Seattle Chapter News

Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA January 2023

Another Paradigm Shift or Just Simply Déjà Vu?

I am one of many people lucky enough to have known master modeler, author, artist, and scratch-building extraordinaire, John Alcorn, before he passed in early 2017. In those fifteen years I don't think I ever once saw him build an injection-molded, styrene kit. John was truly committed to scratch-building the old-fashioned way…deep and thorough research, followed by vacuformed plastic over hand-carved, wooden masters, and machined metal parts – he was the real deal. While John owned a smattering of plastic kits, he was reluctant to open one up and build it. It just wasn't his way.

16 parts on Eric's Fiat 2000 (Build article in this newsletter)

I've thought about John a lot these last few weeks while building and finishing another 3D-printed armor marvel from Vargas Models. While I think John might have enjoyed the subject matter (his expertise was in all things flying, but the historical time-frame of the Vargas offerings would have piqued his interest), he would have been dismayed at the technology.

The 3D-printed kits being produced today are as revolutionary as injection-molded plastic kits must have been to scratch builders like John, and similar modelers who were steeped in balsa and paper mediums. (I hear you a-hollerin', Scott Kruize – yes, there are still some balsa guys lurking in the shadows!)

I am not alone in feeling that we are in the midst of another paradigm shift in modeling ("a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions"). While we have been watching and listening to the early adopters of 3D printing among us for some time, the technology has been a little sketchy, and expensive. Not quite ready for prime-time – certainly not in today's Golden Age of styrene indulgence.

But I have to tell you folks, things are changing, and quickly. So much so, that it worries me a little (more about that later). These armor kits from Vargas, and a whole slew of other 3D vendors, are absolutely stunning. The sheer variety of new subject matter, the exquisite detail of the parts, the high quality of the resin medium…all of this is moving 3D printing from a curious niche in our hobby over to the mainstream. Aircraft and similar 'exacting' subjects might require more refining of the technology to produce the surfaces desired, but 3D resin printing is a train on a track folks, and it is heading right for us.

The biggest benefit that I personally reap from these new 3D-printed models is the ridiculously low parts count. As a builder of mostly armor, I am used to kits that routinely have over 500 parts, many of them two or three times that. The beautifully detailed 3D printed kit I just finished had 26 pieces, including a nameplate and four (optional) alternative parts. That may be common in the 1/72nd scale Spitfire realm, but not for any tank I've ever seen. The reason I am so attracted to a low parts count is that I am one of those modelers who enjoy painting and finishing a model much more than actually assembling it. With this last model (Fiat 2000 WWI Italian tank), I was finished with cleanup and assembly in a single afternoon. Bang.

The clean-up we normally associate with resin kits is also changing for the better. The old-school resin blocks have been replaced with a manufacturing process that creates

In This Issue

Vargas FIAT 2000	4
Rogers M29C	10
Santa Models Railroading!	12
Hurricane Bookshelf: Falklands War	14
ICM German Mortar	16
IPMS Seattle 2023 Dues	18
Meeting Information	18
2023 IPMS Seattle Meeting Schedule	18

SEATTLE CHAPTER CONTACTS

President:
Eric Christianson
10014 124th Ave NE
Kirkland, WA 98033
Ph: 425-591-7385
ModelerEric@comcast.net

Vice President:
Terry Moore
7014 Lake Grove St. SW
Lakewood, WA 98499
terryandjill@comcast.net

Treasurer:
Fuzhou Hu
19012 3rd Dr SE
Bothell, WA 98012
Ph: 412-215-7417
fhu.ipms@gmail.com

Show Chair:
Rick Taylor

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 10:30 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. 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. We are in the process of transitioning to InDesign. 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 425-885-3671 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 2023 meeting schedule is as follows. All meetings are on Saturdays at North Bellevue Community Center from **10:30 AM** to **1:30 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.

January 14 **February 11**
March 11 **April 8**


IPMS/USA MEMBERSHIP FORM

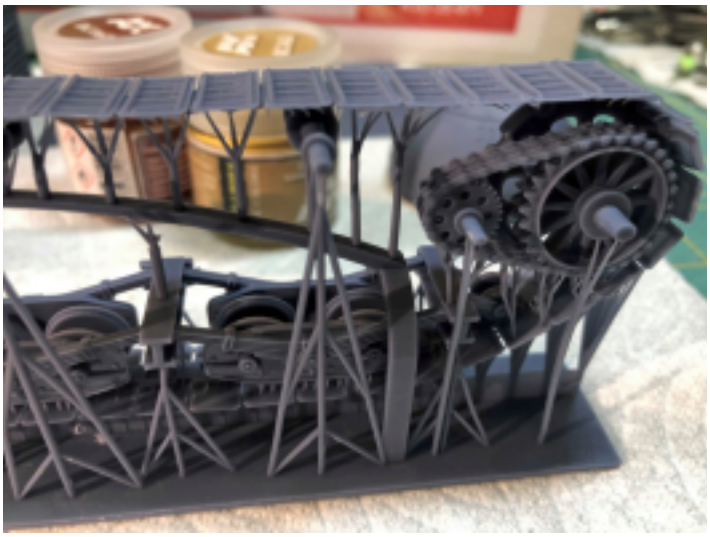
IPMS No.: _____ Name: _____
If Renewing First Middle Last
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
Signature (required by PO.) _____
Type of Membership ☐ Adult, 1 Year: $30 ☐ Adult, 2 Years: $58 ☐ Adult, 3 Years: $86
☐ Junior (Under 18 Years) $17 ☐ Family, 1 Year: $35 (Adult + $5, One Set Journals) How Many Cards? _____
☐ Canada & Mexico: $35 ☐ Other / Foreign: $38 (Surface) Checks must be drawn on a US bank or international money order
Payment Method: ☐ Check ☐ Money Order

Chapter Affiliation, (if any): _____
If Recommended by an IPMS Member, Please List His / Her Name and Member Number:
Name: _____ IPMS No.: _____

IPMS/USA
Join or Renew Online at: www.ipmsusa.org
PO Box 1411
Riverview, FL 33568-1411

Newsletter Editor:
Robert Allen
7919 133rd Ave. NE
Redmond, WA, 98052
425-885-3671
baclightning@yahoo.com

dozens (or hundreds) of tiny post-like 'fingers' that support the resin part during printing. These tiny posts are simple to snap or slice off. In some cases, you can take an Xacto knife and slide it along a surface, cutting dozens of the posts off at once. Each post is very thin and weak, but a hundred of them will firmly hold the resin part in place until needed. Even the resin material itself is different from before – at least with Vargas models. I (tried) to build a resin 3D-printed French H3 Hotchkiss tank about ten years ago, and had to pass the parts through a sonic cleaner multiple times to remove the oils and such from the surfaces before I could paint anything. Not so with the new resin. On my last Vargas build I did not encounter any oil by-product on the surfaces whatsoever. I still gave everything a warm, soapy wash just to be sure, but my paint and weathering products stuck just fine.



Exquisite Detail

This kind of quality isn't cheap, to be sure, but the delta between a Vargas kit and a high-end injection-molded kit is already pretty thin. Prices are falling and variety is growing; the business model seems sound – as long as there are still modelers alive to buy the kits (which is another conversation altogether)!

