



Hokey smokes, Bullwinkle! Has this last month been a busy one or what?

First off, I'd like to thank everyone in the club for all their hard work and the time they spent running the show. Great job, guys! If it hasn't sunk in yet, you guys pulled off something that very few can say they've ever done: In less than one year, you went from a cold-start / initial club formation to running a full-blown AMPS-style show with all the bells and whistles. I don't know of any other group that can say the same. Putting on contests organized and operated at the scale that our show was is usually the culmination of a couple of years of planning and preparation, yet you guys pulled it off in really only a few months. So, take a few moments to reflect on what you did and then pat yourself on the back. You deserve it!

Congratulations also to all the guys in the club who took home some "heavy metal" in the form of bronze, silver and gold medals at their first AMPS show! Several of you also took some of the "best of's," so on that level, the show was also a complete success. I know the AMPS judging methodology can be a bit intimidating at first, since it's so different than the usual "1-2-3-ye-out" systems used at other shows. This "unknown" aspect though shouldn't hold anyone back from participation in future AMPS shows.

Finally, many of you attended the judges' training and certified as AMPS judges. This is also another great accomplishment and one that you should be proud of. As our judging mentor Mike Petty told us, there are only about 100 certified AMPS judges in the entire country, and you guys are part of that small group. Hopefully your new understanding and experience as judges will help all of you to become more skilled model builders.

This month also sees the start of our second group-build. We've been fortunate to attract the attention of a corporate sponsor, *Alliance Model Works*, who is providing complete photo-etched update sets and other accessories for us to build and critique. This has allowed us to select a broader subject matter this time, the Panther Ausf. G series (to include the Jagdpanther). So, this time our group effort will focus on the techniques for building with PE instead of the basic kit construction skills.

This build should really be fun! And NO, you will NOT have to put tiny little *AM-Works* stickers on your Panthers like some *NASCAR* racer! (Although that's a fun mental image... "Here comes Ernst Barkmann into turn number three in his *AM-Works* sponsored Panther Ausfuhrung G...!")

Last Meeting Minutes:

Our last regular meeting was held on 13 July with 10 members in attendance.

Business discussed included final coordinations for our contest on 16 July, to include the 15 July set-up. Members also discussed and voted to participate in the *AM-Works* sponsored *DML Panther-series Smart Kit* and PE group-build with 8 members signing up.

Our raffle featured a Tamiya Leopard 2A5 along with an H.K. Creation Workshop resin conversion set to build the Swedish Leo-Strv 122. This combo was donated by Keith Frape. Scott Amey won the raffle, and we added \$28 to the treasury.

We only had three models for Show&Tell – I guess that most guys were holding back for the show!

Next Meeting Agenda:

Our next meeting will be at 6:00 pm, Wednesday, 10 August, 2011.

6:00 pm (1800): Meeting starts / Admin Business – This month's business:

- (1) Consensus for hosting another contest next year. Designate Contest Committee Chairman.
- (2) Line up volunteers to man our club-display / recruiting table at the Southeastern Toy Soldier Show at the State Museum on Saturday, 13 August.
- (3) Finance report on the status of the Treasury to include a vote on donations to the organizations that loaned us tables for the show.
- (4) Consensus and vote on expanding the size (page count) of our club website.
- (5) Consensus and vote on new club t-shirt order.
- (6) Discuss the establishment of a formal "executive" board.
- (7) Pass out group-build kits and PE accessories.

6:30 pm (1810): Show & Tell: Builds and WIP's

6:50 pm (1850): Break / Shopping / Mixer

7:10 pm (1910): Reconvene / Continue: Demonstration / Discussion on Photo-Etched parts

8:00 pm (2000): Meeting ends (This month we have to clear out by 8:00 pm sharp.)

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.

Classified Ads:

Tim Darrah needs **modern Russian tankers** for a project. He's specifically looking for figures that can fit into turret hatches. If you have any possible candidates that might fit the bill, please bring with to the next meeting and see what kind of "deal-deal" you can work out with Tim.

Up-coming Events of Interest:

August 10, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road. **(Our one year anniversary!)**

August 13, 2011, 7:00 am (0700) until ~4:00 pm (1600): Club display and recruiting table set-up at the South Eastern Toy Soldier Show, SC State Museum. **We need volunteers to help man the table!**

September 14, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

October 12, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

November 9, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

December 14, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road. **(Christmas party anyone?!)**

April 26-28, 2012, AMPS International Show, WW2 Victory Museum, Auburn, IN. (woo hoo!)

April 28, 2012, IPMS Region 12 Regional, hosted by IPMS Mid-Carolina "Swamp Foxes" at the SC National Guard Armory, Bluff Road, Columbia.

July 14, 2012 (Tentative), AMPS Central SC "Wildcats" Model Show and Contest co-hosted with the Mid-Carolina Chapter SCMA, Gymnasium, Ball Part Road, Lexington, SC

Armor Modeling Forums and Links for Interest:

This month we have several new links:

<http://scratchmod.com/Home.php> Excellent how-to tips on various extreme weathering techniques, to include good explanations on the "hair-spray" technique. Thanks Tony Kelly for this one!

http://www.missing-lynx.com/articles/other/oilpaintrenderingmr_1.html Michael Rinaldi explains his oil paint "rendering" techniques (color modulation, streaking and staining) with great step-by-step photos.

For the group-build guys, some Panther info:

<http://www.panther1944.de/en/sdkfz-171-pzkpfgw-panther/history.html> Not quite as detailed as the Jentz and Doyle reference books, but still very comprehensive. This site includes tables and indexes that show the dates that Panthers were delivered to the German ordnance depots and then issued to the units. This data include which units received Panthers and how many they got.

