Seattle Chapter News

Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
June 2011

TREZ-NOTES

IPMS Seattle Officer Elections – 2011

by Spencer Tom

It's whiffle bat time. The results of the election are in and we have – er – an interesting situation. While the vote for Vice-President was overwhelmingly in favor of the sole candidate (congratulations, Eric Christianson), the vote for President ended up in a tie.

After discussing the situation with our current President, we decided to take the unconventional step of reaching out to the group of members who had not yet voted. The voting deadline was extended until midnight Sunday evening, 6/5/11. While an additional nine votes arrived, one was an abstention, and the remainder were split evenly.

Since most of the officers and candidates will either be out of town or at the NOPMS show on the day of the June IPMS Seattle meeting, Terry and I have agreed that the best course of action at this point is to have an open discussion about resolving this election tie at the club's July meeting.

Terry, Robert Allen, and I are open to any suggestions you may have about how to handle this unusual situation.

Life gets interesting sometimes, doesn't it?

Vote Totals:

President

Andrew Birkbeck - 34
Jon Fincher - 34
Andrew and Jon as Co-Presidents - 1
Abstain - 1

Vice-President

Eric Christianson - 57

Upcoming Shows

Here are the known shows and events for 2011:

6/11 Fort Worden NOPMS 6
7/22-24 Puyallup Good Guys
8/3-6 Omaha IPMS Nationals
9/17 McMinnville OHMS
9/24 Lynnwood Galaxy Sci-Fan
9/25 Milpitas, CA Tri-City Classic VII
???????? Silvana 5th Annual
10/1 Moscow ID Bring out Good Stuff
10/8 Burnaby IPMS Vancouver

Thanks to Chellie Lynn.

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SEATTLE CHAPTER CONTACTS

President:	**Vice President:**	**Treasurer:**	**Editor:**
TBD	Eric Christianson	Spencer Tom	Robert Allen
	18215 NE 95th Way #103	318 N.E. 81st St.	12534 NE 128th Way #E3
	Redmond, WA 98052	Seattle, WA 98115	Kirkland, WA 98034
	Ph: 425-591-7385	Ph: 206-522-8414	Ph: 425-823-4658
	ModelerEric@comcast.net	slt1298@seanet.com	baclightning@yahoo.com

IPMS Seattle Web Site (Webmasters, Norm Filer & Tracy White): **http://www.ipms-seattle.org**

Public Disclaimers, Information, and Appeals for Help

This is the official publication of the Seattle Chapter, IPMS-USA. As such, it serves as the voice for our Chapter, and depends largely upon the generous contributions of our members for articles, comments, club news, and anything else involving plastic scale modeling and associated subjects. Our meetings are generally held on the second Saturday of each month, (see below for actual meeting dates), at the **North Bellevue Community/Senior Center, 4063-148th Ave NE**, in Bellevue. See the back page for a map. Our meetings begin at 10:00 AM, except as noted, and usually last for two to three hours. Our meetings are very informal, and are open to any interested modeler, regardless of interests. Modelers are encouraged to bring their models to the meetings. Subscriptions to the newsletter are included with the Chapter dues. Dues are $25 a year for regular mail delivery of the newsletter, and $15 for e-mail delivery, and may be paid to Spencer Tom, our Treasurer. (See address above). We also highly recommend our members join and support IPMS-USA, the national organization. See below for form. Any of the members listed above will gladly assist you with further information about the Chapter or Society.

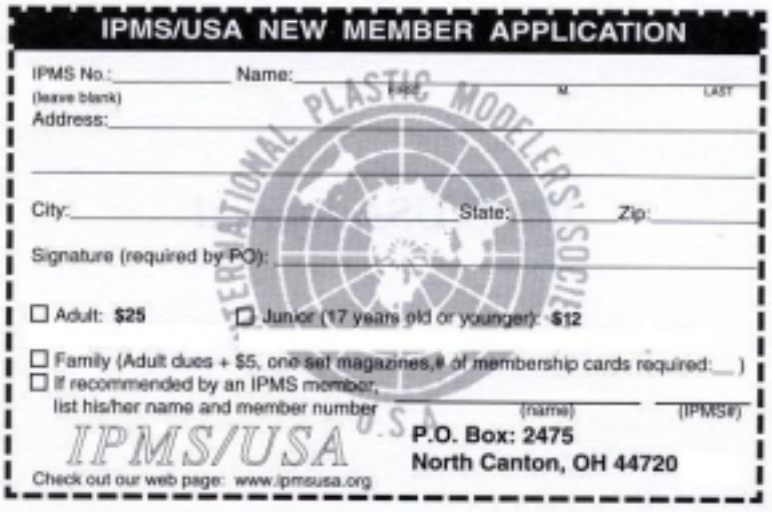
The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Chapter or IPMS-USA. You are encouraged to submit any material for this newsletter to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise. The newsletter is currently being edited using a PC, and PageMaker 6.5. Any Word, WordPerfect, or text document for the PC would be suitable for publication. Articles can also be submitted via e-mail, to the editor's address above. Deadline for submission of articles is generally twelve days prior to the next meeting - earlier would be appreciated! Please call me at 425-823-4658 if you have any questions.

If you use or reprint the material contained in the newsletter, we would appreciate attribution both to the author and the source document. Our newsletter is prepared with one thing in mind; this is information for our members, and all fellow modelers, and is prepared and printed in the newsletter in order to expand the skills and knowledge of those fellow modelers.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

The IPMS Seattle 2011 meeting schedule is as follows. All meetings are from **10 AM** to **1 PM**, except as indicated. To avoid conflicts with other groups using our meeting facility, we must **NOT** be in the building before our scheduled start times, and **MUST** be finished and have the room restored to its proper layout by our scheduled finish time. We suggest that you keep this information in a readily accessable place.

June 11 **July 9**
August 13 **September 10**



Dave Piehl

by Brian Hennessey

photo by John Newcome

IPMS Seattle member Dave Piehl quietly passed away on June 1 at home after a brief battle with liver cancer.

Dave was born and raised in Minnesota, moving to Western Washington some time after graduating from High School in 1979. He earned an Associate degree in Electronics from Edmonds Community College in 1985. His final employer was Astronics AS, a leading company in aerospace electronics power management systems, where Dave worked as a Senior Engineering Technician Level IV.

I met Dave when he and my sister were dating in 2005. I soon learned of Dave's competitive nature. Whether bowling, playing Trivial Pursuit, or Easter egg hunts Dave always gave 100% and expected nothing less than victory, a trait he would transfer to modeling. He was aggressive in every competition but always gracious whatever the outcome. His attitude was either 'I got you this time', or 'I'll get you next time', accompanied by a broad smile and a firm handshake whatever the field of competition.

We became fast friends as we had nearly identical education, work, and hobby interests. We talked and somehow got on the subject of model building. I mentioned that I built models in my youth and Dave said he had recently built some tanks, though he would never show them to me. We decided to build models together. Our search for research material and information on model building led us to the IPMS Seattle and Northwest Scale Modelers groups in 2007.

Immediately Dave set out to be the best at this hobby, as he did with all his other interests. Dave soaked up all the information from the senior members like a sponge and within a few models was building contest quality models. He started learning building techniques, crossing them off a checklist one at a time. Like many members, Dave's favorite subject was 1/48th scale Luftwaffe aircraft from WWII, but he wanted to expand to other subjects. He really envied modelers who worked in other scales and subjects.

Dave really enjoyed the friendship and camaraderie of all the members. Since this was a hobby he loved so much, he had a special fondness for all who shared this interest. He was especially respectful of all the senior builders, seeing what a wealth of knowledge they have to share. He just enjoyed everyone and formed deep friendships and friendly competitions.

