



Maddog Monthly

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January 2005

Welcome
To The
Future Of
Modeling!



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December 2005 Meeting Minutes



The meeting began at 1810. Brian Geiger presiding. Being the Christmas Show the model of the month wasn't held. The attendance was lower but the 19 members present brought over 80 models. Every aspect of modeling was represented, airplanes, ships, armors, cars, rockets, science fiction, railroad and figures. Herb brought a nice collection of 1/72 aircrafts, unlike most of us Herb still has a 20/20 eyesight. At this rate it will not last long! Dan went Sherman, he should bring those Sherman's to a contest and enter them as a collection. Tom also brought some of his model, who can forget the (in) famous Barracuda, I am surprised that Squadron did not make that plane the model of the year! Dave made a Revell Big Boy for the meeting, nice work Dave. Even in 1/87 the Big Boy is a very large model. I was told that many railroaders are using this model as a static model because most layouts cannot handle such a big locomotive.

Bill brought a Cylon fighter from the new TV series Battlestar Galactica. We are all glad that Bill is back and started modeling again.

Kent brought the new awards that include the name of the modeler and a photo of the model, great work Kent, everyone seems to like that new format.



The raffle was also a success, and probably could become a Christmas tradition for the December meeting.

Chris Broode (sorry about the spelling) was back with us, Chris attended meeting before but apparently want to become one of our "full time" members, Chris seems to like large scale aircrafts.

The members voted for the next theme contest to be held in February, the winning theme was "civil". To avoid any confusion I will use the dictionary definition of civil; . . .distinguished from military or religious affairs.

And lastly we like to thank Tom for the cookies.

The next meeting will be at the regular time, third Saturday of the month, January the 21st.

2005 Holiday show

On page two and three are a sample of the models present at this year's Holiday Show at Hobby Town USA.





All Model Kits Produced Before 2005 are Crap!

by Brian Geiger

That's right. Gather up those old dusty kits and throw them all away. But Brian, isn't that too extreme? Why such drastic measures? Of course it's too extreme but I'm *that* close to actually doing it. "Why?," you ask. Because I've seen the latest releases by Hasegawa, Tamiya, Trumpeter, and Dragon and they keep getting SO MUCH BETTER. It's a great day for modelers!

Let me illustrate with a few examples:

Enter the Dragon

For years, armor kits consisted of a vehicle, rubber band tracks, a few thick decals and maybe some figures if you were lucky. Dragon started adding enhancements such as individual track links and a few photo etch details. Recently, Dragon has taken huge steps, adding several innovations that have previously been available only in aftermarket form. Their new "3 in 1" armor line and "Gen₂" figures are truly a generation ahead. For Christmas, I got the 3 in 1 Panzer IV kit 6264. I could rattle off a shopping list of new features but I really want to stress that so many of these were previously unheard of in a stock kit. (You can read the complete list here <http://www.dragonmodelsusa.com/dmlusa/prodd.asp?pid=DRA6264>) If you've ever dreaded painting the rubber on all those stupid road wheels, this kit has separate rubber rims and hubs.



If you cringe at the thought of snipping and cleaning up hundreds of individual track links, the "Magic Track" come ready to assemble in separate bags.



Dragon's side molding technology has also enabled them to make hollow track horns. A track assembly jig is included that enables the modeler to assemble the tracks, with the correct sag, and then transfer the finished assembly to the wheels. Now that's magic!

Do you like multi-media? There are three small-to-medium sized sheets of PE brass, a wire cable, beautiful clear periscope and headlamp parts, a turned aluminum gun barrel with two brass shells, as well as fifteen other wire and metal parts. The



thin decals, printed by Cartograf, look awesome. A Gen₂ figure is included and they've even thrown in vinyl cacti for use in a DAK scene.

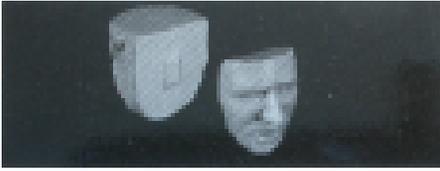


Other kits have featured positionable hatches before. Dragon let's you open nearly every orifice, including the mantlet view ports, pistol port, signal port, turret stowage bin, steering brake inspection hatches, turret hatches, driver & radio operator hatches. Furthermore, enough interior detail is provided that you're not simply opening up a hollow model. The gun assemblies are complete, inside and out and the optional plastic barrel has rifling. The machine guns have hollow muzzles. The weld patterns are correct on the turret. I get a sense that the people at Dragon have done their homework and addressed the details that modelers have been doing on their own. If you can't tell, I really like this kit.

