

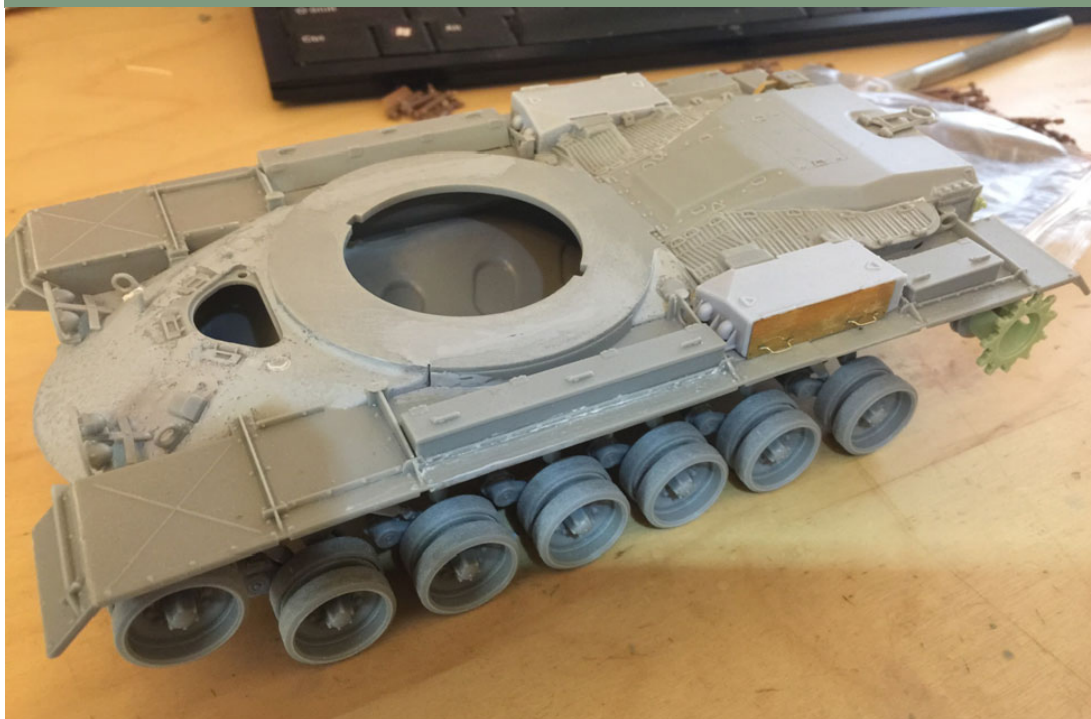


Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

June 2015
Volume 19, Issue 6



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Building an IDF Magach 3

Part I

By Aaron Smischney

When given the choice of building a tank of any nationality, I always prefer it to be an Israeli subject. I really like the "road warrior" style field

modifications on their vehicles, and they make interesting modeling subjects.

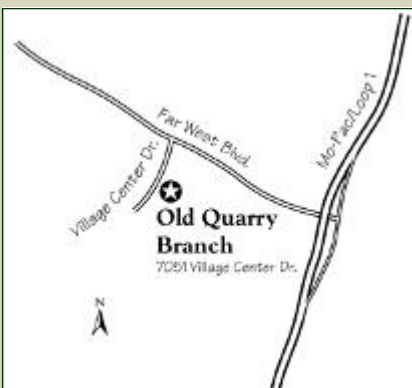
Magach is the local name for U.S. M48 and M60 tank variants in Israel, and they served in the IDF for almost 40 years, with the last being withdrawn

(Continued on page 4)

Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) meets at 7PM each month at the **Austin Public Library Old Quarry Branch**. Our next meeting is on

June 3, 2015

Annual dues for full membership are USD \$12 to be collected at each January meeting. Upon receipt of payment, a membership card will be issued. This card is valid for one year, and it entitles holder to discounts at various local hobby shops in the Central Texas and San Antonio areas.



