



MOSQUITO-GRAM

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY CHAPTER OF IPMS/USA

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FROM THE IRON WORKS

By Big Bill Schwarz, Da' Pres.

Hi all. hope you are all well. As most of you know I'm down and up with my leg but I'm not ready to lose that battle yet! Nuff Said Bout Dat ! Thanks from some of the members for their get well wishes too. With that all said not too much new here. I'm glad the Zooms are working well too so keep them up and try all to participate with words as well as being there. Everyone can have a few minutes so don't be shy and contribute.

Next, Covidcon/slash Mcon has a good chance of working this July because of science. How much we do not know at this time but as it gets closer we will keep you informed. Myself and the E-board will meet separately and put it all together. There will be some restrictions and at this time MASKS ARE MANDATORY ! Like I said I will not sacrifice peoples' health for a F#\$^%ng model show. More to come on this as the 6 of us make all of the arrangements. That's about it for now. My last thing to be said is this. I wish you all good health and to remain well. This is Paramount! Have fun modelling and enjoy life as we have it because crabbing gets us nothing and the situation is still the same. Enjoy the Zooms, build some models and have a great year as we move forward.

" BIG BILL PRES "

Big Bill sent some pictures of his recent purchase-SKYSHARK!



Editor's note: I never heard of this aircraft. Is or was it experimental?





Looks pretty complex!

From the Vice President's Desk

By Vince D'Alessio



Hi Guys!

I hope everyone on is OK. This month I have finished the AFV Club 8 Inch Howitzer M1. Scale 1/35. The sprues are numerous and a lot of the parts are small, some requiring the use of a fine saw. The Howitzer rolls on 10 rubber tires, It has rubber hydraulic lines-some thing I never used before.



Once the build was complete which was very tedious, I primed the model with Badgers Stynylrez black paint. This was a first for me having heard about this stuff a couple of years ago. It has to be sprayed with a .5 mm needled air brush and 20 to 25 psi. It went on well-dried well-not a really dead flat finish but not a satin finish.

The rest of the paint was Mr. Color Olive Drab Semi Gloss It's my personal favorite. The model was weathered with Mig filters and washes along with Mig Pigments. Pictures included..



Guys stay well, hoping Big Bill's leg gets better soon, and that the MCon goes off without a hitch-this includes everyone staying healthy.

Hope to see you all soon,

Vince.

Best Wishes,

The Contact's View

By Mike Pavlo, VP



It has been several weeks since we learned of the demise of Squadron Mail Order, or as we like to remember it - The Squadron Shop. I have a collection of old Squadron catalogs, with many dating back to the early 1970's. Recently I was looking through some of them and the memories came flooding back! I can still recall the first order I placed - my mom wrote a check because I was too young to have a checking account and I paid her back with my hard-earned lawn mowing money. When the box arrived I

could hardly believe models and various modeling goodies (like the highly regarded Squadron Green Putty) could arrive at our doorstep. That feeling is relived to this day whenever a box arrives filled with modeling goodness. But oh, those Squadron catalogs and monthly sale flyers! Back then, it was often in those two items where we first learned of new kit, book and decal releases. And some of their sales were legendary...but you had to act fast, and be sure to provide alternate choices in case you hadn't. I still have every issue of their quarterly magazine "The Squadron" which was their catalog with accompanying build articles and product reviews, all very inspirational to this young model builder.

Squadron was the first nationwide model mail order company. They were the biggest and the best for a long, long time. They eventually lost their way, and it's sad that they're gone, but their demise does not diminish the impact they had on us and our hobby.

Best wishes,
Mike Paavlo

I know I will miss Squadron. I checked the catalogues as they arrived, and as Mike stated, grabbed a few new kits (at the time) for introductory reduced prices. For example: when Eduard released it's FW-190A8 with new tooling in 1/48 scale-Squadron had it for \$19.99! And the same with Hobby Boss 1/48 T-35/76-with a Full and Complete Interior-\$21.99. I grabbed both and am glad I did.



Does this count as building something from plastic that works?



And now it is time for a brand new “**Terre-Gram.**”

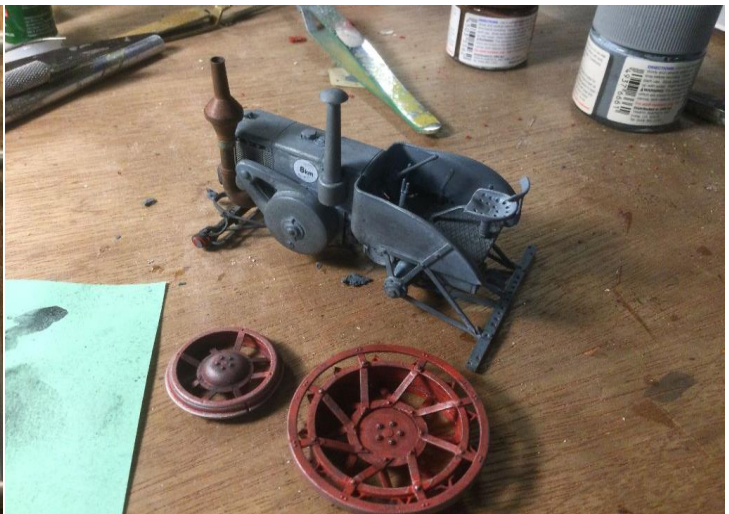
It's all Big Bills Fault!

Well it's true! It's all Big Bills fault! If he hadn't brought in the Thunder Models 1/35th scale Case tractor to a meeting (remember those?) a few years back, then I probably would not be building tractor models today. Don't get me wrong, I still like my vacuform biplane builds, or any biplane build for that matter but it proves the point that it's always good to get out of your comfort zone and build something different.