Earlier I alluded to being worried about this apparent paradigm shift coming at us. It's true, and I only have to look at my styrene stash in the garage to see why. In these last 90 days I have finished six builds; four of them reviews, and two of them 3D-printed. My grand plan was to continue to review new kits, but also to finish, and I mean finish, what's in my stash. Before dismissing this as wishful thinking - I am 65 after all - I actually did the math. Even accounting for a slow decline in my present build rate, I (thought) I could actually do what I have envisioned, barring some unforeseen circumstance. Well, with these 3D printed models…here comes my unforeseen circumstance. While I am not completely enamored with WWI and interwar subjects (which make up just about all of the Vargas offerings), I can see that it is only a matter of time before we see other 3D vendors producing far more mainstream subjects.

In my mind's eye, in the not-too-distant future, I see myself holding in my hand a new 3D-printed PzKpfw IV Ausf E with 30 parts, and passing on my identical Dragon kit that has over 1,400 parts, sitting unbuilt in my stash. For me, the build will be much faster, while the pleasure I will get out of the process will be the same. The choice seems like a no-brainer to me.

So, I have to ask myself – what will my stash look like in five years? Hmmmm….

Thanks, All - And Model On!

Eric

27 parts on Rick Taylor's US Interwar Mk.VIII Liberty

My Styrene Stash

Vargas Scale Models 1/35th Scale FIAT 2000 Italian Heavy Tank

by Eric Christianson

Vargas Models, a prolific maker of extraordinary resin, 3-D printed, limited-run armor models is back with another unusual subject; the Fiat 2000 Carro Armata or 'heavy tank'. The Fiat 2000 was the first Italian tank ever developed, with the first prototype displayed in mid-1917, and the final production prototype unveiled the following year.

The FIAT 2000 was a substantial vehicle, of comparable dimensions to the British Mark V tanks, and weighing 40 tons as compared to the Mark V's 28 tons, making it 'technically' the heaviest tank of World War I, although it never saw combat.

The layout of the FIAT 2000 differed to the other tanks then in use; the engine was separated from the crew - not placed behind the crew compartment as modern tanks, but below it. The mechanical layout was also interesting and innovative, comprising a FIAT Aviazione A12, water-cooled 240 hp (180 kW) engine with six cylinders driving the tracks through a transverse transmission. The fuel capacity was 600 - 1,000 liters, but this gave only 75 km range on paved roads.

The tracks were longer than the hull, but were lower in comparison to the wrap-around type found on the British 'rhomboidal' tanks and thus lower in weight.

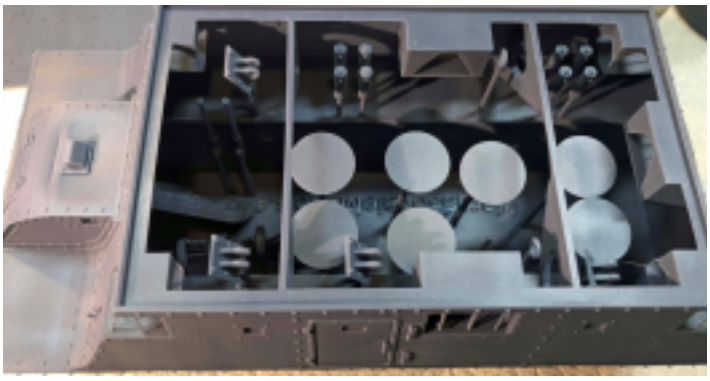
The armor was of clean design, being made of riveted steel plates. It was 15 mm thick on the sides and 20 mm on the front.

Armament originally consisted of the turret mounted gun and ten machine guns (three on each side and four in front), but this left the rear of the tank undefended and tended to contaminate the interior with propellant fumes, so it was decided to install a ventilator in the roof and alter the machine gun positions to two on each side, three at the rear, and two in front.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the tank's weaponry was the turret. Apart from the Renault FT, this was the first tank to have a rotating turret mounted above the hull. The turret was made of four pieces rivetted together and had room enough for two crew members. Its weapon was a 65/17 howitzer. Thanks to the tall turret and the space available beneath it, the gun's elevation was -10/+75°.

A modest order for 50 tanks was never completed, the only tanks produced being two prototypes, both of which met their fate to time and circumstance. A project to build a 1:1 fully functional replica, however, was completed in April of 2020, and 'should be making the rounds at tank demonstrations and armor shows in the near future'.

Physically larger than a Tiger I, as wide as a Panther, and taller than an M3 Grant, this enormous vehicle can be built in one of two versions offered by Vargas; the first sporting seven machine guns and a short-barreled howitzer in the turret. The second, representing a rework of the second 1918 prototype (finished in 1934), with two of the machine guns replaced with 37/40mm guns, both positioned forward. This second version is the subject of my review.



As with most 3-D printed kits, the sprues do not have any old-school poured-resin blocks to remove; instead containing dozens (hundreds?) of very thin connecting rods that are part of the printing process. This makes the parts very simple to remove from the sprues. The howitzer barrel, machine guns, name plate, and a few other parts are printed – inside – the single-piece main hull, and can be easily removed (a great use of empty space there!) There are very few actual parts, 17 in all, and these are exquisitely detailed – some of the best work I've seen in this medium. There

is cleanup required, to be sure, but nothing like what I would normally expect for limited-run subjects.

The dark-grey resin is firm, but sands easily enough, and there are some very slight surface striations on some of the round parts that require attention, making preparation more important than with typical styrene kits. Comparatively, however, this work from Vargas is pretty good as delivered. There are very few, if any, surface flaws and the molding is excellent with no noticeable defects. The detail overall is crisp, and while many of the parts are very delicate, Vargas pulls everything together without having to resort to using photo-etch or other finicky mediums, which is a big plus (for me at least). The two pieces that represent the full track runs, one for each side, are simply breathtaking – so much so that I decided to leave one side skirt off to display the detail represented in resin by Vargas.

The contents of the box include:

- Two track sections, packaged individually.
- One top plate for the main hull, packaged individually.
- One half-round turret, packaged individually.
- Two separate side skirts, packaged individually.
- The single main hull and superstructure, packaged individually.
- An 8-page, color instruction booklet, consisting of two full size sheets, folded in half, which includes a parts list. All text and label information is printed in English.

There are no markings included in the kit.

As with most limited run, resin kits, the instructions are brief and not always 'enough'. Assembly requires test fitting and comparing what you have to drawings and images of the real thing, easily found on-line. In place of text, Vargas provides simple CAD images from the printing process itself for use as a rough go-by to start with. Fortunately, each piece is shown assembled and printed in a different color from the one adjoining it, which makes things a little easier to follow – but only a little. If you have built limited-run kits before, this one is typical – a lot of testing and adjusting surfaces to fit. Fortunately, the images are rendered from several angles so you are rarely forced to guess about how things go on 'the other side'.

Clean Before You Start: Even though there are relatively few parts in this kit, a 3-D printed model requires a good amount of preparation before assembly. After unwrapping all the parts, and carefully snipping (not pulling) the parts printed inside the main hull, I carefully shaved and sanded the surfaces of everything to remove any remaining vestiges of the thin resin posts that held the parts to the sprues. The track sections, however, were so fragile that I felt they would come apart during assembly and painting. I decided to leave intact some of the supporting structures until each track run was security attached to the main hull, after which I removed the remaining vestiges of the resin supports. This worked out very well.

