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In This Issue

Paints and Models and… Tariffs

I was going to write an editorial about using ATOM acrylic paints by Ammo, what I learned about them at the Nationals, and my experience painting these last three builds with the paint. BUT. The same 20ml ATOM paint bottle I purchased for about $4.25 now costs over $10 online, even at the discount shops.

I may still write that editorial when I am not so angry. I feel compelled, however, to address these ridiculous tariffs, and how they are, and will continue to affect our hobby. What's more, rather than stumbling through my own interpretation of our shared predicament, I asked AI to make some sense out of things for me. I couldn't have said it better.

The Impact of Current Tariffs on the Scale Modeling Industry – And What It Means for Scale Modelers in the United States

Introduction

For generations, scale modeling has been a cherished pastime, blending artistry, engineering, and history into a hands-on hobby that brings enthusiasts together from all walks of life. Recent developments in international trade, however, have cast a shadow over this vibrant community. The imposition of new and increased tariffs on imported goods, including those vital to the scale modeling industry, has sent ripples through supply chains, raised prices, and left many modelers wondering what the future holds for their beloved hobby.

This editorial aims to shed light on how these tariffs are affecting the scale modeling industry, explore their consequences for manufacturers, retailers, and hobbyists, and provide insight on what the evolving landscape means for scale modelers in the United States.

(Continued on Page 32)

IPMS Seattle Chapter Contacts

President	Vice President	Treasurer	Newsletter Editor
Eric Christianson	John DeRosia	Fuzhou Hu	Elbert Lin
ModelerEric@Comcast.Net	johnDeRosia2015@gmail.com	fhu.ipms@gmail.com	elblin@comcast.net

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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. 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.

Editorial Policy

Our newsletter is prepared with the goal of providing information that educates, informs, and helps expand the skills of our membership about our hobby: plastic scale modeling (including resin, vacu-form, and 3-D printed scale models). All content related to the hobby are welcome. For more detail, please see the complete Editorial Policy here.

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If you use or reprint the material contained in the newsletter, we would appreciate attribution both to the author and the source document.

Seattle IPMS Website and Facebook Page

IPMS - International Plastic Modelers Society - Seattle Chapter (ipms-seattle.org)

Facebook Page (https://www.facebook.com/groups/IPMSSeattle/)

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Celebration of Life for Brian Cahill

Join us to celebrate the life of Brian Cahill. Given Brian's many friends and family on the east and west coasts, two events will be held.

For each, the memorial service will be followed immediately by lunch.

Dress is business casual.

Seattle, Washington	Stony Brook, New York
Sunday, September 28, 2025 1:30pm – 5:00pm (doors open at 1pm) View Lounge The Museum of Flight 9404 East Marginal Way South Seattle, WA 98108 **(Guests will have access to self-tour the museum exhibits from 10am to 5pm)**	Saturday, October 4, 2025 12:30pm – 4:00pm (doors open at 12pm) Ruvo 105 Wynn Lane Stony Brook, NY 11777

Please RSVP to cahilljm@aol.com with your name, the event you will attend and number of people in your party by Wednesday, 9/17/2025.

DShKM with support/tripod

By Bob LaBouy

Introductory & Historical Background

ICM's notes: *"DShKM with support/tripod*

In 1946, the Soviet Army adopted the DShKM heavy machine gun—a modernized version of the previous DShK model. This powerful weapon had broad applications, serving both infantry units and as a mounted weapon on various equipment types. With a muzzle energy of 19.2 kJ and high rate of fire, combined with exceptional reliability, it stands as one of the finest weapons in its class. The DShKM proves highly effective against lightly armored vehicles: its B-32 armor-piercing incendiary ammunition can penetrate 20mm-thick armor at distances up to 500m. The weapon accommodates multiple ammunition types including armor-piercing, incendiary, armor-piercing incendiary, tandem, and explosive rounds. Originally designed for anti-aircraft defense, the DShKM saw extensive use throughout the 20th century and remains in service with various armed forces today. In the Armed Forces of Ukraine, it serves as a heavy infantry weapon, mounted either on special mounts or various pedestals. Additionally, fire groups employ the DShKM in counter-drone operations."

Recommended reading on the DShKM weapons:

Wikipedia

US Air Force Museum

YouTube Review: ICM 1/35 DShKM with Support (35747) Review

Construction notes for the DShKM:

To give you some idea, here's what ICM provides in this kit:

- Kit contains only plastic sprues. [meaning there are no PE or masks]
- This kit doesn't contain no decals
- Only a very simple four-page instruction sheet (with six or seven assembly steps, depending on the version chosen)

This is about as simple modeling an experience as you will ever encounter (in my opinion). As you open this small box, with a four-page instruction sheet. You're then greeted with two identical grey sprue trees, each with nineteen kit parts. The two trees contain tripod and pedestal bases. Steps 01 through 04 are identical, with the next two to three illustrating the two different bases. This entire kit looks and fits together very nicely without any surprises.

I was a bit disappointed not to find either the steel wheels, protective shield nor the aerial gunsights; each of these items or attachments are shown in many period photos from WW II, Vietnam or the

Ukrainian wars. There is no indication that these items were to be included, but it would have permitted an extensive number of diorama possibilities had they been included.

There are few assembly steps after adding the eight pieces comprising the guns themselves and painting these with the four paint colors called out on the first page of the instruction sheet. The remaining two or three assembly steps are to assemble the triangular or pedestal bases. The three leg base is the trickiest one, as the positioning of the three legs (i.e., their height and spread distance is up to your choice) whereas the pedestal base is predetermined. This really is a simple build and can be completed in an hour or two.

Painting notes:

The paints I used include: (and used the box art as a visual clue about the paints to be used)

Mr. Surfacer 500		Surface preparation (optional)	
Mission Models	MMS-001	Black Primer	
	"	MMP-021	US Army Olive Drab Faded 2
	"	MMP-032	Russian Modern Green
Life Color		LC 02	Matt Black

VMS Varnish Matt (acrylic top coat)

(Also used several AK Real Colors Markers for both touchup and to pick out small knobs.)

Followed by an overcoat sprayed coat of Alclad II Lacquer's Aqua Gloss Clear (#ALC 600). This is my personal favorite which produces a great clear finish (though in the bottle it appears cloudy, not to worry).

I completed my dry brushings, using my old standby Winsor & Newton's Artist Oil color Naples Yellow Light, No. 426.

As there are no decals, that step is not required.

And I sprayed my overall final finish using VMS Varnish top coat MATT; which produces a very flat overall finish. I recognize this product may be new to many modelers; however, I believe its small dispenser tip and acrylic easy to clear up aspects deserves your attention.

Conclusion:

I loved this small inexpensive kit with two guns, which can provide you with several benefits. It's well designed, quick and easy to build and can provide both the novice and experienced builders a rewarding

experience--I highly recommend this kit. I would like to thank ICM for this neat kit and opportunity to review it.

