



Well guys, welcome to Volume 3, Number 1 of *The Wildcat*!

It really doesn't seem like we're an organization going on its third year, but it's true! Somehow, it feels to me like we just started up a couple of months ago, but I guess, like they say, time flies when you're having fun! And I know, I'm having fun, and I hope all of you are too. For me the best part of our little club is the camaraderie and friendship. I know that I've made a bunch of new friends who've brought a lot enjoyment to what is otherwise a solitary past-time and hobby. So, to all of you, I just want to say "thanks" for being there and for being a part of AMPS Central SC!

This last month, we've done quit a few things that have touched a lot of others in the AMPS world and in our larger community. Following on the heels of our participation in the 70th Anniversary Celebration for the Columbia Army Air Base, we've sent a donation to and have been accepted, as a group, in membership in the SC Historic Aviation Foundation. AMPS Central SC is now foundation "member" number 1097, and along with our membership card we received a very nice letter from the SCHAF president, C. Cantzon Foster, II, thanking us for participating in the CAAB anniversary event and complementing us on our "outstanding display." I don't know about you, but I found a lot of satisfaction in the opportunity to give back a little to our community, and hope that we can continue to contribute to the SCHAF's future endeavors (and besides, the exposure for AMPS and our club was also gratifying!).

This past month we've also sent funds to the AMPS Atlanta chapter to sponsor their show theme award at next month's regional contest. Again, it was nice to be able to give back a little to AMPS, the organization, and help out our friends in Atlanta with their show. While on that subject, I hope that all of you are looking at your calendars and trying to organize your schedules in order to attend the Atlanta AMPS regional show, 17-19 Feb, 2012. I know I've made my reservations and am planning on attending all three days. But even if you can't spare that much time, or the cost is too much, I hope that you're able to break away and at least get to Atlanta for Saturday, the 18th. The show does feature a pile of vendors, and some of the best armor and figure models in the Southeast will be on display. The show is definitely worth the drive just for the day. And don't forget, if you do attend, take a couple of hours and volunteer for a shift in the judging "pits." I know our Atlanta friends will appreciate it, and, as most of you know, there's no better way to get a good look at the models than to sit at the judges' table putting them on the turntable and under the spotlight!

This month, Tim Darrah has written up a very nice and detailed review of the Vulcan Models 1/35 scale Vickers Mk VI B light tank. A kit of this little, but very important vehicle, has long been awaited, and it looks like Vulcan Models has done the subject justice. Tim also introduces the "Devil Over the Atlantic" (DOA) paints that he used. These are a fairly new line of acrylic paints that are being formulated to match many of the more obscure British paint colors used during WWII.

So, guys, it looks like 2012 is off to a good start! We've got a lot in store for us this year, so I hope you're all strapped in and getting ready for the ride!

Last Meeting Minutes:

Our last regular meeting was held on 14 Dec, 2011. This was our Christmas party, and our friends at HobbyTown USA provided the refreshments. (Thanks Ryan and Keith!) We had 14 regular members in attendance, and in addition to the refreshments, we held our second holiday gift exchange. Tony Abbott ran the gift exchange, and everybody present participated with some strenuous "steals" and "swaps" coming in at the end.

Regular business conducted: A treasurer's report from Scott Amey; Discussion and vote approving a \$30 donation to the SCHAF; Discussion and vote approving a \$30 trophy sponsorship to Atlanta AMPS. (This was later amended to a \$50 sponsorship. 10 members voted by email to approve of the increase.); Discussion and vote approving our next contest and show theme – "Strangers in a Strange Land." (The theme description and rules have been drafted and distributed to all members for review.)

Next Meeting Agenda:

Our next meeting will be at 6:00 pm, Wednesday, 11 January, 2012. Reminder to all: Dues for 2013 are due, \$12 each! See Scott Amey who will collect your dues and mark you down as paid.