Sabot Away! is the official newsletter of AABS and is published twelve times a year on/before each monthly meeting. Any inquiry on subscription issues or assistance on article contribution please contact editor Eric Choy via email aabsco@gmail.com.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of AABS.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ♦ **June 3 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ♦ **June 13 - SoonerCon 2015** South Oklahoma City Chamber, Oklahoma City, OK
- ♦ **July 1 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ♦ **July 22 to 25 - IPMS/USA Nationals** Hyatt Regency Columbus, Columbus, OH
- ♦ **August 5 - AABS Club Meeting**



AABS Officers May 2014– Apr 2016

John Talley, President
(512) 388-3473, johnwtalley@hotmail.com

Greg Beckman, Vice-President
(512) 539-9018, pgb3476@yahoo.com

Eric Choy, Treasurer
(512) 554-9595, aabsco@gmail.com

Ted Paone, Secretary
(512) 635-9516, theopaone@att.net

Eric Choy, Newsletter Editor
(512) 554-9595, aabsco@gmail.com

Roderick Bell, Webmaster
(512) 507-6104,
rbell3@austin.rr.com



Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

Month	Program Presentation	Newsletter Article
January, 2015	Tom Pachalos	Tom Pachalos
February	Tom Pachalos	Dave Bourland
March	Eric Choy	Eric Choy
April	TBA	Milton Bell
May	Jake McKee	Jake McKee
June	Dave Bourland	Aaron Smischney
July	Ted Andreas, Jr.	Ted Andreas, Jr.
August	John Talley	Rick Herrington
September	AMPS Judging Review	Zach Talley
October	Kit Auction	Bill Menzie
November	Kevin Hutchison	Kevin Hutchison
December	Ian Candler	Ian Candler
January, 2016	Ted Paone	Ted Paone

Here is a list of members who are responsible for providing articles for the newsletter and program presentation at our monthly meetings.

Please note any member may contribute as many articles as he/she wants anytime. The purpose of this schedule is to ensure we have at least one article in the newsletter each month.

Prompt submission of your article is much appreciated. The deadline is always **11:59PM on the last Wednesday of the previous month** (e.g. Tom Pachalos' article for January was due on the last Wednesday of December).



From the Turret

The summer months are coming upon us, and I hope you are all able to find time during this season of fun in the sun and vacation trips to build and paint and make some of your own fun. Modeling in the AC is certainly better than being out in the hot sun doing yard work, so at least the days spent at home over the summer won't keep many of us from modeling.

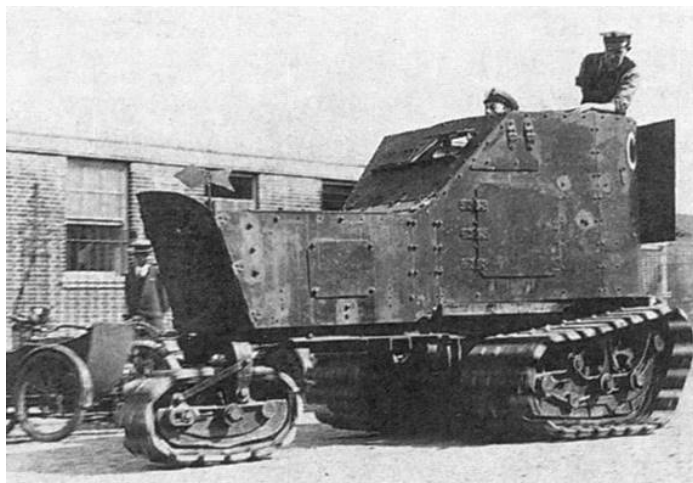
The fall expo will catch up to us all quickly after the summer months, so I hope you have a chance to prepare your models and show well.

With a look back at the history of armored warfare development we have to note that it was one hundred years ago this summer that many experiments were underway, most of them failing, but all of them leading to the creation of practical armored vehicles suitable for combat.

By June of 1915 there were already many artillery tractors being used in France, while the state of the art in England was the Killen-Straight tractor fitted with the body of an armored car.

I hope you all can make it out to the meeting on Wednesday night!

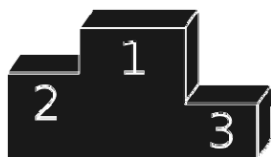
John Talley
President



A Killen-Straight tractor fitted with a Delaunay-Belleville armored car body, June 30 1915.



A Holt tractor being used to tow French artillery in the Vosges in early 1915.



June Is Quarterly Contest Month!

Bring in your **finished** model this month to win U.S. Treasury issued greenbacks! Our quarterly contest cash prizes are **\$40, \$30, and \$20** for the first, second, and third place winners.

To enter you must be a member in good standing. Any model that has not placed in previous quarterly contests is eligible to win. The "no sweep" rule is strictly enforced in our in-house contests.

