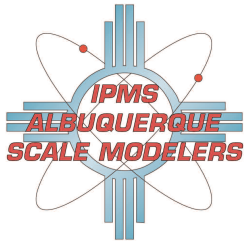


# ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://www.hobbies-n-stuff.com/asmweb.htm>

May 2005

## PRESIDENT'S CROSSHAIRS BRIAN PECK

Greeting fellow modelers!

I would like to thank Dave Straub for his excellent presentation in April on the history of Airships. I enjoyed it very much as did many other members and it was very informative; we look forward to more great presentations in the future from Dave.

At the May meeting, I will be doing a workshop on wet sanding paint finishes on aircraft, so bring in your projects for this hands-on workshop.

In IPMS news, the Nationals in Atlanta on **July 20 - 23, 2005**, promises to be a wallet-emptying experience with 128 vendors *totaling 425 tables* on hand! There are a few ASM'ers planning on attending the Nat's and I hope they have a special private cargo plane rented to haul home all the goodies from the vendors' room. If you can make the trip it should be well worth it! If you are not an IPMS national member, I encourage everyone to join. Not only can you at-

tend the National Contests held every year, you have access to many modeling outlets including The Journal magazine with many modeling tips, an online message board plus much more!

For more information, check out the website at <http://www.ipmsusa.org>!

Hope to see everyone at the May 6th meeting!

## VICE-PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS FRANK RANDALL

Well, this year is passing by way too fast. It is almost May and I think I missed a month somewhere. Anyway, I hope everyone is building and building and building. There are some great theme contests coming up and some great sponsored contests. I challenge everyone to get out of your comfort zone and build and support those people that are holding the special contests. I had a fun time building the Gundam model, and it was something I most likely would not have done except for the special contest.



April meeting highlights, clockwise from left: Dave Straub prepares for his airship presentation; several works-in-progress on display; the May Super Raffle kit!



April Best-of-Show winners, clockwise from right: Hamish O'Connell's *Eagle vs. Bear* diorama, Don Smith's *Screamin' Eagle* figure, John Tate's P-40N, and Jeremy O'Connell's *Year of the Dragon* Diorama.



In another vein, Patrick Dick and myself have had some paint failures. Mine involved Polly Scale Metallizer and Model Master acrylics. The paints sort of mixed when I put the red on top of the silver and needed to recoat it. One would think that two acrylic paints would be compatible. Generally the rule, if you are using paints that have different solvents, is to put the strongest solvent down first and the weaker on top. Up till now I have not have any trouble with two similar paints affecting each other. Oh well, live and learn.

The next big Super Raffle is upon us, so save your quarters and support the club! I intend to buy some tickets even though the Super Raffle is a Russian T-34 tank in 1/24th scale (Where would I put it??). And lastly thanks to all that have donated stuff for the Club raffle, we really appreciate the support.

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## CONTEST CORNER

### MIKE BLOHM

#### **April Contest Results: "Bent Wing Birds, Cats, or From the Animal Kingdom"**

The April meeting's contest topic was a popular one, resulting in a great turnout of 37 model entries. Who can resist building a Corsair or Hellcat? And there are certainly a ton of animal names associated with both commercial and military vehicles. Additionally, we had 14 works in progress on display. Pictures of the winners are shown above;

all pictures and detailed contest results are posted on the website.

In the Juniors division, Hamish O'Connell won the Best of Show and People's Choice Awards, and a Gold in Dioramas & Vignettes for his clever and excellently-crafted diorama entitled "Eagle versus Bear—Final Showdown on Zulu Prime." Nice job, Hamish! The diorama featured two animal Gundams fighting to the death, vaguely reminiscent of US-Soviet relations during the Cold War. There were a lot of Automotive entries with animal names, with Hamish Connell winning a Gold for his 1970 Dodge "Ram" Charger; Jeannie Garriss winning a Silver for her Corvette Stingray; and Adam Martin winning a Silver for his 1968 Shelby Mustang. Jeannie also won a Gold in the Ships category for her excellent "Bat Boat."

