ledges a little longer than required — they will be faired up later. I usually cut a few extra ledges in case I break teeth. Glue all but two of the ledges together, side by side, with white glue. This allows you to cut the teeth in all the strips simultaneously, guaranteeing good alignment. After the strips are glued together, sand the bottom and sides of the sandwich flat and draw a line across the bottom to help orient the strips after the glue has been dissolved, **3**.

To make templates for the deck camber and notch depth, you'll need two of your extra ledges. Mark the camber on one, and on the other, mark the camber less the thickness of the battens. Sand both

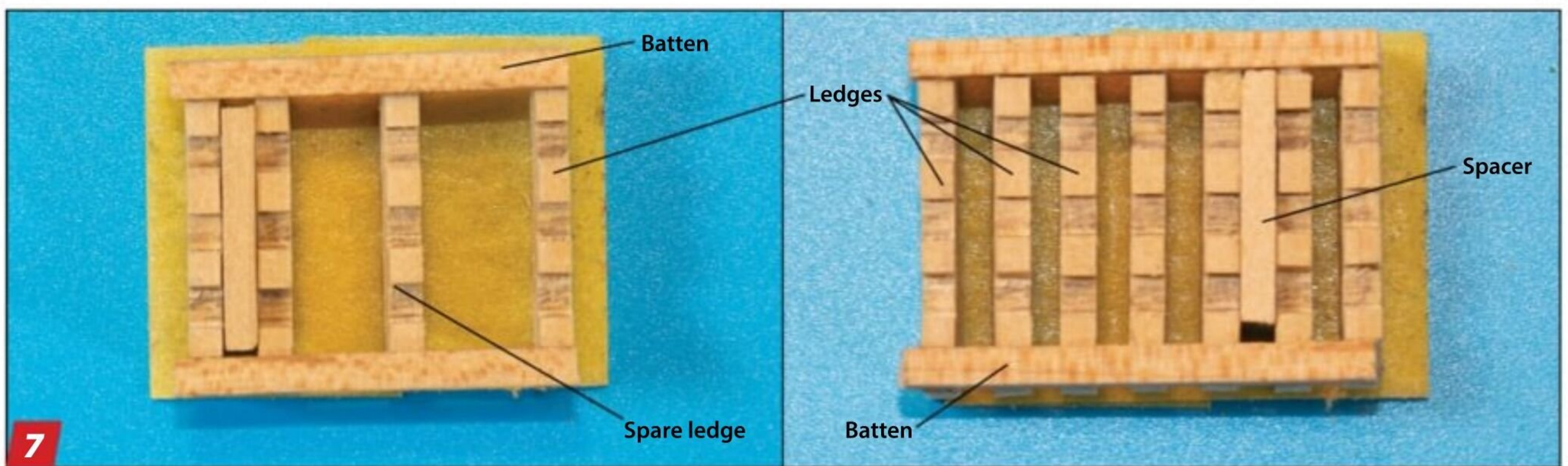
of these ledges to these lines. Place the templates, one after the other, against both sides of the ledge sandwich and mark the camber and the notch depth.

Divide and mark the top of the ledge sandwich into four tooth-and-notch pairs with an extra notch at the end. Remember, make your ledges longer than they need to be. Darken the areas that will become notches to prevent confusion, **4**.

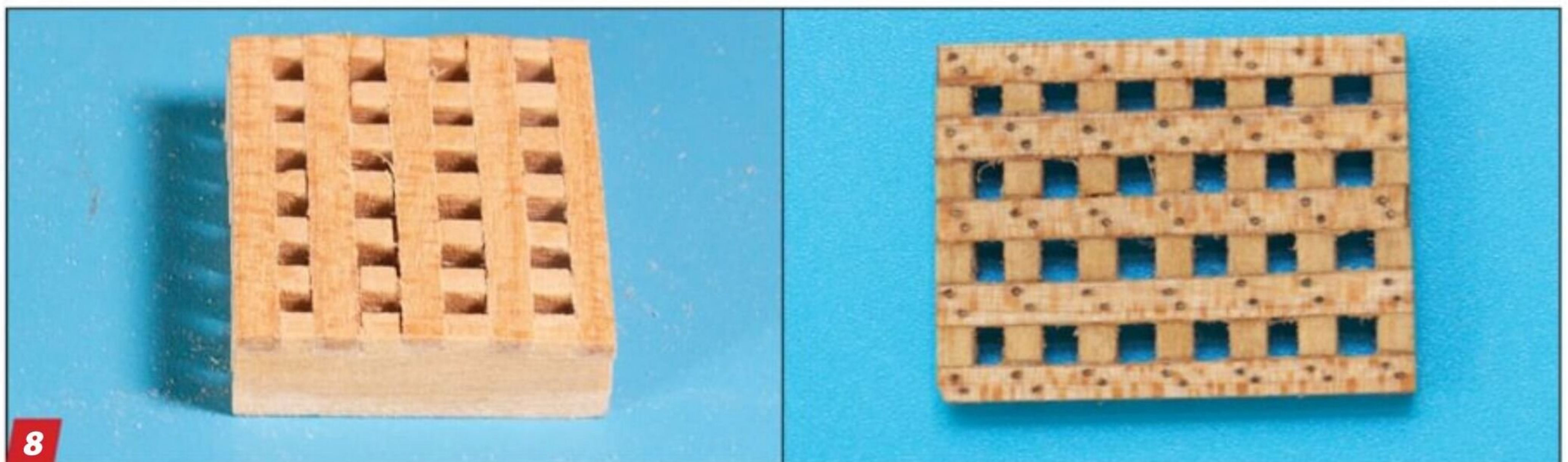
Cut inside the darkened notch lines on top of the ledge sandwich with a razor saw until the blade kisses the notch-depth line. Make sure to cut inside the notch lines — not on them — because a saw creates a kerf. If you saw on the line, the notches will be wider than you want. You can always remove more wood. You can't put it back. Remove the rest of the wood in the notch with multiple passes with the saw or a chisel. Clean up the depth of the slots with a sanding strip. Sand the top of the ledge sandwich to the camber line. Lastly, soak the sandwich in 91% isopropyl alcohol until the white glue dissolves and the ledges separate, **5**.

Ensure all the ledges are oriented correctly — remember the line you drew on the undersurface of the sandwich? Then use an engineering square to guarantee a 90-degree angle and glue the outermost battens and ledges together, **6**.

After the glue has dried, take one of the spare ledges and install it — do not glue it! — somewhere in the middle of the grating assembly. This will prevent racking (the grating being forced out of shape) while you install the next several ledges and battens. The



After the outermost battens and ledges have dried, insert a spare ledge into the framework to prevent racking. Place a spacer the correct thickness for the space between ledges next to an outermost ledge, place a ledge next to the spacer, and glue it in place. Move the spacer and repeat.



You'll need to sand the battens to match the camber present in the ledges. Before you do, decide if you want to show the nails holding the battens in place. If you do, make depressions like you see here with a needle and twist a sharp No. 2 pencil in the dimple.

larger the grating, the more important this step is.

Insert a piece of scrap wood the correct thickness of the gap between the ledges, $2\frac{3}{4}$ scale inches in this case, inside the outermost ledge as a spacer. Take the next ledge, place it next to the spacer, and glue it to the outermost battens. Move the spacer and repeat until all the ledges have been placed, **7**.

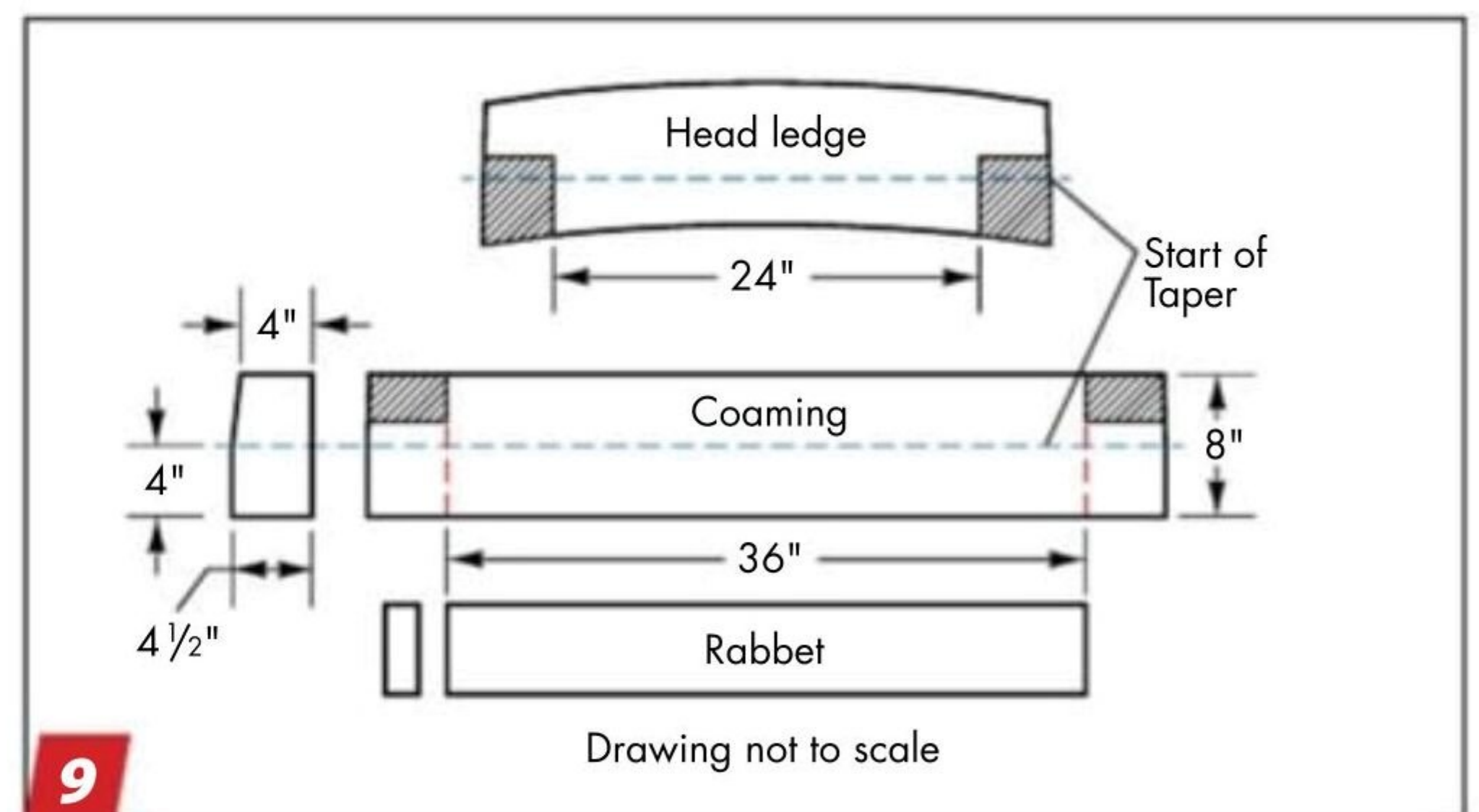
Install the remaining battens in the notches. Depending on your model's scale, you may wish to show the fastenings securing the battens to the ledges. Make a depression in the wood with a needle and then twirl the tip of a sharp pencil in the depression. Sand the surface so the battens match the camber, but do not handle the grating again until after you've applied a finish to prevent from smearing the pencil dots, **8**.

Building the hatch

Now that the grating for the hatch is finished, it's time to build the hatch proper. First, understand that traditional hatches are constructed from two timbers running fore and aft called coamings, and two transverse timbers called head ledges. As with the ledges, the head ledges have the same camber as the deck. The hatch height and thickness are determined by the ship's nationality, type, deck, and era, so check your plans.

This hatch is 8 inches tall and $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick at the deck, tapering to 4 inches thick at the top. The coamings and head ledges were joined with either simple lap or scarfed joints. I used a lap joint for this hatch. The grating rests on rabbets, 2-inch-wide strips of wood attached to the inner surface of the coamings, **9**.

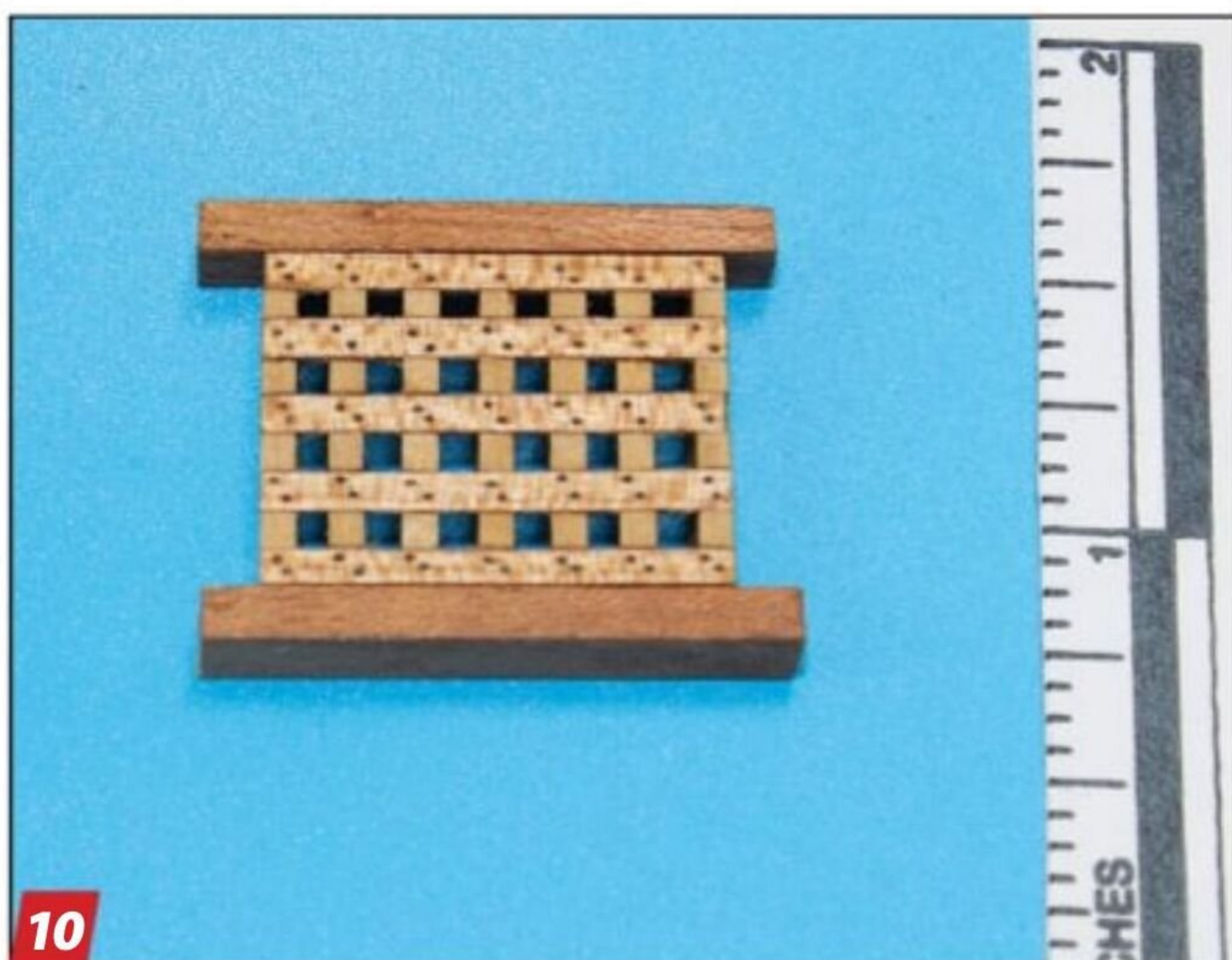
Place the coamings against the grating and mark its length on them. Leave $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches extra on both ends for the head ledges. Extend this line (red on the plans) to the bottom of the coaming.



