

Model Cars

December 2013 • Issue 182

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Chuck Most takes a "Commercial Break"



BIG MERCYS: 1939-1970



Gene Winfield's Jade Idol

Also... Gregg's Five Favorite Tips *and much more!*



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EDITOR'S CORNER

A Christmas wish list

As modelers, we all have our favorite types of models, and most of us have been disappointed when once again the manufacturers fail to make a kit of the 1939 Hupmobile or whatever kit you have wanted for years. I have been waiting since the late '50s for someone to make a 1927 Ford roadster kit, but nobody has—except in resin.

Why a '27 Ford, you ask? Well, it was the first car that was turned into a popular hot rod. Yes, the '32 had the flathead V8 which became the engine of preference, but the '27 was the cool looking one. Ok, I know I probably will never see it in kit form, but I can still dream.

Every once in a while someone comes up with the idea of listing their top five wish list for the kit manufacturers to hopefully produce. Surprisingly, in the past few years some of those kits have found their way to the shelves of the local hobby shop. Ten years ago I would have never believed that there would be an early Kurtis midget kit or a '50 Olds, a Chrysler 300, or early '50s Hudson Hornet kit manufactured, but it happened. This just goes to prove that there is hope for just about anything to be made into a kit. However, the cost of making a new kit from concept to the hobby shop shelves is in the six figure plus range, so the manufacturers have to think long and hard before dropping that kind of cash on anything new.

Alright Santa, it's time for my top five wish list, so pay attention.

1. 3-in-1 1927 Ford Model T with coupe, roadster and pickup options.
2. 1955 Lincoln Continental Mark II. Classic lines, a great looking car.
3. 1954 Mercury two-door hardtop. Next to the '49 Fords and Mercurys, a customizer's dream—plus it could be built as a nostalgia NASCAR or factory stock model.
4. The re-issuing of certain Revell Parts Packs. They had so many options, a builder could go into meltdown just thinking about what to build with them.
5. A 3-D printer and the ability to run it properly. 3-D printing is going to revolutionize the aftermarket in coming years. Having the ability to reproduce parts in minutes for any project, who'd have ever think it.

Well boys and girls, I've made my wishes known to Santa. Now I'll have to wait and see what happens, but I'm not holding my breath. How about you? What would you like to see under the tree this year? Hopefully it's not another Mustang, Camaro, Corvette, Firebird or Thunderbird kit—don't we have enough of them already? Whatever your wishes are, I hope you will receive all of them. We need to support the people who make our hobby possible whenever we can. Tell your family if you want a specific kit or tool. Give them a kit or part number to avoid getting something totally unwanted—and encourage them to buy from your local hobby shop. These businesses are disappearing fast and deserve support from all of us.

That's about it from me for this issue. Normally this is where Gregg would say something in Hawaiian that means Season's Greetings and Happy New Year, but I'm not bi-lingual, so all I can do is say I hope all of you will have a joyous holiday season and a better and happy 2014. Now get busy and build something. Adios from SoCal...

Darryl Gassaway

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New Products



Dremel



Dremel sent their new cordless variable speed high performance Lithium-Ion powered rotary tool (#8220, \$130). It is an impressive power house, that's for sure. If you are used to the older, smaller, hand-held AA-battery powered Dremel tools, then you are in for a surprise with this one. It is not small...far from it. It's a work-horse of a moto-tool, and it should last you a lifetime. I love the way it feels in your hands. It is solid, doesn't feel plastic-y, and is well-balanced. It comes with a carrying case, a small assortment of bits and tools, and a free-standing charging stand. It's a great moto-tool, and it will be used on our workbench for many years to come.

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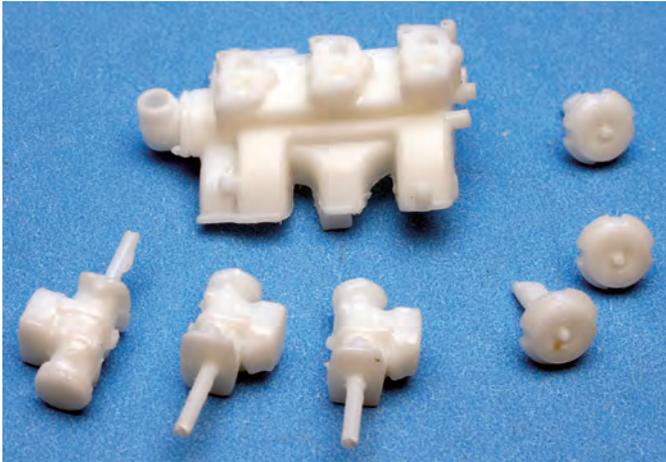
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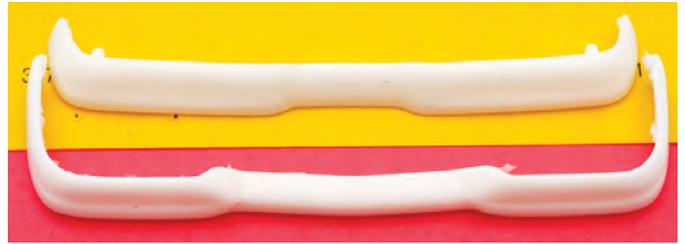
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Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland

Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland always seems to be on top of the new kits that are being released. This time, they have released a few new goodies for the new Revell '57 Ford kit.



Tri-Carb Intake Manifold (P-143, \$6.50) for the '57 Ford Y-Block. Includes Stromberg carbs and louvered air cleaners.



1957 Ford Smooth Bumpers (RM-145B, \$5.95). Bolts, overrides and dagmars removed. Pattern by Larry Boothe.



1957 Ford Fender Skirts (P-144, \$3.50). Pattern by Larry Boothe.

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Tamiya LaFerrari

Tamiya's new, and gorgeous, 1/24 scale kit of Ferrari's newest supercar, the LaFerrari, is incredible. It is on par with their earlier Enzo kit, but with a more beautiful body and shape. Features of the kit include full engine detail, front air intake and rear cowl opening depicted accurately using nylon mesh, rear bumper mesh opening recreated by applying decal to clear parts, metal transfers to depict side and rear-view mirrors, plus Ferrari logos. Also included are masking stickers to protect windows during painting of the model.

The body is flawless. I couldn't find any flash *anywhere*. The hardest part is figuring out what color to paint it. After some quick research on the 'net, it looks like there are a few colors to choose from. Of course the standard Rosso Ferrari Red is an option, as is black, yellow, and white. I saw some light blue, dark blue, and even the Lambo-style orange that I love so much. After some soul searching and a roll of the dice, I think I'm going to go wild, with a black and white paint job. Black on most of the body, with white around the lower part of the front,

side doors, and back end. I will update this page along the way while it is being built.

Available separately for use with this kit are a photoetched detail set and carbon fiber decals. The carbon fiber decals are not the standard template-style, they are already in the shape needed. The photoetch is the new style, with no frets holding the parts to the trees, which makes it so much easier to use. If you are going to build an all out LaFerrari, I would highly recommend the photoetch set and the carbon fiber decals.

Tamiya #24333 1/24 LaFerrari
MSRP: \$92.00

Tamiya #12654 1/24 Photoetched detail set
MSRP: \$19.50

Tamiya #12656 1/24 Carbon fiber decal set
MSRP: TBD



Replicas & Miniatures Company of Maryland



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Online Resin

Recently we have noticed a lot of resin products being offered on eBay. Resin casters have found a good way to get not only their products sold, but a great way to find new

customers who come back to either their eBay store or their own website for future purchases. Here are a couple of them we have found recently.



I have seen some of *QuarterMile Replicas* work before, but while doing an eBay search for resin bodies, I came across these two resin bodies. The MPC Tom Akers' "The Wizard" comes with the body, tin plate, and rear spoiler. To complete this build you will need an MPC/AMT Mustang or Challenger funny car kit. The body and decals sold for \$32 plus \$8 S/H on eBay (he

does combine shipping.) Look for eBay seller [468ratnasty](#).

The other body I picked up was the MPC "Flash" Gordon Mineo funny car, also \$32. Shipping and handling for both combined was a reasonable \$10. If you don't want to deal with eBay, there is also a web site you can visit: www.scaleracingreplicas.com



We found these Outlaw hoods, perfect for a few projects currently on the MCM workbench, on eBay under the seller name *67impala427*. From left to right: Trumpeter '63 Nova, Revell '90 Mustang, and Revell '69 Camaro. The seller offers a good deal if you buy more than one hood. We got the three hoods for \$17.25 plus \$4 S/H. The flash was minimal. As far as fit, I was glad that

the hoods were a little tight. It gave me the opportunity to sand them and make them fit perfectly. I used a straightedge aluminum sanding block, and with a couple of passes with some #400 grit paper, the hoods fit perfectly! The more hoods you buy, the more you save.

The Missing Birdcage

Remember those early Maserati Birdcages I was searching for a couple of issues ago? Well, Fred Cady came through for me and sent over the missing kit I have been searching for. Fred sent the *Aardvark Models* Maserati Birdcage resin kit, made by our good friend Andy Martin. These kits have been out of production for a long time, so if you were lucky enough to get one way back then, hang on to it! I now feel that I have a complete collection of the Birdcage resin kits, and all I need now is the time, and patience, to build them all! Thanks, Fred!



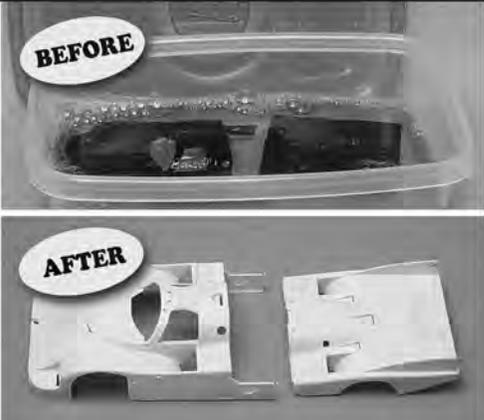


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BEFORE

AFTER

by Gregg Hutchings

I had asked that all of our contributors to *Model Cars Magazine* send in their favorite five tips, tricks, or techniques to share with our readers. So, I figured I better

put up first, or shut up, as the saying usually goes. Here are the Top Five Tips from yours truly!

Tip 1: Straightening Warped Resin



One problem I see here in Hawaii, due to the constant humidity and heat, is the warping of resin parts and pieces if they are not kept in a cool place, and level. This older resin chassis (from Herb Deeks, I think) fell victim to the weather in paradise.



After letting the chassis sit in the sun for a half a day, I ran it under cold water and let it sit for a few hours. Then with a long edged razor from Etch Mate, I gently pried up the chassis from the glue points.



This tip is actually "creatively borrowed" from local builder Mark Guerrero. I glued the chassis down to a piece of marble (glass works as well) with a CA (super glue). Just a few drops every 1/2" or so was good enough to keep it secure.



And it worked! This was done a few months ago, and it's still straight even now. I do keep it stored on a level shelf, and that should keep me out of trouble (for now...).

Tip 2: Scale Wood



If you need some realistic wood for bed linings, interior pieces, or even to make a "Woody," look no further than your local cigar store. These cedar sheets are super thin, and I have never been denied by the store clerks when I asked if I could have them. They are used to line the cigar boxes, as they naturally absorb water. They even smell fantastic! And what looks more like real wood than... real wood!

Tip 3: Mask That Body!



I have always had a problem when I glued on rear bumpers, body kits, aprons, etc. using liquid glue. The glue would seep out and attack the body, leaving me to sand and finish up the area, and frustrated at my lack of perfection in the simple task of glueing on body parts.



Solution: I use Tamiya masking tape on the body, just a hair above where the rear body kit panel will mount up. Getting the Tamiya tape to lay down perfectly along that body seam is the most important point. Take your time, it will pay off.



I will clamp the lower piece on, usually with clothes pins, and let the glue set. After removing the Tamiya tape, you are left with a perfect joint. No glue on the body, no time wasted sanding and cleaning up anything. Just prime and go!

Tip 4: Perfect Circles



Need to make perfect round holes? Or punch out perfectly round discs? Go to your local craft store and look in the scrapbook section for these hole punches. I have picked up different sized punches from 1/2" to 1" diameter for about \$10 or less each.

Tip 5: Tea Time



I found the ultimate paint strainers, sold in packs of ten. The good news is you get some great tasting tea as well! These tea bags are made of some sort of nylon that lacquer thinner does not harm or damage. I have been able to clean them in lacquer thinner, and they usually last until I forget to clean them right away, and have to throw it away. I use them before I make the tea, of course!

Hopefully this will inspire and get the rest of the team on board and sending in their five favorite tips!

by Gregg Hutchings

I have been making my own paint stands for years. The problem I always had was that the bodies were hard to keep in place on the stand, and they would usually fall off or slip while I was painting them. I kept on using the stands, applying more and more masking tape to hold the bodies in place. This worked sometimes, but not often.

Thinking back on the problems I used to have with the simple coat hanger paint stands I used to use, I thought that there must be an easy way to solve the problem. And there was! Square plastic tubing placed over the coat hanger where the hanger grabs the body. It seemed too easy to work, so I had to give it a try. All you need is a wire coat hanger, about a foot of $\frac{3}{16}$ " square styrene tubing, a black marker, wire cutters, a drill, a 6" x 9" piece of scrap wood (I used a piece of pine shelving), and a half hour of your time.

Straighten out the coat hanger and mark off about 17" of straight length of wire. You'll need two pieces; you may need two coat hangers to get two pieces this long. Using good wire cutters or diagonal pliers, cut the required lengths of wire. Mark both wires to indicate the centers. Now mark the wires $1\frac{1}{2}$ " from either side of the center marks. These 3" lengths is where the square tubing will go over the wire. Now mark and cut two 3" sections of the $\frac{3}{16}$ " square tubing, and slip them over the wires.

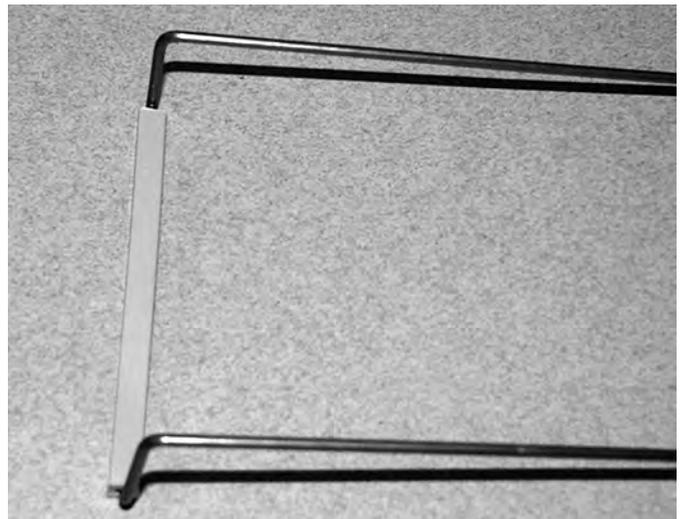
With a good set of pliers, bend the wire 90 degrees just outside of the ends of the square tubing (make sure the square tubing is centered on the length of wire). Bend both sides the same way, making sure that the square tubing can still float on the wire. After you have made both bends on the wire, and it looks like a "U", mark $\frac{3}{4}$ " from each bend and bend the wire again, 90 degrees from the first bends. See photo 1.

Mark a centerline on the wood and drill two sets of holes 3" apart, that are $\frac{3}{4}$ " off the center line of the wood. This will allow the wires to fit snugly within most 1/24-25 scale model car bodies. See photo 2.

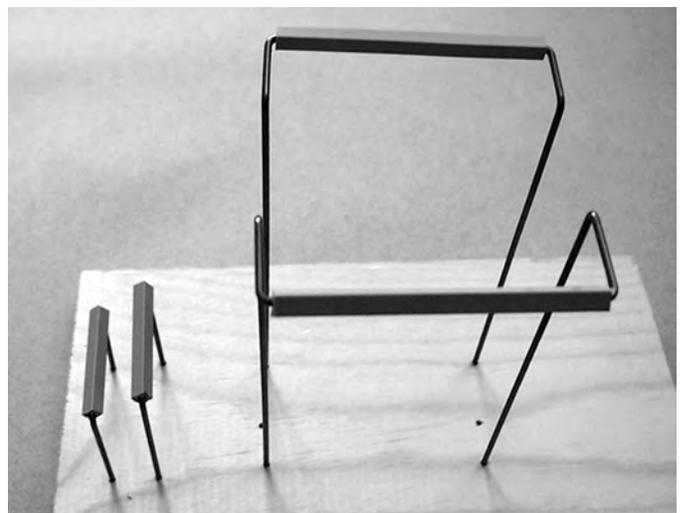
I also made an additional smaller set of holders on the front of the stand to hold body pieces such as the hood, for painting at the same time as the body. Basically, it is just two wires with $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long square tubings on short, $6\frac{1}{2}$ " and $5\frac{1}{2}$ " coat hangers, positioned so that they slope at an angle.

I usually just tape the hood or body piece to the square pieces. For that extra strength, and piece of mind, I would suggest using the green 3M double stick tape to hold your precious parts in place.

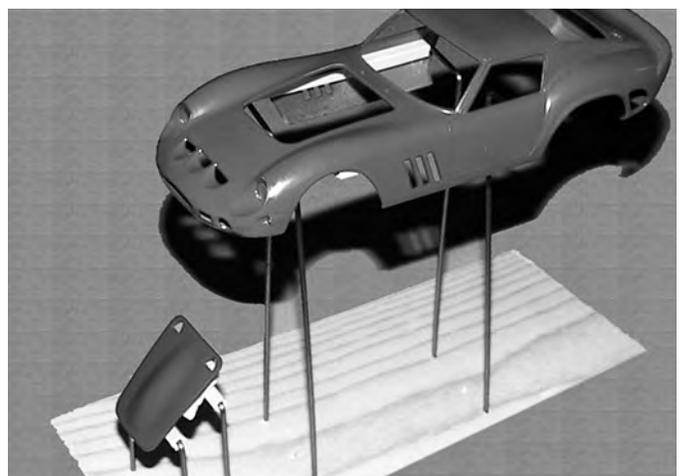
I hope you enjoy building and using this simple paint stand.