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ICM Dragon's Teeth Anti-tank Obstacles

By Bob LaBouy

From ICM's own description:

'Dragon's teeth'. Anti-tank Obstacles

Concrete anti-tank obstacles, also known as 'Dragon's Teeth', were first used during World War II. They are believed to have been invented in Finland as a means of defense against the armored vehicles of the Red Army. The purpose of these obstacles was not only to stop tanks and other armored vehicles but also to direct their movement into areas where they could be targeted by fire. These types of obstacles were widely used by all participants in the conflict, including neutral countries. For example, Switzerland also used similar obstacles, referring to them as Toblerone fortifications, due to their resemblance to the shape of the famous chocolate bars.

'Dragon's Teeth' are still used today as engineering obstacles of a fortification type. Typically,

they are made of concrete and have a tetrahedral shape, sometimes with the top corner cut off. Many such obstacles have been installed in Ukraine—both in areas where combat operations are taking place and in other regions of the country, as a protective measure in potentially dangerous zones."

Historical & Reference Notes:

There are numerous historical notes about the West Wall/Siegfried Line, with a few of my favorites below:

Siegfried Line

The Siegfried Line, a German defensive line built along the western frontier, was breached and destroyed through a combination of Allied air and ground offensives, including Operation Queen, from 1944 to early 1945. The line, featuring "dragon's teeth" obstacles and pillboxes, was eventually overcome by Allied forces, including the British 21st Army Group and US formations, with some bunkers destroyed by explosives or covered with earth.

Britannica

Siegfried Line campaign

Siegfried Line

The Germans had launched their counter-offensive in the Ardennes from a section of the 'Westwall', better known to the Allies as the Siegfried Line - a 400-mile chain of fortifications, bunkers, barbed wire and tank traps that Hitler ordered to be built in the 1930s.

It ran along Germany's western border from Holland in the north to Switzerland in the south. Prodigious amounts of concrete, steel and manpower were used to upgrade the original Siegfried Line constructed during World War 1.

The main German thrust at the start of the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 came from the 6th SS Panzer Army, their strongest and best equipped force of tanks, which was based near the Belgian border in an area known as the **North Shoulder.**

The 1st, 2nd and 99th American Army divisions, initially pushed back, eventually held up the German advance in a fierce engagement at **Elsenborn Ridge**, where three American GIs earned the highest military award, the Medal of Honor. Numerous relics of the Siegfried Line remain as they were, including many thousands of 'dragon's teeth': pyramid-shaped tank traps made of concrete and steel, now softened by moss and vegetation but still capable of stopping any motorized vehicle in its tracks.

Deep in the woods, on the Belgian side of the (unmarked) border, look out for deep indentations in the ground, where the Americans dug emergency field hospitals for their wounded.
THE SIEGFRIED LINE CAMPAIGN
Through the Siegfried
The Hunt For The Remains Of Hitler's Siegfried Line

Kit Features:

1 page (w/ an assembly drawing for the teeth)

Four sprue sections

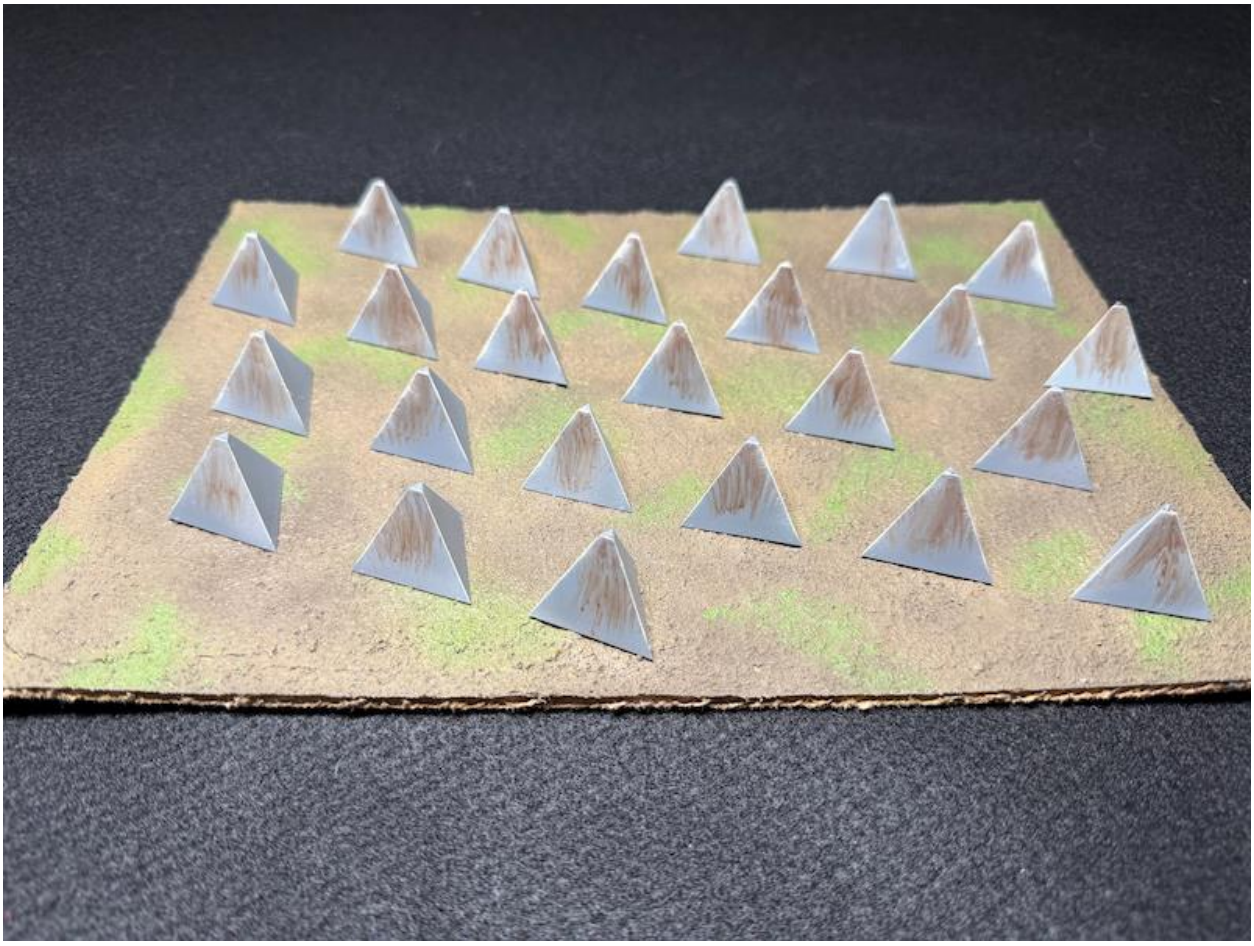
72 kit parts

Molded in grey plastic

If you research a very simple model kit to construct, ICM's Dragon Teeth, Anti-tank Obstacles must be among the leading contenders.