Here are the basic plans for the coamings and head ledges for a hatch. I used lap joints at the corners, although scarf joints (a joint with interlocking opposing angles) could also be appropriate.

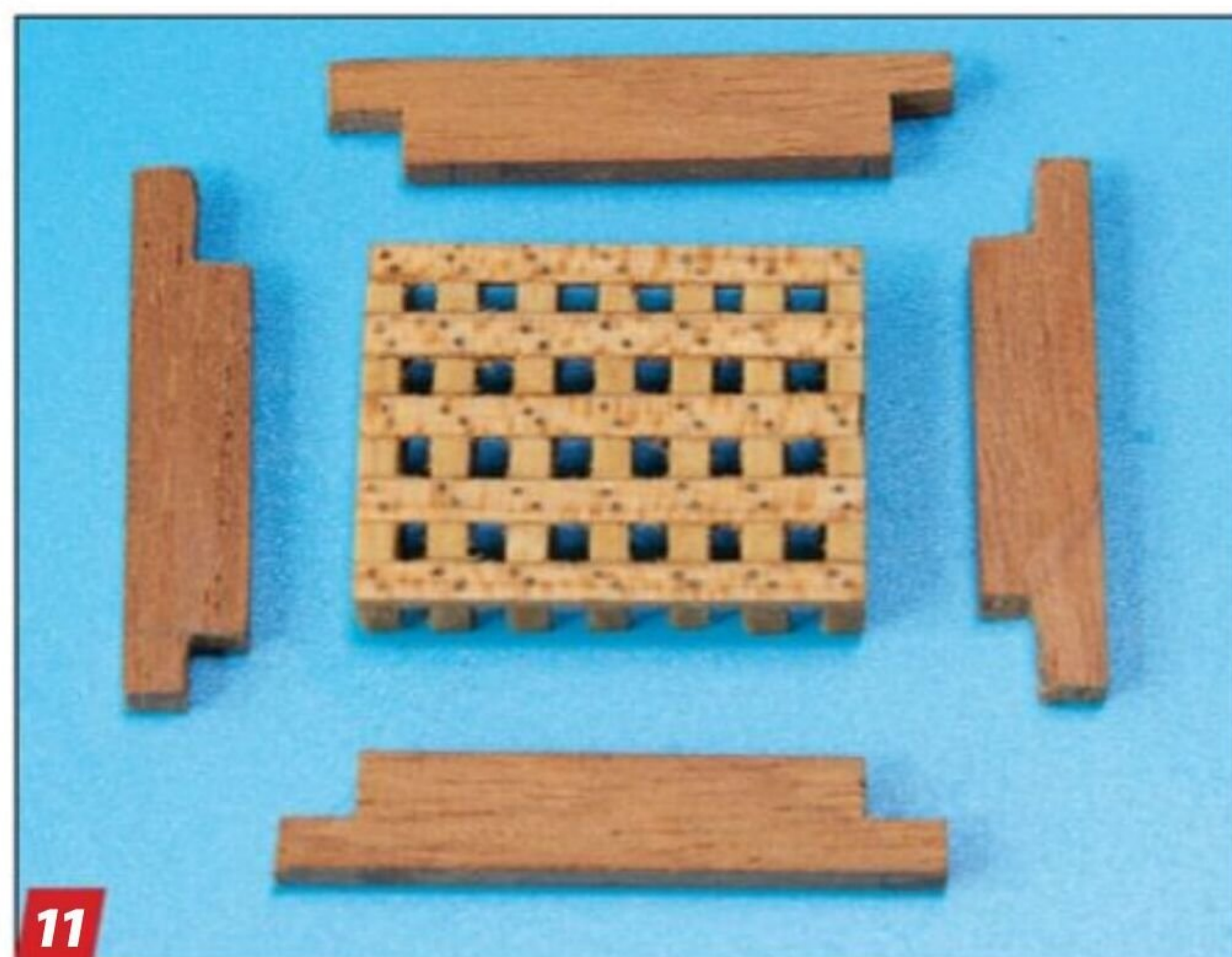
Draw a horizontal line (blue) to mark the start of the taper at the midpoint of the coaming. Draw a second horizontal line one-third down from the top outside the grating line. This marks the wood that you need to remove on both coamings for the lap joint (gray areas), **10**.

The deck camber makes the head ledges a little more complicated. When cutting out the head ledges, make them 20% taller to accommodate the camber. Mark the camber with the same template you used for the grating along the bottom and top edges. Use the coamings as a template to mark the taper line, the notch for the lap joint, and the upper edge of the coaming. Remove the wood for the lap joints and sand the top camber to the line you've drawn, **11**.



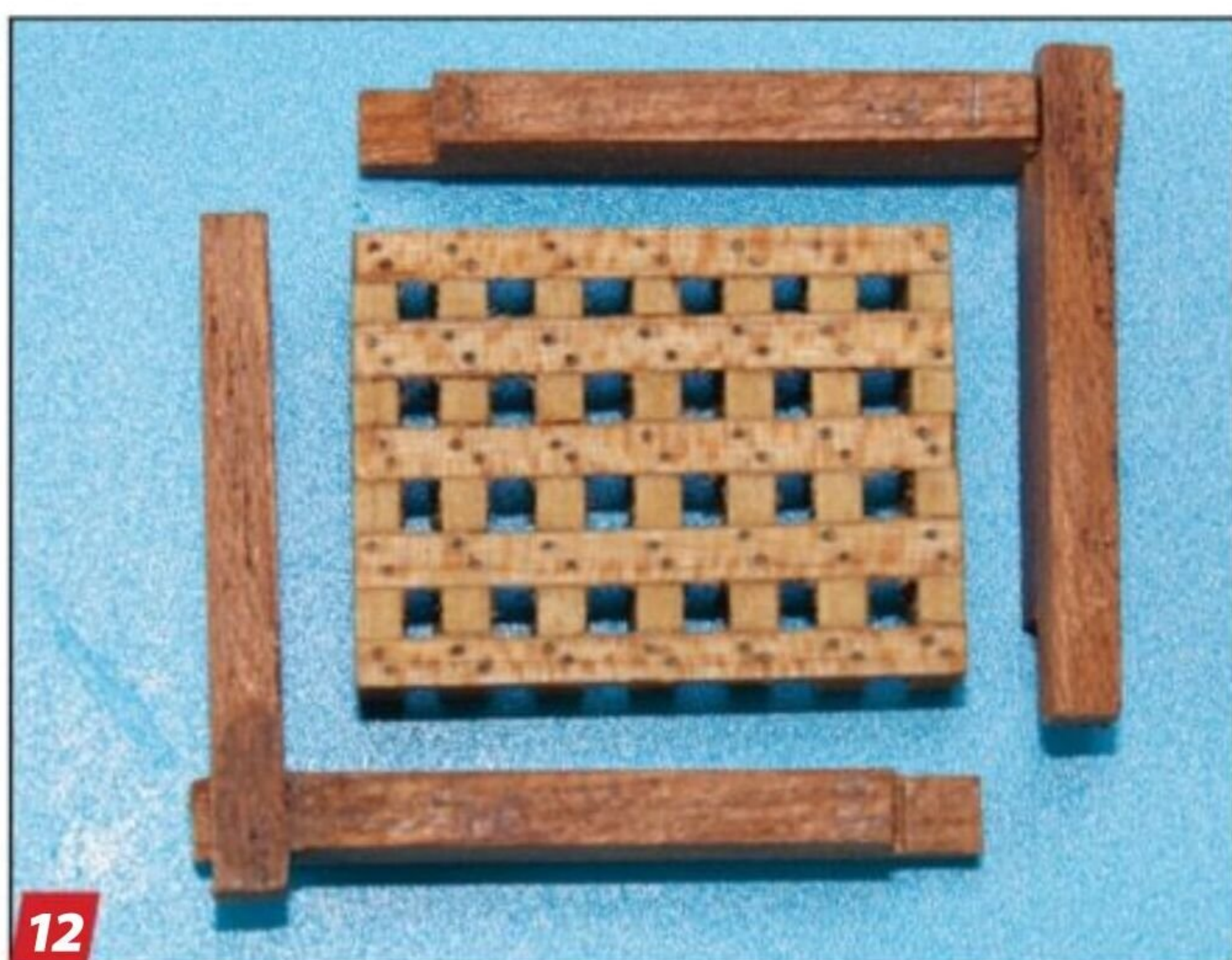
10

Start building the hatch with the coamings. You'll want to transfer the lines from the plans in Step 9 to the coamings to mark the ends of the grating, and remember to leave space for the head ledges, where the taper begins, and the material to be removed for the lap joints.



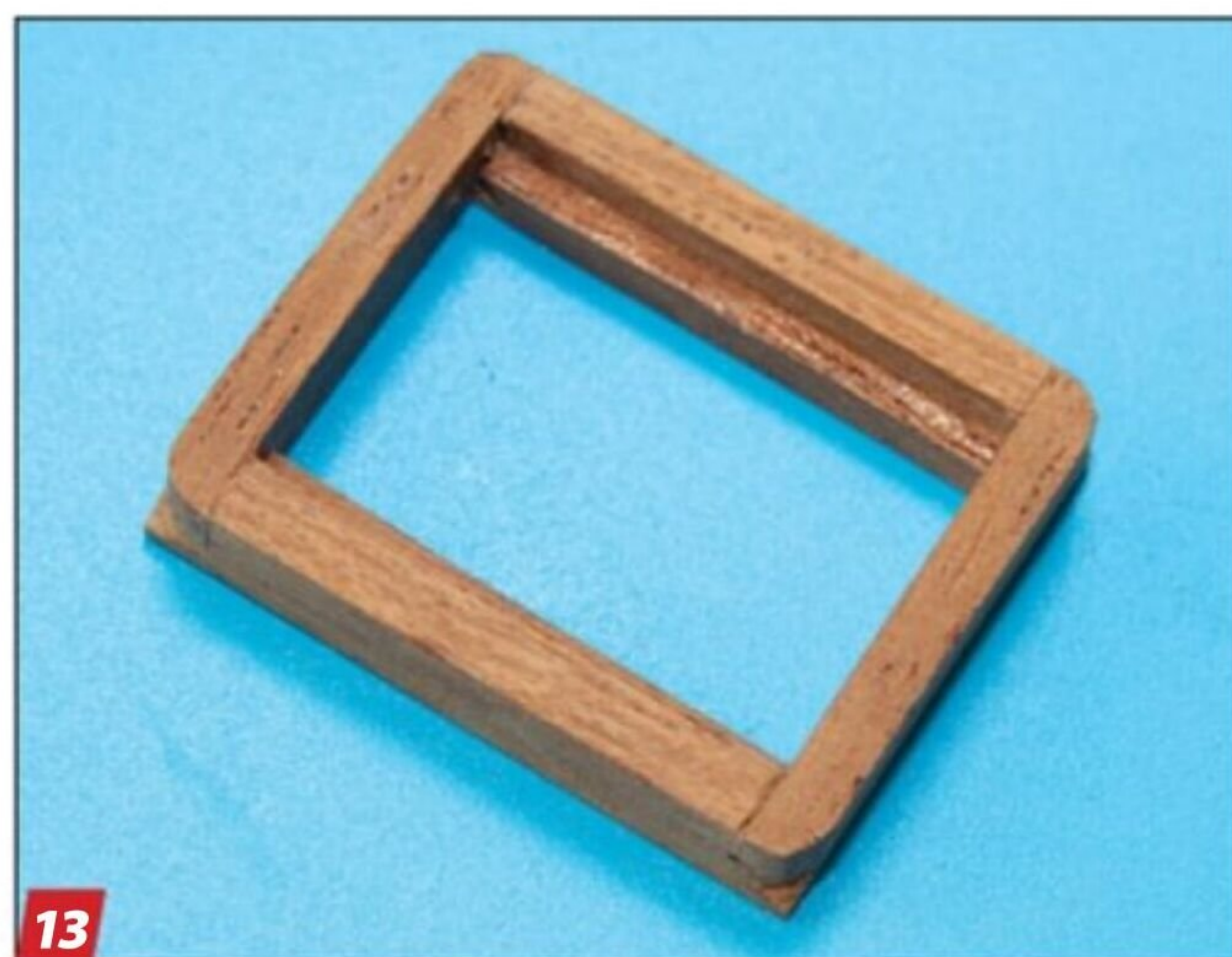
11

Because they run athwartships, constructing the head ledges takes a bit more work. When roughing them in, make the head ledges 20% bigger than what they need to be to allow for room to sand the camber along the top and bottom and to accommodate the lap joints.