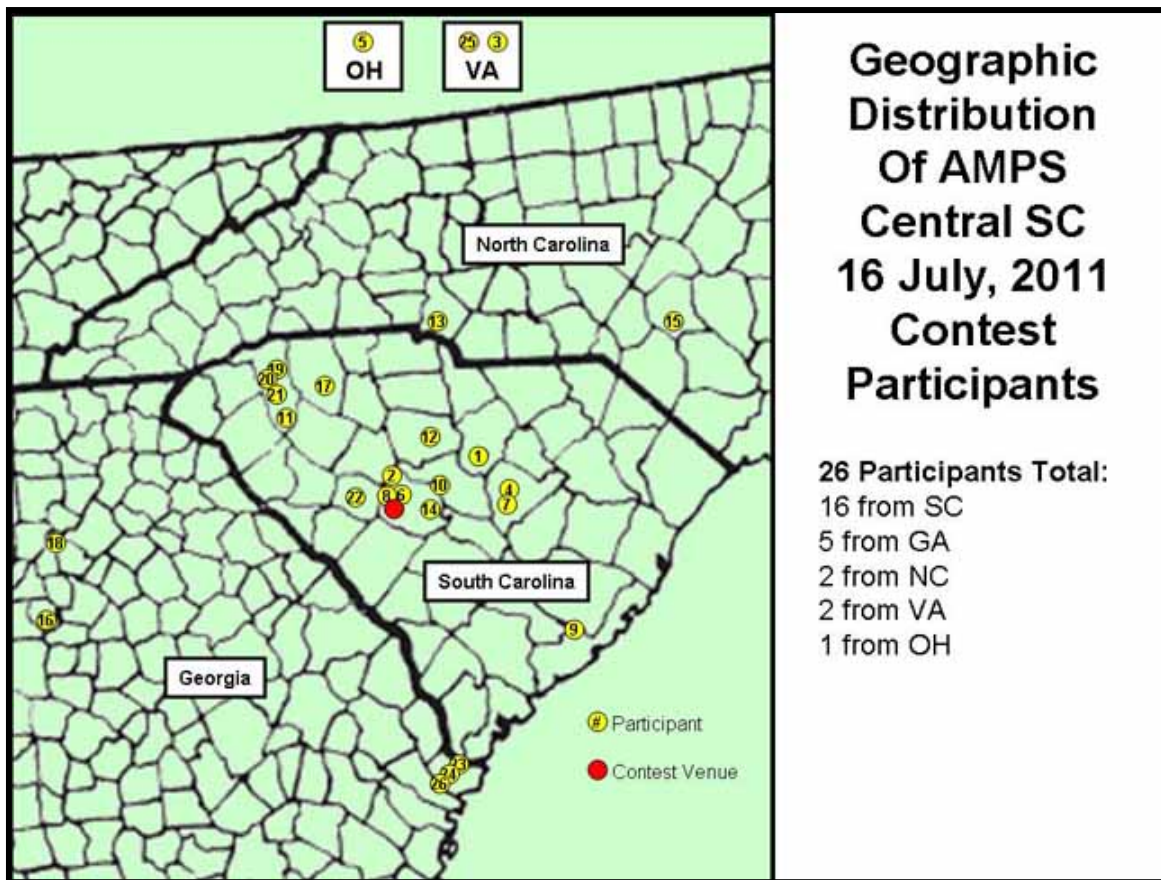
Also included is data on the Jagdpanther and Bergepanther. A great place to start your research efforts for the group-build!

Newsletter Feature Articles:

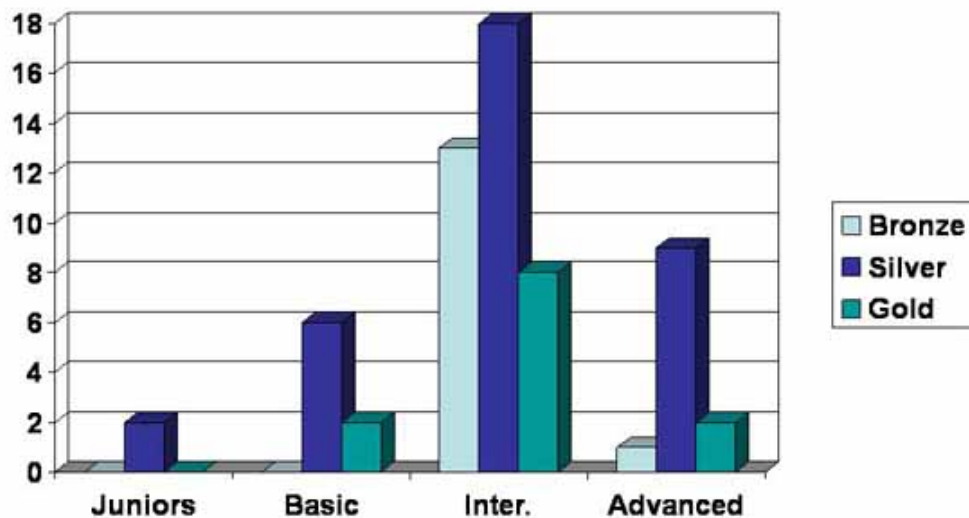
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AMPS Central South Carolina "Wildcats" Inaugural Show and Contest

The following slides show the statistics and other important data from our show and contest. This information will be useful to analyze our performance, predict trends, and make plans for the future.

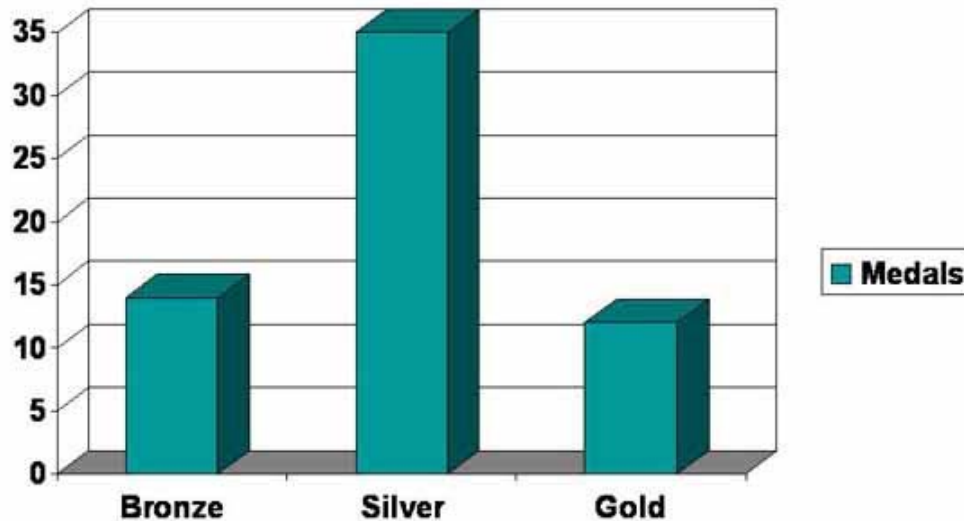


Medals Awarded by Skill-Level and Type



AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
 16 July, 2011 Show

Total Medals Awarded by Type



AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Medals Awarded by Skill-Level and Type