This kit provides the materials (no paints) and parts for twenty-four of the dragon's teeth. Each tooth is simply constructed by gluing triangular base piece the upright part of the tooth. There are no clear parts nor is there any masking involved, as the teeth are each painted overall concrete/grey color.

Construction Notes:



Another issue is that of instruction *clarity*, with the instruction sheet illustrating only three steps needed to complete each of the teeth. While the instruction guide shows three steps, you'll notice that I have omitted lifting or hoisting hook (all but one for illustration purposes).

Personal Observations & *caveat emptor*:

My visit in 2008 where we walked amongst row after row of dragon's teeth outside Aachen, Germany. This is a small part the area known as the

Siegfried Line and is largely the same as when originally constructed the late 1939. I've attached several images taken during my trips to illustrate some of the larger areas involved, the varied shapes and

heights of the concrete teeth as well as another image to show the underlying bases looked like. Any internet search also will reveal there are numerous dragon teeth designs, not just those I've photographed.

As you can see there was no real effort to even attempt to take out or remove most of the teeth after the world war ended. My reasoning: as the attached images show this hook is missing or not shown on the top of any of the teeth, I've seen at the three battle fields I have photographed along the German border areas. I could not find any of the small lifting rings on the tops of the teeth. This may be because these small rings had just rusted away or even cut off, but they are not evident in any of teeth I photographed along the West Wall. I left one attachment hook on just to illustrate what it will look like.

Another aspect of the teeth is apparent: there are two or three heights shown (usually in sets of two large with a shorter one in between) and some flat sided teeth. Why? I just don't know and couldn't find any insight in my reading and research. From my images, you will also notice that those in my photos are all four sided and not triangular, as depicted in the ICM kit. Again, I can only guess knowing what little I know about the ICM engineers, they have seen some three-sided teeth.

Fit & Finish

Tackling the kit is very easy; all parts fit perfectly, with a small amount of sanding to fit along the base areas and no filling.

Painting & Decals

I painted the dragon's teeth with just four colors:

(1) Mig's One Shot Primer in Grey (#A.Mig-2024),

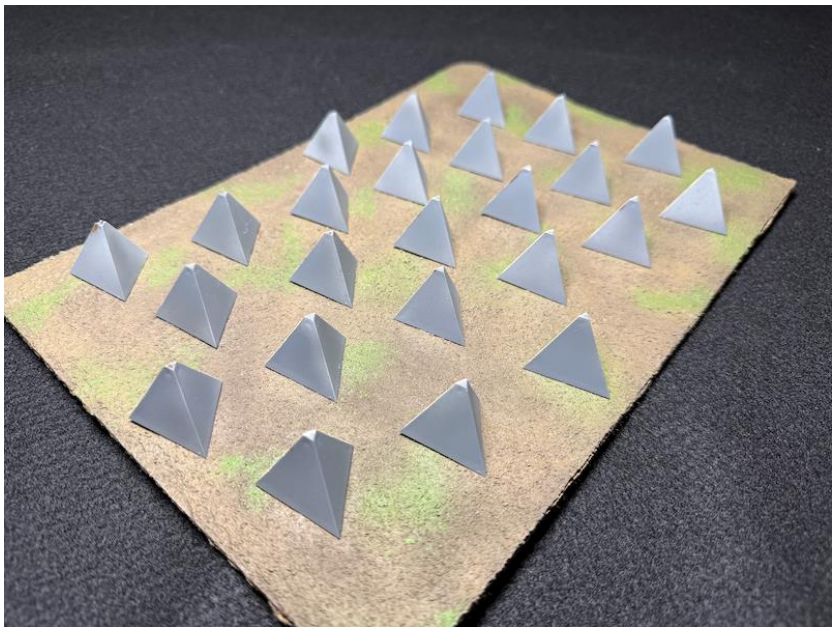
(2) Vallejo's Model Air Medium Sea Grey (#71.049),

(3) IJA Earth Brown (71.136),

(4) and followed with CAM Light Green (#71.006).

I always recommend a primer coat whenever you are using acrylic paint as it assures a good base and eliminates the loss of acrylic paint. Although there are no decals, there was no need for my usual overspray of clear gloss. However, I Followed my preparation of each dragon teeth with an overcoat sprayed coat of Alclad II Lacquer's Aqua Gloss Clear (#ALC 600). I then used a pin and streaking wash of 502 Abteilung Brown Wash (#ABT080). I completed my dry brushings, using Winsor & Newton's Artist Oil color Naples Yellow Light (# 426). I also chose to use this technique on only one side surface, as I wasn't very pleased with the outcome. Again, I am sure the problem is my issue not the kit's.

I did use a new product (for me), AK Terrains Dark Earth (#8018), which I found created a fast-drying textured earth base on which I placed my array dragon teeth.



Recommendation:

This ICM kit once again an excellent model of the dragon's teeth anti-tank obstacles, which I suspect will be a part of many dioramas in future model displays.

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Odessa NI Russian Improvised Armored Tractor

