

Seattle Chapter News



Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
April 2014

PREZNOTES



Calling ALL Members!

As I hope everyone is aware, our 2014 Spring Show is set for Saturday, April 12 at the Renton Community Center, a few short days away. For many modelers in the Pacific Northwest, this is the highlight of their modeling year, and is certainly one of the largest model show/contest west of the Mississippi. For the past few years, we have had on display 600+ models, and this year we have 31 different vendors occupying 58 vendor tables.

While this show relies on the participation of modelers from clubs around the area, from IPMS Vancouver BC, to IPMS Salem OR, Boise ID, even Salt Lake City UT, as well as non-club members in droves, it is at its heart an IPMS Seattle Show. And as I have done in the past, I would like each and every one of our members to consider participating this year in YOUR show. Volunteering allows everyone else who has volunteered to help out, to enjoy the show that little bit more, by having to work that little bit less. And we have plenty of areas for you to volunteer in, such as set up on Friday afternoon April 11, or any number of spots during the show on Saturday April 12: Registration, Raffle, Meet and Greet host, contest judging. And the beauty of it all is that these volunteer opportunities are spaced out across the day. If you want to volunteer early, and then have the rest of the day free to wander the model tables, and vendors, then consider volunteering as a registration person, or as a meet and greet host (helps modelers find their categories around the room), as contest entries close at Noon. But if you want to ramble through the vendors first thing, then volunteer to man the cash box in the afternoon, for the walk ins, or be a contest judge? Judging doesn't begin until the afternoon, once entries close at Noon.

And PLEASE consider entering your finished models in the show, or on the

display only tables. People are traveling from far and wide to see MODELS, and frankly they don't care which table they are displayed on! I fully understand that contest entering isn't everyone's cup of tea, but surely displaying your models on the non-contest tables is something everyone would consider okay?

One thing we are trying to encourage is for people to bring in their World War One models, this year being the 100th Anniversary of the start of that conflagration: all scales, all subjects: aircraft, armor, ships, figures etc. This to help populate the first tables seen by show attendees as they walk into our event. WOW them with a sea of wonderful models, rather than a sea of white table cloth! If you have such models, PLEASE bring them to the show for this display.

Remember that the April meeting is the FIRST Saturday of the month, April 5, while the Spring Show is the SECOND Saturday, April 12, with event set up Friday afternoon, April 11.

Cheers,

Andrew

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IPMS Seattle Web Site (Web Co-Ordinator, John Kaylor): <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. Please do not embed photos or graphics in the text file. Photos and graphics should be submitted as single, separate files. 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 2014 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 accessible place.

April 5 (Meeting)
May 10

April 12 (Spring Show)
June 14

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

IPMS No.: _____ Name: _____
(leave blank) (FIRST M LAST)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Signature (required by PO): _____

Adult: \$25 Junior (17 years old or younger): \$12

Family (Adult dues + \$5, one set magazines, # of membership cards required: _____)

If recommended by an IPMS member, list his/her name and member number _____ (name) (IPMS#)

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Check out our web page: www.ipmsusa.org

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2014 IPMS Seattle Spring Show at a Glance

Saturday, April 12

Registration - 9 AM until 12 noon
Public Viewing - 10 AM until 3 PM
Judging – 12 noon until 3 PM
Awards Ceremony - 3:30 PM
Show Close – 4 PM

Renton Community Center, 1715 Maple Valley Highway, Renton

Directions:

From the North: Take I-405 southbound to Exit #4 (Renton-Enumclaw). Go through the first stop light, turn left on Maple Valley Highway (South 169). This will take you under I-405. Continue about 500 feet and turn right at the first stop light. Follow the entrance driveway around the athletic fields to the large parking lot area. The Renton Community Center and Carco Theatre are adjacent to one another and the parking lot.

From the South: Take I-405 northbound to Exit #4 (Maple Valley-Enumclaw). This exit will divide, take the first exit to Maple Valley-Enumclaw (South 169). At the stop sign, at the end of the off ramp, turn right. Go approximately 200 feet to the stop light and turn right. Follow the entrance driveway around the athletic fields to the large parking lot area. The Renton Community Center and Carco Theatre are adjacent to one another and the parking lot.

Entry Fees:

\$10 for Adults (unlimited entries)
\$5 for Juniors
\$5 for Spectators

Registration:

To make the spring show registration as smooth and easy as possible for everyone involved, we have put the form on line for people to fill out ahead of time. Please feel free to download the form as a PDF from the address below and fill it out ahead of time.

<http://www.ipms-seattle.org/springshow/springshow-registration.php>

DO NOT FILL IN THE NUMBER! This will be assigned to you when you pay your entry fee at the door. Any model without a registered number will not be eligible for judging or awards.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no names on the registration forms. The registration number assigned to your model when you check in for the contest will also identify you.

