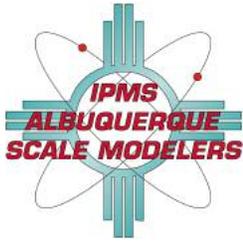


# ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

May 2007

## PREZ NOTES

KEN LIOTTA

### IPMS/Albuquerque Scale Modelers 2006 Region X Chapter of the Year!

**Con-grat-u-lations Albuquerque Scale Modelers!**

It has been officially announced by the Region X Coordinator that we have been awarded this distinction once again. You worked hard and enjoyed a wonderful year in plastic modeling, touring, make-and-taking, seminars, and Regional contest hosting. And on behalf of the 2007 ASM E-board, I wish to extend an extra special thanks to the 2006 ASM E-board for having been largely responsible for making '06 so successful for us:

Patrick Dick	Keith Liotta
James Guld	Tom Perea
Frank Randall	Tim Wood

Well done! Additionally, I would like to reiterate my thanks to Mike Blohm for leading the charge on authoring our 13-page nomination and Joe Walters for assisting with compiling and editing of the nomination. It is my belief that the work of these two played a significant role in our having received the award. Our nomination was so impressive, the Regional Coordinator attached it to his announcement of the awarding as a model for other IPMS Chapters to use for future CoY nominations.

The rest of the membership should also take a bow for their support and participation in all of the '06 events. Many of you assisted in various different ways. You know who you are and we appreciate your work.

## OTHER NEWS

Hobbies 'N Stuff is closing their doors! *What!?!?* Yes. After 20 successful years of being Albuquerque's premier hobby shop, Stan and Helen wish to enjoy retirement. They are willing to continue filling special orders for a short period but they will not be replenishing their usual stock items. The doors are set to close for the last time on June 30.

For the past twenty years the Johnsons have been providing the best service to many different hobby goers, most importantly to us, the plastic modeling community. Of the many "Plastics Guys" there (Stan, Pat, Keith, Larry, Tim, John and Tom), they have all served as "Bartender" to our many issues and needs. From Aeromaster's latest P-47 decals to Trumpeter's newest 1/32 A-7, they have given so much to us. I would like to extend my personal gratitude for all that the Johnson's have given us and let them know that **THEY WILL BE MISSED**. All of our best wishes from ASM for a long and relaxing retirement, you've earned it and more.

## VICE-PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS JAMES GULD

Hey, it's finally spring and the contest season has hit. First up is the Pike's Peak show/contest in Pueblo, Colorado, on May 19. This is a one-day show put on by Centennial



April meeting highlights, top to bottom: Mike Blohm gives one of the meeting's three simultaneous clinics; the meeting in progress; a table o' tanks for the sponsored contest.

Model Club. Next up after that is this year's Region 10 convention, called ModelZona, put on by Craig Hewitt Chapter in Mesa, Arizona, June 22 – 23. I'm planning to attend both and hope to see many ASM members there. Remember these clubs supported us last year when we had our show, so it's time to help them out and attend their shows this year.

## STARFEST 2007 REPORT JOE WALTERS

Each year, a local sci-fi group in Denver (online at <http://www.starland.com>) puts on *Starfest*, one of the most highly-regarded fan-run sci-fi conventions in the country, with attendance generally in the vicinity of 3000 people. This year, the event ran across the weekend of April 20 – 22.

In addition to guest speakers, panels, video, art shows, demos, and many other activities (including an ongoing make-and-take event hosted by Tom Grossman, a friend of many ASM members), there's a Sci-Fi Model Competition run by local modeler Vernon Clark. My wife and I have been attending these conventions for over ten years now, and Vern always gives me a hard time if I don't enter a model, so I brought along the Klingon/Romulan battlecruiser I had entered at ASM's January contest, and it fared just as well there as here... well, I got a consolation prize—everyone who entered got a choice of a new X-Acto knife or a cool self-clamping tweezer thing. I took the latter.

Be that as it may, this year's show featured far more models than I had ever seen there, with a total approaching 100. Very impressive turnout!

A printed photo doesn't do it justice, but someone had acquired and built all those glow-in-the-dark monster kits Aurora issued several years ago, and arranged them in a light box under a black light—the effect was astounding. The picture on a video display looks pretty good, so check it out on the Bonus Page if you receive the electronic version of the newsletter, or the ASM web site Field Trips page ([http://abqscale-modelers.com/asm\\_field\\_trips.htm](http://abqscale-modelers.com/asm_field_trips.htm)).