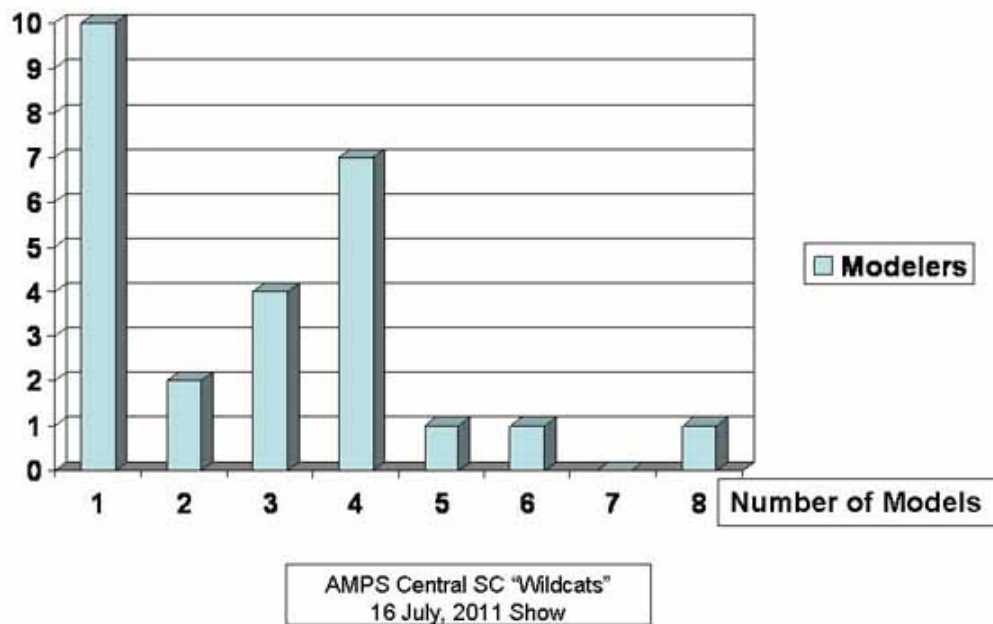
61 total medals awarded

- 12 Gold in all Skill-Levels = 19.7%
- 35 Silver in all Skill-Level = 57.4%
- 14 Bronze in all Skill-Levels = 23%

- Advanced: Gold-2; Silver-9; Bronze-1 = 19.7% received
- Intermediate: Gold-8; Silver-18; Bronze-13 = 64% received
- Basic: Gold-2; Silver-6; Bronze-0 = 13% received
- Juniors: Gold-0; Silver-2; Bronze-0 = 3% received

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Number of Models Entered by Participants



Number of Models Entered by Participants

75 total models entered for judging by 26 participants.

- 10 Modelers entered 1 Model = 38.5%
- 2 Modelers entered 2 Models = 7.7%
- 4 Modelers entered 3 Models = 15.4%
- 7 Modelers entered 4 Models = 27%
- 1 Modeler entered 5 Models = 3.8%
- 1 Modeler entered 6 Models = 0%
- 0 Modelers entered 7 Models = 3.8%
- 1 Modeler entered 8 Models = 3.8%

- Average number of models entered by each = 2.9

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

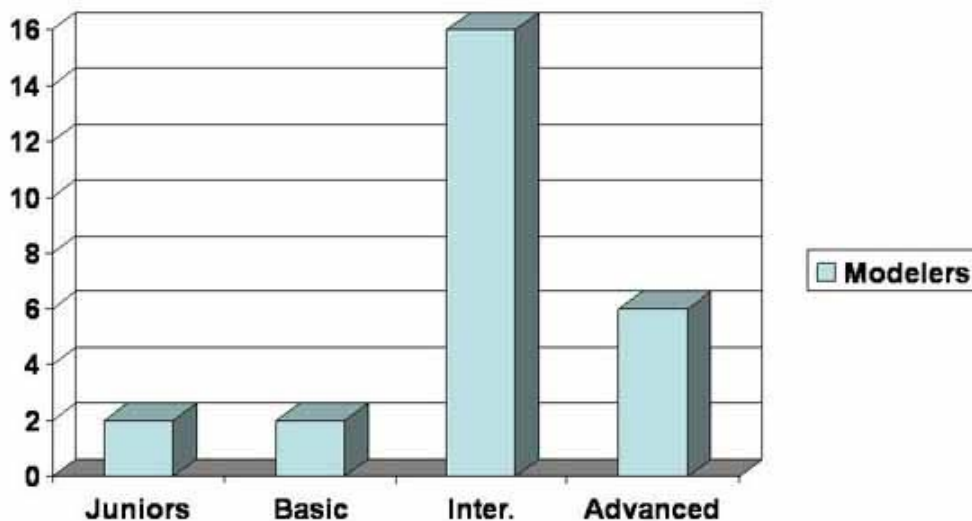
Numbers of Models Entered by Participants Adjusted and the Consequences of "Flooding the Judging System"

- Only 3 out of 26 participants entered more than 4 models.
- These three participants entered a total of 19 models, or more than 200% the average number entered of the other 23 participants.
- These 19 models equaled 26% of the 75 total number of models entered for judging.
- If these 3 participants and their models are taken out of the calculations, the average number of models per participant is reduced from 2.9 to 2.4.
- At a judging rate of 4.7 models per judging team per hour, these same 19 models took over 4 judging-team hours to judge.

Or, to put it another way, nearly 25% of the total 16 judging team hours were expended on only 3 of the participants!

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Modelers by Skill-Level



AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Modelers by Skill-Level

26 Participants entered in the show for judging

- 6 Advanced Modelers = 23% of total participants were awarded 19.7% of medals
- 15 Intermediate Modelers = 57.7% of total participants were awarded 64% of medals
- 2 Basic Modelers = 7.7% of total participants were awarded 13% of medals
- 2 Juniors Modelers = 7.7% of total participants were awarded 13% of medals

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Judging Shifts and Teams

- Judging was performed from 9:00 am until 3:15 pm, approximately six hours.
- We employed standard 4-man teams.
- Judging shifts were planned for 2 hours for a total of 3 shifts.
- Shift 1, 9:00 am to 11:00 am had 2 teams
- Shifts 2 and 3, 11:00 am until complete had 3 teams each.
- Thus, we had a total of 8 team-shifts ($2+3+3=8$), each approximately 2 hours long for a total of 16 judging team hours ($8 \times 2 = 16$).
- We employed the same 12 judges (3, 4-man teams) continuously throughout the entire time period.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Judging Shifts and Teams (cont.)

- We had 75 models entered for judging.
- Thus, teams judged approximately 4.7 models per hour ($75 / 16 = 4.7$).
- Although this rate is significantly lower than the standard estimate of 6-8 models per hour, the 12 judges at our show worked continuously with breaks controlled by each Table Captain.
- We were not able to use teams of new judges at the beginning of each of the three shifts because fresh judges were not available.
- Had fresh judges been available for each shift, the minimum number of judges needed to conduct the same 8 team-shifts would have been 22, assuming the first eight judges (2 teams) worked again during the third shift.
- Therefore, we would have required 10 more judges than we had to run our shifts as recommended in the AMPS Show SOP.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

Judging Shifts and Teams (cont.)

- The Bottom Line Up-Front:

The only way to increase the models per hour judging rate is to have more judges!

However, with a minimum number of dedicated judges who're willing to work continuously, judging can be accomplished to standard.

The issue then becomes the intersection of the hourly judging rate, the number of teams, the amount of time available to judge and number of models entered.