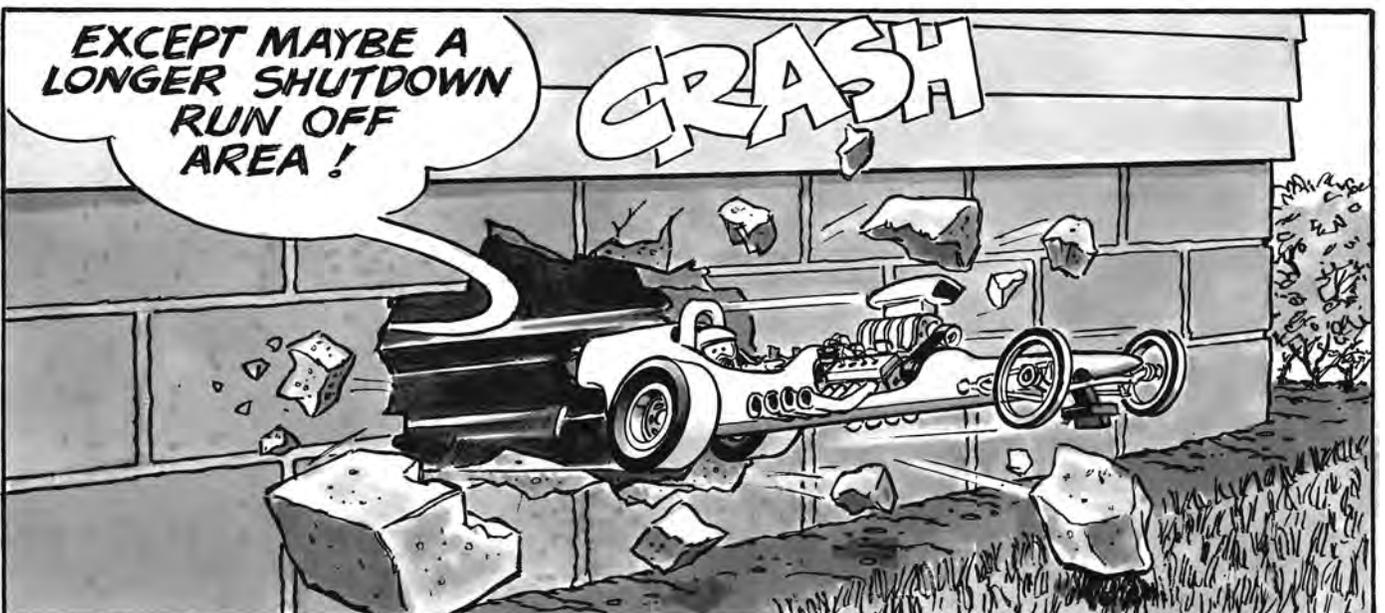


1. This is how all the bends in the coat hanger wires should look, with the square plastic tubing in place.



2. Drill the base to accept the wire holders with the correct sized drill bit. Note the smaller set of holders in the front for parts like the hood or trunk lid.







by Scott Colmer

Part Sixteen:
Ready for the Booby Hatch

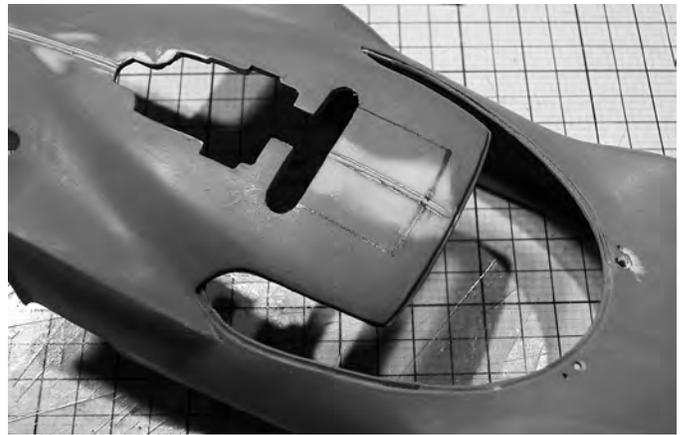
I can't help it; I am a snowball builder. I find that here's always *one more thing* to add...

I really felt like my imaginary driver would want to exit the vehicle if there was a fire or crash.

This is last addition. Really. *No, really.* ;)



The cantilever design of the roof called out for some inside bracing to make it look like it could support some minor weight.



Starting with a centerline, I marked out the escape hatch opening on the roof.



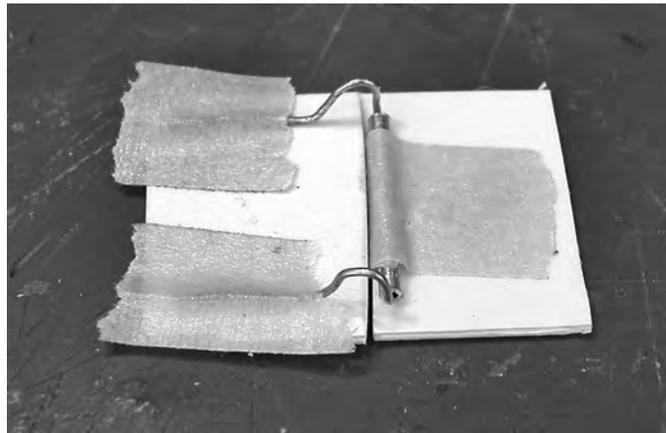
For straight cuts I like to use a stainless blade in a Dremel. These blades like to eat fingers so they demand respect. It turns out when they are dull they do more melting than cutting if the drill speed is too fast. My impatience yielded these results.



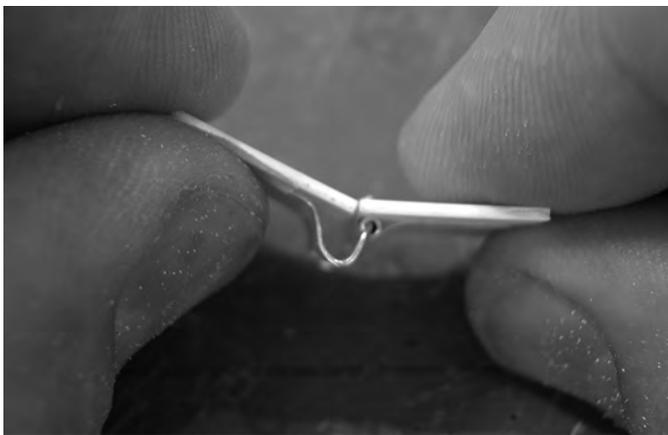
A common fix for over-zealous panel cutting is to add material to the edges, then sand the edges of the panel to fit the opening. Scraps of styrene sheet and Testors liquid cement did the trick.



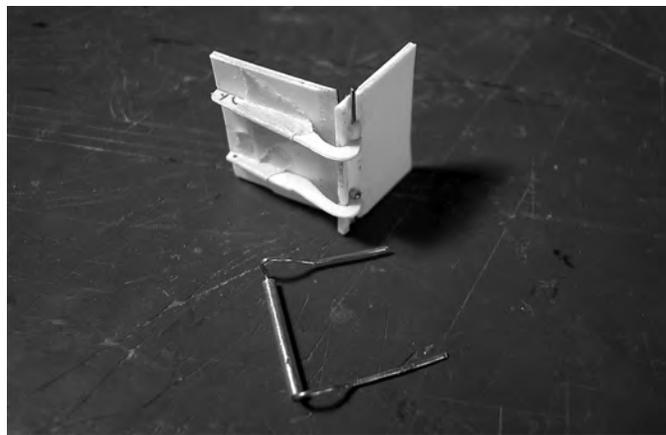
When fitting the escape hatch to the opening, I tried to allow for paint thickness by using masking tape to mimic the thickness of paint. This area will have primer, a base coat, a candy coat, a graphics coat, and a clear coat. Just on a guess, I went with two layers of tape on the edges of the opening.



Time to design the hinge. I wanted to use a dogleg-style hinge. The trick is to keep the hinge from hanging down too far into the cockpit. I used a piece of styrene sheet to simulate the roof area where the hinge would attach, to allow me to work on the hinge design in an easily accessible way, without handling the body. Test hinges were roughed out in wire, bent and re-bent to get the smallest arch possible while still allowing for full opening of the hatch.



I found that the thickness of the plastic would cause the edges of the escape hatch panel to bind with the roof opening, preventing the hatch from opening. The solution will be to bevel the edge of the hatch as thin as possible where it meets the roof so it can clear the roof when opening, yet still retain a narrow panel gap.



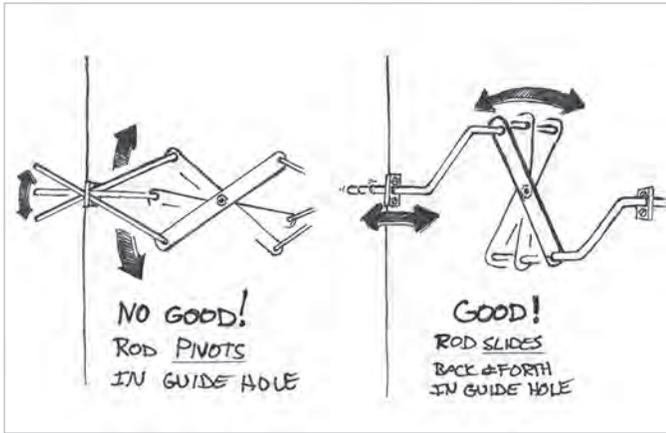
The next step was to reproduce the wire pattern in flat styrene. Note the beveled edge of the hatch. I also found that the closer to the hatch opening I attach the hinge on the roof, the less pronounced the dogleg needs to be. That kept the dogleg loop out of the side window sight line.



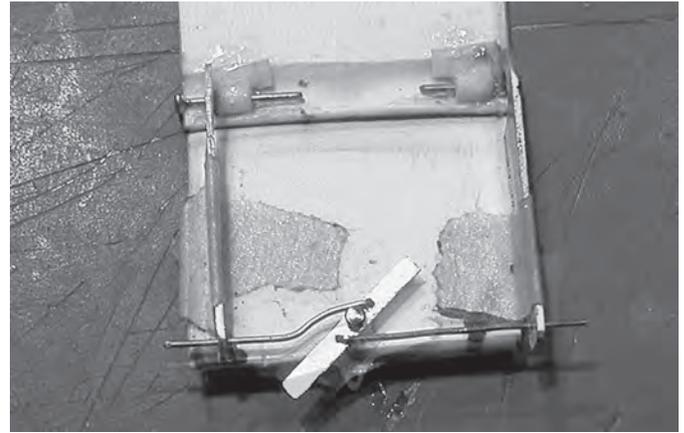
Once the shape of the hinge arms was finalized in styrene, it was transferred to 1/32" aluminum sheet. I used pins to locate the master to the working stock of the second hinge.



And of course I needed to latch the hatch. Since the hatch does not touch the body along its back edge, it would have to latch on the sides. I used a dual rod design I copied from a storage cabinet at work. My first attempt did not work the way I expected. The latch rods had too much side the side movement when actuated.



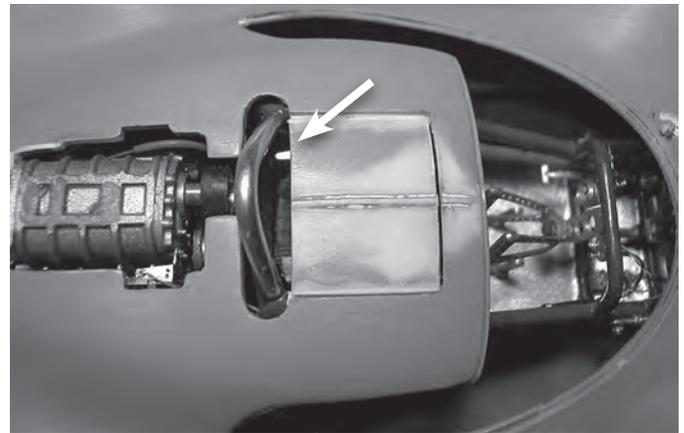
After playing with the mechanism for a while, I figured out that the latch rods and actuator arm needed to be positioned so that the latch rods pivot along the **top and bottom arc** of the actuator arm, not the left and right arc. This new arrangement allows the latch rods to travel in more of a straight in-and-out line rather than pivoting when they pass through the latch rod guides.



My second attempt worked better.



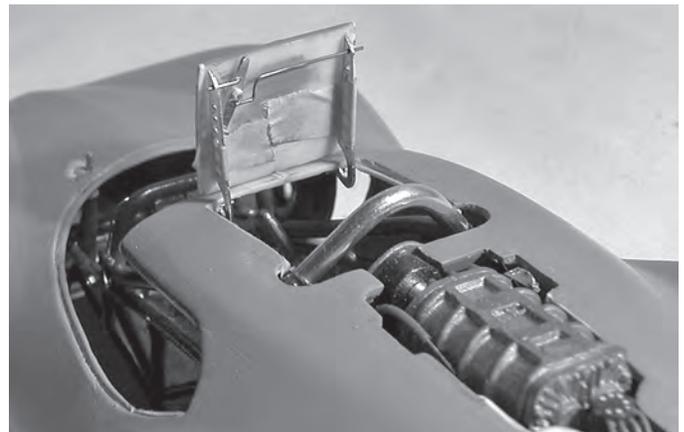
Thin strips of styrene we added to the edges of the hatch opening on the inside of the roof to create a support lip for the hatch. You can also see that I moved the pivot point of the latch actuator arm off to the side. I did not want it bumping the top of my driver's helmet!



I finished off the brackets and duplicated the mule installment on the actual body to make sure there would be no surprises during final assembly. That showed me my outside latch handle interfered with the roll bar when the body was lifted.



The handle was shortened and another mock-up showed that the hatch opened and closed and...the latch worked! When closed, the latch rods caught the edge of the support lip as intended...



... and they cleared the edge of the lip to allow the hatch to open. Success!

Next installment: *What color is a Scorpion?*

Race Team & Trailer Contest

Model Cars Magazine and *Galaxie Limited* have partnered together to bring you one of the most innovative model car building contests ever!

The idea is to build a *Model Cars Magazine Racing Team*, consisting of a race car model and any one of the Galaxie Limited trailer kits (21' tandem axle, 36' tri-axle, or 38' tri-axle fifth-wheel), featuring your own version of the Model Cars Magazine racing team graphics—incorporating the current red and white MCM logo—to come up with the ultimate race car/trailer/graphics combination. The car can be *any* type of race car (NASCAR, drag, F-1, Sprint, Indy car, Bonneville, etc.).

The winner of this year-long contest will not only receive some great prizes (and maybe some contingency prizes as well), but the winning entry may be used to create a

special edition set of decals for everyone to enjoy! Also, if your race car is based on a Galaxie Limited kit ('48 Chevy or Dragster) along with your Galaxie Limited trailer, you will receive a double bonus as well!

So put on your thinking caps and see what you can come up with! You have a full year to get this done, as we will feature the winners in the August/September 2014 issue of *Model Cars Magazine*. Stay tuned for more updates, including official contest rules and a list of prizes, as well as some ideas sent in by some of our readers and builders. For now, get those creative ideas flowing and start planning your entry!



Galaxie Limited Trailer
built by Jairus Watson

The Jade Idol

The Gibson Brothers model of Gene Winfield's Jade Idol • By Darryl Gassaway

If you were a teenager in southern California during the late '50s, you grew up in a magical time, especially if you were hooked on hot rods and custom cars. The SoCal car scene was unbelievable—cool cars were everywhere! People who would become icons of the car scene were just getting started on building their reputations. People like the Barris Brothers, the Ayala Brothers, Bill Cushenberry, Bill Hines, Valley Customs and Gene Winfield



were becoming known to an ever increasing number of hot rodders and custom guys. Their building skills and unique designs were becoming very popular, and a whole new group of people were getting involved in modifying cars because of them. Many early customizers rose to the top of the custom world because of one very special creation. For the Barris Brothers it was the *Hirohata Merc*, for Darryl Starbird it was the *Predicta*, and for Gene Winfield it was a customized 1956 Mercury he called the *Jade Idol*.

In 2011, a then 83-year old Winfield was the honored guest at a car show in Syracuse, New York. A model car contest was part of the event, and that is where the story of this model starts. Gene saw the model building skills of the Gibson brothers, a then 27-year old Joe and his younger

brother, 21-year old Tommy, and asked them if they could replicate the *Jade Idol*. The build took the two of them four months to complete, and the model now has a place of prominence on a shelf in Gene's Mojave, California office. Since that time the Gibsons have built other Winfield replicas, the *Solar Scene* and the *Goulart Cart*, which sadly was accidently destroyed during shipping. In 2013 Gene debuted his second generation *Pacifica*, a highly customized '62 Ford Econoline pickup. This year Gene and the brothers met up again in Syracuse and Gene asked if they would build a replica of the *Pacifica*. Currently Joe and Tommy are just getting started on another what is becoming a long line of Winfield replicas, and are hoping to have it completed soon.



This 3/4 rear view shows the extent of the bodywork done and highlights the custom fins, taillights, and scratchbuilt tubular rear grille.



The body used for the model was a '56 Chevy. On the real car it was a '56 Merc.



A close-up of the aluminum strips set into the roof and a glimpse of the scratchbuilt interior with hand stitched upholstery and custom dash.



The wheels from a '49 Mercury kit were modified and the centers painted.



The front end of the model, showing the restyled grille and headlights. Notice the unique bezels around the quad lights. On the real car they were parts from a Chrysler hubcap, but on the model they are scratchbuilt.