Raffle:

As in years past, we will have a raffle this year with lots of great models and model related prizes. You will be able to buy tickets at the raffle table during show hours. If you have kits you would like to donate as raffle prizes, please contact the raffle coordinator, Eric Christianson, at **modelereric@comcast.net**

Ticket Prices: 1 ticket - \$1; 6 tickets - \$5; 15 tickets - \$10

General web site address for Spring Show information: **<http://www.ipms-seattle.org/springshow/index.php>**

IPMS-Seattle Spring Show Categories

Note: * Indicates categories eligible for Out of Box award

JUNIOR:

(Ages through 17. At their discretion juniors may enter senior classes)

- 001. Aircraft *
- 002. Armor *
- 003. Automotive *
- 004. Space Fact/Experimental/Future Technologies/Sci-Fi. *
- 005. Prefinished (any subject. must have some modification from out of the box)
- 006. Miscellaneous (incl. figures, dinosaurs, naval) *

BEST JUNIOR AWARD

AIRCRAFT:

- 101. 1/73 & smaller; all subjects *
- 102. 1/72 single prop, turbo prop and gliders *
- 103. 1/48 single prop, turbo prop and gliders *
 - A. Axis *
 - B. Allied *
- 104. 1/72 multi prop, turbo prop *
- 105. 1/48 multi prop, turbo prop *
- 106. 1/32 & larger prop, turbo prop and gliders *
- 107. 1/72 single jet *
- 108. 1/48 single jet *
- 109. 1/72 multi jet *
- 110. 1/48 multi jet *
- 111. 1/32 & larger jet *
- 112. Airliners, civil, sport, racing, airships; all scales *
- 113. Rotary wing; all eras & subjects *
- 114. Biplanes/Vintage Types *
 - A. 1/72 and Smaller *
 - B. 1/71 and Larger *
- 115. Miscellaneous; scratchbuilts, vacs & conversion.

BEST AIRCRAFT AWARD

MILITARY VEHICLES & WEAPONS:

- 201. 1/35 & larger, closed top through 1945 *
 - A. Axis *
 - B. Allied *
- 202. 1/35 & larger, closed top after 1945 *

- 203. 1/35 & larger open top AFV, half-tracks & self-propelled guns *
 - 204. 1/36 & smaller, all eras & subjects *
 - A. 1/36 & smaller (except 1/48), all eras & subjects *
 - B. 1/48 all eras & subjects *
 - 205. Soft-skinned, all eras & scales *
 - 206. Towed artillery & missiles, all eras & scales *
 - 207. Miscellaneous; scratchbuilts, & conversions
- ### BEST MILITARY VEHICLE/WEAPONS AWARD

FIGURES:

- (Horse & rider, mounted or dismounted are a single figure. Two figures on base are a diorama.)
- 301. Smaller than 54mm (excluding 1/35)
 - 302. 54mm (including 1/35)
 - 303. Larger than 54mm
 - 304. Sci-fi, Fantasy Figures and Creatures, Real Space
- ### BEST FIGURE AWARD

SHIPS:

- 401. Powered - 1/700 and smaller *
 - 402. Powered - 1/699 to 1/350th *
 - 403. Powered - 1/349 and larger *
 - 404. Unpowered, all scales *
 - 405. Submarines *
 - A. 1/73 and smaller *
 - B. 1/72 and larger *
- ### BEST SHIP AWARD

AUTOMOTIVE:

- (All scales; non-military)
- 501. Factory Stock *
 - 502. Hot Rods *
 - 503. Custom *
 - 504. Pick-up trucks *
 - 505. Commercial Truck, Van, Fire & Rescue, Misc *
 - 506. Competition - Closed Wheel *
 - 507. Competition - Open Wheel *
 - 508. Large scale autos/trucks, all subjects, 1/19 and larger *
 - 509. Motorcycle *
- ### BEST AUTOMOTIVE AWARD

SPACE FACT / EXPERIMENTAL / SCI-FI VEHICLES (all scales)

- 601. Space Fact *
- 602. Aerospace Testbeds & Record Breakers *

- 603. Sci-fi, Vehicles *
 - 604. Sci-Fi Figures and Creatures *
 - 605. Gundams *
 - Gundams 1/144 and smaller *
 - Gundams 1/100 and larger *
- ### BEST SPACE FACT/EXPERIMENTAL/SCI-FI VEHICLES AWARD

DIORAMA / VIGNETTE:

(all scales) A diorama is two or more models relating to tell a story.

- 701. Aircraft
 - 702. Automotive
 - 703. Armor
 - 704. Space facts/ Future Technologies/ Fantasy (Including dinosaurs)
 - 705. Naval
 - 706. Figure
- ### BEST DIORAMA / VIGNETTE AWARD

OTHER CLASSES:

- 801. Collections (5 or more related models)
- 802. Flights of Fancy/Hypotheticals (all scales)
- 803. Animals/Dinosaurs
- 804. Group Builds
- 805. Miscellaneous (anything not covered above)
- 806. Mentored (Built by one adult and one Junior)

NOTES

- a. Prior IPMS-Seattle First Place winning models are not eligible (except in Collections Category and Group Builds).
- b. IPMS-USA National Contest Rules generally apply.
- c. Head judges' decisions are final! If you have a question please contact them.
- d. Only one category per model.
- e. Where classes are subject to interpretation, the entrant may choose the category. Judges may reassign models to a more appropriate classes at their discretion.
- f. If your diorama is overly large, or has special requirements, please contact the show chairman prior to the show.
- g. At the judges' discretion "HIGHLY COMMENDED" ribbons may also be awarded.
- h. At the judges discretion categories may be split.
- i. Judges wear ID tags. After awards are posted, feel free to discuss your results with them.

- j. There will be One "Best Out of the Box" award per designated (*) category.
- k. Models in display cases during judging will NOT be judged. No exceptions.
- l. All Out of the Box entries must have the kit instructions on the table with the model to be eligible for an OOB award.

