

MosquitoGram

The Official Newsletter of the New Jersey Chapter of IPMS
Vol. 06 No. 10 - October 2006

October 2006 Issue

This month's contest
is:

OPEN

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This month's meeting
is on:

Friday October 13th



Please note:
All submissions to the
next newsletter **MUST**
be received by
10/27, or they **WILL**
NOT make it into the
November newsletter.

THE VIEW FROM PIT ROAD

By Dave Schwartz

Hello, everyone. I'm sure by this time you are aware that I've been graciously allowed to assume the position of President of NJIPMS. I'm more than happy to do so and will give it my best. I've got no allusions, here. I've got very, very large shoes to try and fill, but with the kind of assistance that's available among the membership, I'm sure we can continue the upward roll this clubs been on. In my view this club has been most successful in it's endeavors and a huge vote of thanks is due to those who have come before me. Since I have very little to write about this month, I thought I might tell you a little about myself. Please try and stay awake, OK?

I've been a member of NJIPMS, for about 8+ years. My main modeling interest is automotive, but I've also been known to build a plane or two. I reside in Wayne, NJ (about 10 min. from the PAL), with my very UNDERSTANDING wife, Carol. She thinks I'm nuts, and quite frankly, I can't disagree with her. I've got two grown children. My daughter, Sharon, who's 27, and my son, Adam, who's 24. Both are on their own and doing well and I'm very proud of them. I had my own Locksmith business for about 22 years and decided to pursue other interests, when the business wasn't fun anymore. I'm now employed as Material Coordinator for Safemasters, a Division of the Stanley Works, located in Little Falls, NJ. My main interests pertaining to this hobby: The Club---Mosquito Con--- and trying to get some modeling done. You're probably bored by now, so that is more than enough about me. A few more thoughts before I close this one out.

OCTOBER IS DUES MONTH-- SO PAY UP!!!! Seriously, dues are important, so I ask that you please do not forget. If you've got a situation that prohibits you from doing so, please let myself or someone on the E Board know and we will take care of it. Dues are important, for sure, but your membership and friendship are more so.

I'm sure you all want to know where we're going now that I'm driving the car. Well-----, I'm not sure, YET. Anybody bring a map? Don't expect any radical changes. I'm a big advocate of: "If it ain't broke, DON'T fix it." I think we'll be doing a little Chassis Tuning, is all and much of what I see happening in the future will have YOUR interests in mind and rely on your input as well. Remember this is

YOUR club, I work for you. Just step up and speak out, cause we're all in this together. OK, I'm done. Now, go build something.

Dave

BYE-BYE FROM BOO-BOO'S DEN

Gentlemen. First off and most important, this is the last month that you can take advantage of the clubs offer of paying for the first night at the region 2 contest that is being held the 20 and 21 of the month down in Virginia beach. I will be attending and hope that many of us who will be there can get together after the award portion of the show and have dinner somewhere. So far from what I understand there will be many of us attending this contest so come on and join us and we will have a great time.

Well for those who stayed home instead of going to last month's meeting, petrified of being nominated for club office, don't worry elections are over and I am happy to announce that Dave Schwartz and Tom Stead are now your president and vice president. I have known both these guys for quite some time and I know that the club is in good hands. Congratulations and thanks to both of you for stepping up and taking over. I can only hope that the members of this club support these gentlemen as much as you have me.

Now for the sappy portion of the article, I have been your President for three years and in those years I believe that your e-board did an awesome job. As I said being your president was the second best decision I made in regards to this club (first off was joining). Stan Stankewicz was the best Vice President that I could have possibly wanted. Stan I am sure there were plenty of times I might have been a pain in the neck but you did everything that you could to help us do what we thought was best for the club. Martin I hope that Dave has a better grasp of the English language and can get his monthly article to you faster than I could. You put together a really nice newsletter and spend a lot of time doing it but it is appreciated. Ron what can I say other than I would not have been able to call any meeting to order without you. But seriously you are another member who does more than many realize. There are more people than I can mention who were always there when ever I needed help, you know who you are and we couldn't have done half of what we got accomplished without you.

Finally I have one more thing that I would like to mention. There have been many of you who have helped me doing what I like the best, anything to do with modeling. But there has always been one who stood behind me and supported my crazy little hobby. That would be my lovely wife Barbara. Whether it was dragging her to another contest somewhere, getting out the credit card for another model that "looks just like the last one you bought", or setting aside plans because I had a meeting that night, she has always been behind me. So for once go ahead and thank your wife for looking the other way when she sees that kit that you snuck in when you thought she was watching Oprah (yea she saw it!) or not asking why did that resin ship cost so much and why do you think it is such a great deal.

I have been very blessed by having such good family and friends and in closing I would like to state that New Jersey IPMS is the best group of people whom I have had the pleasure of working with. Let's not let up in our endeavors and lets always strive to make this the best damn club in IPMS.