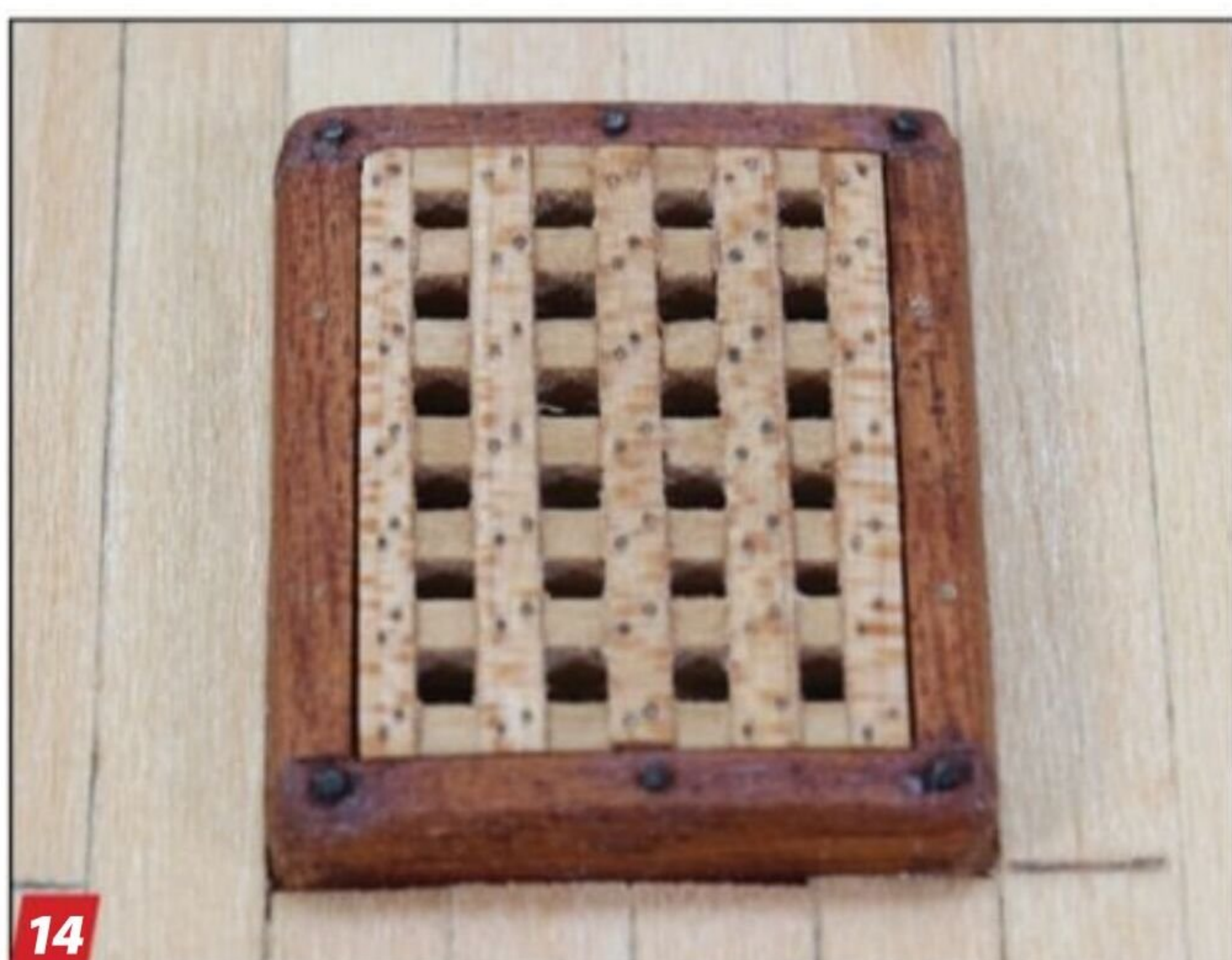
12

Assemble one head ledge and coaming and then the other, making sure they are square. When the glue has dried, test-fit the parts around the grating to make sure they all go together correctly and then glue the final two lap joints. Glue the rabbets to the inside of the coamings.



13

At this point, you should shape the hatch's taper and round the corners of the lap joint to the level of the decking. Leave the square edges from the level of the decking down. Lastly, sand the camber on the bottom to the lines you've drawn on the head ledges.



14

Assemble the hatch, careful to keep it square. Double check that the grating fits. When the glue has dried, glue the rabbets onto the inner faces of the coamings, **12**.

Sand the taper on all four sides and round the corners to the level of the top of the deck planking. Leave sharp corners on the bottom of the hatch so the planking fits snugly. Finally, sand the camber into the lower edge of the head ledges, **13**.

Temporarily attach the hatch to the ship and plank the deck. Remove the hatch and apply a finish to the deck. A hatch would have been fastened with three bolts in the head ledges (copper wire blackened with liver of sulfur) and two treenails in the coamings. Reinstall the hatch, place the grating, and you're done, **14**.

Tack the hatch in place on your model and install the deck planks around it, making sure to keep everything symmetrical. When you're finished, remove the hatch and finish your deck. You can detail the hatch with the bolts and nails used to attach it on the real ship, glue it in place, and attach the grating. **FSM**



Build Your Scale Modeling Skills!

Find high-quality, skill building products curated by the *FineScale Modeler* magazine team at the Trains.com Store.

Check out our selection of:

- ▶ Books covering topics such as airbrushing, dioramas, aviation, and essential skills
 - ▶ Magazines providing a deep look into high-interest topics
 - ▶ The best tools available for building and finishing a scale model
- AND MUCH MORE!**



Shop now at:

[Shop.Trains.com/ScaleModeling](https://shop.trains.com/ScaleModeling)



Field a StuG

Simple weathering and groundwork
propels the vehicle

BY IVAN MOMCILOVIC

The Sturmgeschütz III is one of World War II's most easily recognizable German armored fighting vehicles and one of the most produced. Initially designed as mobile assault gun to provide direct-fire support to infantry, the vehicle was constantly up-armored and up-armed. The Ausf F was the first StuG III variant to mount a 7.5cm StuK 40 L/43 gun that could fire armor piercing rounds and turned the low-profile vehicle into a tank hunter. Later versions carried the longer and harder hitting L/48 gun.

Prompted by the release of Takom's new 1/35 scale StuGs, I grabbed a Dragon kit that had been lurking in my stash for many years and set about building it and a base for proper display.





1 Construction of the kit went well, and I didn't run into any issues putting it together. The only confusing part of older Dragon kits is the location for some of the photo-etched metal parts, but a little research set me straight.



2 I found intriguing photos of a StuG on the Eastern Front with extra stowage and tarps over the mantlet and rear engine deck. I made tarps using Tamiya two-part epoxy putty, cutting and shaping it to fit the locations. It's fast drying, so the model was ready to paint in a few hours.



3 In preparation for the layers of paint and weathering to come, I sprayed the model with Vallejo Hobby Paint Black (No. 28.012) straight from the spray can.



4 The base color on this vehicle was dunkelgrau, which I added by airbrushing Tamiya German Grey (No. XF-63) over the entire model. I lightened the German grey with Tamiya Buff (No. XF-57) and sprayed it along edges and hatches as color modulation.



5 When everything was dry, I applied a light filter with Tamiya Medium Blue (No. XF-18) and Tamiya Acrylic Thinner. This reduced the contrast between the previous shades.



6 In preparation for the next color, I masked stripes across the body with Ammo Camouflage Masking Putty (No. A.MIG-8012). This works much like Silly Putty, but paint right after adding the putty and before gravity has its way with it and pulls it from the desired shapes.



7

For the next layer, I airbrushed Ammo Dunkelgelb Highlight (No. A.MIG-0904). Peeling off the putty revealed a nicely defined pattern. To break up the dunkelgelb, I sprayed Ammo Dunkelgelb Base (No. A.MIG-0902) along panel lines and section edges.



8

After spraying the model with Tamiya Clear (No. X-22), I applied the decals and flowed on a dark brown artist-oil wash. I think this step really adds life to the model. I highlighted small parts like nuts and bolts with hand-brushed dunkelgelb.



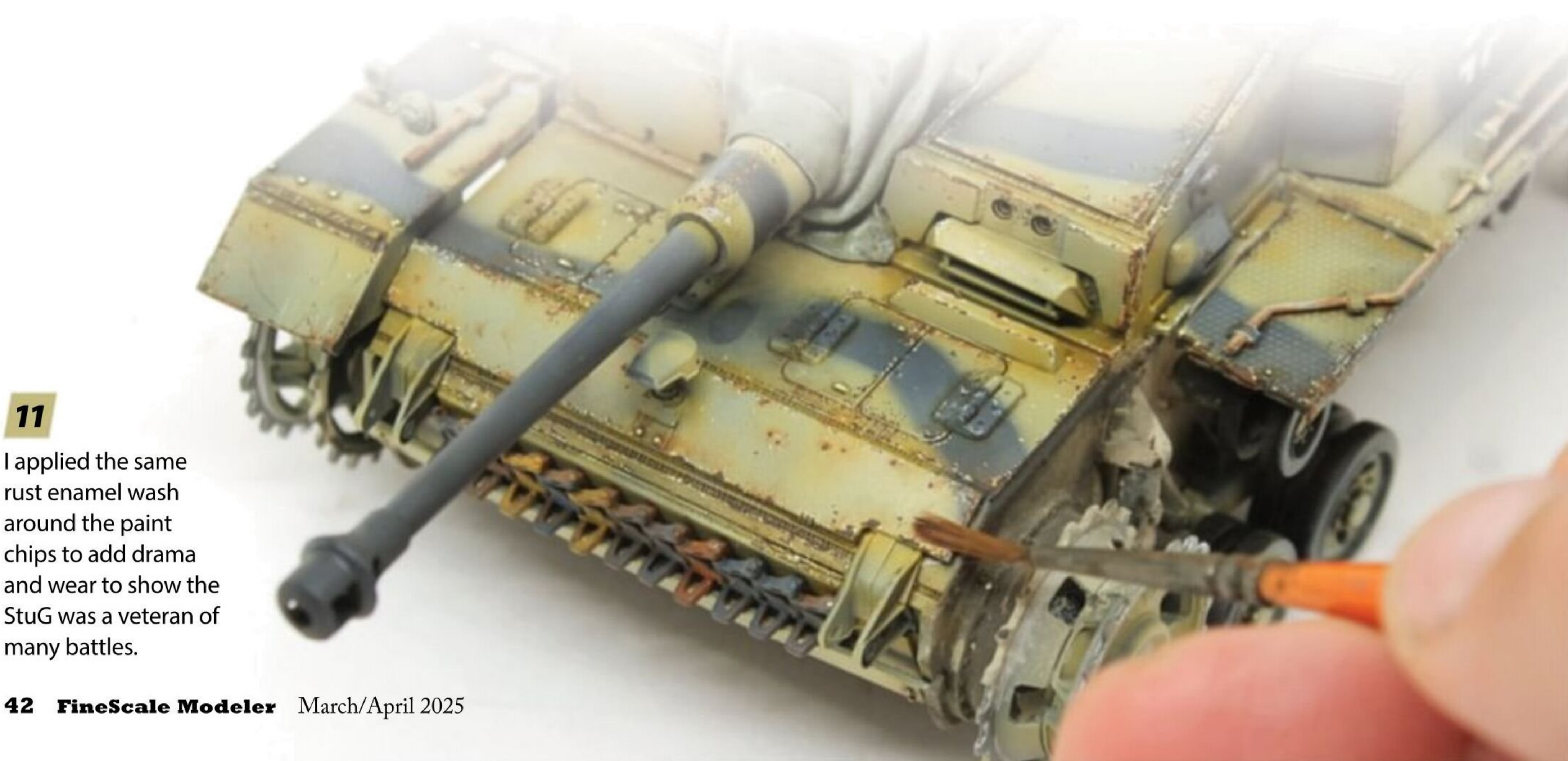
9

Focusing on the lower hull, I added out-of-production Wilder Stony Light Grey (No. TE08) and Stony Dark Russian Textured Earth (No. TE02) acrylic. The light color looks like dry mud and the dark shade gives the appearance of fresh, wet mud.



10

Using a fine brush and buff acrylic paint, I applied paint chipping along edges and around hatches. I followed with dark brown applied inside the buff areas to provide a 3D effect to the chipping. After that, I painted metal tools light gray and followed with an enamel rust wash.



11

I applied the same rust enamel wash around the paint chips to add drama and wear to show the StuG was a veteran of many battles.



12

Using brown dirt and static grass, I deposited earth and foliage in corners on the upper surfaces where it would naturally accumulate. After refining the positioning with a fine brush, I fixed the dirt and grass with Ammo Sand & Gravel Glue (No. A.MIG-2012).



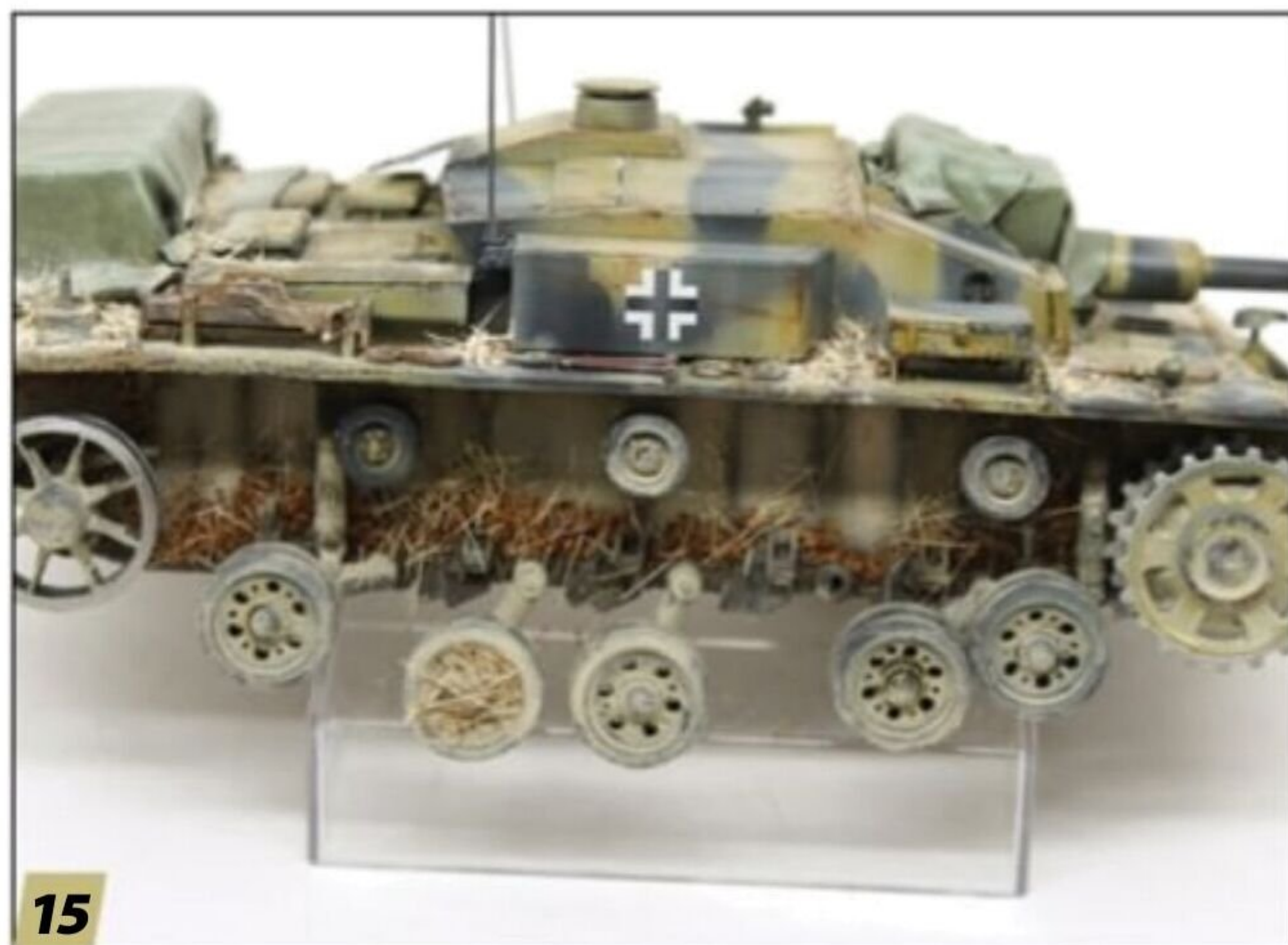
13

I sprayed light layers of LifeColor Diorama Series Dust (No. UA705) and Deposited Dust (No. UA738) over and around the dirt and grass. These acrylics dry dead flat for a realistically dusty finish but be sure to clean your airbrush as soon as you finish, because these paints can clog it.



