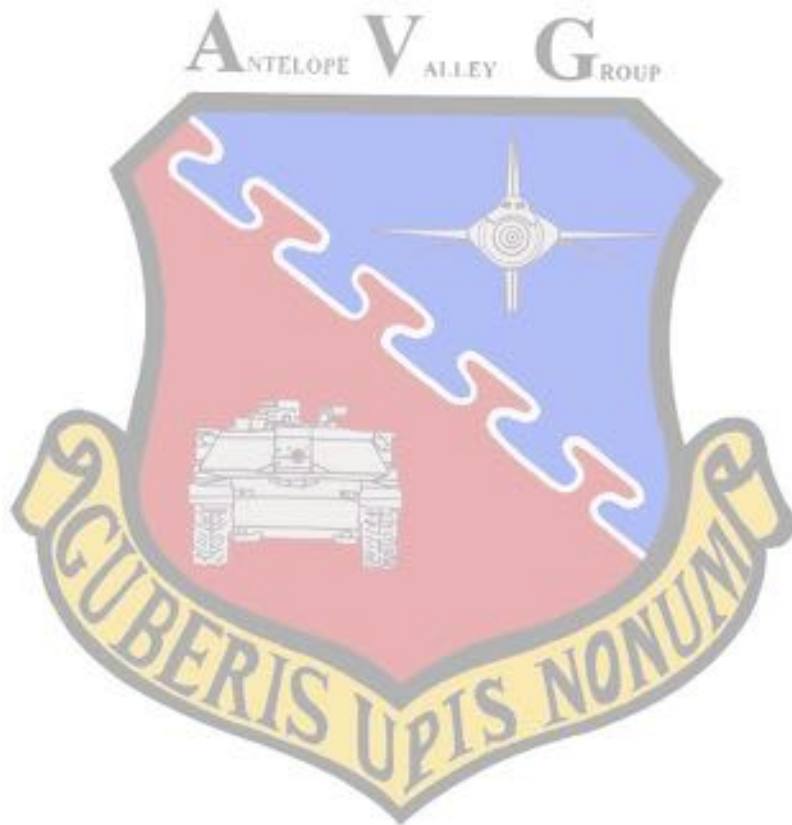


The Smoking Hole

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2021 Club Officers

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Club News and Business

JANUARY PHYSICAL MEETING 1:00 - 4:00 pm JANUARY 15, AT PREZ BILL'S HOUSE, PALMDALE (address will be in an e-mail).

December Meeting General Meeting Notes:

We had a really great meeting with our December gift exchange at Veep Jay's house. It was almost like pre-COVID with a great turnout. We elected the new club administration, and held our long-delayed "It's a Small World" in-house contest. We also had an evening Zoom meeting for those that couldn't attend the in-person meeting.

Latest Club Status

Still working a permanent indoor venue yet. Niilo, Jay and new Prez Bill all have potential leads. With any luck, the omicron-variant surge will be over quickly and will open potential venues to us. In the meantime, we can potentially meet at volunteer club member's residences short term

2022 Club Officers

The December meeting brings the inauguration of the next year's clubs administration, and this year is no exception. The new club President is Bill Kelly. Bill has been an AVG member from the very beginnings of the club (he got me involved). He's an outstanding modeler, and I know he's got some great ideas for the future of the club. Our new Vice President is one of our newer members, D. J. "Rowdy" Yates. Besides being a modeler, Rowdy has an interest in other miniatures which he's displayed at our meetings, adding another dimension to the club. A couple of the 'Old Guard' volunteered to stay on, myself as the "Administrative Amateur" Secretary and Niilo as our bean-counting Treasurer

January Meeting

Happy New Year! January's Meeting will be at Prez Bill's house in West Palmdale (not far from Jay's). We have lots of things to discuss, such as postponed in-house contests and plans for the Desert Classic. With luck, this will be a return to regular in-person meetings. Hope to see you there!