The dash-mounted TV screen is a typical feature of customs from this era.

A visit to Gene Winfield's Shop

By Darryl Gassaway

The trip to Gene Winfield's shop was an adventure. Getting to Mojave is not easy, but it was worth the trip. I was joined on the trip by my friend and traveling companion Kurt Wilson, who shared the driving, and the frustration in finding the place. When we arrived, we found the number of cars at the shop amazing. Everywhere you looked there were cars in varying stages of completion. I found myself feeling like the 13-year old kid that used to carry his copy of *R&C* to school every day in his back pocket. I was in heaven.

It's hard to believe the man overseeing all this work is 85 years old. We were lucky to catch Gene at the shop that day, since he is on the road about half of the year doing painting or bodywork seminars at car shows around the country—and the world. His schedule would probably kill a man half his age, but Gene thrives on all the work. While we were there, we watched the guys in the shop putting the final touches on Gene's *Pacifica* clone. It was amazing to see it come together.



There is another part of Gene's property that proved to be especially beneficial to me—his junkyard. Behind the shop there must be over 100 different cars and trucks. Some are parts vehicles and some are discarded projects, but they all have value. I was able to find the four pieces of chrome that were missing from the grille area of my '56 DeSoto amongst the carnage of the junkyard. Yes, my three year search was finally over! What a day it was, meeting and spending time with Gene Winfield, shooting pictures of the Gibson Brother's build, and finding the ever elusive parts I was missing. Yes, life is good.

A little side note to the story: In August of 2013 Gene and his crew were at Bonneville with his '27 Model T coupe to attempt a land speed record for its class. Sadly, Gene's best two-way average of just over 139 mph missed the record by less than *one* mph!

Not bad Gene. I guess that makes you the fastest 85-year old on the salt.



Off to the side of the shop was Gene's '27 T coupe waiting for its engine and another attempt at the salt.



A stock bodied '53 Merc hardtop awaiting Gene's special touch.



A chopped '53 Chevy sedan with frenched headlights and the hood dechromed.



An old CRA sprinter that Gene wants to drive on the dirt someday.



A chopped '49 Merc with Buick headlights waiting to be finished.



Another chopped '49 Merc, fresh from the paint booth, waiting for the rest of the work to be done.



Ok guys... I saw it, but I couldn't believe it. A 1951 Nash waiting for some desperately needed restyling.



The new *Jade Idol II*, a '57 Ford still in progress. I can't wait to see the finished product.



BIG MERCYS: 1939-1970



The engaging story of this once prolific marque • By Bill Coulter

Mercury automobiles debuted with great fanfare in late 1938, and left us very quietly seventy-three years later, without a whimper, in January, 2011. The brainchild of Henry Ford's only son Edsel, Mercury was created to fill the huge price gap between bread-and-butter Fords and luxury Lincolns. Designed by E.T. (Bob) Gregorie, the 1939 Mercury was bigger, wider, more powerful, and more expensive than its sister brand Ford.

However, Mercury suffered from an identity crisis from the outset, which continuously interfered with it establishing a solid niche in the US automotive marketplace. Sometimes Mercury was portrayed as the "performance" division in contrast to more mainstream Fords, while at other

times Mercurys were head-to-head competitors for Motor City crosstown rivals like Buick, Oldsmobile and Chrysler during the 1950s through the 1980s.

Frequently, Mercury shared platforms with Ford products, while other times it was its own make, with unique sheetmetal, chassis and engine choices. And at other times, Mercury was linked to the Lincoln brand, as it was from 1946 through 1970. Mercury was its own division at Ford until 1946, when it was combined with Lincoln into the Lincoln-Mercury Division. Ford was hoping the Mercury brand would now be seen more as a "junior Lincoln" rather than an upscale Ford.

From the outset, the very first Mercurys (1939-40) caught the attention of customizers. Sort of like a one-two-punch in the kisser, two particular custom Mercs had big impacts. The Matranga Mercury custom, fashioned from Nick Matranga's stock 1940, was one of Sam and George Barris' first iconic creations, setting a benchmark and starting a trend that would continue for decades. Soon after, the Hirohata Merc came along in the early '50s. Based on Bob H's stock '51, it has probably done more to solidify and enhance the whole custom car concept mindset than any other customized street vehicle in history to date.

The next big Mercs to garner a lot of attention would be from 1953-56. This period would see mildly customized big Mercs cruising the streets, and the term "lead sled" was coined to describe them. Odd how one car make can keep hitting the vein of a popular topic like full-size Mercurys did from the early '40s through the mid-'50s. Though the Mercury brand isn't with us anymore, there's no question that the high marks left by those early big Mercs will not be equalled again—or soon forgotten.

During the Ford Division's early '60s "Total Performance" era, Mercury produced some equivalent models, such as the full-size S-55 and the Marauder, which shared the same body styles and mechanicals as the Ford Galaxie 500/XL sports-performance models. These big Mercurys had considerable success, especially in stock car racing.

For model car builders, street rods and customs remain a popular staple. It's a rare builder who hasn't at least flirted with the idea of building a custom Mercury. What we're about to look at is a fitting tribute in scale to one of the

great American car brands. And it should get your creative juices flowing to get busy on a Big Merc of your own!

Though we were looking at thirty-plus years of big Mercury models, eventually the question came down to... *just how many Big Merc plastic kits were there?* Actually, not many. The first big Mercury kits were actually small, done in 1/32 scale, as a collaboration between AMT and Revell. They produced both the '55 and '56 models. Then came the new 1959 Mercury, as an annual 3-in-1 in 1/25 scale from AMT. Those yearly annuals continued through 1966. In the midst of all the hoopla, ITC released their 1940 convertible in 1961, while AMT introduced their ubiquitous '49 kit in 1963. And most recently (2007) Revell released a full-on custom '49 Merc coupe kit.

Obviously, we also had to look at some other items besides plastic kits to thoroughly cover our subject, so you'll also see diecasts, metal and plastic toys, plastic promotional models, and a bunch of resin. The bulk of the built Mercurys seen here came by way of the plethora of aftermarket choices from *Modelhaus*, and from *Big Sky* and *R&R Vacuum-Craft* resins, *Jimmy Flintstone*, *Air-Trax*, and others. Modelhaus alone offers three '56s, five '57s, two '58s, a '59, a '60 (they also have replacement parts for '61 and '62), and three '63s... and when you add that list to what's offered from other resin manufacturers, there's no good reason you haven't at least considered a Big Merc project!

So sit back, relax and enjoy the chronological cornucopia of Big Merc eye candy assembled here. You may be surprised at the wide range of Big Mercs Tom Coolidge and I were able to uncover.



First up we have a stamped-metal '39 Mercury with coin slot (in about 1/40 scale or so) from the Jim Gurley collection. Gurley says he's been told it's a piece of 1939 World's Fair memorabilia. Obviously not a plastic kit, but definitely collectible.



Bob Shelton lent us a helping hand by tackling this 1940 Mercury convertible built from a Promolite resin re-pop of the old ITC kit. I told Bob to use his imagination, and you can see he took me at my word! Quite a choice of two-tone colors! And the whole thing is riding on an AMT 1940 Ford chassis and a set of Pegasus wheels/tires to complete the treatment.



Darryl Peters, known for his great model building (and let's not forget Scale Auto Details, his aftermarket enterprise) built this Jimmy Flintstone resin '40 Mercury into an eye-catching custom. Paint is House of Kolor, chassis and interior are from an AMT '40 Ford coupe, with other details from Darryl's spare parts box—and I'd bet something or other from SAD's catalogue.



This baseplate is a positive testament to the exclusivity of this hand-crafted replica by Steve Amos.



Bob Wooley acquired this Mercury some time ago. Believe it or not, it's but one of about eight built by the late Olaf Wahl, from Germany, who lived in the US for a few years before moving back home.



This duo is a collaborative effort by Gary McNutt and myself. The idea for this one was settled upon during a pre-dawn drive to the original Toledo NNL back in the early '80s. The race car is a generic NASCAR GN machine, while Gary's '53 Ford stakebed truck is partially scratchbuilt, starting with the AMT '53 Ford pickup kit.



Model car guru Mike Carroll says, "Steve Amos did the masters for this '46 Mercury. Bill Harrison was a friend of his and had two convertibles that Amos built up and gave him. He also had one convertible kit and one Sportsman kit. Randy VanDraiss got those and gave them to Mike C. on the agreement that I build them and give him one finished."

"There were supposedly five convertibles and three Sportsman kits. Steve Amos did both the masters and the resin casting. The masters are obviously off the ITC/Testors '46-'48 Ford, as some parts are interchangeable. Model car sage Bob Wooley currently has this '46 coupe in his private collection."



Steve Boutte worked his magic once again with this trendsetting custom '49 Merc. The body has been pie sectioned 2.5 scale inches in the rear and the side character line has been straightened. The top was chopped two scale inches in the front and four scale inches in the rear, and converted to a hardtop.

The front and rear gravel shields have been molded into the body, and the hood has rounded corners as well as a new center peak. The grille came from a '56 Chrysler, while the Mercury front bumper has been smoothed and peaked. The headlights are from a '50s era Jaguar, and the molded in bezels are from a '57 Ford. Flush fitting fender skirts and the side trim are scratchbuilt.



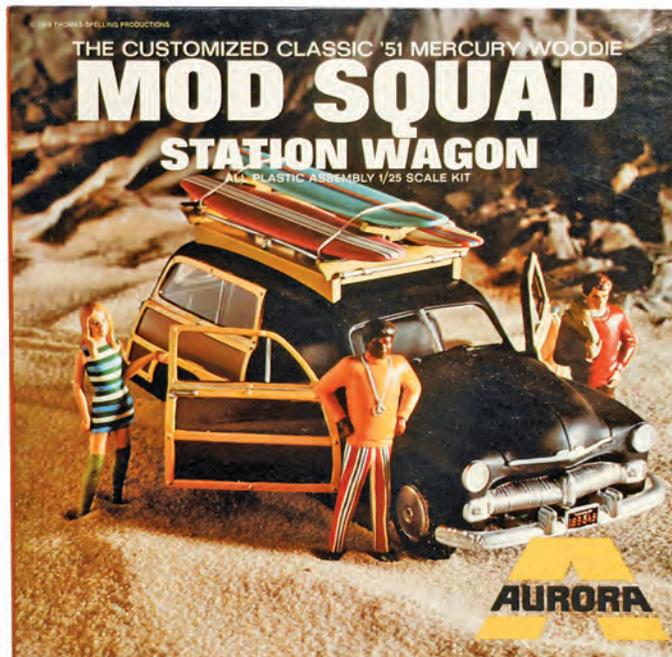
Jim Gurley combined the back half of an Aurora Mod Squad Merc Woody station wagon with the cowl forward coming from the AMT '49 Merc sedan kit. Jim said he just liked the looks of the AMT front end on the Aurora. So what do we call this one... a '49 or a '50?



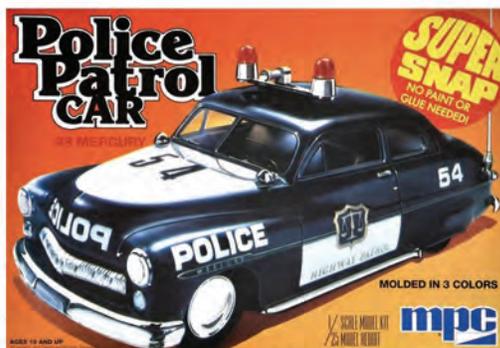
If you're under the impression custom Mercs are strictly an American phenomenon, think again! Gerhard van Vuuren sent this slick custom, built from the Revell '49 Merc kit, all the way from South Africa. There's nothing outlandish on this one... just a good solid build of contest quality. Beside building outstanding models, Gerhard also writes for the popular specialty magazine *SA Hot Rods*.



What model building article of this scope would be complete without something from the legendary Hank Borger? Would you believe Hank didn't build this one? It's a (gasp) *diecast!* Hank treasures this custom '50 coupe and doesn't think he could build anything finer in plastic. After close inspection, Hank discovered it was made by First Gear. No wonder it's of such high quality!



The Aurora Mod Squad Merc woody station wagon kit has long been a highly sought after and expensive find. I have it on good authority that when Aurora's assets were sold to R-M it was decided that this kit's tooling was of such poor quality that the new owners didn't wish to put their name on it. Can we say... "recycled"?



The MPC Super Snap Mercury was issued in more than one rendition. What's been really puzzling is that MPC couldn't seem to decide if it was a '49 or a '50, as can be seen here on the box art. Looks like a '49 to me, especially the parking lights.



Jim Gurley has done a number of masters for Tom Coolidge for his Promolite resin product line. When he's not too busy doing that, Jim demonstrates his considerable talents by rendering this classy 1951 custom Merc. The rear fender treatment and '52 Buick side molding is scratchbuilt.



To many of us, the Hirohata Mercury is the quintessential benchmark for all things customized. No... it was not the very first such Mercury, but you'd be hard pressed to cite another similar vehicle that has had such universal acceptance and recognition as the *crème da la crème* of this genre. This Danbury Mint 1/24 diecast is a must have if you like custom Mercs, and especially a '51 Merc.



Just when it was looking like there was nothing in the way of a 1952 Mercury, Tom Coolidge came to the rescue with this Tootsie Toy four door. It's plastic, and about ??? scale.



I first saw this mighty fine '53 Mercury convertible built by our English friend Mat Irvine when I got my copy of *Scale Car Modeling* (The Crowood Press). Hard to believe Mat started with an R&R resin kit, but true talent always shines through, as this beauty proves.



Jim Gurley owns this 1954 Mercury Monterey hardtop, a 1/25 scale unpainted diecast bank. These items were popular collectibles back in the day, when plastic kit were virtually non-existent. Some folks actually used them as intended—as a piggy bank!



These three 1954 Mercurys are the handiwork of California's Paul Hettick. In each case Paul started with '54 Merc resin kits by Big Sky resin... you guessed it... from Montana! Paul's work has always been in great demand. At times, following the bidding wars on eBay auctions of Hettick's masterpieces would give you a nose bleed! They are all stunning, but that Sun Valley hardtop is a real keeper!



This stack of "Foof" cars (as Tom Coolidge calls them) were inspired by the old F&F cereal cars, possibly in HO scale. Jim Gurley created the masters for these '54s and '55s and they were cast by Promolite.



This roughly 1/20 scale 1955 Mercury plastic toy has the look and proportions just about right. It's from the Gurley collection.



Irv Arter is generally known for his "rake" (no, not for yard work!). His tasty jet black '56 hardtop took top theme honors at the Toledo NNL a few years ago. If there ever was a model that captures the "wow factor" look, it's this one!



I have always had a love affair with '56 Mercurys, so it should be no surprise that when the theme of Big Mercs was finally settled on, I would build this '56 convertible. The kit is from Modelhaus. The uptop is a modified '58 Ford piece. The paint is persimmon over off-white. My airbrush broke down, so Tom Creeger finished applying these tasty colors to the body.



Once upon a time, AMT and Revell collaborated on a series of 1/32 Detroit machines for 1955 and '56. Shown here are the boxes for these little 1/32 kits that were so popular before 1/25 scale became the norm.



Craftsman Paul Hettick works in mostly 1/25 scale for his custom builds, but this '56 Mercury four-door hardtop produced by AMT-Revell back in the day is still a pleasing build to the eye.



Frenchman Jean-jacques Lillette is known to all his friends as simply "Zelkam." His historically futuristic Mercury show car rig was the hit of the 2013 NNL East contest, grabbing the best theme award. The trailer was scratchbuilt.



Zelkam's '57 Mercury station wagon is based on the Modelhaus Voyager two-door resin kit. Factory colors from MCW were used along with ample amounts of Bare Metal Foil. Viewing the rig and station wagon together leaves no doubt why Zelkam received this prestigious award.



Mike Dmytriw is a talented replica stock model builder. He admits to having over 600 pieces in his personal collection. Mike is quite fond of this 1958 Mercury build, as it was bought from Modelhaus and given as a birthday present from his son.



What to do with an ancient piece of '57 Mercury Modelhaus resin? That was the question for many, many years. Originally it was to be a NASCAR build. Then it made a trip to Starter in France to promote a 1/43rd resin stock car kit. Finally back in my stash...I see a restored 1/1 '57 Mercury CHP cruiser and I was smitten. Oh, so glad I waited all those years!



Ron Savoie has a knack for picking up just the right glue bomb for restoration. This '59 AMT Merc convertible was a challenge, but Ron knew what he was doing. The two-tone red over black paint is stunning. The wide whites on five spoke mags sets this build apart from the more mundane.



Here's an unusual build by Paul Hettick—the Modelhaus 1957 Canadian Mercury pickup based on our domestic Ford F-100.



This is the built model Ron Savoie started with. Although things look fairly organized in this shot, it was skill and perseverance that resulted in the gorgeous finished model seen above.



Remember that without these dealer promotional models there would have been no unassembled 3-n-1 kits back in the day. This 1960 Mercury was part of an extensive line of hardtops and convertibles in a number of finished colors as indicated on the box script.



The story is the same for this AMT 1962 Mercury promotional model. Though many such collectible pieces bring staggering sums, this pristine example was reasonably priced and in like-new condition.



Len Carsner did the trick on this '60 Merc hardtop. Not a rescued glue bomb or from someone's junk parts box, Len had the pleasure of working with a fresh piece of resin from Keith Lowdon, who just happens to also be the curator/chief restorer at the Clive Cussler museum in Colorado. Keith casts resin model cars because he enjoys it as a diversion, according to Tom Coolidge.



This Don Emmons '63 NASCAR Mercury probably got me started building vintage NASCAR models. It was featured on the cover of the October 1963 issue of *Rod & Custom* magazine. Today, it's housed in the International Model Car Builder's Museum in Sandy, Utah (<http://www.themodelcarmuseum.org/index.html>). Please contact Mark Gustafson, who has the keys. We encourage you to visit this time capsule of model car history and creativity. Thanks to Mark for the photo.