If you like to participate but haven't paid your 2015 dues, please do so before our meeting or the show-and-tell session.



(Continued from page 1)

from active service in 2006. Throughout the years, Magach went through many modernizations and upgrades. All of them make for a fascinating subject to model.

For this build, I am using DML's 1/35th M48A3 (3546), the second release in their M48 series. This kit is the first that can be modified into an Israeli version. With the help of IDF Magach 3 conversion set from DEF Model, the make-over is very straight forward and requires almost no modification to the base kit.



Magach 3 was an early version (post 1967 Six-Day War) being used in the 1973 Yom-Kippur War. The original 90mm gun has been replaced with a British license 105mm L7, and it has armored exhaust boxes. Instead of the tall cupola, it has either a low profile *Urdan* or a Sherman-style vision cupola. The DEF Model conversion set contains the latter with a bunch of stowage and a nice set of decals. I am also using the M48 update set (also from DEF Model) that includes drive sprockets with lightening holes and a very nice set of rear panels with super thin fins.

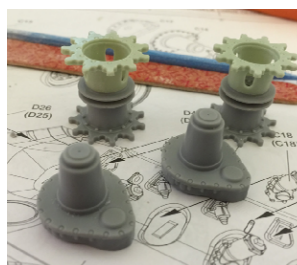
The DEF Model conversion set comes in a very nice packaging with components sealed in compartments. This is a nice change from just dumping all the parts in a zip-lock bag, and it certainly seems to minimize any transit damage. The casting of the parts is exceptional with minimal cleanup needed. You can tell they are designed by modelers for modelers. Take the air cleaners for example. The pour plugs are in inconspicuous locations, and they can be easily removed.



DML is notorious for packing its kits chock full of sprues that you cannot close the box after opening it. This is because DML rarely omits parts that one does not need in its variant kits. While this is good for your spares box, it can be very confusing. Also DML has a habit of cross-boxing variants, and you might end up with multiple sprues with the same letter designation! That combined with dubious instructions makes for a frustrating build.

Well fear not on the new M48 series kits. Since they are "new," you get a refreshingly straight forward instruction set and "just what you need" parts on the sprues. With so few unused parts, the box looks practically empty.

The drive sprockets from DEF Models' M48 update set is a direct replacement for DML's kit outer sprocket parts. One issue I ran into was that the locating pin section did not line up correctly. I have to sand off the pin-lip from the resin part and super glued it to the plastic parts. Afterwards I checked using the kit's DS tracks to make sure everything was lined up.

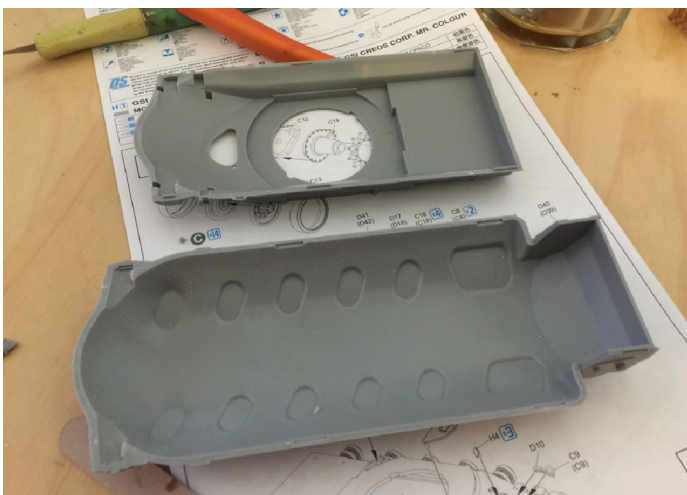


Here are the sprockets and final drive parts. Beware the sprockets are NOT "workable." They need to be glued to the final drives and will not turn. It is possible to make them workable with some



engineering, but I am not going to do that. This does make fitting the tracks a little trickier.

The next part of the instruction has you attach a bunch of parts to the top and bottom hulls before gluing the hull halves together. I decided to rearrange the order a bit so I can get the hull together without scraping off parts. After checking the parts and the instruction, it looks like there is nothing stopping me from doing what I intended. Here are the two halves cleaned up and ready to be glued.



When gluing big parts like these, I like to “true up” the mating surfaces by giving them a light sanding. After dry-fitting and fixing any burrs, I ran Tamiya ExtraThin on both parts before attaching them together. Then I filled ExtraThin in any cracks and squeezed the halves tight until the crack disappeared.