Another type of club had on display two full-sized replicas of the robot from *Lost in Space*—complete with blinking lights and sound effects. One of them even talked,



Danger! Danger!

though I'm pretty sure the fellow nearby with the laptop was feeding it the proper lines.

Someone entered a full-sized replica of the Ark of the Covenant from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The entry form next to it mentioned that it was "safe to open." We didn't take the chance.



Close your eyes! Don't look at it!

There were a number of scratchbuilds, such as a huge *Nostromo* refinery ship and escape pod from the movie *Alien*, and a rebel blockade runner from *Star Wars*. A tiny *Discovery* from *2001: A Space Odyssey* was there, as was a huge Treebeard figure from *Lord of the Rings*.

Lots of Gundam-type robots and Japanese anime figures were in evidence, particularly—but not exclusively—in the juniors category.

A private collector brought a gargantuan collection of *Star Wars* toys and figures (for display only) in several full-sized display cases, and all laid out in various tableaux from scenes from all the movies.

There was an informal meeting of IPMS Front Range at the convention, so I thought I'd drop in. By chance, I had my ASM name badge (I keep it in my camera bag), so I wore it proudly. There were about ten folks present—this wasn't a regular meeting of the chapter. One of the members was in costume as the "V" character from the movie *V For Vendetta*. I figured he was probably working on a V-2...

Oh, the rest of the convention was pretty good too. My wife got her picture taken with Leonard Nimoy, and later got him to autograph it. Gil Gerard and Erin Gray from the *Buck Rogers* TV series were there, and were excellent guests. Gil looks like he could play the part again. Ray Park (Darth Maul from *Star Wars Episode 1*) was an excellent guest, with lots of stories from the *Star Wars* film as well as his work on *X-Men*, *Sleepy Hollow*, and others. He demonstrated some of his moves on request, and was a very well-received speaker. Additional guests were from *Battlestar Galactica* and the *Stargate* series, the *Mummy* movies, and several horror films.



IPMS Front Range meeting: In every club, there's always some guy who doesn't like the way it's being run.



The dealer room was vast and crowded, and modelers would be interested to see how many and varied kits (some of questionable origin) were being sold.

Two pages of photos from the convention are available on Starland's web site (<http://tinyurl.com/2cmbys>).

# RETIREMENT SALE-A-BRATION!

**After 20 great years owning Hobbies 'N Stuff, Stan & Helen are retiring from the hobby business.**

**While the business remains for sale, starting May 1st Hobbies 'N Stuff will begin their "retirement sale-a-bration". Come into the store for information on progressively deeper discounts on in stock merchandise as well as discounts on special orders.**

**It has been a great 20 years, but Stan and Helen are ready to move onto a slower paced work life. They thank you for all the support through the years.**



**SOUTHWEST CORNER OF EUBANK & CANDELARIA  
505-293-1217**

## BOOK REVIEW DON SMITH

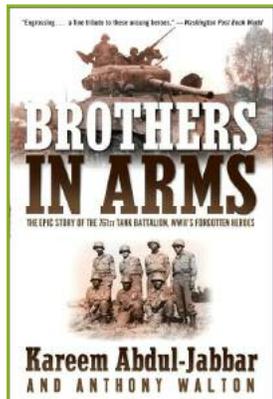
### Brothers in Arms

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anthony Walton  
Broadway Books. 2004 • 302 pages

*Keeping with the European theatre of war "theme," this month's book starts with the Lorraine campaign as my companion to last month's Lorraine 1944: Patton vs Manteuffel book. -D. Smith*

This is a pretty interesting book about the men who fought in tanks and their stories. What makes this different is that the 761st Tank Battalion is an all-black unit formed when the army was racially segregated. This book is co-authored by basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who has a personal connection to the unit.