Late last year he started experiencing frequent abdominal pains. Several tests revealed no cause. Colonoscopy and Upper GI endoscopy revealed no definitive problems. It wasn't until he turned jaundiced and his blood work came back abnormal in late April that a detailed scan of his liver found cancer spread throughout. With no treatment possible for this form of cancer, the best that could be done was to make Dave as comfortable as possible. Dave was able to remain at his home until the end. Dave's dad had succumbed to this same illness at about the same age (Dave turned 51 four days before he died). Dave is survived by his son, Austin Piehl. His girlfriend, Barb Dockery, performed as an angel caring for Dave his final days.

A memorial service is being planned for the Museum of Flight in July. Details will be posted when available.

In case people want to honor Dave, he had few causes he was particularly interested in:

American Cancer Society – for obvious reasons

ASPCA – Dave had a deep love of all animals.

Dave was the best man at my wedding in 2007 and my daughter named him 'Super Dave'. He was the fifth Beatle in our family, unofficially adopted by my parents. He was a friend to many in the group and will be missed by all who knew him.

Operation Sun Run

by Norm Filer

1957 was a good year for the U.S. Air Force. The new century series aircraft were finally reaching maturity and squadron service, and Strategic Air Command was just starting to receive the KC-135 tanker that would put real world-wide capability in its bomber force.

In May of that year, the 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing at Shaw AFB, South Carolina, started receiving the first of their RF-101As. Somebody at USAF headquarters realized that the new Voodoos, coupled with the new KC-135, were capable of setting new records. The Voodoo was the first Air Force Fighter equipped with the flying boom capability. This allowed much higher fuel transfer rates than the more commonly used hose and drogue system. While the older KC-97s and KB-50s struggled to climb much above twenty thousand feet, the KC-135s would zip right along at 35,000. First up was an attempt to establish a new coast-to-coast speed record, both West to East, East to West, and round trip. Like all military efforts, this one needed a catchy title, and this one became Operation Sun Run.

The plan was to use six aircraft; two would fly one way, two would do the round trip, and two would serve as spares in case of problems with one of the primary aircraft. Six RF-101As deployed from Shaw to George AFB, California. on 14 October 1957. As mentioned above, the boom refueling system was new to TAC, and critical to the establishment of any new record, so considerable time was spent practicing with the new tankers.

McDonnell had established a basic flight profile that would be used for the record attempt. The profile planned for an afterburner takeoff from Ontario International Airport, leaving it in afterburner until leveling off at 45,000 ft., staying in AB until starting a decent to 35,000 ft. for refueling at around Mach .8, then hitting the burner again and repeating the process. The plan was for four of these refueling cycles Eastbound, each over a track of about 100 miles. The westbound track also included four tanker cycles, but these were only to cover about 80 miles each. Time between tanker cycles was estimated to be a very short 26 minutes.

During the work up at George, the original RF-101As were replaced by brand new RF-101Cs. An indication of the significance of this Air Force record attempt is that these birds came directly from the factory and were the second thru seventh RF-101Cs built.

The actual record attempt was scheduled for November 27, 1957. The plan was for two waves. The first aircraft, the round trip attempt, would leave Ontario IAP five minutes ahead of the one way aircraft. The spare would depart 10 minutes after the one way attempt and would follow until after the first refueling. If either one or two had no problems the spare would turn around and land at March AFB, just east of L.A. The second wave would depart one hour later and follow the same plan.

Sun Run #1: Capt. Ray Schrecengost left at 06:59.57 and flew to Floyd Bennett, New York in 3:15.41, turned around and returned to Ontario in 4:01.26. Total time was 7:17.07. He had some controller confusion and fuel problems that slowed him a bit.

Sun Run #2: Capt. Robert Kilpatrick lost the use of his wing fuel, and had in-flight refueling problems and had to descend to 14,000 ft. on one refueling, and had to manually find the tanker on another refueling when controllers lost both him and the tanker. Despite all this, he reached New York in 3:11.39, about four minutes faster than #1.

Sun Run #3 (photo above): Capt. Don Hawkins, the first wave spare, actually recorded the best time to the first tanker, but since neither #1 nor #2 aborted, he was out of the race, refueled and landed at March AFB.

Sun Run #4: Capt. Robert Sweet, left at 07:50:38. A flawless aircraft, no controller problems and maybe some luck allowed Sweet to establish a new East to West and round trip record of 3:36.22 and 6:46.36.

Sun Run #5: Lt. Gustav R. Klatt, posted the record to New York. His time was 3:07.43. Again he had controller problems and at one point had less than 500 lbs. of fuel when the controllers did not position him properly.

Sun Run #6: Capt. Robert Burkhart, the second wave spare, hit the first tanker and since #4 and #5 were on their way with no problems he took on only enough fuel to return to March AFB.

Modeling notes; some artwork and photos of Sun Run #1 show the name “CIn-Min” under the cockpit, a large TAC emblem on the spine of the aircraft and a 18th TRS emblem on the nose. The name was the first three letters of Capt. Schrecongost’s two daughters. It is my belief that all these were added after the record setting effort. The name and the title “Sun Run” stayed on the a/c long after it was repainted in 363rd TRW markings.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SUN RUN
U. S. AIR FORCE
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SUN RUN
60165
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SUN RUN
U. S. AIR FORCE
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SUN RUN
U. S. AIR FORCE
60167
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SUN RUN
U. S. AIR FORCE
60168
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SUN RUN
U. S. AIR FORCE

Hasegawa 1/72nd Scale Sukhoi Su-33 Flanker D

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

The Sukhoi Su-27 family has quite a bit of diversity in its lineage, and the Su-33 shows just how adaptable the airframe is. Designed as a carrier-borne multi-role fighter, the Su-33 features many differences from its land-based Su-27 counterpart. This includes folding wings and tailplanes, a tailhook for arrested landings, and aerial refueling capabilities. The aircraft also has canards ahead of the wing, which improves maneuverability and shortens the take-off run. As it is a dedicated ship-borne fighter, it is currently operated only by Russia, although the Chinese are reportedly developing their own equivalent for their new carrier.

This is Hasegawa's first all-new tool 1/72nd kit in a while, and it is nice to see that they continue to produce quality kits with excellent surface detailing. The kit features recessed panel lines throughout, and these are both thorough and petite. As this kit is of a Russian subject, and Hasegawa has not released (yet, anyway) a Soviet/Russian weapon set, this kit comes with a full set of stores. The decal sheet offers markings for four aircraft, and includes useful stenciling.

Looking more closely, construction starts with the interior. The kit comes with a one-piece tub that features raised detailing on the side consoles. The instrument panel is likewise detailed, and the kit comes with decals for these areas as well, which should combine with the raised detailing to produce a very nice looking interior. The seat is pretty decent out of the box as well, and only lacks seat belts. The finished tub is sandwiched between the upper and lower fuselage/wing halves, and very quickly this model is looking like a Flanker.

Like most Flanker kits, this one has separate air intake pieces. These are made up of two sides, an upper intake ramp, and a rear engine face. There are two bottom intake insert options, one with open and one with closed vents. These finished intakes fit onto the lower wing piece. This has been a fit issue spot on many other Flanker kits, so be forewarned here. Hopefully with careful dry fitting and sanding, these will fit with minimal effort.

Getting this kit on its legs, the landing gear is really nicely done. The molding on these parts is crisp and does a great job of capturing the look. The nose gear has separate oleo scissors, lights, and linkages (as well as separate wheels). The main gear is suitably beefy and also has separate wheels and linkages. The gear door interiors also have some detailing, and the result will be some very nice looking legs for your Su-33.

For weaponry, this kit comes with two types of R-27 missiles (four R-27R and two R-27ET), two R-77, four R-73, and two R-60 missiles. There are also four B-8 rocket pods. The missiles are all molded with two sets of fins in place and two separate, which makes cleanup easy and simplifies alignment. The R-77 has its rear fin piece separate, although they are molded solid. This is understandable, as these fins are very fine and are far beyond the capabilities of injection molding.