So here's my latest tractor, it's the Miniart 1/35th scale German Agricultural Tractor. Its actually a Lanz Bulldog and there are some absolutely fascinating videos on YouTube concerning this machine. By the way I did an in-box review if this kit in the December newsletter so let's see how good that review was.



What first impressed me with this kit is the fineness of the surface detail and also the complexity of the steel wheels. The design of those wheels are interesting. The large outer rear wheel and the thin center ridge of the front wheels are used when the tractor is traveling on a hard surface but once into soft ground the wheels sink in and the inner rear wheel spikes or ridges dig in to move propel the machine while the front wheels give flotation and steering. The supporting arms radiating out from the center of the rear wheels flex slightly and act as a crude suspension or shock absorber system. Hey, another piece of useless information! But let's get back to the build.



One of the first problems I found with this kit was the large sprue gates on the parts. This really proved a problem on some of those finely molded and very delicate parts. Even using the sharpest nippers and finest saws parts were still broken. In some cases the cross sectional area of the sprue gate was larger then the part itself. This was especially true for some of the

steering gear parts. It turned out that it was easier to use the part as a pattern and build a replacement out of copper wire or Evergreen rod stock.

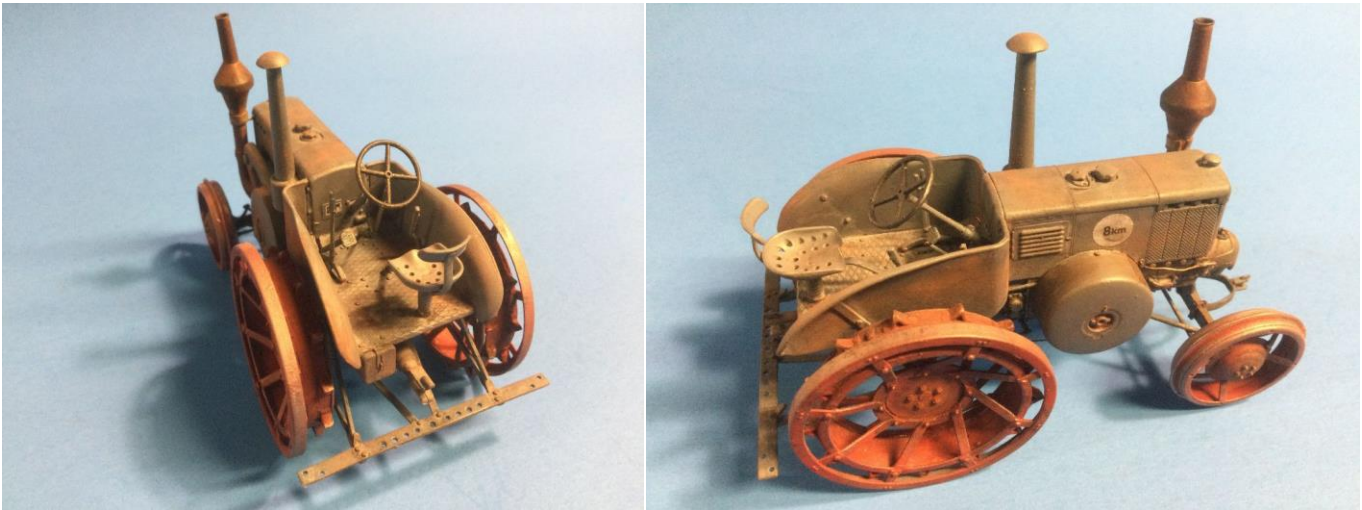
Another problem was the instructions. Although looking detailed at first glance, I found it hard to find the exact location for many of the parts. I had to look at instruction drawings a few steps ahead of what I was working on to find the true parts location. Also some of the parts, again with the steering gear looked identical but closer examination revealed slight but very important differences. I also had a difficult time figuring out the correct assembly for the rear wheels. I spent a lot of time looking at the instructions and dry fitting the parts. It was not an easy process.



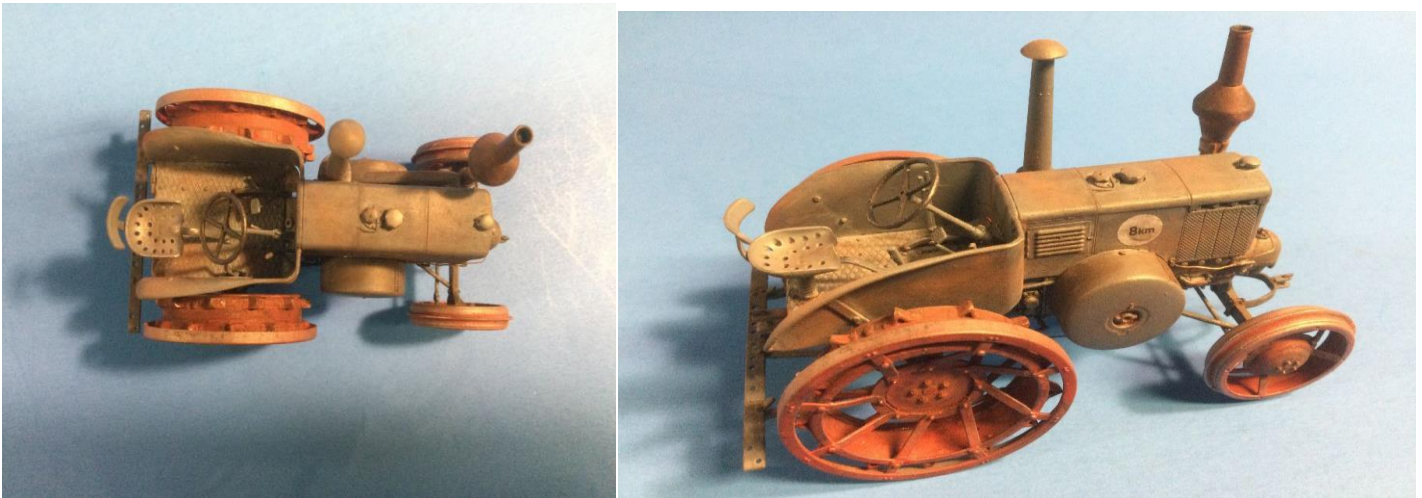
There was a small fret of PE parts and these were well done and easy to work with, the “Lanz Bulldog” name plate being especially well done. Fit of the parts was for the most was good with the exception of the engine compartment and hood assembly; however a little filing fixed the problem. I used no filler on this build so that speaks volumes about the fit of parts.

