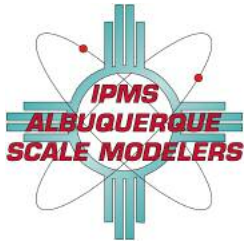


# ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

May 2011

## PRESIDENTIAL INKLINGS VICTOR MAESTAS

### Start/finish ratio

While talking with club members, I have heard many (most) say that they have a selection (some large, some small) of started, but unfinished, model projects. These can be in different stages of completion; from a few trimmed and prepped parts all the way through to the last few steps.

Other than the demands that having a life with families, pets, jobs, houses, cars, etc., can bring, there have been many reasons (excuses?) for this. Some people come to a block because the kit is difficult and the builder is tired of the slog without much progress. Put it away and maybe finish it some other day. Others come to a halt due to lack of references to finish that particular section. Put the kit away until a new reference book comes out to figure out what color those wheel wells really should be. Still others will move on to a different project because of the dreaded "I hate this part of the process" problem. Masking windows, assembling and painting ordinance, endlessly prepping for a natural metal finish, or a complicated camouflage scheme can all make you want to try something else. Another reason for packing up an unfinished kit is making a mistake that will require backing up and re-doing work already done. Putting an axle on reversed so the shocks won't mount correctly or having an idler wheel on the wrong way so the tracks won't line up with the rest of the road wheels can be easily fixed, but sure can take the wind out of your sails. I think the most common is

also the most simple, a new kit will come out and you literally cannot wait to start it.

There is a small minority (myself included) that like the "start one, finish one" approach. There is great satisfaction in seeing a project through to completion and seeing the results of your efforts. There are also no wasted efforts; modeling time is precious and you don't want to spend time on something that may never see the light of day. This method also has its limitations. If you are planning to follow the theme contests, this means some planning at the beginning of the year is needed to make sure there is enough time to get all the projects done on time.

There are also some benefits to putting away a partially finished model kit. If a contest theme comes up that you want to enter into, you can look through the nearly completed pile

April meeting highlights, top to bottom: Brian Peck conducts one of the four "rotating clinics" for the night; and the business meeting in progress.



and get that kit done quickly. Another positive to this is that while you let this project simmer, you can work on something else. It can be hard to wait for that finish to cure completely before moving on with the current project. With some other kits in different stages in the wings, you can simply switch between them as needed.

As with most methods in a hobby, there is no absolute right or wrong way to do things. This is a pastime and whatever continues to feed your interests and give satisfaction to the things you are working on is the best way to go. It is interesting to observe the different approaches and find out the reasoning behind them.

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## JIM'S ARMOR CORNER

### JAMES GULD

I thought I would write about a couple of builds I have going at the moment. One is the Dragon Sherman M4DV kit and the other is Tamiya's reboxing of the old LRDG Chevy 30CWT with the Italeri Breda 20mm AA gun kit.

The Dragon M4DV kit came out last year and is a nice addition to their Sherman family. I'm building mine as a tank made by Pressed Steel Car and which participated in the early battles in North Africa, and this particular tank was knocked out on February 15, 1943, at the battles around Sidi Bou Zid. I will be modeling mine prior to being KO'ed. I had to make a few modifications to the kit to make it into a Pressed Steel Car tank. The one thing you find out when building Shermans is that certain factories had particular builds. In the case of this Pressed Steel Car tank it had a very early one-piece front nose without any bullet splash. Currently no one makes this style of nose. Dragon does make an early one-piece nose, but I had to remove the bullet splash. The other area I had to change was the inside of the bullet splash around the top of the hull. The Pressed Steel Car tanks had a flat area, and Dragon portrays it with a slight downward chamfer similar to how a number of other Sherman hulls were produced. Along with this, I had to put a slight chamfer on the short return bullet splash which goes around to the back of the hull. Like I mentioned earlier, Shermans had a number of subtle differences. All the early M4s and M4A1s sent to 1st Armored Division in North Africa had two short raised rails welded to the top of the engine deck to secure items. On a number of tanks, they had a rack for a Jerry Can on the left rear, and they moved some of the Sherman tools.

Now on to the painting and markings. The 1st Armored Division had a peculiar way it marked its vehicles with a turret: stars and bands around the turret that were interrupted with a geometric symbol to denote the different companies within the battalion. I'm working on the paint job as I write this and decided to do a reverse mask process. First I sprayed white over the areas where markings go and then followed that with yellow. After that I will make masks up for all the yellow markings and then spray on my OD. After that I will apply the name of the tank on the hull sides with yellow lettering from Archer Transfers. I've done a test on some scrap styrene and was happy with how it came out. More to come.