Next, I went to work smoothing out some minor (but noticeable) grooves on the surfaces of the round parts. The resin is not soft, but it works away with a little effort, resulting in a smooth surface relatively quickly. Other areas that need attention are where flat surfaces mate together; on some parts the flat surface was actually slightly convex (rounded) from the production process, and need to be made perfectly flat to prevent gaps.

Once I thought I had everything pretty well cleaned up, I gave the parts a warm bath in soapy water, rinsing them in warm water. After drying I felt the surfaces with my fingers, and, if I found anything tacky, I repeated the wash, rinse and dry steps until all the tackiness was gone. With all the parts clean and free of defects, I was ready for assembly.

Assembly starts with a choice to make – whether you will build the 1918 version with seven machine guns, or the 1934 version with two of the forward-facing MGs swapped out with long-barreled 37mm guns. I wanted to show a little variety in armament so the later 1934 prototype appealed to me.

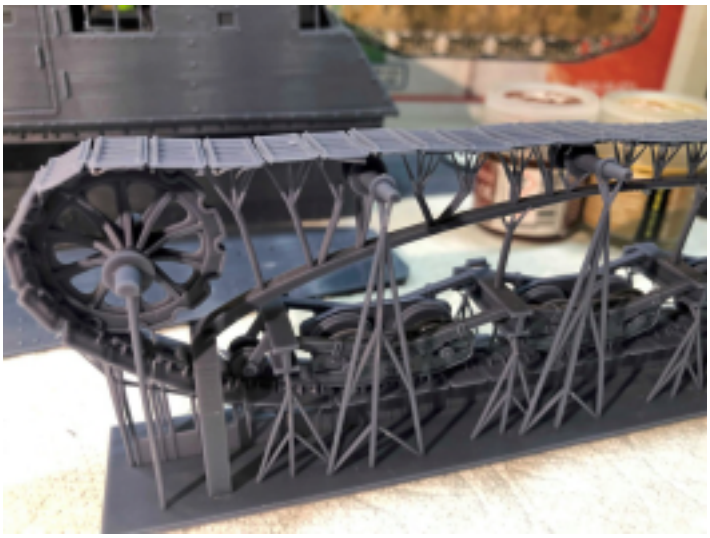
Discarding the three unneeded parts (including a shorter main armament barrel) that made up the differences between the two versions, and donning my particulate mask, I went to work with several round files, sanding and fitting, until I had a good seal around all the parts and the places where they go.

The seven conical MG turrets were a tight fit and pushed into place without glue. Vargas printed a very slight round circle to insure proper placement of the MG turrets - nice. I left the actual gun barrels off until the end of the build so that they, and the rest of the tank, could be finished separately.

The barrel of the main armament has a 'seat' printed in the main turret that causes the barrel to point upwards – not my preference – I like barrels to be pointed horizontally. Not wanting to remove the printed circular 'seat' and recreate it to lower the elevation of the barrel, however, I decided to use these parts as provided.

The two track sections, which are amazing pieces of work, have many, many resin supports to remove and clean up. I removed as many as I could without degrading the overall strength of the runs – I could remove the final supports once the track sections were in place on the sides of the hull. (See image of 'before and after cleaning'). The side skirts will cover 90% of the track sections, so, per suggestion by Vargas, I installed the side skirt with the finely represented grab handles, leaving the other side skirt off so I could expose the exquisite track detail and bicycle-chain gearbox.

The top armor plate falls into place with a noticeable gap between it and the hull opening. I wasn't sure if this gap was supposed to be there or not, so, choosing the easier path, I centered the top in place over the hole and called it a day.



And that was that – assembly complete, with the barrels set aside for attaching at the end. Vargas models are perfect for modelers like me, who enjoy the 'finishing' steps to those involving assembly!

There are a surprising number of images of the Fiat 2000 online, and more than a few color schemes to work with. I chose a three-color pattern to break up the menacing bulk of the vehicle, planning to apply a significant mount of weathering that might be present in combat.

Here is a breakdown of the colors and materials I used to finish the build:

Painting: Main Hull and one side skirt
Primer: Rattle-can Gunze Mahogany
Post Shade (1) – Tamiya Primer (White) airbrushed carefully on upper surfaces.
Post Shade (2) - Tamiya Dark Iron airbrushed carefully on lower surfaces.
Main Camouflage - Tricolor, airbrushed freehand:
Light Shade: 1:2 Mix of Tamiya XF-60 Dark Yellow and XF-2 Flat White
Green Shade: Vallejo Model Air71.092 Medium Olive
Brown Shade: 50/50 mix of AKI RC067 ROT and RC023 Olive Drab

Painting: Track Sections and Guns
Primer – Rattlecan Flat Black
Post Shade (1) AK Surface Primer Track Color
Post Shade (2) Dark Iron

Weathering (glossy surface)

- Mr. Hobby Mr. Weathering Color Enamels - Stain Brown – all surface detail, stumped with Mr. Hobby thinner.
- Vallejo Thick Mud colors, working light to dark, starting with 73.807 European Mud, and finishing with 73.808 Russian Mud.
- Dot Filter using various AKI Drybrushers
- Treated the track and lower chassis with AKI Earth Effects

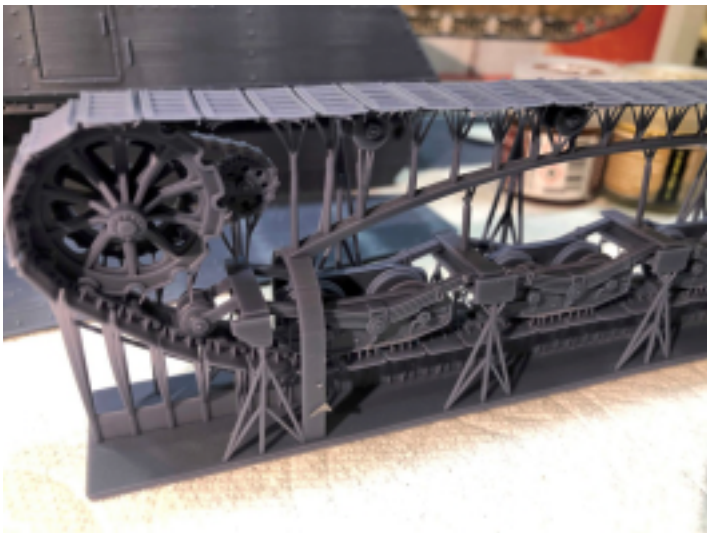
Weathering (flat surface)

- Overall filter using Old Holland Sepia Extra (tube) Oil paint.
- Dusting of Tamiya Dark Iron on lower areas and panel lines.
- Dusting of Vallejo Game Wash 73.200 Sepia on upper areas and panel lines.
- Overall bolt detail added using Tamiya X-10 Gun Metal
- Overall 'bling' added using Uschi Chrome Powder.
- Overall application of dry pigments to areas that needed a little toning, using MIG Russian Earth to darken areas, and European Dust as a mid-level dirt-color dusting.