The paint scheme for the Lanz was very simple, Tamiya XF-7 Red for the wheels and Tamiya XF-66 Light Gray for the body. I used a mixture of black and brown pastel and alcohol washes for weathering. The radiators were painted Tamiya XF-2 Black with Rub-N-Buff Copper to bring out the grid and screen detail. The exhaust was painted Rustoleum Primer Black

with a brown pastel and alcohol wash. I particularly like using Rustoleum Black primer as a base color for any exhaust parts as it has a “sooty” finish when dry. This finish works well with the pastel alcohol wash and gives a good representation of hot and dirty exhaust parts.



Believe it or not this kit had a small decal sheet which was mostly data plates and that big “8km” white circle on both sides of the tractor. This marking denoted the maximum road speed for the machine, apparently a requirement of German automotive laws. Another useless bit of information for your use! These decals were well printed and worked well with Micro Set and Micro Sol.



Although not an easy build I was very happy with the results and would recommend this kit highly. MiniArt is bringing out two variants of the Lanz and you can be sure I’m going to purchase them. Hey Bill, you ever build

that Thunder Model Case tractor? Think you said you were going to place a price tag on the steering wheel, just like they did on the real machines. Hope you enjoyed reading this as much as I enjoyed writing it. I just got my second vaccine shot so hopefully this virus thing will start to go way and we can get together at the K of C soon. Thanks for reading! Stay safe!



Mike Terre

Nice build Mike-so when are you going to buy the ‘north forty’ and sow some seed???



Next our favorite MAD DOCTOR Simon has a build he calls

“Time for a Quickie.”

Sometimes you just feel like starting a modeling project you’ll be able to finish quickly . Truth is, “ quickly “ doesn’t happen too often with my modeling projects because I typically have three or four projects going at the same time. And sometimes I do finish a project in less than a month , as I recently did with the A-model 1/72 Yak 200.

For a starter , there is not a lot of material available documenting the Yak 200 and 201 1953 vintage twin- engine trainer prototypes. Only one each of these two was built, and the 201 differed from the 200 only by having a radome under its fuselage . Flight trials showed stability issues, the type was not chosen for production and it promptly sank into oblivion .

I am not really sure why A-model put out models of both the Yak 200 and the 201. And for that matter, I don't know what made me buy one ! Opening the box revealed a cleanly molded model with a relatively low parts count. I've seen quite a few Russian/Ukrainian models with overly ambitious detailing and ensuing difficult assembly-not this one !



There is little flash , and surface detailing is neatly scribed. The cockpit detail is adequate with proper painting and I added seat belts cut out from newspaper to good effect . Overall assembly was problem free with the exception of the engine nacelles which protrude behind the trailing edges in a pretty unsatisfactory way ; some plastic sheet, Tamiya White putty and a sanding stick took care of that without too much trouble .

Clear parts are well- molded and fit well which is good as they are prominent on this type. As I said above , documentation on the Yak 200 is sparse and the kit clean but basic. Studying available photos, I added 1. exhaust pipes 2. airspeed probes to

both wingtips 3. compression scissors for the nose gear 4.. antennas above and below the fuselage 5. small disc-shaped counterweights at the base of the propeller blades and 6. a small bumper rear wheel beneath the fuselage.

Painting is very simple I've also seen these colors on actual planes , which takes out a lot of guesswork .. The cockpit and front fuselage interior are a light grey -blue , radios etc picked out in black. The landing gear and their bays are a color close to RLM 02 . Propellers are black with yellow tips . Wheel discs are green; there is a picture on the web with those being yellow, but it's a obvious colorized B&W photo.

It's difficult from existing photos to determine if the appropriate color is natural metal or overall gray; I went for the latter as it is easier, with Testors Light Ghost . The upper part of the fin is darker, and I used dark gray. Position lights were painted on ; I couldn't figure out where the landing lights were on the real plane so there are none on my model.



The kit decals are very good , with the sheet covering both the Yak 200 and 201, definitely two minor footnotes in the history of aviation . Once they had dried, my Yak 200 got my usual coat of Testors semi-gloss laquer and I was done . Now I can get back to work on the other 4 or 5 models I've been working on !

Thanks Dr. Simon; now get back to the lab and cure COVID 19!

Patrick O'Connot sent photos of his recent two builds, but without any text or explanations whatsoever!! So I'll try and guess.



I think this is a TA-152, though the designation number may be wrong. Wasn't this a high-altitude fighter that Tank designed, but never saw service?



This I know is a BF-109 Tropical. Do the rounded wings make it an -E? Not sure, but good work Patrick!



THE JUDGES TABLE

By Jon Da Silva



It is typically at this time of the year that we've made our final Mosquitocon preparations. However as we all know the world has changed greatly the past year. I'm hopeful we will be able to have the event later this year and that it will be a great (safe) turnout.