14

As a final touch, I applied Ammo Splashes Dry Earth (No. A.MIG-1750) with a fine brush and enamel thinner to refine and blend the effects.



15

I built up more of the textured dirt and grass effect around the running gear using the same dirt, static grass, and sand and gravel glue as I had used on the upper hull. It makes sense to have the same weathering effects on the whole model, doesn't it?



16

The only difference around the lower hull was that I applied Ammo Splashes Loose Ground (No. A.MIG-1752), a brown enamel that increases the muddy appearance of the model.



17

Most fighting vehicles carry extra equipment, so I filled the engine deck with jerry cans, a fuel drum, and a crate. All of these are resin items from Value Gear, a terrific source for all kinds of equipment.



18

Lacking a specific plan for the StuG, I shaped a small base from insulation foam trimmed with balsa wood. I covered the groundwork with Ammo Vignettes Acrylic Vietnam Earth (No. A.MIG-2159).



19

While the relatively slow drying Ammo acrylic paste was still wet, I scattered small rocks and ground across the surface for added texture.



20

After forming the basic shape of the haystack with foam, I applied diluted white glue and added static grass. I fixed the shape with hairspray and airbrushed it Ammo Dark Yellow Primer (No. A.MIG-2003) followed by a little buff for realistic color variations.



21

I glued clumps of scenic grass over the base leaving the tracks for the StuG clear. Next, I sprayed the entire base with a light coat of dark brown primer.



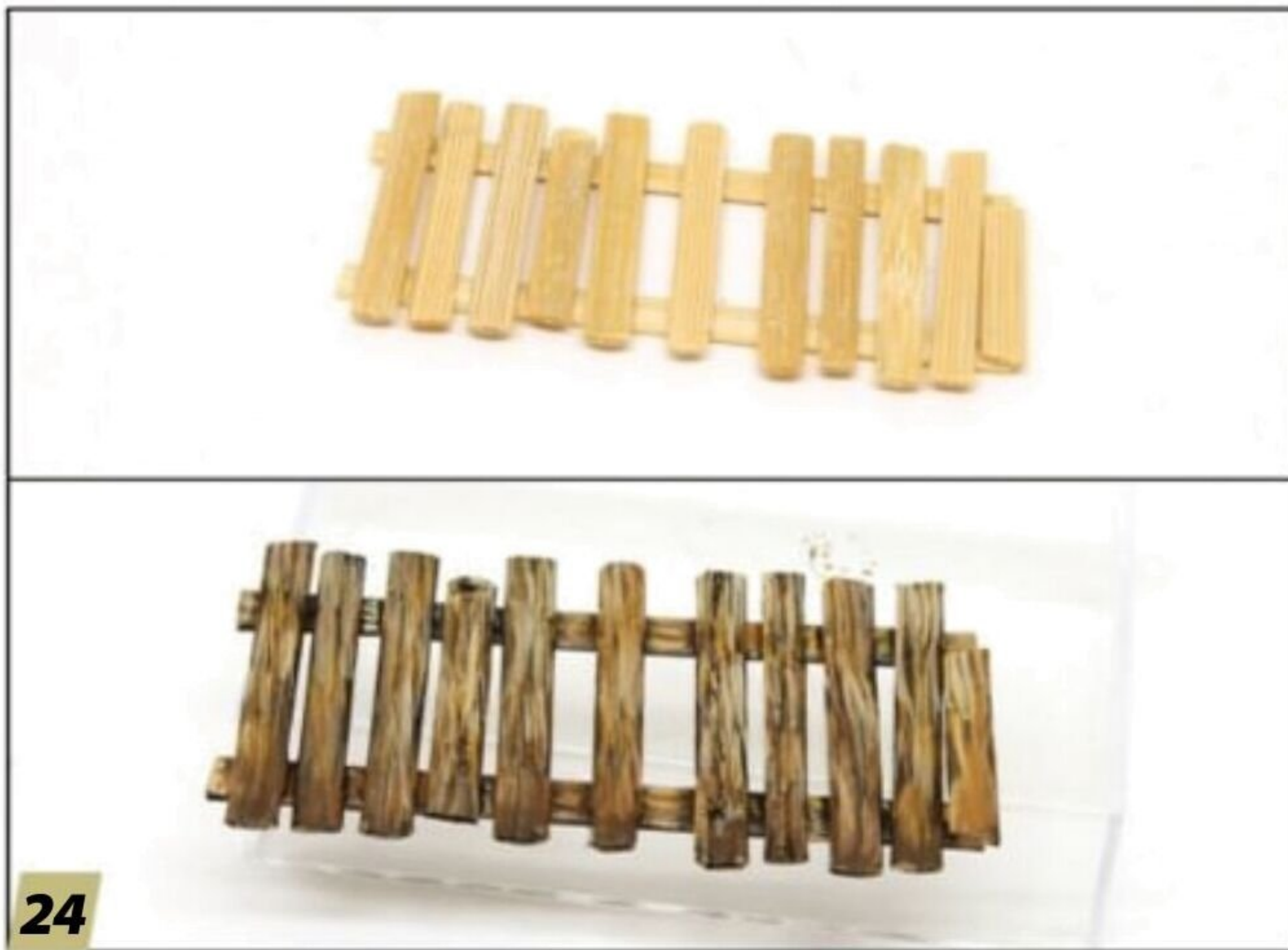
22

After painting bare ground buff, I airbrushed all the vegetation dark yellow primer. Differing shades of green followed to give the various foliage realism.



23

A light spray of buff over the groundwork, including the haystack, blended all the elements.



24

I believe that no diorama is complete without small details. To that end, I made a 1/35 scale fence with wood strips held together by superglue. Hand-painted colors came from a LifeColor Weathered Wood set (No. LCCS20) and finished it nicely.



25

In preparation for placing the model on the base, I replaced the kit's nonworking individual-link tracks with a set of workable tracks early PzKpfw III/IV tracks from RFM (No. RM-5047).

FINAL THOUGHTS

WITH THE STUG ON THE BASE, I

recruited Verlinden and Tristar figures, replaced their noggins with Hornet resin heads, and painted them with Scale 75 Scalecolor tube acrylics. To add to the rustic feel, I brought in barrels from a craft store. Unfortunately, those barrels were not as detailed as I wanted, so I carved wood texture in them with a hobby knife and painted them with Scalecolor tube acrylics. The overall effect is a StuG III Ausf F during a halt in the advance into Russia. **FSM**





CHURN *some* WATER



Ideas for modeling 1/25 scale drag and ski boats

BY TIM BOYD

In your modeling career, you've probably built more than a few scale car and truck kits, or perhaps you've produced models of historically significant ships in scale. However, I'll bet that few of you have considered building a 1/25 scale drag or ski boat kit. We're out to change that, starting right now.

Drag and ski watercraft experienced immense growth in popularity and design progression from the late 1950s through the late 1960s. In their most advanced forms, they adapted automotive engines for power, with early Chrysler Hemis, Ford FE 390 and 427 V8s, 327 Chevy V8s, and even a few salvaged World War II Allison V12 engines seen most often. Designed primarily for between one to five people, they were used as tow boats for water skiers, quarter-mile drag races, and longer "enduro" competitions.

In some cases, drag boats swapped their blown fuel Hemi engines (and yes, their drivers!) from rail dragsters to the water and back again. Soon, boating drag races

grew to attract as many as 30,000 racing fans to view the action, sometimes in purpose-built racing facilities. The book *Drag Boats of the 1960s Photo Archive*, by Don Edwards, Barry McCown, and Bob Silva (2008, Iconografix), does a great job of bringing this era to life and providing a wonderful range of scale boat-building ideas, too!

While the ski boats were slightly less extreme, they towed their skiers at ever increasing speeds. Out of the water, with their eye-catching paint and stylishly finished interiors, they became prominent attractions at car shows, leading some to characterize them as hot rods with propellers instead of wheels and tires. Today, just as in the 1/1 scale hot rod world, some of the most famous 1960s ski and drag boats are being rescued and restored, bringing their stories to a new generation of boat and auto enthusiasts.

By the 1970s, racing boats had become prone to accidents and driver fatalities, so they diverged into much different, purpose-built designs with covered cockpits, spoilers, and parachutes. The evolution of the ski versions mostly involved moving to big-block Chevy and Olds V8s for power. Anyone who experienced listening to one

of these ski boats at full song as it blasted across a lake was left an unforgettable memory!

Kit makers AMT and Revell viewed ski and drag boats as an obvious extension to their automotive catalogs. Their offerings captured the progression of drag and ski boats of the '50s and '60s and have much to offer us model builders.

These kits assemble without much hassle and comparatively quickly (for example, there's no chrome trim needing tedious applications of bright foil). Further, since these boats used automotive-based components, including engines, drivelines, and interior fittings, your choice of kitbashing components is essentially unlimited. The flat surfaces of boat hulls provide a great canvas for anyone who wants to add advanced paint treatments or real, wood veneers, and the prominently positioned engines nicely showcase engine wiring and detailing. The results can be just as eye catching as any car or truck model. Drag and ski boats also make great, attention-grabbing companions to tow vehicle and trailer projects.

What are your options if you'd like to build a drag or ski boat? Let's get wet!

KITS OF 1/25 SCALE BOATS

Only five 1/25 scale drag and ski boat kits have been introduced since the late 1950s, and two of them remain mostly unknown. Fortunately, the other three are relatively available today and waiting for your modeling skills.



AMT released the first detailed 1/25 scale boat as part of its 1959 and 1960 annual kit catalogs (No. 159). The kit was based on a Chris Craft design and could be built three ways: inboard “Cutlass” runabout, customized speed boat, and “crackerbox” style “sea going dragster.” The kit included two complete engines (a Chris Craft in-line six and an approximation of a Lincoln Y-block V8), along with passenger compartments in front of or behind the engine, or both. This kit was reissued in the same box art in 1997 (No. 8125) and 2017 (No. 1056).

The second AMT 1/25 scale boat kit was merchandized as part of its Trophy Series and replicated one of most successful racing boat brands of the early 1960s, Rudy Ramos’ Rayson-Craft (Nos. 2163-149 and 2163-170). Released in late 1963 and available through the middle of the decade, it was never reissued in this form. Powered by a Ford FE 390 V8 with either tri-carb or blower induction, the ski version included a fully upholstered interior with seating for four, while the drag-racing version added lower side sponsons and a two-blade racing prop. My personal favorite, this kit is rare and hard to find today.



Revell’s first 1/25 scale boat kit also arrived in 1963. Powered by a first-generation Chrysler Hemi with six, two-barrel carbs and individual zoomie-style headers, its “Go & Show Drag Boat” (No. H-1278:198) included a sheet of wood veneer for the front hull. A full tuck ‘n’ roll interior with two build options was credited to famous 1/1 scale upholsterer and drag racer Tony Nancy. The trailer and boat interior were both considerably more detailed than the AMT Rayson-Craft. This Revell offering was released once in this form.



In 1968, AMT introduced the "Hull Raiser" kit (No. 2463-170). By this time, race-boat hull design had evolved to be notably narrower and more streamlined. Accordingly, AMT's offering was a major (and irreversible) revamp of its earlier Rayson-Craft kit, with an all-new boat hull that replicated a 1/1 scale Kindsvater design. The engine became a SOHC Ford 427, and much of the Rayson-Craft kit ski version interior parts were eliminated.



The "Hull Raiser" has been reissued four times, but only in combination with various tow vehicles. In 1968, AMT offered "Quarter Masters" (No. T380-300), which included a custom-only Firebird tow vehicle (derived from its 1967 annual kit). In 1975, AMT combined the boat kit with its Chevy G30 van kit and "Aqua Rod" decals (No. T-561). Round 2 reissued this version in 2023 (No. AMT 1338/06), but with a decal sheet including a second graphics option based on the original 1975 catalog illustration. Lastly, in 2005 AMT/Ertl and The Model King paired this boat with a reissue of the MPC 1970 Pontiac Bonneville convertible (No. 21574P).



The last of the mainstream 1/25 scale boat kits was Revell's "Hemi-Hydro" (Nos. H-1312 and H-1312:225). Introduced in 1971, it was a modest update of the earlier "Go and Show" drag boat kit with new headers and collectors and redesigned bench seating while dropping the racing buckets. The earlier kit's wood veneer also went by the board. This kit has seen multiple reissues, starting in 1994 with a taller box and carryover graphics (also No. H-1312:225), and most recently in 2014 with new "Hot Rod Hydro" box art (No. 85-3092). The latter included a new decal sheet designed by Sean Svendsen with multiple liveries and provided two different "wood" panel inserts for the front hull.

YOU CAN DO PLENTY OUT OF THE BOX OR WITH MILD KITBASHING

You might think that with only five basic kits to choose from, your building options are limited at best. Not so! Built box stock or with a bit of kitbashing, the AMT and Revell kits can offer satisfying and surprisingly diverse results for your modeling work.



Here you see AMT's Chris-Craft boat in the showroom-stock and racing versions. The wood-grain effect on the deck was simulated with hand-brushed paints. Twin hinged panels reveal the Chris-Craft inline six below decks. The racing version includes these scallop decals and even instrument panel decal gauges. Not shown is the custom version, three big, deck fins, and skirts for the trailer fenders.

These are both 100% out of the box builds of AMT's Rayson-Craft kits. The blue boat is an exact replica of a real 1/1 scale racing boat down to the hull-side graphics and lower-front hull sponsons. The fully detailed V-drive and supporting structures are a highlight along with AMT's rudder steering system components. The ski boat uses the kit's full interior with four-passenger seating and a matching upholstered V-drive cover. Even the propellers are specific to the ski and drag versions.



How about a little kitbashing? Revell's "Go & Show" kit may be rare, but you can approximate its content by building Revell's "Hemi-Hydro" along with Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland bench and bucket seats (No. RM-155) and zoomie headers with tips and "Firepower" rocker covers (No. RM-156) conversion kits. This model of the kit's racing version omits the wood decking and changes the engine to a kitbashed MEL 430 V8. Note the kit-provided Casale V-drive gearbox and the details extending from the cavitation plate in back.