I thought I'd seen just about everything until I received this creation from Don Holthaus' fertile mind. This Modelhaus 1960 "Merchero" resin kit was inspired by a magazine sketch. It looks like there should have been one in 1/1.



Paul Hettick crafted this '63 Breezeway two-door hardtop. The backdraft roof styling is quite noticeable from this rear angle. This is another resin kit from Modelhaus.



This 1961 Mercury promotional model was purchased not long ago on eBay. Seeing as how I needed something for '61 for this article and I didn't have a '61 Merc, it was a welcome addition to the Coulter collection.



Don Emmons might have been their first many moons ago, but he hasn't a thing over on Daryl Hutala's '64 NASCAR Mercury driven by the late Darel Dieringer. Take note that Daryl hasn't missed a bell or a whistle.



Jon Davis wasn't satisfied with just generating a contest quality build of his '64 Mercury—he had to show off and open and hinge all the body panels. Let's just say you don't try this without having quite a tidy skill set and some idea of what you're doing... before you start building!



The AMT 1965 Mercury annual kit was pretty much all new tooling in the mid-'60s. Unless you're fortunate enough to find an untouched example or salvage a glue bomb, you won't be finding any new reissues of the one, as the tooling was revamped to produce the 1966 Mercury annual kit.



Let's just say that along with a wonderfully creative mind, Joel Klassen has the chops to deliver some of the most unique and wayout creations I've ever seen. He calls this one the Monterey Ranch. Is it a prototype, a custom, a one-off people mover, or is it just something Joel uses to demonstrate his considerable skill set? Starting with a regular AMT mid-'60s Mercury kit, only Joel can tell us how he got from there to this. Leaves me speechless and that's hard to do!



And finally... this is the handiwork of a guy who is arguably the most skilled and prolific replica stock scratchbuilder I know of. We were fortunate enough to receive some early shots of this 1/25 scale 1970 Mercury Marauder X-100 just before Juha Airio left from Finland to attend a contest in France. He makes things look so easy! If you like what you see here, Juha and close friend Tapani Rauramo have teamed up to offer resin copies of this big Merc and dozens of other subjects as well. Air-Trax ring any bells?

In conclusion...

If you thought an article on thirty years of big Mercurys would pretty much be short and sweet... well, I hope we surprised you! We can, though, come away with some definite conclusions after viewing all these great models. First, I'm so very pleased to have the aftermarket taking up so much of the slack from the plastic kit industry...but how is it that we've never seen the following in styrene:

1939-40 Mercury

1946-48 Mercury

1951 Mercury

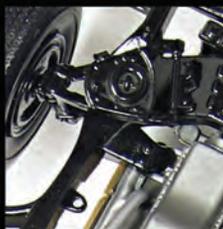
1953 through 1956 Mercury

You might not agree, but I'd settle for just about *anything* on these subjects. I'd take a bone stock version or even some pseudo-custom releases. Revell, Round 2, and Moebius... what'll it take to get any or all of these on your to-do list? At my age, guys... the clock in tickin'!

"B" is for

BEAUTY

The 1956 Chrysler 300B 1:25th Scale Model Kit
from Moebius



The 1956 Chrysler 300B: a mid-century marvel of automotive beauty, now recreated as a spectacularly detailed 1:25 scale styrene kit from Moebius Models. Kit features a detailed interior, 396 Hemi engine and chassis, soft vinyl tires and your choice of wire wheels or full wheel covers.

MOEBIUS MODELS

Building Character

moebiusmodels.com

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sketchpad

with Mike Lomaka

IMPORTS

I am a fan of cars of all styles. I enjoy seeing what is going on all over the globe, thanks to the Internet. An area I see gaining in popularity is the import scene. While the Japanese are known for wild styles like boso-zuko, there are also a lot of good ideas and builders as well. I like to see what car builders do with their domestic cars, and thought I would incorporate some of the ideas I have picked up from looking at websites showing pictures from "local" shows, but done here in the states.

280

One trend is to go full tilt on a racing theme (check out what Akira Nakai does to Porsches). I tried to make everything accessible from the outside. The oil filter pokes through the front grille under the bumper, oil and brake fluid gets filled through a cap in the odd shaped panels on both sides of the hood by the firewall, fuel goes into a relocated gas filler, and battery terminals are located on the rocker panel in the side stripe. Some subtle modifications include moving the parking lights

to inside the bumper and replacing them with round driving lights, a scratchbuilt front air dam, wheel flares, hood scoop, and rear spoiler along with a roll bar and racing seats inside. I used an old set of SSR MKII 7j wheels I had laying around and painted them to match the rest of the car. For paint, I used gloss white and a flat dark metallic gray with gloss orange, black, and white for accents. This one just looks like fun.



Toyota Supra

This is a kit I feel is often overlooked. I still remember the reviews praising the detail that still holds up to today's standards. I kept the modifications to this one fairly simple. I swapped out wheels from a Revell MR2 kit and added some camber to the rear wheels, let the exhaust dump out the front fender behind the front wheel. The biggest body modification I did was a typical one

you would see in Japan. In place of the rear window, I used sheet plastic around the opening and made a new vertical rear window to give it more of a coupe feel. They like to experiment with paint as well, so I covered the entire car in a metallic blue hit with dull coat, and put a wide gloss black stripe on the new rear deck lid and hood.

07 R



Mazda RX-7



Theme cars are quite popular in Japan. I thought I'd take a stab at it using the old Monogram RX-7 kit. This is another fairly detailed kit I haven't seen finished in quite a while. Some subtle modifications would be needed to make it look like this one. The most involved would be updating the taillight area. The added center section carries the same lines as the taillights across the entire back of the car, as well as a strip added to the bottom of the panel above it allowing for a straight line across as well. I added a rear spoiler reminiscent of a Porsche 944, fender flares, and an air splitter up front. These are easier than you think and can be done using sheet plastic. I tried to repli-

cate another trend by installing a rear spoiler (like the one in AMT's '91 Z-28) upside down and mounting it to the bottom of the rear. This cleans up the rear by finishing it off and providing room for center dual exhaust while the tow loop and license plate get mounted between it and the bumper. I used Monogram stock car wheels, de-chromed and painted white, with low profile tires stretched over them. I have seen some tires from Japanese manufacturers that are tapered just for the purpose of adding camber. Paint is a flat olive drab with gloss accents and random military stencil decals used throughout.

2010 SUBARU WRX STI Aoshima #050538



VERSIONS: Stock
MOLDED COLORS: Black, Gunmetal, Clear, Tinted Smoked Clear, Chrome Plated
SCALE: 1/24
MSRP: 2800 Yen (Japan)
MODIFIED REISSUE

ENGINE: None. This is a curbside model.

CHASSIS: Aoshima is a master at detailed curbside chassis, and this WRX is no exception. The one-piece chassis unit has the transmission lowers, the gas tank, and the front half of the exhaust system (with all heat shielding) molded in place. Engraving is superb, as is typical for Aoshima. Front suspension is a ten-piece assembly with poseable steering, and the rear suspension is a five-piece affair, both with separate detailed disc brakes and the option to build as stock height or lowered. The rear half of the exhaust system is a six-piece assembly with plated drilled exhaust tips.

WHEELS AND TIRES: Gunmetal gray stock Subaru 18" multispoke wheels ride on black rubber Pirelli P-Zero wide tires.

INTERIOR: The interior floor has the rear seats and console molded in place. Side panels are separate and have excellent three-dimensional details. The two-piece Recaro seats feature decalized stitched RECARO and STI trim. Either left-hand or right-hand drive versions can be built from this kit, alternative dashboards being provided to suit. Said dashboards have excellent engraving and have separate hanging pedal units, dual-stalk steering column, and correct WRX steering wheel. Decals are provided for the instruments, heater and air conditioner controls, navigation screen, and horn button. Separate trim pieces include the shifter, brake lever, console arm rest, and rear headrests. Aoshima prints a detailed interior painting schematic on the instruction sheet.

BODY: Aoshima chose to mold the hatchback version of the WRX, and as usual for them, the execution is spot on. The one-piece body is cleanly molded with the hood, side skirts, front and rear fascias as separate. At the front is a plated headlight bezel/reflector bar with separate projector beam headlights, hood internal louvers, clear turn signal lenses and headlight covers, and molded-open grille. A choice of cowls and wiper blades are provided for left- or right-hand drive versions. At the rear is a chromed taillight reflector bar with clear taillight lenses, rear diffuser, GPS antenna, and roof spoiler. The side mirrors are a little work of art, having not only separate plated faces, but tiny clear turn signal lenses. All transparencies, including the dark smoke tinted side and rear windows, are thin and noticeably free of optical distortion. The windshield has the

sun visors and overhead console molded in place, and the rear window has very delicately engraved defroster lines.

DECALS: In addition to the items mentioned earlier, the small decal sheet contains Subaru badges for front and rear, STI logos in red, gas cap STI trim, wheel centers, side marker light lenses, silver R205, IMPREZA, AWD and WRX scripts, and two black and silver STI plates.

OTHER: Aoshima provides a sheet of black mesh material for use in the grille and fascia scoops, and a sheet of self-adhesive masking material for the windows.

COMMENTS: *Of all the rally-inspired "pocket rockets" out there in the marketplace, none have had the impact of the legendary Subaru WRX. The wedge-shaped 2007-2011 model, which this kit represents, is one of the most aggressive-looking of the bunch. Aoshima first released their WRX STI as a 2007 model, then updated it to the new styling features of the 2010 edition. As is usual for Aoshima, the molding quality is first-rate and the detail engraving just superb throughout. This is no shake and bake kit; you'll need a bit of patience to make it all happen as it should, but that patience is rewarded with a great build experience. The option of left or right hand drive and the inclusion of the mesh and masking material are absolute plus points. Detail photos abound both in print and online, and there are plenty of examples of the WRX prowling the streets even now. For those wanting even more detail, Aoshima offers a detail set (#588) containing a sheet of photoetched metal, metal foil transfers for the emblems, logos, and mirror faces, and turned aluminum exhaust tips. It's well worth the price of admission and adds that little bit extra to what is already a superb model. Both the kit and the detail set warrant my "highly recommended" rating—get them both and have a blast building your WRX STI.*

1967 CORVETTE STING RAY CONVERTIBLE Revell #4087



VERSIONS: Stock, Racing
MOLDED COLORS: White, Clear, Red Clear, Chrome Plated
SCALE: 1/25
MSRP: \$24.98 USD
MODIFIED REISSUE

ENGINE: The vaunted L71 435 horse tri-power big block is very well represented here by a 30-piece assembly (including options), easily the best representation of this version of the legendary Rat motor in 1/25 scale. Note the excellent texturing on the block, heads, and exhaust manifolds, as well as that on the Muncie M22 "Rock Crusher" four-speed transmission. The engine features correct unplated valve covers, upper and lower radiator hoses, a triple-carb unit

with molded-in fuel lines and clearly visible venturis, plated tripower manifold and triangular air cleaner, separate oil filter and starter, separate fan clutch, and a Delcotron alternator with its requisite attachment bracket. The racing version option has a four-piece Hilborn side-mount eight-tube fuel injection unit (not side draft Webers as on the Corvette Grand Sport) and a pair of Hedman-style four-into-one exhaust headers. The shielded distributor unit is molded solid; you will need to drill this out carefully on its sides to accept wiring, and for wiring, you'll need to use very small diameter braided lines—this is what the real car uses as part of the necessary electrical interference shielding (plenty of detail pictures of just such are available in print and online). Decals are provided for the air cleaner and the Tonawanda #1 marking on the right valve cover. Wiring, some plumbing, and careful detail painting makes this mill come alive. Don't skimp on it and you'll be quite pleased.

CHASSIS: The basic chassis is very well done, with superb engraving. The requisite molded trademarks on the chassis are easily removed for the fastidious among us. The seven-piece front suspension has a one-piece lower unit, separate coil springs, and separate upper A-arms. The seven-piece rear suspension has separate shocks and a simplified, but detailed, swing axle assembly. Alternative front and rear lower suspensions are provided for use with the racing wheels, as they attach via meta; pins versus the plastic axles used by the stock version. The engine room detail is well attended, with a separate battery, steering gear box, three-piece radiator and shroud, two-piece master cylinder and fluid reservoir, and washer bottle.

WHEELS AND TIRES: For the stock Vette, plated finned aluminum wheels are given (with decalized wheel centers), and you can see daylight between the spokes, as one would expect from a modern-era kit. These ride on black vinyl no-name small skinny tires that were formerly Michelin TRXs with decalized redline striping. The racing version uses four shallow-offset Minilite eight-spoke racing wheels, and these mount in no-name semi-narrow tires that were once Goodyear Polyglas in a former life.

INTERIOR: The basic interior bucket features the console, shift gate panel detail, and gas pedal molded in place on the main unit. Door panels are separate and feature excellent three-dimensional details, including door handles and window cranks. Both front bucket seats have separate (and prototypically correct) backs. The dash has superb engraving throughout, and for the first time in the history of this kit there are decals provided for the instrumentation, clock face, radio face, and glove box script—note that you have a choice between stock black or custom white instrument dials. The steering column has a delicate turn signal stalk, and the stock-only steering wheel has a decalized horn button. The hanging pedals (brake and clutch) are a separate unit attaching to the rear of the dash. Shifter and brake lever are separate plated units, and there is a decal for the shift pattern on the console.

BODY: There's an old saying: "when something works, you stick with it." The same masters used to create the now-discontinued Ultimates-series 1/43 scale kit and the much-missed 1/12 scale 427 coupe was used to base this kit on. The one-piece body is very well proportioned and has the right Sting Ray look to it. Two hoods are provided: a stock "Stinger" 427 hood and a Grand Sport-style boxy-scoop hood with separate intake baffles. At the front is a plated egg-crate grille (not molded open as one would expect, but can be opened up by thinning the back side of the grille and opening the slots with a very sharp knife), front bumperettes with bumper support beams, and plated turn signal bezels with separate clear lenses. At the rear are separate plated taillight bezels with individual clear red lenses, plated bumperettes and license housing, and a clear oblong backup light lens. The windshield frame, side window frames, inner and outer rear view mirrors, door handles, and windshield wipers, are all separate plated pieces. There is a choice of two different side pipe assemblies, each with its own separate chromed rocker trim: the stock units with plated exhaust tips and heat shield covers, and for the racing version, side exhaust dumps attaching to the rear of the headers. There is an optional up-top unit with superb fabric engraving. All clear windows are thin and reasonably free of optical distortion.

DECALS: In addition to those previously mentioned, the new decal sheet contains red and black 427 custom side striping, stock Stinger hood striping in black, red, or white, crossed-flag emblems for the front windsplit and the rear gas cap, a Corvette Sting Ray script for the rear deck in silver, 427 logos for the

scoop sides, two Chevrolet USA-1 plates, two 1967 Michigan EP 8742 plates, and two current Michigan FOUR 27 plates.

COMMENTS: First appearing in 1995 under the Monogram label, this was the first of the 1/25 scale C2 Corvette kits to accurately depict its prototype, especially in the running gear department. First molded in red, then in white, the original kit (#2968) continued well in to the first decade of the new century. This is the first reissue of the kit, now inheriting the speed and custom parts first appearing in the last reissue of the companion Coupe kit (#2050). High points of this kit are its beautifully crafted engine and chassis, accurate stock side pipes, separate chromed windshield unit, superb decal sheet, and correct bumper supports up front. The only criticisms I have are some small sink marks at the rear that are easily filled, and the very tips of the front fender tops, which are easily reshaped to be a bit more prototypically accurate. Out of the box, the kit builds into an excellent representation of the much desired L71 car, the most high-dollar of all '67 Corvettes at auction these days. Kit bashing? You bet. By trading parts with the companion Coupe kit that only recently went out of production, you can trade the aluminum wheels for Chevy five slot rally wheels, the L71 intake for the more common single four-barrel L68 setup, and the side exhausts for the more common full exhaust system. The speed and custom parts are quite nice, and those headers and Minilites especially can easily find their way onto an unrelated project. Reference material? Plenty—online, in print, at car shows, and on the street. Scale Corvette enthusiasts have a lot to like with this kit, and those who missed its first go-around would do wise not to miss it this time. It's a keeper.

"MIAMI VICE" FERRARI TESTAROSSA Revell #4264



VERSIONS: Stock
MOLDED COLORS: White, Clear, Chrome Plated
SCALE: 1/24
MSRP: \$24.98 USD
REISSUE

ENGINE: Twenty-six parts make up the big flat-12 boxer engine that is the motive power for the Testarossa. Detail engraving is excellent throughout. Take special note of the exhaust manifolds—they are quite different from those found on either Tamiya's or Italeri's kits of the same type, as they have catalytic converters, making this kit the only US-spec model of the "Red Head." Decals are provided for the tops of the intake plenums and the air filter box. Take the time to de-chrome the exhaust manifold "spiders" and paint them properly. This is an excellent rendition of the Ferrari boxer engine, and there are a great deal of references both on line and in print to help you in superdetailing it.

CHASSIS: The basic chassis pan has very good structural details and texture engraving. There are subtle copyright print marks that are easily removed with enamel thinner or denatured alcohol, and molded in copyrights are easily removed with a sanding stick. Front suspension is a six-piece assembly with

...continued on page 50

Model A Makeover

By Cliff Read

I often prefer working in metal because I like my models to have opening doors and steerable wheels. Fabricating in metal usually results in much more durable moving parts. Knowing that I like working in metal as much as plastic, a friend of mine kindly mailed me a damaged 1/24 scale FirstGear hot rod promo/bank that he figured I might enjoy making into a project. The original diecast depicted a mid '90s era hot rod using the straight, less attractive Model A frame, a smallblock Ford engine, and oversize wheels and tires. I'm more of a fan of traditional '50s and early '60s hot rods, so I knew exactly what I wanted my version to look like. After completely disassembling the damaged diecast, I discarded most of the parts, and used, for the most part, just the main body and part of the basic frame.