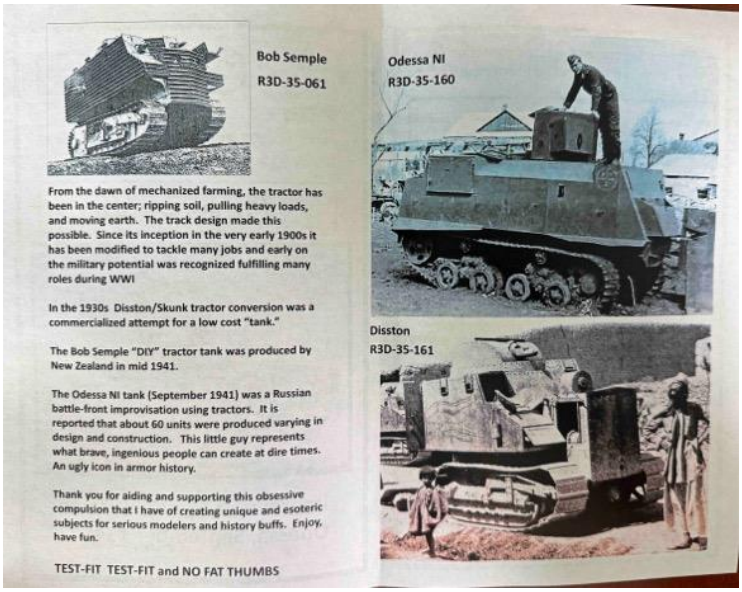
By Eric Christianson

Reviewer's Comments

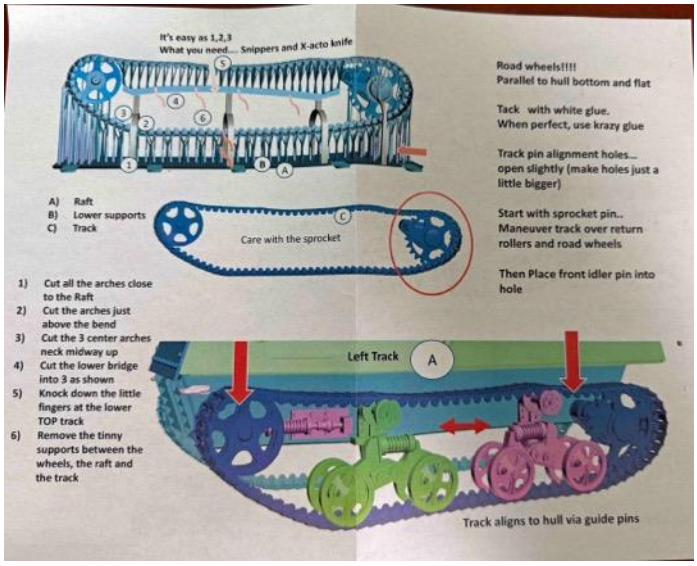
The ever-busy Vargas Scale Models has recently released several World War I Russian armored tractors; each one slightly different from the others. One would think this would make for a great opportunity to use an economy of scale, but that would be wrong - each version appears to have a different chassis, superstructure, armament and armor. I guess Luis Vargas just woke up one day, and, to our benefit, decided to create a bunch of Russian tractors!

Vargas has historically occupied a niche specializing in unusual, 3-D printed, limited-run resin armor models, mostly pre- and between World Wars. So far this has been a winning strategy for this prolific company, fleshing out all those subjects ignored by others. This offering continues in that tradition.

Admittedly, the Odessa NI tractor doesn't have a lot going for it, visually. At first glance I found it difficult to tell just what it was until I looked carefully at the front end and found a nicely detailed engine radiator. The vehicle is



literally a steel box placed right over a tractor, with a small gun turret placed on top, like a cherry. Officially, the NI was a Soviet improvised fighting vehicle, based on an STZ-5 agricultural tractor. A total of 69 vehicles were produced during the Siege of Odessa in World War II. These fought during the siege against the Axis forces in support of Soviet troops. Some versions sported old turrets cannibalized from damaged tanks. The NI was powered by a 44hp MA-4-cylinder gasoline engine, which proved to be very noisy, and slow. In an unusual note, several NI derelicts were found by our troops in Afghanistan, years later.



The Kit

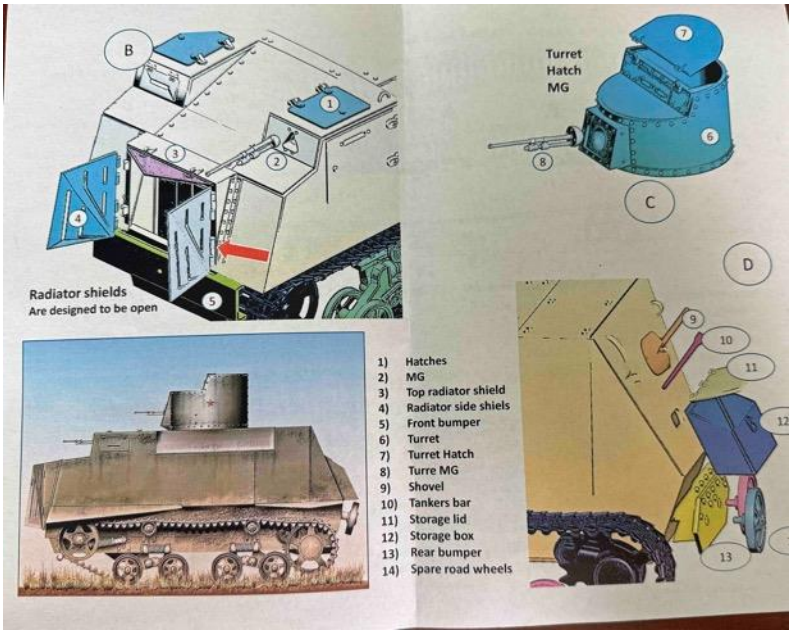
In this release, the NI is armed with two heavy machine guns: a fixed gun in a small box on the port side of the hull and the other in the turret.

As with many of the Vargas models, some of the molded-on detail is breathtakingly thin, such as the brackets that hold the on-board tools. These are so perfectly engineered that I was able to firmly 'click' the various shovels and hammers, etc. into place. The two doors in front can be positioned closed or opened to uncover the radiator inside. Vargas also provides its usual handful of random parts (crates, sandbags, helmets, etc.) for enhancing the vehicle and/or diorama.

The track and running gear, unusually for Vargas, are provided in three pieces – the track run is a well-supported single piece that includes the drive sprocket and the return roller, with the two double-wheel bogies making up the second and third pieces, also well protected. I believe that Vargas wanted to make sure the delicate assembly arrived in good shape. The instructions said to attach the bogies to the hull first, followed by the track section, but I found that assembling each side (all three pieces) first worked just as well and was a little less fiddely. The detail here, and elsewhere is beautiful.

As with most 3-D printed kits, the Vargas sprues do not have any old-school poured-resin blocks to remove; instead, each sprue contains dozens of very thin connecting rods that are part of the printing process. This makes the parts very simple to remove from the sprues. Most of the smaller parts are printed within a flexible, protective 'cage' of resin. There is cleanup required, to be sure, but nothing like what I would normally expect for a limited-run, resin subject.

The dark-grey resin is firm but sands easily enough, and there are some very slight surface striations on some of the curved parts that require attention, making preparation more important than with typical styrene kits. Minor flaws are easily removed with the sanding stick or simply filled with a primer such as Gunze 1000 or 1200 Mr. Surfacer primer. Comparatively, however, these models are shipped good-to-go. Vargas pulls everything together without resorting to using photo-etch or other finicky mediums, which is a big plus (for me, at least).



I spent about four hours assembling the vehicle and about twice that painting and weathering it.

The contents of the box include:

- Main Hull, packaged separately.
- Track & Bogie assemblies, packaged together.
- One sprue of all the remaining parts, packaged separately.
- An 12-page, color instruction booklet consisting of three, full-size sheets, folded in half. Four of the 12 pages focus on the assembly. All text and label information are printed in English.

There are no markings included in the kit; those in the images of the completed model were from my spares, based on images found in the instructions and online.