Special Awards 2014

Best Finish/Ted Holowchuk Award sponsored by IPMS Seattle
Best British/Commonwealth Subject sponsored by Robert Allen & Andrew Birkbeck
Best Canadian Subject sponsored by IPMS Vancouver BC
Best Submarine sponsored by Oregon Historical Modelers's Society
Best Bare Metal Finish sponsored by IPMS/Tacoma Green Dragons/Les Sundt Memorial Chapter
Best Small Air Forces sponsored by Mike Millette & Mike Medrano
Best Pacific War Subject sponsored by Tracy White
Best U.S. Subject sponsored by Woldale School
Best Fire/Life Safety Subject sponsored by Seaside Fire Service
Best 1/32nd Scale Aircraft sponsored by Craftworks
Best Street Rod/Custom sponsored by IPMS/PSAMA
Best Sci-Fi Subject sponsored by Galaxy Hobby
Best Finish of a Military Vehicle - In Memory of Dale Moes, sponsored by George Stray
Best French Subject sponsored by Djordje Nikolic & Jacob Russell
Best German Subject sponsored by Andrew Bertschi & Jon Fincher
Best Italian Subject - In Memory of Stephen Tontoni, sponsored by Will Perry & Ralph Braun
Best Japanese Subject sponsored by Tim Nelson, Woody Yeung & Ken Gunji
Best Middle East Wars Subject sponsored by Middle East Wars SIG IPMS/USA
Best Damaged Structure in Need of a Remodel sponsored by Crescent Builds Custom Construction & Remodeling
KaylorMade Award for Outstanding Kitbashing sponsored by Kris Kaylor of KaylorMade

Spring Show Sponsors/Vendors

The following companies and individuals have helped sponsor this year's annual Spring Show by renting a vendor table at the event. We wish to thank these people for their interest and generosity, and encourage visitors to visit their web sites and their tables at the event.

Company/Individual - Contact **Web Site**

Mike Tsoumpas
J&S Hobbies - John Geigle
DRAW Decal - Greg Drawbaugh www.drawdecal.com
R&J Enterprises - Rich and Joy www.rjproducts.com
Michaelminiatures - Mike Cramer www.Michaelminiatures.com
Skyway Model Shop - Emil Minerich www.skywaymodel.com
Modelcraft - Bob Adie Sr. www.modelcraft.com
John Casey
Everett Quam
Terry Moore
Galaxy Hobby - Mike www.galaxyhobby.com
Mike Lane
Carl Broberg/Terry Davis
Support the Troops Mark Aldrich, Tacoma IPMS
Garland Angleton
Steve Cozad

Andrew Bertschi
Roy Schlicht
Gundam Vancouver - Derick Siu
Craftworks - Shawn McEvoy www.craftworks.com
Bob Jacobson
Scott Baumann
Fantasy World Hobbies - Jason Thordarson
www.fantasyworldhobbies.com
Joseph Koczur
Scalefinishes.com - Jameston Kroon www.scalefinishes.com
Roberto Otero
Robert Scott
Johnny Horn

Meng 1/35th Scale AMX-30B French Main Battle Tank

by Eric Christianson

It's been a long wait, but Meng has released a French AMX-30 in 1/35th scale, the first example kitted since the old Heller version. The sleek lines and low silhouette of the AMX-30 have long made this one of my favorite tanks, even if the real vehicle fell short of expectations on the battlefield. This brand new kit comes with excellent instructions, a PE folding tool, and separate track links.

The AMX-30 main battle tank was designed by GIAT and it was first delivered to the French Army in 1966. The production version of the AMX-30 weighed 36 metric tons and sacrificed protection for increased mobility. The French believed that it would have required too much armor to protect against the latest anti-tank threats, thereby reducing the tank's maneuverability.

Protection, instead, was provided by the speed and the compact dimensions of the vehicle, including a height of only about seven feet. It had a 105-millimetre main weapon, firing an advanced HEAT warhead known as the Obus G. The Obus G used an outer shell, separated from the main charge by ball bearings, to allow the round to be spin-stabilized by the gun without affecting the warhead inside. Mobility was provided by the 720 horsepower (540 kW) HS-110 diesel, although a troublesome transmission adversely affected the tank's performance.

Due to transmission problems the French Army began to modernize its fleet of tanks to AMX-30B2 standards in 1979. This included a new transmission, an improved engine and the introduction of a new fin-stabilized kinetic energy penetrator, amongst other improvements. Production of the AMX-30 also extended to a number of variants, including the AMX-30D armored recovery vehicle, the AMX-30R anti-aircraft gun system, a bridge-layer, the Pluton tactical nuclear missile launcher, and a surface to air missile launcher.

As early as 1969, the AMX-30 and variants were ordered by Greece, soon followed by Spain. In the coming years, the AMX-30 would be exported to Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Cyprus, and Chile. By the end of production, 3,571 units of AMX-30s and its variants had been manufactured. Both Spain and Venezuela later began extensive modernization programs to extend the life of their vehicles and to bring their tanks up to more modern standards. In the 1991 Gulf War, AMX-30s were deployed by both the French and Qatari armies, and Qatari AMX-30s saw action against Iraqi forces at the Battle of Khafji.

The AMX-30 kit comes with:

7 sprues of soft, dark green, slightly waxy plastic

5 sprues of soft, tan plastic for the individual track links

1 sprue of clear plastic

1 small sheet of photo-etch

1 small sheet of decals made by Cartograph of Italy

1 piece of rubber material for use over the gun mantlet

Separate lower hull and upper turret, individually wrapped



Instruction booklet with two color schemes:

(Generic) 'Single Color Scheme' in olive green.