"It's a Small World" In-house Contest

We finally held our long-delayed (almost 2 years) "It's a Small World" in-house contest. There were several very nice entries. And the winner is...



Rich R. and his beautiful 1/144th Gee Bee's! These are from the Dora Wings kits and are real jewels. The Jimmy Doolittle figure and 1/144 Brengun photo-etch bicycle are the icing on the cake!

December Physical Meeting

Our former Veep Jay was kind enough to host us in his home for our Christmas meeting. It was almost like pre-pandemic times, with a table full of models, snacks and our yearly gift exchange. We had a good turnout, around 15 members.

There were some great models on display:

I always enjoy Mike S.'s sci-fi and fantasy builds, but I think this has got to be my favorite (and very seasonally appropriate)



"When the Martians Stole Christmas". Mike used the 1/8th Moebius "Mars Attacks" figure and the 1/8th Pegasus War of the Worlds Martian, along with a Marvin the Martian figure, Christmas decorations, a finger board for Marvin's skateboard and fairy lights to make this great vignette. He painted it with Tamiya paints and weathered it with pastels. It took Mike a total of 50 hours to construct.



Mike also had this cool little vignette of the classic 1950's "B.E.M" (Bug-eyed Monster). I apologize, I misplaced Mike's writeup on this, so can't give any more details.



John S. finished his build of the Round 2 (ex-AMT) 1953 Studebaker that he reviewed for us. Very clean build of a great old kit



He also brought his Czech Model Shrike that he presented last month



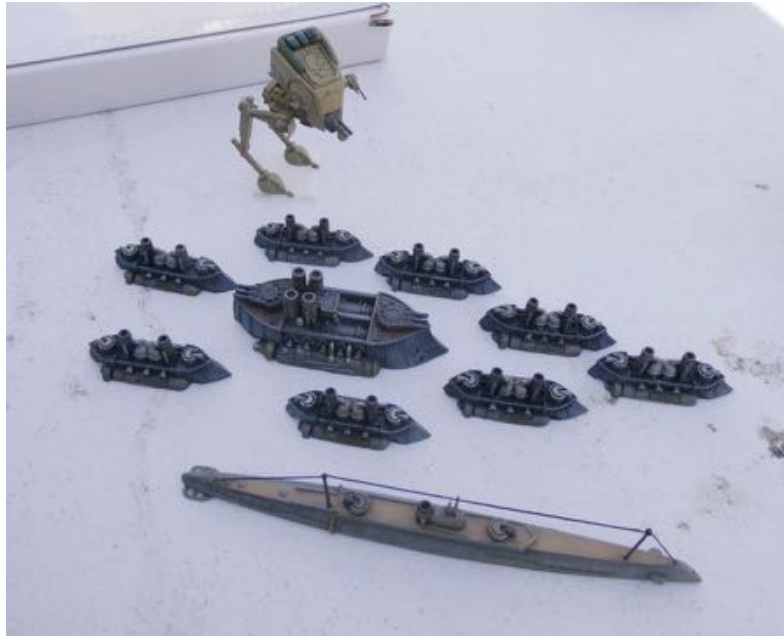
Mike O.'s beautiful 1/48th Tamiya T34-85. This was in the running for the "Small World" winner



Luis' 1/72 HobbyBoss F-5E. Luis' hand-painted this. Never would have guessed, finish was awesome!



Jay's 1/72 X-36. Not sure what kit this is, perhaps David's (Muroc)?



VP Rowdy had some excellent small-scale miniatures



Prez Bill had his 1/72 Frog/Novo Hotspur

Bill's also working on the awesome 1/24th Airfix Mosquito. This is the cockpit



That's the stock kit instrument panel. Amazing.

Nillo had his 1/144th Northrop YF-23. This is the Trumpeter kit



It took Niilo 10 hours over 2 weeks to build. He didn't use any aftermarket and used Testors and Tamiya paints and a black Sharpie for detailing.

Niilo says: "The Northrop YF-23 was the competitor against the Lockheed YF-22. Both were lightweight air superiority fighters and the YF-22 was selected.