For decal choices, there are two main options: tiger or eagle. This refers to the marking on the tail, as the rest of the aircraft is pretty much identical across all four options. The Su-33 is camouflaged in a three-color upper camouflage scheme, with solid lower surfaces. The color callouts are given for Gunze paints, and even then some of the colors require mixing. The aircraft covered include Red 80 and 81 with a tiger's head on the tail, and Red 60 and 72 with an eagle on the tail. The decals are nicely printed and look very good in terms of registration and color.

As the Su-27 family is highly popular and highly contentious among modelers, I cannot finish this review without at least touching on the accuracy. For the most part, this is a pretty accurate Su-33. When finished, it will definitely look the part of the aircraft. That said, there are some shape issues with the kit, most notably around the spine and stinger. The stinger should be round in cross section, and the kit has the top slightly flattened. The stinger also seems to be sitting too high as it comes forward to meet up with the fuselage spine, but after looking at photos I think that it actually is at the right height and it is the upper wing area that is too flat. This is a very subtle shape and it is very difficult to ascertain just what is actually going on in this area, contour-wise. Given the complex shape and difficulties in both determining what is wrong and fixing it, this is one of those areas that is probably best left untouched.

Other than that one area, I could not see anything else that stood out as wrong, so overall I can say that this is a very good kit of the Su-33.

While the marking options for the Su-33 are limited (and it appears that the Chinese naval Flanker is going to be based on a different Su-27 line, so this kit can't be used for one of those), this is actually one of the better Flanker kits out there. While it is unlikely, I would very much like to see Hasegawa expand on their work on this kit and produce models of other Flanker variants. My thanks to Hasegawa USA for the review sample.

Eduard 1/48th Scale MiG-21MF

by Gerry Nilles

The long awaited release of what we can only hope is the first of an all-inclusive series of Eduard MiG-21s has occurred. Interestingly Eduard has chosen the final high production version, the MF, (NATO code name Fishbed J) as a starting point. The MF, which is primarily an export version, ended a span of over two decades of design and production of the MiG-21 family of fighter and trainers.

The MiG-21MF first entered service in the early 1970s. However the original design specification for this icon of Soviet airpower goes back to the early 1950s, at the time of the Korean War. Lessons learned from the use of the MiG-15 during combat in the Korean skies quickly translated into the need for a much more refined air superiority fighter. The result of this design effort of course was the MiG-21 that began initial production around 1957. The first principle production version, the MiG-21F, (NATO code name Fishbed) went into service in late 1959, early 1960. However, the "F" model entering the Soviet Air Force had a number of limitations and, for the most part, was restricted to fair weather usage, having just a basic radar system. Also because of weight considerations on performance, it only carried one cannon while having the space for the other faired over. As a side-note in 1962, the Indian Air Force ordered a small evaluation batch of the "F" model that did include both cannons regardless of said loss of performance.

The next major upgrade to the MiG-21, the PF early and late series (NATO code name Fishbed D), began testing in 1961. The PF model included such improvements as initial all-weather capability, better performance that allowed two cannon configuration, and larger wheels and better brakes to name a few. Appearance wise the early production "PF" differs significantly from the "F" model in that it had a much larger intake area and nose cone, a larger spine, a wider cord vertical stabilizer, and appreciably larger fuselage blisters to accommodate the increased size of the main gear wheels. The late production "PF" included another increase to the size of the vertical stabilizer and the addition of a bullet shaped fairing at the base of the vertical for the parabrake system. Other changes include an enlarged ventral fin and a nozzle after-burned redesign.

As noted above the "MF" was the last major production version of the MiG-21. The "MF" included a number of additional technological improvements over the "PF" series not the least of which was a more powerful engine. However, appearance wise the "MF" only differs from the production "PF" in that it has an enlarged, constant cross section, spine that first appeared on the PFMA model, as well as a side hinging two-piece canopy that again appeared earlier on the MiG-21PFM.

Molded in dark gray styrene the Eduard 1/48 MiG-21MF kit is not only sharply cast, and extremely well detailed, but also without any visible flaws, sink marks etc. The kit contains no less than nine individual part trees as well as two PE frets, (one colored), "Eduard Mask" painting masks, and a set of two "Eduard BRASSIN" resin UB16 rocket pods. However, I should note here that two of the larger part trees are devoted exclusively to a very nice assortment of ordnance.

The first thing that struck me about this kit was the level of detail along with the number of small parts included. The ejection seat alone consists of 29 individual pieces (including the PE), and the detailed cockpit it goes into is nothing short of outstanding. Likewise the same can be said about the landing gear and gear bays. This is definitely a kit for a more experienced model builder. Not surprisingly, 11 of the beautifully illustrated, easy to follow, 8-½ x 11 full color 20-page instruction booklet are devoted to the assembly process. As a side note and considering the aforementioned level of detail and number of parts, I definitely recommend that prior to starting construction a thorough review of each step be taken.

Accuracy-wise, all references this reviewer checked indicated that Eduard has done their homework very well. I might add that a consult with several fellow model builders, who also had access to the kit and whose opinions and expertise I highly

Continued on page 16

Dragon 1/35th Scale M4 (105mm) Sherman Howitzer Tank and Bronco Models 1/35th Scale Sherman T51 Workable Track Set

by Andrew Birkbeck

Dragon Models Ltd. has blessed the Allied WW2 armor modeler with yet another version of the Sherman tank. This time around the modeler is presented with the 105mm howitzer version of the M4. This vehicle consisted of a 105mm gun, mounted in the so called "high bustle" turret, atop a "large hatch" (47 degree) M4 hull. The kit consists of 11 sprues of injection molded parts, slightly more than 450 parts, together with a fret of photo etched brass parts, a pair of DS 100 rubber tracks, and a short length of metal cable, and decals for three vehicles. Perhaps 100 parts are "surplus to needs", and care needs to be taken when figuring out which parts go with which variant.

The injection plastic parts are well molded, though some are better than others. This is because the kit, like all the 1/35th scale Dragon Sherman kits, is not a completely new tooled one. Some of the kit parts have a direct lineage back to the Italeri M4A1 Sherman kit of 30 years ago, but to be fair to Dragon, they have over the years improved on the Italeri parts still being used. Of the original Dragon parts in the kit, many of these also come from earlier kits, but again to their credit, Dragon have been upgrading these parts as well. Overall, one gets a great set of parts.

The instructions that come with the kit are the usual exploded diagram type familiar to anyone who has built a previous Dragon armor kit. Thus they needed to be checked carefully for little "errors", a few of which were found (see further ahead). Herewith a short guided trip through the instructions for some key points:

Step 1: Road wheels/bogie parts. The three markings options offered up with this kit had the stamped road wheels, parts V8/V9. However Dragon gives the modeler as an option in the instructions the use of parts D6, spoked wheels. Check your references if you wish to utilize this latter option. And part V6, the track skid atop the bogie units, is missing the prominent retaining bolts. These can be found, however, on the sprue trees of Sprue V. Simply slice them off and install carefully.

Step 3: When assembling the front transmission housing, note that parts R1 and R3 are transposed in the instructions. I also found building up the transmission housing area trouble free, unlike some earlier Dragon Sherman kits where the main parts (in this case R5, R6 and R7) didn't mate up correctly.

Step 4: I found getting the air filter units (built up from parts C4, C14/15, C24/25 and C27/28) very difficult to keep glued to the hull rear plate, C12. In the end I built up a little backing plate and stuck it to the air filters, and then to the hull rear plate. This was done in such a way as to be invisible when the model was completed. And note that the idler wheel, listed as V18, should also have part V32 glued to it as well.

Step 5: Front hull area. Dragon gives the modeler the option of injected molded parts for the headlight and siren guards, or photo etched brass parts. The plastic parts are quite "chunky", and I opted to use the PE parts. I took the PE fret and turned one of my metal stove top burners to a medium heat. Once nice and hot, I placed the fret of parts onto the burner, and watched it turn color (shades of blue etc), to anneal the parts. Be careful doing this, you don't want to get the parts so hot, they melt! Then put the parts aside, to cool slowly. Annealing them makes the PE brass much easier to form, and I used a wonderful tool produced by The Small Shop, the Photo Etched Bending and Rolling set, to form the guards. These were carefully super-glued in place, but are very fragile, so be careful! I also used the photo etched front mud guards, parts MA15, soldering these for added strength, rather than using super glue. For the rear hull light guards, I chose to use the injection plastic parts, after carefully thinning them down.