'NATO Camouflage Scheme' in tri-color green, brown, black

The instructions are one area where Meng truly excels above all the other armor kit manufacturers. The instructions are contained in a 20-page color booklet with a history, paint callouts (Gunze Hobby Color and Mr. Color only), tools list, and two five-view color schemes. Additionally, Meng is the first company that I know of to stamp their sprues with large, 3/4-inch letters (A, B, C, etc.) that really help with identification, and as far as I know, the first to include a track link assembly jig/PE bending tool in the kit. While this last item has promise, the reality fell a little short in both roles. Still, I really like the direction they are going.



This is the third Meng kit I've had the pleasure to review. I've also built their German VsKfz 617 Minenraumer, the British Tortoise. Meng used a soft grey plastic for the Minenraumer which was flash-free and very easy to work with. For whatever reason, they chose to use a different plastic for the Tortoise and the AMX-30. This new plastic is a dark green and tough. It has a slightly waxy/oily surface and, when sanded, tends to turn white-opaque and it becomes difficult to work with. The smaller parts contain flash that has to be removed, with some parts having so much that once you are done it looks more like a resin chunk than a plastic part. The soapy, oily surface tends to attract the residue from sanding so that only a blast of air or water will clean the parts enough for you to check your progress. Finally, some glue, like Testors (black bottle) liquid cement, is slow to 'take': the plastic doesn't dissolve easily. I've had parts fall off by gravity two to three minutes after applying the glue - something that would never happen with the grey plastic. With such beautiful engineering, it is a shame to see it rendered in such a poor quality medium. Hopefully we will see Meng bring back their grey plastic in their future releases.

Construction starts with the hull and main running gear. The only thing to say here is that in several cases, and throughout construction, there were missing 'Option' icons. Sometimes they are there, sometimes not. The optional choices simply show 4, or 6, or 8 part numbers, with parenthesized part numbers for the other side of the vehicle. This is ok, but it is not always clear that these are choices between options.

The fit with some of the smaller parts, like the view ports on the hull hatch in Step Six, is poor, as are the brackets for the PE screens in Step Eleven. I suggest you bend the PE first so you can use it to figure out what angle the brackets need to be for the best result. The bending tool Meng includes in the box is useful for checking the angle of the bend you make, but not for actually bending the parts.

Meng provides exquisitely formed plastic tow cables that conform to all the bumps and corners on the deck perfectly. They did the same with the electric cables on the Tortoise: beautiful work.

In Step Twelve Meng has you use a strange 'rubber mat' to drape over the main gun mantlet. With reservations, I plowed into this part and to my surprise I found that the rubber responds well to Tamiya thin cement and later, it took primer and paint fine. Do not get it wet with water or moisture or it might curl a little. I used a can of compressed air to blow off some of the plastic debris and shavings and a frosty layer of condensation caused an edge of the rubber mat to come up slightly.

The main gun took some work to remove a side-seam; there is an excellent after-market barrel available. The smoke discharger bases that attach to the turret in Step Twenty-Five must be aligned right. Look at the orientation of the dischargers in the pictures to see which way to attach the bases because they will also 'fit' the wrong way. The IR/Searchlight housing is fiddly, requiring three hands to get right. With the complexity in painting this correctly I decided to shut the front doors, thereby hiding the light and saving my sanity. Likewise, assembling the machine gun and its parts is difficult and plagued with a lot of flash. Once the waxy plastic parts were clean, they looked like a bunch of chunks of white candy. I brought the parts together so that they somewhat resembled a gun and smothered everything with glue. Once painted, it looked ok.

MENG provides 120 links, 60 per side. I had 18 links left over so maybe 51 per side? I strongly recommend first attaching a section of about 10 links around the rear drive sprockets so that you can attach the remaining runs without having to run them around the sprockets when you attach the rest of the track. The clearance between the sprocket teeth and the hull is extremely small and the fragile

nature of the runs will cause problems otherwise. This is because the track, while beautifully executed, suffers from not having enough 'gripping' power between links when the links are laid out prior to gluing. They are supposed to be movable, and each link contains little hooks for that when you assemble them using their track jig. Unfortunately, the hooks are not 'hooked' enough and any run longer than a few links tends to fall apart under the slightest stress. I simply assembled both top and bottom halves of each link and then put the links together like I would any other link and length track.

Also, if you use one drop of glue between links, as I did on the first run of the track, you will find that this lack of grip will carry though when installed on the vehicle. The links really want to come apart. As a consequence, I recommend adding two drops of glue between each and every link and maybe giving it an extra ten minutes to set up. I use Testors 'black bottle' cement for this because it gives me plenty of working time. After about 30-40 minutes the track comes up in a single, nice, bendable piece that can be worked around the wheels and return rollers.

The AMX-30 is a cinch to paint green, and only slightly more difficult to paint in the NATO three-tone finish. I chose the latter by request of a friend and I used the excellent illustrations provided as a go-by. I thin all Tamiya paint and primer products 50/50 with Gunze Mr. Color Leveling Thinner, which has its own retarder for airbrushing. If you haven't tried it, you should. I use a Paasche 'H' Single-Action airbrush with the number 3 tip with 20 lbs. pressure for everything. I use the same thinner for hand-brushing Tamiya paints.

I set the machine-gun cupola aside so I could paint it separately and insert the clear-plastic glass before attaching the whole thing to the turret later. I also covered the machine gun mounted searchlight with a round piece of tape to mask it. Everything else was painted as assembled, which followed these steps:



I started with a primer coat of Gunze Mr. Surfacer 1200 thinned 50/50 with Gunze Leveling Thinner, to give the slippery green plastic and PE some bite. I then sprayed an overall pre-shade coat of Tamiya NATO Black (XF-69). I followed this with Tamiya NATO Green (XF-67) and Tamiya NATO Brown (XF-68). I lightened both colors with a few drops of Tamiya Flat White (XF-2). I used the excellent five-view go-by on the back page of the instructions. Pulling off a tri-color NATO pattern is not a simple feat on a tank with this many protuberances – the scheme provided really helped. There are precious few decals for the NATO-painted version, the largest being a tiny 'license plate' number under the shovel on the back of the tank. Unfortunately, Part F21 from Step 11 is sitting in that spot. Consequently, no decals - and no complaints!