This build was surprisingly easy for such a small scale. The majority of fits were right on and required minimum filing and sanding. Alignment for the aft stabilizers was challenging to achieve the right angle, but was accomplished using a home-made fixture. Painting was easy using "Rattle can" spray paints for major surface prep and fine-hair brushes for small areas. Note: 1/144 decals are a challenge for "old guys". If you want to build something reasonably fast, it's a good kit for a reasonable cost.

2022 Meeting Schedule (Tentative)

Primary	Activities	Refreshments	Demo	Review
15 Jan	Physical meeting at Prez Bill K's house, Palmdale 1 – pm			
19 Feb				
19 Mar				
16 Apr				
21 May				
18 June				
16 July				
20 Aug				
17 Sept				
15 Oct				
29 Oct	2022 Desert Classic (Tentative)			
19 Nov	2023 Club Officer Nominations			
17 Dec	2023 Club Officer Elections, Gift Exchange			

The Tool Crib

Nothing new this month

Kit Reviews

Modlesvit 1/48th F-82F/G Twin Mustang



Lessons learned from the daylight bombing campaign over Germany in 1942 showed large bomber formations required fighter escort for protection. However the tremendous distances in the Pacific Theater, combined with the very long range of the new B-29 bomber exposed the range deficiencies of the Army Air Forces longest-range fighters, the P-38 and P-47. So in 1943 the Army released a requirement for a very long range escort fighter. This specification produced some unusual designs, such as large Fisher P-75 Eagle (which used a number of parts from existing aircraft, such as wings from the P-51, tail surfaces from the SBD and landing gear from the F4U), and the Consolidated-Vultee P-81 compound-power (propeller and turbojet) fighter. North American proposed a design that was essentially 2 P-51 fuselages mated with a new wing center section, which was designated P-82. The P-82 offered several design advantages. It was based on the structural components of an existing design, the lightweight P-51 (P-51F through J) and the addition of a second crew member reduced pilot fatigue.

The prototype XP-82 first flew on June 26, 1945. Although looking like 2 P-51's stuck together, it was a much modified airframe. The fuselages, based on the P-51H, were lengthened by 57 inches to house additional fuel, and a new wing center section, containing 6 .50 caliber guns, joined the fuselage. One main landing gear strut attached to each fuselage and retracted inward, and each fuselage had a tail wheel. The initial P-82's were powered by Packard V-1650's similar to the P-51H engine, but with the propeller on the right engine rotating the opposite to the one on the left.

Ultimately, none of the long-range escort fighters saw service in the war. The P-75 had numerous development problems and didn't offer superior performance to existing aircraft. The P-81's turboprop engine had a protracted development and wasn't ready until after cessation of hostilities (the prototype initially flew with a V-1650). The P-82 came closest, but only 2 prototypes had been completed prior to the

end of the war. The capture of Iwo Jima eliminated the requirement for extreme range, so the long range escort mission during the war could be performed by the "Very Long Range" (VLR) P-51D's, which carried 310-gallon external tanks and additional navigation radios.

The initial 20 production P-82B's were powered by V-1650 engines, but as the V-1650 was a license-built Rolls Royce Merlin, and the British greatly increased the licensing cost after the end of the war, it was desired to replace the Merlin with a US engine. The only suitable engine was a derivative of the Allison V-1710 used in the P-38. The -100 series V-1710 had a hydraulically-driven 2-stage supercharger with an infinitely variable drive ratio and fuel injection.

After the war, the Air Force had little interest in piston-engine fighter, so many P-82's completed under previously awarded contracts sat engine-less in storage. But because of the short range of early jets, the P-82 initially entered service in it's originally intended long-range escort role with the Strategic Air Command. This Allison-engine version of the P-82 (now re-designated F-82) was the F-82E. The long range capability of the P-82 was amply demonstrated in 1947, when a P-82B, named "Betty Jo", equipped with 4 310-gallon external tanks, flew 5,051 miles non-stop from Hawaii to New York. The SAC F-82's were later replaced by F-86's, but with the improvement in Soviet air defenses, the days of large bomber formations were over, and the need for escort fighters had vanished by 1957.