This intersection becomes the limit or capacity of the show.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

AMPS Atlanta 2011 Show Stats (For Comparison)

- Two-day Regional Contest
- 43 participants
- 91 models entered for judging
- 68 medals were awarded: 12 bronze; 32 silver; 24 gold
- Bronze = 17 %
- Silver = 47 %
- Gold = 35 %

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

AMPS Atlanta 2011 Show Stats (For Comparison) (cont.)

- Each participant entered approximately 2.1 models
- Each participant earned approximately 1.5 medals.

AMPS Atlanta Regional Show is the closest other AMPS show hosted in our general area.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

AMPS Central SC 2012 Show Planning Assumptions

- We will not have any more judges for our next show than we had at this show. We will have at least 12 judges available (8 from our club plus 4 more from other clubs).
- 75-80 models is the upper limit of the number that can be judged with 12 judges working full-time over 6 hours.
- The number of models per participant will be less than 2.9 (this year's number).
- For our second and subsequent years, modelers in our area will not desire to enter older models since all of their older work will have already been judged to AMPS standards. This desire accounted for the high average models per participant at our 2011 show.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

AMPS Central SC 2012 Show Planning Assumptions

- If the average number of models entered per participant declines to the same 2.1 average as the AMPS Atlanta 2011 show, then we can handle about 36 participants, a 37% increase in the number of show participants.
- It is unlikely that we'll get a nearly 40% increase in attendance. However, if the models entered per participant is not too high, we can handle such an increase.
- Assuming the average number of models entered per participants declines to our adjusted average of 2.4, then we can handle about 31 participants, a 20% increase in the number of show participants.
- We will restrict our show promotion efforts to limit our likely growth in attendance for 2012 to not more than 20%.
- We will continue to keep registration fees high for more than 3 entries per participant in order to discourage "flooding" the judging system.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

AMPS Central SC 2012 Show Planning Assumptions (cont.)

AMPS Atlanta 2011

- 12 Bronze = 17%
- 32 Silver = 47%
- 24 Gold = 35 %

AMPS Cen. SC 2011

- 12 Bronze = 23%
- 35 Silver = 57.4%
- 14 Gold = 19.7 %

The rate of medals awarded by level, bronze, silver, and gold will remain about the same for 2012.

The average number of medals earned by participants will not increase over the 2.34 medals per for 2011.

This number is likely to fall closer to the 1.5 medals per earned at the AMPS Atlanta 2011 show as our judges become more experienced and as local participants reduce the numbers of models each enters.

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

AMPS Central SC 2012 Show Planning Assumptions (cont.)

- Using 2.34 medals per participant as an upper range with a 20% increase of participants (an increase to 31), we should award no more than 73 medals in 2012.
- Estimated award numbers and rates for 2012 are:
 - 14.6 Bronze = 20%
 - 38 Silver = 52%
 - 19.7 Gold = 27 %

AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"
16 July, 2011 Show

"The Completely Unauthorized, Slightly Abridged and Totally Incomplete History of Photo-etched German Tool Clamps"

This little missive started out as your ordinary product review, in this case for the "Alliance Model Works" ("AW-Works"), LW 35046 PE German Tool Clamp set. However, since our club has started a new group build which features the "AW-Works," LW35054 PE Set for the Panther G, a review of the tool clamps (which are included in the Panther set) seemed a bit redundant and over-come-by-events...

But the more I looked at the "AW-Works" tool clamps, and especially after building a pill bottle full of them, the more impressed I was. My high opinion is a result of almost 25 years of building numerous PE detail sets, many of which included various renditions of the common and lowly German tool clamp. As I thought about this long (and often very aggravating!) experience, it occurred to me that you, my fellow travelers, might not appreciate just how far things in the PE accessory world have progressed, especially for armor modelers!

No my friends, PE for armor models has not always been with us... There was a time, long ago, when PE parts weren't even regularly included in kits. In fact, there was a time when there were NO photo-etch parts or sets available for armor models!

The earliest armor-model specific PE parts that I know of were developed by Steve Zaloga for his 1/35 scale US T-30 halftrack. His model was based on the old "Tamiya" M3 halftrack, which I'm sure that many of you are familiar with. Mr. Zaloga introduced PE to armor modelers in a Fall, 1983 *Fine Scale Modeler* article (p.30). In this article, he showed the hand-drawn art work which he had sent to a contractor to be turned into PE idler and drive wheels for his halftrack along with PE parts for the fighting compartment floor. He also offered these parts (through an intermediary) to other model builders, so in a sense, these wheels were the first commercially available armor model PE. This commercial effort was very proto in nature, and honestly, it stretches the commercial point just a bit.



However, Mr. Zaloga gets the props for being the first to offer a PE accessory set for armor models.

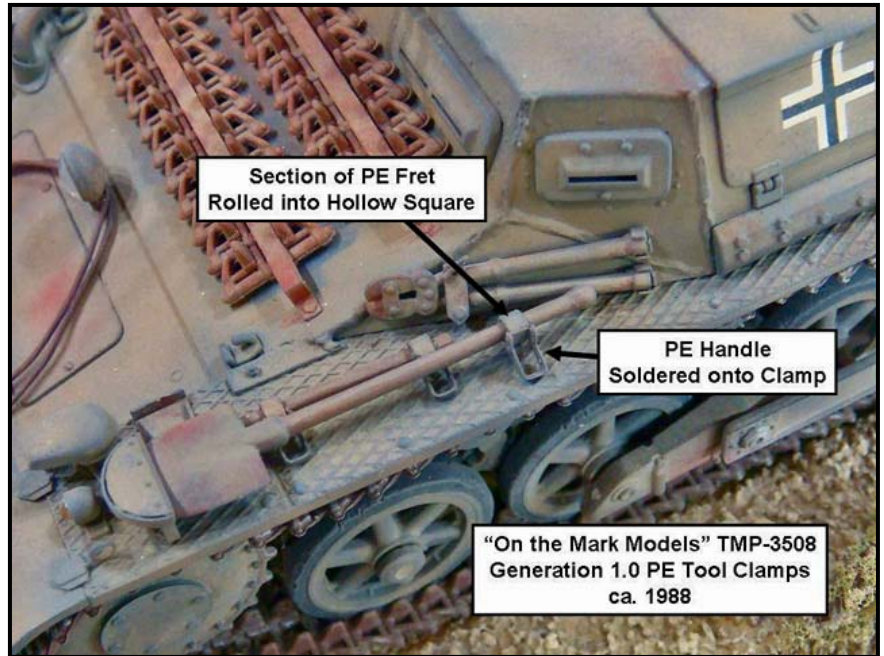
Having said that, though, the real credit for the first commercially available armor model photo-etch sets has to go to Mark Persichetti of "On the Mark Models" ("OTMM"). Mark made his first sets available in 1987, and in my opinion, these "OTMM" PE sets were the start of what we recognize today as the PE after-market accessory business. "OTMM"'s first advertisements appeared in the April, 1988 *Fine Scale Modeler*, and their products were available at least until the mid-90's.