6:00 pm (1800): Meeting starts / Admin Business – This month's business (1) Read thank you letter from SCHAF (2) Discuss and vote on trophy sponsorship for AMPS 2012 International Show, Auburn, IN (3) Discuss and finalize our 2012 show theme description and rules "Strangers in a Strange Land"
6:30 pm (1830): Show & Tell: Builds and WIP's
6:50 pm (1850): Break / Shopping / Mixer
7:10 pm (1910): Reconvene / Continue: Show & Tell: Builds and WIP's
8:00 pm (2000): Meeting ends (officially – but we'll carry-on as long as the store will stay open)

Regular meetings are held on 2nd Wednesdays of each month at 6:00 pm (1800) at the HobbyTown USA store, 10120 Two Notch Road, Suite 5, Columbia, SC 29223, (803) 736-0959.

Up-coming Events of Interest:

Jan 11, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Feb 08, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Feb 17-19, 2012: AMPS Atlanta Regional Contest, Marriott Century Center Hotel, Atlanta, GA.

Mar 14, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Apr 11, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Apr 26-28, 2012: AMPS International Show, WW2 Victory Museum, Auburn, IN.

Apr 28, 2012, 9am -5pm: IPMS Mid-Carolina R-12 Contest, NG Armory, Bluff Road, Columbia, SC.

May 09, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Jun 13, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Jul 11, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Jul 14, 2012: AMPS Central SC Regional Contest, Gym, Ball Park Rec. Facility, Ball Park Road, Lexington, SC.

Aug 08 (T), 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road. (Date conflicts with IPMS / USA Nat'l Convention and may be moved to either Aug 01 or 15.)

Aug 8-11, 2012: IPMS / USA National Convention, Disney Land, Lake Buena Vista (Orlando), FL.

Sep 12, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Oct 10, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Nov 14, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

Dec 12, 2012, 6:00 pm (1800): Our meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road. Christmas Party anyone?!

Newsletter Feature Article:

Type: Builder's Kit Review

Subject: 1/35th Vulcan Scale Models #56008 Vickers Light Tank Mk. VI B

Source: HobbyTown USA, Retail Price \$49.95

By: Tim Darrah, AMPS #2545

The Vickers Mk. VI B light tank was used by the British Royal Tank Corps from 1936 to 1942 and was used in all of the major campaigns of early World War II – France, North Africa, Greece and Crete. So you'll have a variety of cool paint schemes to choose from. Also, according to Wikipedia, it served in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War; that would make an interesting kit. It was used by the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Egypt. The vehicle had a three man crew and with one .303 inch and one .50 inch Vickers machine guns in the turret. The completed kit is 4 ½-inches long, 2 3/8-inches wide and 2 1/2-inches tall, so it's a nice small compact kit. You just gotta put a figure in it to show just how small the real thing is.