The Instructions

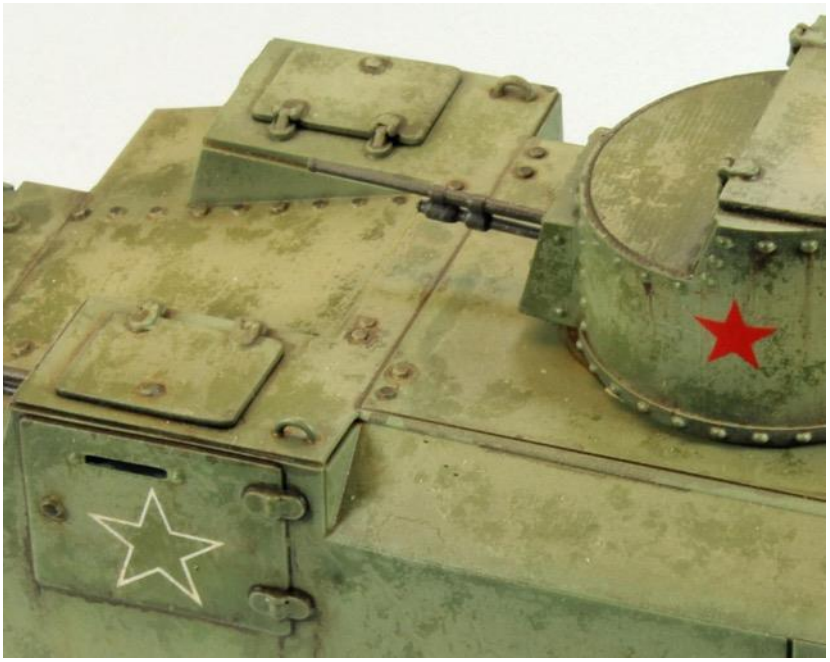
As with most limited-run kits, the instructions are brief and not always 'enough'. Assembly requires test fitting and comparing what you have to drawings and images of the real thing, easily found on-line. In place of text, Vargas provides simple CAD images from the printing process itself for use as 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. If you have built limited-run kits before, this one is typical – a lot of testing and sometimes 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.' Note: some of the images appear to have been mixed up with other versions of the NI – still, there is plenty there to get you on your way and through the build.

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. Each piece on the sprues is held in place by dozens of very, very thin connection points that are easily removed, sometimes simply by twisting the part, as is the case with the track and running gear. Once separated from the sprue, the soft gray resin is easily cleaned with a knife and/or sanding sticks. While there are very minor striation marks on round parts, such as the turret or barrel, these are easily removed with the sanding stick or simply filled with primer. With all the parts cleaned and free of defects, I was ready for assembly.

The Build



Assembly was straightforward and nearly hassle-free. Attachment points are very small on the detail, but their relatively light weight won't need much CA glue to stay in place, as long as you are careful during painting and weathering. I wanted to make the engine radiator visible so I left the two hatches off until the end for fear of damaging them in subsequent steps. The turret and the track/bogie assemblies can be assembled and put aside, to be attached later. I also left the pioneer tools off for painting after realizing that they

literally ‘snapped’ into place under their brackets molded on the hull. This leaves a couple of tow and lifting hooks and various hatches to attach, and that was that – assembly complete! With the major parts still separated for painting (hull, track/bogie assemblies, on-board tools, and two front engine hatches), I was headed for the paint booth. Vargas models are perfect for modelers like me, who enjoy the ‘finishing’ steps to those involving assembly!

Painting and Finish

There are few color pictures of the NI tractor online - I only found a few, and all were essentially 4BO Russian green. To break up the monochromatic finish I used a technique loosely called the ‘Sugi’ method, patterned after an approach championed by a Japanese modeler who goes by the name of named ‘Mr. Sugi’. Essentially, the surfaces start out dark and are lightened by several similar, and consecutively lighter, greens. Each layer is partially scrubbed off with the aid of AKI Worn Effects, revealing the darker color underneath.

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

Painting:

Overall Primer - Mr. Hobby Mr. Finishing Surfacer Mahogany 1500

Chassis and Wheels -

- Base Coat – AKI.RC.284 Olive Green
- Post Shade Mottling – Tamiya XF-71 Cockpit Green (IJN), then XF-76 Gray Green (IJN), and finally XF-14 JA Grey

Track and remaining detail -

- Mr. Hobby Mr. Finishing Surfacer Mahogany 1500
- Tamiya XF-84 Dark Iron

Weathering

- A.MIG Wash Brown overall
- A.MIG Dark Wash pin wash overall
- Model Master Afrika Dunkelgrau 1942 for dry-brushing overall
- Vallejo 77.716 Semi-Matt Aluminum and Uschi Chrome pigment for bling overall
-

Conclusion

This is my eighth Vargas kit and, as always, the build was a breeze. It is not unusual for me to open the box and finish assembly in the same afternoon. Luis Vargas does a solid job researching his subjects, and the superb design and engineering that went into his kits is readily apparent. As I said with the most

recent (and every) Vargas project – each one makes me want to build another.

As with any all-resin project, this kit has its challenges, but these are minor compared to resin kits of old. This 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 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.

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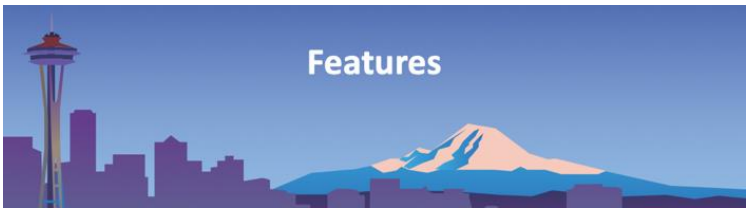

Kakamigahara Air and Space Museum

A photo essay by Elbert Lin

As part of my trip to Japan with the "Two Andrews" back in May, I was able to visit the **Gifu-Kakamigahara Air and Space Museum**, located in the city of Kakamigahara in Gifu Prefecture, which is about an hour by car from Nagoya.

The city of Kakamigahara is considered the cradle of the Japanese aviation industry. The second Japanese Army airfield was constructed here in 1917, and the Kawasaki Dockyard Co, Ltd. built their first dedicated airplane production facility there in 1923. The Kawasaki Kakamigahara plant became their main aircraft production facility through the end of WWII, and suffered repeated bombing because of that. For more information on the history of Gifu Airfield and its role in the creation of the Japanese aviation industry see here.

The museum is located just next to the current JASDF Gifu Airbase.

It originally opened in 1996, and was substantially updated in 2018. There are both outdoor and indoor displays. The focus is mostly on aircraft used by the Japanese military, both pre

and post WWII. Therefore, it features an eclectic assortment of subjects, many very rare, and many of which are not viewable in the West.

Access

The museum is accessible by public transportation, but it does require train transfers and a bus ride as the final leg. For more information and very detailed photo guide, see here.

We rented a car in Nagoya and drove via expressway and surface roads using Google Maps as a guide. All told from Nagoya Station to the museum took around 1 hour. This is probably the easiest way to access, but you have to have an International Driver's License in order to rent a car.

Admission is 800 yen, but 500 yen for those of us over 60! And, there is a great gift shop at the end with cool JASDF swag. Definitely recommended for Japanese aircraft fans and those with an interest in the history of the Japanese aviation industry.