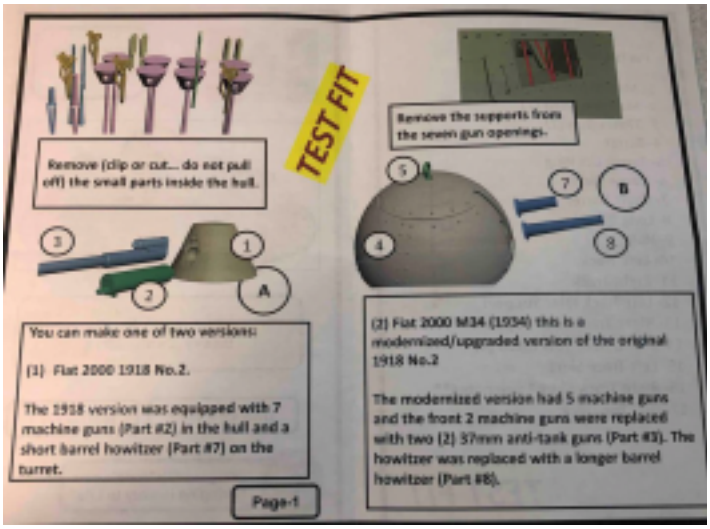
This is my second 3D printed model from Vargas and the build was a breeze. Luis Vargas did a solid job researching the subject, and the design and engineering that went into the kit is readily apparent. As I said with the last Vargas project – each one makes me want to build more.

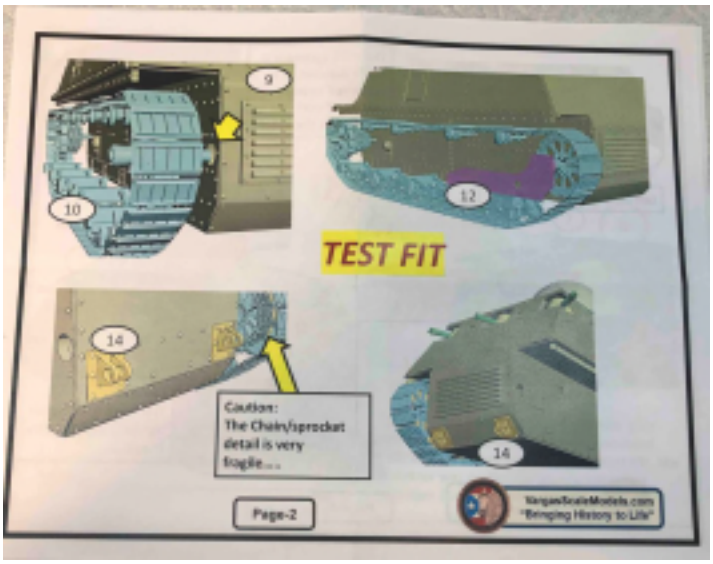
As with any all-resin project, this kit has its challenges, especially when compared to injection-molded models. I think the build was straightforward enough, however, for any modeler to finish. Having a solid working knowledge of alternative adhesives (CA Glue, epoxy, and/or 'fortified' white glues) would certainly be a plus.

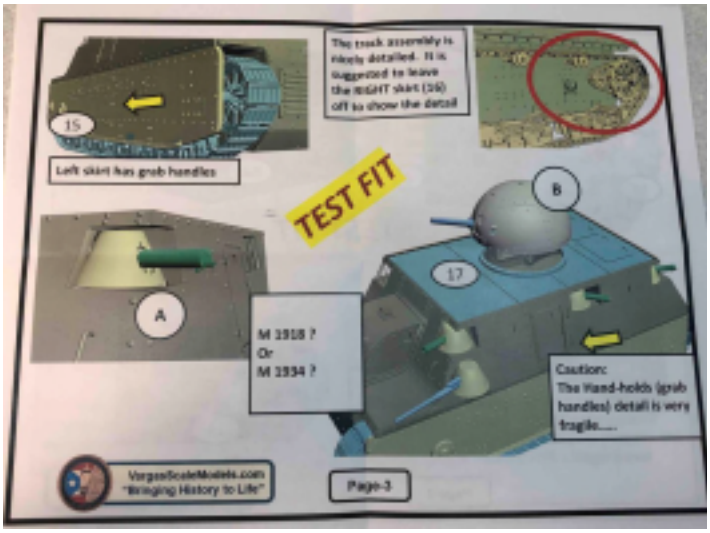
I would like to heartedly thank Luis Vargas at Vargas Scale Models for providing this kit for review, and to IPMS USA for giving me the opportunity to build it.




Parts List (36)
1- Machine Gun Shiels (7)
2- Machine Guns (7)
3- 37mm Gun (2)
4- Turret
5- Turret Lift Ring
6- Name Plate
7- Short Barrel
8- Long Barrel
9- Hull
10- Left Track
11- Right Track
12- Left Track Idler Support
13- Right Track Idler Support
14- Front/Rear Tow Hitch (4)
15- Left Track Skirt
16- Right Track Skirt * see notes**
17- Hull Top Deck
TEST FIT
TEST FIT
WW1 1918
ITALY
Fiat 2000 No. 2
Heavy Tank 1918
1/35 OR 1/72
R3D-xx-71
VargasScaleModels.com
"Bringing History to Life"


TEST FIT
Remove (clip or cut... do not pull off) the small parts inside the hull.
Remove the supports from the seven gun openings.
You can make one of two versions:
(1) Fiat 2000 1918 No.2.
The 1918 version was equipped with 7 machine guns (Part #2) in the hull and a short barrel howitzer (Part #7) on the turret.
(2) Fiat 2000 M34 (1934) this is a modernized/upgraded version of the original 1918 No.2
The modernized version had 5 machine guns and the front 2 machine guns were replaced with two (2) 37mm anti-tank guns (Part #3). The howitzer was replaced with a longer barrel howitzer (Part #8).
Page-1


TEST FIT
Caution:
The Chain/sprocket detail is very fragile....
Page-2
VargasScaleModels.com
"Bringing History to Life"


The track assembly is nicely detailed. It is suggested to leave the RIGHT skirt (16) off to show the detail
Left skirt has grab handles
TEST FIT
M 1918 ?
Or
M 1934 ?
Caution:
The Hand-holds (grab handles) detail is very fragile.....
VargasScaleModels.com
"Bringing History to Life"
Page-3

What Has Tracks and Floats?: The Amphibious M29C of the Rogers Motor Company

by Dave Hansen

In the middle of World War II, the Rogers Motor Company, a well-established manufacturer of engines for model airplanes, opened a scale model division. It would be natural to assume that the subjects would be the same aircraft that Rogers knew best, but the scale model division went off in a totally different direction. In the span of years between 1943 and 1946, it produced one tank, one artillery piece, one amphibious cargo carrier, and two naval vessels. No planes.

The models were pine and cedar with other parts made of heavy die-cut fibre board or thick paper. Some pieces were machined to shape as well, and assembly was straightforward: a large detailed instruction sheet guided the builder through the process. The models stood out for their size. The M4 Sherman tank, 40mm Bofors anti-aircraft gun, and amphibious Weasel were advertised as scaled ¾-inches to the foot. The naval vessels – a Landing Ship Tank and a Landing Craft Infantry – were scaled respectively at 3/64- and 3/32- inches to the foot. The wording on the boxes carried the encouragement that they were easy to assemble, and they were to a point. I had found that out myself somewhere in the Eisenhower administration when I carried home the kit of the anti-aircraft gun. I began easily enough but soon my progress bogged down in the face of compounding complexity.

