



# Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

May 2025



## HUNGARIAN STUG

by **Greg Beckman**

While online shopping for something different from my usual "Russian" fare, I stumbled on Bronco Models' 1/35<sup>th</sup> Hungarian 40/43M "Zrinyi" II 105mm Assault Gun (CB35036) on Scalemates. I read a couple reviews and thought it would be a good change of pace for me. Currently, this kit is pretty much not available in the U.S. However, I found a few reasonably priced listings on eBay by sellers from China. An order was placed, and I had the kit in about one and a half weeks.



Additional shopping on Hobbyeasy showed several resin upgrades available from SBS for the suspension and other parts, but economically I could not justify the cost for those

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ **May 14 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **May 15 to 17 - AMPS 2025 International Convention,**  
Camp Hill, PA
- ◆ **May 24 - Scalefest 2025,** Grapevine Convention  
Center, Grapevine
- ◆ **June 4 - AABS Meeting**
- ◆ **June 21 - OKCMetroCon 2025,** Council Road Baptist  
Church, Bethany, OK
- ◆ **July 3 - AABS Meeting**



### AABS Officers

Feb 2025 – Jan 2027

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## Schedule of Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

Month	Program Presentation	Newsletter Article
January 2025	* OFFICER ELECTIONS *	Ted Paone
February	Ted Paone	Eric Choy
March‡	Bob Bethea	Kevin Hutchison
April	Ron Askew	Bill Zych
May	Mike Reeves	Greg Beckman
June‡	Eric Choy	Craig Bland
July	* KIT AUCTION *	Aaron Smischney
August	Allan Romer	Allan Romer
September‡	Marty Hebda	Marty Hebda
October	AMPS Judging Review	Bill Menzie
November	* KIT-SWAP NITE *	Mike Bird
December‡	Chris Chany	Chris Chany
January 2026	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 wants at any time. 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. Ted Paone's article for January 2025 is due on the last Wednesday of December 2024).

‡ Quarterly contest month





## From the Turret

I wrote this for the meeting before I realized we meet on the **second Wednesday of the month (MAY 14<sup>th</sup>!!!!)** It was too good to change it.

Eighty years ago on May 8, 1945 today, German Generaloberst Alfred Jodl and Admiral Hans-Georg von Friedeburg signed the unconditional surrender



*Celebrations in London on 8 May 1945. (Wikipedia)*

documents at 2:41 a.m. at General Dwight D. Eisenhower's headquarters in Reims, France. At 2:27 p.m. "Lutz" Graf Schwerin von Krosigk, leading minister in the rump Flensburg Government, made a broadcast announcing the German surrender. World War II in Europe ended, and the Cold War began.

At this month's meeting we will have a show report and a talk by member **Mile Reeves**. Don't forget if you won the door prize last meeting, you are responsible for bringing a kit in for this month's drawing.

See you all at the meeting!

**Chris Chany**  
President



## Upcoming Quarterly Contest

**A**re you ready for our next quarterly contest at the **JUNE** meeting? As usual, you must be a member in good standing in order to participate (i.e. PAY YOUR DUES!).

The prize for the first place winner is \$40. Everyone who participated in the contest (except for the cash prize winner) is eligible to win the drawing of a recent armor kit TBA.

Note there is no limit to how many model you enter as long as your entry wasn't placed in our previous quarterly contests.

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upgrades as they are way north of the price of the actual kit. I did break down and purchase a turned replacement barrel from Aber (35L139).

Upon arrival of the kit, I checked the contents inside the box, which looked pretty good. Bronco gives you two options that mostly focus on whether you want to add mesh skirts (one-piece German *Toma* style) or go with bare fenders. Both involve the bulk of the kit's PE fret.

The kit comes with workable tracks, which are pretty nice. All the hatches on the hull top can be positioned open or close, but very little of the interior is provided. You get the complete gun mount, the driver's position, and nothing else! It is a pity as the hatches for the engine and transmission areas are huge, and they would have displayed those areas very nicely.

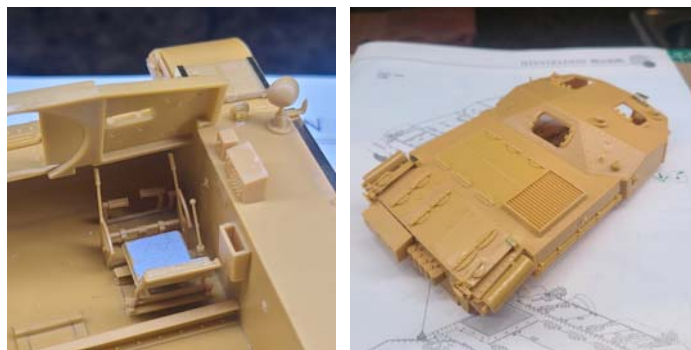
This kit also comes with two German-styled 55-gallon fuel drums, eight nicely detailed Jerry cans, and a sprue with a nice MG34 and a few small ammo cans. A string is provided for a cable, but no hooks are provided. Strange...