Dragon instructs the modeler to carefully measure for the location of the gun support cradle brackets, parts A65. I am not sure why, as they are clearly marked on part G5! And I found the photo etched parts for the front hull ventilator, MA13, 17 and 23 very difficult to bend to shape, so much so that I destroyed them. So if you opt to install these, take every precaution to insure success. For me, I just left them off, as not every vehicle had them installed

from what I could deduce from period photographs.

Finally in Step 5, I replaced the molded-on lump that purports to be a hatch grab handle on parts A24/25, with a spare part R8, suitably trimmed to size, and glued into two holes drilled in the appropriate spots.

Step 7: Installation of the on board tools. The kit supplied tools are "okay", in my humble opinion. I chose to replace half of the kit parts, with resin examples from a set produced by Formations Models. The Formation parts have lovely cast on retaining straps and buckles, whereas the Dragon parts rely on very tiny photo etched parts for these straps etc., and I just couldn't make them work. Perhaps you will have better luck with the Dragon parts! On the Dragon parts I did utilize for the On Board Tools, I scratch built some straps and buckles using paper, and some Aber PE buckles.

Step 9: Turret commander's hatch and gun barrel/mantlet construction. The gun barrel is a lovely piece of slide molding, complete with barrel rifling. Care just needs taking to remove the seam that runs the length of the barrel. Note that Dragon offers the modeler the option of either a Commander's vision cupola or a later split hatch configuration. However, reading various online postings about M4 (105) tanks, it appears that the instructions are wrong. They indicate that the 4th AD tank depicted on the decal sheet had a commander's vision cupola, when apparently 4th AD vehicles had the split hatch configuration. I replaced the molded on lump depicting the grab handle of the split hatch, on part B19, with a spare grab handle in the kit, part B30. Over in Step 11, Dragon gives the modeler a nice loader's hatch, complete with separate grab handle. Why a separate grab handle on the loader's hatch, but not the commander's split hatch?

Step 10: Parts B57 through B61 consist of the gun mantlet dust cover mounting strips, as installed on later war M4 (105) Shermans. However, the instructions only

show the installation of one of these parts, B59. So consult reference photos if you intend to install the dust cover parts. But note also another problem in this area: in an earlier kit of the M4A3 (105) Sherman, Dragon got the width of the gun mantlet wrong. It was too narrow by about 2 or 3mm. Dragon fixed this issue on this new M4 (105) Sherman, but apparently didn't fix the width of the dust cover parts. Thus part B59 is too narrow for the corrected mantlet parts on this new kit! I cut part B59 at an appropriate point, and slipped in 3mm worth of the appropriate sized plastic rod.

The main turret part, B10, has nicely depicted cast texturing present. However, there are noticeable mold seam lines in the area of the pistol port that need removing, and the area retextured where appropriate. Also note that the turret is missing any depiction of the manufacturer's casting

marks. These can be sourced via Archer Transfers, as I did.

Step 11: Dragon gives the modeler the choice of two different turret machine gun mounts, as well as a superb M2 machine gun. The latter is a multi-part affair, and really is a lovely little set up, one of the true jewels in this kit.

Step 12: Here we have a couple of issues to deal with. First, the tow cable: this is made from twisted steel strands, and my attempts to anneal it and thus allow it to bend more easily failed. It remained super springy, and thus I couldn't get it to conform to the model as I wished. So my Sherman has no tow cable. I found a solution too late to install on this model: a firm called Kataya in Poland offers superb copper braided tow cables, and these work a treat (I installed one on another Dragon model I am working on), using the Kataya cable, and the Dragon cable end parts (A45 in this kit).

A second issue is the DS100 tracks. The parts depict T48 rubber chevron tracks with the end connectors that helped reduce ground pressure, and the quality of these tracks is beyond doubt, very well molded, with excellent detail. The only problem is that I can't find any photos of the M4 (105) Shermans depicted on the decal sheet with these type end connectors?

As a bonus, when DragonUSA sent IPMS the review sample of the M4 (105), they also sent along a set of workable T51 rubber block Sherman tracks by Bronco Models. And while they weren't a perfect fit for this particular Sherman either (they were a track seen earlier in the war), I just couldn't wait to give them a try. Each track link in this set consists of five parts: an upper and lower track pad, two end connectors, and one connecting rod unit. If there is an "issue" with this set, it is how long it takes to put it all together! Each link, as mentioned, has five parts, each part has two sprue attachment points that need cleaning up, and there are 83 links to each track, times two. That's one heck of a lot of cleaning up! This said, what you end up with is an absolutely first class set of working tracks, that fit perfectly around the Dragon sprockets, and look amazing on the model, I hope you will agree from the photos.

The key is trying to reduce the construction time, and I found the following the best way to speed things along. Cut out and clean up parts A2, the lower track pad, and then stick about six or seven of this part in a row, held down with a thin piece of double stick tape, on a completely flat surface (see photo). Then take the connection rod parts, A1, and the end connectors, A3, and assemble them and let them dry overnight. When completely dry (so there are no sticky spots that will foul their movement), drop them into position on top of the lower track blocks held in place by the tape, and then take the upper track pad, part Ba1, put a small amount of glue on the two spots shown in the instructions , and carefully drop them into place. I used the thick Testors glue in the black squeeze bottle with the metal tube applicator, and it worked a treat.

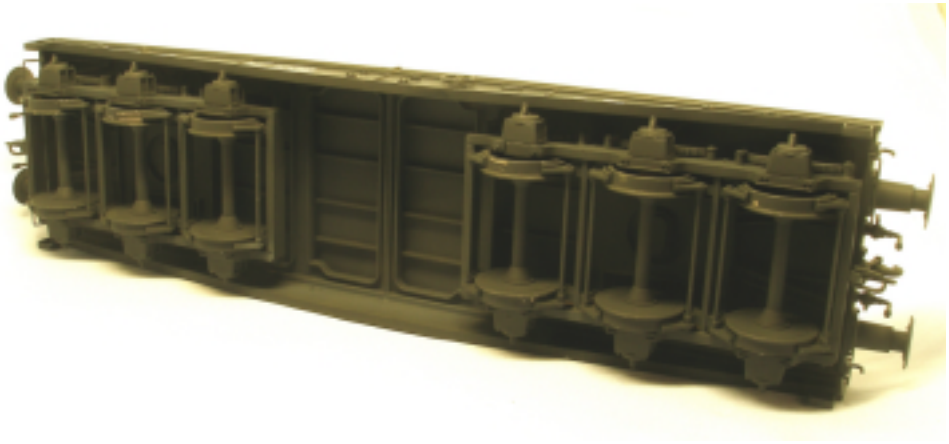
The model was painted using Tamiya acrylics, thinned with Mr Color self leveling thinner (lacquer). Tamiya XF-62 Olive Drab (old formula mix) was lightened with Tamiya XF-60 Dark Yellow. This was airbrushed over a coat of Mr Surfacer 1200 lacquer primer. A second, lightened (more XF-60) application of Olive Drab was then sprayed into the center of the panels, to break up the one color scheme. A couple of thin coats of Tamiya gloss clear (X-22) was airbrushed over the entire model, and when thoroughly dry, the decals were applied. These are produced by Cartograph, of Italy, and are superb. The only issue I had was that rather than giving the modeler specific decals for the vehicle codes etc., you are given a generic sheet of letters, numbers and symbols, and asked to cut and paste them together. Once the decals have dried, a sealing coat of clear gloss was applied, followed by various oil paint/thinner pin washes. The model was then left to sit for a few days, while everything dried nicely, whereupon a coat of Vallejo acrylic matt varnish was applied. Dirt, mud, dust streaks etc., were added via Mig and Tamiya products to suitably "dirty up" the model.