AMT's "Hull Raiser" kit is shown here built box stock (left) with hand-painted wood decking and a pearl yellow fade to candy red achieved with spray paint. The second boat (center) matches the AMT "Quarter Masters" box art with 1968 Pontiac Verdery Green from MCW Automotive Finishes and a Pontiac V8 built from an AMT Parts Pack. The third boat (right) is again a "Hull Raiser" built with a 1970s-style Chevy hi-riser, dual-quad, big-block engine, and custom faded flames out front.



These two are more involved racing-themed kitbashes. A 1/1 scale V12 Allison-powered boat from the 1965 Salton 500 endurance race inspired the red boat. It combines the front hull of the Revell "Hemi-Hydro" with the rear of the AMT "Hull Raiser" along with the Allison engine from the AMT Parts Pack and a modified front-deck layout. The yellow boat uses a shortened AMT "Hull Raiser" body along with a turbine engine from the rare 1970s AMT "Turbosonic" dragster.



Both of these came from Revell "Hemi-Hydro" kits. The pearl, mint-green boat (left) features a front hull insert made from wood veneer and a fully upholstered, five-seat interior sourced from the Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland conversion parts mentioned above. The lime-green boat had its hull narrowed front to back and a Revell Parts Pack Pontiac V8 swapped in.



This Revell "Hemi-Hydro" has an inboard/outboard jet drive. It uses club-style seating and a scale Berkeley Jet Drive propulsion system, both sourced from Calnaga Castings. The mill is a tri-power Olds 400 V8 sourced from an AMT/Ertl 1969 Olds 442 kit. Decals simulate the wood inserts on the hull.

LET'S ADD TWO DRAGSTER ENGINES FOR SOME SERIOUS KITBASHING!

How involved your model-boat building gets remains entirely up to you. But these basic kits lend themselves to some complex drag and ski boat projects. Inspired by the "Mortician" and "Adios Two" drag boats, here are key steps to help you create a dual-engined drag boat of your own.



You'll need a "Hull Raiser" from the Round 2 "Aqua Rod" reissue and a reissue of the AMT Double Dragster. For the optional sponsons, you'll need an AMT Trophy Series Rayson-Craft boat kit or fabricate them from styrene sheet.



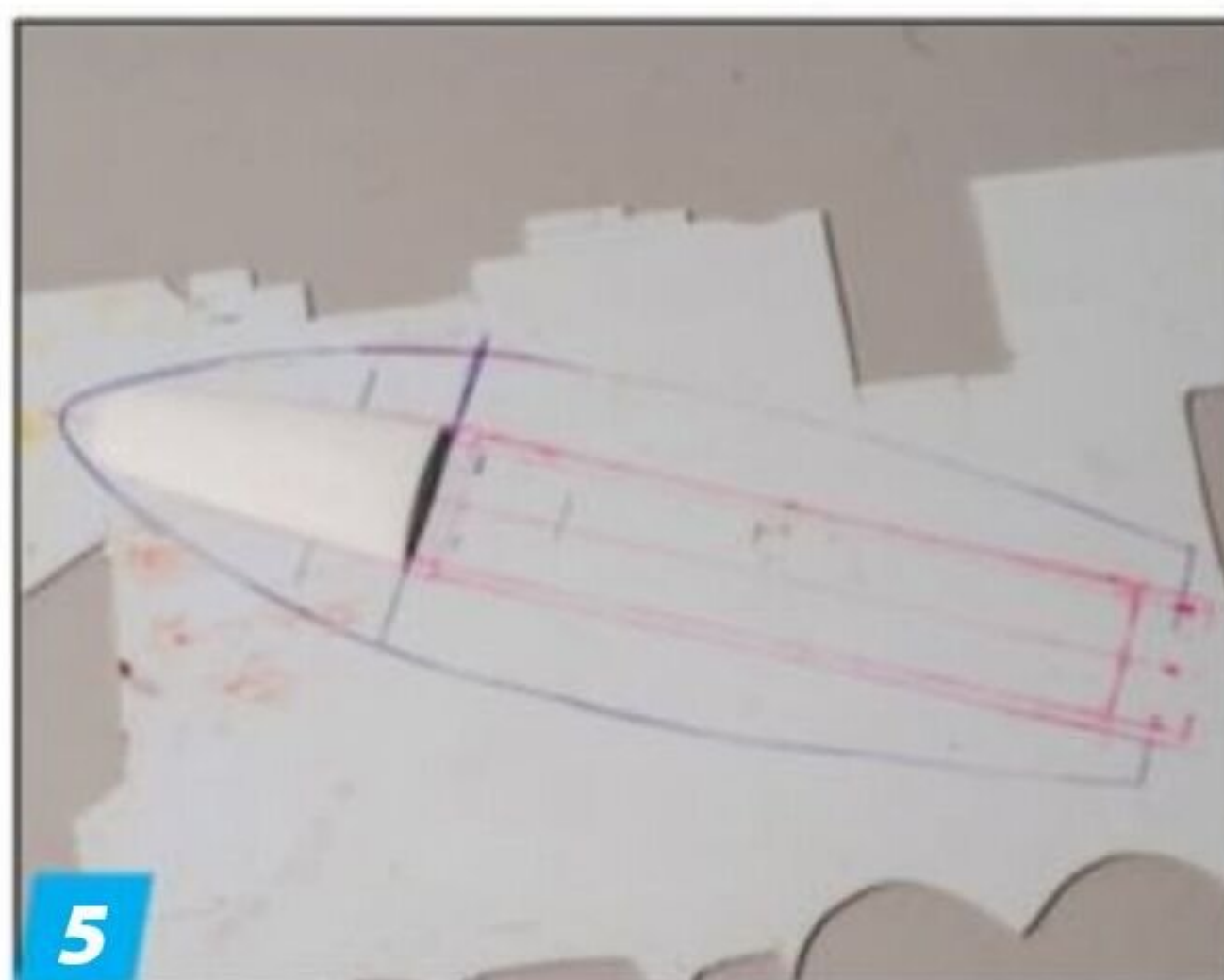
Three parts comprise the "Hull Raiser" body. Take the top part and use a jeweler's saw to remove the center section (the recessed portion with engraved wood grain). The part on the right is hull's new top outer edge.



Tape a large sheet of .040- or .060-inch styrene sheet to your work surface. Take the new hull top from Step 2 and trace the inner edge onto the styrene sheet. This creates a new pattern for the center of the hull top.



Drag boats in the mid-late 1960s migrated toward center-located single-seat driver compartments, often with a raised cowl in front of the driver. Cut the upper body of the Double Dragster streamliner lengthwise, retaining the part at the bottom.



Glue the cowl from Step 4 to the piece from Step 3 as shown. Use the rear edge of the cowl to establish the width of section to remove for the driver and engines. Remove the area inside the red lines and cut along the black lines to finish the top hull insert.



Some 1960s drag boats included sponsons on the hull to help lift the boat above the water during acceleration. I took these from a Rayson-Craft glue-bomb; you could build them from styrene sheet and two-part automotive putty. They are optional.



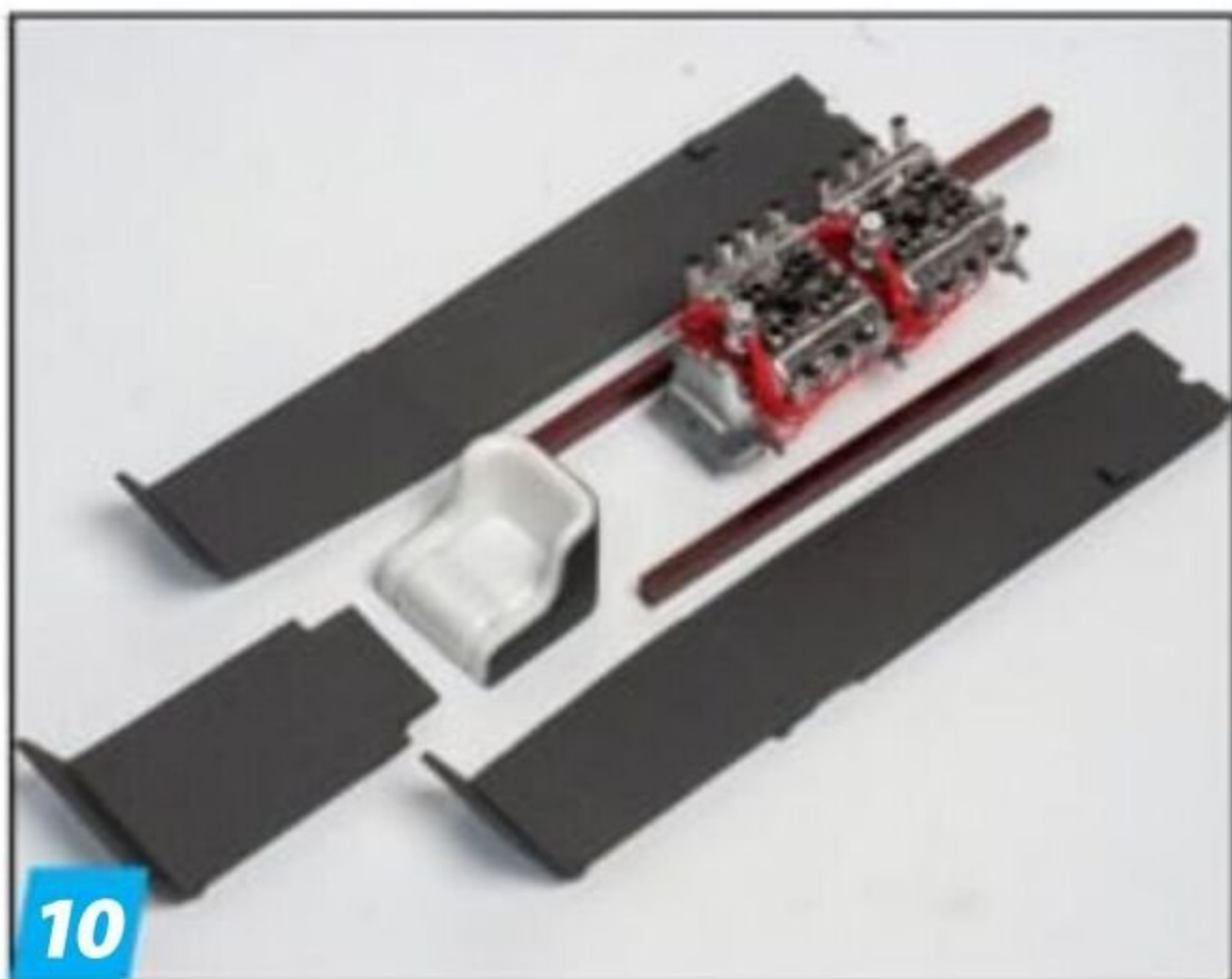
Test-fit the Step 5 insert and fine-tune for a snug fit. Before gluing, turn it over and attach rectangular styrene strip around the edge of the central opening to reinforce the area. Also cut styrene strip and add it to the hull interior to make stringers (orange).



Test-fit your engines and driver's seat. If everything looks good, glue the top insert in place. I used plastic cement followed with superglue once the initial application had dried. Let these glue joints dry for several days before applying body putty to them.



Time to paint the hull! I painted this nine-color scheme with Testors One Coat lacquers — no airbrushing. You can achieve a similar result with other hobby paints. Note, I masked off the interior while painting the hull.



10 Inside, the stringers (front-to-rear frame rails in wood and fiberglass boats) are finished to look like dark wood. The seat wears Tamiya Pearl White (No. TS-45) and Semi-Gloss Clear (No. TS-79). The tandem Chevy engines can be built straight from the AMT Double Dragster box.



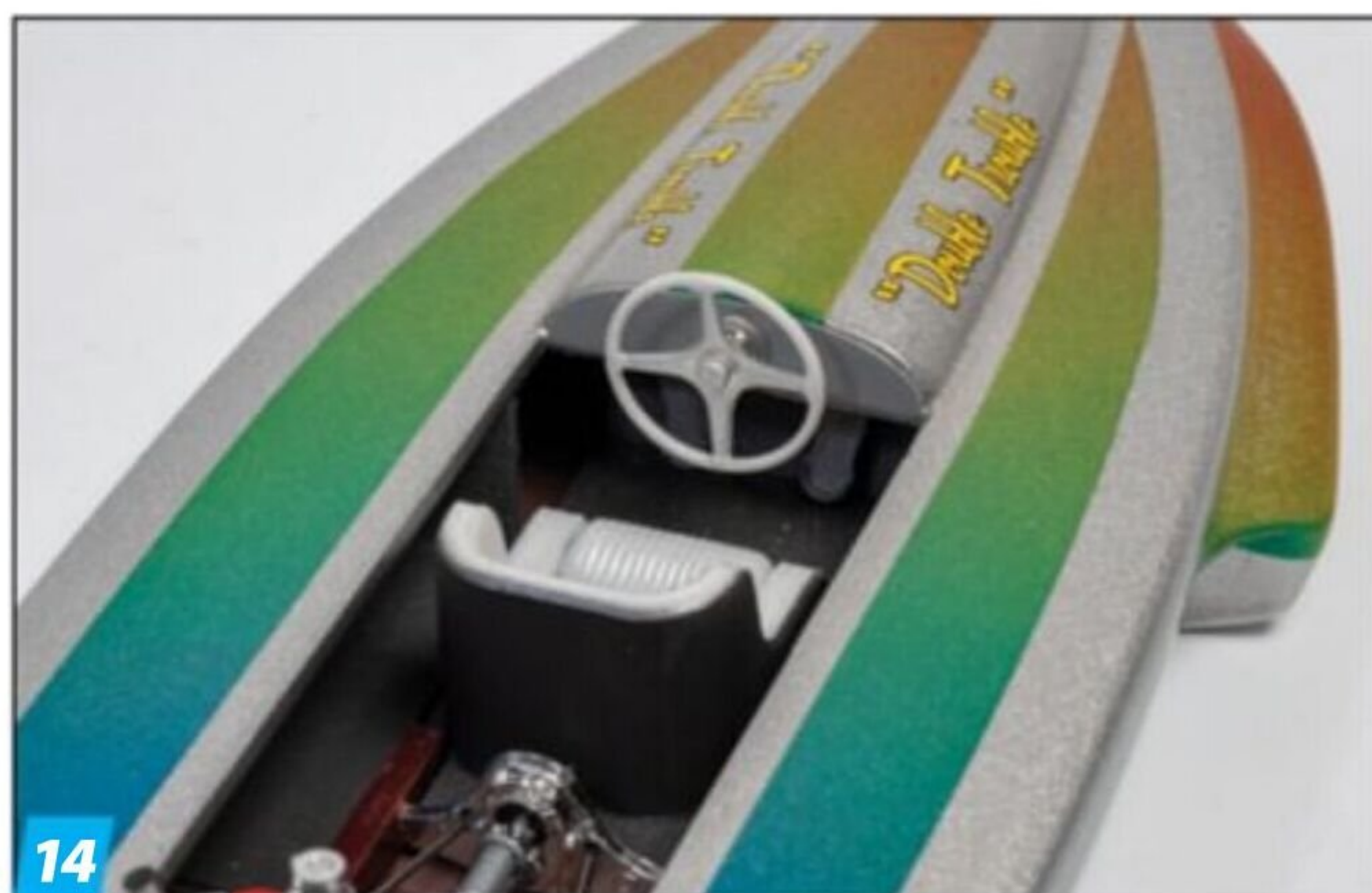
11 The engines wear Corvette ribbed valve covers, fabricated fuel lines, and spark-plug wires. The exhaust headers came from the chrome parts in the special edition version of the Round 2 AMT Double Dragster. The motor-mount plates are perfect for drag boats.