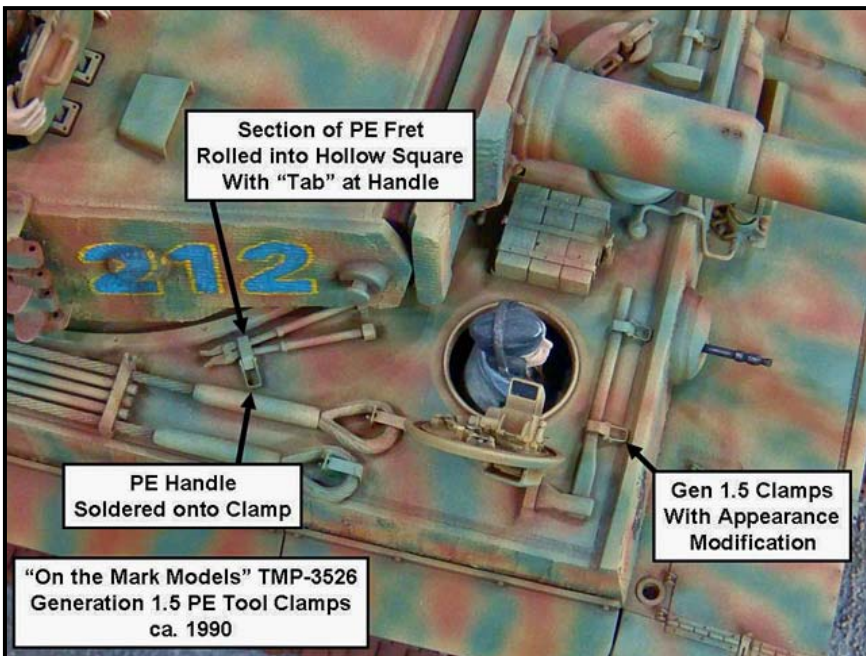
The earliest "OTMM" PE set that I ever used was TMP-3502 (?) for the "Heller" R-35 tank (copyrighted 1987) which I built in 1988. Another very early "OTMM" set that I also built was TMP-3503 (also copyrighted 1987) for the "Tamiya" T-34. These early sets were a little "over-scale" by today's

standards, but they were perfectly buildable and greatly enhanced the kit details. These sets were also "designed by a modeler for modelers." Mark included wonderfully detailed instructions that often included templates and research notes for accurizing the base kits. In my opinion, no PE manufacturer since has done such a good job with their instructions.

The earliest "OTMM" set that I know which included the German tool clamps was TMP-3508 released in 1988. This set was for the "Italeri" Pz I and the "Tamiya" Pz II (both combined in the same set). I built the "Italeri" Panzer I with this set in about



1988-89 and photos of the tool clamps can be seen to the right. These clamps, which I'll call Generation 1.0, were formed from two pieces of brass. One piece, the clamp body, was formed from a section of the PE fret cut to length and formed into a hollow box shape. To this box was attached the PE clamp handle. These handles had to be either glued, or preferably for strength, soldered. As can be seen in the photos, these clamps were pretty good looking, and they made an astounding improvement on the kit's appearance.



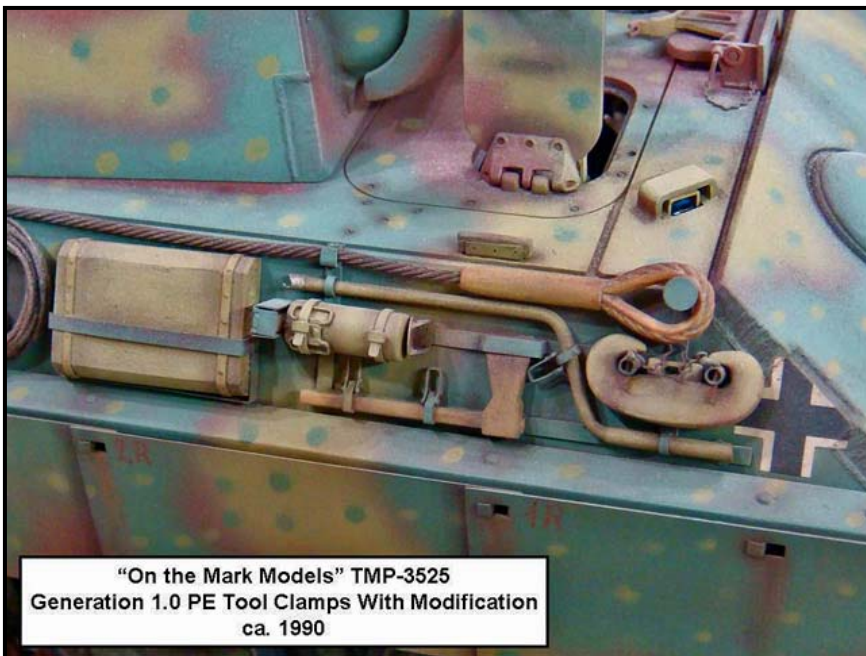
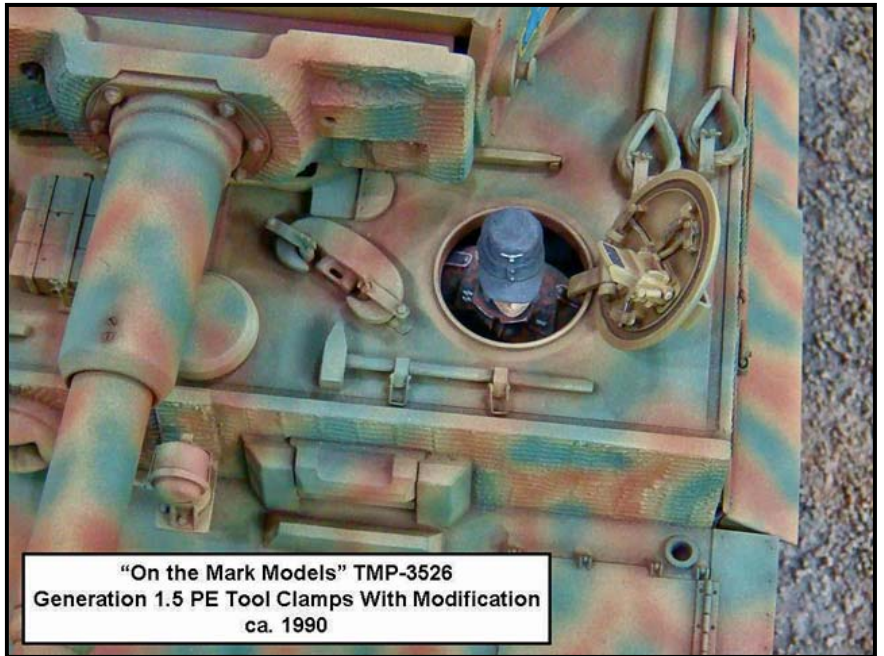
"On the Mark Models" never really changed their German tool clamp design, and even their final sets included clamps that were essentially the same as the clamps included in the Pz I/II set. I did learn over the years to improve the appearance a bit by leaving a "tab" sticking off the clamp body box. This replicated the latch part of the clamp a bit better and increased the soldering area for the handles. Later versions of the "OTMM" clamps can be seen in the accompanying Tiger I and Panther G photos. For discussion sake, these improved clamps can be thought of as Generation 1.5.