Proud to be your Ex President

Tom VanDermark

FROM THE VEEP'S LAIR

BY TOM "THE BEEMASTER" STEAD

Well, what a way to return to the club! Thanks for the fixed election that's placed me in the vice-president's chair. Actually I stepped up on my own so I bear the responsibility for my action so I can't complain. I'm really looking forward to working with Dave and trying to keep the club going strong. So far I've gone from sittin' in the crowd, to Chapter Contact to Contest Chairman, and now Vice-President! Hell of a long way for a rank amateur to travel, but thanks to everyone in the club who encouraged me to keep on taking responsibility. Now it's time for me to give back to the club.

As a rule, being the Veep is like being a runner-up in Miss America, or the third man who walked on the moon. It's great but...who? Well, besides supporting our latest president-for-life, I would like to try to set up a few goals of my own for our club.

- 1) I'd really like to see more members entering our monthly contest. I know that we (or at least I) often feel like "How can I compete with those guys?" Well, I'd still like to see what other members of our club, other than the usual suspects can come up with! C'mon people, even if you haven't built anything recently, I'm sure you have something from your past hiding in the basement. Bring it in and show it! Talk about the kit and what you've learned from it. Ideally I'd like next year to be the year that sees everyone in our little band of brothers enters at least one monthly contest
- 2) More participation on other levels. How many have joined the International Plastic Modeler's Society? Hmm, I don't see too many hands raised out there. The IPMS has a bi-monthly journal and a lot of helpful resources available to its members. Also, you can't enter a regional or national contest without membership. The newsletter always has a membership application in it or you can go to www.ipmsusa.org and join on line.
- 3) I'd also like to see more participation from member's who are not ten-percenters. You know, in every organization, it's always ten percent of the people who do ninety percent of the work. This club is great, but it would be greater if more people would step up. Just as an example, how come we had only one candidate for each of the e-board offices? There are quite a few people who would also do a great job, but are afraid of the responsibility. Hell, I am too! But I'd like to think I can help the club. So should you the next time elections come around.
- 4) My last big goal is the newsletter. Martin does a fan-damn-tastic job of getting everything together each month, but, like many of those 10%ers I mentioned above, could use a lot of help. When I joined this club almost 12 years ago, I realized that my modeling skills were pretty feeble compared to most of our members (I still think that today!). So I decided to write for the newsletter, first with my "Kickin' the Bees Nest" series (Available in back issues for a large fee) and currently with The Prototype Page. Now that I'm adding a Veep column in, I'm gonna petition a change of title from Mosquitogram to VonSchteadogram. The only to stop this is for more members to start writing. I'd love to see our newsletter double in size. Not likely to happen, but a number of decent articles from the silent majority would really help. Kit reviews and book reviews or commentary about a historical event. Look at some of the past articles. John Bucholz

had a good two-parter about Italian Light tanks that clearly illustrated the differences among the various models (*Editor's Note - if you think THAT was good, check out John's article this month!*)

Lastly I'm going to take a swat at sponsoring a monthly special contest. The theme will be "What the f...!" I'm looking forward to seeing prototypes, one-shot wonders or spectacular failures! Just as an example, any French bomber of the '30's or one of those multi-turreted monsters that were supposed to dominate the land war, would easily qualify. Car models have quite a few one-hit wonders themselves! So get cracking, you have until the May contest to have some fun!

SEPTEMBER 2006 CONTEST RESULTS

By Steve Zajac

Empire Night results: Mike Terre made it 2 theme contests in a row winning the Air category with his Short 184 by Aeroclub in 72nd scale that was filled, drilled and scratch built with numerous extra goodies, not to mention the 7' of stretched sprue. Tom VanDerMark's *C.S.S. Nashville* by Verlinden in 1/200th Confederate Empire scale won the Land / Sea category.

Mike's Short 184 took a 1st in the Air category, while 2nd place went to Ron D's Mosquito II by Hasegawa in 48th scale, and 3rd place went to Art Doran's out of the box Typhoon by Hasegawa in 48th scale. The other entry was Tom Stead's Kyushu Shinden by Hasegawa in 48th scale done out of box.

AIR CATEGORY

1 st	Mike Terre	1/72 Short 184	Aeroclub
2 nd	Ron Dobrzelecki	1/48 Mosquito Mk II	Tamiya
3 rd	Art Doran	1/48 Typhoon	Hasegawa

Tom VanDerMark's *C.S.S. Nashville* built OOB took Land / Sea first place, while Tom Stead's Chi-Nu Japanese Heavy Tank by Fine Molds in 35th scale and built OOB took 2nd place, with Bill Schwarz' golden oldie 'The Dragon Slayer' took 3rd place.

LAND AND SEA CATEGORY

1 st	Tom VanDerMark	1/200 CSS Nashville	Verlinden
2 nd	Tom Stead	1/35 Chi-Nu Japanese Tank	Fine Molds
3 rd	Bill Schwarz	The Dragon Slayer	??

Upcoming Theme Nights

November - *Russian Night*, sponsored by Simon V
If you would like to sponsor a theme night please see or email stevezaj@msn.com.