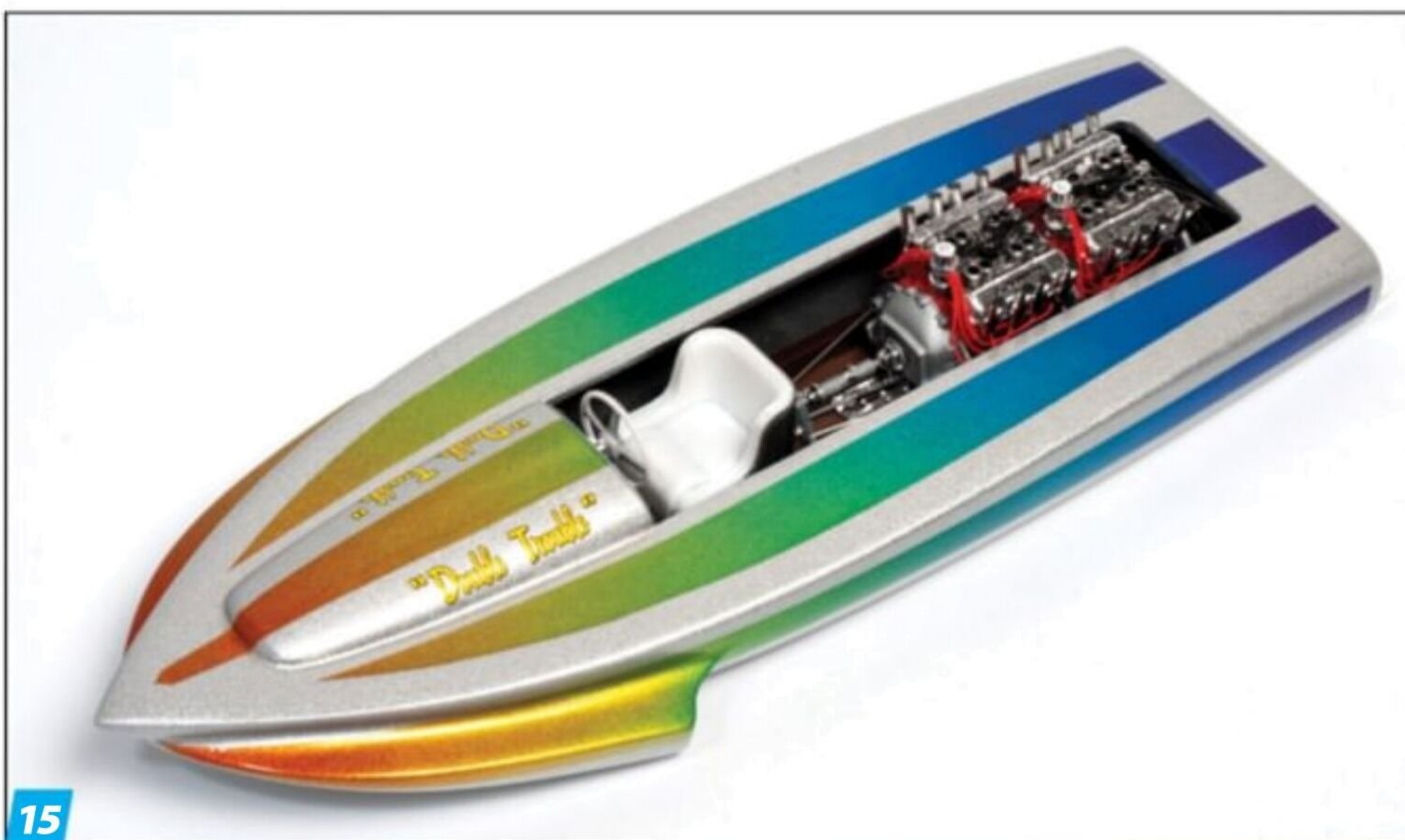
12 I cut down the Double Dragster steel frames to connect to the engine-mount plates to make runners on both sides. They elevate the engines relative to the hull and stringers and create clearance for the slightly cut-down oil pans and the bell housing.



13 After mounting the engine, it's time for the V-drive. I extended the driveshaft on the engine to connect to the gear box (chrome behind the seat), and shortened slightly the shaft from the gear box to the hull bottom to drive the prop. The braces were cut from steel rod and connected to the frame rails.



14 Cut a panel from .015-inch styrene sheet and mount it to the edge of the raised cowl behind the steering wheel. A simple, four-spoke steering wheel from my spares box was painted to match the upholstery. The "Moon" gas and cavitation plate pedals were sourced from Replicas and Miniatures Co. of Maryland.



15 All finished! This kitbashed project looks very different from the stock AMT "Hull Raiser." The "Double Trouble" decals came from the expanded markings in the special edition AMT Double Dragster.

FINAL THOUGHTS

INTRIGUED? I HOPE SO.

But maybe your greatest interest is in kits of smaller, personal watercraft. Or maybe you like 1970s to 2000s hydro kits. There's more to talk about, and I've taken the discussion to FineScale.com/hydros to talk more 1/25 scale boat and pleasure craft kits. There's everything from a personal jet ski to a replica of the 1977 Unlimited Hydro national champion. Join me there and get serious about churning (scale) water! **FSM**



Clear Prop! F-86A Sabre

A fantastic addition to the current catalog of F-86 kits on the market, the Clear Prop! 1/48 scale F-86A Sabre plastic model kit appears to be the first 1/48 scale injection-molded plastic “A” since Lindberg released one in 1953.

The kit’s light gray plastic parts show fine recessed panel lines and details. Based on the parts breakdown, I suspect Clear Prop! is planning other versions of the Sabre.

The detailed, multipart ejection seat receives gorgeous photo-etched metal (PE) seatbelts. Decal gauges settle nicely into the instrument panel’s raised bezels, and PE reflector bezels for the gunsight complete the panel. A finely molded control stick and side consoles with separate throttle and other levers finish the cockpit tub.

The intake tunnel runs from the front to

the compressor blades, and the jet pipe runs completely from the turbine to the exhaust. The part quality, detail, and fit are first-rate. The speed brake bays and doors are the most detailed I’ve seen on an F-86 kit; separate hydraulic lines are even provided for the actuators.

The instructions have you cement the intake, jet pipe, nose-gear bay, cockpit rear deck, and cockpit into the fuselage before joining the halves. The locating tabs are large and precise, and everything should fit just fine. Clear Prop! did a wonderful job of keeping the engineering tight on this kit, but maybe too tight. I installed everything on one side as indicated before joining the fuselage. Big mistake! It resulted in a twisted fuselage and time wasted filling and sanding large gaps.

Instead, cement the fuselage together before installing any interior parts. Then, install the cockpit rear deck and cockpit, followed by pushing the assembled jet pipe into place and then the intake. Because Clear Prop! molded the lower fuselage mostly open to be completed with other panels and the lower wing, this is easily done.

The main gear bays in the lower-wing half are detailed with separate walls and PE actuators and equipment. Molded apart from the wheels, the tires have Goodyear logos on the side-walls. The flaps, slats, rudder, and ailerons are all separate, and the completed wing fits rather snugly into the fuselage.

The fit of the nose gun port panels isn’t great, but filling and sanding would remove most of the detail. (I didn’t fill or sand my kit, so you can see what I mean.)

Beautifully printed, the decals are a bit fiddly, especially the small stencil decals. I had some curl on themselves during application and others tore, so take care when applying them. Hiding clear carrier film from decals on natural-metal finishes can be problematic, but not here. It just disappeared. Nice work, Clear Prop! A separate sheet shows stencil placement, and the color callouts for the marking options appear accurate.

The Clear Prop! 1/48 scale F-86A Sabre plastic model aircraft kit is great and produces a terrific replica of this much-needed subject. Mine fought me, although some of that was my fault. The engineering is tight and you have to pay attention. You’ll want to have a few kits behind you before tackling this one. The F-86 is one of the most beautiful aircraft ever built and Clear Prop! did a fantastic job of replicating the initial production variant.

— Caleb Horn



Kit No.: CP4824 **Scale:** 1/48 **Mfr.:** Clear Prop!, clearpropmodels.com (Sample courtesy of mfr.) **Price:** \$57.95

Comments: Injection-molded plastic (gray, clear); 212 parts (38 photo-etched metal parts); decals **Pros:** Needed subject; well-detailed; decal print quality; nice photo-etched metal **Cons:** Very tight fits; difficult stencils





ICM M1097A2 Humvee

The venerable Humvee has been part of America's armed forces since the 1980s. Many model manufacturers have produced many different Humvee kits, and now joining the ranks is the ICM 1/35 scale Humvee M1097A2 plastic model kit of a stripped-down, utility variant.

Assembly begins with the single-piece frame, suspension, and drive train. The parts fit well and need only minimal cleanup for mold lines. As the most complex portion of the kit, I found the instructions unclear for locating certain parts, which is unfortunate because it's the most complex part. Trial and error saw me through, and the rest of the kit was smooth sailing.

The basic body builds quickly — it doesn't even have doors! I only deviated from the build sequence in the instructions

to hold off adding the windshield and its frame until after painting. I didn't want to mask the clear parts, and the engineering of the kit made adding it at the end easy.

Finally, I must say the vinyl tires are beautifully realized. ICM has molded them without ugly seams running through the middle of the tread, and there's a single connection point that can be hidden where the tire meets the ground.

Unmentioned in the instructions, ICM published an animated video on YouTube showing the model's full assembly, step by step. Had I known this early on, it would have helped with assembling the chassis!

References for ICM colors are provided, but I prefer Tamiya paints for airbrushing. The instructions provide two nice, five-view color profiles of the standard NATO three-tone camouflage or desert tan schemes. I chose the desert scheme and used Tamiya Flat Black (No. XF-01) for the frame and suspension and Desert Yellow (No. XF-59) for the body. I detail-painted with Vallejo colors.

ICM's decals are thin and use a new digital process that allows you to wash away the carrier film after placing the marking on the model. This eliminates the unsightly clear edges around decals, and I found it worked perfectly! I hope this is a sign of things to come for all decal manufacturers.

One warning: Cut the single decal for the five gauges on the instrument panel into individual gauges. The carrier film dissolved before I could line up all the instruments, and a couple were ruined when I tried to move them into place. I ended up painting them instead.

This was a small project, given the stripped-down nature of the vehicle and relatively low parts count. Despite the one



issue of vague location points on the chassis, it's a fun, straightforward kit to build. The parts fit well, with almost no cleanup required. I only spent about 10 hours building my ICM 1/35 scale Humvee M1097A2 plastic model kit and another five hours on painting and weathering. I think it would be a good kit for a beginner with a few kits under their belt.

— David Nelson



Kit No.: 35435 **Scale:** 1/35 **Mfr.:** ICM, icm.com.ua (Sample courtesy of mfr.)
Price: \$66.99 **Comments:** Injection-molded plastic (tan, clear); 139 parts (4 vinyl tires); decals **Pros:** Minimal cleanup; good fit and engineering; great decals **Cons:** The instructions were vague on the placement of some parts on the chassis/drivetrain

Exclusive reviews online!

Want more Workbench Reviews? Head to FineScale.com/Reviews:

- Clear Prop! 1/48 scale MQ-1C Gray Eagle
- Tamiya 1/48 scale F-35C Lighting II
- Revell 1/25 scale *Stranger Things* '85 Chevy K5 Blazer
- Eduard 1/48 scale P-51B/C Mustang
- ICM 1/48 scale MH-60L Black Hawk
- Academy 1/144 scale P-8 Poseidon
- Italeri 1/72 scale F-35C Lightning II ▼



TOTALNAVY.COM
ALL SHIPS, ALL NAVIES, ALL KINDS
(718) 471-5464
www.TotalNavy.com

FANTASTIC PLASTIC Unique Resin Kits for Experienced Modelers



Visit the Virtual Museum Store
www.fantastic-plastic.com
Concept Aircraft • Spacecraft • Sci-Fi

GLENN HOOVER



Model Build Instructions

I do the prep work for you...
Reorganize the model kit instructions
Combine aftermarket part instructions
...into a seamless, single checklist

New Releases • Upgraded Website
See my website for a list of books
glennhoovermodels.com

MEGA HOBBY

The Largest Selection of Hobbies on the Web!
Over 40,000 items from hundreds of manufacturers

**FREE SHIPPING ON LOWER 48
USA ORDERS OVER \$150**

MegaHobby.com
110 Hurlock Avenue
Magnolia, NJ, 08049
Order securely online or call toll free: 888-642-0093
WWW.MEGAHOBBY.COM

FSM FineScale Modeler

Watch and Subscribe!

You Tube

<http://www.youtube.com/finescalemodeler>



Ad Index

We believe that our readers are as important as our advertisers. If you do not receive your merchandise or a reply from an advertiser within a reasonable period, please contact us with details about your order. Model Railroader magazine, 18650 W. Corporate Dr., Ste. 103, Brookfield, WI 53045. The Advertiser Index is provided as a service to *FineScale Modeler* magazine readers. The magazine is not responsible for omissions or for typographical errors in names or page numbers.

ARA Press _____ 4

Alpha Precision Abrasives _____ 8

ATLANTIS TOY & HOBBY _____ 8

Aves Studio _____ 8

Cult TV Man _____ 8

Evergreen Scale Models _____ 8

Fantastic Plastic Models _____ 56

Flex I File _____ 8

Glenn Hoover Models, LLC _____ 56

MegaHobby.com _____ 56

Model Expo _____ 5

MODEL RECTIFIER CORP. _____ 2

PROXXON _____ 7

Round 2, LLC _____ 59

Tamiya America, Inc. _____ 60

TOTALNAVY> _____ 56

Trains.com _____ 39

GET MORE
of what you love at
FineScale.com!

FSM FineScale Modeler

Watch and Subscribe!

You Tube

<http://www.youtube.com/finescalemodeler>



**What's
New?**

Don't miss what's new.
Watch the
New Product Rundown
video today!