Despite a few niggles (the lack of hatch grab handles, the apparently wrong track configuration, and the few instruction errors), I really enjoyed the overall experience of building this kit. It is well detailed; the parts fit together well, and were thus a pleasure to assemble. To me, it is the "end result" that counts, and I achieved the result you see in the pictures without any great hassles. The model certainly "looks" the part, and I can recommend it highly to anyone, like me, who really enjoys Sherman tanks. The Bronco Model tracks, while time consuming to assemble, posed no major issues, and result in a first rate set of tracks for any Sherman kit requiring T51 rubble block tracks.

Thanks very much to DragonUSA for supplying IPMS/USA with this review sample.

Trumpeter 1/35th Scale German Schwere Plattformwagen Type SSyms 80

by Eric Christianson

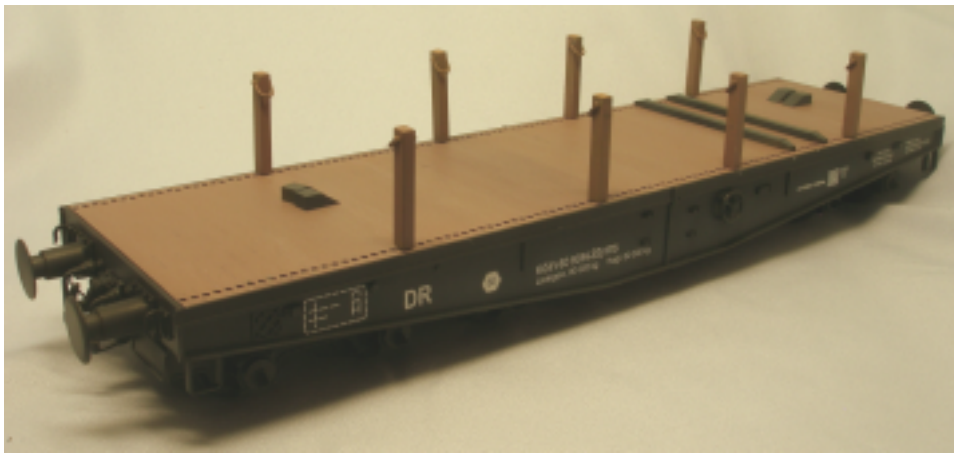


During WWII, railroads were often used to bring military hardware and resupply closer to the front because of the vast distances involved. This mode of transportation was preferable to moving them by road which was more expensive and a lot harder on the equipment and men. The SSyms 80 Ton flatbed rail car was used to carry the German heavy tanks, such as the Panther and Tiger tanks, and accompanying resupply.

As with previous Trumpeter offerings, there is considerable effort put into the roadbed, railroad ties, track, and base. These are designed in such a way as to be able to be added to other tracks for possible additional rolling stock - a real potential for diorama enthusiasts. This particular offering includes extended sections of track (35 ties vs. 26 in earlier kits). The wood-texture of the ties is beautiful, and the ties are ingeniously molded and connected in such a way that they are removed from the sprue and attached as a single piece.

I started with the road bed. This is a multi-step (yet separate) process so I kept coming back to it as I built up the rest of the kit. Trumpeter gives you an option to add this track to another set of track so (normally) the first thing to do is to remove a section of one of the end pieces so the base would be the right length for just this kit. There are deep scribed marks on the inside of each side for doing this and after 20 seconds with a razor saw the job would be done. On this build however, I decided to mate up all of the 1/35th scale roadbeds I own so I could display a whole set of cars that I have built. As a consequence, the roadbed I now have consists of two four-foot sections!

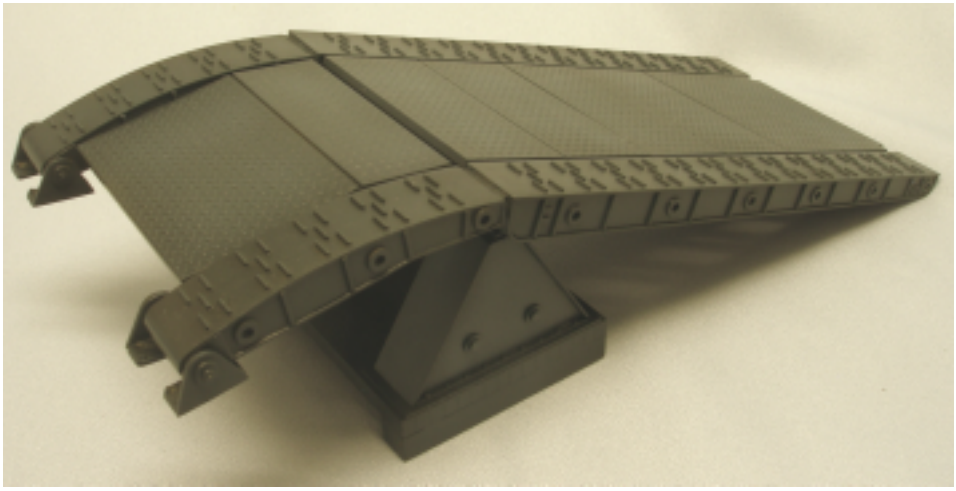
The rest of the base is snapped together and then glued. To give the assembled pieces more strength I glued Evergreen sheet plastic on the inside of the roadbed, across each vertical seam. Once that was dry, I sanded some of the rough edges down a little. These seams are significant when viewed up close. With more time I would have sanded and filled the seams on the base, but I felt they looked OK after painting them black. The seams on the roadbed itself disappeared after painting and weathering.



When I build a model I detach, clean and bag all of the parts into separate plastic bags according to the steps in the instructions. I find this an easy task to do during my downtime, such as in front of the TV or on business trips. Having done this with the Trumpeter kit before-hand, I ended up assembling this entire kit in a single evening during a get-together with other modeling friends. I was pleasantly surprised by the strength and solid feel of the completed car – there are very few little parts in the kit, everything else are solid chunks of plastic. Refreshing!

The flatcar has two large wheel trucks, each consisting of six wheels on three axles. Everything is symmetrical so after you've built one section; all of the other sections fall together very easily. I used Testors (black squeeze bottle) liquid cement. I feel that Testors makes the only glue that will tame these big heavy pieces into submission since it actually melts the plastic surfaces together instead of merely attaching them.

The surface of the flatcar is finely detailed with wood grain and has eight significant holes that must be drilled and shaped to accommodate the tie-down posts, if you



want to use them. I opened the holes and found that even if I don't use the posts, the openings tend to disappear when the car is painted and finished.

When completed, the entire car is made up of two large, heavy halves that must be glued together. This creates a large and noticeable seam, so after everything was dry I 'troweled' in Tamiya (tube) putty and wiped the excess off with Gunze Mr. Color Thinner, my favorite seam filler combination. Seam gone!

The assembly of the loading ramp and fulcrum base was just as trouble-free and enjoyable as the flatcar. Big, heavy pieces of plastic, perfect fit. The only issue might come where the curving portion of the ramp attaches to the run-up part. There are two shallow tabs that mate these two heavy sections together. While this might have been designed better, I simply turned to Testors again and created a bond strong enough to withstand the handling required to assemble, paint, move, and photograph the completed model.