The Tamiya LRDG Chevy 30CWT is an old kit first re-

leased in the late '70s. It has surfaced from time to time and its latest appearance has it teamed up with the Italeri 20mm Breda AA gun. The LRDG never towed these into battle, but they had one heavy gun truck with either this or a Bofors 37mm AT gun per troop. These vehicles would usually be the last in line to keep a lookout for enemy patrols. A few minor changes are needed to the Tamiya kit to make it into one of these gun trucks. The top of the rear compartment sides need to be cut down to the metal frame and then a raised wooden extension added that goes in the front half of the bed. Inside the bed itself, it has a wall right in front of the wheel wells to help hold stowage. The Breda is bolted to the rear floor area. It could traverse roughly 180 degrees.

The only aftermarket items I'm using are replacement resin wheels from Hussar. Right now the basic build is done and I'm just waiting on the wheels to arrive and then it's on to paint. This one should be fun! The LRDG had some wild paint jobs and changed them basically from patrol to patrol due to the different areas that they might be working in. Mine will be a three-color disruptive pattern based loosely on the Caunter pattern. The colors will be Portland Stone, a light blue and a light pink.

Considering the age of the Tamiya kit, it has held up very well. A few areas need to be thinned down like the front grill and the exhaust but overall the fit was pretty tight and I only had to use some filler in a couple of spots. A few things that would make this kit even better would be some new figures, replacing the rubber tires with styrene ones and a new weapons set. Model On.

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## CHILI CON II UPDATE

### JAMES GULD

Well, it's less than a month away. That means a lot of last-minute details to work out and people to volunteer to work the show. We need people to work the show registration and model registration tables on Friday and Saturday. We will also need help with the raffle and on the show floor as security. The show only works when all of us pitch in. Please come and see me at the next meeting or fire me off an Email and let me know where you would like to work or we can just assign you a job. Thanks.

Now as far as show updates go, the vendors room is just about sold out and I will be getting the medallions and finalizing all the trophies next week. We also came up with a system to allow for model entry forms to be filled out before the show to alleviate possible long lines at the show. These PDF forms are up on the web site *now*.

We still have a number of Trophy Packages to be sold. Break open the piggy bank or spare change jar. Well that about does it. Oh yeah, finish those models for the show!

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## STARFEST 2011

### JOE WALTERS

The annual StarFest sci-fi convention took place April 15 – 17 at the Denver Marriott Tech Center and my wife Linda and I attended, as we have for over fifteen years now. We



always have a great time, and there is so much to do there it is impossible to see it all, much less report it all!

This year's guests included LeVar Burton (Star Trek's Geordi LaForge), Morena Baccarin (Anna from *V*, as well as roles on *Firefly* and *Stargate SG-1*), Jeffrey Combs and Casey Biggs (Weyoun and Damar from *Star Trek: DS9*), Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca from *Star Wars*), and several more. Autograph lines were set up so you could meet all the guests, and from what we could see, it appeared everyone got to meet everyone they wanted to!

Several sci-fi authors and artists were there as well, along with three other concurrent conventions: RoboFest (a single large room devoted to builders of robots such as the *Lost in Space* robot, R2D2, and others), Horrorfest (which took up several rooms and included movies and panels and lots of attendees dressed as zombies), and ComicFest, which takes place at a hotel across the street (the StarFest schedule is always so full we've never made it over there!).

There is an art show, a Harry Potter-themed wizarding area with their own activities, panel discussions of various sorts (we attended a talk by a Hubble scientist who showed and discussed many amazing images from the telescope), a "Saturday Night Live"-style play parody, a costume competition, a compilation of trailers and sneak peeks from upcoming sci-fi movies, and more activities that can fit here.

Of special interest to modelers are two ongoing activities: the Make & Take room, and the Model Show. Tom Grossman normally runs the Make & Take but could not make it this year due to schedule conflicts, but his substitutes filled in quite effectively. As you can see from the photo, it was a popular and busy attraction—and it was this busy all weekend long!



Vern Clark runs the Model Show and contest, and there is always a large turnout, usually around a hundred or so models entered. This year, one model overshadowed all the others: a full-sized scratchbuilt replica of the shooting model of the original *Battlestar Galactica*! Surrounded by several of the well-known ships of the "rag-tag fleet," this monster was about five feet long, and dominated the entire room. It was hard to notice the other models...

The *Galactica* was a multi-year project, involving extensive research (the builders of the show's shooting model kept detailed journals describing not only the design elements but also what existing kits they raided for what parts to stick on the hull). We were told the builder spent over \$8000 acquiring all the parts to precisely recreate the original model. He confessed that he "improved" on it in some ways; as with another famous TV show, the model was unfinished in some areas, as they were only planning to shoot it from one side. This model is complete all the way around.