Next I shot the whole vehicle with a liberal coat of Future Acrylic to prepare the surface for washes. While the Future was drying, I painted the wooden portions of the pioneer tools Vallejo Acrylics New Wood and all the steel parts Vallejo Oily Steel. For the hand painting I mix a tiny bit of Vallejo Slow Dry and water with each color until it flows smoothly off a 00 Liner Red Sable brush.

I painted the machine gun Tamiya Gun Metal (X-10). The shine would later get covered by a flat coat. To give the wooden parts of the tools more depth, I brushed on a little Mig Wash Brown Oil straight from the tube and let that set overnight. Don't let this paint leach out its oil beforehand, like you would when you are using oils for detailing. The oil helps it stay workable. In the morning I carefully removed most of the oil paint using a brush dampened with Mona Lisa, leaving the areas near the buckles and metal parts darker than the wooden shafts.

I gave the entire vehicle a pin wash using Mig Dark Wash (aka Raw Umber) straight from the bottle. This wash goes on very dark but, on the shiny, acrylic surface, it stays wet and workable for a long time. Using a clean brush, Mona Lisa thinner and a paper towel, I worked the wash around until I had it just the way I wanted it. I let this dry overnight and then gave the model a 'road-dusting' coat of Vallejo Model Air Light Brown, paying special attention to the wheels and track. This very fine paint literally 'whispers' on when thinned 50/50 with Vallejo's Airbrush Thinner. Great stuff! Next I shot the whole vehicle and figures with Vallejo Flat Varnish to kill any

remaining shine, again, thinned 50/50 with Vallejo Airbrush Thinner to improve flow. Finally, I inserted the machine gun cupola glass and attached it to the top of the turret with a little spot of Testors 'black bottle' cement and...one more AFV for my case.

The AMX-30 looks like a tank should look: low, sleek, balanced, menacing. I've always had a place in my heart for this AFV ever since buying a ROCO MiniTank version of it when I was a kid. I jumped at the chance to build it, especially since it was produced by Meng. The plastic was a challenge to work with, however, and the fit of the parts was not as good as their previous releases. Also, the track will give you problems unless you simply go with your experience using link & length track.

Still, the problems are surmountable and result in a fine looking build. I recommend this kit to all modelers who have a little experience solving minor problems. Get yourself a sharp hobby knife and consider the suggestions above.

I would like to thank Meng and 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 Jacob's and Eric's articles. - ED]



Meng 1/35th Scale French FT-17 Light Tank (Cast Turret)

by Andrew Birkbeck

The 100th Anniversary of the tank going into combat takes place in September 2016, and as this anniversary draws closer I have become fascinated with these first creaking, clattering vehicles of death; part of the first modern industrial war in history. And while the British Army's rhomboid shaped monsters that took part in that engagement at Flers-Courcelette during the Battle of the Somme were the first tanks to see service, the diminutive French FT-17 can legitimately lay claim to be the great grandfather of the modern tank: the first fully tracked armored vehicle with a rotating turret. And as luck would have it, Meng Models have produced a simply magnificent model kit of this seminal vehicle. Not only is this model exquisitely detailed, it is fully detailed, as it comes with a very complete interior.



Firstly, let me say what a lovely box Meng has packaged this kit in! Extremely sturdy, in order to protect the parts within, with a lovely full color painting of the FT-17 on the box top, done in a satin finish.

- 10 Sprues worth of parts in tan injection molded plastic
- 68 dark gray/blackish plastic track links
- 2 cast metal parts
- 2 metal axles
- 4 metal springs
- 1 fret of photo etched brass parts
- 1 sheet of decals
- 1 set of instructions, 6.5" x 10", 21 pages which includes color painting and markings profiles

The tan plastic parts are very well detailed, flash-free, and devoid of any ejection marks or sink marks that can be seen once the kit is assembled with one exception, the track links. Detail is exceptional on all the parts, and photo etched parts are kept to the bare minimum, without sacrificing detail. And allowing one to put all this lovely plastic and metal together, a set of excellently executed instructions, well laid out, easy to comprehend, and without any mistakes that I could find.

Construction of the FT-17 commences with the transmission and engine, plus radiator: lots of small parts, and lots of detail painting. However, you will find that if you study the instructions carefully, and are mindful of what you are doing, everything fits together with the minimum of fuss!

Section 1 through 3. Then comes the driver's compartment in the front of the tank, leavers, pedals, seat cushion, back rest, and yet more engine bits and pieces. One thing to recognize early on is that there are a number of alternative parts for the interior, based on the historical period you are building the kit from. The FT-17 served from WW1 through to the invasion of France 1940, and beyond as a vehicle captured and pressed into service by the Germans. Markings are included for a WW1 vehicle, two 1940 vehicles, and a 1944 vehicle. I built up the main engine/transmission parts as one unit, and painted it Tamiya XF-84 Dark Iron.

