



THE SCRATCHING POST

Newsletter of the Central Arkansas Scale Modelers



2019 4th QUARTER ISSUE

Looking Back and Moving Forward

As we begin 2020, CASM members can look back on 2019 and find a lot for which we can be proud. We have seen a trend of increased attendance in our meetings, with new members joining, and former members returning after many years of absence.

CASM has once again been named as the Region 6 Chapter of the Year for 2018 (awarded in 2019). This is our sixth time to receive this award since 2011, and the seventh time overall.

As reported in the last Scratching Post, we also had our most successful Sproo-Doo in the history of the show, with a record number of entries and vendors. People were impressed by the diversity of the models and the quality of the entries.

Members have attended many shows around the country and won numerous awards over the last year. Articles and photos featuring the work of our members have been published in multiple

magazines and websites, giving even more exposure to CASM. And, of course, we saw the rebirth of the Scratching Post.

We have seen an increase in participation of automotive and gundam modelers, and the demos at club meetings included more diverse subjects.

2020 promises to be another great year for CASM. We will once again submit our achievements for consideration for Chapter of the Year and will work to maintain the momentum we saw with 2019's Sproo-Doo.

But more importantly, we will continue to reach out to the modeling community, and do what we do best, which is to support and promote our hobby. CASM is, and will continue to be, a place for modelers at all levels to discuss models and show off their work.

We hope to see you all in 2020!

-Brent Bristow, editor

The Rye Field Panther G: Part 4-One Stage Nears Completion

by Rick Knapp

I'm at last approaching completion of the fighting compartment of the Rye Field Panther G's hull, as imperfect as my efforts may be. Engine compartment and turret remain as yet untouched.

The first thing I must do in this installment of the Panther saga is to apologize to the Rye Field kit designers. They did *not* neglect to address the tank's radio sets in their instructions. I had been focusing—too narrowly, it turns out—on the steps for detailing the fighting compartment tub. One evening, while looking at upcoming tasks in this project, I reviewed items to be attached to the underside of the vehicle's upper hull, and there the radios were! I had assumed that the sets should be mounted atop the transmission housing, but as it turned out, the Rye Field folks had something else in mind. Their plan was to have the sets attached to the upper hull's underside via the framework on the aft end of the radios. How well this would work when trying to attach the upper hull, I'll now never know. Since the top of the aforementioned framework was intended to fit into an indentation in the upper hull's underside, I cut it down to prevent a misalignment problem later.

The Rye Field Panther's transmission and final drive is a

very complex and somewhat delicate assembly, and it is arguably too complex. Rye Field's instructions show the mechanism simply being dropped into place, but try as I might, I couldn't get it to fit entirely properly. I did some damage trying and repaired that as best I could. Operator error was definitely a possibility there.

Previously, I referred to a problem I caused myself by doing things out of the order dictated by the kit instructions. Rye Field intends that part H62, the decking that receives the bottom of the turret basket, be dropped over the upright ammunition bins that fill the openings at its four corners. This only works (if it really does) as long as the kit builder has not, as I did, fully detailed and installed the engine bulkhead. My solution to the difficulty I had caused myself involved some minor surgery to part H62, prying items off the engine bulkhead, removing most of the legs from the four upright bins, and gluing the bins to part H62 prior to installation—crude and slightly traumatizing, but it worked.

I'm now finishing up the vehicle's sponsons—those sections of the hull that extend over the tracks. The major challenge there is the loading and installation of the ammo racks. Rye Field provides stencil decals for the three types of 75mm ammunition in the kit. These are tiny, but

manageable. The decals are tough enough to withstand considerable maneuvering, but still conform well. Decals for the shell bases are even included, although they aren't really necessary for ammo in stored positions.

The kit instructions clearly show how the ammo racks—which thankfully are not photo-etched items—are to be loaded. Getting the two parts that hold the shells in each of four sections of the sponsons spaced correctly is vital. I ensured that the spacing would be accurate by loading a couple of shells into interior spots in the racks, lightly cementing the bases of the racks into the recesses intended to hold them, and once the two rounds were positioned correctly, securing them in their cradles with liquid cement. That light cementing of the bases was where tube glue comes in handy. Once everything had set up, I removed the whole assembly and painted. Painting shells already glued in place was not terribly difficult, and their position relatively deep in the racks meant that they'd be hard to see anyway.