Another nice addition is a PE fret that is to be used as a template to spray the national insignia on the skirts (*Editor: a nice move by Bronco as decals will have a hard time settling on PE mesh surface!*).

Construction of the kit was straightforward. I spent the first few steps assembling the gun and mount, along with the driver's area. Next up was the suspension components where the bulk of the building takes place. It involved assembling various suspension components and joining them together before attaching them to the hull. This took me a couple of days to finish as Bronco wants you to have the suspension workable. I did not go down this route



as it was just too fragile. So everything was fixed with glue which made the suspension much more stable.

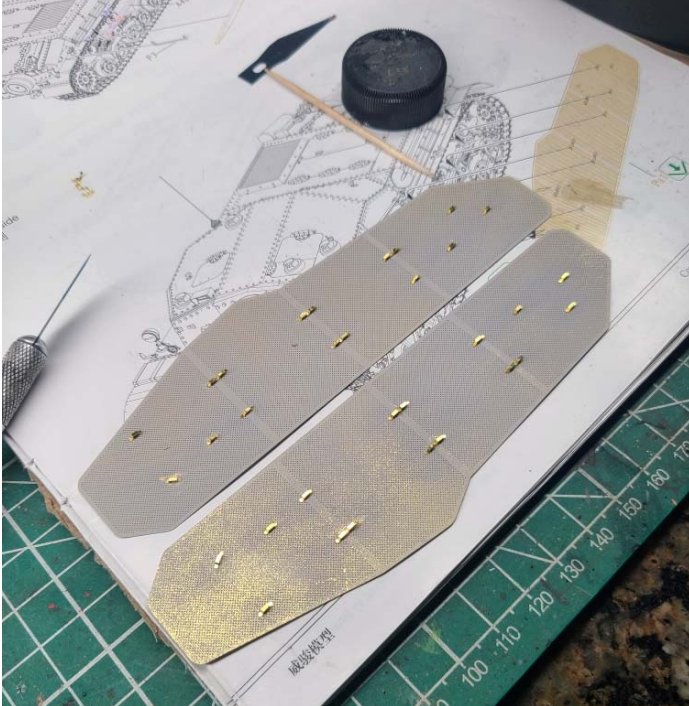


Next up was preparing the hull top for joining it to the chassis. On the inside I mounted various clear periscopes. Tools, jacks, Lights, etc. are all attached on the outside. Joining the upper to lower hull was not as smooth as it should be.

The last phase of the construction was the choice between fenders or skirting. Both options require plenty of PE, so choose your poison wisely. I opted for skirting. Various skirt hooks were attached to the fenders and chassis to which the skirts were hung from. Note that there are specific locations to attach these hooks. It was straightforward as their locations are easy to see.

Once that was completed, my attention turned to the inside of the skirts to attach the latches for the hooks. Again, it was straightforward with obvious locations to attach the latches. After painting and weathering,