FROM THE IRON WORKS

By Bill Schwarz

Due to problems with my computer, I was unable to upload Bill's article this month. Hopefully the issue will iron itself out next month. Meanwhile, my apologies! - Martin

Short Review

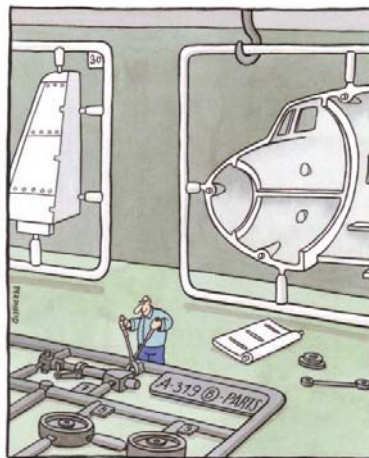
By Bill Schwarz

Revell Germany 1/72nd scale S-BOAT

Fellows, this subject has been looked at before, but not by me yet. All I can say is besides the props, the model is beautiful. Real nice mouldings, and it dry-fits really well. I think I am going to build it for next years circuit! I'm not much of a SHIP GUY, but I have loved Torpedo boats since I was small and use to watch McHale's Navy! I'm glad RVG brought out this boat! I'm going to make spray curtains out of epoxy putty, and use the Eduard PE set, and make up some custom artwork for the bridge. I like the railings that Revell supplies. If I go the extra 20 for the White ensign PE parts, I would be wasting them. The Eduard kit has more then enough parts to please me!! I will also be using the Armo metal FLAK Gun, and figures from CMK and H-G. (made especially for this boat!) That's it for this QUICKIE! Oh yes, one more thing!!!!!! The Price is right for what u get. I bought it from Gordo Kwan over at SprueBrothers for 22 bucks! Outside of buying from my good friend Jimmy Pantafallo over at Ridgefield Hobbies, this is one of the very few places that I shop. I'm quite selective, and these two always come to my rescue when I need something!!!!!!

Big Bill Schwarz

P/S you can see Gordo's site at SPRUEBROTHERS.COM



JÜRGENS JOB BEI AIRBUS WAR EXAKT SO, WIE ER IHN SICH ALS KIND IMMER VORGESTELLT HATTE.

Juergen's job with Airbus was exactly like in his childhood dreams.

My 2 cents

By Stan Stankewicz

First I would like to say that serving as your VP the past three years has been very enjoyable and rewarding. I could not have asked to serve with a better president and cooperative E-board, NJ/IPMS has greatly benefited from Tom's patience, leadership and hard work! Working with Tom has created a lasting friendship and one I hope will continue to grow in the years to come.

I wish to congratulate our new President Dave Schwartz and his VP Tom Stead and hope they continue to guide the growth and success of NJIPMS. I must also acknowledge a few of the past regimes which have contributed to the success that we now enjoy today.

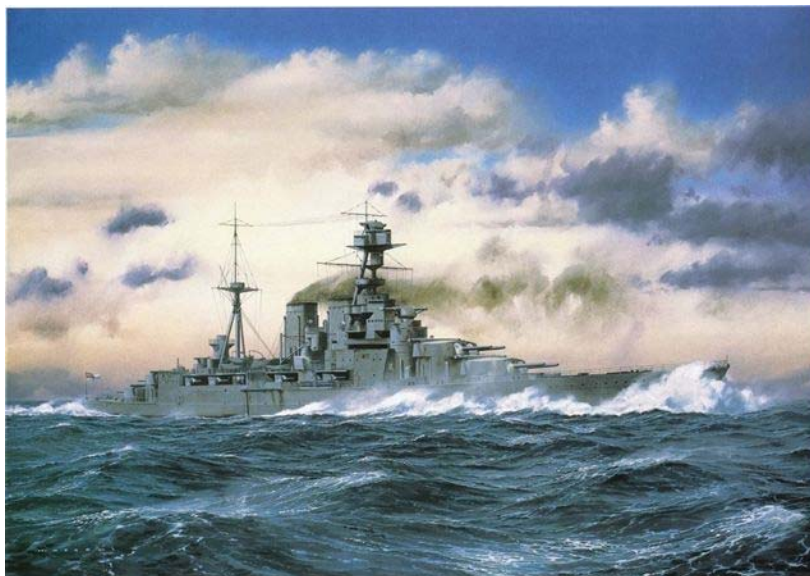
I am glad to see Bill Schwartz back as a member and as a former president we thank him for his efforts which gave MosquitoCon the jump start it needed to become the premier "Best Little" contest in the Tri State area. Bill Connolly also deserves accolades for demonstrating his professional attitude and organizational skills which continued our clubs growing success. And how can we forget Bob "president for life" LaPadura. Bob continually strived for growth and exposure of NJIPMS and thanks to his efforts we now have the motto "Modelers with Attitude".