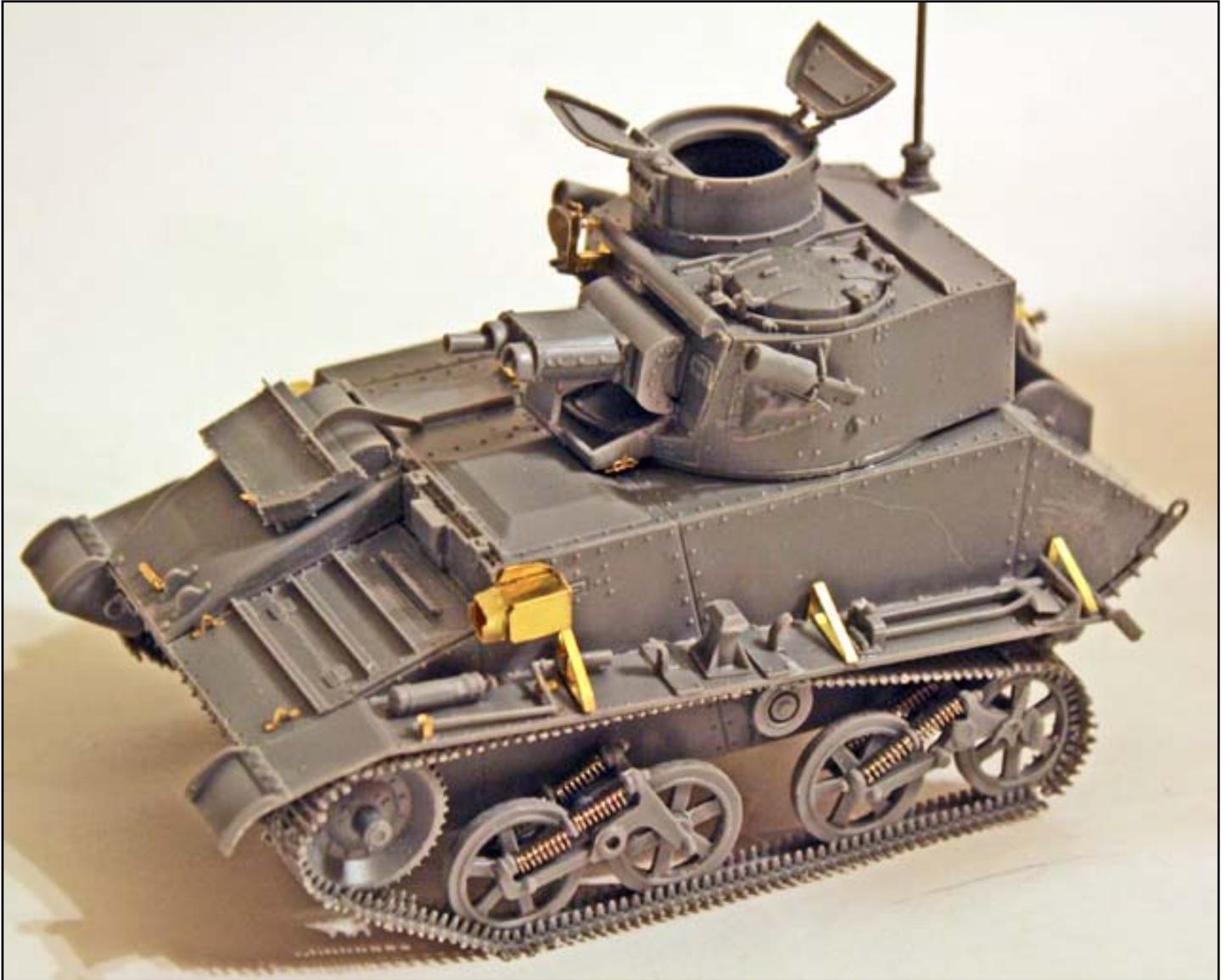


When Keith, from HobbyTown, sent out the e-mail that this thing was coming out, I knew that I had to get one. At \$50 it's a bit pricy, but it's the only game in town for this little tank.

Opening the box, you'll find a nice light grey plastic that the kit is molded in, but it is a tad waxy and is very easy to slice through if you have a new blade in your scalpel. I'm surprised at the flash on a brand new kit, but it is nothing that can't be taken care of with a swift wipe of a blade or sanding stick. The instructions are very nice, well drawn and on glossy paper that is better quality than some model magazines. One thing that you must watch out for, some of the detail drawings/sub-assemblies are

drawn right-to-left instead of the normal left-to-right. Before you start, you might want to mark the sprues with their letters/numbers as they are very faint.

I'm going to do this review a bit differently as I'll go step-by-step and give you hints on how to get around any problems that I faced. Hopefully you won't get bored. Also, as I'm doing this thing out-of-the-box for this review, I'll use the kit etched brass and decals. I'm not sure if any aftermarket parts or decals are available yet.



Step 1: Go ahead skip this and go directly to step 2. You'll see why in a second. Only do the sub-step shown in the right hand drawing in the instructions if you are going to display the driver's hatch open.