Since painting dozens of rounds of ammo is a bit tedious, I'm making the assumption that my particular vehicle has used up some of its ammunition. I'm also assuming that my Panther's loader has had the opportunity to shift his remaining 75mm rounds to spots where they'd be easiest (Make that easier—there were no really convenient spots.) to reach.

Therefore, the ammunition racks in the left-hand sponson are nearly empty, while those in the right-hand sponson will be full.

So far, so good, mostly. The Rye Field Panther has been designed for accuracy, if not for ease of assembly. My hope is that at the end of all this, I'll have a completed kit that closely resembles a late-model Panther G. Stay tuned!



Dave Branson's 2019 Car Model Challenge

At the beginning of 2019, Dave decided to challenge himself to only finish models that he had started prior to 2019, and not start any new models. Showing a great amount of self-control by sticking to this challenge, Dave finished 10 model cars, some which he had started as far back as the 1990's!





No Name Modelers Christmas Party

On December 9, Ken Leslie and his wife Nancy hosted the annual Christmas party of the No Name Modelers. In addition to some great food, there was also a group build in which participants were challenged to build a diorama. There were 12 entries, and the winners received gift certificates provided by Rail and Sprue Hobbies. The party was attended by several CASM members, including Dave Branson, Brent Bristow, Ron Leker, Alex Silvia, Brian Elliott and Roy Elliott.

The No Name Modelers meet on the 2nd and 4th Monday nights of each month from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Arkansas Veterans Home, located at 2401 John Ashley Drive North Little Rock. Everyone is invited to attend!



KIT Review: Atlantis Models TR-3E Triangular UFO

by Brent Bristow

The TR-3E Triangular UFO kit by Atlantis Models has been around for a number of years and has become a staple of the sci-fi modeler's stash. The design of the kit, which is based upon numerous reported sightings of UFOs, provides flexibility for the modeler to create their own unique take. This reissue is true to the original release.

The kit consists of five parts, which are the upper and lower halves of the ship, and three pieces for the landing gear. The details are crisp and well defined. The parts are molded in a silver plastic, so the kit could be built and displayed without paint, if desired.

Closer examination of the kit revealed that there were a few dips in the molding of both the upper and lower halves around the sides. I filled in these areas with a generous amount of CA glue, and then sanded it down with progressively finer grits of sandpaper. The landing gear pieces had mold lines all around it, which I carefully sanded off. These pieces were difficult to hold on to, and I dropped the legs several times while sanding them.

The two halves went together well, but it was a little tricky getting the vents to line up

perfectly on all three sides, and it took me a few attempts to get it right. Using Tamiya Extra Thin cement, I assembled the two halves. After it dried, I filled in gaps with Vallejo Plastic Putty. Allowing the putty to dry overnight, I then sanded the joint areas with 400 grit sandpaper, then smoothed it out with 600, 800, and 1000 grit sandpaper. The edge of the bottom half extended past the top half in some areas, particularly at the corners. These areas were easy to sand down to an even joint.

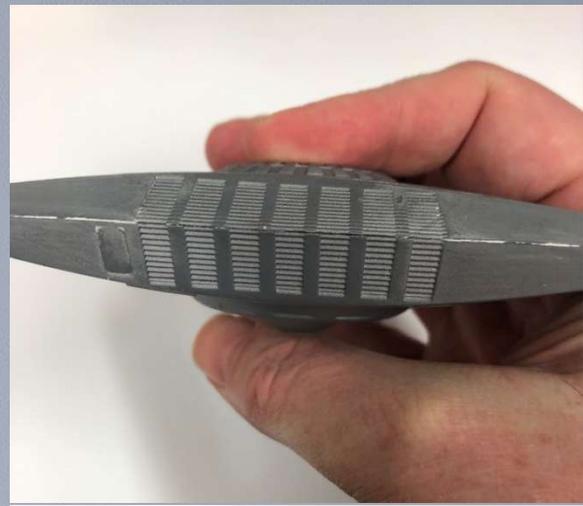
The landing gear pieces had round tabs that appear to attach to the lower part of the ship, but there were no clear indicators where these were to attach. I measured and marked off the areas where I wanted to attach the legs, and using a 0.42mm drill bit, I drilled holes to these tabs to attach. At this point, I washed all the parts with a mild dish detergent and allowed it to dry. I then attached the legs with CA glue.