Reflecting back on my years as a member I can truly say NJIPMS has steadily grown year to year which reflects on the dedication of all those who help run the club from MosquitoCon to our annual picnic and holiday party to the various workshops and special contests.

I hope that this year's call for volunteers to run for office is the exception and not the run in the coming years. In order for the club to continually prosper we must NOT rely on the same few individuals who are always there for the clubs well being. Our membership has many able bodies but for what ever reason never volunteer to even help with the simplest of duties. As you read this **You Know Who You Are!** And just think if you let the other guy do it eventually the other guy gets tired of always being the one. Finally no one will be there to do it! Hopefully this is a wakeup call to all those members who are there to enjoy the hard work of others!

Respectfully,

Stan Stankewicz

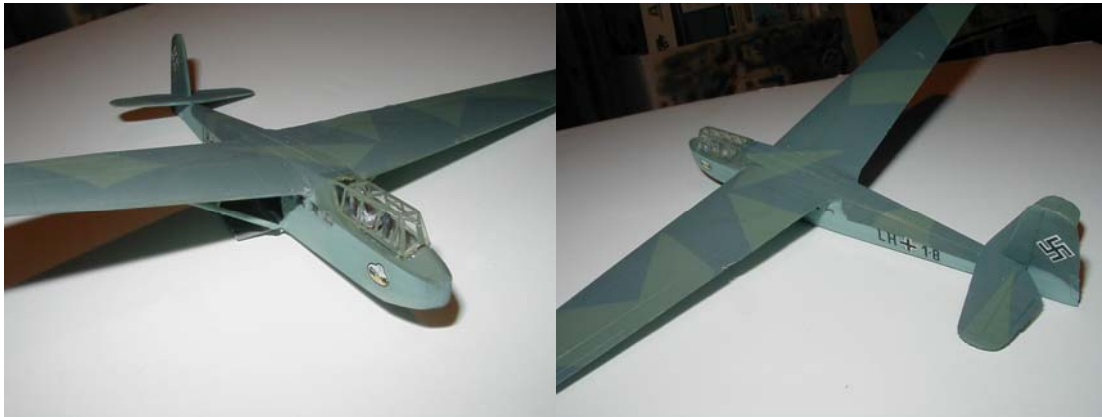


37 巡洋戦艦 フッド HOOB (イギリス) 1920-41

THE PROTOTYPE PAGE

By Tom "The Bee Master" Stead

The Second World War saw many innovative combat tactics. Among these was the concept of vertical assault. This used a combination of gliders and paratroops to take strategic objectives prior to the arrival of the regular army. Gliders of all sizes were crucial to this and the DFS 230 was the standard assault glider (similar to the U.S.'s CG-4). Their first and most notable success was in the invasion of Crete. Likewise, toward the end of the war, they were used by Otto Skorzney in the daring rescue of Benito Mussolini. These gliders were used in a number of experiments, including the use of braking rockets, removing the wings and substituting autogiro blades atop the fuselage, and most importantly, as part of the development of the Mistel piggy-back aircraft.



Model: DFS 230 Assault Glider	Mfr: HUMA	Scale: 1/72
Origin: Germany	Type: Injection molded white plastic, clear styrene, decals and odd instruction sheet in a cardboard box (or in the case of older issues like mine, a heavy plastic bag).	

Comments: The reason I said the instruction sheet is odd, is due to the very small assembly diagrams (including a number of Mistel combinations) and the fact that the opposite side has a huge 3-view showing the cammo patterns! There is interior detail that won't be seen unless you open the starboard door or the port cargo hatch.

Assembly:

- 1) As with most kits, you start with the cockpit. This consists of a seat, stick, floor and instrument panel. Detailing should be kept to a minimum, after all this was a glider and kept as light as possible. A pilot is included. Add a seat harness. I added some seats inside as I wanted to show at least some of that interior.
- 2) The instructions have you adding the cabin windows now (all 12 of them). Since this would be a pain to mask, I decided to make my windows using the old white glue method. Take your pick and glue the fuselage halves together.
- 3) Glue the two single piece wings to the fuselage and the stabilizer and rudder. Paint now before you add the landing gear, struts, etc.
- 4) For the basic glider and the first two Mistel combinations, add the landing skid, wing struts, tail skid and wheels (parts 25-32). For the third Mistel combo, using an ME-109E, install the heavier landing gear (parts 38-44).
- 5) If you decide to do the Mistel combos install the struts and wheel braces on the wings (or struts only on the ME-109E Mistel)

Painting and decaling:

The two paint schemes are an overall RLM 63 Grau, or a standard Black Green/Dark Green splinter with some side mottling over Light Blue. As a bonus, you are given fuselage codes for both the gliders and their powered components as well! This is a nice touch for any modeler and saves you a ton of grief. Paint schemes for the powered components are also supplied! The decals apply with absolutely no problems whatsoever.