Step 2: Add the three parts in the left drawing as no problems were found. The middle step has you add the big rear springs, glue those to the hull, pay attention that there is a very small slot on the hull and a very small peg on the leaf springs. You can figure out that the brackets with the two rings go on the edge and the bottom of the leaf springs go inboard of the brackets that were attached in the left drawing. Once the leaf springs are attached, then go ahead and attach the cover plates as seen in Step 1. By doing it this way, you will be able to get the leaf springs in the correct position a lot easier. In the right hand drawing in this step, go ahead and add the bow plate as shown. You may add the driver's seat if you're going to have the hatch open. I'm not, so this will go into my spares box.

Step 3: No problems here. Part C-35 is in a separate bag taped to the green cardboard piece. It looks like the sprue was too big for the box and the factory removed the part and placed in on the cardboard. At first I wasn't going to use the P/E (photo-etched) bracket for C-35, but comparing the P/E with the plastic part, the P/E is a whole lot better.



Step 4: I glued the bottom two hatch parts (C-3 & C-25) together then I added that assembly to the hull. Get the outboard edge in the correct position as it might "droop" a bit on the inboard edge. Once this is done, then go ahead and add the driver's visor hatch. Finally, go back to step 1 and add the P/E brackets to C-4. They hold up the large driver's hatch if it's in the open position. The P/E rivets are very small, so good luck on getting those attached without feeding the Carpet Monster.

Now the real fun begins with **Steps 5 & 6** (not!): Putting together the suspension. Here I hope to help you out as the suspension was not fun to build

at all. The first assembly took me about 40 minutes to do (it's only 22 parts), but at the end I got it down to about 20 minutes.

Start off by cleaning up the road wheels for the first assembly and get those attached to the arms. You can build it so the leading arms can swivel, you will need to do this to help with those springs. My first attempt with this is how the real thing was built, by putting a nut at one end and build from there. This was defiantly the wrong way to do it as I lost two nuts (you only get 4 spares so be careful).

The best way is to assemble the suspension bogies is as follows:

Get the left hand drawing done, then take the brass rod (make sure you get the correct one as they are different sizes - a long one and short one - I didn't realize this until later) then add A-19 the spacer to the rod. Now take the small spring add that to the rod, then the fat spring (again watch out for different lengths), and repeat for the other side. Now slide the rod/spring assembly to the holes on the plastic boogie. Once that is in the correct position, add a bit of "instant glue" to the opening to secure the rods. While that is still wet, add the nut B-3 to each end. I know that it doesn't sound like much, but trust me, it'll kick your butt. On the one hand I wish that the spring assembly was plastic to make it easier, but on the other hand, once completed, it really does look good.

I went ahead and added the bogies to the hull as I completed each one and with a tweak here and there, all of the wheels lay flat on the ground. I then let the kit set for 24 hours before starting the tracks in step 7.

Steps 7 & 8: Add the boogies if not already attached along with the sole return roller. The kit comes with link and length track, something that I'm not a fan of. They unfortunately don't give you any spares, so if you break a link or length, you're screwed. They are very fragile, and the sprue gates are on the delicate sides of the links, very difficult to clean up. You also have to get them on correctly or you'll have a gap, like I do on the right side. The best way to remove the tracks from the sprue is using a UMM-USA Micro Saw (www.umm-usa.com, JLC Tools \$12.00 or \$22.05 for the Anniversary Packet, your best bet). It has very fine teeth and cuts right through the plastic like a knife through hot butter. If you are very careful, you might be able to get the tracks to remove in one piece for painting. To do that, just lightly tack-glue the drive sprocket onto the hull. I wasn't able to do this due to careless gluing of the tracks on my part, so they are permanently attached to the wheels. To me the biggest let down on the kit are the tracks, I would have liked vinyl tracks much better. At this point in time, I don't know if any aftermarket tracks are available, if they are, get them!! Even if it doubles the cost of the kit.