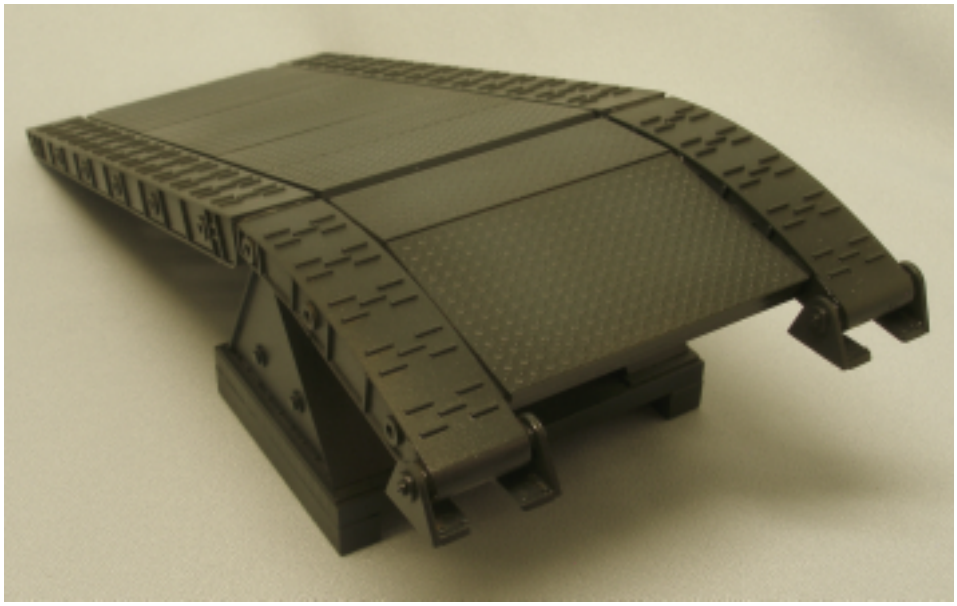
For painting the base and road bed, I airbrushed the railroad ties using Model Master Enamel Burnt Umber. The ties are linked together so they were easy to paint as one piece. I then painted the base using Gunze Mr. Color Black, a lacquer, which produced the satin finish I was looking for.

Next I painted the rails with a base coat of Tamiya NATO Black and highlighted them with some Rub&Buff Silver to bring out the worn areas. Once the base was dry, I masked off the edges with blue tape to leave just the road bed exposed, and painted that with Tamiya NATO Black.

Once dry, I used a spray bottle to wet the surface with a mixture of white glue, diluted dishwashing soap and warm water. I then sprinkled on a coat of ash from my fireplace and let it dry. A quick brush off and blast from some compressed air and the base was complete. I then slipped the ties up into the base from below and glued them so that just the wooden upper surfaces were exposed when viewed from above – very handy. Finally I slid the rails through the ties and attached the four rail connectors provided. With more time I would have added several other colors for highlighting and grime, followed by a dusting of various Mig powders.

I started by airbrushing the entire flatcar and ramp Tamiya NATO Black. I then lightly dusted the sides and ends with Model Master Enamel Intermediate Blue to bring out a 'cold steel' look I was after (and what I used in the other Trumpeter railroad cars I've built). Next I masked off the thin edge surrounding the top surface of the flatcar and sprayed the surface a mixture of Tamiya Flat Earth, Tamiya Flat Brown, and Tamiya Sky Grey. This gave the surface the color of old wood, a good base for the weathering to come. I then airbrushed a coat of undiluted Future acrylic and waited two days for it to dry.

Once the Future was dry I went about applying the decals. The decals included in the kit are beautiful, but also very thin - and once they hit the surface of the model they are very difficult to move, period. After destroying the first two decals, I switched from the Gunze blue and green bottle solvents to the MicroScale Red and Blue system without any luck. I finally just went very slowly and, using water only,



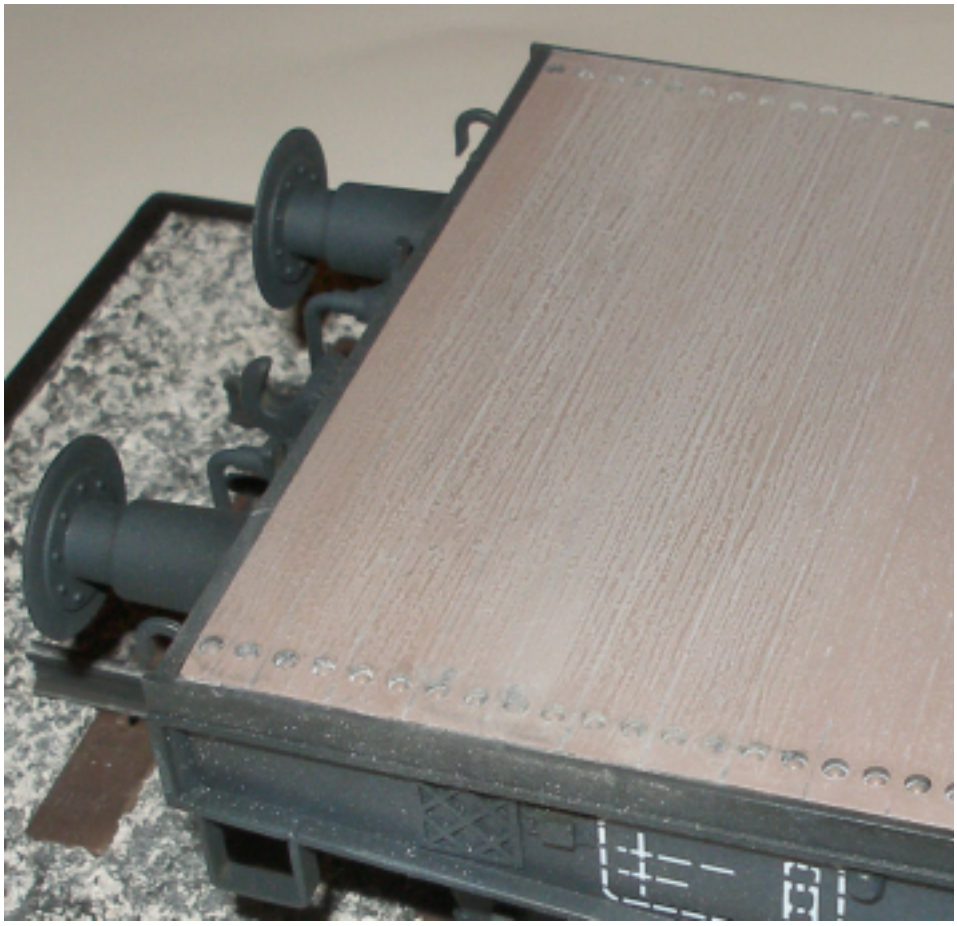
carefully slid the decals off the backing paper to exactly where they should go. Some responded to touches with a toothpick or cotton swab, some didn't. Fortunately, Trumpeter provides enough stenciling to finish the sides satisfactorily, if not perfectly accurate.

Finishing: I was looking for an old-wood brown surface that 'hinted' a weathered 'grey' feel, like the one pictured in the three-view drawing provided in the kit. I first tried giving the glossy (top) surface two filter coats of MIG German Grey Highlight (a light gray oil-based paint) highly diluted with Mona Lisa paint thinner. I found, however, that the filter just disappeared into the light brown background. A thicker wash produced similar results, so after airbrushing everything with a layer of Testor's Dullcoat to kill the gloss, I applied a dry, streaked-dusting of MIG Panzer Grey (Fading) pigment. This color is also a light grey shade and when applied with the grain provided the look I was going for. To bring out the grain underneath, I drew my index finger along my forehead and the side of my nose and worked the oil across the grain – it's amazing how 'icky skin-oil' works with MIG pigments!