I generally don't keep track of the time I spend on my models, but my wife tells me that I spent almost 200 hours on this one. It was an enjoyable project and looks exactly as I'd envisioned, so from my point of view it was time well spent.



Here is the damaged First Gear diecast as received.



The first step was to completely disassemble the model. Disassembling a typical diecast model is fairly straightforward... remove all visible screws, then pry apart any plastic parts that are either snap fitted or glued into place.



After disassembly, the usable parts were stripped. This is all I used of the original diecast model.



The doors were cut away with a hacksaw, and metal files were used to finish and clean up the openings.



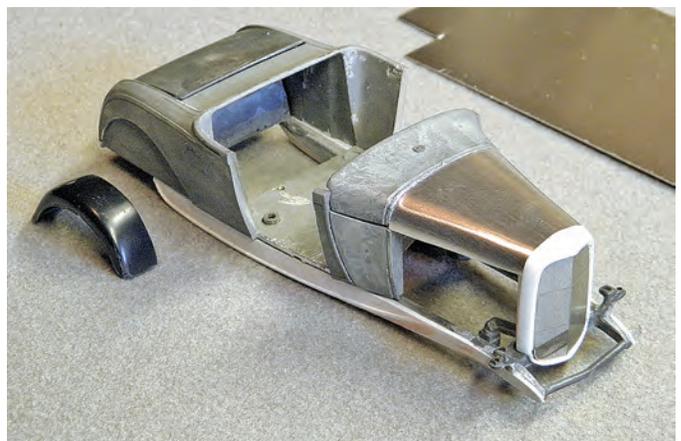
I fabricated some '32 style chassis frame rails in styrene. I also immediately sent off for a photoetched grille insert from **Model Car Garage**.



New doors and hood were formed using sheet aluminum. I used aluminum rather than brass because aluminum is easier to bend by hand to create the proper curvatures.



The unrealistic trunklid hinges were snipped off, in order to add more realistic, in-scale scratchbuilt hinges. I also modified the deck area to be a trunk rather than the diecast's rumble-seat/bank.



A test fit of the new aluminum hood. The bobbed rear fenders were made using the fenders from a Revell Deuce kit, and the grille shell is from that same kit.



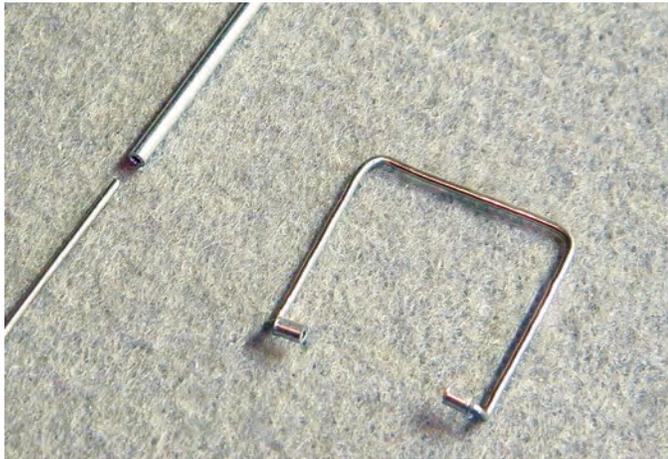
An early stage mockup of the body placed on the newly revised chassis.



The bead detail on the rear fenders was added using thin silver wire.



The dropped front axle was formed of polished aluminum tubing. Brass rod was inserted into the tubing before bending to prevent the tubing from kinking or collapsing when bending it to shape. Kingpins were lathe turned, drilled, and soldered to the brass axle insert, making a really durable front axle.



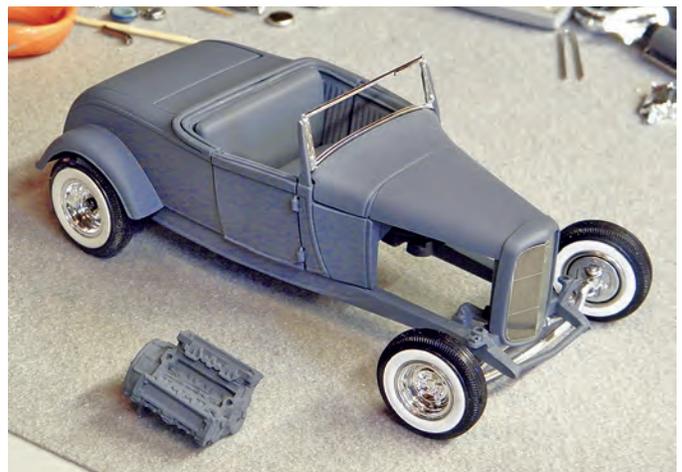
New hinges for the doors and trunklid were formed of wire and aluminum tubing.



Backing plates were formed from styrene, with plated wire used to connect to the kingpins, and to form the tie rod. The front and rear transverse springs were fabricated from individual strips of aluminum sheet, and fastened to the axles using scratchbuilt aluminum shackles and axle brackets.



Here you can see how the door hinges work. The hinge pins are on the ends of the large wire loop that was epoxied to the insides of the door skins, and the hinge knuckles made of aluminum tube were epoxied to the body at the front of the door openings.



Another mock up after all body parts have been primed. It's starting to look like a hot rod now!



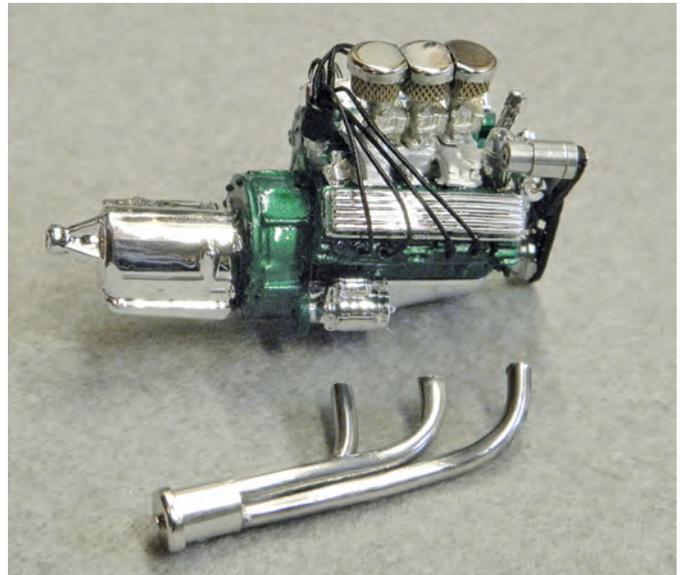
The radiator was formed in styrene and then clad with polished brass sheet.



Interior (and trunk area) carpeting was simulated using craft store white felt.



I built a more "fifties-appropriate" tuck-n-roll interior from styrene sheet and malleable wire, with the simulated pleats done with model railroad styrene corrugated siding.



For a traditional drivetrain, I used a Revell '50s era Cadillac kit engine, which I detailed with a handmade tri-carb manifold (including linkage and fuel lines), mesh filters, and aluminum tubing exhaust headers, plus the usual spark plug wiring and radiator plumbing .



The dashboard gauge cluster was formed of aluminum sheet, with slices of aluminum tubing used to form the individual gauge trim rings.



A polished aluminum firewall gives the engine bay some additional sparkle.



The big-n-little wheel/tire setup was a combination from my parts bin with small Ford caps from a Revell/Monogram Deuce kit. A variety of gauges of plated wire and sheet aluminum were also used for various items, including the traditional hairpin radius rods to position the axles, and the chrome welting between the body and the rear fenders.



The front cycle fenders and brackets were formed in aluminum and wire.



The rear end features a very traditional hot rod taillight treatment. The trunk lid is held open by an operational scratchbuilt strut.



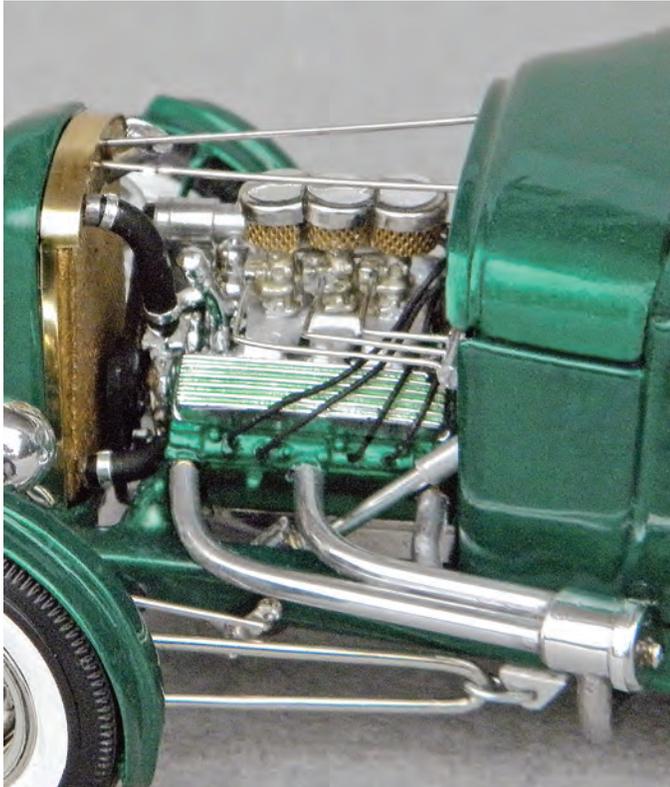
Here you can see the photoetched grille, the front shocks made of telescoping lengths of aluminum tube, and the header-to-exhaust pipe connections that make this hot rod street legal.



The mufflers and exhaust pipes were made of aluminum tubing. Note the scratchbuilt exhaust hangers and polished aluminum fuel tank. This rod is as neat and clean underneath as it is on top.



The main body paint is custom-mixed automotive basecoat/clearcoat with Humbrol, Testors, and Tamiya used to pick out small details.





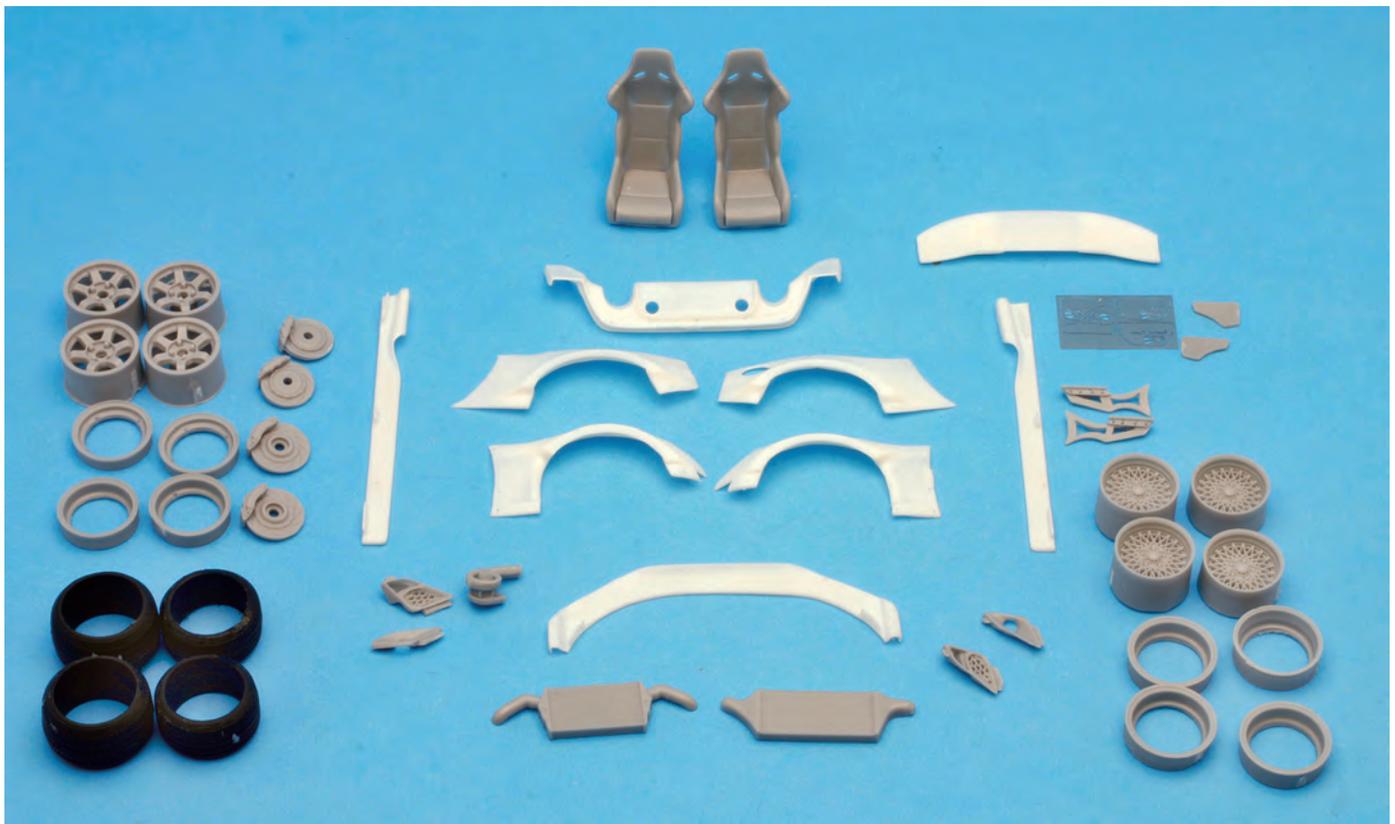
Factory 81

By Gregg Hutchings

Facebook has become a great way to connect with new model car builders, and even some aftermarket companies. Recently, we were introduced to a really cool company called Factory 81.

At first it looked like they only produced a limited number of rims and tires for tuners, but that first look was a little bit too quick. It turns out Factory 81 not only makes some great rims and tire sets, but they have produced some very impressive

trans-kits as well. I was really impressed with their new wide-body kit for the Tamiya/Aoshima Toyota 86/Subaru BRZ kits. The Toyota 86 and Subaru BRZ are actually the same car, with each manufacturer adding their own badges and logos. The car was a joint effort between the two companies, in search of the ultimate lightweight and powerful sports car. I think it's great. If you are either a Toyota/Scion fan, or a Subaru fanatic, you have your choice of a sweet machine that will leave your friends jealous and you'll have a smile on your face.



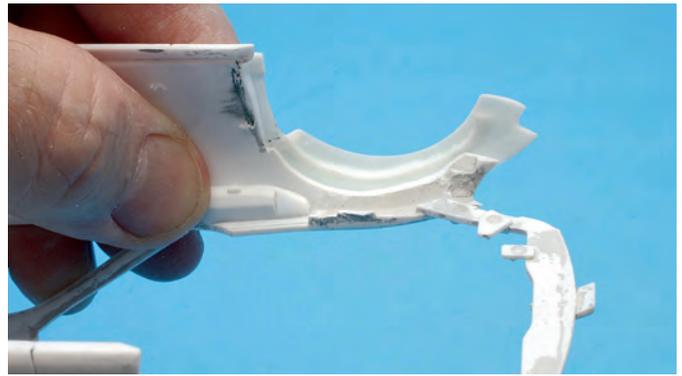
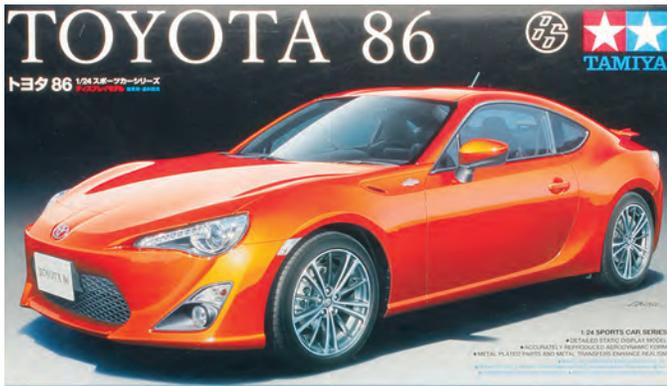
TK002 Rocket Bunny Toyota FRS / Subaru 86 transkit

MSRP \$86.99 US

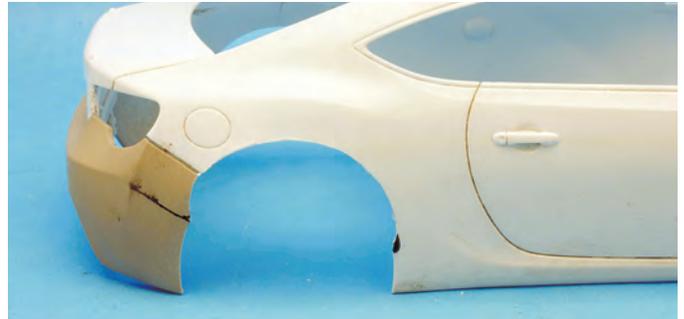
www.eightyone81.com

- Two sets of rims: SSR Mesh and TE37v
- Two types of intercoolers: Vmount or normal
- One turbocharger
- One set of stretch tires included
- Full wide-body kit (front and rear fenders, lower front apron, side rocker panels, rear valance)
- Rocket Bunny rear spoiler logo with photoetched side plates

Worldwide production limited to 286 sets only



The front fenders need to be cut/trimmed out. The best way is to place the fenders on the body, and mark with a black magic marker the area to be cut.



The rear fenders are done the same way, with the rear apron also being cut away.

The Rocket Bunny wide-body transkit is designed to fit on either the Tamiya or Aoshima Toyota 86 or Subaru BRZ. The Aoshima kits have options for engines, and right or left-hand drive.