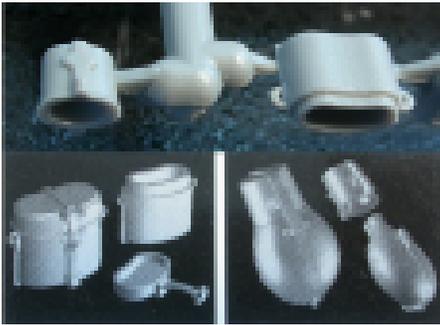
Go Figure

Dragon has also begun a line of what the call, "Gen₂" figures. Leading off the series is kit 6273, a six figure set called "Desperate Defence Korsun Pocket 1944". The first noticeable difference is that they are broken down into many more parts in order to provide finer detail.

For example, the heads separate in two halves, bisected a the helmet chin strap.



The result is a strap that looks more like a strap and less like flash. The same can be said for much of the clothing detail such as collars, hoods, great coats, etc... The gear features many more "in use" details



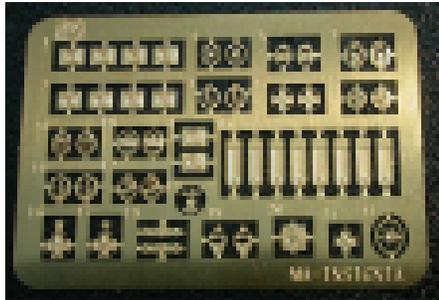
like water bottles with separate hollow caps, pistol holsters and ammo cases with opened flaps, an extended trenching tool, and a dagger removed from it's empty sheath. They are detailed on both sides including the part that mates with the figure. That gives you a lot more options for use in a diorama. Overall there is more detail, such as torn patches on the trousers and patterned soles on the bottom of the boots. Previously, I'd heard Dragon criticized for inaccurately shaped German helmets. The Gen2 helmet shape



not only looks correct to me, it also includes the rivet details. The weapons break down into separate parts for bolt mechanisms, ammo clips, and an extended stock on the MP40. They all have hollowed muzzles, including the 9mm parabellum. This is really cool stuff!

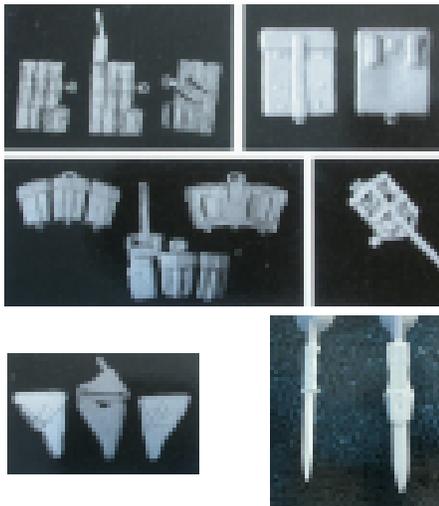


Another new innovation is the photo etch sheet that includes parts for shoulder boards, belt buckles, insignia and medals. I'm a little leery of the shoulder boards since the shoulders usually have contours



that seem hard to conform to. However, what could be more appropriate for replicating belt buckles and medals than actual metal?

My only other concern is aligning all of the many mating parts. Care must be taken along the way. For example, the



crouching figure poised to throw a stick grenade on the back of the box looks more like a botched android. When assembled correctly, there's no doubt that these are the best injection molded figures currently available. A Gen2 Fallschirmjäger set 6276 is also in stores and I'm sure we'll be seeing more.

Tamiya recently released a StuG III B, it's first 1/35 kit in nearly 16 months, and it comes with a turned aluminum barrel. Both Hasegawa and Trumpeter have been

including small rivet details that so many modelers have been doing on their own. Eduard's new Hetzer models have full interiors and engine compartments and their Fokker D.VII (OAW) is chock full of aftermarket stuff. Here is a small list of some of the current model kits that I feel demonstrate a quantum leap in kit technology:

- Dragon '3 in 1' 1/35 armor series
- Eduard 1/35 Jagdpanzer Hetzer (early & late versions)
- Eduard 1/48 Fokker D.VII (OAW)
- Hasegawa 1/32 Junkers Ju 87G 'Kanonvogel'
- Trumpeter 1/32 Me 262 A1 and A2

There are more of them out there but these come to mind. These are the kind of kits that make me want to torch the old collection. Yes, they are more expensive but if you attempted to buy a kit and the aftermarket parts included, you would pay a lot more. I only hope that in the years to come, the trend continues and we'll be throwing these kits in the trash too. ☹



Wespe diorama by Vladimir Demchenko

The Alfa Class Russian Submarine *John Thurton*

In 1971, a Russian submarine was tracked by a US submarine and soon everyone was talking about the 50 knots Alpha. The speed was of course greatly exaggerated, and never mind the excessive noise produced by the prop rotating at near cavitation speed!