I have been busy getting rid of some unwanted kits on the evil auction site to make room for the new Trumpeter 1/200 Scharnhorst. I know many of you have large stashes. If I get more than 30-40 models I feel overwhelmed and sell about half of them. I usually only keep rarer kits and resin ones, but even some of those have made their way to greener pastures. If only someone would make an injection molded Enterprise in 1944 fit (I know Tom's Modelworks makes an outstanding resin kit).

It's enjoyable to see so many of you at our virtual meetings. A few meetings ago, the discussion of pastels came up by someone. Grinding them down to use in a powdered form. I suggest trying mica powder. It's fairly cheap for a variety color set and works very well on models, and there are metallic variants which can be useful as pastels are usually "pastel."

Jon, that was me talking about pastels. With all the talk on FB in model groups about all the different washes, pin washes, rusting solutions,etc., I simply grind pastels to a fine powder and use them for weathering and color diffusions. They work great! I've even mixed them into sludges with water and white glue, to replicate rust, mud, streaks and the like. I will checkout Mica powder, since metallic variants sound cool. Thanks Editor

John Bucholz sent this review just a day late for the February Newsletter, and since I actually managed to find this again, his patience is rewarded!!

Because we have not been able to go to a movie in months, I would like to do this review like a movie review-here goes!

A "western movie" review---The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly.....

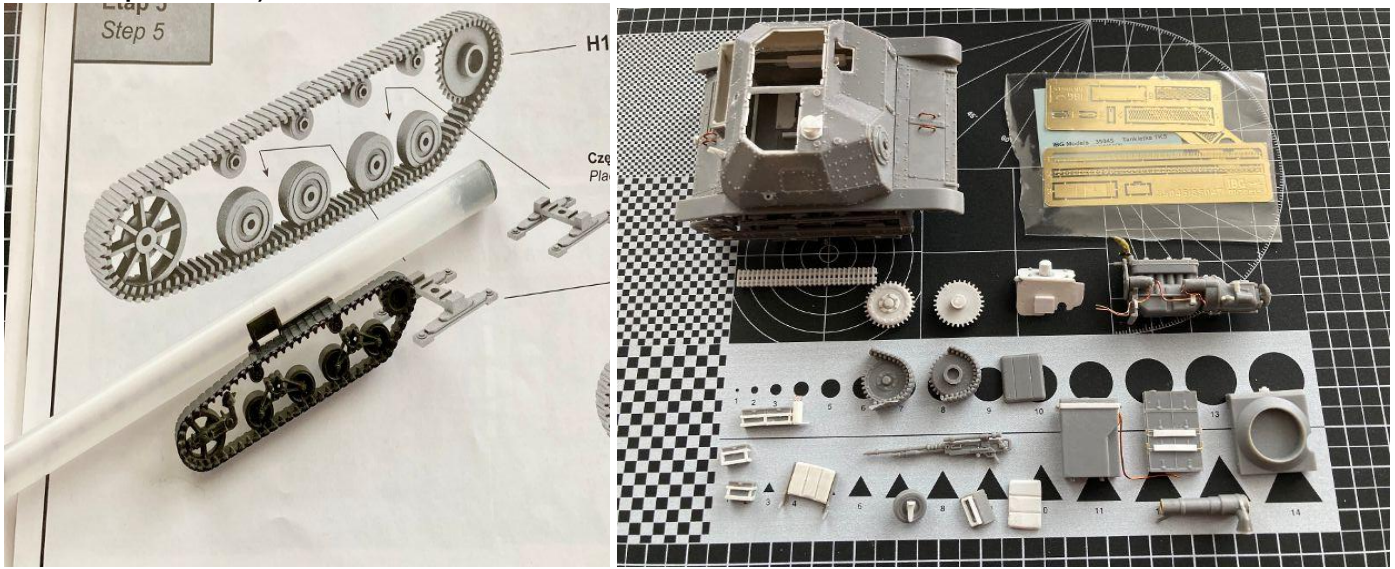
The "Star of the Show"- The IBG Models TKS tankette (with Hotchkiss machine gun).



The "Back Story"- In the 1920's Carden-Loyd produced a series of machine gun carriers which became very popular with many countries throughout the world. The government loved them because they were cheap. The military loved them because you could have five tankettes in place of one real tank. The main problem was of course they were totally useless in a combat situation. Poland produced the TK series of tankettes in the late 1920's. By 1933 the improved model the TKS was put into production. This model had a fully enclosed fighting compartment, ball mounted M.G., six-cylinder Fiat-Polski engine, and gunner's periscope. By 1938 almost 300 had been produced and were assigned to the Cavalry Brigades of the Polish army. When Germany invaded in 1939, the Panzers were massed into tank armies in order to break through the Polish defenses. The Poles followed the French style of deployment, and spread their tanks into small groups throughout the front lines. The TKS crews counterattacked with great courage and while able to best the Panzer Mk. ones, were no match for the cannon armed tanks and artillery of the German attackers.

The Good- It is nice to have a new model of this Polish light tank as the older kits from other Polish manufactures like RPM were really showing their age. The IBG molds are all new and are much more delicate and detailed than the older kits. You get a 12-page color instruction manual, tankette with separate hatches and view ports, an interior with engine and drive train, and three nice pieces of Photo-etched parts. Decals are provided but you really don't use them on any tank after 1938! The instruction steps point out where to place each part and then show a picture of the model with the

parts in place (a nice feature if you are not a Polish tank expert!). There is also a nice five-view drawing in full color to assist with painting (something all model companies should provide!).