At first I was going to go with a flat or semi-gloss black finish. One thing that really makes this stand out is to drill the holes in the fender kit, and use aftermarket rivets, like the Tuner Model Manufactory (T2M-1039).



In the end, I decided to go with the Dodge Lime Green from ScaleFinishes.com. The interior will be white, and the rims may even be swapped out for a set of VOLKS white rims. Stay tuned, and watch this build online!

Time for a

COMMERCIAL BREAK

with Chuck Most

It seems to me that there has been a segment of the automotive modeling hobby that's been overlooked for far too long. I am, of course, talking about the Light Commercial side of things. For many years Terry Jessee covered this segment of the hobby in his fantastic "Light Commercial" column in *Scale Auto Enthusiast*, and most shows and contests still have a dedicated segment for these types of models, with no shortage of entrants. But overall, I think that mainstream coverage in this area is lacking. So... I figured instead of complaining about it, I'd do something about it!

I know that some of you might believe there isn't much interest in the subject of light commercial modeling subjects—and if you're judging that simply from the number of newly tooled kits available from the mainstream plastic kit manufacturers, I can see why you'd think that way. After all, it's been over a decade since the last kit of a current pickup truck was released, for instance. But I think this end of the modeling spectrum is heating up again, not that I think it ever really faltered much to begin with. Revell has been reissuing many of their light truck kits over the last few years, and the fact that my local hobby shops can't keep them in stock, and everyone I know is building them, tells me there's more than a passing interest in the subject matter. Same story on the AMT van kits from the '70s... who'd have thought there'd be any interest in such subjects even a few short years ago? And we aren't even getting into all the resin light truck kits and transkits which have become available just within the last few years, the upcoming Moebius bumpside Ford pickups, or the resurgence in models of medium to heavy duty truck subjects (which I think goes along with the light commercial side of things

to a degree). Look me in the eye and tell me interest in these subjects is waning!

The mission statement of *Commercial Break* will be giving these modeling subjects their due. We will be diving into the light commercial modeling segment, covering pickups, vans, police vehicles, and the like. We will also dip into the medium-to-Class 8 segments every so often, but that won't be the main focus of this column. Tim Ahlborn already covers that segment ably in his *Trucker's Corner* column, so I see no need to step on his toes

too often! And as a warning, while we will focus mainly on what's available in plastic and resin, diecast models will not be overlooked. And I do consider things like farm and utility tractors and construction equipment to be commercial vehicles, so watch out for sporadic coverage of those subjects as well. If you want to think of this as my version of "Light Commercial," or my version of Gregg's own "Trucker's Corner" in the old *Plastic Fanatic*, so be it. That's essentially what "Commercial Break" will be, within the scope of subjects just described.

Tips and tech, kit reviews, aftermarket stuff, and maybe the odd 1:1 inspirational piece or two thrown in for good measure every so often.

"Commercial Break" won't be a regular monthly column, but more of a recurring feature. It'll pop up every so often as items of interest come my way.

So... with the formalities out of the way, we'll give you a rundown of what to expect as the saga that is "Commercial Break" unfolds. You'll see some of these models in future articles, and some are merely shown here as examples, but you get the idea.



Never be afraid to look outside the mainstream scales for commercial vehicle fodder! Though primitive by today's standards, the Minicraft (ex-Revell) Highway Pioneers series of kits had quite a few early vehicles rendered in 1/32 scale which really come to life with a little work. This is the 1911 IHC Motor Truck from that series.



Kit manufacturers and second-party entities such as Stevens International have been keeping the classic truck kits coming the last few years. Stevens International and AMT/Ertl paired up to re-release the "Bullnose" Jeepster Commando kit a few years back, and given Round 2's penchant for great reissues of long-gone kits, I think it's safe to assume we'll be seeing a little more of the same in the years to come.



Modified and hot-rodded trucks are still trucks, right? Expect to see a few of them discussed on these pages, though the main focus will be "working" vehicles.



If you know where to look, there's all sorts of stuff besides trucks and trailers out there... some of them might even be in a scale consistent with the majority of your collection. This is a 1/25 Gehl skid loader which was done as a diecast promo model for Gehl dealers. This one was disassembled and weathered, because nothing bothers me more than a nice, shiny, new-looking piece of farm or construction equipment!



Again looking beyond the normal boundaries, the model car aftermarket can lead you to all manner of interesting light commercial subjects, such as this cast resin Jimmy Flintstone piece.

'51 Nash Rambler sedan delivery, anyone?



4x4s, off-road trucks and mud boggers? Yeah, we'll talk about those, too!



We'll also discuss plain-Jane, everyday work trucks. They may not be the most exciting subjects ever, but without them our modern world simply would not function as well.



Beaters, classics, and farm trucks... or any and all combinations of those and more... you'll see them here!

Well, that's it for now, but expect a lot more in the coming months. There's quite a bit of ground to cover, and like I said in the beginning, things are just getting started! Stay tuned for the next installment, when we look into three new police vehicle kits from Revell.

Big Kenworth

The reissue of the Revell/Monogram Kenworth W900 brings another 1/16 scale tractor to the stable for big scale builders, and makes a nice companion to the Peterbilt 359.

The 1/16 scale KW is nearly a carbon copy of the 1/25 scale Revell of Germany W900, but bigger. *Much* bigger. Both are long hoods, both have 60" flat top sleepers, Caterpillar power, and the VIT (Very Important Trucker) interior. The big KW does not have any sleeper interior detail—odd for a big scale kit, but it does open up plenty of possibilities for the builder to scratch-build their own interior. The kit represents a 1981 long hood W900, a big Kenworth for the time. Most of the W900 series in the late '70s-early '80s were the standard short hood (seen in the 1/25 Revell/Monogram snap W900 kit or the AMT Kenworth W925). Placing the 1/16 cab next to the 1/25 cab, you see the size difference between the two. The 1/25 looks tiny by comparison.

After a good look-see, I see several things that need attention. First, on the hood sides, there is a pronounced mold seam line just below the curve from the hood side to the top of the hood, which should be sanded smooth. The chrome plating looks good on the wheel and fuel tank tree, but the tree with the grille, bumper and mirrors had a pebbly texture on the backside on my kit—unfortunately that means the forward face of the mirrors is dull and pebbly. The bumper also has a slight texture when viewed at just the right angle. Everything else on the kit looks straightforward. There are two large leftover sprue attachment points, one on the cab cowl and the other on the trailing edge of the hood. These need to be carefully cut off. Don't try to pry or bend it, as it will tear the plastic, especially on the hood, creating a jagged edge that will be very visible.

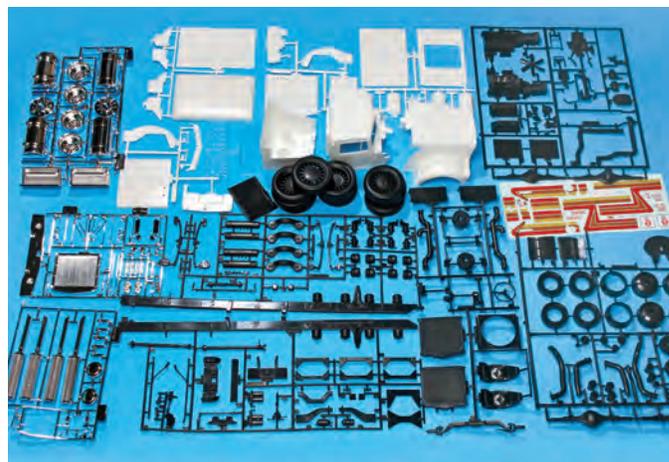
The decal sheet has nice four color stripes, ICC numbers, license plates and fuel permits for 1981, as well as Chicago Kenworth mudflap logos and an owner/operator sticker—a decal offered by the old Chilton publication *Owner/Operator*. The decal sheet

is devoid of any company names. Some of the aftermarket decal printers offer 1/16 scale stripe schemes of other period correct fancy paint schemes. While on the subject of paint schemes, Kenworth W900's were built to the customer's specification and usually had their frames (frame rails, crossmembers, air tanks, fuel tank mounts, axles and fifth wheel) painted to match the cab, or in an accent color. Note that the builder of the box art model painted the battery box sides red. This would be correct if the frame were red. The battery box was masked off during painting and the sides kept the frame color unless the customer ordered raw or polished aluminum. I like how the builder captured the detail on the firewall, windshield weather striping and the air cleaner detail as well as a super-smooth paint finish. The Caterpillar engine is shown in white on the box—this is period correct for this engine.

A couple of things that stand out. The fuel tanks would look better if they were longer (Plastruct tubing and end caps), and if you are going for a restored large-car look a little more frame rail for a longer wheelbase would look good.

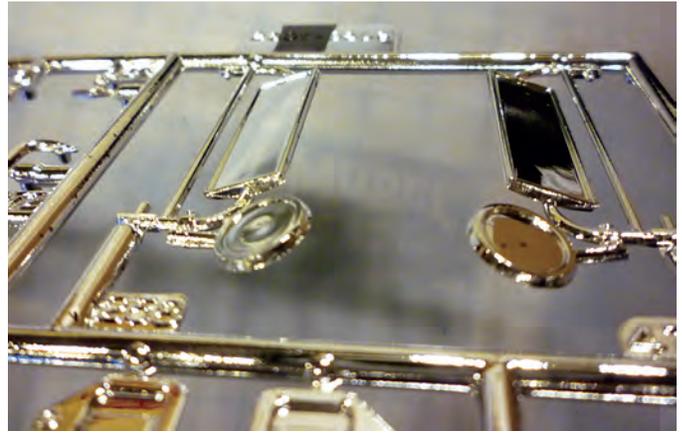
Even though 1/16 scale truck kits don't have a lot of after market parts available, the kit has plenty of possibilities. Right off the top of my head, I can see an easy conversion to a daycab by cutting out the cab back wall, fabricating a new wall from sheet styrene (or use the sleeper rear wall), cut a rear window opening and make new glass from clear plastic. Another idea: cut the sleeper from a 60" to a 36" sleeper. Yet another idea: cut the hood down to the 119" BBC length and create a standard hood W900 and have the starting point for a nearly spot-on Sonny Pruitt *Movin'On* truck. Anything you can think of doing with a 1/25 scale KW, you can do with this one—just with a bit more scratchbuilding.

The biggest problem I see with the kit is, well, the size. It's huge!

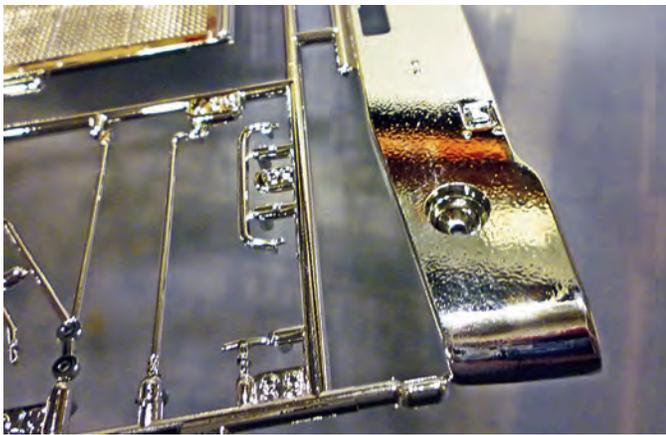




The chrome plating on the reverse side of the bumper and grille on the kit I received was grainy, which wasn't an issue on the bumper, but the grainy texture appears on the forward facing surface of the mirrors, along with some very obvious ejector-pin marks. Careful sanding and applying Bare-Metal Foil to the forward side of the mirrors will give a better appearance.



The reflective side of the mirror has perfect chrome.



The chrome plating on the bumper has a subtle pebbly texture, but not as bad as the backside of the bumper. On a smaller scale you might not notice the texture as much, but on such a large surface it really shows. Sanding the bumper smooth and either foiling it, painting it with Alclad Chrome, or sending it out for replating are your alternatives.



There is a pronounced mold seam on both sides of the hood. This should be sanded off. Interestingly, the 1/25 scale version has the mold seam, too. The W900 hood was fiberglass and should be smooth.



The 1/16 scale Kenworth dwarfs its 1/25 scale counterpart, and towers over the Revell HO scale KW.



The decal sheet has a set of custom stripes, but no company names or logos.

Revell Peterbilt 359 Wrecker

One of the largest 1/25 scale model truck kits made is the Peterbilt Wrecker by Revell. The kit was first issued as a Stepp's Towing Company wrecker nicknamed "Can-do." The original box art featured photographs of the real Stepp's rig, a 1990s Peterbilt model 379. The kit, however, was *not* a 379, but a 1982 vintage model 359. Revell of Germany tooled up some 379-ish dress-up parts to sort of make the 359 look like a 379, including a new grille shell, headlamps, bumper and air cleaner covers. This created plenty of discussions and debates amongst model truck builders as to the accuracy of the kit, especially when the original box art showed a Caterpillar engine and suggested the Cummins engine should be painted Caterpillar yellow. Aside from the wrong year and wrong model of truck, the kit was a superb example of a heavy rotator wrecker. The current Revell USA version of the kit is no exception.

The Revell USA version features fresh box art of a nicely built model by James Stein. The box describes the kit properly as a Peterbilt 359 Wrecker—even though the model on the cover has the 379 dress up parts, there is no debate that this is a 359. Revell calls this version of the wrecker "Will-do," a play on the original "Can-Do."

Opening the heavy box, the trees are all bagged in plastic with no chance of damage to the decals, clear or chrome trees. The chrome on the main tree with the grille and bumper had gunk under the plating, but does not suffer from the flakes-off-at-the-touch problem that the previous versions suffered from. There is quite a bit of flash on the air horns and hood ornament; careful clean up will be needed. The cab and hood are connected with thick plastic sprue that needs to be *cut—not twisted* off. If you attempt to twist it off, you will damage the trailing edge of the hood.

With 650 parts stuffed into the box, the kit is rather unnerving. I find it best to study the parts trees and the instructions before starting any assembly to get familiarized with the parts. The instructions are in booklet form and are very easy to follow.

I have a dozen ideas for this kit, and have already started two of them. I don't like to build a model that another modeler has built, so instead of building a copy of the box model, one of my versions will have subtle changes—reworking the hood from a dual air cleaner to a left-side only air cleaner (more typical if a Detroit Diesel 8v92 was under the hood), sanding off all the rivets, brackets and rear fender steps to simulate a fiberglass hood version, and cutting down the sleeper to a 36" size. I thought about using the Revell/Monogram snap together 359 sleeper but decided to cut the kit sleeper down. My version will have forward mounted fuel tanks under the cab doors, and a COE-style battery box.

The next version will be a long hood 379-127. Using a Bill Drennen mastered 1/25 scale 379 long hood conversion kit (available from P&P Vintage Kits and Resin). The kit includes the hood, grille, fenders, cab shell, instrument panel, more accurate 379 lamps, and instructions on how to use the resin with the Revell 359 kit. I added eight scale inches to the frame rails between the front springs and cab mounts to account for the longer hood. I also sanded smooth the right side sleeper door and grafted in a baggage door from an Italeri 377 sleeper, as the 379 wasn't available with the right hand door that the kit has.

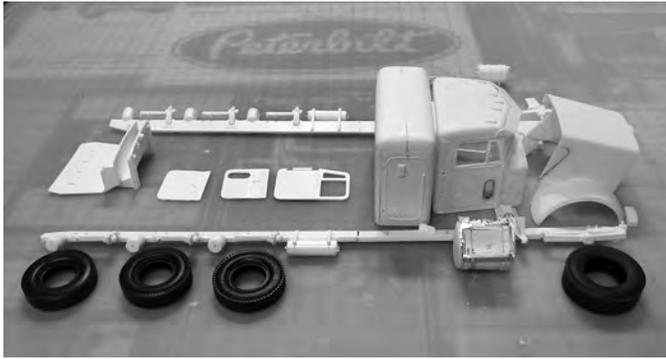
I'm glad that Revell USA issued this kit—Revell of Germany kits tend to be harder to find and pricier. I envision other builds of this kit—mating it to the Revell of Germany Kenworth W900, maybe the K100 COE, or any of the AMT kits and the Moebius Prostar or Lonestar.



This latest reissue's box art features an attractive buildup by James Stein. My versions will be somewhat different, as I don't like to build a kit the same exact way others have done.



The decal sheet isn't as large as the Stepp's version of the kit, but does carry a clever chain and hood graphic, a patriotic theme, scroll work and Hadley Air Horn decals for the rectangle air horns (nice touch!).



As soon as I got the kits home, I set out building them. My first task was to figure out just what I wanted to do—and what to change. I cut down the sleeper from 63" to 36". I grafted a peep window from a junk 352 cab into the passenger door. The frame rails cut down in length for the shorter sleeper. Any miscalculation in cutting the frame will cause problems when it comes time to mount the wrecker body.



I filled in the right side air cleaner cutout and cut off the extension panel on the cab. The Luberfiner oil bypass filter will be mounted on the right instead of on the left frame rail. This setup was more common on Detroit Diesel installs. If you look closer at the hood you can see I removed the raised rib at the panel seam, the rear fender step, and the forward bracket. A fiberglass hood was an option on the 119" and 113" BBC 359's. The kit actually has the correct deep depth surround of a fiberglass hood.



My wrecker will have the fuel tanks mounted under the cab doors. I cut the kit tanks at the outside of the straps and on the weld seam on the ends. The outside edge of the tank mount has to be notched to allow for the tank end to sit level. The COE style battery box is made from RenShape resin styling foam. The air tanks are from the parts box.



My two Peterbilt wreckers. On the left is the 359 with small sleeper, on the right is the 379-127 with Bill Drennen resin long hood conversion. Both are halfway through the building process. Even though they started as the same kit, I want each to have a completely different outcome. Next month I should have the rotator boom, winches, engines assembled, and everything ready for paint.

American Industrial Truck Models (www.aitruckmodels.com) has three new resin conversion kits in 1/25 scale.