Photo 1: Outdoor display with a Kawasaki V-107A, a JAM YS-11, and ShinMaywa US-1A

Photo 2: ShinMaywa US-1A Rescue Amphibian

Photo 3: Kawasaki P-2J Anti-Sub Patrol Aircraft

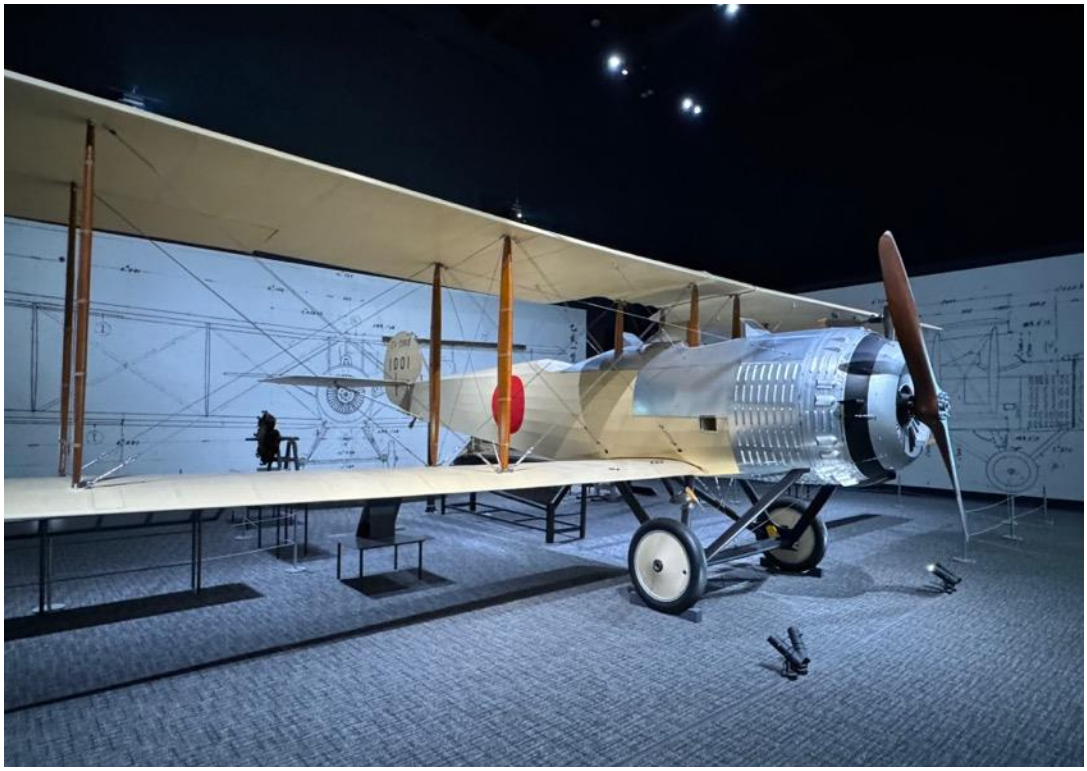

Photo 4: Otsu Type 1 Reconnaissance Aircraft (Salmson 2A2 license built by Kawasaki) Replica

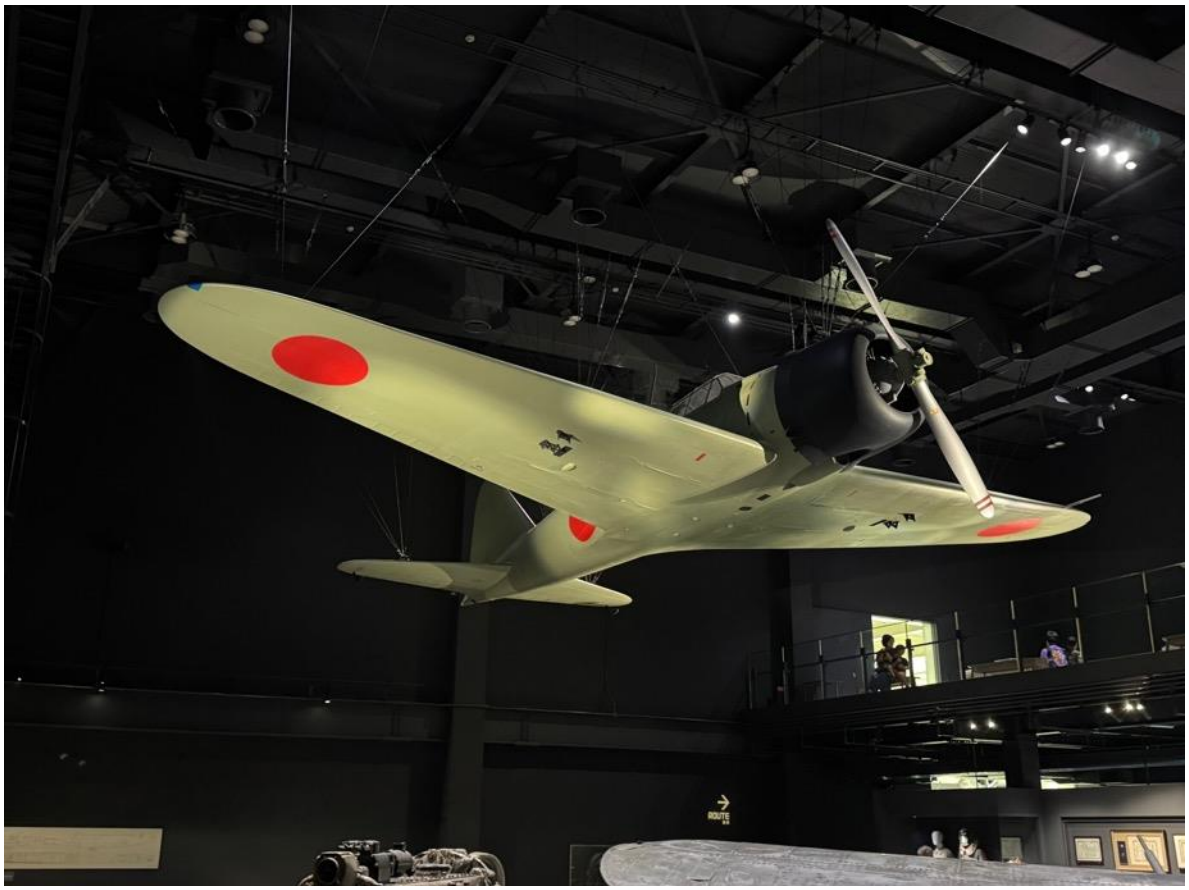

Photo 5: Replica A6M1 Prototype that first flew from Kakamigahara in 1937

Photo 6: Ki-61-II Hien, fully restored by the Kawasaki company

Photo 7: Detail of the Ki-61-II Hien

Photo 8: The Ki-61-II has been left in natural metal, to better see detail

Photo 9: T-33A Trainer

Photo 10: T-1B Trainer

Photo 11: F-104J License-built by Kawasaki Heavy Industries in Japan

Photo 12: T-2 Advanced Trainer

Photo 13: View of the Post-War gallery

Photo 14: Low-Noise STOL Experimental Aircraft "Asuka"

Photo 15/16: F-4EJ Kai Phantom

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Message From the President (Continued from page 1)

Understanding the Tariffs

Tariffs are taxes imposed on imported goods, often as a tool of economic policy. In recent years, the U.S. government has introduced a range of tariffs targeting products from various countries, with a particular focus on goods imported from China and other major manufacturing hubs. These tariffs, intended to address concerns about trade imbalances and intellectual property, have had wide-ranging effects across numerous industries, including toys, collectibles, and, crucially, model kits and accessories.