The Bad- All is not perfect with this kit however-many small points can add up to some major work on your part. The main issue is the interior. If you make this kit all buttoned up-hatches and viewports closed, then you will save yourself a lot of work. Now you are asking, why is there a problem if the kit gives you an interior? The main issue is that the real tank was put together with conical screws (they look like rivets but they are not). The inside of this tank has metal strips on all the plates into which these screws were placed and each one has a corresponding nut on the inside surface of the plate. Unfortunately, the inside walls of the model are as smooth as a baby's bottom! If you want to open the top hatches to show off the interior, you have to replicate these detail (the white strips on the inside are all plastic strip and each screw on the outside armor plate has a corresponding nut added from plastic rod!). Another point is that while you get an interior, it is not by any means a complete interior. The engine is nice to include but because the driver was six inches away from the exhaust manifold an asbestos lined metal cover was placed over the engine assembly (not in the kit). Seat back cushions-Nope. View port hinges-Nada. Radiator hoses, fuel tank brackets, ammo hold downs- Zilch. In short if you want to display an interior you will have to make about 50% of it yourself. Again, if you only open the top hatches and stick two standing figures in the opening you may get away with less detail, and if you close up all the hatches and ports you can skip all the inside items completely!

The Ugly- This is not a "bad" item, just one I think is in fact "ugly"! The track, wheels, sprocket, and idler wheel are all produced as one piece. This makes the suspension system almost foolproof to assemble but the effect is just like the old ROCO Mini tanks of the 1960's (all you old timers know what I mean-for the youngsters I put a ROCO suspension piece on the picture of the kit track assembly). The treads have no outside detail, and while each link is supposed to have two teeth the track assembly just has one solid bar from edge to edge. Not liking this set up, I removed the rollers, wheels, and rear idler from the cast tread assembly by cutting and filing (yes it took a long time!). The front sprocket was a bit too much work but I had an old RPM

kit and the sprockets are an almost perfect match (they just need some extra detail work). The RPM tracks will work on the IBG rims if you just file the inside of the track horns a bit (they are also link and length which saves time).

The "Movie critics review"- It seems like I am down on this kit, but really it is a very well molded model of a tank that no one else has produced. If you build it OOB and keep it buttoned up it will make a lovely piece for your collection. If you want to show the interior as it was in the real thing just be prepared for some scratch building (there is nothing overly hard there just a lot of small detail to add!). As this is light years ahead of the older kits I say if you want something different in your collection give this kit a try.

Stop Press----There is a version of this kit that has figures and separate wheels and tracks if you want to save some time converting the one-piece track assembly.

Final Credits- Most tank books will have a picture or two of the TKS but if you really want to see the full history of this tankette, I found a web site that has more information than you will ever need to complete this kit- I Googled TKS and came up with the site DERELA.PL. It had multiple sections on the TK3 and TKS as well as pictures of restored vehicles in Poland.

Coming Attractions-----Watch for the sequel----"We build the TKS tankette" coming to a Newsletter near you.

Thanks John! I don't know about anyone else, but I'd be a bit leery about going to war in a "Tankette." It would be like going to a gang fight with a Swiss Army knife!!



Chris Egan, who was our best Aircraft builder in 2019, tells about his build of the Beech Staggerwing.

Well I finally broke down and I'm jumping into writing about building models. In this first installment I will be introducing my 1/72 scale Sword Beechcraft D-17S Staggerwing. Some of you have seen it already from a Zoom meeting. I was first taken by a photo of an orange and cream-colored real life example that I saw built in 1/48 scale on my trip to the IPMS Nationals in Columbia, SC. I also purchased the Sword kit at this show. I was disappointed in the variety of civilian markings for the type in 1/72 scale. By chance I had a Squadron repop of a Twin Beech that had the

“Beechcraft Bird” in white and red...Something that only showed up on one Staggerwing after lots of looking: NC41344. After months of on and off looking I found a blog showing the restoration of this gray and white aircraft with a tan cabin. It spoke to me like many subjects do.

The Kit: The Sword kit is not very detailed and suffers from some molding misalignment, chunky parts, lack of detail in some areas like the landing gear well, clear parts that are about 6 scale inches thick, foggy, and don't fit. The fabric detail on the top and bottom of the fuselage is represented as recessed panel lines... Really? By contrast the fabric and panel detail on the sides of the fuselage, wings and tail surfaces was well done and like many short run kits the panel lines are very fine. This one put me to the test with research and learning new skills. I started it in the summer of 2019 but it sat as a box of cleaned parts and an engine until April of 2020. I completed it a couple days before Christmas. I came up with a list of improvements, many are standard and others were involved for me. I feel that the club may benefit from some of my tinkering so after an overall description of the things I did, I will present a list of topics that I will write about in future installments because as Mike D. says, I am quite verbose...That cracked me up.

Modifications: Starting from the ground, most of the landing gear was scratch built. This is the topic of the article so I will cover this in detail shortly. I added the framework, fuel tank and some control cables to the main gear well. The fabric detail was filled in on the belly of the plane since a few pictures showed that in this scale it would appear flat. I added the underwing landing lights, drilled out the exhaust pipes, made a prop from the hub of a 1/48 Monogram P-47, blades are from 1/72 Hasegawa Buffalo, those blades, once polished smooth are among the best Hamilton Standard blades for 1930s and 40s light aircraft with constant speed props. They were painted Alclad polished aluminum. The Pratt and Whitney R-985 Wasp Jr. is a gorgeous resin kit from Small Stuff Models, I have used these before and I have many more to use on future builds, they are just awesome, but true to size so often cowlings need to be thinned out and rocker boxes sanded down. I added baffling and the various intakes. I