The appearance of the Soviet Tu-4 bomber (a carbon copy of the B-29), led to concerns that the Soviets could bomb the US mainland, and led to a crisis in fighter interception. The existing F-47's and F-51's used in the interceptor role had proven ineffective, and development of all-weather jet interceptors had been delayed by numerous problems. The F-61 Black Widow was more effective, but the aircraft were old and tired. The F-82 was chosen for modification to the all-weather interception role. A large radar pod (which was jettisonable) was added under the wing center section. The F-82 interceptors were designated F-82F and G. The F and G differed in the model of radar installed, with the F-82F using the AN/APG-28 and the F-82G used the SCR-720 (same as the P-61). The F-82 was the primary all-weather interceptor until it was replaced by the Lockheed F-94.

The F-82 was also the primary interceptor in Asia, with 3 squadrons based in Japan. At the outbreak of the Korean War, the F-82 was the only fighter aircraft with sufficient range to reach Korea from Japan. The F-82 was initially used in a reconnaissance role. When news was received that North Korean forces had crossed the 38th parallel, 3 F-82's were dispatched from Japan to assess the situation. This is considered the first US combat sortie of the war.

The F-82's were then widely used to provide air cover for the evacuation of US civilians from Korea. On June 27, 1950, 27 F-82's were providing air cover for C-54's evacuating civilians from Kimpo airfield. In the late morning, 5 Chinese fighters (Yaks and La-7's) appeared in an attack on the airfield. The F-82's engaged the fighters, allowing the C-54's to escape. The shot down 3 of the aircraft, while the other 2 retreated. These were the first US "kills" of the war.

The US needed every aircraft available to repel the North Korean forces. The Far East Air Forces requested additional F-82's, primarily as escorts for B-26 strike aircraft, but the request was denied by AF HQ, as they did not want to deploy aircraft that were protecting the US west coast.

FEAF made the best use possible of the F-82's available. Besides escorting bombers, F-82's were also used for ground attack, primarily of roads and trains, using rockets and their machine guns.

As the war progressed, the numbers of F-82's decreased. Shortages of spares (the aircraft had never intended to be in service for a long time) hampered operations. By late 1951, only 8 F-82's remained in service in Korea, and they were entirely replaced in early 1952 by F-94's

The final F-82's in service were in Alaska, where they served as interceptors and escorts for SAC bombers flying near Soviet airspace. F-82G's that had been modified for cold weather operations, they were designated F-82H's. Lack of spares forced a number of airframes to be grounded as parts sources, and the last F-82 in Alaska was retired in 1953.

The last piston engine fighter in the AF, the F-82 had a short service life and was never produced in large numbers (only 272 aircraft), but proved an important transition aircraft between WW2 and the jet age.

There have not been a large number of kits produce of the F-82. The first injection kit of the F-82 was produced by Frog in 1/72. This was one of their very last kits and is very difficult to find (I've never actually seen one in person). Most that I have seen photos of are Russian Novo boxings. In the 1970's Monogram produce a fairly decent 1/72 kit, although it's definitely a product of it's era, with raised panel lines and basic detail. It also has a few dimensional errors, notably slightly too-short noses. This kit has been released a number of times, in Monogram, and, most recently, Revell Germany boxes. There is also a horrible copy produced by Idea of Korea (also boxed by Hobbycraft).