Scale models—be they military vehicles, aircraft, ships, cars, or figurines—are primarily manufactured in East Asia, with China, Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines among the chief suppliers. Tariffs on goods imported from these regions can range from 10% to 25% or more, depending on how items are classified by customs authorities. The scale modeling industry, where margins are often thin and profits modest, is particularly sensitive to these added costs.

Effects on Manufacturers and Distributors

Manufacturers, many of whom operate on a global scale but rely on East Asian factories, are feeling the squeeze. Companies such as Tamiya, Hasegawa, Meng, and other industry leaders face increased production costs, not only for their finished kits but for component parts and raw materials. These expenses trickle down through the supply chain, affecting distributors and, ultimately, the consumer.

Some manufacturers have attempted to mitigate the impact of tariffs by shifting production to countries not subject to the same duties. However, relocating manufacturing is both costly and time-consuming, requiring new infrastructure, employee training, and adherence to varying quality standards. As a result, the majority of companies continue to manufacture in their established facilities, passing increased costs along to distributors and retailers.

Distributors, who serve as the bridge between manufacturers and the hobby shops or online retailers that serve scale modelers, are likewise affected. Faced with higher import costs, many distributors have no choice but to raise their own prices or reduce the variety of products they stock. In some cases, this has led to supply shortages or the discontinuation of certain product lines, especially those with lower sales volumes.

Consequences for Retailers

Local hobby shops, long the lifeblood of the modeling community, are among those hardest hit by the tariffs. Many operate as small, independent businesses with tight margins; sudden spikes in wholesale costs can be devastating. Some have responded by reducing their inventory, focusing only on best-selling kits and accessories, or seeking alternative suppliers in regions less affected by tariffs.

Online retailers, while better equipped to absorb some of the increased costs due to higher sales volumes and lower overhead, are not immune. Price increases are visible across major e-commerce platforms, and deals or discounts are less frequent. Retailers must also grapple with unpredictable shipping delays and fluctuating supply, making it harder to keep shelves stocked and customers satisfied.

What It Means for Scale Modelers in the U.S.

For the everyday modeler, the effects of tariffs are most directly felt in the wallet. The average retail price of a model kit has risen noticeably over the past few years, with some kits seeing increases of 10%, 20%, or even more. Accessories, paints, and tools—many of which are also imported—have followed suit.

Beyond higher prices, modelers are encountering reduced availability of certain kits, especially niche or specialty items. Limited runs or less popular subjects may be postponed or canceled entirely, as manufacturers prioritize high-volume products to maintain profitability. This constriction of choices can be particularly frustrating for experienced hobbyists searching for rare or unique kits to expand their collections.

At the same time, new entrants to the hobby may be discouraged by the increased costs. Whereas an introductory kit may have cost $30-$40 in years past, those same kits now push $60 or more, when factoring in necessary paints and glue. This poses a challenge for a pastime that has long prided itself on accessibility and inclusiveness.

Adapting to the New Reality

Despite these challenges, the scale modeling community is nothing if not resilient. Many modelers are finding creative ways to adapt:

- Group Buys: Enthusiasts are organizing group orders to split shipping and tariff costs, making bulk purchases more economical.
- Secondhand Market: Interest in pre-owned kits—via swap meets, online forums, and auction sites—has surged, offering a more affordable alternative and helping keep cherished kits in circulation.
- Supporting Local Businesses: Many modelers are making a point to support local hobby shops, recognizing that their survival is vital to the future of the hobby.
- Exploring New Brands: Some are turning to manufacturers in countries less affected by tariffs or discovering new domestic brands entering the market.

Looking Ahead: Possible Changes and Strategies

There is ongoing debate about whether existing tariffs will remain in place, be expanded, or eventually rolled back. Trade policy is subject to political shifts, and the future remains uncertain. However, the broad impact of tariffs on the scale modeling industry is now clear: higher costs, reduced choices, and a need for adaptation.

Modelers can position themselves for success in this environment by staying informed about market trends, building networks with fellow hobbyists, and remaining flexible in their purchasing decisions. Patience is also key; while some kits may be harder to find or afford in the near term, the industry's history of innovation and the passion of its enthusiasts suggest that new solutions will emerge.

Conclusion

The current tariffs have presented the scale modeling industry—and its dedicated community—with significant challenges. Higher prices and supply chain disruptions have tested both businesses and

hobbyists, but the enduring appeal of the hobby remains strong. By adapting to new realities, supporting one another, and continuing to celebrate the joy of building and creativity, scale modelers in the United States can look forward to a resilient and evolving future.

No matter how the global trade winds shift, the passion for scale modeling endures—a testament to the creativity, patience, and camaraderie at the heart of this beloved pastime.

Well said and thank you, AI.

I will be at my daughter's wedding in Bend, OR, this coming Saturday, so I will have to miss another meeting. I am hoping that someone will pick up a 'Get Better' card for Bill Pugnetti to let him know we haven't forgotten about him and bring it to the meeting for everyone to sign. Hang in there, Bill!

For everyone else, Model On folks! And spend some money at Skyway and Model Paint Solutions!

Eric

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Northwest Scale Modelers (NWSM)

The Northwest Scale Modelers meet monthly at the Museum of Flight in Renton. Modelers of all genres are welcome to attend. Please see their website for more information: [NorthWest Scale Modelers (nwsm.club)]

Seattle Armor Modeling and Preservation Society (AMPS)

The Seattle Chapter of AMPS holds monthly meetings and occasional build sessions that modelers of all genres are welcome to attend. Please see their Facebook page for more information.

Galaxy Exiles Sci-Fi Modelers

The local Sci-Fi modeling community is served by this club located in the North End. Modelers of all genres are welcome to attend. For more information, please contact John Morel at johncmorel@gmail.com or see their Facebook page for more information.

Performance Model Club

The Performance Model Club meets every third-Saturday of the month at the Mt Vernon Roundtable Pizza from Noon to 2:00pm. All modelers are welcome to bring their recently completed models (or ones in work) to 'show and tell.' We have several that drive all the way from West Seattle and Renton as well as from Bellingham. We purely talk models, techniques, etc. With an average attendance of 6-10 at each meeting, we are not prepared to sponsor another PMC Model Show yet, but who knows what might be possible if this club grows!

Questions? Feel free to contact David Kaneshiro – kaneshiro.david@gmail.com or call/text 206-601-1351.