[www.finescale.com/videos/
new-product-rundown](http://www.finescale.com/videos/new-product-rundown)

Classified Marketplace

This section is open to anyone who wants to sell or buy scale modeling merchandise. FSM reserves the right to edit undesirable copy or refuse listing. For FSM's private records, please furnish: a telephone number and a street address.

All Copy: Set in standard format. First several words only set in bold face. If possible, ads should be sent typewritten and categorized to ensure accuracy.

Coming Events Rate: \$45 per issue (55 word maximum). Ads will contain the following information about the event: state, city, sponsoring organization and name of event, meet, auction or show, dates, location, times, admission fee, name and/or telephone number and/or email of person to contact for information. Name, daytime telephone number and street address of the person providing the information is also required but need not be included in the ad. Unless otherwise requested, ads will be published in the issue month that the event occurs in. Additional months are available at the \$45 per issue fee. Please specify issue date(s).

Word Ad Rates: 1 insertion - \$1.13 per word, 3 insertions - \$1.08 per word, 6 insertions - 99¢ per word. \$30 minimum per issue. Count all initials, single numbers, street number or name, city, state, zip, phone numbers each as one word. Payment must accompany the ad. To receive the discount you must order and prepay for all ads at one time. We accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover.

Send Your Ads To: *FineScale Modeler* - Classified Marketplace, 18650 W. Corporate Dr., Ste. 103, Brookfield, WI 53045. or E-mail: classads@firecrown.com

COMING EVENTS

CA, VENTURA: MODELFEET '25. Sunday, February 23, 2025. 8:30am-3:00pm. Plastic model contest and swap meet to be held at the Seaside Park / Ventura County Fairgrounds. 10 W. Harbor Blvd., Ventura, CA 93001. Admission: \$10 per person. State parking fee applies. For more information contact Vernon Morseman at 805-658-8138

IL, WHEATON: 85th ILLINOIS PLASTIC KIT & TOY SHOW. February 23, 2025, 9am-2pm. DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Rd., 60187. Adults: \$8.00, under 12 FREE w/adult. 150 tables available, BUY/SELL/TRADE OR JUST BROWSE. Have a great time. Cars, Trucks, Airplanes, Military, Fire/Police, Muscle Cars, all scales. Re-live childhood memories. Follow us on Facebook! Past-Time Hobbies, Inc. 630-969-1847

All listed events were confirmed as active at the time of press.

Please contact event sponsor for current status of the event.

FOR SALE

CANOPY MASKING AND MORE! ezmask@gmail.com - Chris Loney, 75 Golf Club Rd., Smiths Falls, ON, Canada K7A 4S5. 613-283-5206 or 613-206-9459

FRED'S MODEL WORLD sells model kits too darn cheap! Check us out at www.fredsmodelworldonline.com. Facebook, or contact Fred at fsterns@aol.com or call 716-838-6797. Our address is Fred Sterns, 48 Standish Road, Buffalo, NY 14216

SHIP AND AIRCRAFT MODELS. Built for display. For additional information contact, Ray Guinta, PO Box 74, Leonia, NJ 07605. 201-461-5729 www.modelshipsbyrayguinta.com

WANTED

AIRCRAFT, ARMOR, SCI-FI, FIGURES, AUTO, ETC. Buying kit collections, large or small, worldwide. Top prices paid. Call Jim Banko 610-814-2784 or mail list to 122 Independence Ct., Bethlehem, PA 18020, fax 610-439-4141. E-mail: cth1@prodigy.net

ALL SLOT CARS WANTED. Any kind, any condition. Top dollar paid. PAUL at 248-760-6960. E-mail: slotcarguy@slotcarguy.com

CASH PAID FOR PLASTIC MODEL COLLECTIONS. Call John in Michigan 248-707-4430. Email: aspectav5429@yahoo.com

MODEL CAR AND TRUCK KITS. Unbuilt, started or built. Any size collection. Good prices paid. Please contact: Fred Sterns, 48 Standish Road, Buffalo, NY 14216. Phone: 716-838-6797. Fax: 716-836-6057. E-mail: fsterns@aol.com

PLASTIC MODEL COLLECTIONS: BUILT ONLY. Planes, cars, boats. Contact mike@peterson-picture.com or 773-387-1400.

MISCELLANEOUS

1ST AND ABSOLUTELY THE BEST MUSEUM-QUALITY MODELS. IPMS Nationals winner building aircraft and armor to your specification, including conversions and scratchbuilt. Call BC Models for quote and information at 913-385-9594 or visit www.bcmmodels.com

Closing Dates:

May 2025 closes February 11

July closes April 14

September closes June 16

November closes August 18

Local Hobby Shop Directory

Local Hobby Shop Directory listings are available for the next six issues for \$165 (payable in advance) or at \$37 per issue (billed to established accounts for a minimum of six insertions). Ads will be set in standard listing typography. All insertions must be consecutive and may be invoiced if you have credit established with us. No mention of mail order business permitted. Closing dates listed in Classifieds section.

ARKANSAS • Jacksonville

Headquarters for scale hobbies. Models; N-HO-O trains; gaming; tools; paints, etc. Discounts & special orders. Open 10-6, closed Sundays and Wednesdays.

RAIL & SPRUE HOBBIES
1200 John Harden Dr. 501-982-6836

CALIFORNIA • Burbank

Large selection of plastic kits, paints, and supplies. Special orders no problem. Visit us in person or online www.houseofhobbies.com. Secure online ordering.

BURBANK'S HOUSE OF HOBBIES
911 S. Victory Blvd. 818-848-3674

CALIFORNIA • Garden Grove

Rewards program for 10% back on purchases. Plastic aircraft, armor, ships, cars, decals, books, paints, tools, miniatures war-games. Mon-Thur 11-8, Fri 11-midnight, Sat 10-midnight, Sun 11-7 www.brookhursthobbies.com

BROOKHURST HOBBIES
12188 Brookhurst St. 714-636-3580

CALIFORNIA • Ventura

Wide selection of domestic & import plastic aircraft, armor, ships, cars, Gundam & rare kits. HO, N, Z, O, G scale trains. Track, structures, scenery & supplies. Also carry Estes rockets. Open 7 days. www.venturahobbies.com

VENTURA HOBBIES
2950 Johnson Dr., #128 805-658-8138

COLORADO • Aurora

Large inventory of models from the world over! Detailing accessories, research publications, games, trains, R/C, tools, and supplies. Easy access from D.I.A. <http://www.colpar.com>

COLPAR HOBBIES
1915 S. Havana St. 800-876-0414

CONNECTICUT • Milford

Extensive selection of armor kits & Verlinden accessories. Military, auto & aircraft plastic models. Photo-etched parts. O gauge train sets. Open Tues - Sat 11-6, Sun 12-5. www.HQHobbies.com

HQ HOBBIES
394 New Haven Ave., Unit 1 203-882-1979

MASSACHUSETTS • Norton

Thousands of Models Old & New. Autos, Ships, Armor, Planes, Sci-Fi, Books & Supplies. Plus Die-cast and Toys. Th & Fr 12-7. Sat & Sun 12-5. Visit: www.mymummy.com. Email: mummy@mymummy.com

HARRY'S HOBBIES & COLLECTABLE TOYS
250 East Main St., Ste 4, 5, & 6 508-285-8080

MASSACHUSETTS • Wakefield

Complete line of model kits & supplies, plus toy soldiers, figure kits, games, etc. Open 7 days a week. Shipping available. Info: hobbybunker.com

HOBBY BUNKER, INC.
103 Albion Street 781-321-8855

MICHIGAN • Traverse City

Let your imagination run wild! Aircraft, ships, cars, armor, special orders, diecast cars, model railroading Z to G and more...

TRAINS & THINGS HOBBIES
210 East Front St. 231-947-1353

MICHIGAN • Ypsilanti-Metro Detroit

Your single stop model building shop. Michigan's largest selection of new and vintage kits in all genres plus everything needed to build them. Please call for hours. Visit us on Facebook. www.modelcave.com

MODELCAVE
103 W. Michigan Avenue 734-316-2281

MONTANA • Hamilton

Your one-stop shop for model trains, R/C planes and vehicles, model kits, paint, accessories, and much more! customerservice@rimrockhobbies.com. Visit: rimrockhobbies.com

RIMROCK HOBBIES
305 W Main St 406-361-8065

NEW JERSEY • Kenil

Full service hobbies, a full line of HO, N, 3-Rail, military, cars, boats, planes, dollhouses, scratchbuilding supplies, plus details-details!

KENIL HOBBIES
590 Rt. 46 973-584-1188

NEW JERSEY • Magnolia (Camden)

Huge foreign & domestic model selection all scales. Automobiles, aircraft, ship, books, wargames, scenery, diorama supplies, parts & tools. Open 7 days

AAA HOBBIES & CRAFTS
706 N. White Horse Pike 856-435-1188

OKLAHOMA • Owasso

Oklahoma's largest plastic kit, paint & aftermarket inventory. Planes, cars, trucks, armor, ships, trains & sci-fi. Special orders welcome! Tues - Sat 10-5, Closed Sun & Mon. Web site: www.topshelfmodelsllc.com

TOP SHELF MODELS
119 S. Main St. 918-274-0433

OREGON • Beaverton

Complete full line hobby shop. Z, N, HO, O, Lionel, and LGB. Open Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5.

TAMMIES HOBBIES
12024 SW Canyon Rd. 503-644-4535

TEXAS • San Antonio

Scale modeling from beginner to expert. Wide selection of aircraft, armor, autos, figures, ships, & sci-fi. Lots of reference material, detail parts, decals, tools, & eight lines of paint. Tue-Sat 10am-6pm www.dibbleshobbies.com

DIBBLE'S HOBBIES
1029 Donaldson Ave. 210-735-7721

TEXAS • San Antonio

ONE STOP SHOPPING FOR PLASTIC MODELS! Stocking Aircrafts, Armor, Car, Ship and Sci-fi models and detailing accessories. Full lines of Tamiya, Vallejo, and Aclad Paints.

HILL COUNTRY HOBBY
9355 Bandera Road, Ste. 118 210-681-2007

VIRGINIA • Staunton

Biggest scale model kit & hobby store in Virginia! We house over 100 model manufacturers and nearly 20,000 model kits. Open Tuesday-Sunday, closed Monday's. <https://frontline-model-kits.square.site/>

FRONTLINE MODEL KITS & HOBBIES
18 West Beverley Street 540-569-2903

WASHINGTON • Seattle

Plastic Model Specialists. Largest selection of plastic models in NW! We have Aircraft, Armor, Auto, SCI-FI, and Gundam, along with great paint selection. Email us at skyway@nwlink.com or look us up at www.skywaymodel.com

SKYWAY MODEL SHOP
12615 Renton Ave. S. 206-772-1211

CANADA-ON • Toronto

Large selection of new & out-of-production kits. Accessories & finishing products. Servicing the hobbies since 1986. We buy kit collections. www.wheelswingshobbies.com

WHEELS AND WINGS
1880 Danforth Ave. 416-752-0071

SINGAPORE • Singapore

Old kits & latest releases. Good selection of unusual model kits & accessories. We stock electric trains & slot cars. Open 7 days. The Katong Shopping Centre. www.hobbybounties.com

HOBBY BOUNTIES
865 Mountbatten Rd #02-91/92 65-6440-1890

Say you saw their
directory ad in
FineScale Modeler.

Have you seen what's new on **FineScale.com**?

PRODUCT INFO

EXTRAS

VIDEOS

SHOP

GALLERIES

HOW TO

COMMUNITY

AND MORE!

GO TO **FINESCALE.COM** TODAY!

By Tim Boyd

Scale models fire hot!

AMT turned up the temperature with its 1963 Pontiac Bonneville convertible kit

In the early 1960s, the scale model-car hobby was on fire. Every year brought new kits with new advances. Several of the kitmakers would buy impressive display ads in hot-rod-ding magazines, and in March 1963, AMT bought four pages in *Car Craft*.

Looking like a newsletter tucked inside the larger magazine, AMT's ad updated its ever-broadening kit lineup with single-page stories. One of those, titled "AMT Engineers Scale Nichols' Stock Shop to Build Pontiac Kit." (For the uninitiated, Ray Nichols was one of the premier race-car fabricators during the NASCAR's "Golden Age" in the 1960s and early 1970s.) Apparently, AMT sent two engineers to Nichols' shop in Highland, Indiana, where they photographed and scaled just about everything there. "The results?" the article read. "You'll see when you pop the lid on AMT's 1963 Pontiac kit." Let's do just that.

Page 2 of the aforementioned ad touted the AMT 1963 Bonneville convertible kit's "newly designed deep dish racing wheels, cage type padded roll bar, frame braces, double shocks all around, stock racing exhaust with big 4 [inch] outlet, racing dash, [and] oil cooler." Other racing parts included an Eelco accelerator pedal, fire

extinguisher, racing-style harness and steering wheel, dash-top tachometer, and front and rear stabilizer bars. Final assembly added hood tie-downs, a racing fuel filler, a gas tank vent, and headlight covers. A set of garage tools and gas can were added display accessories.

Most annual kits back then shared tooling with the pre-assembled "promotional" dealer giveaways. Since Pontiac designated the top-of-the-line Bonneville as the subject of its 1963 promotional, it became AMT's assembly kit instead of the entry-level Catalina.

AMT's factory-stock build options included the four-barrel and Tri-Power

intake setups for the 389 V8, plus single and dual four-barrel options with Super Duty exhaust manifolds for the 421 V8. The interior featured bucket seats, a console, and a scale "mascot" that sure looked like a skunk! The customizing options offered front and rear roll pans, several front and rear grilles, fender scoops, turnpike skirts, and Lucas headlights.

Setting aside that AMT's 1963 Pontiac kits replicated Bonneville hardtops and convertibles, the 1/1 scale Pontiac race cars at the 1963 Daytona 500 were based on Pontiac's shorter wheelbase Catalina hardtops. Further, probably unbeknownst to AMT as it developed the Bonneville kit during spring and summer of 1962, starting with the 1963 season, convertibles would no longer be allowed in NASCAR competition.