A couple of years ago, Platz in Japan produce a very nice little 1/144th F-82F/G

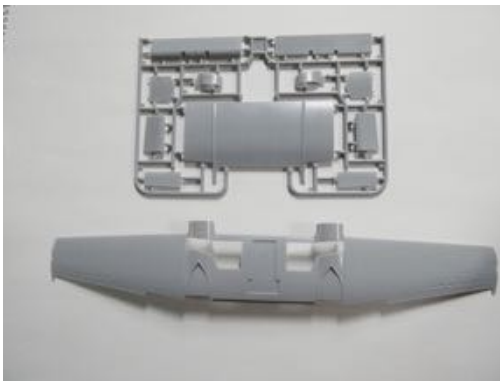
The first 1/48th F-82 was produced by Modelcraft Canada. Modelcraft was an offshoot of a Canadian import company (Scaland Imports). Modelcraft was like the proverbial "box of chocolates" – you never knew what you were going to get. Most Modelcraft kits were re-boxes of other manufactures molds, often with Canadian-theme decals. The re-boxed the rather nice Occidental T-6, the Matchbox Twin-Otter and Norseman and the Airfix L-1011, but some of the subjects were truly ancient, consisting of old Frog kits and even the antique Bluetank/Nitto M8 cargo tractor. But the F-82 turned out to be an entirely new tool. It was highly anticipated by 1/48th modelers, but the final result was, um, rather disappointing. The released kit had a distinct limited-run vibe, and not a good one (think early Sword or HiPM, not Special Hobby or Dora Wings). The kit suffered from warpage, lots of flash and blobby detail parts. Steve Eisenman says "There are no un-buildable kits", but this one will certainly present "challenges" (especially the natural metal variants). I have seen a few of these completed, but not many. Having beat a HiPM Bv-141 into submission, there weren't enough years left in my life to try build this kit, so I attempted to sell my example, only to find that fellow modelers treated it like it was made of uranium. I was finally able to ~~dump~~ re-home my kit to some ~~unsuspecting sucker~~ lucky modeler who has many hours of ~~aggravation and frustration~~ modeling pleasure to look forward to.

After the disappointment of the Modelcraft kit, the announcement of a new 1/48th F-82 from Modelsvit was greeted with cautious optimism. Modelsvit is a relatively new Russian manufacturer, who has primarily produced Soviet subjects (including a growing collection of Yaks). They released a well-received 1/48th P-51H, so there was great hope that a decent 1/48th F-82 would finally arrive.

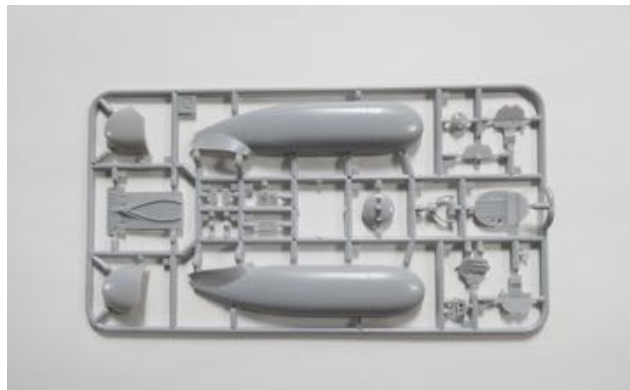
Modelsvit's initial release is of the F-82F/G all-weather/night fighter variant (they have also announced an F-82E/H day fighter). The kit is contained in a medium-sized box with a colorful painting of an F-82F in flight. Inside the box are 338 parts in light gray styrene with 2 sprues of clear parts, a sheet of photo etch, decals, and vinyl canopy masks.



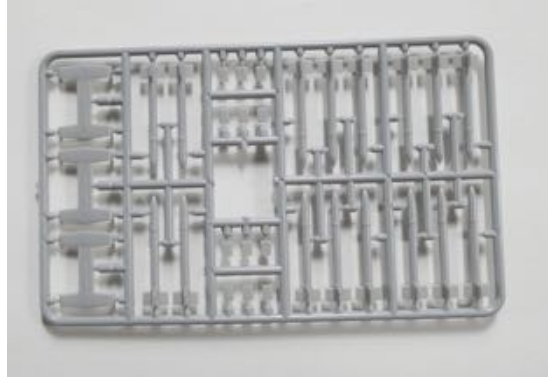
All the gray parts are in one large Ziploc bag, with some of the smaller sprues separately bagged inside. The main bag appears to be a little too small – the one-piece lower wing molding has torn a hole in my bag. The canopy sprues are each contained in separate boxes – a nice touch. The etch fret and masks are in a small bag contained in a larger bag with the decals. The instructions are a color multi-page booklet.