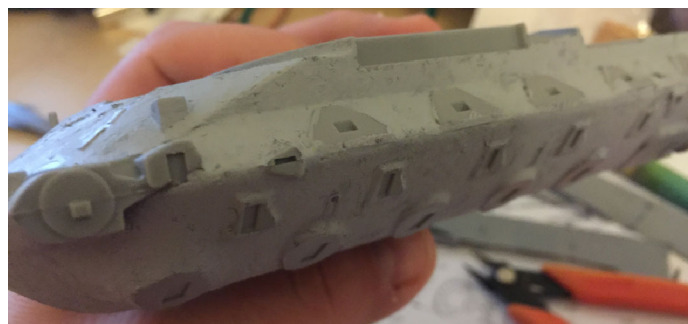


Once the glue has set up, you can see we have a bit of a seam on the front that needs filling.

Here we can see the hull. In my opinion the kit's cast surface is too smooth. Also the upper sides have no texture at all. Although not super visible after fitting the running gear, I prefer the whole thing textured.



To make the cast texture I used Tamiya basic putty thinned with Tamiya ExtraThin cement. I then “painted” the mixture on in small sections and “stippled” as needed. To move the material around the surface and avoid details that should not be textured, I used a clean brush dipped in ExtraThin to control the flow of the mixture. Here I have cast one side of the hull, including the smooth upper sections.



While the thinned putty was still workable, I used a metal tool to scratch the surface where the tank would be more battered, like the front lower section. Don't worry about going too deep as we will be softening this up later.



The photo on the next page shows the upper front hull in the process of being textured. We don't want to put too much putty on at once, as it will dry and be hard to manipulate.

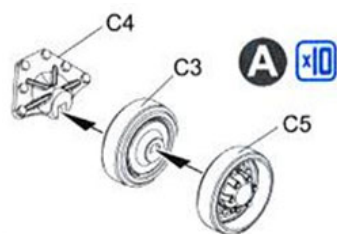
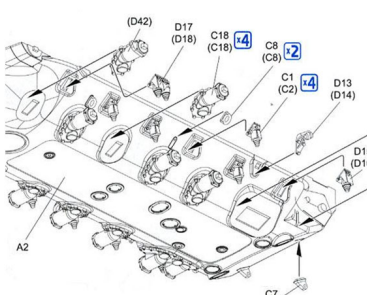


Next we are going to soften the cast texture by sanding. Depending on what nationality or specific tank I am modeling, I pick different grit sandpaper. If the tank is Russian or I want a very rough texture, I use low grit coarse sandpaper and just knock off the highest bits. For texture on an American tank, I use a medium to semi-fine grit to make a smoother surface. Remember you can always add some more texturing later. Just make sure that the putty is fully dried before sanding! Wet putty will clog your sandpaper!

After sanding, make sure you wash the part in water to remove any "sand dust." Give it a good towel off before continuing.

Since most of the rough handling of the hull was done (or so I thought!), I began to prep all of the little bits that need to be added.

There are a few kit parts that need special attention. C18 is one of them. Each C18 holds a road wheel, so you want to make sure it is as straight as possible. There are locating tabs to help, but they are not very firm. You will have a lot of play after you glue them. I wish DML used a peg-and-hole approach to make positioning easier.

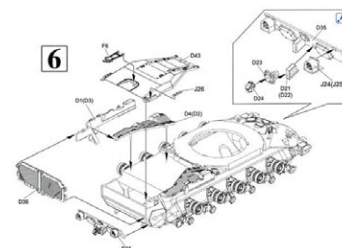
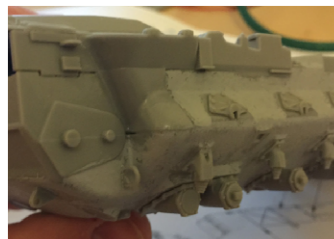


The next part to look out for is C4. This is the bracket for the return roller wheel (note I have

chosen not to add them until after painting). The back of this part has rather prominent "nub" knockout marks. These can make placement to the lower hull difficult. When cleaning the part, make sure to sand or cut the nub flush with the part.



Beware of a mistake in the instruction that neglects to tell you where to fit parts D1 and D2. These are side components near the engine deck. You will want to fit these BEFORE you put all the fiddly running gear bits. I did not spot the error until I already had a bunch of the extra parts on the hull. You can see the poor fit of these parts (below left). But fear not for we have putty! Here is the part blended in and sanded (below right).