AITM #CK-121 Mack B-615 cast cab and hood.

The conversion represents the B61 with the proper radiator for a V8-powered unit. The resin needs some thinning on the inside to allow the door glass and back window to sit flush with the body. Decal nameplates, templates for the glass, and interior parts are included.



AITM #CC-1 Crane Carrier Corporation Centurion

This low-cab forward COE would make a great roll-off or refuse truck, perhaps a stake truck. The conversion kit includes the cab shell, engine blank for the donor chassis, interior parts, air cleaner and exhaust, wipers, mirrors, and a photoetched grille.



AITM #CK-119 Mack RM600

This big Mack is quite impressive. The one-piece cab and hood casting is plastic-kit thin, and includes interior, bumper, exhaust, nameplates, visor and radiator. This would make a great mixer or snow plow.

...continued from page 35

separate upper A-arms, coil-overs, and steering rack. Rear suspension includes the engine cage, a 10-piece affair with separate swing axles, coil-over shocks, and stabilizer bar. As to the exhaust system, this is a six-piece assembly all at the rear, with separate plated and pre-drilled exhaust tips. The engine room accessories are quite visible, including a three-piece radiator wall/firewall with separate electric fans and an upper engine cage. A detail decal is provided for the latter.

WHEELS AND TIRES: Plated Ferrari pentastar wheels with decalized wheel centers ride on black vinyl wide tires that were once Goodyear VR50 Gatorbacks (which, incidentally were OEM for the US-spec Testarossa).

INTERIOR: The basic interior shell only has the center console, brake lever, and pedals molded in place. Side panels are separate and have very good three-dimensional detail. Both front bucket seats have no backs to them; however, due to the interior configuration, these will not be seen through the rather small rear window. Decalized instruments adorn the dash, along with a correct stalked steering column and correct three-spoked Ferrari steering wheel with a decalized horn button. There is a separate overhead console with a plated rear view mirror to adorn the roof inside, and a plated shifter is the only other accessory.

BODY: The sleek yet boxy shape of the Testarossa is captured extremely well here. The one-piece body has both front and rear fascias molded in place, and has the characteristic Testarossa side gills molded not only separately, but open to fresh air as on the actual car. The front grille is molded in and is not opened up, and is flanked by two clear running light units. At the rear, the grille is molded open only where the taillight/turn signal lens units go, and these lenses are also separate cleaner components requiring the transparent red and clear amber paint of your choice. The engine cover (hood) is hinged, the air duct grille molded in place and not opened up, with the engine dome separate and a small clear center high mount brake light lens also unique to the US spec version. Both "elephant ear" mirrors have separate chrome faces. Separate also are the wiper blades and the rear license plate. All clear window components are a tad thick, yet quite clear, and exhibit only moderate optical distortion.

DECALS: In addition to the items mentioned previously, the smallish decal sheet contains two Ferrari Cavallino shields, the requisite square Ferrari badge for the nose, two silver Pininfarina logos, a silver Ferrari block logo for the rear deck, a silver TESTAROSSA block logo for the same rear deck, front and rear side marker light lenses, a silver Cavallino (prancing horse) for the rear grille, and three license plates—a black and silver FERRARI plate, a Florida AIF OOM plate, and (of course) a Florida VICE plate.

COMMENTS: First released in 1986 as kit #2756 under the Monogram label, the Miami Vice Testarossa was the second kit of its type after Tamiya's well-received offering; Italeri's was to follow close to three years later. The parts breakdown of the Monogram offering was very similar to its European and Japanese competition, despite some minor simplification. It was also the only US-spec version of the car in 1/24 scale. The kit was reissued three years later molded in yellow in the Exotic Car Series (#2910), and this was the last issue as Monogram—the next issue of the kit was under the Revell label in the mid-2000s as #2869, again as "Miami Vice." To put it mildly, Monogram outdid itself on this mid-1980s-vintage kit, and it still holds up well today. Some time spent in detailing the engine bay and the interior will enhance what is already a first class replica. Ditto for de-chroming and "aluminizing" the pentastar wheels. For superdetailing this Red Head, metal foil transfer scripts are available from various sources such as Crazy Modeler and FMD, a full bore photoetched detail set is available from Hobby Design (this is meant for Tamiya's kit but can be adapted to the Revell/Monogram offering,) and a beautiful photoetched detailing set on rubber-backed media is available from Replicas & Miniatures Co. of Maryland. Reference material? Online. In print. No problem. If you are a fan of Ferraris, exotic cars in general, or just a Miami Vice fan who grins at the sound of Jan Hammer's incredible synthesizer music from the show, this kit is a good addition to your stable. It builds well and holds its own against the Tamiya and Italeri offerings, not to mention being readily available and somewhat less expensive than both of its competitors.

L'IL COFFIN Monogram #4183



VERSIONS: Show Rod

MOLDED COLORS: White, Clear, Chrome Plated

SCALE: 1/24

MSRP: \$19.98 USD

REISSUE

ENGINE: Power for the famous show rod came from a DeSoto Firedome version of the legendary 392 Hemi with six Stromberg 97 carbs on a log manifold. This setup is replicated here by a 16-piece assembly. Engraving on the block and heads is minimal, in fact simplified, but this was the way it was when this kit was tooled up in 1964. Note there is no fan belt, pulley, or fan detail; there is some on the actual car and this will need to be supplied via the spares box. One very nice feature of this engine (and surprising for the kit's vintage) is the separate fuel lines and fuel log. Some degree of wiring and plumbing will be needed to spiff up this Hemi; good photos of the actual car abound both in print and online to help you here.

CHASSIS: The basic one-piece chassis frame is separate with no molded in accessories—a rarity considering the kit's age, but most welcome for the detailer. The front suspension is a complex 19-piece assembly, mostly chromed, with separate radius rods, shocks, springs, tube axle, and spindle halves, and features poseable steering. Rear suspension is a simpler eight-piece unit, also mostly chrome, with a one-piece vintage Ford banjo axle with separate radius rods, shocks, and chromed drum brakes. Chromed side pipes are molded solid—the wide ends will need to be carefully hollowed out and not simply painted black as the instructions call for. There is a vestigial radiator at the front of the chassis, and that's all for the engine room.

WHEELS AND TIRES: At the front are shallow offset American Racing five-spoke chrome wheels on narrow no-name 1950s-style tires. At the rear are deep offset American Racing five-spoke chrome wheels on M&H-type "pie crust" slicks. Both front and rear setups have snap-in molded styrene white-walls.

INTERIOR: Nothing is molded directly to the one-piece interior floor, everything is separate. This includes the gearshift, all three pedals, brake lever, headrests, and roll bar. The one-piece seat/rear cover, inner door panels, and inner roof panel all feature excellent tuck-and-roll upholstery patterns. Of interest here is the dash, with a five-piece "venturi" instrument cluster (no face detail) and a V-shaped twin-grip steering wheel. That's all she wrote.

BODY: L'il Coffin's deeply chopped and sectioned '32 Ford body is perfectly reproduced here in terms of shape. The one-piece body contains all fender sections. The Coffin's suicide doors are hinged to open. At the front are four small running lights, clear lenses on chrome bezels, the grille shell, and the chromed grille bars—these are very delicate, so handle with extreme care. At the rear is a single chrome bumper/trim piece. All clear window pieces are flat, very clear, and practically devoid of any optical distortion.

DECALS: The smallish decal sheet contains two L'il Coffin logos, two M&H Tires logos, and pairs of sponsor decals for Champion Spark Plugs and the National Hot Rod Association.

OTHER: A four-piece standing skeleton figure is provided to display with the finished model.

COMMENTS: One of the most recognizable show rods of all time, L'il Coffin started out as a '32 Ford tudor sedan owned by Dave Stuckey. Restyled several times, the car was purchased by Monogram Models at the behest of its newly-hired custom car consultant Darryl Starbird. Starbird reworked the Deuce into the now-familiar low slung, chopped and channeled rod with the cantilever roof. Monogram kitted the Coffin in 1964 for the first time (as #PC94) and displayed the real car at its New York World's Fair exhibit that same year. The kit was re-boxed and reissued as #6749 in 1968 after Mattel's acquisition of Monogram. Sitting out the 1970s, the Coffin was reissued by Monogram in 1985 as #2705, and again in 1995 as #0094 in a special edition celebrating Monogram's 50th anniversary. The kit was reissued one more time, in the Selected Subjects Program in 2001, with box art lifted from the original 1964 release. Back again as part of the less expensive "Car Show" line, this kit is a real trip in the way-back machine. It is a prime example of what made Monogram great back in the halcyon days of car modeling. Yes, there is quite a bit of detailing and accurizing work to do to bring the kit up to current standards, but what's here is a great canvas. It builds well and is a real looker if that Candy Red paint is anything to go by. Good photos of the car, both in its heyday and the restored version, are available online and in several good books on hot rods and custom cars. For many of us this kit is fondly remembered, and for those who never had a chance to build this one before, now's your chance. Anyone with a love of custom cars and street rods won't want to pass this one up.

FIREBALL ROBERTS '57 FORD Revell #4024



VERSIONS: NASCAR

MOLDED COLORS: White, Clear, Chrome Plated

SCALE: 1/25

MSRP: \$24.98 USD

MODIFIED REISSUE

ENGINE: This is nearly identical to that of the recently issued '57 Ford Custom 2-n-1 kit reviewed in an earlier issue of this magazine. Representing the rare F-code supercharged 312 cubic inch Thunderbird Special V-8 with three-speed transmission, the 33-piece engine has excellent detail throughout. Of special note are the separate valley cover that goes below the intake manifold, the molded fuel lines and distribution block going to a delicately molded fuel pump, and the well done Paxton centrifugal supercharger and special three-piece air cleaner unit unique to the F-code cars. Note also that the original stock single carb air cleaner is still on the parts trees of this kit, a definite gift to the spares box. As with its companion factory stock kit, this is to date the best representation of the Ford Y-block engine in 1/25 scale, loaded with detail, and deserving of first-class wiring, plumbing, and detailing.

CHASSIS: Again, nearly the same as the stock version kit, and very reminiscent of the last days of AMT/Ertl before the RC2 takeover. The frame and floor pan are separate, and the interior builds up off of the floor pan. Engraving on both units is quite good. The frame features separate bumper braces/attachments on all four corners and the floor pan unit has a separate two-piece gas tank and spare tire well. Front suspension is a six-piece assembly with separate upper A-arms, a simplified lower A-arm/king pin/spring unit with integral tie rod (not that unlike what was in the 1962-vintage AMT '57 Ford kit, but a lot more state of the art!), a separate steering box, and two racing-style dual-shock absorber units. Rear suspension is a nine-piece unit with separate dual shocks and shock attachment plates. The exhaust system is a four-piece affair featuring separate turned aluminum exhaust tips. Moving to the underhood area, this is superbly done, having a full firewall with good engraving, a separate brake booster/master cylinder, and separate wiper motor, separate narrow battery (correct for the time period), inner fender brace bar, two-piece radiator with separate header tank, and one little piece (#110) I still haven't quite identified!

WHEELS AND TIRES: Four body color stock open steel wheels are the only rolling stock provided in the kit, with the four chromed Ford dog-dish hub caps from the factory stock variant still on the chrome tree. Tires are the all-new black vinyl no-name blackwall skinnies from (yes, again) the factory stock version of the kit.

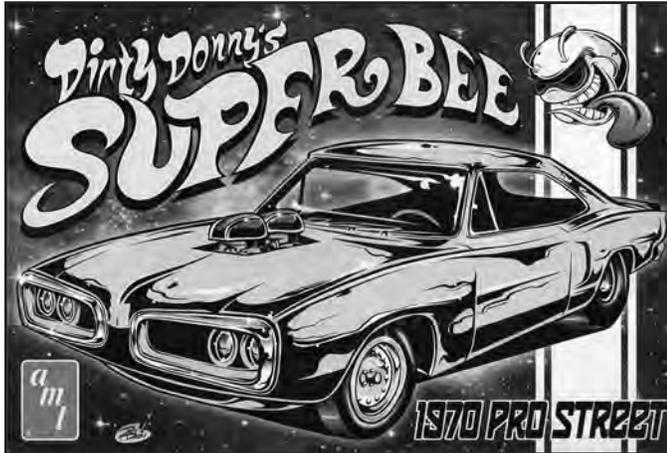
INTERIOR: As mentioned before, this builds up off of the floor pan. Side panels are separate and have good three-dimensional details (arm rests, door handles, and window cranks). These, and the all new three-piece cut-down front bench seat, are all lightly engraved to accept decalized gray upholstery sections. In the absence of a rear seat is an all new seat blanking plate and package shelf. The dash is very nicely engraved and features a separate steering column with turn signal lever and "three on the tree" shifter, a separate hanging pedals unit, and a racing style steering wheel (note that the stock plain-Jane three spoke steering wheel is still included on the parts trees.) Decals are provided for the main instruments.

BODY: R-M did a superb job on the '57's one-piece body. Dimensions look good, and the body has only the FORD block lettering on the front panel, and that's it for molded-in scripts. At the front are new body color headlight blanking plates (though the original three-piece headlight bezel units with body color outers, chrome reflectors, and clear lenses are still in the kit). The grille is molded with bars open, the turn signal lenses are separate clear pieces, and a one-piece chrome bumper with separate license plate complete the front end. At the rear are new taillight blanking plates and exposed gas cap (and yes, the normal taillight bezels minus the red clear taillights are still here,) the FORD trunk ornament, and a chrome one piece bumper. Trim pieces include rear view mirror, hood ornament, wipers, and door handles, all chromed. The hood has excellent structural engraving on its underside. The underside of the roof has a full headliner with separate clear dome light, the sun visors being part of the clear windshield unit. All clear windows are thin and are pretty much distortion-free.

DECALS: In addition to the items mentioned earlier, the decal sheet provides all the markings for Fireball Roberts' famous #22 car, and alternate markings in red and black for a fictitious #57 "Feroocious FORD" car. Also on the decal sheet are sponsor decals for Perfect Circle, Champion Spark Plugs, Air Lift, Pure, Wynn's Friction Proofing, and Firestone.

COMMENTS: We all knew there would be a second variant of the 2012-issue Revell '57 Ford Custom; the partial Paxton blower parts on the chrome tree gave that away. This, the third issue of the '57 tooling (the second issue was the special Model King police car), is a real treat for vintage NASCAR fans, but that's not all. Like the factory stock offering, it has the basis for a good period piece custom or drag racer with some ingenuity and parts swapping. The new F-code Paxton blower and accessories can easily find their way into a '57 Thunderbird along with the steelie wheels and dog dish hub caps to produce a model of the rare F-code 'Birds. Or, it can form the basis for a good demolition derby entry. What Revell has done with all versions of the new '57 Ford is to produce an excellent canvas for the modeler to work their magic. It's superbly engineered and builds up beautifully. Fans of the great Fireball Roberts now have the opportunity to model one of his most famous rides, thanks in no small part to the excellent decal sheet. As with the previous issues, this one easily earns "highly recommended" status.

DIRTY DONNY'S SUPER BEE 1970 PRO STREET AMT #806



VERSIONS: Pro Street

MOLDED COLORS: White, Clear, Red Clear, Chrome Plated

SCALE: 1/25

MSRP: \$24.98 USD

REISSUE

ENGINE: What else would power a Mopar street machine but a Hemi? The 35-piece (with options) “elephant motor” can be built as a normal 426, or with the exotic experimental Chrysler dual overhead-cam Hemi heads that never quite made it to production. For a long time, this Hemi that was first seen in the 1990-vintage AMT ‘68 Road Runner, was the best 426 Street Hemi in 1/25 scale. Even though there are now better Hemis, this mill is still quite good and very usable. The block is separate from the four-speed Borg-Warner transmission. This kit offers two intake setups: a single four-barrel (for the DOHC mill) or a Weiand tunnel ram manifold with dual four-barrel carbs. Both intake setups have a choice of two different styles of chromed air cleaner or a chrome velocity stack. Exhausts are two-piece tubular Doug Thorley-style four-into-one headers. Note that several of the stock parts are still included on the trees, including the two-piece chromed stock air cleaner, stock exhaust manifolds, the stock dual-quad Hemi manifold, and the racing-style dual-quad cross-ram intake manifold—certainly quite a few more building options, as well as a feast for the spares box! With some time spent wiring and detail painting, this Hemi looks great.

CHASSIS: Ertl tried a modular chassis concept with their 1968-70 Mopar kits, essentially a stock front subframe attaching to either a stock or tubbed rear section. Obviously, this kit has the tubbed section. Overall the chassis is excellent, the front subframe having the upper A-arms, radius rods, and transmission support molded in place, and the K-crossmember with steering gear molded separately, two separate king pins, and a separate sway bar. There is no provision for pose-able steering, but an industrious modeler could very well do that with what’s here. The tubbed section is simple but effective, and the engraving is very well done. Rear suspension is an eight-piece unit with shortened nine-inch rear end, chromed suspension arm./radius rods, and two plated coil-over shocks. Note that the differential cover for the stock kit’s Dana 60 rear is still on the chrome tree (hello, spares box!). The underhood area is well catered to, with separate inner fenders, firewall, radiator wall with separate radiator core and horn, battery, wiper motor, master cylinder, washer bottle, and chromed electric fuel pumps.

WHEELS AND TIRES: You’ve got one option here: Cragar Supertrick modular wheels (narrow offset in front, deep offset in back) on narrow front and ultra wide rear Mickey Thompson Sportsman black vinyl tires.

INTERIOR: If you think the basic bucket looks completely stock, you’re right—it is the ex-MPC annual kit stock interior, with side panels, console base, and rear seat molded in place. Two Recaro-style racing seats are your only option for seating, but you have an option of chromed shifters—Hurst-style T-handle or stock MOPAR pistol grip. The dash is again stock, with reasonably good en-

graving, and has a stock steering wheel with molded-in horn ring. A three-piece roll bar completes this interior.