Summary: Gliders are kinda rare in this scale and HUMA has seen fit to do a number of both operational gliders like this one, as well as some of the rocket powered gliders used as test beds for reconnaissance. These will fit nice with the older Italeri Gotha and Messerschmitt gliders as well as numerous resin kits. HUMA even has put out a set of two open framework training gliders that were used to train future Luftwaffe pilots. This is a nice kit with very few problems and is recommended.



THE PROTOTYPE PAGE

BONUS ARTICLE!

By Tom "The Bee Master" Stead

The use of mobile artillery is a linchpin in modern warfare. Railroad guns have provided this since the Civil War, but, unless the tracks can get you near the target, hopefully without being destroyed, you need some additional mobility. The Wehrmacht, anticipating that there would be a need for siege guns, designed a few extremely large ones, and mounted them on powered crawlers. Long range transport was via railroad, and then they would be lowered to trundle off and hurl huge shells at fixed fortifications. These 60-cm mortars fired a shell almost two feet in diameter and were used at the siege of Sevastopol. Two of them (Thor and Odin) became relatively infamous. Later models had the bore reduced to 54 cm, and the barrel lengthened to get a slightly longer range.



Model: Morser Karl "Thor"	Mfr: Minicraft/ Hasegawa	Scale: 1/72 nd
Origin: Czech	Type: Injection molded plastic, decals, excellent instructions in a cardboard box.	

Comments: The kit supplies the mortar in the prototype version; the operational version had a different number of road wheels. You also get the two cranes for rail transportation, a length of track and the choice of building the railway aspects in either 1/72nd scale or in HO scale. Since the instructions divide the assembly into a series of subassemblies, take advantage of this and paint each part as you finish.

Assembly:

- 1) This is one kit you build from the bottom up. Start with the track units which interlock and put the stops at each end of the rails. Then move on to the two carriage assemblies. These are built assembly line fashion since they are identical. Since I don't have a model railroad set, I chose to build the wheels in 1/72nd scale. For you HO fans, you add a shim. The two end pieces have some tubing attached to represent the brake lines. The tops and sides have various boxes and hydraulics added. Decide if you want the work platforms up or down.
- 2) The two cranes are next. Once again they are identical and look strong. Two support eyes are to be attached later.
- 3) The mortar is next to be assembled. Surprisingly the barrel can recoil using springs (seems somewhat toy-like to me). The casing and such has a number of rods that need to be kept in alignment, so take care. One advantage in these instructions is the use of photos as well as diagrams to help in assembly.

- 4) The transporter chassis goes together smoothly, but the road wheels and return rollers will require careful painting. When all is dry, there are a large number of parts, including the drivers compartment, lifting lugs, grab rails, pipes, exhausts and the mortar supports.
- 5) Parts A4 & A5 are placed in the mortar body and carefully glued to the supports. If you do this right, you can elevate or depress the mortar.
- 6) More ladders, elevation wheels and such are added now. You need to make a decision, the work platforms need to be up or down. If you're displaying it suspended in the cranes and on the tracks, glue these in an upright position. If, like me, you're showing the Karl in an operational mode, glue the platforms down. The vinyl tracks are attached using the old "hot screwdriver" method. Be careful stretching them around the bogie assembly.
- 7) Lastly the cranes are attached to the railroad carriages. If you want to suspend your Karl, there are small plastic pins that are used to hold it to the arms. A large shell is given if you want some perspective.
- 8) Although not supplied, I added some 1/72nd scale German soldiers at various points, in order to show the scale of the beast. The driver needed some surgery to fit the compartment, and a sitting soldier provides a touch of atmosphere on one platform.

Painting and decaling:

Three schemes are provided: Overall Panzer Gray, overall Dark Green and a late war scheme of Desert Yellow (?), Dark Green and Brown. I chose a compromise of overall Dark Green, with a wide Panzer Chocolate-Brown squiggle. You are only provided with decals for "THOR". They apply well.



Summary: A most interesting kit. For many years it was the only kit of this subject in ANY scale. Years ago, a resin model in 1/35th scale came out, recently followed by injection molded models of both 60 cm. and 54 cm. models. In any case, this kit will provide a good build for someone with a few small armor kits under their belt, and, if you are looking for a challenge, a conversion to the long-barreled 54 cm. version wouldn't prove arduous. Minicraft also released the mortar along with a Munitionspanzer (with loading crane), a number of years ago. If you have the money a number of these kits could be combined to build a sci-fi model of either an OGRE or one of Keith Laumer's BOLOs. I'll gladly recommend this kit.



UPCOMING EVENTS

What	Who	Where	When
XV Annual Model Festival	IPMS/Stratford CT	Knights of Columbus Milford CT	10/8/06
GraniteCon XIV	IPMS Granite State Modelers	Nashua Elks Club Nashua NH	10/15/06
HVHMG 2006	Hudson Valley Historical Miniatures Guild	Elks Lodge Poughkeepsie NY	10/21/06
Region II Convention	IPMS Tidewater	Va Beach Convention Center Virginia Beach, VA	10/21 to 10/22/06
DevilCON 2006	AMPS Eastern Front	Holiday Inn Runnemede NJ	10/28/06
BAYCON 2006	Bay Colony Historical Modelers	Knights of Columbus So Attleboro, MA	11/5/06

See www.nijpms.org "Upcoming Events" page for further information

October Mystery Photo

No, it's not a new feature. But, can anyone identify the objects in the photos that Ron Dobrzelecki sent?