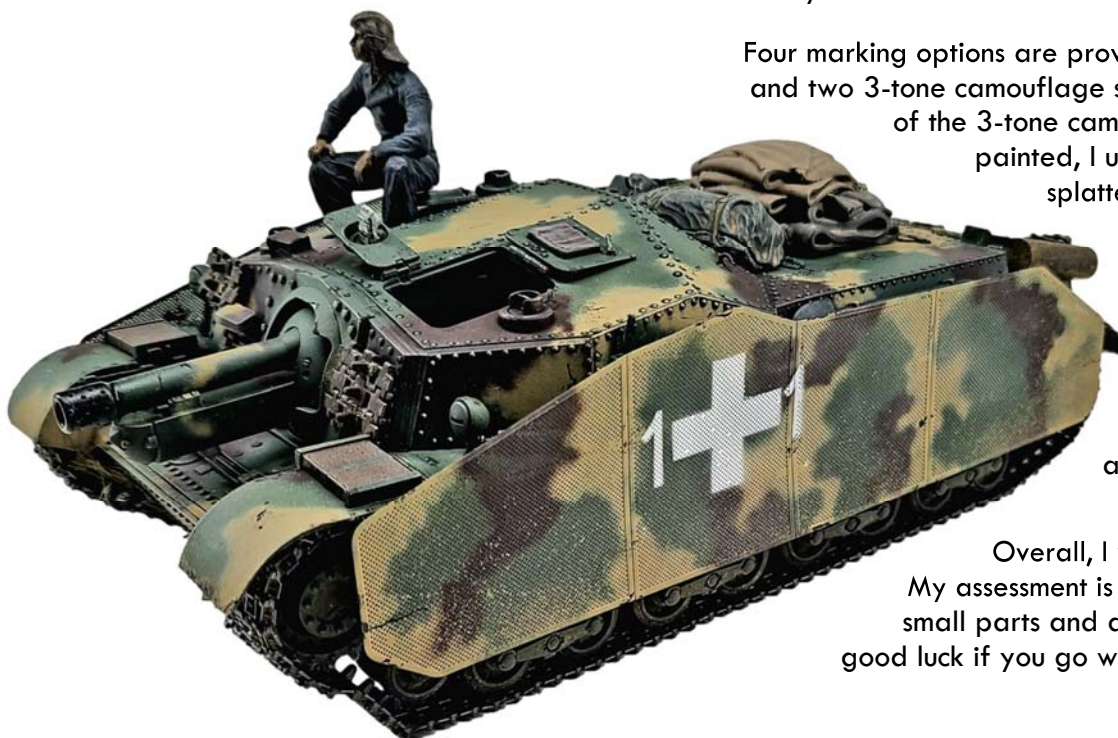


I went to hang the skirts and encountered alignment issues. The top hooks/latches lined up pretty well. The bottom ones: not so much (on both sides). I'll take the



hit for this, but I was super careful in locating and attaching all the hooks and latches... a bit frustrating to say the least.

Four marking options are provided: two overall green and two 3-tone camouflage schemes. I went with one of the 3-tone camos. Once the model was painted, I used various washes, dirt splatters, and light drybrushing for overall weathering and abuse.



The figure is from Miniart's Hungarian Tank Crew set (35157). I used the seated figure and placed him sitting on the driver's hatch.

Overall, I was pleased with the kit. My assessment is to go slow due to all the small parts and detailed suspension. And good luck if you go with the mesh skirt option!

**Greg**





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We accept cash, check, money order, or PayPal ([payaabs@gmail.com](mailto:payaabs@gmail.com)). For those who prefer to make a mail-in payment, our treasurer's address is:

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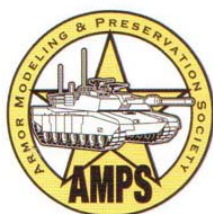
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## About Flaking Time!

by The Editor

*(Editor: this is an article I wrote for AMPS Boresight two years ago. For some reason it never made it to our newsletter. "Better late than never!" as my mother used to tell me. Enjoy!)*

**D**uring WWII on the Western Front, more German tanks were destroyed by tactical air strikes than by Allied infantry or armor units on the ground. The residual fear of *jabo* attacks deeply influenced Germany's post-war armor tactics and tank design. That might explain the reason for the inclusion of a 20mm AA gun in the turret of the joint US-Germany MBT-70 project (insisted by zee Germans

in their proposed Kpz.70, Bundeswehr version of the MBT-70). *Flakpanzer Gepard* (German for cheetah), the subject of this article, was another good example of a modernized version of the WWII-era *Wirbelwind* Self Propelled Anti-aircraft Gun.

My Tamiya's 1/35<sup>th</sup> *Gepard* kit is of 1977 vintage. It was based on the Leopard I kit



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released in 1975. Both kits shared many common elements (and inaccuracies), such as the lower hull, wheels, and good old rubberband tracks.



Now why did I pick this kit to build instead of the newer Meng or Takom release? Hear me out folks: it has to do with the other armor modeling club I secretly jointed some time ago...

To encourage members to reduce their stash, this club decided to hold a "Tamiya Classic" build contest. The rule was the kit that we picked to build had to be made before 1983, and we must build it straight out of the box without using any aftermarket parts. AND we had to use everything inside the box, figure(s) included! After a little bit of research, I decided Tamiya's *Gepard* kit was one of the better (not to mention easier) kit to tackle from that era. So I dusted off this classic from the darkest corner of my modeling closet and had a go at this *Iron Chef* style model competition!

## Construction

The assembly of this classic kit was pretty straightforward. I did not encounter any issues except for minor cleaning of seams here and there. It was ready for paint after spending a few nights gluing all the parts together.