The years passed and along the way I acquired all the Rogers kits and even built the Sherman; the big scale made it truly a door stop of a model. Recently I was looking for a different kind of project for some modeling diversion and from the stash I picked out the kit of the M29C Weasel, the amphibious version of the Army's tracked personnel and cargo carrier. I'd always liked the vehicle, sort of an ugly duckling that is still without an easily available and accurate kit in 1:35th scale.

The Rogers kit was in perfect shape despite its 1945 date of manufacture. The box looked new, all the parts were still there, the plans were crisp; it was as if someone had bought it and then kept it in the back of a closet for almost 80 years. Lucky me!

I unfolded the plans to their full length of three feet. Included were a four-view drawing of the vehicle, a series of photographs that established the order of assembly, and chunks of text that described what I was looking at in the pictures. I spread out the contents of the box and came to my first realization that the project may not be as easy as I thought. The pictures on the plan showed the numbered parts in their proper place on an assembled model but there were no part numbers on the individual pieces themselves. Some were obvious – the blocky bow and stern were easily identified – but there were many almost identical parts that seemed either not to belong anywhere or to belong in several locations. I labeled those parts that I could identify with their appropriate number and put a question mark on the others, hoping that all might become clear as the work progressed.

The basic hull shape glued up in a few brief steps, and I clamped it all together to dry overnight. The next day, I filled a few small gaps with putty and sanded it down. So far so good, so good in fact that I decided to shift my attention to the tracks. Unlike most armor models, the track runs weren't attached to the hull but were assembled separately on their own platform; the last step in the build of the Weasel would be to drop the completed hull on top of the completed tracks.

I began by gluing the axles to the base plate and then attaching the fibre-board bogie frames to the end of each axle. There was a bunch of road wheels and I spent a lot of time sanding down the center seam on each one and filling pits in the Bakelite plastic, a messy business that made me happy I was working in the garage. I drilled out all the axle holes to a uniform size, slipped on a short piece of wooden dowel, and

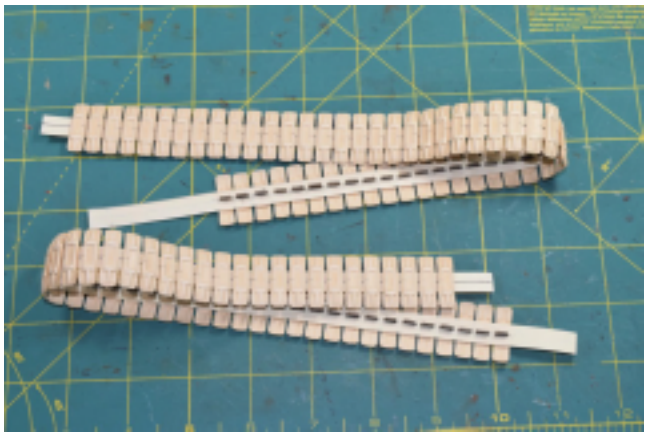
began to attach the road wheels to the bogies – but couldn't. The wheel diameters were too large and they banged into the axles. I didn't want to face the prospect of grinding down all 40 road wheels to a smaller diameter so I did the next best thing: I cut big divots in the axles so the wheels had the clearance they needed to turn. A crude fix but invisible.

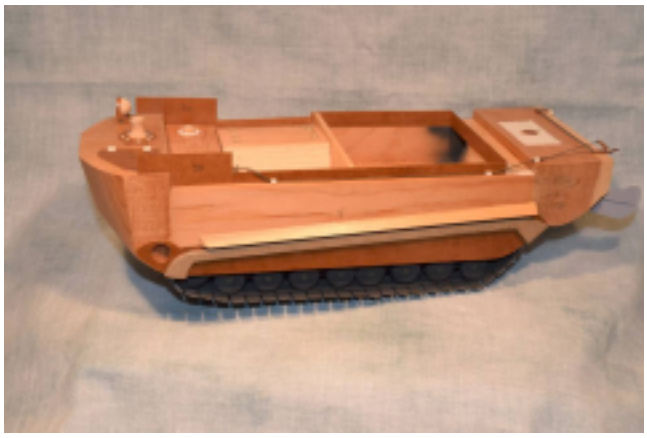
The individual track shoes, all 100 of them, were pressed out of heavy paper and they had surprisingly good detail. The kit included a strip of kraft packing tape, the intent being that you would wet the tape, stick the track shoes to the tape, and then wrap the result around the road wheels. That idea seemed bound for failure at the outset, so I cut a narrow strip of bond paper and glued the track shoes to it using Aleene's Tacky Glue, a strong and flexible adhesive I often used in the construction of card models. It worked like a charm.

Difficulties were few. The kit included a piece of celluloid for the windshield but over the decades it had curled itself into a stiff spiral. Instead of trying to flatten it, I cut a piece out of a clear plastic vegetable container and in no time at all I had an excellent replacement. The age of the kit showed up again when I tried to shape the splash guard at the front of the vehicle. It was made of stiff card and had become brittle. I moistened it a little to coax it into shape but it cracked and fell apart. I decided that I could leave it off without doing any harm since I had seen pictures of the vehicle with the shield removed.

I added some missing details like bolt heads and footman loops, and I fashioned a rectangular inspection plate out of card and attached it to the rear deck. The plan sheet contained an instrument panel that could be cut out and glued in place but it would disappear during the painting process. I made a replacement out of card and used my punch set for the instrument openings; it made the driver's position a little more authentic. And speaking of authenticity, there should be an axe and shovel on the rear deck. The kit included a small block of pine printed with the outline of those tools, apparently suggesting that they could be discovered within by some clever carving. I had run out of steam by the time I came to that job and opted to leave it for another day.

I had fun building an old-fashioned kit, especially one of an uncommon subject that is half-vehicle and half-boat. For the most part, it was problem-free and those parts that I couldn't figure out a place for at first all managed to find their proper home. It is a model from the middle of the last century so there has to be some latitude in regard to accuracy, but on the whole it carries its age well. My only quibble is that the tracks are the narrower version fitted to the original M29 Weasel and not the later amphibious M29C. But that's okay – I'm happy to have it as my most recent example of modeling in the Stone Age.





Santa Models Railroading!

by Scott H. Kruize

I am reliably told that, Once Upon a Time, if you showed up at the Seattle Chapter IPMS meeting with anything other than a model airplane, the PURIST-'Nazis' would come up and criticize you for even showing your model - or your face. By the time I came around, in late 1999, that was all past. Now, at our meetings, perusal of our Show-&-Tell tables will reveal every conceivable kind of model miniature.

That's all to the good, and I enjoy adding my own variety to Show-and-Tell. The only things conspicuously missing: we hardly ever see any having to do with model railroading. That's for a good reason: model railroaders have their own get-togethers, and share their specific passions there. That's OK: modeling is modeling is modeling...there's room for all of us.

Recall my prior observation that inclement weather prevents me from flying models outdoors... but like the rest of you, I can model in any kind of weather, no matter how awful. Sandy's hobby, however, is gardening, and while I've seen her braving elements that make me glad to be inside, there really are limits. Recently, what with the blowing wind, near-freezing temperatures, downpours and snow showers, she's pretty well confined indoors with me. That's when we try to share a secondary hobby: jigsaw puzzle assembly.

This Tom Newsom portrait shows Santa in a quiet time between frantic holiday seasons. He's in his model railroad workshop. By himself: no elves to distract him, no kids making demands...alone with his tool-equipped work table and the subjects he enjoys relaxing with and working on.