As an aside, "MB Models," a resin kit and accessory maker in the late 80's and 90's, included PE parts designed and etched by "OTMM" with several of their full resin kits and conversion sets.

At about the same time, circa 1987-88, "Gunze-Sanyo," an Asian specialty plastic kit maker, started to release a series of "High Tech" kits that included injection molded plastic parts with white metal and PE details. These "High-Tech" kits were the first mainstream plastic kits that included PE. However, the "High Tech" kit series was short-lived, very expensive, generally out of reach (and unknown) to most model builders, and the PE parts were never available as "aftermarket"

accessories. Still, "Gunze-Sanyo" predated "MB Models" including PE in their kits, so they should get credit for another milestone in the armor-model PE story.

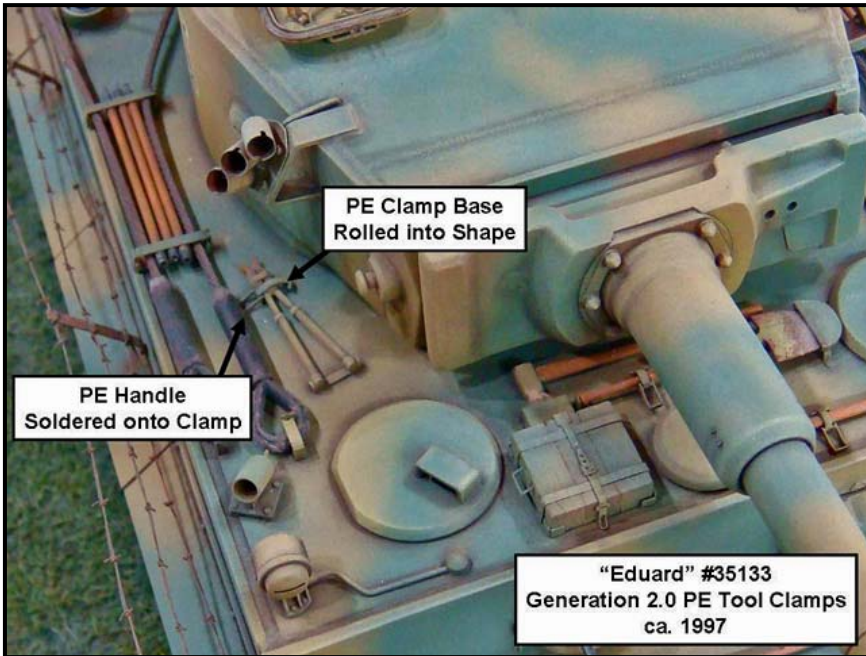
Close on the heels of the "OTMM" PE sets came "The Show Modeling" ("TSM") sets from Japan. None of the old "TSM" PE frets or instructions that I have show any copyright dates, but I believe the earliest sets that I ever got must have dated to around 1990. Interestingly enough, the first "TSM" PE set, #001, was a copy (I don't know if it was licensed or not) of Steve Zaloga's US halftrack drivers and idler wheels.



"TSM" produced what must be the most difficult of all PE sets to build. The material used was a very hard stainless steel that could not be annealed no matter how hot you made them. Also, the engineering was a nightmare with lots of edge-to-edge and butt joints (with no gluing or soldering surface area to speak of), and the sets included horrible "picto" instructions that were hard to read. However, they could be built. I've used several sets for things like the Italeri VW Kubelwagen (which included "TSM's" own version of the flat strip and PE handle Gen. 1.0 clamps.). However, their German tool clamps were usually just PE handles

that could be glued onto the kit parts to slightly improve the plastic part's appearance. Honestly, I never used any of these always going for one of the other manufacturer's complete PE replacement clamps. For this reason, I consider "The Show Modeling" German PE tool clamps (just handles, really) to be an "evolutionary" dead end (devolutionary?), and designate them Generation 1.0.1. I've included pictures of a couple sets of "The Show Modeling" German tool clamp handles at the end of this article to satisfy your puerile interest in the "side show macabre." (And also because I never used them, so they're still hanging around cluttering up my PE stash box!)



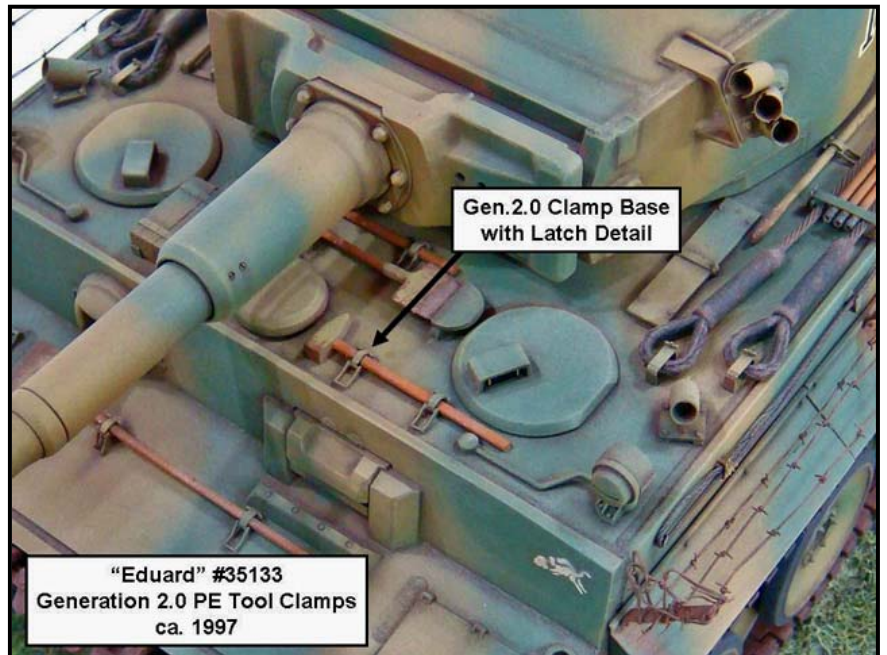


During the early 90's, "Verlinden" jumped on the band wagon with some rather heavy-handed Gen. 1.0 PE efforts, but "Verlinden's" early PE sets always seemed to me to be more of an after-thought and secondary to some of their other accessory lines, like their resin and dry-transfers. Their early PE was designed and engineered comparable to other contemporary sets, but they generally suffered from poor quality control with over-etching and out-of-register etching common. This rendered many parts unusable no matter how nice they were designed. And certainly, in the early years, "Verlinden" never released any PE sets that were as

comprehensive and innovative as their competitors.