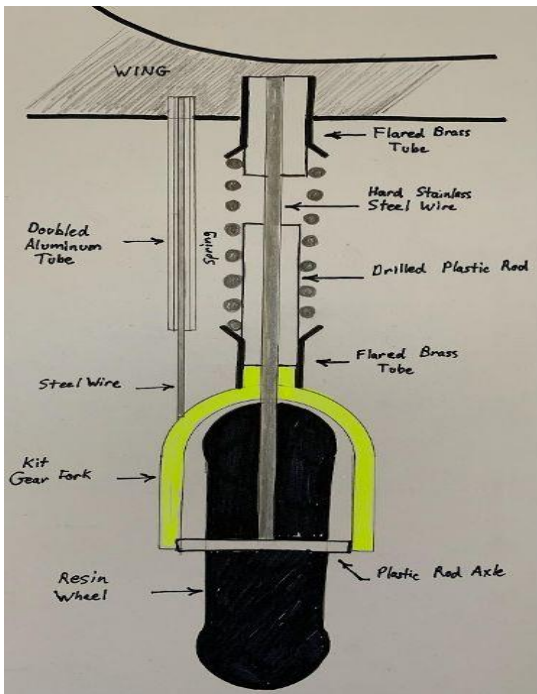
scratch built the cabin detail to match the 1:1. I replaced the clear parts with acetate salad packaging and CD case material. I added wing root fairings, fuel tank access panels, and reskinned the top of the fuselage to represent fabric. I added various details missing or scratch-built several that were chunky such as the elevator counterweights. I dropped the elevators as well. This detail goes a long way since many aircraft without gust locks, or are parked temporarily sit like this. The tail decals are home made. The model is finished with a mix of Tamiya sky gray, light blue and white. The white on the cowling and I-struts was Testors Classic White lacquer. The pinstriping on the cowling is a mix of decals and hand painting. This was cleared over with Testors gloss clear lacquer with a couple drops of semi-gloss added to cut the ultra-shine. And of course, because it is a biplane it is rigged, with EZ line. In short, the only specific after-market piece added was the engine, everything else was spare parts box or scratch-built.

In future articles I will discuss how to rig a biplane in 1/72 using EZ line, Reskinning the model for overlapped panels, fairings, and replacing or adding fabric detail to an existing kit, Making windows and windscreens for cabin aircraft and how to blend them into the fuselage, and detailing 1/72 scale radial engines.

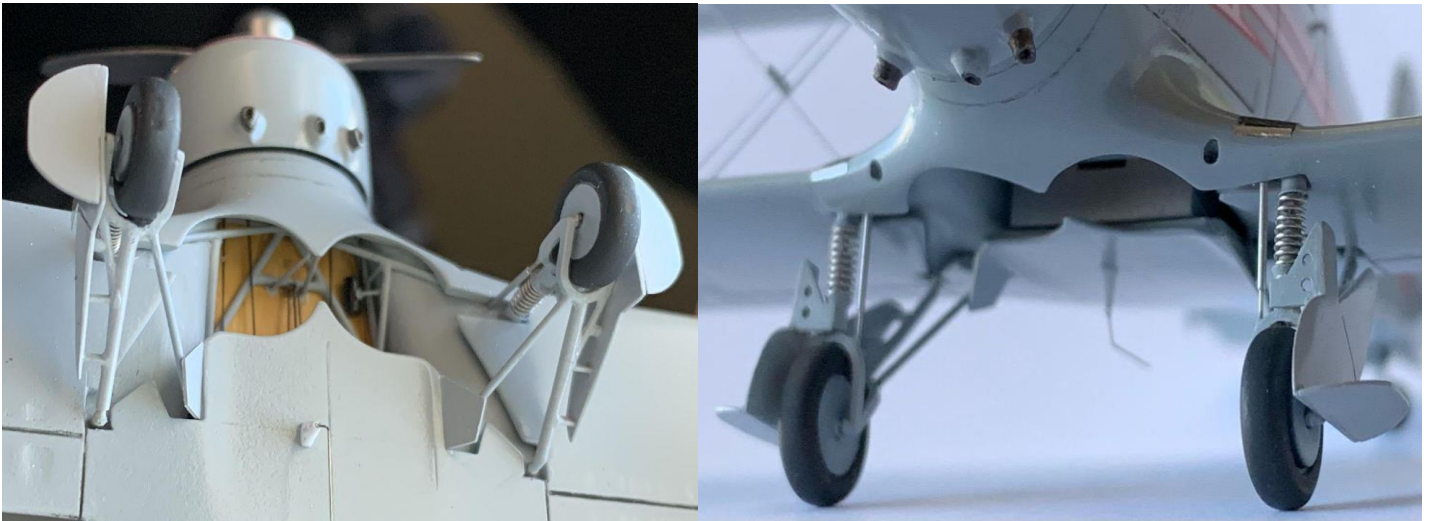
Landing Gear: Today I am going to talk about building the landing gear in general terms (no exact dimensions) so it can be adapted to your build. As I inspected the landing gear in this kit, I noticed five problems, sprue gates larger than the parts, mold misalignment, missing components, wheels too wide to fit in forks, and gear bay doors molded very thick as one continuous piece. In all honesty, I just assume that landing gear being thin, fragile or round needs to be replaced or scratch built on a short run kit, especially the older ones. Also looking at the real aircraft, the landing gear is very complicated and very prominent. I knew I was going to likely break the pieces in construction and I wanted this to be strong for years on the shelf.