For the purposes of this review, I decided to keep the paint up very simple. I spray painted the model with a few coats of Tamiya Bare Metal Silver. Between coats, I fixed a few places that needed to be smoothed out and filled a couple of minor gaps. After this, I

did a minor wash with a charcoal grey over some of the details. I wanted to show that this kit can look great even with a minimal paint job, but there is also plenty of opportunity for customization and detailing. Since the design is only loosely based on reported sightings, there is no wrong way to paint it.

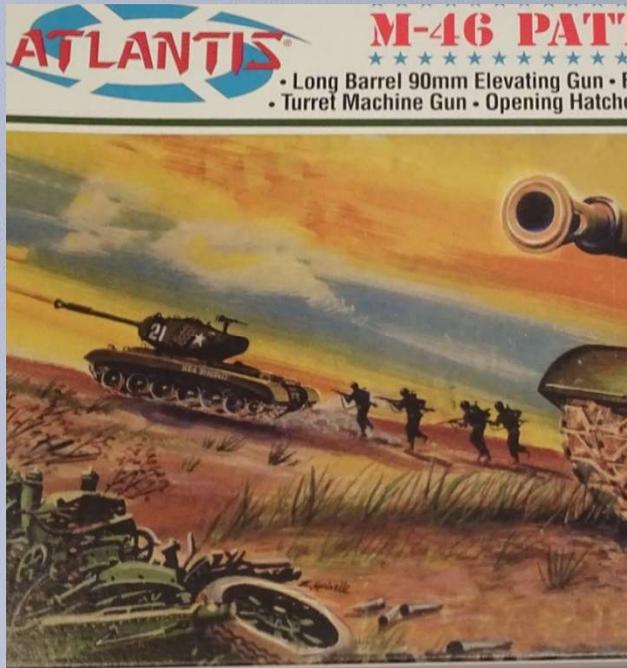
The TR-3E is a great kit with a lot of flexibility, and priced at \$12.95, it is an inexpensive piece for those on a budget. Its compact design doesn't take up a lot of shelf space, but it still makes a nice display piece. While there are a few construction challenges, they are minor and easily fixed. It is a must have for any sci-fi modeler.

Thanks to Atlantis Models for supplying the kit for this review.



Retread: The Atlantis M46 Patton Tank

By David Carter



This kit will look familiar to boomers because it's a reissue of the 1956 vintage 1/48 scale Aurora Patton tank. Although the M46 was Aurora's most expensive and detailed mold back then, it also had toy-like features to appeal to children: the turret turned, the gun elevated, a full crew, hatches opened, and, if carefully built, the tracks worked. Impressive and more realistic than the strictly toy tanks sold with toy soldiers. I built one as a kid. It was hard to assemble the wheels without getting some of glue holding the end caps on, on the wheels. The original Aurora instructions told you to heat a knife over a candle to melt the pin to hold the ends of the rubber tracks together. I and other kids slammed these together and played with them as they gradually

succumbed to our skirmishes and were reduced to scrap. You could always tell when one had been played with: small parts such as hatches, crew, guns, and antennas would come off and get lost. The gun mantle always seemed to come loose, it didn't fit the backing plate well, and the tube glue never held it together. Although the suspension was pretty robust, a few road wheels would come off. Worst of all, the melted pin never held the tracks together and they always came off. Eventually we tied the ends together with thread.

It was all great fun but eventually, I moved on to more detailed offerings from Monogram and Revell. Aurora moved on too. They invested heavily in the slot car craze of the 1960s, and when this fad passed, they did too, selling out to Monogram in 1977.