There's a lot about him in his shop we identify with. He wears a fairly lightweight - for him! - red jacket, not the bulky robe worn driving around at Christmas. He's hatless, and the glasses he's wearing are obviously reading glasses only. Next to him is a canvas-and-leather bag of tools. In his hand are high-quality needle-nose pliers with built-in wire cutters. These he's using on the underside of a fairly substantial green steam locomotive, perhaps in 'O' gauge.

There's a hint of overhead and background lighting, but his primary illumination comes from one of those movable desk lamps. Its black metal half-cylindrical reflector, nearly a foot long, is supported by an adjustable parallelogram to direct its light neatly to his hands and work subject.

A background element that I hadn't particularly paid attention to, but Sandy took to right away: posted on the wall is a large blow-up, a technical illustration of a very old-fashioned steam locomotive. It's done in sepia pen on a parchment-looking large sheet, perhaps six feet wide and three high? Not a drawing of the one he's working on, but probably is just for general inspiration.

On the large table top before him is wide variety rolling stock, nearly all locomotives, often labeled with the name of their railroad line. It all amounts to a substantial production setup, perhaps for his exceptionally good railroad modeling 'Nice' List entries.

Off to Santa's direct left, but still within the puzzle frame, are two items of interest. One is a very large machine, with piping, brackets, and gear wheels with their control levers and knobs, all finished in metallic green. It's labeled 'Train Maker'. Perhaps it's a machine only Santa owns, to help him fulfill those wish lists of exceptionally deserving model railroaders.

The other set of items, on the small end table next to the Train Maker, is a substantial glass of milk, a partly-unfolded large Ivory-colored napkin, and a modestly piled-up plate of cookies. Hey, it's Santa: we already knew how critical nutrition is to keep up his strength and energy. Who else has such a demanding career...spanning so much time and space as his does!

Sandy and I just finished this puzzle, and are perfectly willing now to leave Santa working at what he enjoys, and turn our own attention to a much more modest set of gifts to wrap, pack, and label, to send out to a few of our friends-and-relations. Following Santa's example, what better way to anticipate Christmas time than to prepare gifts for others?

'Santa and his Trains - art by Tom Newsom. copyrighted and published by Cobble Hill Puzzle company of Victoria,B.C, Canada. 18x24 in, 500 pieces. On the Web at **www.cobblehillpuzzles.com**

Hurricane Bookshelf: Falklands War - Yet Another That Didn't Go As Planned

by Scott H. Kruize

I suppose a query setup could run steadily on the Web to announce each and every new publication as it comes out...on aviation history, or naval or automotive history, available figurines information, all about Gundams...what-have-you...

I know of no modelers that do this. If the rest of you are like me, you read books more-or-less by happenstance, as and when some modeling project requires supporting material, or if some thought or occurrence jogs your memory or interest.

The latter explains this 'Hurricane Bookshelf' review. My wife and I are watching *The Crown*, the drama about the royal family around Elizabeth II in modern times. The Falklands War is part of Season 4, partly because the Queens's youngest kid, Prince Edward, was in the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy at the time, flying operational helicopter missions. But also because Her Majesty had to deal with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who - at least as shown in this series! - more-or-less decided all by herself that the Falklands takeover was worth going to all-out war!

So I dug out two books on the Hurricane Bookshelf, and re-read them. I've no military experience whatsoever, so the only thing I know about military operations is what I get from reading military histories, as related to modeling. One thing learned, way back: wars are won by the side which makes the fewest mistakes.

These books detail this. Starting with diplomatic failures, both sides made a number of blunders, which in total might've lost the war to either side. On balance, the British made fewer, and won the conflict…for whatever that's worth. If you do a lookup now on the Falkland Islands, you'll see that the matter hasn't been resolved in any way to lead anybody to expect difficulties won't recur.

In their defense, both sides were caught seriously off-guard. They weren't prepared, because they weren't expecting war. Entirely in keeping with the cynical (a.k.a.: 'realistic') training I got in political science classes, the whole thing started when the Junta Argentina, increasingly unable to cope with domestic discord, fell back on a classic 'solution'. Pick an enemy, provoke a fight, and patriotic hatred of Those Other People gets the leadership 'off the hook'…at least temporarily!

So the Junta grabbed the Malvinas - which the British named the Falkland Islands - as part of a two-century-old dispute over who's the rightful owner. (My economics training asserts itself by demanding to know 'What possible DIFFERENCE can it make WHO owns and administers that handful of rocks in the middle of nowhere - a.k.a. South Atlantic - with a tiny population dwarfed by the number of sheep they keep?!')

A lot of relevant convoluted diplomatic history is thrashed out and detailed in the Hastings and Jenkins book. The gist: there was NOT only a big brouhaha in the news...which then subsided as expected, leaving the Junta to bask in the glow of grateful patriotic worship by Argentina's population. Instead, under Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government, the United Kingdom pulled itself together for the kind of imperialist war everyone around the world thought was long over with.

As events went from crisis to war, mistakes began to pile up. Budget cuts left the Royal Navy with only two aircraft carriers, and these were only marginally operational. They were too small to operate fixed wing military jets, and had astonishingly few Harrier 'jump jets' aboard. The few still on the production line were hastily finished and sent to the Fleet Air Arm, but even that wasn't enough. The ships had to accommodate a Royal Air Force squadron of ground-attack Harriers. These were not equipped for air-to-air combat. It hardly needs to be said that defense of the task force from air attack was the most critical requirement.

As a supplement, a variety of antiaircraft missiles were deployed to defend the ships and later, Army beachheads. They didn't perform as sales brochures claimed. Many were fired, but many missed. Only a few actually performed as advertised, to shoot down attacking Argentine airplanes.

Argentina had barely sufficient number of fighters and attack planes: American Skyhawks, French Super Etendards and Mirages, and some Israeli Daggers - illicit copies of the Mirage series. Not bad aircraft, but barely up to the task with their avionics and weapons fits, and worse, inadequate tactical training. Worst of all: government/military/political infighting about policy deliberately prevented Air Force pilots from learning the highly specialized, technical skill of attacking warships.

Argentinian attacks were made in 'penny parcel' flights, not well-coordinated. There were but eight specialized Exocet antishipping missiles, so the only other weapons available for shipping attacks were thousand-pound iron bombs, mostly old from American surplus stocks. The descriptions made it clear that fusing such bombs to detonate inside steel warships, just right, is fussy and difficult. Many bombs that hit British ships crashed right on through, leaving only big torn-metal holes, and others lodged inside without going off.

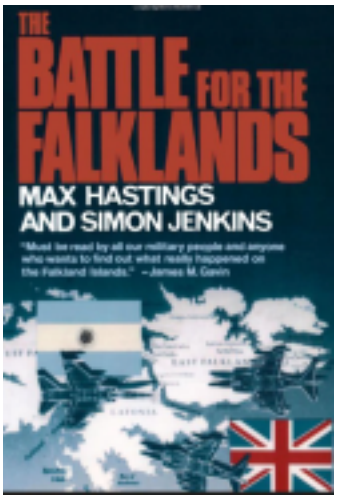
More than anything, logistics dominated other factors in war: more than military prowess and bravery, more than careful political and military planning, more than superiority of military equipment and its effective deployment. The Falklands Malvinas are a thousand miles from the Argentinian mainland, eight thousand miles from the United Kingdom. Such distances dominated what military forces could accomplish.