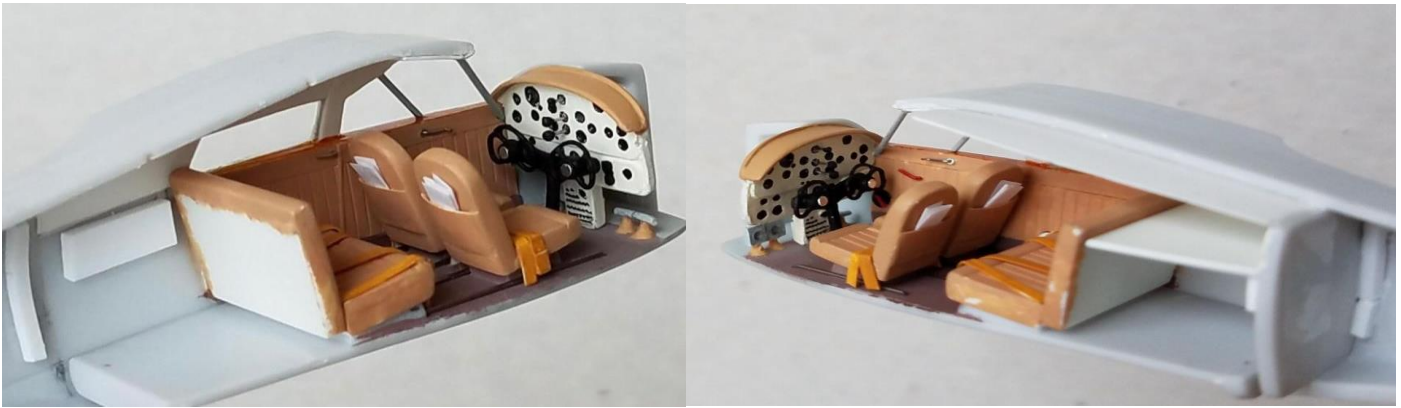
First off, we need to accept that nothing will be exactly to scale in 1/72 scale due to limitations on the materials. For example, the gear doors would be about 0.001 to 0.002 inch thick. the thinnest plastic Evergreen makes is 0.005 inch. Looking back on this, I have .003 inch aluminum sheet and should have used it since it can be shaped into curves easily. Instead I took the kit gear doors and before separating them, I thinned them out from the inside using 400, 600, 800, and 1000 grit sandpaper loop over some making tape and use it to hold the doors onto a mat. Wrap the sandpaper around your finger and be ready for lots of mindless sanding starting at 400. From there I separated the doors and reglued the pieces into the desired positions. The Staggerwing has two U-shaped forks made of square tube on each side welded at an angle. I wanted to do this with square brass jewelry wire but realized that I would need to solder the ends at the axle and at the leg. I didn't like how the wire bent at this small radius. Then an idea hit me, I will use 0.015 hard straight stainless steel wire from McMaster Carr as the inner base of the leg and it would go from the wing all the way down through the wheel and tire. The kit tires were too wide and poorly molded so I used resin spares from a Cessna 195. At this point I need to say dial calipers are one of my most important tools in model building along with my JLC razor saw and my micro drill index. The numbers are small and in this scale things that are off by thousandths can make things crooked.



Used the kit gear forks but cut the legs off with a nub remaining. I drilled down through this. Scratch building in 1/72 scale, or any scale would not be complete with micro tubing. I have a collection in numerous sizes from Albion Alloys in brass and aluminum.. This product is great because they go from .3mm up to 2mm and they are slide fit. All odd sizes telescope and all even sizes telescope. Wall thickness on the tube is 0.005in thick!!! At this point I was stumped, I wanted to represent the springs and the varying thickness of the legs. I thought of a fuel line flaring tool I used recently and I had an idea. I cut a piece of brass to size and put it on the countertop on end. I took a 1/8 transfer punch with a 45 degree tip and put that in the tube and gave it a very light square tap with a brass hammer. This took a few attempts but I managed to get the flare I wanted in all four pieces without tearing the brass.



On the bottom of the gear leg I put one of these pieces of tubing onto the remaining nub and then put a piece of plastic rod in the middle. I drilled up from the bottom with the previously established hole to get a hole up the center of the plastic. In the wing I drilled holes to tightly fit the brass tubing. Hold the wing up to the light every so many turns of the drill to see how close you are getting to the other side. Going through obviously is not ideal. The brass was inserted here so the flare was the same distance on both wings. Once again, I put a piece of center drilled plastic rod inside so it bottomed out in the hole and extended about 0.010in from the flare. The springs were pretty simple but took a half dozen attempts to get right. Looking at my references I counted the number of full turns of the springs and looked about rough diameter of the wire used. Then estimated an acceptable size for 1/72 scale. I ended up using 0.008in. soft stainless-steel wire. I matched the direction of rotation and tightly wrapped the wire around a drill bit slightly smaller than the plastic rod. This took a few attempts to get it right so that the coil is snug on the plastic rod. Each turn must be tight against the previous turn. The real aircraft has 7 full turns, and so does mine, plus a half turn on top and bottom. The challenge is cutting the spring without deforming it. I gently spread the coils with a tip of an X-acto blade until they were spread far enough to put a tiny amount of pressure on the gear leg to fill the gap. I made the aft leg from brass wire and tube and made a socket in the wing for this. I made sure both gear legs were square.



Do not glue the leg in place. I then made brackets to hold the gear doors in place and glued that on. The perforated bracket in the front was made to match the general shape of the original but sized to fit the model part with its concessions for scale and strength. The bracket was glued and the seam was filled to look like it was bent to shape. I went with the larger 0.010in plastic because it was closer to the door thickness. At this point the steel wire was in the gear leg with enough to go through the wheel and up into the wing and sit level. Removing the tire and putting white glue on the wire to prevent paint from sticking, I painted this assembly and the airframe in the various coats, primer, gray, gloss. I scraped the white glue off and slipped the spring onto the lower shock assembly. CA glue was dabbed into the mounting holes in the wing and was held in place, the spring did want to extend it. I then added the triangulating arm from the fuel tank area and the tiny door. This was just butt joined to the gear fork and a dab of CA and touch up paint added. This is the beauty of keeping some thinned paint. Several small dabs of thinned Tamiya paint virtually disappears into the surface. The actuators were made from 2 layers of slide fit aluminum tube and 0.010 stainless steel wire. A hole was drilled in the wing for the aluminum and a dab of slow dry CA added. The aluminum tube was glued into the wing first and then the wire was extended to meet the gear fork and ultra thin CA used to hold it in place.