PANZER IV/70 (A)

Correcting the Dragon kit - Part 1

By John Bucholz

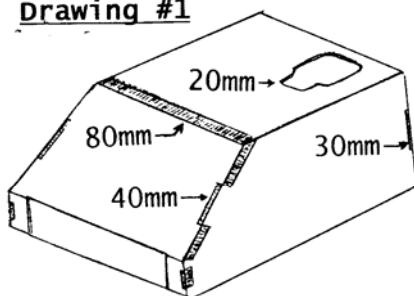
This kit is one of the older models from Dragon and as such is not quite up to their current standards. I know it has been out of production for several years but it was just included on the re-release list they issued in 2004, so it may be available again as you read this. As it is just a straight re-release there will be a lot of areas to improve for a fully accurate model of this panzer.

I have seen several models of this kit and it does look very nice out of the box if you paint and weather it in the proper manner. My goal was to make the kit as accurate as I could given the limited research material on this particular panzer. After a lot of detective work I think I have corrected all the major problems with this kit. Feel free to change as much as you are comfortable with. If I had this model to do over again, I think I would use the hull of a Tamiya panzer IV and just use the dragon superstructure and detail items. This will save a lot of time correcting the problems with the Dragon hull.

I will list each section of the model I changed, and the various steps I followed in each section. Some of the changes were very minor so you may want to leave out a lot of the modifications I made.

THE SUPERSTRUCTURE- The first thing I noticed on the kit was the incorrect thickness of the sides and rear of the armor plate. While the Panzer IV/70(A) was very much overweight for the chassis it was built on, the armor plate as depicted would prevent any movement at all! The frontal plate is 80mm thick and is in scale for the kit. The side plates are 40mm thick and should be reduced by half. The rear plate is 30mm thick (which is approximately one inch) and should be reduced accordingly (Drawing#1). I filed in the old seam with super glue and re-scribed the plates with the correct depth. I added weld lines to all the new plate joints by masking with tape and applying several coats of Mr. Surfacer, roughing up the surface, and then removing the tape. As I was going to show the model with a figure in the hatch I also reduced the thickness of the roof around the hatch area. The real roof plate was only 20mm thick so you should really put a good amount of bevel on the inside to thin this area down. (The roof plate on the kit scales out at about 2.5 inches!) The lifting hooks on the roof were moved inward about 4mm and new weld beads were applied.

Drawing #1



Re-scribe Superstructure
Front plate-80mm thick (kit is correct)
Side plate-40mm thick
Rear plate-30mm thick
Top plate-20mm thick

sketch A

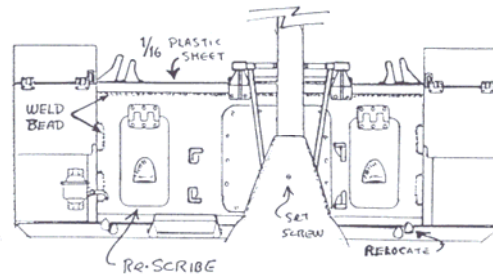


sliding sight cover to scale

The Nahverteidigungswaffe (close defense weapon) is back about 2mm too far, so I moved this up, drilled out the chamber and added a piece of plastic rod underneath to represent the

Moving to the front plate, the driver's visor (parts B11 and B10) are designed to show the visor in a closed position. I used the visor from a spare Italeri Mk. IV kit and installed it in the open position. Don't forget to open the front plate and install some armored glass behind the visor. I also noted in my photo sources that the two large domed bolts on each side of the front plate were symmetrical while the kit has one pair close together and one pair spaced apart. I moved the spaced ones closer so they matched the pair by the driver's visor (Drawing 4).

Drawing #4



HULL FRONT DECK- The transmission cover plates were a little too long and thin compared to my references so I filled in and re-scribed the panels to be a little shorter and wider. I drilled out the vent opening on the plate at this time and installed the armored covers (F10). This plate also has two joints per side to simulate the interlocking of the 30mm side plates to the front deck plate. I simulated weld seams with a few coats of Mr. Surfacer. You must also install a missing hull reinforcement strip which was welded to the front deck and protected the joint between the deck and the front superstructure. I used 1/16 plastic strip for this part (Drawing 4).