The Best of Show—Basic and a Gold in the Figures category were won by Don Smith for his excellent "Screamin' Eagle" figure from the 101st Airborne. The People's Choice award went to John Kendrick's P-61 Black Widow. Don Smith also won Gold awards in the Armor & Military category for his Tiger Tank, Desert Afrika Korp, and in Ships for his Bat Boat. In the Aircraft category, Don Blea won a Gold for his North Vietnamese MiG-17 and a Silver for his F4U-5N Corsair night fighter, and John Kendrick won a Bronze for his P-61 Black Widow "The Spook."

In the Intermediate division, Jeremy O'Connell won both the Best of Show and People's Choice awards, and a First in Dioramas & Vignettes with



## Year 2005 Contest Quick Reference Chart

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

- 7 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1**  
**SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY**
- 4 Feb** **D-Day Presentation**—no contest.
- 4 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/scale.  
*\*Sponsored Contest: Gundams*  
(John Kendrick)  
and  
**ASM Swap Meet**
- 1 Apr** **Bent-wing Birds/Cats/Animals**—  
Any kit, any scale, any era.
- 6 May** **WWI**—Any kit, any scale.  
*\*Sponsored Contest: Micro-Modeling*  
(ASM E-Board)
- 3 Jun** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2: SOUTHEAST ASIA**  
**1941 - PRESENT**  
*\*Sponsored Contest: Best P-40*  
Subject (Ken Liotta)
- 8 Jul** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 5 Aug** **Jets & Prototype Aircraft/Vehicles/**  
**Ships**—Any kit, any scale.  
*\*Sponsored Contest: Night Fighters*  
(Patrick Dick & Jason Clevenger)
- 9 Sep** **Africa/Middle East, 1914 - Present**  
Any kit, any scale, any nation.  
*\*Sponsored Contest: Best P-38*  
(Stan Johnson)
- 7 Oct** **Battles of 1945**—Any subject/scale.  
*\*Sponsored Contest: 1/35-scale German*  
*Armor* (Rick Carver & Don Smith)  
*\*Sponsored Contest: BabeFest*  
(Larry Horyna)
- 5 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit, any scale.  
Plus: **One-Hour Modeling Contest**  
*\*Sponsored Contest: F/A-22 Raptors*  
(Mike Blohm)
- 2 Dec** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3**  
**MODELING NEW MEXICO**  
Plus: **Model of the Year**

his excellent “The Year of the Dragon—Taming a Panther.” This 1/35 scale diorama involved three Tamiya vehicles (M25 Tank Transporter, Willys MB half-ton 4x4 Truck, and Panther) and 12 figures. Second place in Dioramas & Vignettes went to Tom Redling’s “What if the Cold War Had Not Ended?” featuring an M-1 Abrams and an M-2 Bradley. In the Armor & Military category, First place went to David Downs’ Mk A Medium Tank “Whippet;” Second went to Rick Carver’s Tiger Tank; and Third went to Tom Redling’s 2A6 leopard Tank. Cecil Severs won a First in the Miscellaneous category for his excellent Cockpit Interior

for Avia B534 “Dogan” (Hawk). In the Aircraft category, First went to David Boehning’s excellent F6F-3 Hellcat; Second went to Frank Randall’s F4U-1 Corsair; and Third went to Hank Pettigirard’s F4U Corsair. Hank and Walt Schanwald both brought an impressive group of Bent Wing Birds as entries—thanks for letting us see your collections!