[Editor's Note: The Model-Kasten non-workable, plastic individual link track for the Bren carrier will fit the Vulcan Mk VI kit's road and idler wheels. However, the track pitch is slightly different between the Vulcan Mk VI B and the Tamiya Bren Carrier – which the MK tracks were made for. Also, the tank used a different design on its drive sprocket, so just switching the drivers is not an option. As of yet, no AM company – Fruil, Sector-35, or Spade Ace – has announced tracks for the Vulcan kit. I'm keeping my fingers crossed, though!]

Step 9: All we're doing here is attaching the fenders. Just make sure that the leading edge of the fenders match up to the leading edge of the bow plate.

Step 10: Use the P/E handles instead of D-29/-30, along with the P/E brackets instead of C-19, -21, & -22. I used the AM Works nuts/bolts set instead of the Vulcan ones as they are easier to work with. Pay attention to how the start handle goes together, they show the brackets from right to left. Also, leave off D-31 until after painting, it's the rear view mirror and will get broken off every easily. They also give you the option to use a plastic headlight cover assembly or a P/E one. I used the P/E one as it looks better. When you fold it up, add D-40 (the headlight itself) before you fold up the housing. I didn't & it was a pain trying to get it in there. I am surprised that the front and rear mud flap/fenders are not P/E as the plastic ones look a bit thick.

Step 11: You're adding the exhaust housing and the right side head light, so just do it like you built it for the left side housing.

Step 12: Here we are installing the exhaust pipe and the rear lights/license plate frame. No dramas here, you might need a bit of filler on the exhaust pipe, but not much. Also, pay attention to the drawing on how part C-15 is orientated.



Step 13: We are finally getting to the turret with some details that will be attached. My antenna D-35 was broken while still on the sprue. No real problems here; you need to drill a hole in D-5 for the antenna, but wait until D-2 & D-5 are glued and cured before the hole is drilled. It'll help to have a solid base before the hole is drilled.

Step 14: The two handles are fragile so be careful for bending. I plan on using a MV Lenses for the searchlight, so I'll wait until after painting before the cover goes on. Vulcan does supply clear plastic lenses, but the MV will look a ton better. You may want to add wiring for the light now as once it's on the turret; you will not have access to the back of the searchlight.

Step 15: Add the bracket & searchlight to the front turret plate then do up the mantle and guns, but do not attach it just yet. Wait until step 17 and part E-4/E-5 is installed, as this part is the travel lock and will need to touch the mantle between the two lower ribs.

Step 16: Again nothing major here. When you do up the aiming guide, P-17, the two brackets will fold onto each other with P-9 overlapping P13.

Step 17: Apply the travel lock first, then add the guns that you saved from step 15. P/E part P-4 goes on the left side of E-4 but bend the handle so it goes up against the side. At least that's the way it looks like it goes. You can have both the top hatches open or closed: it's up to you.

Step 18: Add the completed turret, and you're ready for priming then painting. It's a tight fit, so you might want to ream out the turret race just a bit; I cut off the two locking tabs, but I do that for most of my kits.

Painting & Decaling the Kit: The instructions give you markings for two vehicles both in G-3 Khaki Green and G-4 Dark Green. The first one, which is shown on the box art, is from the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment at Calais France in late May, 1940 with a hard-edged scheme. The second one is from the

3rd County of London Yeomanry with the 22nd Armoured Brigade, 2nd Armoured Division in Whittleford, Cambridgeshire, in September 1940. This tank has a soft-edged scheme with a big white ring around the base of the turret.

I hear you ask about those colors and who makes them: well here are the answers. The instructions give you mixes for Tamiya paints for both G-3 Khaki Green (XF-59 Desert Yellow+XF-62 Olive Drab 2:3) and G-4 Dark Green (XF-58 Olive Green+XF-61 Dark Green 2:3). Hannant's (www.hannants.co.uk) makes them in enamels, X814 Deep Bronze Green, X815 Mid-Bronze Green and X816 Khaki Green. I guess that you could use the Mid-Bronze Green for the Dark Green G-4 color, but I'm not sure. White Ensign Models (<https://www.whiteensignmodels.com>) also has them in enamel, they use weird stock numbers, so I won't provide those in case I dork it up and give bad information. I saw one idea of using Tamiya TS-28 Olive Drab with XF-27 Black-Green (I'm not too keen on that idea but it might work).