In Section 4, 5, 6, and 8 I assembled much of the rest of the interior parts, keeping them in three main sub units: left side, right side of





the hull (parts A10 and A7) and hull floor (main parts A19 and B1) plus a few other separate parts such as the driver seat cushion B29. The main interior sub units were painted overall Tamiya XF-2 Flat White (all parts were first primed with Mr Surfacer 1200). A dark wash was then applied liberally to highlight all the detail, as well as serving to fade the bright white paint.

Section 7 & 9 “Right and Left Exterior Assemblies”: make sure that parts B41 and B42 are installed the correct way up, as it is possible to do so upside down. I also replaced the kit supplied metal springs that attach to the cast metal suspension unit on each side of the tank, as I felt the kit ones were a bit wimpy. I simply took some lead wire of the appropriate diameter, and wrapped it around a suitably sized drill bit and cut the resulting coil to size. I wasn’t actually happy that the suspension part was in fact made out of cast metal. It didn’t seem required to be so for strength, and metal parts have little give if you need to slightly reposition them, and of course require super glue to attach them to the surrounding plastic parts.

We now come to Section 11, the main hull assembly section. It is here that you discover how well this kit is engineered, as with careful test fitting and slight trimming here and there, all the previously built and painted sub assemblies fit together ever so nicely! In Section 12, 13, and 14, the road wheels and general running gear assembly sections, you have again to check for alternative parts, in the form of large metal or wooden front road wheels. I also again replaced the kit supplied metal springs in these sequences with handmade replacements from lead wire.

Section 15 sees the modeler building the rear vehicle skid, with more alternative parts to choose from amongst. All goes together wonderfully once the decision has been made on which vehicle you are building. Section 16 has you assembling the link by link tracks. Each has a small mold pimple that needs carefully removing from the top side of the links that are visible once the kit is assembled. Nothing a sanding stick and sand paper didn’t fix. The links simply “click” together without cement, though I ended up applying model cement once they were all together and attached to the running gear, in order to strengthen the bonds. Section 17 and 18 have Meng providing the builder with the opportunity to attach the various front and rear hatches either closed, or open to show off all the interior detail the kit provides. Section 19 through 21 covers the assembly of the small turret, complete with finely detailed casting marks and what appears to be a mold mark on part J17, the main turret part. However, by closely examining various reference photos of preserved FT-17s in museums, I determined that this wasn’t a mold mark, but a casting mark, so don’t remove it by mistake! More alternative parts come in to play with the turret assembly, either a WW1 cannon for the main armament, or a post-WW1 machine gun. Since I buttoned up my turret, I didn’t bother with more than a rudimentary assembly of the main interior parts, though Meng gives the modeler the option of displaying the rear turret doors open, in which case you can put all the goodies together for a nicely detailed turret interior straight from the box.

Now with the model assembled in a series of sub assemblies (main hull, turret, and left and right side running gear and track), I painted all the exterior parts with Mr Surfacer 1200 to give the parts a uniform surface to apply the paint to (given we have plastic, PE, cast metal and lead wire parts). Prior to this, the already painted interior sections were masked off. Then an overall black coat of paint was laid down over the exterior parts. As a reviewer, I could have taken the easy way out when it came to painting this model, and chosen Paint Scheme D, an overall Panzer Grey Luftwaffe vehicle from 1944 France. A second scheme was a Finnish FT-17 from February 1940 in a

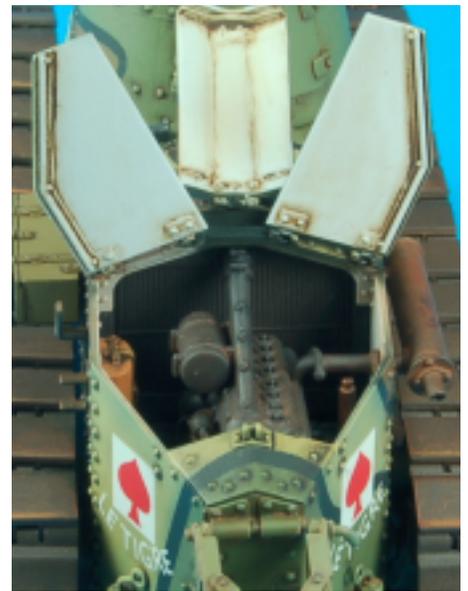
three tone Red-Brown/Green/Tan scheme with white wash winter camo laid in a mottled scheme over the top. A third is a three tone wavy scheme of Tan, Red Brown and Khaki, 4th Platoon, 1st Company, 29th Tank Battalion, French Army, May 1940. However, as I said earlier in this piece, I had fallen for the WW1 tank, as a WW1 vehicle. This involved the most complex scheme out of the four provided: a vehicle from “Le Tigre” Regiment of the French Army in an overall Red Brown, Tan and Green layout, with black outlines. I figured the best way to do this was to utilize a complex aftermarket masking product from a firm called J’s Work. Here is a link to what I used: <http://www.jsworkmodel.com/popup/PPA5103.jpg>



As with most complex paint schemes, the masking and painting process was rather laborious, but the end result, I believe, was well worth the effort. I utilized Tamiya colors throughout the painting process: XF-1 Flat Black, XF-60 Dark Yellow, XF-64 Red Brown, and XF-58 Dark Green, each suitably lightened where appropriate. I believe this scheme could have also been achieved using the product Blu-Tack rolled out into “worms” together with carefully cut masks from Tamiya tape?

Once painting was complete, and the masks removed, a series of oil pin washes were employed to highlight the lovely rivet detail. When dry, the sub-assemblies were glued together and the front and rear hatches suitably displayed in their open position. I also added a few pin washes with a suitable “rust” colored oil paint, just to add a little visual interest.