A superficial glance at the headlines at the time would probably have caused us all to say obviously the United Kingdom was far more powerful than Argentina, so the conflict would be short; its outcome inevitable. Cue the distances involved, with logistic complications. Reading these books, it's all too clear the war could've gone the other way. A few more Argentinian bombs going off, a few more effective attacks, more Exocets, but even if all the available ones had reached their intended targets, the Task Force would've had to break off contact and sail back to the U.K. in defeat.

But back to modeling: it's surprising what variety of aircraft and other equipment served in the Falklands War. True to the way modern international commerce is carried out, both the British and the Argentinians had largely the same equipment. Some was civilian, pressed into impromptu use: the Hawker Siddeley 125 executive jet transport, Boeing 707 airliner, and even LearJets. In the event, since they served VIP corporate executives, they had communications and navigation equipment aboard far superior to anything in Argentina's air forces. They were used to warn of British aerial activity, and guide strike forces to their targets, way better than the warplanes' ability to perform by themselves.

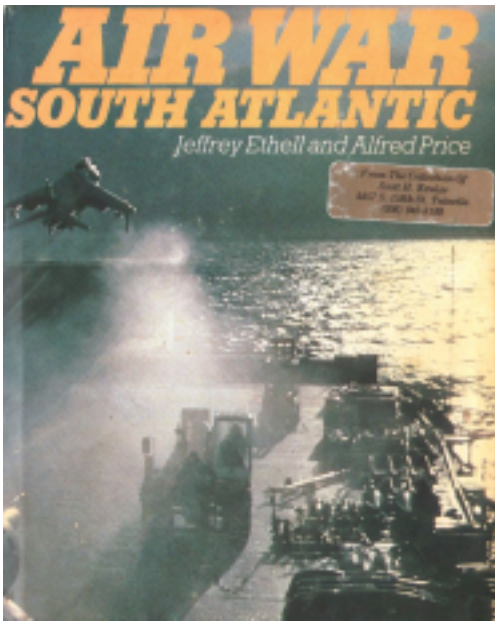
'Hey: whutzat LearJet - showing civil registration numbers, even! - doing here in the Military Multi-Engined-Jets Category?'

I can't help but comment here that a year ago, I pretty much assumed that Russia was so much larger and more powerful than Ukraine that the conflict would be brief and one-sided...within a day or so, Vladimir Putin would reduce the whole Ukrainian population - those that survived - into subservient minions. Well, wars don't go as planned…it bears repeating that 'Wars Are Won (whatever that might mean in context at a particular time) By The Side Which Makes The Fewest Mistakes.'



Air War South Atlantic. Jeffrey Ethell and Alfred Price. Copyright 1983 by Sidgwick & Jackson LTD; published by Macmillan of New York; 235 pages

The Battle for the Falklands. Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins. Copyright 1983 WW Norton & Company of New York and London; 400 pages



ICM 1/35th Scale WWII German Mortar (s.Gr.W.34)

by Eric Christianson

Kyiv, Ukraine-based ICM is back with a new offering from its infantry support heavy-weapons line, this time with a WWII German s.Gr.W.34 8cm Mortar. This nice little one-hour build comes with a bunch of extra goodies, and will fit right into a diorama or open halftrack/truck bed. This highly detailed and diminutive subject includes a deployed mortar, three ammunition boxes with lids, four single mortar rounds, two rifles and several other pieces of personal gear.

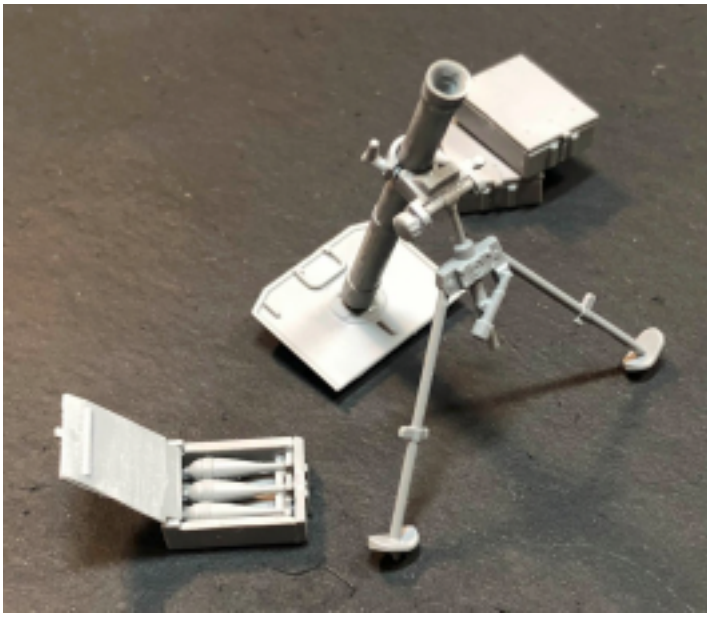
The 8 cm s.Gr.W.34 was an adaptation for use in self-propelled mountings and employed conventional 8 cm 3.5 kg shells (high explosive or smoke) with percussion fuses. Its range could be extended by fitting up to three additional powder charges between the shell tailfins.

This overall design was conventional and broke down into three loads (barrel, bipod, and baseplate) for transport. Attached to the bipod were a traversing handwheel and a cross-leveling handwheel below the elevating mechanism. A panoramic sight was mounted on the traversing mechanism yoke for fine adjustments. A line on the tube could be used for rough laying. A total of 74,336,000 rounds of ammunition were produced for the s.Gr.W.34 from September 1939 to March 1945.

The build is simple. The mortar tube itself comes in two pieces that will need a little clean-up to remove the seamline. This minor inconvenience will be more than offset by the single-piece, highly detailed mortar stand. Add the baseplate, mortar stabilization bracket, and adjustment piece and you are done.

The three ammunition boxes can be modeled with the lids open or closed, and fit three single rounds neatly inside. A fourth round is supplied as well.

The four-page instruction sheet includes several cad images, a parts map of the single sprue, and painting directions. There are no markings or stencils included in the kit.