Finally DOA ["Devil Over the Atlantic"] Paints (<http://trackpads.co.uk>) has them as acrylic in the same type bottles as Vallejo. They make all three colors, and the colors are listed by name, so it's easy to find what you're looking for. I'm using the DOA Paints since A) I want to try something different and B) none of the hobby shops in Columbia have all of the Tamiya paints needed. They worked well, I sprayed them without thinning them and they went on so thin that I needed a second coat to cover the kit properly. When it dried, it had a very nice gloss to kit that eliminated the need for a gloss overcoat for decals & initial weathering.

Mike turned me onto two articles that accurately describe British camouflages during World War 2. They are



<http://mafva.net/other%20pages/Starmer%20camo.htm> and <http://www.network54.com/Forum/47208/message/1252022924/The+complete+Mike+Starmer+Acrylic+Paint+Mix+Database%21>. If you have any interest in British World War 2 military vehicles, print these puppies out for future reference: they are that valuable.

As this is an out-of-the-box review, I wanted to use the kit decals. They went on very well: I used just a touch of Solv-a-set, and they sucked down over the rivets extremely well. Only on two rivets did I have to poke a hole and reapply the Solv-a-set.

Be careful removing D-31, the rear view mirror from the sprue, I broke mine while trying to use my UMM micro saw. The figure is from the Tamiya Cromwell that I did last summer. Might as well use something I had on hand instead of ordering a figure.

OK, so was the kit worth all of the hassle? "Yep-er-buddy!" I'm glad that I bought it and have tried different things. It's not a Tamiya or DML kit, but it's almost as good. I just wish the tracks weren't such a pain.

“The Day Room”

In the US military, most company-level units have a “Day Room” in the barracks where the troops hang-out, relax, and BS. When you want to learn the latest in “rumor control,” you swing by the Day Room and chat-up the Joe's and Jane's hanging out there. They might not always get it right, but they're always willing to tell ya just what they think!

This month we have to finalize and approve our contest show theme for next July. I've sent out the draft theme description and eligibility rules, so please, review them and be ready to discuss and vote to finalize the theme at the next meeting (11 Jan, 2012). If you haven't received an email copy of the draft, let me know.

As you're looking over the draft theme, keep in mind what the purpose is of having a show theme. Of course, there's the interest and fun from an unusual theme, but in addition to that, the idea is to create an incentive to entice model builders to our show. In order to appeal to as many potential attendees as possible, we have to keep the theme somewhat broad – the more potential subjects that are eligible, the more potential model builders that might be interested in entering. On the other hand, there are judging practicalities that come in to play with trying to sort excessively large groups of models. In the end, though, with the AMPS judging system, the theme award is handled pretty much like all the other "best of" group awards. The top scoring few eligible models are compared and rank ordered with the number one model receiving the award.

Having said all of the above, though, there is something to be said for the KISS-principle, and the eligibility rules for our theme, as written so far, are a little convoluted. I've attempted to make the theme as broad as possible while still making it a special theme that not every model will fit. This was a little harder than I anticipated (which is why it seems so "wordy") so, some simplification and streamlining certainly wouldn't hurt. I don't think we want to send the entire meeting "beating this horse dead horse," but if you have some ideas, don't hesitate to bring them up.

Finally, and yet once again, I really do want to encourage everyone to try to get to Atlanta for their show. The majority of the show is Saturday with the awards done Sunday morning, so although it's billed as a three-day show, it's really only one and a half or two. If you want to enter, but don't want to get a room for Saturday night, I'll be willing to help you out with picking up your models and medals on Sunday. (Just be sure to hand-carry me around to be sure I know what you have on the display tables!) And don't forget what goes around, comes around with the judging, so sign up and help judge. We'll be grateful for the help when it's our turn next July!

Happy modeling!

Mike Roof

Chapter Contact