The Best of Show in Masters was won by John Tate’s excellent P-40N, which also took First in the Aircraft category. John also won the People’s Choice award and a First in Dioramas & Vignettes for his “Dress Rehearsal” which featured a Ju 87B Stuka from the Condor Legion in 1939. Second and Third place in the Aircraft category went to Don MacBryde’s F-6F-3 Hellcat and F/A-18C Hornet. Second place in Dioramas and Vignettes went to Glenn Bingham’s excellent F4U-1A Corsair, which featured folded wings. In the Figures category, First place went to Jim Guld’s German Anti-Tank Infantryman, France 1940; and Second place went to Stan Harris’ Mongols & Bolsheviks—Central Asia 1920s. In the Armor & Military category, First place went to Stan Harris’ British Sherman 3rd Hussars—El Alamein; Second place went to Jim Guld’s “Whittman’s Last Ride” (Tiger I); and Third place went to Ken Piniak’s Tiger Tank. John Tate won a First place in Science Fiction & Fantasy with his General Ursus figure from the movie “Planet of the Apes.”

### Special May Raffle

There will be a special raffle at the May meeting sponsored by the ASM E-Board. The raffle prize is a Trumpeter 1/16 scale T-34 / 76 Model 1943 Tank, so you don’t want to miss this one!

### Upcoming Contests / Events of Interest

**May 6: “World War I”** Points contest. Any subject or scale, friend or foe, that participated in WWI (all fronts).

Special Raffle: Trumpeter 1/16 scale T-34 / 76 Model 1943 Tank

*Sponsored Contest: “Micro-Modeling”* —ASM E-Board. Includes 1/100 scale and smaller Aircraft, 1/72 scale and smaller Military Vehicles, 1/700 and smaller Ships and Subs, 1/43 and smaller Automobiles, and 1/72 and smaller Figures. Award for Best Entry, and possibly other levels based upon overall participation.

*Workshop: Wet Sanding Finishes*—Brian Peck

**May 14: LoCon 2005.** Radisson Suites, Colorado Springs CO. <http://users.adelphia.net/~dkagarisefamily/LoCon2005.htm>

**May 21: Scalefest 2005.** Mesquite TX (IPMS/USA—North Central Texas). [www.ipmsnet.org/scalefest.html](http://www.ipmsnet.org/scalefest.html)

**June 3: Special (Non-Points) Contest #2 “Southeast Asia 1941 – Present”** Any subject from the SE Asia nations, or involved in conflicts in those nations, from 1941 to the present. All scales. SE Asia is defined as the current nations of: Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam; or what had once been these nations from 1941.

*Sponsored Contest: “Best P-40 Subject”* sponsored by Ken Liotta. See website for further details.

**June 4: ASM Mall Show** at the Cottonwood Mall.

**June 18 – 19: Region 6 2005 Convention.** Moore, Oklahoma. <http://htwebservices.net/r6conv>

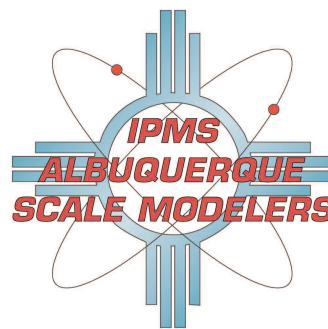
**July 8: ASM Swap Meet** (No Contest)

**July 20 – 23: IPMS/USA Nationals.** Atlanta, Georgia. <http://www.ipmsusa2005.org>



**Sep 23 – 24: The Gathering / SHOCON Annual Contest.** Davis Conference Center, Logan, Utah. <http://www.utscale.org>

**Sep 30 – Oct 1: Region 10 2005 Regional Contest.** Fort Collins, Colorado. <http://www.ipmshpm.org/2005Region>



**Master**

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| John Tate . . . . .     | 1080 |
| James Guld . . . . .    | 518  |
| Stan Harris . . . . .   | 335  |
| Ken Liotta . . . . .    | 241  |
| Don MacBryde . . . . .  | 195  |
| Mike Blohm . . . . .    | 177  |
| Larry Horyna . . . . .  | 125  |
| Glenn Bingham . . . . . | 110  |
| Ken Piniak . . . . .    | 89   |
| Patrick Dick . . . . .  | 4    |
| Brian Peck . . . . .    | 2    |