Step six has us working on the rear plate (part D35). Why do instruction makers always insist on adding all of these little bits before attaching them?

Okay, so the plate is glued, but one problem arises: D35 is supposed to be part of the hull casting, not a separate part. BACK TO THE PUTTY! Below are pix of the back plate glued in (left) and blended (right). Now we can add all those darn fiddly bits.



Sabot Away!

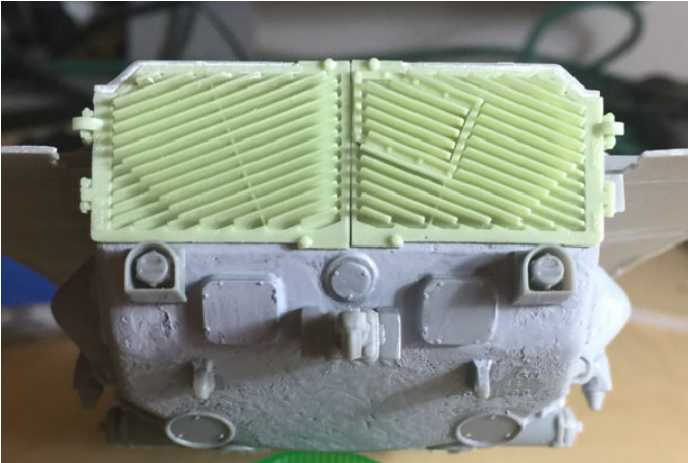
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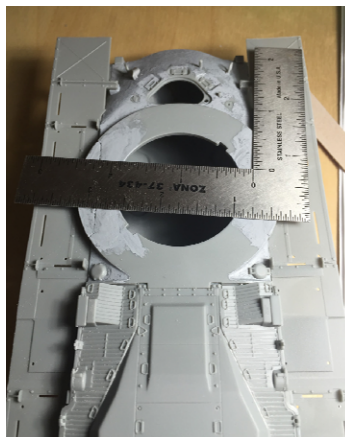
Here I have added the DEF Model rear plates with the fine fin castings and all of the additional parts. I still need to add the handles to the lower part of the doors.



A trip to Camp Mabry got myself some references on the handles that I needed to add.



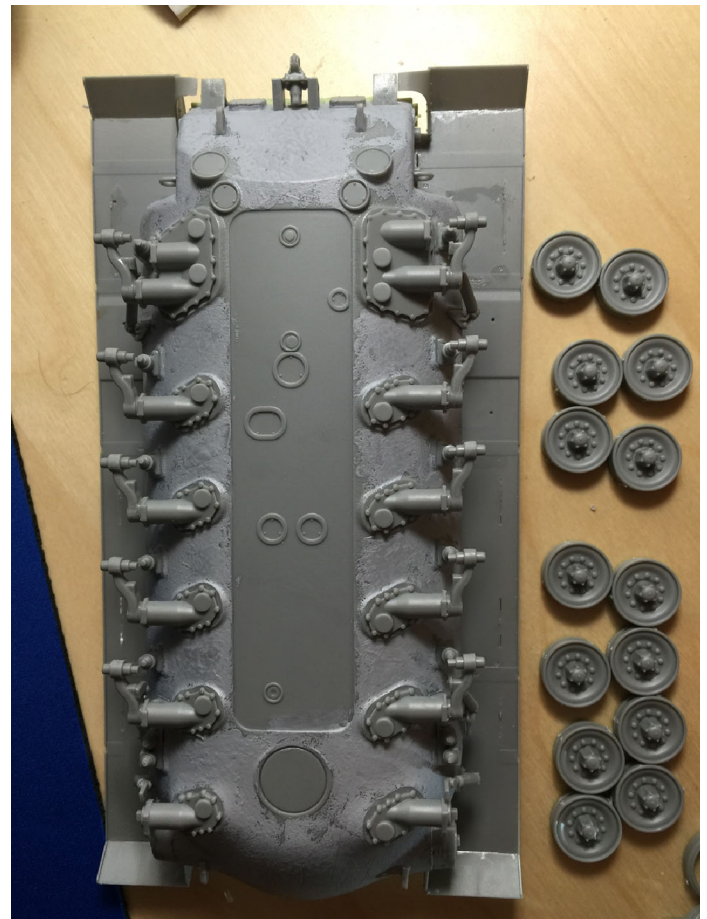
While fitting the fenders, which include parts for the turret ring, I used a square to make sure it was flat. I then filled in the gaps with putty and sanded flat. I probably didn't need to do this as the ring is well-hidden by the turret, but all of the putty was making me light headed.