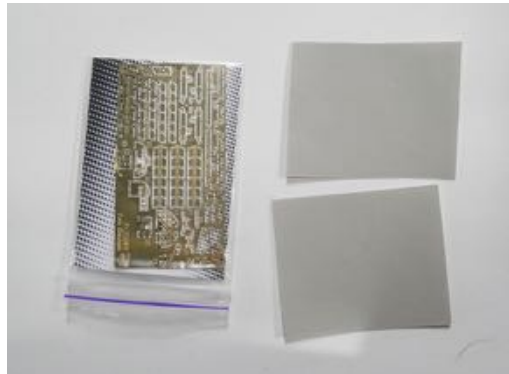
Parts molding looks very good, with very fine panel lines, little, if any, flash and no signs of warpage (at least in my example – I have seen some reports of warped parts). Some fineness of some of the detail is extraordinary, with hydraulic lines in the gear wells and tire sidewall detail.



The F/G – specific parts (radar pod, details and interface) are contained on a separate sprue. The kit includes the different radar antennas used by the 2 versions (which can be displayed with the radome removed – the kit includes parts for a ground radome support stand) and the different co-pilot instrument panel configurations of the 2 versions. Some parts (notably the exhaust stacks) for other versions of the F-82 are included, but the kit doesn't have the lower wing insert to allow building the aircraft with the radar pod removed, so you won't be able to build an F/G that had the pod removed or a different F-82 variant from this boxing.

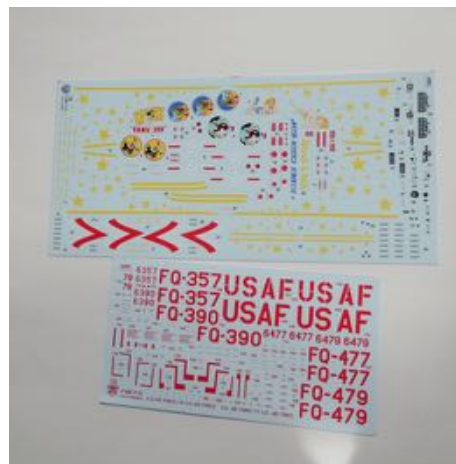


Some external stores typically carried by F-82's are included – HVAR's with their typical mounting trees and P-61-style drop tanks.



The photo etch sheet contains a number of details. Interestingly, the flame damping exhaust stacks are multi-part etch assemblies. This should make for a very scale-like appearance, but it remains to be seen how well this will work in practice. The instrument panels are depicted by decal gauges with a photo-etch overlay.

The canopies are quite clear (if a bit thick). The kit has 2 canopy configurations for each cockpit, a one-piece closed canopy and a 2-piece that can be posed open.



Decals are provided for 4 overall black aircraft. With only 282 F-82's produced, there's not a huge diversity in markings – most of these schemes are well-known and have appeared on other F-82 sheets. Modelsvit has chosen some of the most interesting examples, with nose – or fuselage – art. I was pleased to note that Modelsvit has included my favorite F-82 scheme, the very colorful 5th All Weather Fighter Squadron, with large areas of blue and star and stripe trim. Decals are on 2 large sheets and are well printed, and Modelsvit had reproduced the proper rounded “buzz number” font used by North American on F-82's and F-86's. The only reservation I have with the decals is that Modelsvit has depicted the 5th FS trim color as yellow, whereas pictures of the aircraft show it as gold (with some aircraft sporting gold and silver stars). Fortunately, Kursad and Caracal Decals has announced an F-82 sheet, so hopefully he will correct this, or perhaps I will scan my sheet and reprint it using metallic gold on my Alps printer.