**Intermediate**

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| David Boehning . . . . .   | 460 |
| Jeremy O’Connell . . . . . | 335 |
| Hank Petitgirard . . . . . | 330 |
| Rick Carver . . . . .      | 235 |
| Frank Randall . . . . .    | 235 |
| Walter Schanwald . . . . . | 220 |
| Tom Redling . . . . .      | 185 |
| Cecil Severs . . . . .     | 139 |
| David Downs . . . . .      | 135 |

**Basic**

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Don Smith . . . . .     | 688 |
| John Kendrick . . . . . | 587 |
| Don Blea . . . . .      | 245 |
| Matt Blohm . . . . .    | 200 |

**Junior**

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Jeannie Garriss . . . . .  | 620 |
| Hamish O’Connell . . . . . | 470 |
| Logan Carbin . . . . .     | 325 |
| Taylor Liotta . . . . .    | 225 |
| Adam Martin . . . . .      | 110 |
| Jimmy Letterhos . . . . .  | 100 |
| Nathan Shatto . . . . .    | 100 |

**ASM CONTEST POINTS**

**CONTACT INFO**

|                               |               |          |                                 |
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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 prior month.

# JIM'S SPRUES & REVIEWS

## JAMES GULD

### Dragon VC Firefly 1/35 Post Build Review

I figured I would give you my take on my last project—the good, the bad, and the ugly... well, not really ugly.

This is Dragon's third attempt at the VC Firefly, so you would think that all the bugaboos would be fixed. Well, they aren't. Three times isn't always a charm.

The British VC Firefly was a re-armed Sherman M4A4 with the 17-lb gun. They made some minor changes to the turret, like adding a squarish loader's hatch so he could get out. Because of the length of the 17-lb gun, the turret had a separate radio bin added to the rear and the Brits also had a fondness for adding a spare parts bin on the back of this radio bin. So you can use these clues in spotting VC Fireflies in photos. Another giveaway is the gun crutch, which was usually mounted on the left rear side of the rear deck.

Dragon now has the correct length for the Firefly. The M4A4 hull is longer than the Sherman hulls, thus the track length is longer. The M4A4 uses 83 lengths per side, whereas other Sherman's use 79 lengths. On the bottom of the hull the rear details are not in their proper place. They should be moved forward by about .25", but I decided not to do major surgery. The other major flaw is the height of the front drive sprocket—it's too high. It should be lowered by about .125". By doing this, the tracks will then line up with the tops of the return rollers.

Speaking of the tracks, they provide individual tracks with both regular end connectors and extended end connectors. These required a little cleanup on the outside of the track pad. They had slight mold pins marks, which required a little scraping with the #11 X-Acto blade. After scratch-

ing my head as to how I was going to assemble these, I finally decided to use a metal ruler out of a 12" adjustable square. I taped this down to my work surface and proceeded to build a pair of lengths until I had one side done in pairs. I then just kept gluing these pairs together and letting them dry slightly in between. I used Testors medium viscosity glue—the stuff in the funky black plastic container that you have to cut the fine tube off of to get the glue out. Nice design... *not*.

After getting one side glued together I put them on the tank. After a bit of fiddling they were on. The only problem was that the left side took 80 lengths. I noticed during assembly that the space in between the track pads wasn't always the same due to the way the end connectors were molded.

I figured this was part of the problem along with where I re-glued the post for the front drive sprocket. Another problem is getting them to side evenly around the front drive sprocket. The guide horns on the end connectors go on the inside face of the drive sprocket and seemed to want to splay out. I finally got one side on after a bit of cursing and about

eight hours of work last weekend. That's no typo.