The 2018 Hobbico bankruptcy took down with it many hobby suppliers, including the iconic modeling brands, Revell and Monogram. Shortly thereafter, at Hobbico's liquidation, the Atlantis Model Company acquired much of the Monogram-Revell tooling. This included many of the old Aurora molds. Like many, I wondered what would happen to the many great classic kits in their collection, and when some of these kits would be produced again. The wait hasn't been long as Atlantis has started reissuing kits formerly from Revell-Monogram, including some long out

of production Aurora kits.

One is the old Aurora M46 Patton Tank. According to Greenberg's Guide to Aurora Plastic models, it was issued three times by Aurora. I haven't been able to learn what it originally cost, but Greenberg tells us that by the 1969 its price had risen to \$1.30! The current reissue lists for \$19.99 although I was able to find it up on sale for less.

What's it like to revisit such a vintage kit? The box art is the same as the old Aurora. The instructions still fit on one page with large exploded diagrams. The first thing you notice is lots of flash. Some parts have very large pin holes, and the sprue attachments are heavy and thick. Intrigued, I started working on it while parts for another model were drying. I wanted to see how good a model could be made from it, building to a good standard but keeping close to box stock.



The first step is the running gear. Many parts are molded too close to the thick sprues for the sprue cutter to get in, so it's best to cut them off with a razor saw. Every part has flash and cleanup takes a long time. I took me three

hours to build the running gear for both sides, and most of this time was spent sanding off flash and sprue attachments. Just like I remembered, it's hard to glue the end cap on the axles to hold the wheels on without getting some glue on the wheel too. I learned to let the glue set for a few minutes, hold the cap with tweezers, and rotate the wheels, breaking free any that don't want to turn.



The modern instructions don't mention heating a knife to melt the track ends together. Probably their lawyer warned them that in this day and age we can't tell children to use a flame! Because melting never really worked, I tried to glue the tracks together. Liquid cement had no effect, it just evaporated. Super glue flaked off, as did Gorilla Glue. I tried a glue made specifically for rubber, but it too just peeled off. So, I heated the end of a screwdriver over a flame and melted the end pin to hold them together. And, as always, the ends of the tracks came apart as soon as I tried to put them on. Finally, I used a needle and thread to sew the ends together which worked!

The molded-on side skirts made it necessary to mount the treads before the body was

assembled. I painted and decaled the top, sides, and bottom before gluing them together. Gaps in the front and rear were filled and touched up. The fit of the parts of the turret was poor, and many holes had to be enlarged for parts to fit. The only modifications I did was to drill out the exhausts and gun barrels and to replace the too thick antenna with wire. I didn't use the crew as they were so crude as to detract.

The finished model does look the part. Thought far less intricate than modern kits, Auroras armor models were considered to be

detailed and accurate at the time. These early kits were idealized so heavy weathering seemed out of character. It took me a week to build, while also working on another project. Because of fit and flash problems I wouldn't recommend this kit to a beginning modeler. They would be better off with some of the older Tamiya or, if they want working features, some of the Monogram armor kits. This kit is more for experienced modelers who love vintage kits. I won't build many more these, unless they reissue the Long Tom and M8!



Upcoming Shows in the Area

January 10: Chattanooga ModelCon, Chattanooga, TN

January 26: Calmex XXXIV, Lake Charles, LA

February 15: ModleFiesta 39, San Antonio, TX

February 21-23: AMPS Atlanta and Atlanta Figure Show, Atlanta GA

March 7: Smokey Mtn Model-Con, Knoxville, TN

March 14: KCCON, Kansas City, MO

March 23: Rivercon IX, Shreveport, LA

April 3 & 4: West-Ark Scale Model Contest, Clarkesville, AR

April 18: Route 66 Model Expo, Tulsa, OK

Be sure to check out the first issue of Fantasy Figures magazine, which features an article by Ken Childres on his post-apocalyptic armor build, which also includes a photo of Ron Leker's post-apocalyptic piece!



CASM Meeting and Contact Information

The Central Arkansas Scale Modelers meet at 10:00 a.m. on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub, located at 204 E. 4th St., North Little Rock, AR 72114.

Modelers of all genres are welcome to attend!

For more information, find us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CASModels/> or

<https://www.facebook.com/CASModels/>. You can also go to our website at

www.casmodels.org, or email us at cc_casm@hotmail.com



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