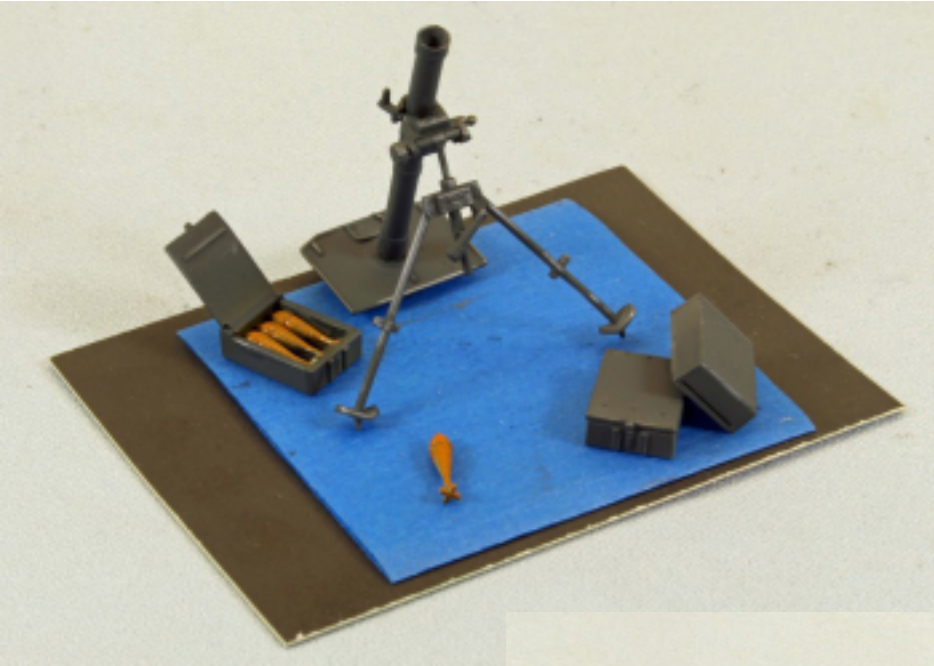


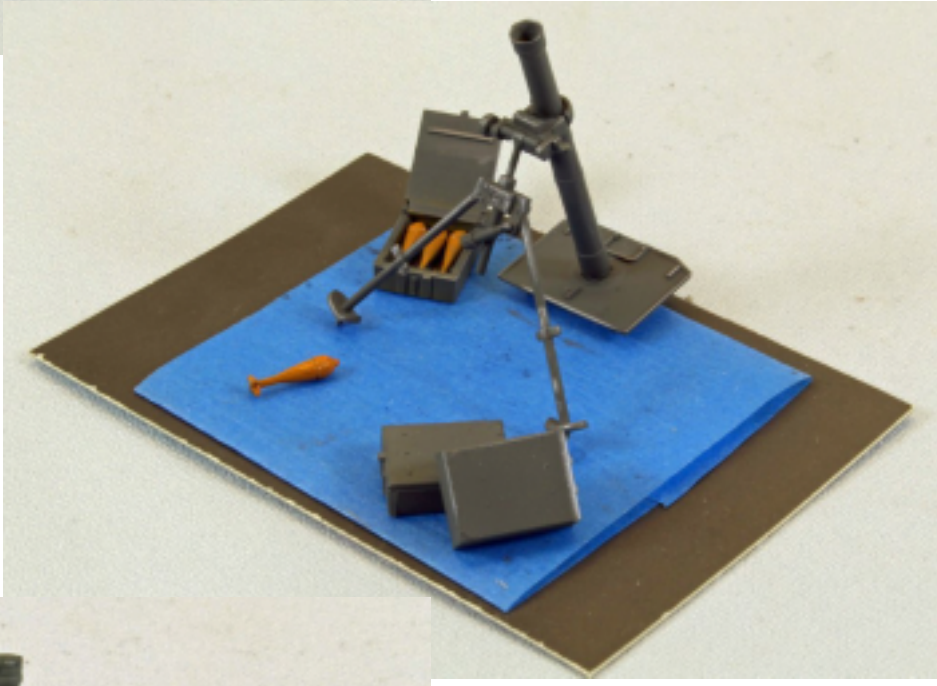
I painted my mortar and ammunition boxes using Tamiya XF-63 German Grey, per the instructions, and the individual mortar rounds using a 1:7 mix of Tamiya German Grey and Tamiya X-6 Orange.

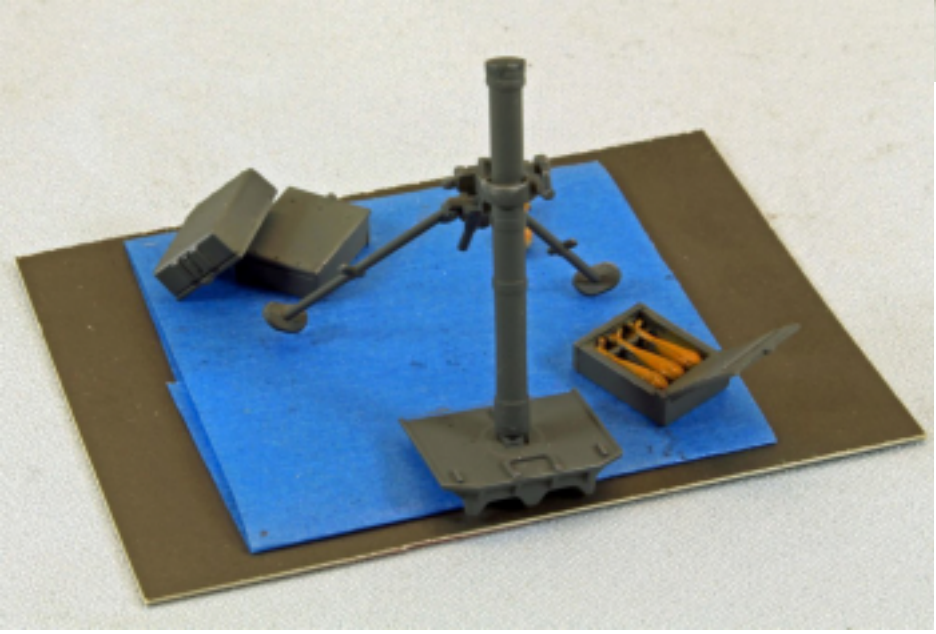
ICM's recent offerings are a lot of fun to build, and this kit is no exception. It was a nice break from the more complex kits on my workbench, with excellent fit and simple assembly.

ICM deserves credit for the engineering and design here – they get things done without resorting to photo-etch parts, a big plus in my book. I heartedly recommend this kit for modelers of all skill levels.

I would like to thank ICM for providing this kit for review, and to IPMS USA for giving me the opportunity to build it.







IPMS Seattle 2023 Dues

Your IPMS Seattle renewal form is included below. Dues will be $20, which includes monthly e-mail delivery of the newsletter. You can renew by writing a check to IPMS Seattle and mailing it to the address below.

IPMS Seattle Dues 2023

Remit $20 to
IPMS Seattle
c/o Fuzhou Hu
19012 3rd Dr SE
Bothell, WA 98012

Full Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

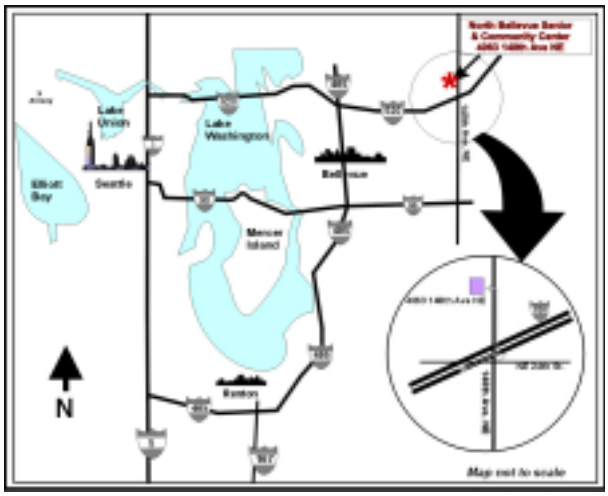
Telephone (Area Code) (_____ **)** _____

E-mail address _____

[ ] Please do NOT release my e-mail and phone information for distributed club rosters.

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.



Next Meeting: January 14
10:30 AM to 1:30 PM

2023 IPMS Seattle Meeting Schedule

All meetings at North Bellevue Community/Senior Center except as indicated

January 14
February 11
March 11
April 8
April 29 - IPMS-Seattle Spring Show - Renton Community Center
May 13
June10
July 8
August 12
September 9
October 14
November 11
December 9