This is a really impressive kit. It is still a limited-run kit, however, so will need a little extra care and attention during assembly (the P-51H had a few areas with fit issues). I'm going to sound like a broken record here – this isn't a cheap kit. Retail is over \$100. I got mine from Sprue Brothers (with an additional 10% discount (for just under \$80, and it's available for under \$70 directly from Eastern European vendors. You get a large, well detailed kit that really doesn't need any aftermarket. This is the 1/48th F-82 we've been waiting for!

Club Demos

None this month

Member Show and Tell, 24th COVID Edition

Mark L's been busy. Here's a sample of some of the armor model's he's completed:



Name: Tiger I (Late version)

Time to Build: 50-55 hours

Kit & Scale: Tamiya 1/35

Aftermarket items: engine deck screens from a set of PE; zimmerit by Master Tools

Paints used: Various brands of craft paints

Finished on: approximately late September 2021

This is the 1989 release from Tamiya. It can be done in either the Late or Final version depending on which markings you want to use. I originally had designs on going "AMS" crazy on this one since the person who gave it to me included 2 sets of PE, Zimmerit sets, etc. I didn't end up doing that (sanity prevailed). While the kit went together like a dream for the most part, I did spend a good deal of time filling and cleaning up the track links-they had sinkholes in various spots on the insides. You also have to pay close attention with the tracks, as some are designed to be mounted on the turret side as spares and not meant to be part of the regular track run. The Master Tools Zimmerit I used was pretty straightforward and easy to use, you just need to spend some time measuring carefully and making sure everything lines up right. It comes in a large sheet of grey plastic and there seems to be enough for 2 tanks per sheet. Great for covering large, uninterrupted slabs of armor; maybe a little too fiddly for more complex shapes. I wound up using Milliput on the mantlet cover, as it was just easier. I marked her with 308 (as on the box art) after sating my curiosity about why she would be numbered that way--she is part of the 502nd Heavy tank Battalion, early '44, Russia, when it was actually overstrength with 55 Tigers (usually it was 45 at max strength). 10/10 would buy another and

finish it; maybe would get a replacement track set so I wouldn't have to deal with the track cleanup.



Name: PanzerKampfwagen IV H

Time to Build: 40-45 hours

Kit & Scale: Tamiya 1/35

Aftermarket items: Zimmerit sheet by Master Tools; some sheet styrene

Paints used: Various brands of craft paints

Finished on: Approximately Labor Day weekend 2021

Simultaneously built this old beauty with the Tiger I. Filled in motorization holes, made sponsons to go over the tracks where the lower and upper hull meet. Using the MT Zimmerit was much more involved and fiddlier than for the Tiger I. Old style tracks were surprisingly well detailed so I stuck with those--also easier to deal with! Very straightforward and easy build. Without the Zimmerit application, my finish time for her would probably be half of what I show above. She is painted and marked as part of 2nd Panzer Division in '44, based on a pretty commonly known photo showing a full platoon (#8) going into exercises.



Name: West German Leopard IA4

Time to Build: 30-35 hours

Kit & Scale: Testors/Italeri 1/35

Aftermarket items: none; screen was included in kit

Paints used: Various brands of craft paints - "Oliv Gelb" is my own mix

Finished on: Approximately Jan 25th 2021

A great example of how well engineered and detailed some older kits are, this one has stood the test of time. Nice, crisp detailing, flash/mold seams were not a major issue on most parts--on the gun barrel it was a pain, due to how well detailed it is. Nevertheless, she went together very well and easily. Original tracks were nicely detailed even though they are the old fashioned "rubber band" type. Since this is a cold war era tank I didn't rough her up too much with rust/chipping etc. Engineering tools are very nicely done. There's an exhaust fan included for the engine deck, to show through the mesh screen included with the kit--very impressive for a kit nearly 40 years old. West German armor from this period ('74-'84 (approx)) was painted "Oliv Gelb", which is often mis-translated to mean "Olive Drab". The truth is, as I found out, that this is one of those colors that doesn't match the name. There is very little "Oliv" or "Gelb" about it, and it is in fact a darkened Field Gray. I picked it up at an expo for \$20 or \$25, very worthwhile!