Instead of designing new submarines to match the Alpha, the US and GB designed new weapon systems that could go faster and deeper than the Alpha. The US came up with the MK48 ADCAP and the British with the spearfish, both were heavy weight torpedoes. Surface launched torpedoes were also designed, the US Barracuda, and the British Stingray used shape charges to defeat the double hull of the Soviet submarines. Using shape charges they were designed to hit the submarine at 90 degrees.

The final cost of the Alpha was never revealed but it appears that it was too much even for the Soviet Union. They were extremely difficult to maintain, the patrol endurance was limited (50 days). Also, given to the poor standards of safety designed in Russian submarines, the fact that the Alpha were regarded as unsafe by the Russian themselves suggest that they were extremely dangerous to operate. It is interesting to think that in the long run they were more helpful to the west because they contributed to the bankruptcy of the Soviet Union and encouraged the US Navy to continue the production of better and better submarines.

Originally, the project 705 Lira (alpha) nuclear attack submarine was conceived in 1958. The original requirement was for 1500 tons SSN capable of 40 knots. The small size and weight were to be achieved by having a single hull and using titanium instead of steel. Automation and the use of a small light gas or liquid-metal reactor would also reduce the size of the crew. A change in the chief designer resulted in a design that had a double hull, doubled the displacement, and a crew almost twice as large. The liquid-metal reactor and automation system were kept. Very high speed and exceptional maneuverability were achieved by the hull shape and slotted rudder. Titanium is readily available in Russian, but is extremely difficult to work with and requires special machines. It is rumored that at least a couple of the boats were built of high tensile steel to save money. Because of the extreme cost they became known as the "golden carps" They were also very difficult to maintain and to repair. The first boat, the K-377 had to be scrapped after a reactor accident. In 1982 the K-123 also had a meltdown and it took 9 years to repair. The six surviving boats were modernized after 1982. Another problem was the lack of suitable bases necessary to keep the metal alloy hot when the sub was in base for maintenance. Also the alloy had to be kept from oxidizing by re-generating periodically. All those requirements required a very substantial infrastructure. It is rumored that at least one of the alpha received a more common pressurized water reactor.

Characteristics: Displacement 2310 tons

Dimensions: 267x44x22 feet

Machinery: one nuclear reactor, 2 creep motors, one diesel

Speed: 43 knots, 14 knots quiet running

Armament: 6 533mm torpedo tubes with 18 reloads

Diving depth: 350 meters, max 420 meters

Crew: 35 men and officers.





Alfa Sub; Dragon versus Blue Water Navy, 1/350 scale

John Thirion

I thought that it would be interesting to build the same sub from two radically different medium and manufacturers. One from China and in the traditional styrene, the other from the US, a cottage industry and made of resin. The Dragon kit follows the traditional two piece hull assembly requiring some amount of putty and re-scribing, the details are crisp. The BWN kit comes with a large plug that has to be sanded; I was somewhat over-zealous and had to do some damage control on the bottom part of the hull. After those minor inconveniences it came to the decision about the paint scheme. Apparently most modern submarine are painted black and anti-fouling red. Black would not be appropriate in that scale, therefore decided to go to two different approaches, the Dragon was painted Floquil grimy black, the BWN was paint Floquil dark sea grey. The first choice was definitely better, allowing better and more subtle weathering which was achieved using pastel powder applied with a soft brush. The smaller details are styrene with the Dragon kit, and white metal for the BWN. The prop is styrene for the Dragon kit and very under scale, the BWN has several props which are photoetched and appear to be more to size. Both kits could be considered as weekend project, evening project for Ian!

How accurate are those two kits? The accurate dimensions for the model should be 9.14x1.5x0.75, the Dragon kit is 8.5x1.6x1.1 apparently an Alpha on steroid, also the shape of the hull is incorrect and the sail does not blend into the hull as it should. It shows only 4 torpedo doors instead of 6 and the placement is wrong. The BWN dimensions are 9.1x1.4x0.9, the shape of the hull is also more accurate and the exact number of torpedo doors are correctly placed. Both kits were released at about the same year, the Dragon was initially released as a two model box with the USS Dallas.



Blue Water Navy Kit



Dragon Kit

Anybody who wants a change of pace, a submarine kit is perfect. If you want something larger, Revell plan to release a Gato/Balao boat in 1/72, and Trumpeter will release the same boat in 1/44, their submarine is much better engineered than their surface ships. The Trumpeter Seawolf is a good kit, the only question, why 1/44 it is not a ship scale, 1/192 would have been more appropriate. If you are limited by space 1/350 is perfect, masochist may go for 1/700. I do not know what to call Dave and its 1/1250 scale ships except extremely talented.



“I think you’re gonna need a bigger boat!”
Well, I think I’ve found it. A 1/10 scale Model of the Imperial Japanese Navy’s Yamato super battleship. It’s located in The Kure City navel museum, Japan. Below is a web address to the Japanese photo Gallery.

http://album.nikon-image.com/nk/NK_ImageView.asp?key=555537&un=97313