HULL REAR DECK- The rear deck has a very noticeable gap between all the plates and hatches which would equal about one inch on the real vehicle. I used 20 thousandth plastic strips to reduce the gap to a more in scale quarter inch spacing. If you are not going to put any engine or cooling fan parts under the deck, you should add some plastic strip under the openings to simulate the louvers under the slots on the hatches. The kit supplied tools are not that great so I would recommend substituting the Tamiya Panzer IV tool set items for the kit parts. I happened to have some Aber brass sets for German WW2 tools (late) which I used for the vehicle jack, fire extinguisher, shovel, and hold down brackets. I used the Tamiya axe, wire cutters, starting crank, and adjuster bar. I scratch built the long and short pry bars. If you go this route do not open any of the deck holes as shown in step 1 of the instructions as the positions are all a bit off and the photo etch tool clasps don't need holes to mount in (Drawing 2).

THE FRONT HULL PLATE- If you use the kit hull it is not correct for this particular panzer. After installing the two part F17 spacer plates to the hull, I noticed the front armor plate was too thin. I used 1/16 inch plastic sheet to bring the armor up to a scale thickness. This plate will add about two scale inches to the front plate. Add a weld seam between the new plate and the upper front deck. Use the Tamiya front tow brackets in place of the kit parts (B2,3 & B6,7-Drawing 4).

THE REAR HULL PLATE- The biggest problem with the kit part is the rear exhaust pipe spacing. The left hand pipe (the one almost in the center of the hull) is correct but the right hand pipe needs to be moved approximately 4mm to the right from the kit location. Because production of this type started in September 1944, I believe they were all built without the rear muffler and had open exhausts installed at the factory. This system was really just two exhaust pipes which went through the rear plate and then angled upward about one foot. This pipe was surrounded by a sheet metal tube, with four fins inside, which extended about

a foot past the pipe opening. This had no noise reduction value but did keep the glowing exhaust from being spotted at night and hopefully hid any backfires from the engine. I used aluminum tube for the pipe, bending it to shape and gluing it into the rear hull. I used the kit lower covers for the exhaust but I removed the kit flame dampers and made new ones with plastic tube. The fins were made from ten thousandth plastic strip. I rebuilt the starter crank support to be more in scale, and I added the Aber brass jack block support at this time. The rear tow attachment was detailed with plastic strip and I installed extra bolt head detail on top and bottom. I used brass rod and strip to replace the kit tow cable holders and end posts on the rear hull plate and deck. The rear idler mounts need some extra detail and re shaping to make them presentable. If you use the hull from Tamiya you will have a lot less work to do in this area ([Drawing 2](#) and [Drawing 3](#)).

THE HULL SIDE PLATE- Step Three in the instructions tells you to remove two return roller mount outlines on the hull and to mount only three rollers, but this is not correct for this kit. The model represents a September 1944 vehicle, with the tow mounts still bolted to the hull front plate. These vehicles still had the standard four roller set-up. The reduction to three rollers came in December 1944 but at this time the front tow hooks were just extensions of the side plates. I wanted to portray the earlier model so I used four return rollers per side. The instructions also tell you to remove the middle two bolts on the hull suspension mounts. This is correct as the factory was reducing the bolts on the mounts but many vehicles still had all the bolts on the top at this time. The ones that did not often had holes where the bolts were as the suspension units were predrilled for the extra bolts that the factory did not install. Use picture references for the panzer you are modeling. The suspension bump stops (part E3) are not that great but you really can't see very much with the suspension on so I did not detail the kit parts other than adding two bolt heads onto each stop. The position of the fuel caps (Part G1) is a bit off. I positioned mine about 1mm higher than the outline on the hull, and moved the rear filler cap about 3mm more to the rear of the hull.

THE SUSPENSION COMPONENTS- I did a lot of changes on the suspension which you may or may not want to duplicate. The kit parts are not bad but they are not state of the art either. To begin with, my return rollers were molded off center. I filed everything to the correct shape and then glued them to the roller brackets (Part C11). The holes in the brackets are twice as large as the pins on the rear of the rollers so take care and check your alignment while you glue. Next I decided to use the wheel mount units (kit Parts C7 and C10) from an Italeri kit as the detail on the springs and bolts was nicer. I also liked the wheels that Italeri provides better than the kit parts (the rims have 4 spot welds in the groove and the kit wheels representation of this feature is not up to par). I had to keep the solid wheels from the kit so I ended up using kit wheels for the first four positions and the Italeri wheels for the last four positions ([Drawing 5](#)).

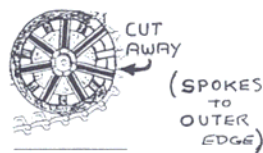
Drawing #5



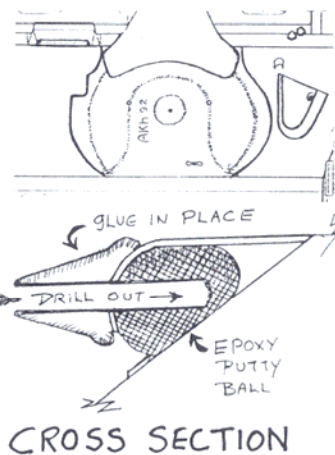
I had to cut off about 4mm of each axle to mount the kit solid steel wheels to the Italeri parts. I replaced the kit drive sprocket with a set of spares from the same Italeri kit. I reinforced the sprocket mounts with sections of aluminum tube and cut out the mud relief holes on the inside of the sprocket. I removed the center of the Italeri sprocket and replaced it with the kit sprocket bolt pattern. This brings us to the rear idler wheel. It would be nice if