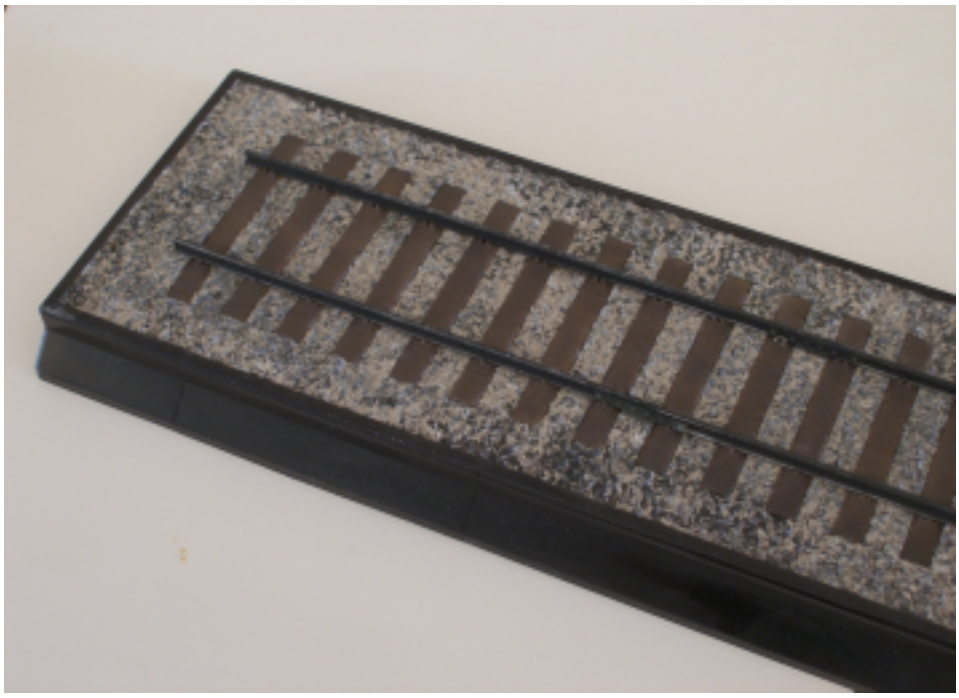
Building this kit was a most enjoyable experience for me. The two modules (train car and ramp) felt solid and stood up to a lot of abuse while they were being painted and handled. Even the few small pieces are well designed and firmly attached. I just cannot say enough good things about the feeling I got from gluing all of these chunks of heavy plastic together – reminiscent of a time gone by. If I had the money, I'd buy enough of these kits to build an entire train. Trumpeter really nailed this one.

I recommend this kit to anyone who likes to build and finish train cars and/or 1/35th diorama enthusiasts. I plan to place a large AFV on mine and add it to my already growing German armored train.

I would like to thank Stevens International for providing this kit for review, and to Internet Modeler for giving me the opportunity to build it.



[Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl and **www.internetmodeler.com** *for permission to use his, Gerry's, and Eric's articles. - ED]*



Hurricane Bookshelf: Aerial Warfare Failures, Including Hurricanes

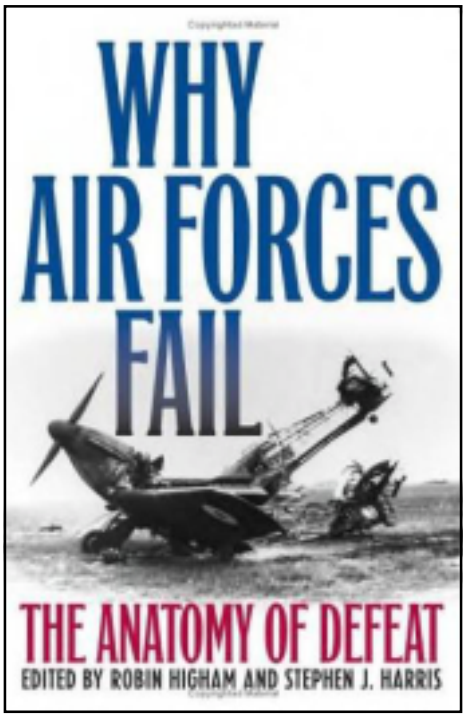
by Scott Kruize

Why Air Forces Fail: the Anatomy of Defeat
Authors/Editors: Robert Higham and Stephen J. Harris
Copyright 2006 by University Press of Kentucky, 382 pages

Well, I never thought this column would be written about a book whose main thesis's illustration is of thoroughly wrecked Hurricanes. But air forces do fail—there's plenty of material for a book like this to cover!—and at the beginning of the Second World War, Hurricanes were among the early victims of the German juggernaut.

No one sets out to fail, as the author/editors explicitly state, but there are all kinds of reasons for failure. An air force's equipment may not be up to the current level of technology, and in aerial warfare, even a slight technical difference might mean the margin between victory and defeat. Peacetime planning may not encompass the reality of what actually happens when the shooting starts. Strategy and tactics might be ill-conceived or downright unworkable. Training of personnel may be inadequate in quality or quantity. The economic and political support may be lacking to make for a large enough air force, or one with reserves and 'staying power' that enable it to persist in combat.

The Hawker Hurricane eventually went on to great victories, and to status as the Allied warplane which destroyed the most Axis aircraft. Early on, however, Hurricanes suffered greatly from Axis assaults. The airfields were all worked over when 'the balloon went up' in France and the Low Countries. The British expeditionary and French air forces lost many warplanes on the ground; all of Belgium's Hurricanes – their most modern warplanes—were wrecked on the first day. Two years later, Hurricanes and other warplanes guarding the Empire's outposts in the Far East were lost to surprise Japanese attack.



Besides lack of adequate facilities to keep planes operational, or warning systems to save them from being destroyed on their own air fields, faulty training and tactics were to blame for many losses. What especially comes to mind is the concept of 'Fighting Area Attacks'. The fast new Hurricanes (and Spitfires) were to fly into one or another of a set of rigidly 'choreographed' formations, which was then supposed to engage an enemy bomber formation. All the fighters would fire all their guns at once, and their victims would all burst into flaming fragments and crash in formation! (No consideration was made about what the enemy **fighter** formations would be doing during this impressive airpower ballet!) The imagination boggles at how anybody could ever have thought that anything like this could possibly be made to work. And this book specifically refers to the Spanish Civil War experience. It was small-scale, compared to what would come later, but many of the basic lessons of modern air combat were there to be learned. People from some air forces learned their lessons, others didn't.

Not that we Americans should feel too much contempt for these failures. The book includes a chapter about our spectacular defeats in late 1941, more than two years into the war. Our considerable airpower in the Pearl Harbor and the Philippines was nevertheless taken utterly by surprise and crushed by Japanese air power.

There are other chapters about WW2 defeats: the air forces of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Imperial Japan, despite their early victories, had major flaws. (It's not enough to observe that America's aircraft industry simply out-produced those of our enemies. Large portions of blame go to the Axis leaders and planners. Among other things, many of them seemed **way** more concerned with 'defending their turf'—executive power and privilege—than with serving their country in fighting the war!)

Other chapters come up to more modern times. One describes the failure of the Arab air forces. I was going to say 'combined Arab air forces', but the chapter makes clear that much of their failures were because, facing the Israeli Air Force—compact, well-disciplined, well-trained, and purposeful—the air forces of Egypt, Syria, and others were defeated piecemeal. There was grossly inadequate co-operation among them.

I referred to the book's 'author/editors' because they included, as chapters, independently written essays, each by an expert in that particular field. The styles and format of these discussions of air force failures are all a little bit different, but all share an approach to give clear explanations of how air forces can come to fail when they transition from peacetime, where they only had to look good, to actual warfare, where the only measure is fighting performance.

One of these independently-written chapter considers the 'small' modern war between Great Britain and Argentina. I already have two books about this on the Hurricane bookshelf: *The Battle for the Falklands*, by Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, and *Air War: South Atlantic*, by Jeffrey Ethell and Alfred Price.

There'll be more in a future column about all these, particularly next year, the 30th anniversary of the war, when the NorthWest Scale Modelers do a special exhibit for the Museum of Flight. But for now, let me just say that *Why Air Forces Fail* taught me things those other books didn't. Because of a formal agreement among the top dog military leaders of the Argentine 'junta', which has ruled the country for decades, the Air Force was actually forbidden to 'encroach' on the Navy's prestige by practicing or preparing for war at sea, at all!