Name: Panzer IB

Time to Build: 12-15 hours

Kit & Scale: Testors/Italeri 1/35

Aftermarket items: no

Paints used: Various brands of craft paints

Finished on: August 25th 2020

This little 2 man tank was a nice, quick, clean build & completion after my very challenging DML M1A2 project. Another great old kit by Testors/Italeri that has, in this modeler's opinion, stood the test of time well. Like a cup of sherbert at a multi-course dinner, it was a refreshing "palette cleanser". Very little issues to speak of with regard to fit, parts cleanup etc. Picked her up at an expo for \$10-\$15.





Name: M1A2 Abrams, Operation Iraqi Freedom

Time to Build: 60-70 hours

Kit & Scale: DML 1/35

Aftermarket items: no

Paints used: Various brands of craft paints

Finished on: Mid July 2020

Over the years I've heard various criticisms of DML/Dragon kits, but never ran into any issues with them myself-until this problem child came along to my workbench. This is the reboxed kit (1993) from the original in '92. The detailing is fine, and the fit for the majority of parts is good. The problems I ran into were with the suspension, pretty much the whole thing. Roadwheels all had sinkholes & seams that needed extensive work (fill & cleanup + seams on the edges). All of the individual track links also had sinkholes that needed filling and cleaning, as well as fit issues. I wound up having to widen out the connection points on every track, in order to assemble runs that were usable. Not to mention that painting M1 Abrams tank tracks is a formidable exercise, even without all that extra work! Safe to say that at least half, maybe more, of the time I spent on this girl was spent on the suspension. As far as the rest of the kit, there was a normal amount of cleanup that would be expected (seams, flash, etc); nothing out of the ordinary. Once all is said and done though, it winds up being a pretty good-looking representation of the M1A2. Turret markings are my own addition from the decal stash.



Name: Jagdpanther (late version)
Time to Build: 35-40 hours
Kit & Scale: Tamiya 1/35
Aftermarket items: Tamiya Panther track set
Paints used: Various brands of craft paints
Finished on: Approx late March 2020

This is the 1996 release with new tooling. I got the Panther track set to replace the 'rubber band' style tracks that were originally included, as they had turned hard, brittle, and unusable. Another great Tamiya build, very little difficulty, lots of nice detailing, a real pleasure to work on. Don't let the box art fool you, she is properly proportioned! An excellent kit all around, highly recommended

John S. has finished an Italeri 1/48th Lockheed TR-1. This is a nice, if somewhat simple kit, that has perfect proportions. John's done a great job "animating" a monochrome black finish





John says: I completed this 48th scale Italeri TR-1 to start the year. I avoid 72nd scale so I went with the larger scale and built this near ridiculous size model. The wingspan is 26 inches. It's an older kit with raised panel lines and minimal cockpit detail. Since it has a flat black paint job and limited clear view pieces. These details are not an issue. The small parts count makes for a quick build, even with all the seams to fill. I'm pleased with the liquid latex masking on the clear parts. This model has markings for a plane operating out of Osan AFB in South Korea during 2016.

Calendar

1/29/2022	Spruefest	Brookhurst Hobbies 12188 Brookhurst St. Garden Grove, CA
2/19/2022	SilverCon 2022	Town and Country Lutheran Church 4049 Marconi Ave. Sacramento, CA
3/26/2022	Silicon Valley Classic VII	Napredak Hall Inc. 770 Montague Expy San Jose, CA
7/20-23/2022	IPMS/USA National Convention	La Vista Conference Center 12520 Wesport Parkway La Vista, NE
10/8/2022	IPMS Reno "High Rollers" 21 st Invitational Contest	Reno Elk's Lodge #597 597 Kumle Ln Reno, NV
10/22/2022	Fresno Scale Modelers Fall Contest	TBD