Overall then, this is a magnificent kit of an extremely important WW1 tank, one that served well into the 1940s. The fidelity of detail is excellent, the fit of the parts highly commendable, and equal to any other firm in the model business. The decals, by Cartograph of Italy, are well printed, in register, and lay down very well. Despite the full interior, the kit went together very well, and anyone with modest modeling skill should be able to turn this kit into a lovely little model. Hats off to Meng for such an excellent job! And my sincere thanks to Meng Models for allowing IPMS USA to review this superb kit.



Meng 1/35th Scale French Char 2C Super Heavy Tank

by Andrew Birkbeck

Following on from their superb yet diminutive FT-17 WW1 French tank, Meng Models of China provides the modeling public with a colossus of a tank model, the French Char 2C. Like the FT-17, the Char 2C was born during the years of battle in World War One, but came too late in the piece to see combat. Before the prototype was even completed, an order was placed for 300 of these gargantuan beasts, but due to the war coming to an end, this order was subsequently cancelled, and only 10 Char 2Cs were eventually delivered in 1921, becoming the largest tank ever to enter service in any of the world's armies. The 10 vehicles went on to become mainly propaganda vehicles, "staring" in various cinematic productions to show the strength of the French military machine. Each of the ten tanks was named after the ancient regions of France: Poitou, Provence, Picardie, Alsace, Bretagne, Touraine, Anjou, Normandie, Berry and Champagne. Normandie was renamed Lorraine in 1939. And while to the French public these tanks gained a reputation as super tanks, land battleships in fact, the French military knew different, and they were never put into battle. Rather than letting them fall into the hands of the invading Germans in 1940, the French Army detonated charges within them, though one, Champagne, was captured intact, and sent to Berlin for display as a war trophy.



The box includes:

- 6 sprues of tan colored plastic
- 2 huge injection parts, hull top, hull bottom in tan plastic
- 3 smaller injection parts, turret shells, and engine compartment
- 150 track links, black plastic
- 1 photo etched brass fret
- 1 decal sheet
- 1 instruction sheet, 16 pages, which includes the color and marking details

Despite the huge size of this model, with two exceptions it is a very simple one, yet one that does not scrimp on the detail. The parts are superbly molded, with fine rivet detail, no ejection pin marks or sink marks, and no flash. There is a very limited number of photo etch parts, and these should provide no issues even for someone who hates photo etched parts. The engineering of the kit parts is excellent, and everything fits together beautifully.



The build starts with the road wheels, and here is one of the two complex parts of the build, though I would say it is really tedious, rather than complex! Section 1 has the modeler assembling 74 sets of two-part road wheels! Nothing at all complex as I say, just ever so tedious! Snip snip, sand sand, snip snip, sand sand, glue. Time after time after time!

Section 2 continues with the suspension, before Section 3 and 4 move on to upper hull construction, before Section 5 and 6 revert back to suspension parts. The Char 2C has a track system similar to the British Rhomboid tanks of WW1. In Section 6, the modeler must make a decision on which vehicle from the color and

and

markings options they wish to build. One has a lower “skirt” that hides much of the road wheel assembly on each side of the vehicle, Option C, while the other two options omit the skirts. The problem, if it is one, is that Meng has simplified the road wheel area, similar to the way Tamiya did on their French Char 1bis kit. If you go with Option C, which I did, then this simplification is hidden, and so gives one a “more accurate” model.

There are lots of very large sub assemblies as one works through this kit, but to the great credit of Meng’s tool makers and designers, nothing at all presented me with any difficulties, provided I carefully studied all the instruction drawings, and took my time. The only molding issue I came across was in the second to last Section, Section 18, the assembly of the smaller of the two turrets. There are three or four seam lines on the main turret piece, at the rear hatch area, that need carefully removing via sandpaper. Nothing major at all though.

The last section, Section 19, involves the assembly of the black plastic individual track links. These are very well detailed, and without ejection pin marks. Each one “snaps” or “clicks” into the next fairly well without the aid of glue. Once you have assembled the 67 links for one side of the tank I believe it behooves the modeler to prime (Mr Surfacer 1200) the tracks, and then paint them (Tamiya XF-84 Dark Iron) separately from the rest of the model. Later, when the main hull unit is primed, painted and decalled, you wrap the tracks around the outer hull suspension area, and then very carefully snap the length together. I did the final “snap” on the top of the hull, and it was a very tight fit, but fit it nonetheless did! I then got out my super thin Tamiya cement (green top), and VERY carefully (to avoid spilling it onto the painted surfaces of the model) applied liberal amounts to all the link joints, to reinforce the connection. It would be a real tragedy if following completion the tracks snapped apart!

As mentioned earlier, I chose Option C in the color and marking section, vehicle 97 “Normandie”. This is an overall khaki color, for which I utilized Tamiya XF-49. For fading the panels, I mixed XF-49 with some XF-60 Desert Yellow. The decals are printed by Cartograph of Italy, and as one has come to expect from them, were excellent. Well printed, being perfectly in register, with good color saturation. However, there was an error contained within them. Decal #11, which appears on the front of the hull as the word “Normandie” and a French tricolor has the flag back to front. From left to right it is red, white, blue. It should in fact be blue, white, red. So simply but carefully separate the flag portion from the name, and turn it around!

This flag error also exists on Option B, Poitou. You have been warned.

Following the application of the decals, the whole model received a sealing coat of Gunze’s Mr. Color Flat Clear. Then a series of pin washes was applied using a suitably dark brown oil paint to highlight the armies of rivets which festoon this vehicle. Some rust colored oil paint was also mixed up into a wash, and applied over the tracks to make them a little more visually interesting. Finally, the contact points on the track were given a rub with a graphite stick.