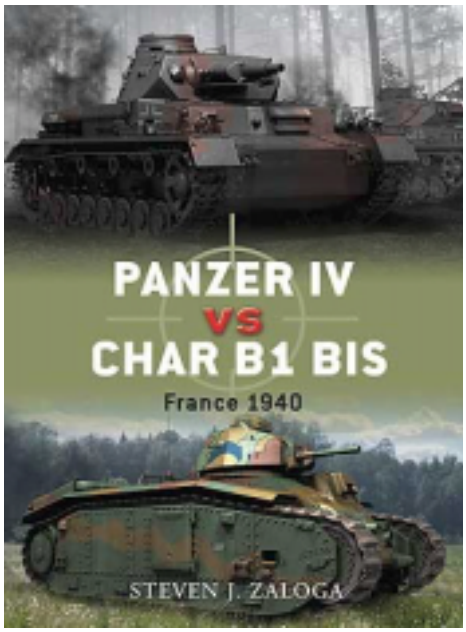
For all the courage and ability of the sailors and soldiers of the British task force, and the incredibly effective use of the Harrier as an interceptor, the mind boggles at what might have happened if the Argentine Air Force had been properly trained and prepared for long-distance overwater flights and the very specialized maneuvers of maritime strike. After reading the chapter in this book, it's not at all far-fetched to imagine the British task force subjected to twice as many effective attacks, losing twice as many ships and personnel. There would have been a quite different *Why Air Forces Fail*, and **all** the books on the Falklands/Malvinas war would have had to be re-written!

Panzer IV vs. Char B1 Bis France 1940, by Steven J. Zaloga

reviewed by Andrew Birkbeck

Despite the use of "tanks" in the First World War, and their use in the opening stages of the Second World War in Poland, September 1939, it was in the Battle of France in May 1940 that these weapons were used for the first time on any large scale. The battles around the French towns of Stonne, Hannant, and Gembloux for the first time in history saw massive clashes, involving hundreds of tanks on both the French and German sides. And it was during these battles that actual "armored divisions" from both sides were involved. This book covers the two major armored vehicles of the Battle of France, the Wehrmacht's Panzer IV, and the French Army's massive Char B1 Bis. The author, Steven Zaloga, is a well known military historian of the Second World War, and also a keen modeler. He is also a very good writer, and the prose of this book flows very well.

The book is divided into seven major chapters, and flows in an intelligent chronological order. The text is augmented by black and white period photos, some color photos from museums, and color artwork, together with charts and battle maps. A brief history of tank warfare is given from the First World War through the post war period, and up to the start of World War Two. This includes the military thinking on both the French and German sides as to the utility of tanks, and how they should best be employed on the battle field. The book then moves on to show how these ideas (different on each side) went on to influence the type of tanks the German and French armaments industries produced. A quick look at pictures of the Panzer IV and the Char B1 Bis show them to be very different vehicles, and the author expertly briefs the reader as to why they turned out the way they did: the Char B1 Bis heavily armored, yet relatively slow, while the Panzer IV was more lightly armored, and as a result lighter, and thus faster.



Under the heading "The Combatants", the author describes the crews of the two tanks, their training (or lack of it), the various mechanical devices installed in the tanks (episcopes etc), and how these helped or hindered the effectiveness of the two tanks. Also covered is the makeup of the two tank organizations, on the French side the DCR (Division Cuirasee) and on the German, the Panzer Division. The author then concludes with a vivid description of the major engagement of the two armored formations in the Battle of France: The Duel at Stonne.

At the opening stages of the Battle of France, the Germans had more "tanks" than the French by a small margin, but many of these German tanks were lightly armed Panzer I and Panzer II vehicles. In terms of more capable tanks, such as the Char B1 Bis, Hotchkiss H35/39, Renault R-35 and Somua S-35, vs. the Panzer III and Panzer IV of the German units, the French had numerical superiority. Yet why were the Germans able to destroy the French Armies in such a short period of time? From the tank vs. tank perspective, this

book reveals all. I found it easy to read, easy to understand, and very enlightening. I recommend it highly to anyone interested in this aspect of military history.

I also recommend it as a spur to building models: "back in the day", Airfix produced "Dog Fight Doubles", wherein the firm packaged two aircraft models in the same box, aircraft that had opposed one another in military combat. I read the brief "history" in the kit instructions, and this spurred me to go out and do more reading on the aircraft, their pilots, and the battles in which they fought. This Osprey book does the same, but in reverse: I read this book covering the men and machines in the Battle of France, and now I have gone out and purchased and started building models of the two tanks covered within its pages: Tamiya's superb Char B1 Bis kit, and one of Dragon Models excellent Panzer IV Ausf. B/C/D kits!

My sincere thanks to Osprey Publishing and IPMS/USA for supplying the review sample.

Eduard MiG-21MF

from page 7

respect, came to the same conclusion regarding accuracy. The only nit was that small tabs (approx 12" x 2") located on the wings just forward of the ailerons, for the purpose of airflow disruption over the control surface, were missing. These are simple to add from plastic card, though.

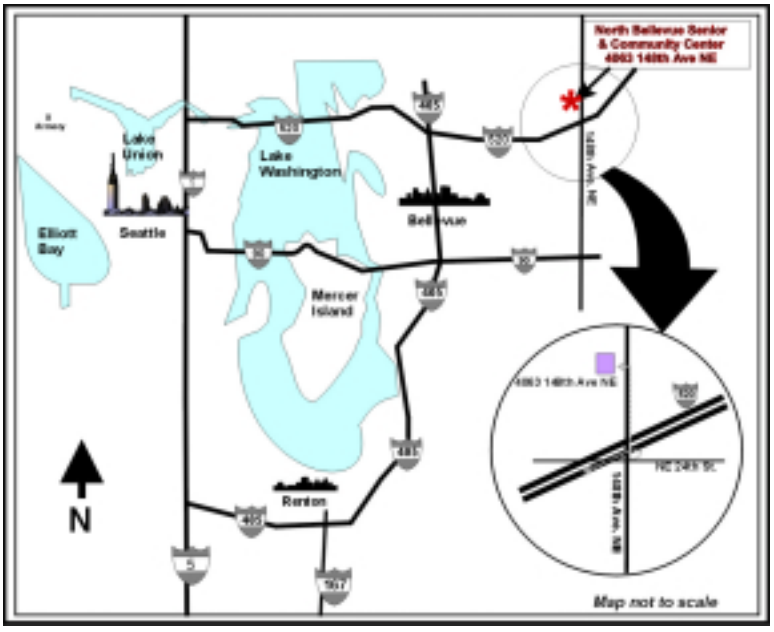
Without a doubt, the markings and painting guides are some of the best I have ever seen. They include six unique and completely different schemes. The first is for a tan and medium green desert-colored Egyptian Air Force MiG-21MF circa 1988. Second is a dark green, dark tan, and red brown Czechoslovakian Army MF that operated from 1989-1993. The third scheme is striking Slovak Air Force MiG-21MF as it appeared in 1999, done in white, medium gray, and olive green. Next is a two-tone gray Polish Air Force MF circa 2001-2003. Following that is a Soviet Union MiG-21SM from the Kharkov Higher Military Academy circa 1991 done in medium tan and olive green. Last is German Democratic Republic MF circa 1990 done carrying a dark tan and olive drab color scheme. Each of these fully illustrated four-view (top, bottom, left and right side) color scheme guides fills an individual page in the instruction booklet along with an interesting bit of history about the individual aircraft depicted.

The other marking guides, consisting of three complete color pages, are dedicated to common aircraft stenciling, weapons stenciling and coloring and pylon and weapons railing coloring and stenciling.

This is a highly detailed, beautifully done, kit of a subject that is indeed an icon when it comes to a modern era air superiority fighters. Add to that a half dozen outstanding color schemes to choose from along with an excellent selection of weapons, and the only conclusion is that this is a winner. This is a "must have kit" if you are into 1/48th modern military aircraft.

My thanks to Eduard for the review sample.

Meeting Reminder June 11



North Bellevue Community/Senior Center
4063-148th Ave NE, Bellevue

Directions: From Seattle or from I-405, take 520 East to the 148th Ave NE exit. Take the 148th Ave North exit (the second of the two 148th Ave. exits) and continue north on 148th until you reach the Senior Center. The Senior Center will be on your left. The Center itself is not easily visible from the road, but there is a signpost in the median.