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Upcoming Events

September

20 — Oregon Modeler's Jamboree - Linn County Expo Center - Albany, OR
Oregon Model Show and Contest - hosted by Oregon Mid-Valley Modelers

October

4 — Fall Show - IPMS Palouse Area Modelers - Moscow, ID

11 — Scale Model Fest - Bonsor Recreation Complex - Burnaby, BC, Canada
IPMS Vancouver Annual Fall Show

TBD - Fall Show - IPMS Boise - Boise, ID

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During (and since) the Pandemic, modelers from all over have been meeting online via Zoom sessions. Between our two local clubs, (IPMS and NWSM), the TNI group, the Galaxy Exiles, plus IPMS clubs in Oregon, there are Zoom meetings just about every night. These sessions are joined by other modelers from across the country, as well as overseas – I think St. Petersburg is the farthest way? These are less meetings than simply build sessions where we share ideas, techniques, etc. – like a bunch of little old modeling ladies. We discuss our current projects, how to solve modeling problems, new techniques, tools, paints, and kits. We try to keep politics and religion out of the conversations, and that really makes the sessions fun and relaxing. These Zoom sessions are open to everyone. The Monday/Wednesday/Thursday sessions normally have between 8 and 15 attendees at any given time, and the big (Thursday) build sessions last 7 hours (2pm through 9:00pm). Modelers come and go, break for dinner, or to walk the dog, etc. The build sessions continue in the background, allowing modelers to join at their convenience.

A lot of modelers with a wealth of experience who can help solve just about any model-related issue. And a great group of people!

Joining a Zoom session takes a single click of a mouse, once you are all set up. First, it is recommended that you download a free copy of Zoom and install it on your device first. Having a local copy is not required but makes everything a little easier to use. Once that is done, all you need is a very basic setup that includes camera, microphone, and speakers (normally all built-in, especially with newer devices). Then just click on one of the links below!

Mondays: Seattle. WA IPMS 2pm – 5pm LINK

Tuesdays: Salem, OR IPMS 6pm – 10pm LINK

Wednesdays: Seattle. WA IPMS 2pm – 5pm LINK

Thursdays: Seattle. WA IPMS 2pm – 9pm LINK

Albany, OR IPMS: Odd-numbered Thursdays (i.e., 1st, 3rd, and 5th) from 6pm - 10pm. LINK

Saturdays: Salem, OR IPMS 6pm – 10pm. LINK

Sundays: 4:00pm CDT-5:00pm CDT. LINK

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The IPMS Seattle 2025 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.

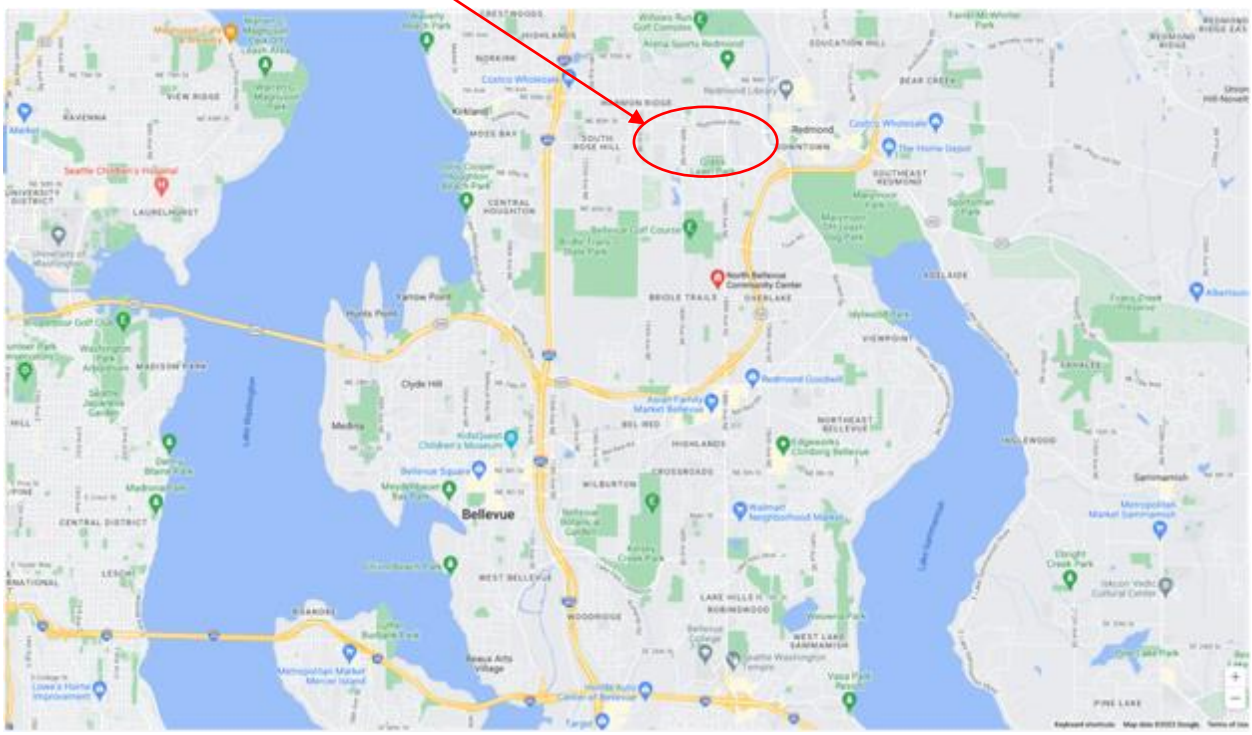
September 13, 2025 **October 11, 2025** **November 8, 2025** **December 13, 2025**

Next Meeting: September 13– 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM

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

Map Link Site Link

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.

Join IPMS/USA

Why Join IPMS/USA?

IPMS/USA is the United States Branch of the International Plastic Modelers' Society, whose roots can be traced to the startup of the first IPMS National Branch during the 1960's in Great Britain. In 1964 a US-based modeler applied for a charter to start the US Branch. In the ensuing five decades, IPMS/USA has become a 4,600-member, all-volunteer organization dedicated to promoting the modeling hobby while providing a venue for modelers to share their skills in a social setting, along with friendly but spirited competition in the form of local, regional, and national contests and conventions. As this is written, there are over 220 active US chapters (including groups in Canada and the Philippines as well as one "cyber-chapter" existing entirely on the internet). These chapters are organized into 13 geographically-determined Regions, overseen by Regional Coordinators. The IPMS/USA Executive Board, made up of elected and appointed members, serves as the overall governing body for IPMS/USA.

Join Online (https://myipmsusa.org/join-us)

MODEL PAINT SOLUTIONS

Model Paint Solutions specializes in tools for handling, storing, mixing, spraying, and finishing model paints. We carry quality scribing tools, abrasives, Mission Models Paint, the full line of AK Real Colors, and German-manufactured Harder & Steenbeck airbrushes and parts. All Seattle IPMS members can take advantage of 5% off and Free-Shipping on any orders delivered during the monthly IPMS meetings. Details provided at the meetings.

Model Paint Solutions (https://modelpaintsol.com/)

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