The tailwheel was from the kit but I added a new shaft from the steel wire and that went into the tire as well. Brass tube was added for thickness. On real tailwheel aircraft, unless the plane was pulled forward into the space or the plane was light enough to adjust the wheel, the tailwheel will often be seen turned to the side from pivoting into the space or turned around backward if the plane was pushed back into its space, and not pulled ahead a few feet to straighten the wheel. To add some life to the model I pivoted the wheel. I added a canvas boot inside the tailwheel well based on common sense about dirt and photo of a Staggerwing that was not equipped with doors. I could not find any pictures of this area on an assembled aircraft. The tail wheel doors were made from thin plastic and installed before painting, the kit parts were as thick as wide and shown closed.

The tires were painted using Tamiya XF-85 Rubber Black. I recommend getting a jar of this color if you don't have it. It is a great match to the subtle blue/gray/black of rubber tires and looks good on wing walk nonskid areas.



I hope you found this useful. Making landing gear from scratch can add strength, and detail. In some cases it is worth doing to avoid molding flaws such as mold seams, misaligned molds, and ejector pins. I also scratch built the gear legs on my 1/48 Thunderbolt because Monogram's were a bit thin. However, sections that have difficult shapes like the curved portions that go from the base of the strut to the wheel axle are often worth saving and integrating into the new gear leg. Enjoy the pictures and I included a rough drawing of the gear leg cross section for clarity, but at the time of building I had no intention of writing about it so I do not have my exact dimensions. Or better pictures of the process. Keep on building, and if you haven't built something that could use some reengineering, go ahead and give it a go. It opens up a varied world of less common types served by the short run market, and breaths new life into kits from decades ago languishing in the back of a stash. Also, you may actually enjoy, the creative thought process along the way, the trick is not to force them. Often working on a parallel project or an idle thought while out on a walk will spark a creative solution to these kinds of builds.

Wow! That is some scratch-building there! Excellent job Chris!

And there's still more to come! Steve Zajak is getting into the car-building bug!

'63 Pontiac Tempest AWB 'The Funnier Farmer'

Scale: 1/25th

Company: AMT / Model King

Reviewed by: Steve Zajac

One thing Covid has done is to get me to re-examine and complete the dusty kits in the basement. And I've got a lot of guilt about just buying a new kit, cause... well I need another new kit. This one has been hanging around for ? years. The model itself was released in the late 1960's and is simplistic and imperfect in many ways. Foot pedals? Who needs the stinkin foot pedals?



It was AMT's effort to cash in on the pre-funny car days of drag racing, when stock cars were severely altered (back axle moved forward and engines set back) and referred to as Altered Wheelbase cars, AWB for short which drag raced typically in the A/FX class. They looked freakish and were stripped of almost all cosmetics- bumpers, interiors, glass, and their uniqueness earned them a nostalgic touch with car collectors and modelers. The 63 Tempest was one such effort, stuffing a Super Duty 421 CI in the smallish Tempest frame, and the most famous was the 'Tameless Tiger' driven by Arnie "Farmer" Beswick. The Model King homage unfortunately decided not to pay any royalty fees to the Farmer, and renamed the car, The Funnier Farmer



. Don't make the AMS mistake and try to improve the kit with after market and scratch built stuff (I have a scratch built chassis somewhere). It's a Nostalgia build with a capital N. Instead the road out of purgatory was to build it OOB, KISS! The good about this kit: nice small block engine (Chevy?), accurate body (I made a new front window frame and side drip rails), very nice bucket seat with engraved belt details, injector stacks (unfortunately the sprue gate is at the fluted section of each stack so prepare to sand and sand), gas tank, and those great styrene rear slicks (just paint black and sand the Goodyear and winged foot logos). I won't go into the bad, but I micro meshed & polished the pitted windshield. Also sanded off the hood and trunk pins that were way oversized. The bottom is crude but works- the single axle front end and large rear axle. Cobra colors auto lacquer was used (velocity yellow- GM) for the body, Alclad chrome for the wheels and grill, and Alclad silver base for gas tank, bumper and stacks. I used some left over decals, because the Model King Funny

Farmer decals fell apart even after using liquid decal film. Oh and I added the magneto. Another one in the books!! Thanks for reading.

Thanks for the write-up Steve!

And now it's my turn. Some larger projects were driving me crazy, so I decided to take a quick break and do a little vignette. I have a Verlinden 1/35 German ...well, taking a dump! So I decided to use him, a dog taking a leak from Warriors, and a 2nd German getting ready to....water a wall? I built the 2nd guy from the spares box. Anyway, it's called PIT STOP, and it got me kicked off Facebook for a day!!



For the background of ruins, I googled WWII Photos of city ruins. There were a lot to choose from! Simply print and voila! A background. This was a fun break from some more difficult builds.

Well that is the end of this Newsletter. Thanks to all the contributors, and thanks for reading. Let's hope we can get together soon, though at the rate it seems vaccines are actually getting to people over the age of 65.....I don't know what will happen. Who does?

Be Healthy Grasshoppers.

Bill Schroeter, Editor Rex