The rest of the build was pretty straight forward. Be careful when fitting the suspension as what appears to be sprue nub on some of the parts are actually part of the suspension!

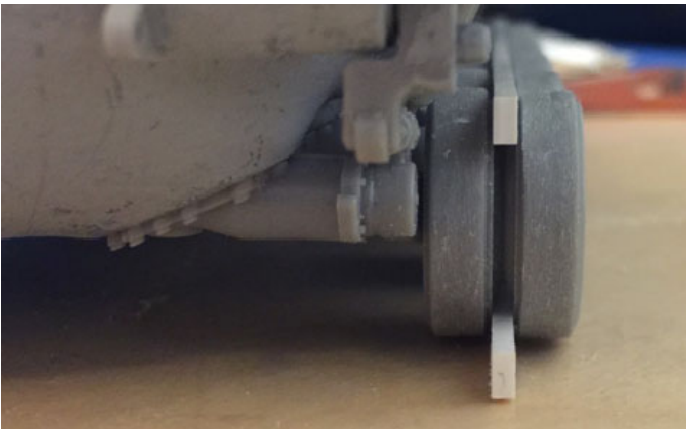
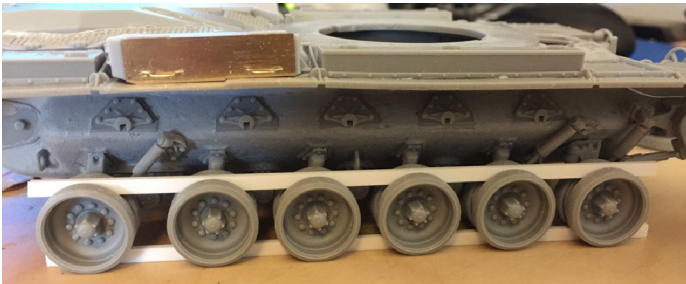


With all of the suspension bits attached, my model looks like an upside-down bug!

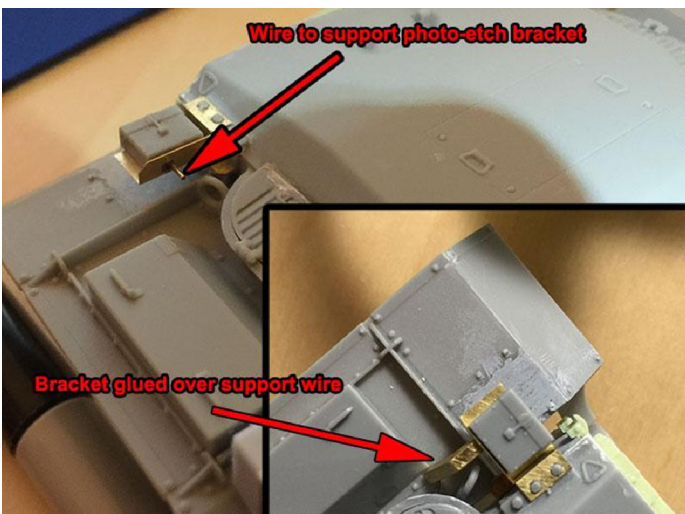




Normally I leave the wheels off for painting, but that is not going to work with this build as the wheels do not have good contacts to each suspension arm (no poly caps). So instead of trying to wrestle them on after painting and possibly breaking parts off, I decided to attach them first. I used some evergreen strips to make a jig to keep the wheels straight while the glue set.