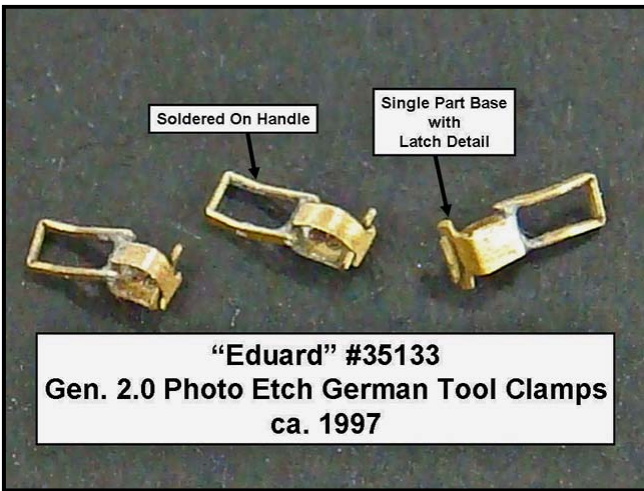
"Eduard" released their first PE sets in 1992 (set 35-002, US Jeep was copyrighted 1992). "Eduard" also made the next real improvement on the German PE tool clamps. I'm not sure exactly when they

came out with their first PE German tool clamps, but the earliest set that I ever used with them was #35-133 for the "Tamiya" Tiger I (new kit). I built this set in about 1998, and it's copyrighted 1997. But "Eduard" could have been using the design earlier. These clamps improved on the Gen. 1.0 design by including a PE clamp latch / body part to replace the plain folded PE fret box used by "OTMM." And for the first time, there were also "fold lines" etched into the tool clamp parts eliminating the need for the careful measuring required by the Gen 1 clamp designs. These new clamps made a significant improvement in the "look" of the PE details. I've included photos here of these Generation 2.0 clamps on a "Tamiya" Tiger I and in a side-by-side comparison with "AM-Works" below.



In about 1994, "Tamiya" released the first PE by a major plastic kit manufacturer for use with their armor kits. These were separate "up-date" sets for "Tamiya's" new Panther G, Tiger II and Tiger I kits that included etched engine deck screens, commander's vane sights (Panther) and anti-aircraft MG ring sights (Tigers). Although these PE parts weren't actually included in the kits (they had to be purchased separate), they were the harbingers of the "mainstream" injection modeled kit PE details.

Sometime around 1995, "Aber" released its first PE sets. "Aber's" "workable" PE German tool clamps followed a couple of years later. At the time, the reviews were very favorable and from the few that I saw built up, these clamps looked very nice indeed. Of course, some modelers claimed they were "un-buildable" or the extra detail was superfluous and unnecessary. At the time, I could never find a local hobby shop source for "Aber," and the price to order them from overseas was always prohibitive. For these reasons, I don't have any first-hand experience with the "Aber" tool clamps (so no examples of the PE or models to photograph), but, since these were the first "workable" PE German tool clamps, I'll designate them as Generation 3.0, as an obvious evolutionary step forward over the Gen. 2.0 clamps.



During the following years of the late 90's and early 2000's, several new PE manufacturers came on



Comparison Between:
“Alliance Model Works” (PE Clamp Gen. 3.5)
and
“Eduard” (PE Clamp Gen. 2.0)
Photo Etch German Tool Clamps

offerings. I'm sure they are the most commonly available, and that they also offer the most sets available from any single manufacturer. Their sets are usually very easy to build, if a bit basic in design and detail. "Eduard" should also get some credit for their "printed" PE designs that include parts that are not only etched but also "pre-painted." So far they haven't offered many of these sets for armor models, but I'm sure they're coming. (A recent "Eduard" release that's notable is a set of German radios with the dials and instruction placards pre-printed on their faces. Very cool, but not tool clamps...)

So, for the last 15 years or so, the "Aber" Gen. 3.0 "workable" German PE tool clamps have been the standard for these details that all others have been measured against,

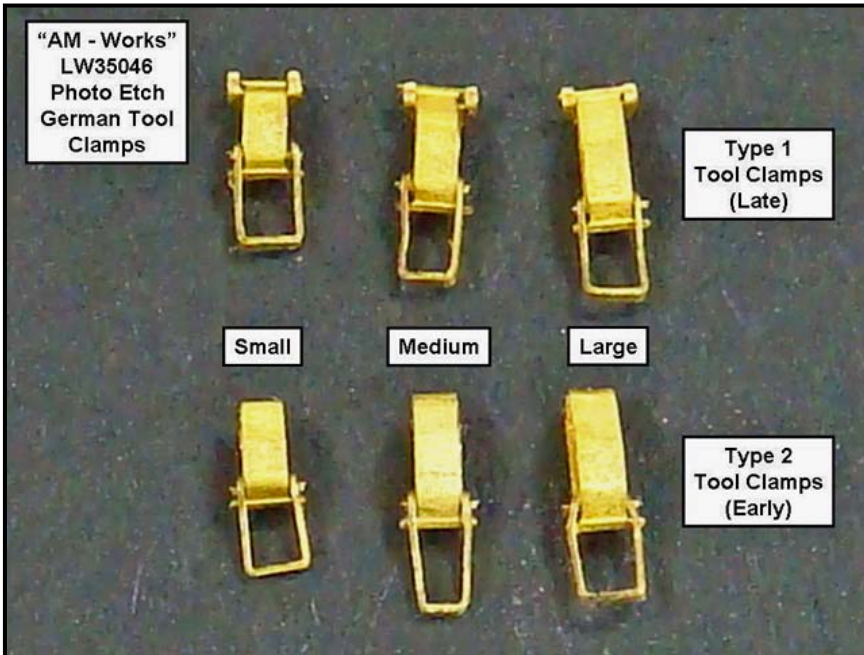
to the scene, "Blast," "Lion Roar" and "Voyager" being a few of the most well known with the old standbys "Eduard" and "Verlinden" continuing their PE offerings. Additionally, the inclusion of PE parts in mainstream injection molded kits became common with manufactures like "DML," "Cyber Hobbies," "Bronco," "Trumpeter," "Hobby Boss," etc. Even "Tamiya" now occasionally adds the odd PE bits to their kits.

"Eduard" deserves some extra credit for the sheer profligacy of their PE offerings.



that is, until "Alliance Model Works" released their own versions.

How has "AM-Works" improved on the "Aber" workable clamp concept? Well, first, the "AM-Works" PE sets are from a domestic US company (although the etching is done overseas). This means that they're available - easily available. The best PE in the world does you no good on the work bench if you can't get it.