The men of the 761st faced many obstacles at home and on the front. There are lots of individual stories about the fierce fighting this unit faced. The 761st was



never intended to fight in the war and was more of a publicity stunt in the racially segregated U.S. Army. With the high casualty rate facing the U.S. armored units, the 761st was needed in Europe. Despite being a racist by today's standards, Patton and the 761st seemed fond of each other. When an infantry commander ordered the 761st tanks into a virtual suicide mission, Patton wanted to know who got "his" tanks killed, and the commander was never heard of again. The 761st was an independent tank battalion with 76mm M4A3 Shermans. The unit was attached to various infantry units to provide armor support. As you may suspect, this led to friction, because infantry commanders did not know how to use tanks and also each infantry unit had initial prejudices against an all-black unit. Like all the other armor units, regardless of race, the 761st saw some brutal and bloody action.

The book has interesting stories, both on and off the battlefield, including one about Jackie Robinson. I recommend this book based on the great stories and to get an idea of what individual combat was like in this theatre. The book does not get any points for historical accuracy (what is a Mk. IV Panther?). There also aren't many photos for modelers although there are some shots of Shermans. I picked up my copy on sale a few years ago when Hastings was closing one of the Santa Fe stores. Normally the retail price is \$24.95.

I'll give it a rating of three out of five stars. ★★★

## JIM'S SPRUES & REVIEWS JAMES GULD

This month, I thought I would give my build impression of the 1/35 Dragon 251/16 C halftrack.

The level of detail and accuracy is pretty good overall. The front firewall/dashboard aren't 100%, but after it's buttoned up, you can't see all that much anyhow. One nice feature is that the front and side visors can be left in the open position, and these parts are clear for the vision blocks. When I started this kit, I decided I would add a few tweaks here and there but wouldn't go crazy and buy aftermarket photoetch. I didn't even use photoetch for the tool clasps; I just made the handles out of thin styrene.

The interior of this halftrack has the motor and fuel tanks for the flamethrower unit and they look good from the few photos I have of 251/16s. I only added some minor wiring to the rear of the unit and used .010 lead solder inside the braided hose they give you for the flamethrower guns. This helps shape the hose to the right look. The rear door detail is nice and the only thing missing was the MG magazine holder on the rear wall, which you would have a hard time seeing due to the motor unit. I did have some minor fit issues between the upper and lower hull. This resulted in a slight gap at the right rear corner of about 1/64". What seemed to be happening was that the top hull was pivoting off of the dashboard but even after I sanded it slightly it still had a gap at the back. I also think that when I glued the rear panel to the side panels that it was just ever so slightly low and helped the gap form. A little filler fixed it and I was on my way. There are a number of other minor issues with the Dragon hull. The kit is too narrow at the top as compared to scale

drawings, and where the top hull meets the lower hull it should have a slight overhang but Dragon omitted this.

The running gear is pretty good except for the front drive sprocket itself. On the real sprocket they have a series of teeth that catch on openings between the track links, and these teeth should have a roller between the two halves of the sprocket. Dragon left them out. Funny, since they could have easily molded this in. I added thin round bits of styrene using my punch-and-die set to correct this problem. The tracks themselves are pretty nice. I made myself an assembly jig out of masonite where I could lay up all the tracks and then just put a small amount of liquid glue on the hole that holds the track pad. This way, the tracks stayed basically workable and I was able to paint and weather them off the vehicle. That's a real timesaver. So now that it was basically built the real fun was to start.

I had previously painted and weathered the interior so it was now time to paint and camo the outside. I was going to try out the hairspray technique that I gave the clinic on last month, but I forgot to bring it to my shop where I paint. I did have with me the Marmite, and I applied it with a Scotchbrite pad and then gave the vehicle a couple of thin coats of acrylic flat that I had in the shop. It worked out similarly to how the hairspray works. This was done over the previously painted and "Futured" halftrack along with the decals being in place. I also used the Marmite to mask the decals and it worked great. I then proceeded to apply the whitewash with a few thin coats of acrylic white. I let this dry for about 20 minutes and then carefully used a wetted paint brush to remove the Marmite first and then used a stiffer brush dipped in alcohol and blotted off and then worked the surface to remove the whitewash. I was going after a heavily worn finish as the vehicle is to be set in a diorama later around March of '44. After that I wanted to try and just use acrylics for the weathering on this one. I tried to use gouache for the pin washes

around the bolts and details, but it didn't work the same as oils. The one nice thing about gouache is that if you don't like it you can remove it. I also used some cheapo craft paints from Hobby Lobby and they thin very well and dry dead flat. I wanted to add in some slight filters to break up the white ever so slightly. I then did a light dry-brushing on the running gear and on the weapons followed by graphite for worn metal on the drive sprockets and the vehicle edges in spots here and there.