This level of racing content was a stunning advance from just a couple of years earlier when parts for racing versions in 3-in-1 annual kits were little more than a roll bar, open wheels, a tonneau cover for convertibles, and decal sheets with a number and a smattering of sponsor logos. Yes, the model kit business was on fire back then, and the AMT 1/25 scale 1963 Bonneville kit (plus the company's four-page magazine ad) was a great example of that fact! **FSM**



AMT 1/25 SCALE 1963 PONTIAC 3 IN 1 BONNEVILLE CONVERTIBLE

Kit No.: 06-613

First Introduced: Early 1963; never reissued

Current Value: \$200

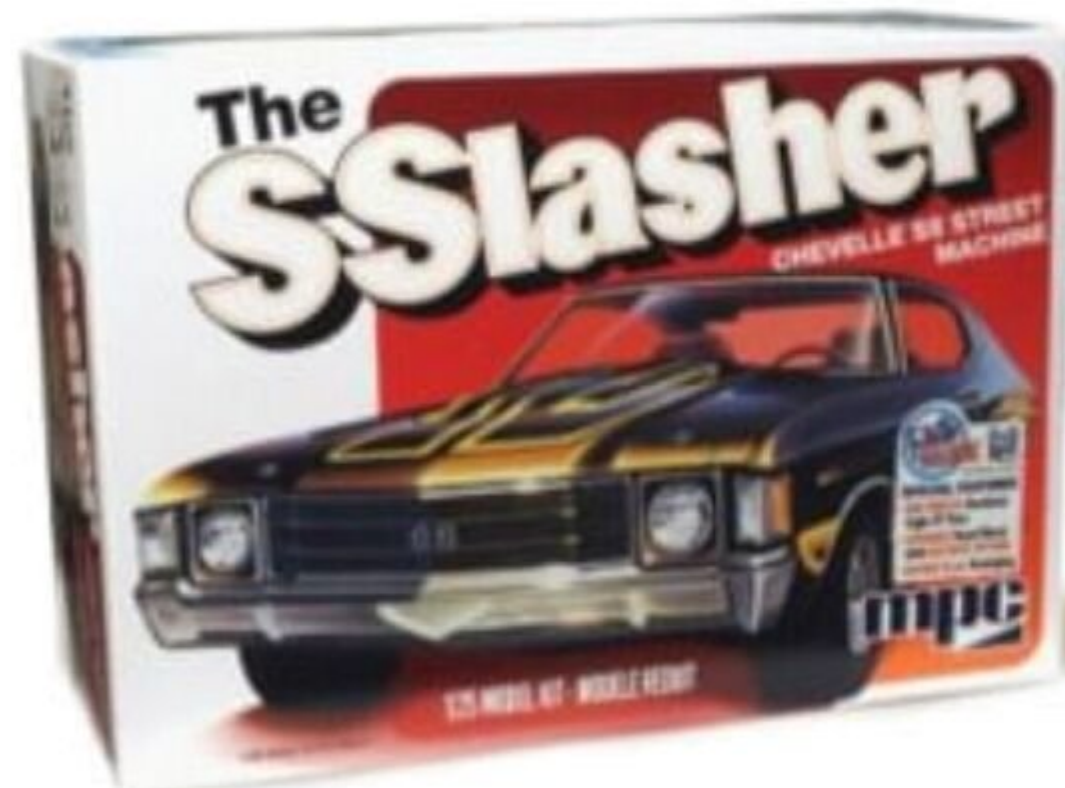
The SSslasher

CHEVELLE SS STREET MACHINE



1/25 MODEL KIT - MODELE REDUIT

FOR AGES 10 TO ADULT.



1972 CHEVY CHEVELLE SSLASHER
#MPC1014 (1:25 SCALE)

MPC revives the Street Machine scene with the SSslasher!

The Chevelle SSslasher is a great project for any modeler that loves 70s street machines.

This kit comes with a ton of great features including bright chrome parts, pad-printed hollow vinyl tires, street aluminum wheels, traction bars, headers, an optional super stock hood scoop, and a detailed interior with roll cage. Also included is a detailed big block engine with a twin 4 BBL hi-rise setup and EXPANDED sheet of SS water-slide decals — all wrapped up nicely in MPC's Retro Style packaging.

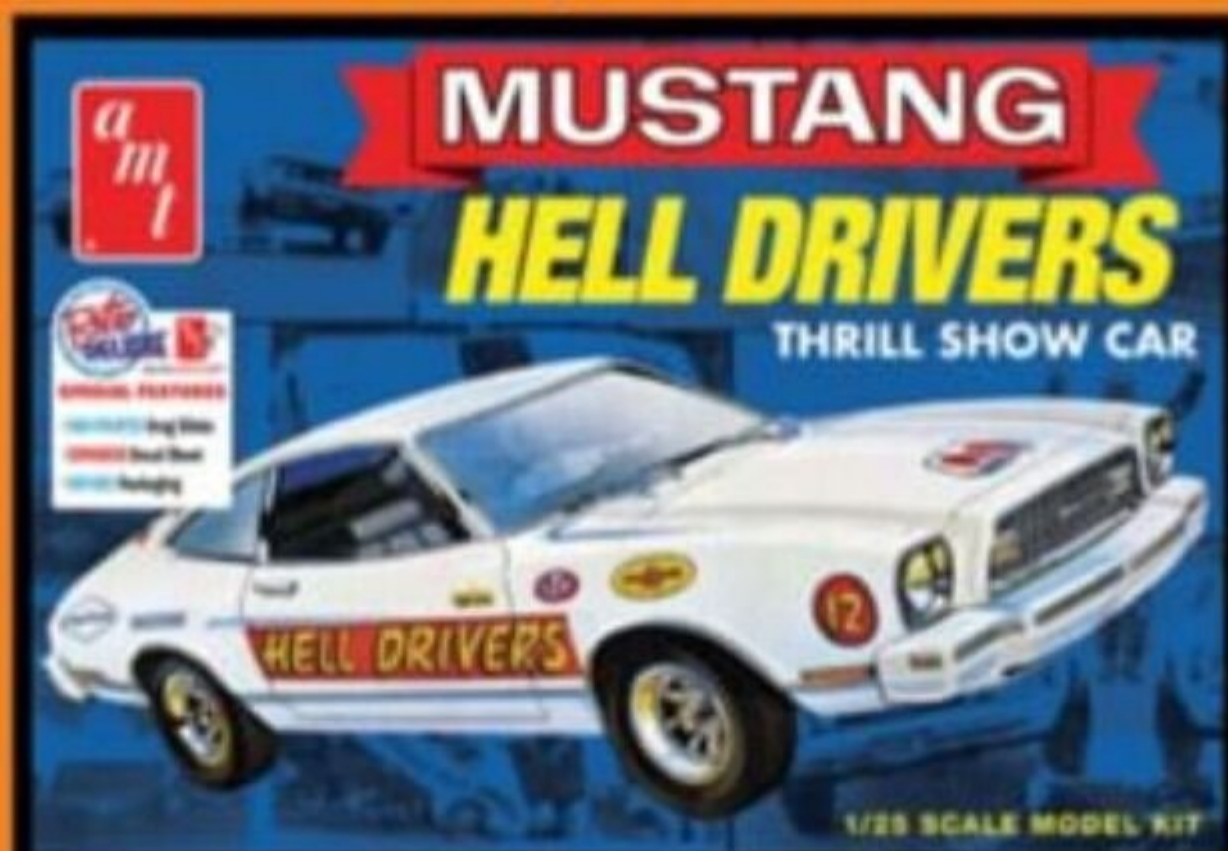
Model Kit Features:

- 1:25 Scale, Skill level 2, paint & glue required.
- 89 total parts
- Molded in white, clear, and transparent red with chrome-plated parts.
- Black Vinyl Tires
- Built size: 7.6 inches long
- Ages 10+
- Expanded Decal Sheet

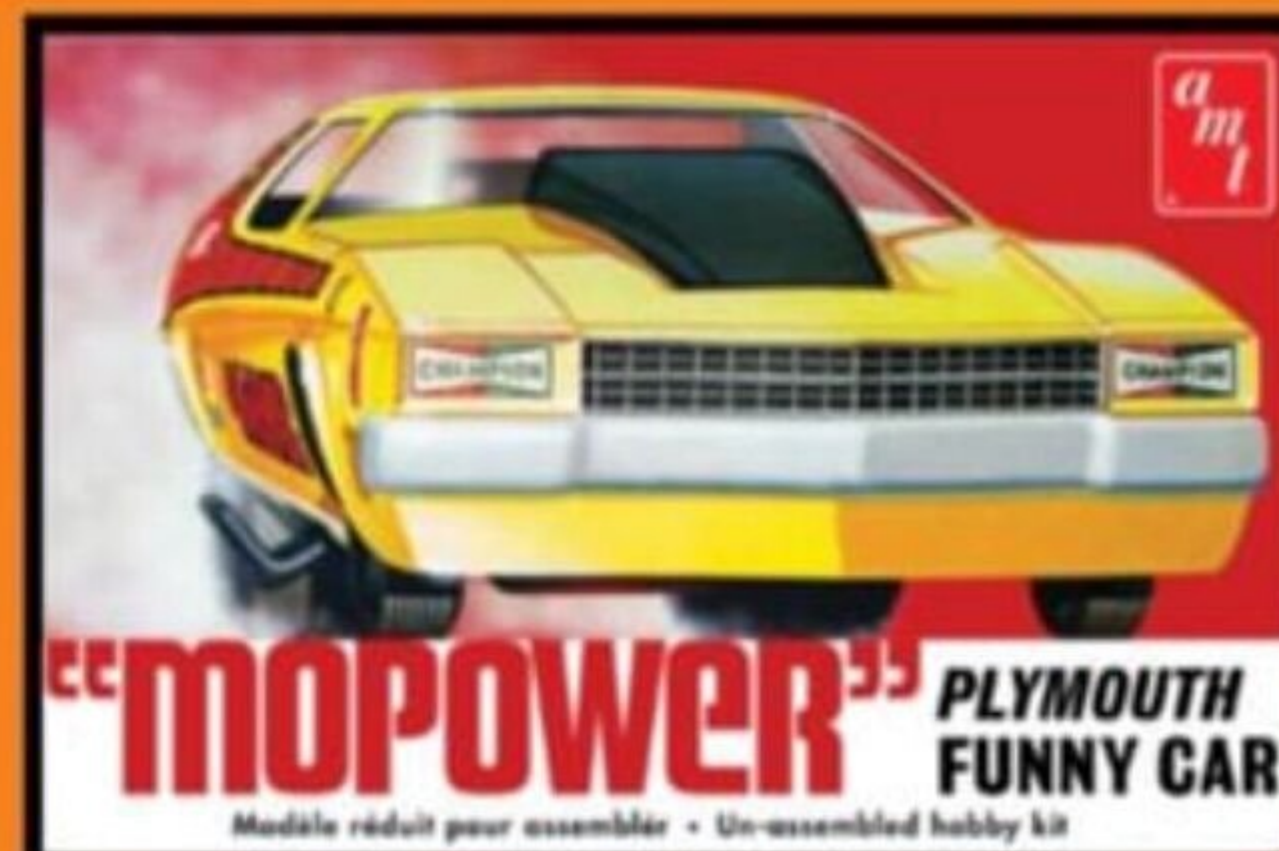
Grab the latest and greatest plastic at: autoworldstore.com!



1976 DODGE DART "WEEKEND WARRIOR"
#MPC1019 (1:25 SCALE)



FORD MUSTANG HELL DRIVERS THRILL SHOW
#AMT14875 (1:25 SCALE)



"MOPOWER" PLYMOUTH FUNNY CAR
#AMT1473 (1:25 SCALE)

NISSAN FAIRLADY 240Z STREET-CUSTOM



Just Customize!

1/24 Sport Car Series

Nissan Fairlady 240Z Street-Custom Item 24367

Minds were certainly blown when the first generation (s30) Nissan Fairlady Z debuted in 1969: its sumptuous long nose short deck fastback coupe looks were - and still are - the stuff dreams are made of, and it had stunning performance to match. Then in late 1971 there was a treat for its fans in the Japanese market as the precious export-only 240Z with its 150 hp 2.4-liter engine was made available - it was predictably a big hit in Japan too, and customers in the archipelago also had a range of customizing parts to choose from. This assembly kit model recreates such a Fairlady 240Z as it might have been seen on the 1970s streets, with popular customizations of the day.



The front-hinged bonnet opens to show off the 2,393cc inline-6 SOHC engine with triple carburetors and aluminum air funnels.

[North American Version]
Build in left-hand drive!



Length: 172mm
Width: 71mm Height: 52mm

Features lowered
suspension

Twin stacked exhausts

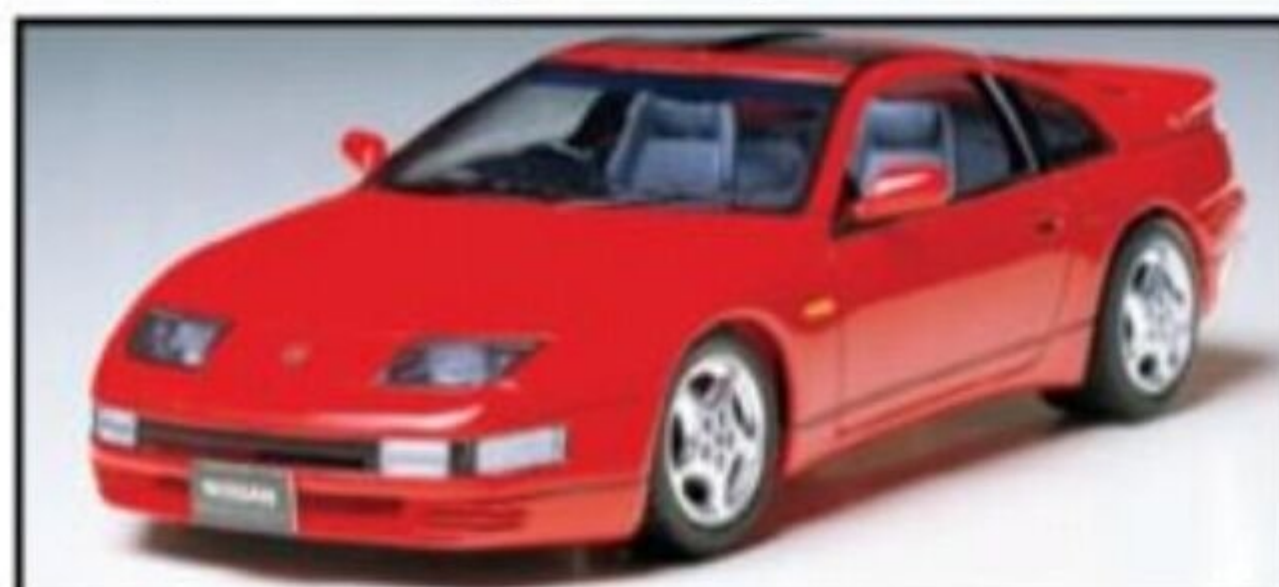


Metal transfers are
included for mirror
surfaces, metal trim,
emblems and more.



RS Watanabe custom wheels are recreated
by a pair of parts.

A legend through the ages Tamiya's 1/24 Sport Car Series has plenty of models of the famed "Z-Car" for you to build. Which will you choose?



Nissan Fairlady 300ZX Turbo (24087)



Nissan 370Z (24315)



Nissan Fairlady 240 ZG (24360)



Nissan 370Z Heritage edition (24348)



Nissan Z (24363)