we could use the earlier tube style rear idler, but all the photographic evidence I have seen shows the later style cast box idler (other than a few prototype models). All the kit supplied cast idlers show the outer rim as a solid piece while in reality this rim was hollow with the spokes fitting down inside the rim. Rather than show a bunch of mud on this part to disguise this feature I cut off the outer rim and made plastic "O's" which I glued to the spokes to better represent this feature. When dry I glued plastic strip around the outer edge and sanded everything smooth (Drawing 6). While we are on the subject of wheels, let's go to the spare wheel storage area. The rear deck has provision for two spare road wheels, one standard and one with the steel rim. The kit places them too far inboard. Line up the outer edge of the wheel with the outer edge of the rear hull top and drill your holes for the retaining rods accordingly. Note that the inner diameter of the wheel hub is different for the two wheel types (the all steel wheel has a smaller diameter center and should be in the inboard position).

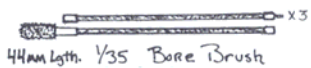
Drawing #6



Drawing #7

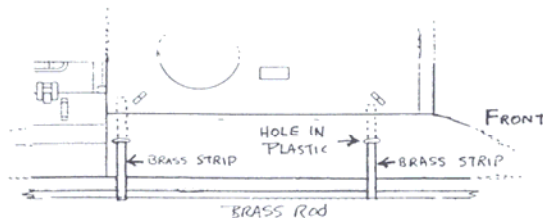


Sketch B

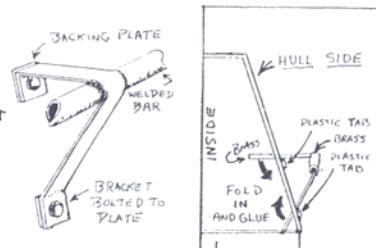


Cleaning Rods to scale

Sketch C



Sketch D

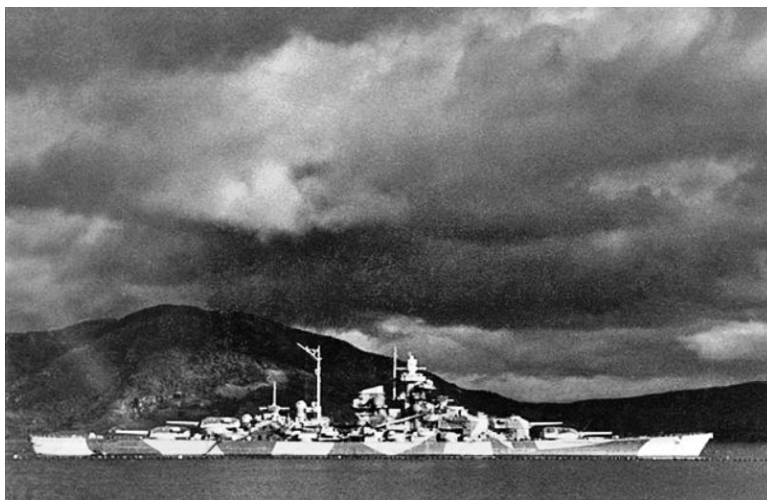


THE MAIN GUN - The kit gun mantlet (Topfblende = Pot Gun Mantlet) is basically correct, but the features supplied to allow the barrel to elevate and traverse force some compromises which make it a little too toy like. I suggest you do the following steps. First, get the Jordi Rubio barrel for the long barreled 7.5 cm Pak42 and save yourself the trouble of getting the kit plastic part straight. The kit part also has no discernable taper towards the muzzle which is correct for the prototype but not production models. Second, forget the parts supplied for movement of the gun (A12, A13, and A14). Third, increase the opening in the mantlet (A 15) to about 15 mm. Forth, Make a ball mount to fit behind the mantlet. I used a ball of Milliput epoxy putty to represent this feature. This can only be seen at the very bottom of the opening so you don't need to spend a lot of time on the shape. Fifth, add some casting

letters to the top left of the mantlet. My references show "AKh 3" which I added using numbers and letters shaved off some old plastic parts runners. I improved the hold down with plastic rod and I used some Mr. Surfacer 500 to add some texture. The front part of the mantlet (A16) holds the barrel. I added texture to this part and a horizontal seam in the middle as well as casting numbers underneath. The four holes in this part were set screws which held this part to the barrel. I drilled these holes out and added small screws inside. Sixth, glue the mantlet to the superstructure and then add the barrel. You will have to drill out the ball you added to the mantlet to get the barrel to sit at the proper depth (Drawing 7).

Part two coming next month!

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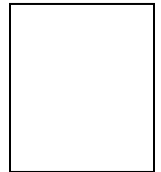
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