I would give the kit a 7 – 8 on a scale of 10.

### Year 2007 Contest Quick Reference Chart

Titles in **blue** indicate contests for "Modeler of the Year" Points

- 5 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1**  
**SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY**
- 2 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 2 Mar** **Armor**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 6 Apr** **No Points Contest**
- 4 May** **Ships**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
*Sponsored Contest: "Best Modern US Aircraft Carrier" (Keith Liotta)*
- 1 Jun** **No Points Contest**
- 13 Jul** **Automotive** (any era/scale/subj.)  
*Sponsored Contest: "Best Mustang" (auto and aircraft) (Mark Soppet)*
- 3 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest
- 7 Sep** **Figures**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 5 Oct** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2**  
**BEST SMALL-SCALE MODEL**
- 2 Nov** **Aircraft**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
*Sponsored Contest: "Best Folded-Wing Aircraft" (Ken Liotta)*
- 7 Dec** **No Points Contest**  
Plus *Model of the Year* competition!

#### Master

James Guld . . . . .	411
Dave Miller . . . . .	395
Mike McNichols . . . . .	105
Mike Blohm . . . . .	49
Brian Peck . . . . .	35
Glen Bingham . . . . .	2
Ray Ayles . . . . .	2
Ken Liotta . . . . .	2
James Taylor . . . . .	2

#### Intermediate

Don Smith . . . . .	354
Kyle Garber . . . . .	285
Frank Randall . . . . .	135
Mark Soppet . . . . .	2

#### Basic

Gil Johnson . . . . .	335
Jeannie Garriss . . . . .	85
John Tribou . . . . .	2

#### Junior

(No entries to date)

## ASM MODELER-OF-THE-YEAR POINTS

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ASM members are encouraged to submit articles, reviews and other items as appropriate. Contact editor Joe Walters for details and specs. Submission deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month.

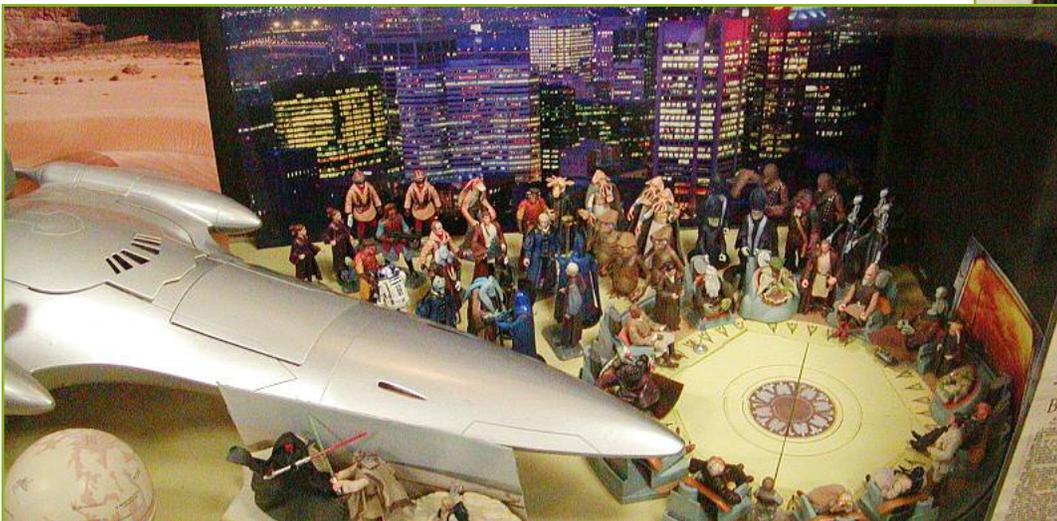
## BONUS PAGE—A few more shots from the model competition at Starfest 2007



When Good Kits Go Bad: The full suite of Aurora's glow-in-the-dark monsters, displayed under black light. It was even more fearsome "live" than as seen here.



New-style Cylon Raider from the current *Battlestar Galactica* TV series



One small portion of the *huge* Star Wars memorabilia display.



Two big scratchbuils: The Escape Pod and the full Nostromo refinery ship from *Alien*.