Meng’s Char 2C is a simply wonderful model, with parts that fit exceedingly well. Despite its huge size, it only has two areas which have lots of parts: the road wheels, and the tracks. The rest of the model consists of a few very large parts, and a few detail parts that assemble flawlessly. It was a blast to build, a synch to paint, and makes one very impressive model when done. I have photographed it next to the FT-17, from the same era. All I can say is WELL DONE MENG! My thanks to Meng Models for providing IPMS USA with the review sample, and to IPMS for allowing me the pleasure of building this delightful model!





Eduard 1/48th Scale Bf 109E Seatbelts FABRIC

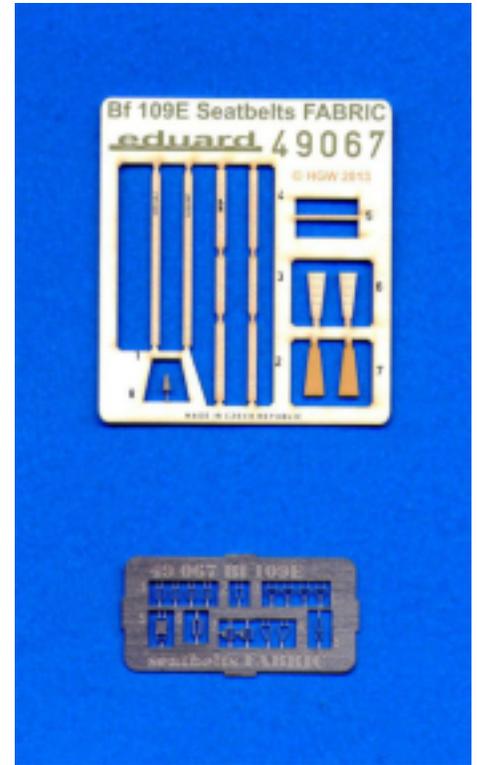
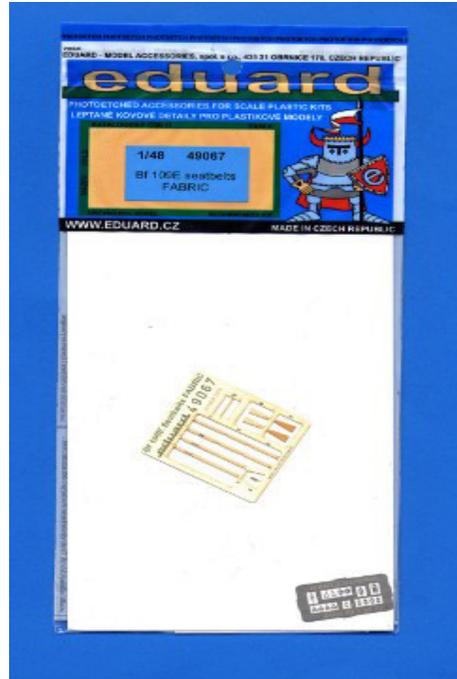
by Jacob Russell

This pair of Bf 109E seatbelts (item number 49067) is from Eduard's new line of multimedia belts, and it's pretty cool. It consists of 16 pieces, 8 each fabric and photo-etch. The fabric pieces are for the belts themselves and the photo-etch is for the buckles, etc.

This is a great set. The pieces are small, so I would recommend the use of an Optivisor and a good set of photo-etch cutters. Oh, and patience! The belts should be easy enough to assemble using Eduard's exploded view diagram.

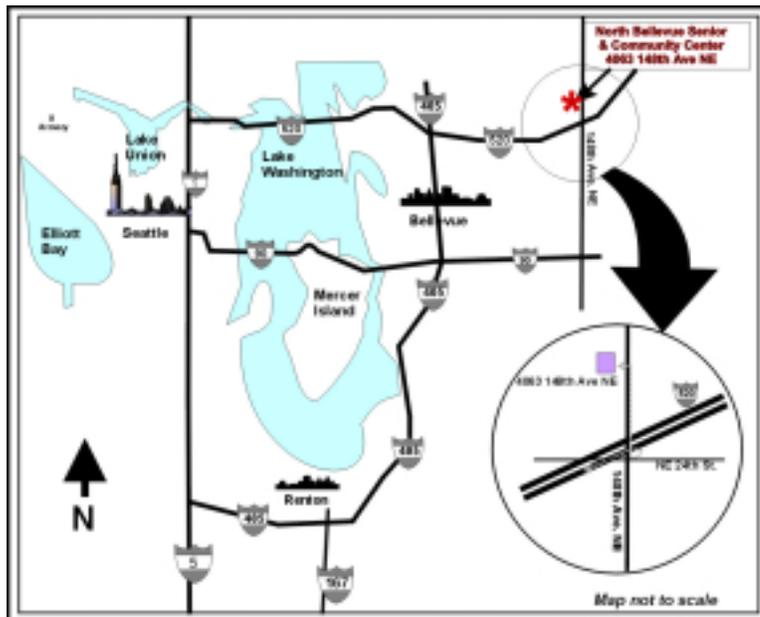
I am very excited that Eduard is producing so many different detail parts, in both their Brassin and p/e lines, for their Emil kits, which are the best on the market.

I recommend this set and I would like to thank Eduard for providing the review sample.



Meeting Reminder

Meeting: April 5 at Bellevue



Spring Show: April 12 at Renton

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

Directions to NBCSC: 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.