Per the rule of the contest, I built this kit 100% "box-stock," including the rubberband tracks. One nice thing about the kit-provided skirts is that they hide the problem of the tracks not hugging all the road wheels and return rollers. Beware if you want to replicate a historically correct *Gepard* in *Bundeswehr* service, do not install the skirts. They were used only on demo and export (e.g. Dutch and Belgian) versions. Zee Germans preferred their cheetahs running "commando" style!

## Painting

Instead of a monotone Olive Drab suggested by

Tamiya's instruction, I opted for a more exciting 3-color camo scheme. I happen to have Takom's *Gepard* kit, so I utilized its color guide to help me with the placement of each color. Tamiya NATO colors (Green, Brown, and Black) were used throughout. Masking was done with silly putty.



The two 35mm Oerlikon barrels were painted with Gunze Mr. Metal Dark Iron (214) and drybrushed with Iron (212).

## Decals

The kit's decals were so old that they shattered when in contact with water! It was a good thing there wasn't any decal restriction for the contest. So I nicked a few markings from my Takom kit.

In case you wonder what "WFOR" means, it stands for Wetina Forces, the opposing side in *Bundeswehr* training and war exercises (we call it OPFOR in the U.S. Army). *Wetina* is the name of a fictitious nation after the Warsaw Pact broke up in 1991.

## Weathering

Due to the time constraint to meet the contest deadline, I only applied a pin-wash on the deepest panel lines and proceeded to paint on the highlights. Real *Gepards* apparently didn't get out much as most photos I have seen show hardly any dirt on them. So I just made my model a bit dusty by spraying on a fine layer of Tamiya Buff and Flesh.

## Figure



My Tamiya kit comes with a figure that I had to paint in order to comply with the rules of the contest. Most of Tamiya's figures made in the 70s were "sausage people" instead of proper figures as we

know nowadays. I did the best I could and called it done. Notice the color of his beret. *Gepards* were assigned to combat support units only, hence his beret is red. Black is for armor crew only.

## Coda

Sometimes a simple project like this one can bring enjoyment as much as a complicated one. Not all "classic" kits are bad. And yes, you can build a kit without all the aftermarket bells and whistles and still make it look decent!

Editor



flugabwehrkanonenpanzer





**IPMS METRO OKLAHOMA CITY**  
In association with SOONER AMPS

**OKCMetroCon**  
**2025**

**Saturday, June 21st, 2025 9am-4pm**

**Council Road Baptist Church**

Building is named "The Cube" north of main church building  
7903 NW 30th Bethany, OK 73008

Theme: **"The Silver Screen"**

Any subject eligible for the theme award must be tied to a specific movie and must have appeared in the movie

**AMPS Boresight (Volume 33, Issue 1)**

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

- ♦ **Big General's Little Ride** by Jesse Naughton
- ♦ **Stuart Memorial Tank Association**
- ♦ **Desert Training Center: CA-AZ Maneuver Area** by Roy Chow
- ♦ **M3A1 Stuart: Armored Recon**



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## New On The Block



If you like RSO, you will be glad to hear Miniart has just released an early production of it in 1/35<sup>th</sup>. Kits of the mid, late, and the 7.5cm PaK 40/4 versions are already on the way. One has to wonder if Miniart will follow up with the RSO/3 series...



Yet another 1/35<sup>th</sup> kit of the KF-51 from Amusing Hobby. This -U variant has an unmanned turret with an autoloader to reduce the number of crew from four to three.



Border seems to think there is a market for Gundam-like (no glue or paint required) 1/35<sup>th</sup> sci-fi armor kits. Their latest kit is called a "Tesla Tank." Bring it on, Godzilla!



Whether Rye Field Model's 1/35<sup>th</sup> Vietnam Sheridan is as good as Tamiya's remains to be seen, but the pre-release photos of the kit look damn good!

## 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."



AABS is the first scale model 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. Subjects of our interest range from WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Middle East, to the most recent war in Ukraine.

At each monthly meeting, we talk tanks, swap kits, and share our building techniques. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town trips to museums and modeling events. Every odd-numbered year, AABS hosts the biggest armor modeling show that attracts some of the best armor modelers in the Lone Star as well as neighboring states.

Since inception AABS is a local chapter of Armor Modeling and Preservation Society (AMPS), a national organization dedicated to the promotion of scale modeling and armored vehicle preservation.

For more info, please visit [www.ampscentex.org](http://www.ampscentex.org)