Secondly, the "AM-Works" PE tool clamps are etched on an adhesive vinyl backing sheet (called "connectionless" by "AM-Works"). This eliminates the PE fret attachment points for these delicate parts which also eliminates the need to cut the parts free and clean them up before assembly, preserving the detail and saving time and effort.

Third, the "AM-Works" tool clamps come in the two distinct styles (or types) of the prototypes. These are the early / initial design where the latch hooks across the full width of the clamp's body and the later design where the latch is held by a "T-bar"

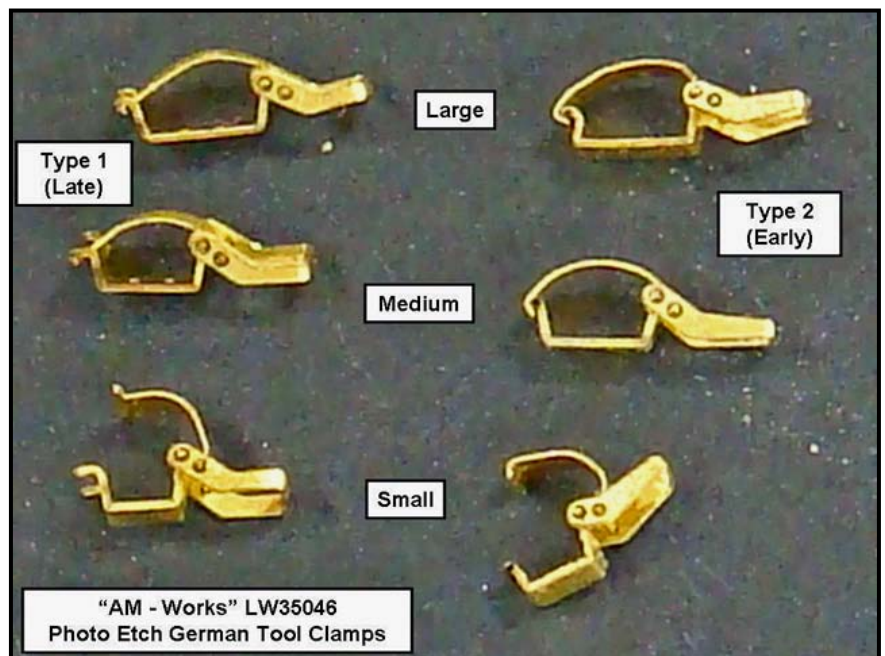
that engages two fingers on the upper corners of the clamp's body. So, "AM-Works" gets a leg up on the "historical" accuracy scale.

Finally, the "AM-Works" clamps come in three different sizes in each of the two styles. This also addresses the "historical" accuracy issue since the actual clamps on any vehicle also varied in size. Even though their method of function was the same, the clamps were sized differently to fit different sized tool handles and parts, so the "AM-Works" set allows the modeler to use clamps that are matched to the size of the kit tools.

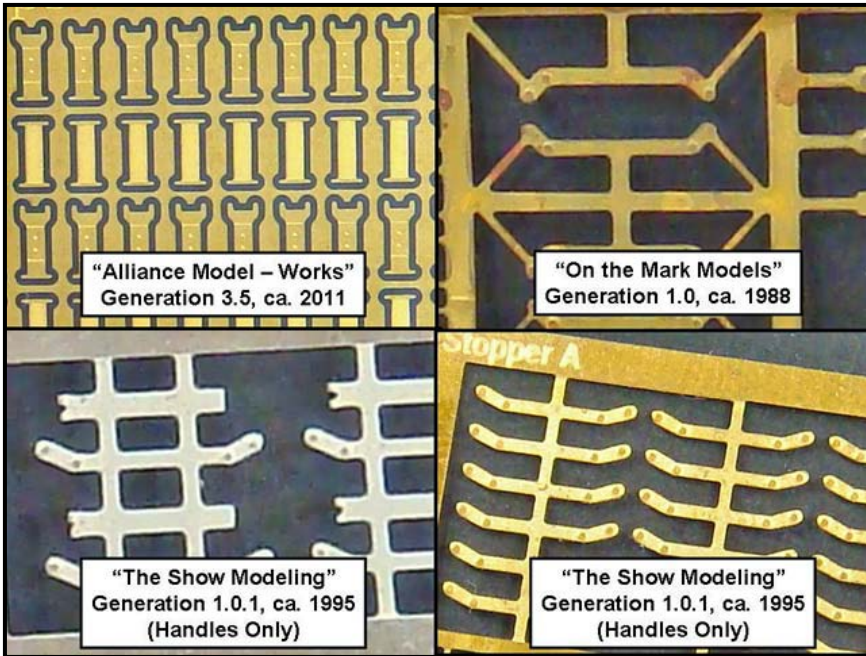
I think all this has earned the "AM-Works" PE tool clamps the designation of at least Generation 3.5 (if not Gen. 4.0).

So, how do the "AM-Works" Gen. 3.5 tool clamps compare to the Gen. 1.0 clamps in detail? Well, I think you can see for yourself in the comparison photos that the newer clamps are more to scale in size and offer a more "correct" appearance.

Another important difference is in "buildability." The earlier versions of the tool clamps were certainly "buildable," but this wasn't easy by any means. The PE fret had to be



carefully cut to length to ensure consistency in the clamp bodies. These strips then had to be folded to a standard size. The PE handles then had to be cut from their frets, the attachment burrs cleaned up, and then they had to be folded to shape and finally glued (with almost no practical glue area) or soldered to the previously made clamp body.



These new "AM-Works" Gen. 3.5 clamp parts still have to be folded or shaped, but there is no need for clean-up since there are no fret attachment points, and the parts assemble without the need for any glue or solder. Of course, the added fidelity to size and detail comes with the price that the parts are a bit smaller than their Gen. 1 counterparts and fitting the parts together is best done while using some magnification aid to vision.

So when it comes to armor model PE accessories, as the old commercial slogan said, "You've come a long way, baby!" We armor-modelers are living in a Golden Age when it comes to after-market accessories, and in

particular with photo-etch parts. We've gone from the proto-commercial experiment by Steve Zaloga, through the early days of "On the Mark Models" and "The Show Modeling" Generation 1.0 sets, through the "Eduard" Gen.2.0 expansion years, into the first "uber-detailed" Gen. 3.0 sets offered by "Aber." Now, in 2011, we have "Blast," "Voyager," "Lion Roar," and others, along with the newest Gen. 3.5 sets from "Alliance Model Works."

Mike Roof
AMPS #1632
AMPS Central SC "Wildcats"

"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 Joes and Janes hanging out there. They might not always get it right, but they're always willing to tell ya just what they think!

Well, guys, that's it for this edition of the "Wildcat." Thanks again everybody for all your hard work on the contest. It was a great success, and I hope we can do it again next year.

See ya all at the meeting on Wednesday,

'Til then, Happy Modeling!

Mike