The second side went together a bit faster and I was probably putting them on in about five hours. This side had 82 track pads and I had more problems with the drive sprocket. No matter what I did, I couldn't get it to look good and the few of the end connectors became unglued or broke on the sprocket and that's when I decided to take them off. I was then going to use rubber band style tracks but the style of track used most commonly on VC Fireflies is not made in rubber band tracks. Also the VC Firefly is the longer-hulled M4A4 Sherman, so it needs the 83 link tracks. So I was now back to indies and I went with the RHPS tracks. They list them as the T-74 tracks, but you can use them as the T-62 tracks. The difference in real life is that the T-62 was an all steel track and the T-74 was a rubber track pad with a steel chevron. They are supposed to go together with-





out any glue; well, they did, but when trying to fit them on the tank a few of the end connectors came off, so I pulled them off and used a little glue at the end connectors and re-fitted them. I only had a couple of end connectors come off after that. I also used a little CA glue on the bottoms of the road wheels, the front sprockets and on the rear idlers. I then painted and weathered them in place. If someone made nice rubber band tracks it sure would save a lot of time and hassles. Since Shermans don't have track sag, the rubber band tracks are the way to go. The only other style of individual tracks I thought of for the Sherman is the resin snap together style, but no one seems to make them.

The rest of the kit went together fairly well except for the front final drive housing. Where it meets up with the bottom side of the hull, it's too short and I added a small styrene filler strip. Another problem area is how they have the hull sides molded: they are also short. On the inside of the hull I added .020" styrene strips for where the final drive should meet up with the hull. I now had a place to glue the drive housing. The problem is due to the way the drive housing and the hull sides come together. They are offset in real life, and on the kit they didn't give you enough material on the inside of the hull to have something for the final drive to rest upon.

Now for the added details. I added texture to the flat steel plates by using lacquer thinner dabbled on with a brush. This gives a very slight texture to the plates. You have to be careful, though, not to go too far. You want to just give it a slight texture like steel plate has. For the front glacis and the turret sides, I added more cast texture by using Tamiya putty thinned with lacquer thinner. This was stippled on using an old brush that is very stubby. The weld seams on Shermans are flush to just slightly raised. On the kit they are slightly low, so I added weld bead using two-part epoxy putty for the wider seams, and I tried something new for the smaller weld beads: I used .010-detail solder, which I then textured with a modified #11 blade tip. For the epoxy putty, I used my weld bead tool, which I have listed at the ASM tips webpage. For the hull bottom, I added round cover plates and drill holes. I went off of the pictures from Military Miniatures in Review #36 which has an article on a buildup of

a Firefly.

Other detailing for missing stuff was done to the hatches, adding bits of spare photoetch parts and fine wire to make the front hull hatch springs. The excellent Mark Haywood book on the Firefly showed all of this. It has scale drawings and loads of close-up photos of preserved Fireflies and photos from WWII. This came in handy for the details to how the rear storage bin was attached, which, by the way, had a couple of different mounting versions. The onboard tools are from Formations along with the rear idler, tow cable, front headlights, and vane sight. The bogie units and wheels received the full treatment for all the missing details. Well, that's not completely true—I was lazy and left off the small bolt details on the inside face of each wheel. I only put them on the outside faces. There are 12 bolts per wheel so that's 144 bolts for just the outside faces. I was a little tired of it. Now Tasca has their excellent bogie units, which are pricey but have all the bits and bobs right. The radio antennas are .008 bronze phosphor wire that Mike Mummey turned me onto. The 17-lb barrel is from Jordi Rubino, as the kit piece is too long.

For the finishing, I first primed the tank in flat black rattle can to pre-shade it. I then mixed up the OD color. The Brits call this SCC15 Olive. You may also see it called Khaki Drab in some books. I have color chips of this color and mixed up my own in acrylic using Model Master and Tamiya paints. I didn't have any problem cross-mixing brands, but I only used a little of the Tamiya paint so this might be why. I then gave it a good two coats of Future and let it dry. I used decals for most of the markings except for the air ID star on the rear deck. This is a dry transfer from Archer. The decals are from Bison; they have a set for Fireflies. This tank is from the 33rd Armored Brigade, 1st Northants Yeomanry 3rd Troop, #12 tank. It was credited with knocking out Michael Whittmann's tank outside of St. Aignan on August 8th, 1944, before itself being knocked out in subsequent fighting for the town.

The figures are a mixture of two of the kit figures slightly modified and the loader from Royal Models British Tank Crew set.

Conclusion: It was a good build except for the tracks and the front-end problems.