The level of detail is staggering, and must be seen to be



believed. The ship is fully lighted, and both the landing bays have sequenced flashing approach lights, floor and ceiling!

A short video of this effect can be seen on the web site listed at the end of this article, along with many photos of the model from different angles and distances and photos of the other models in the show.

Modelers also wouldn't feel left out in the huge Dealer



Room, where dozens of vendors sell everything from movie posters to autographed photos to swords to toys to books to videos to pornographic fan fiction (really). Sci-fi model kits are offered from several vendors (photo at left), as are various pre-built models and displays.

We always get our money's worth at StarFest, and recommend you consider attending next year. Jonathan Frakes and Bruce Campbell (yes, *that* Bruce Campbell!) are tentatively scheduled to appear, and that sci-fi Model Show beckons.

I took many photos at this show, and you can see all of them online (<http://tinyurl.com/sf2011jw>). Note that all the images labeled "Costume Competition" are video files, and you'll want to turn your sound down before playing them.

## ABQ COMIC CON REPORT MIKE BLOHM & JOE WALTERS

This trip report covers a visit to the Albuquerque Comic Con 2011 convention that took place January 15 – 16 at the Hilton Hotel. The convention featured both comic book authors and celebrities from comic-book-related movies and television shows. Guests of note included Peter Mayhew and Dickey Beer (Chewbacca and Boba Fett in *Star Wars*), Gil Gerard and Erin Gray (from *Buck Rogers*), Herbert Jefferson and Anne Lockhart (original *Battlestar Galactica*), Deep Roy (*Star Trek 11*, *Charlie & the Chocolate Factory*), Lou

Ferrigno (*Incredible Hulk*), and Alaina Huffman (*Stargate Universe* and *Smallville*); and comic artists Gene Ha and Andy Kuhn. Local comic book authors and artists were present as well. There were many vendors selling comic books, posters and art, action figures, T-shirts, etc., where you could spend a lot of your money. There were some model kits too, including figures and science-fiction spacecraft.



The crowd was a lot bigger than the planners expected and navigation from one place to another was often difficult, as passageways became jammed with attendees. The action



flowed out into the hallways and patio of the hotel. Let's hope that next year's Con will take place in a larger venue!

Panel discussions were lively, including one featuring the Buck Rogers and Galactica actors together, answering questions and telling stories. Movies were shown, autographs were signed, and everyone found much to do.

Many attendees were dressed in comic book and movie costumes, and some were pretty

cool. There was a face-off in the patio of Marvel and DC Comic characters, but the members of the 501st Legion (Vader's Own) kept it from getting out of hand.

Tall Tale Comics put on this show, and they plan to do Comic Con again in 2012, so put that on your calendar and get working on your costume.



### Year 2011 Contest Quick Reference Chart

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

- 07 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1**  
**SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY**
- 04 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 04 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 01 Apr** **Super Clinic Night**—no contest.
- 06 May** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2:**  
**SHINY SHOW RODS**
- 03 Jun** **1941**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 08 Jul** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3**  
**MORE OR LESS (THAN FOUR WHEELS)**  
*Sponsored Contest: Post-Apocalyptic (Josh Pals)*
- 05 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.  
*Nationals Debrief Night—Bring Models & Trophies!*
- 09 Sep** **Mediterranean**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 07 Oct** **SPECIAL CONTEST #4**  
**COMMON KITS (SEE WEB SITE)**
- 04 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
*Sponsored Contest: P-39 (Don Smith)*
- 02 Dec** *Sponsored Contest: BMW (Patrick Dick)*  
Plus *Model of the Year* competition!

#### Master

James Guld . . . . .	560
Victor Maestas . . . . .	375
Glenn Bingham . . . . .	256
Mike Blohm . . . . .	177
Paul Kirchner . . . . .	100
Ray Ayles . . . . .	75
Ken Liotta . . . . .	10
Dave Miller . . . . .	4

#### Intermediate

Don Smith . . . . .	341
Larry Glenn . . . . .	325
Tony Humphries . . . . .	254
Dan Blea . . . . .	100
Steve Brodeur . . . . .	100
Jack Garriss . . . . .	75
Blaine Couch . . . . .	25
Ken Barry . . . . .	4
Kyle Garber . . . . .	2
Tim Wood . . . . .	2

#### Basic

Logan Carbin . . . . .	379
Jeannie Garriss . . . . .	275

#### Junior

(No entries yet)

### ASM 2011 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.