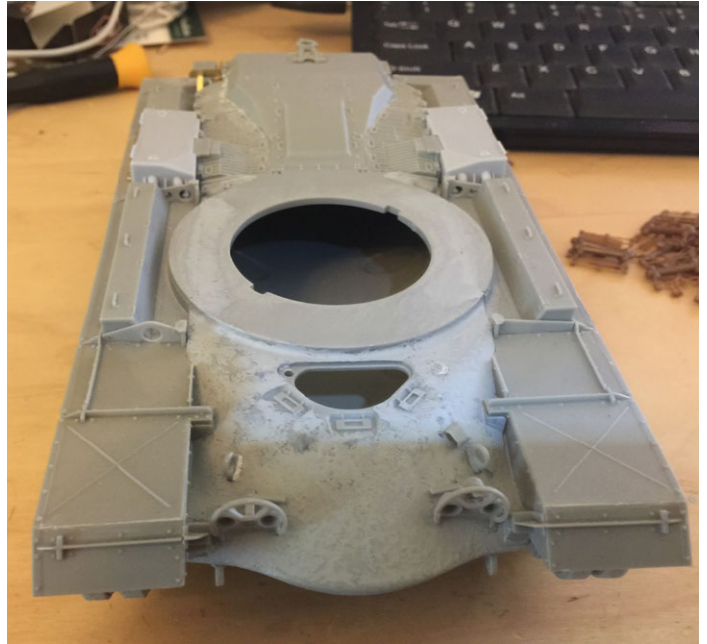


The DEF Model set includes a rear phone box with a conduit piece, but unfortunately it doesn't have any place to attach it. So I did the following tweak:



This made the phone box much easier to attach.

So here is the hull, mostly done.



The only parts that I still need to add are some vision blocks, drivers hatch, and stowage. These parts I am leaving off for painting anyway.

So far the build has been okay with a few challenges here and there. I would NOT recommend this conversion to a beginner. But for someone with a few models under his belt, it is a pretty fun build. None of the issues are show stoppers, and I never felt frustrated during the build.

To be continued next month with the turret!

Aaron



AMPS CENTEX Armor Expo MMXV September 26, 2015



Location
**Georgetown Community Center
445 E. Morrow Street
Georgetown, TX 78626**

Show Theme
First World War

More Info at
www.austinarmorbuilders.com

Above artwork was done by renowned armor artist **Jody Harmon**. Mr. Harmon has graciously granted AABS permission to use this image for this event. This and other artwork of his can be seen and purchased at his official website **www.jodyharmon.com**



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NEW ON THE BLOCK



Coming soon in the very near future is Meng's 1/35th WWI British Mk.V Male Heavy Tank.



Meng's 1/35th Soviet T-10M will be going head-to-head with Trumpeter's release. Who is the winner? Us modelers, of course!



The latest 1/35th Horch Staff Car has ended Italeri's 40+ years streak of being the only injection plastic kit of the subject in the market. We look forward to seeing more variants of this type from Bronco in the near future.



Need more WWI figures to raid the German trenches? Here's a new set of 1/35th British Infantry w/ small arms and equipment, OEMed by ICM and being sold with Tamiya's logo.

AMPS Boresight (Volume 23, Issue 2)

The latest issue of **Boresight** is out. Here is a quick look inside:

- ♦ **The Italian M13/40** by Mike Roof
How to make an accurate version of Italy's WWII medium.
- ♦ **The RCME and Tiger 007** by Ignace Vangel
Cleaning up the battlefields of France in 1944.
- ♦ **Book Review** by John Charvat
Tiran in Lebanese Wars, published by Ammo of Mig Jimenez
- ♦ **SdKfz.222 in 1:48 Scale** by Glen Martin
Tamiya reboxes the ICM armored car kit and adds a little spice.
- ♦ **AMPS Bulgaria** by Mitko Nikitov
Local chapter growth on the international front.
- ♦ **AMPS Local Chapter News**
What's going on in the AMPS community.





About Us

The Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) started in 1999 when Don Jones, a member of the local IPMS chapter, decided "what a good idea to get out two nights a month, and on least one night talk tanks."



Since then AABS is the only modeling club in Central Texas devoted solely to armor modeling. We don't build planes because they are just plain! Our passion is armored fighting vehicles and military figures. Subject of our interest ranges from WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Middle East, to the most recent Gulf War Conflicts.

At each monthly meeting, we talk tanks, swap kits, and share our building techniques and tricks. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town field trips to museums and model shows.

Every odd-numbered year AABS hosts the biggest armor model show in AMPS South Central Region (AMPS CENTEX). Known as Lone Star Armor Expo, we attract some of the best armor modelers in Texas as well as in the neighboring states to come participate.

To find out more about AABS, you can visit our website or pick up a club flyer at your local hobby shop.

We are on the web @ AustinArmorBuilders.com

Here's another excellent 1/72nd build from Bob Bethea. The Elephant Tank Destroyer is a DML kit, and the figures are from Preiser's WWII German Military Police set.