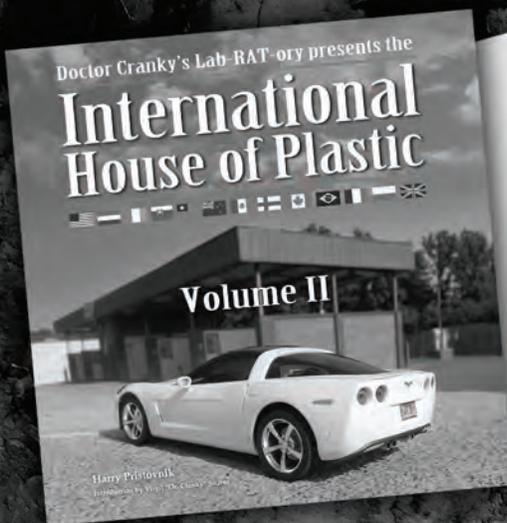
BODY: As with the stock body kit issued by Round2/MPC back in 2008, this ‘70 Coronet body is very well done, having started life as the original MPC annual kit and modified by Ertl in the mid-1990s for these kit applications. Some minor de-flashing and removal of mold parting lines is called for here, easily accomplished. At the front are a chromed grille/bumper unit and associated front pan—instructions are given on detail painting the grille/bumper. At the rear are a stock taillight panel with twin clear red taillights, a stock chrome bumper, and an optional deck spoiler. The hood is scored for removal of what’s needed to clear the tunnel ram manifold, and features a pair of optional detailed hinges; however, these can only be used to keep the hood in the open position. The window transparencies are a little on the thick side and show some small degree of optical distortion, but this does not detract from the finished model. Note that the instructions call for the removal of a small amount of material from the lower windshield—do *not* skip this step or you’ll have fit problems with the interior.

DECALS: The huge decal sheet contains stock Super Bee tail bands in black or white, stock Super Bee rear fender striping in black or white, two large stock Super Bee logos, styled Super Bee and Stingr motifs, six different Dirty Donny-styled Super Bee motifs, twelve different Dirty Donny freestyle icons, and a set of stylized racing numerals (1234567890).

OTHER: A bonus in the kit box is a full size Dirty Donny-styled “Super Bee” collectible decal.

COMMENTS: *In 1993, Ertl (then owners of AMT) tried something of a noble experiment: adapting the original annual kit body parts of the MPC ‘70 Coronet Super Bee to the running gear of their recent 1968 Road Runner stock and Pro Street kits. It became one of their successful sellers of the year. The Pro Street kit (#6140) featured the optional Super Bee side stripe motifs; the stock kit (#6117) did not. When RC2 acquired Ertl, the stock kit was not reissued in the standard line but the Pro Street offering was (as #31929, in two different styles of box art). With new Dirty Donny sponsorship, this fan favorite kit makes its comeback. It’s an excellent canvas for Pro Street modelers, and builds up quite well. Put simply, it’s a fun kit to work with. Granted, some items are showing their age, so to speak (the molded in headlights on the grille and the bucket interior, for example) but the kit as a whole is quite well done. Parts swapping with other kits of its genre, the spares box, and the aftermarket, can result in some pretty wicked combinations. Kudos to Round2 for bringing this one back for a whole new generation.*

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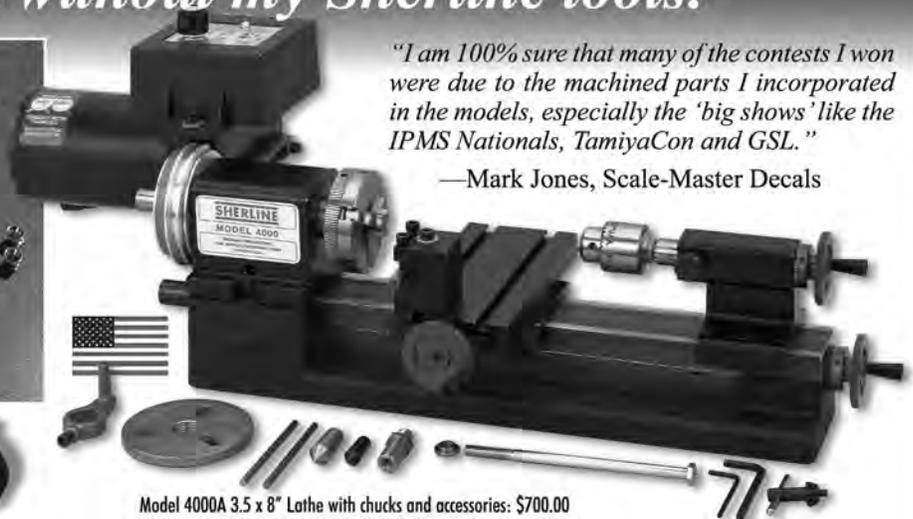


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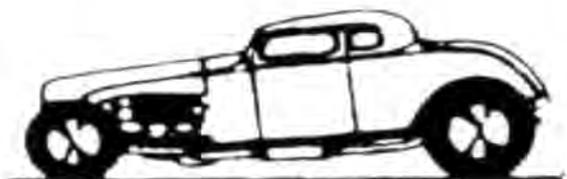
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Marshalltown, IA 50158



COMINGEVENTS

January 26 (Sunday) Wayne, NJ
New Jersey Model Car, Diecast & Kit Collectors Meet. Wayne, NJ P.A.L. Building, 1 Pal Drive, Wayne, New Jersey. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd, Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

February 1 (Saturday) Santa Clara, CA
NNL West 2014. Theme: 50th Anniversary of '64. '64 Mustang, '64 Pontiac (& Ferrari) GTO's, etc. Sub-theme: Race Cars of the '50s. www.NNLWest.org.

February 23, 2014 Camarillo, CA
Modelfest '14. Plastic model contest and swap meet to be held at the Commemorative Air Force Hangar I Southern California Wing, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010. 8:30am - 3:00pm Admission \$ 7.00 per person. For more information contact Vernon Morseman or Stuart Mackie at 805.658-8138

February 9 (Sunday) Tallmadge, OH
Cleveland/Akron OH Toy Show, Summit Cty. Fairgrounds, Rt. 91 & E. Howe Rd, Tallmadge, Ohio. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd, Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

March 15 (Saturday) Sylvania, OH
Toledo Toy Collectors' Fair, Sylvania Exhibition Cntr/Tam-O-Shanter, 7060 Sylvania Ave., Sylvania, Ohio. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

April 6 (Sunday) Utica NY
Spring Thaw Model Show, American Legion Post # 229, 409 Herkimer Road, Utica, NY 13502. Contact and Vendor Info: Dave Lenczewski 315.941.0539, Paul Moller, 315.794.4842

April 12 {Saturday} Salina Kansas
KAMS 19 Annual Model Car Contest and Swap meet, 1108 W. Crawford St. Salina Kansas 67401. Contact Todd Buckles at 785 523 4362 or ttbuckles@twinvalley.net or David Johnson at 785.452.1068 or DavidJ4556@aol.com

April 12 (Saturday) Phoenix, AZ
10th Annual Desert Scale Classic Model Car Contest & Swap Meet presented by the Cactus Car Modelers club. Postal Workers Social Hall, 3720 W. Greenway Rd, Phoenix, Arizona. Contact Bernie Kankiewicz, 602-485-5822, moonmodler@aol.com. Or go to cactuscarmodelers.com for registration info and more details.

April 27 (Sunday) Wayne, NJ
New Jersey Model Car, Diecast & Kit Collectors Meet. Wayne, NJ P.A.L. Building, 1 Pal Drive, Wayne, New Jersey Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

May 3 (Saturday) Broadview Hts., OH
Cleveland, Ohio Collectors' Toy Show, Woodside Party Cntr., 5025 E. Mill Rd, Broadview Hts., Ohio. Contact: John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

July 20 (Sunday) Wayne, NJ
New Jersey Model Car, Diecast & Kit Collectors Meet. Wayne, NJ P.A.L. Building, 1 Pal Drive, Wayne, New Jersey. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

October 11 (Saturday) Sylvania, OH
Toledo Toy Collectors' Fair, Sylvania Exhibition Cntr/Tam-O-Shanter, 7060 Sylvania Ave., Sylvania, Ohio. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

October 26 (Sunday) Wayne, NJ
New Jersey Model Car, Diecast & Kit Collectors Meet. Wayne, New Jersey. P.A.L. Building, 1 Pal Drive, Wayne, New Jersey. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

November 1 (Sat) Broadview Hts., OH
Cleveland, Ohio Collectors' Toy Show, Woodside Party Cntr., 5025 E. Mill Rd. Broadview Hts., Ohio. Contact: John Car-

lisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

November 23 (Sunday) Wayne, NJ
New Jersey Model Car, Diecast & Kit Collectors Meet, P.A.L. Building, 1 Pal Drive, Wayne, New Jersey. Contact John Carlisle, 6996 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Lockport, NY 14094-3430, 716.434.0733

Send in your event or show information to:
Model Cars Magazine, Coming Events,
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It's a Red, Red, Red Month

We have no less than three fine Ferrari models this month, starting with another museum-quality masterpiece from CMC. But there are also two drop-dead beautiful Bugattis, the Chairman's TVR, another classic Cadillac, and *lots* more.

Fantastic Ferrari: CMC's 1969 Sebring 312P Spyder

FIA's 1968 3-liter limit for Prototype Class cars left Ferrari without a competitive entry for 1968 but they were back in '69, debuting the 3-liter V-12 312P Spyder at Sebring, where Mario Andretti and Chris Amon finished first in the Prototype class and second overall behind the "homologated" 5-liter JW-Gulf GT-40 of Ickx and Oliver. CMC's latest masterpiece is this superb Sebring Spyder. With more than 1550, pieces there's much more than I can describe in this space. The hand-rubbed paint on this pre-production prototype is perfect and every possible panel, even the service door for the fluid bottles, is properly hinged. The small sponsor decals seen at Sebring are missing though; Ferrari concurred that they might cause licensing problems. You must first use the tiny functional latches to open the doors, rear deck, and gas caps or remove the air box, while the front cover is retained by two tiny screws—yes, a screwdriver is provided. The front suspension is all there, though non-functional, while brake and clutch cylinders, calipers and radiators are neatly plumbed. Lift the doors to see the real leather upholstery, fabric and photoetched belts, and legible gauges—note the two inside the door frame! In the engine bay there's more wiring (all 12 plugs) and plumbing than I can list, throttle linkages with tiny return springs, complete (and functional) suspension, a multitude of chassis tubes, and the transaxle with more in-scale plumbing. Of course all the cast alloy wheels can be dismantled (yes, the knock-offs were that big!) to better see the disks and calipers. The sheer number of parts here is overwhelming but more impressive is the total absence of any trace of adhesive. Contact CMC-USA (585.292.7280) for more information about this incredible model.



Under The Hood: CMC 1969 Ferrari 312P Spyder

- 5** Realism/Scale
- 5** Detailing
- 5** Working Features
- 5** Paint and Finish

BUT... OK, it needs after-market sponsor decals for absolute authenticity.

Scale: 1/18
Price: \$459
Medium: Diecast
www.cmc-modelcars.de/us

SOURCES

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Under The Hood: AUTOart 1956 Porsche 356A Speedster

- 4+** Realism/Scale *BUT...* No hoses to the big brake drums
- 4+** Detailing
- 4** Working Features
- 4** Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/18
Price: \$149.90
Medium: Diecast
www.autoartmodels.com

Beautiful Bathtub: AUTOart 1956 Porsche 356A Speedster

Bathtub equals Porsche 356 to a sports car person and the 356 Speedster, with its stripped down interior, cut-down windshield, and ridiculous fabric top, was the ultimate bathtub. The Speedster was only sold in the U.S. in 1954, but by 1956 the 356A was sold worldwide. Its only visible changes were a one-piece curved windshield, wider wheels, and badges for bigger displacement engines. AUTOart's superb 1/18 scale diecast is a European car; as far as I can see that means a slightly different gauge arrangement, speedometer in kph, and body builder Reuter's badge on the front fenders. References abound; AUTOart has everything right, including the tiny gold-colored photoetched Speedster and 1600 Super badges. All panels are hinged properly with the spare, tool kit, and fuel tank up front, AUTOart's usual highly realistic interior, and the 1600 cc engine has all the ignition wires, fuel lines, and throttle linkages that match photos in *Superauto Illustrated* (March 1986) perfectly. This one is a must-have for any Porsche collection, and is available from Gateway Global at 866.288.6278.

Beautiful Bugatti: Chromes "Paul Nee" Type 57 Guardian

Originally fitted with a faux cabriolet body by Fernandez in 1936, Bugatti chassis 57397 was re-bodied in 1947 with a Pillarless Coupe (think four-seat Atalante) body by coachbuilder Paul Nee. A class winner at Pebble Beach in 1999, lots of photos are available (www.coachbuild.com) to show what an incredible job Chromes has done with this unique 1/43 scale Type 57. The lines are right from every angle, early Type 57 details and dimensions are correct, and every piece of trim, inside and out, is there in perfect scale. The deep black paint gets the highest possible rating and all exterior trim, including the few photoetched pieces, is bright chrome-plated; even the handles are tiny three-dimensional castings, and everything is applied without a hint of adhesive. Photos show upholstery details are correct and the leather-like finish is exceptionally realistic. Door sills and dash are wood-grain decals and the latter has a full complement of detailed instruments and tiny chrome switches. If you want the very best, Chromes models are available from JM Modelautos (814.474.5697).



Under The Hood: Chromes 1947 Bugatti T.57 Pillarless Coupe

- 4+** Realism/Scale *BUT...* No engine, otherwise no buts—simply the best.
- 4** Detailing
- 1** Working Features
- 5** Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/43
Price: \$379.95
Medium: Resin
www.JMModelautos.com



Under The Hood: Brooklin 1960 Cadillac Series 62 Six-Window Sedan

- 4** Realism/Scale *BUT...* Steering wheel is too horizontal.
- 4-** Detailing
- 1** Working Features
- 4** Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/43
Price: \$134.95
Medium: Diecast
 Contact Brasilia Press:
 Fax: 574.262.8799

Classy Caddy: Brooklin 1960 Series 62 Six-Window Sedan

The 1960 Cadillac's mild facelift—grille, side trim, and toned-down fins—gave it a smoother, less flamboyant look than the '59. Brooklin's new (BRK-189) '60 Series 62 Six-Window Sedan is impressive at first look and more so on closer inspection. It combines their new thin plated wire side/fender trim with the chromed "Birdcage" roof housing to be almost fully detailed: only the fin cap trim and front fender scripts are missing. It makes two-tone paint easy too, and the very smooth, glossy Pelham Blue and Olympic White colors match paint chips perfectly. There's been some on-line criticism of the fins but the photos I've found appear to be shot with a wide-angle lens which causes distortion; I think Brooklin has them right if the tops are plated. Photos (www.shannons.com.au) show that upholstery patterns are accurate; door panels have arm rests but no inner handles. The plated center section of the dash and relief-detailed instrument cluster are equally accurate. Brasilia Press (www.brasilia-press.com) will tell you where to find this very accurate beauty.



Under The Hood: Automodello 1977 TVR M-Series Turbo

- 4** Realism/Scale *BUT...* No brakes or chassis detail.
- 3+** Detailing
- 1** Working Features
- 5** Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/41
Price: \$119.95
Medium: Resin
www.diecastm.com

Torrid TVR: Automodello 1977 M-Series Turbo

TVR created the 3000M by switching to the Ford 3-liter V-6 Essex engine in 1972, and then had Broadspeed develop a turbocharged version, the M-Series Turbo, in 1975. Automodello's second TVR model is this beautifully hand-crafted, very accurate Tribute Edition (just 123 made) 1/43 scale model of the 1977 M-Series Turbo owned by TVR Chairman Peter Wheeler. The basic shape is correctly identical to Automodello's sold-out first version but photos show that the Turbo's new hood and alloy wheels are modeled accurately, and a radio antenna has been added. Every piece of trim is either plated or done with carefully applied photoetched parts. Inside, the leather-colored upholstery has a realistic sheen and the dash decal has the correct new instrument arrangement and a radio fascia. Photos (www.modelcollector.co.uk) show the excellent metallic burgundy paint is exactly right, as are the authentic silver Turbo decals which were applied before the high-gloss clear coat. Dimensions are closer to 1/41 scale; that's not a problem with a model this small. Diecastm (877.343.2276) has this gorgeous tiny TVR.

Another Beautiful Bug: Spark's 1937 Type 57S Derain

French artist Andre Derain owned several Bugattis, including one of the very rare Atalantes. Opinions vary about this car, but The Bugatti Trust (www.bugatti-trust.co.uk) says he used the Atalante's front end to replace the unique turning front fenders of Jean's one-off 1936 Paris Show car (chassis 57385) after that was crashed, creating the equally unique Derain Roadster. Spark's resin-cast model is simply superb; the castings and silver-gray paint are virtually perfect. Stone guards are printed silver while all other brightwork is either plated or very delicate photoetched parts. I can barely see the hood latches and handles and the Bugatti grille badge is legible. Wheel covers even have holes for the valve stems! All light lenses, including the fender-top running lights, are the correct color plastic. Photos of the restored car show the upholstery is correct and the engine-turned dash, with its detailed instruments, is a thing of beauty. Pre-war photos show that Spark has the original lines and all details correct. JM Modelautos (814.474.5697) has Spark's beautiful Bugatti.



Under The Hood: Spark 1937 Bugatti Type 57S Derain

- 4** Realism/Scale *BUT...* Not much chassis detail.
- 4** Detailing
- 1** Working Features
- 5** Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/43
Price: \$73.99
Medium: resin
www.JMmodelautos.com



Under The Hood: Hot Wheels Elite 1990 Ferrari F40

- 4** Realism/Scale *BUT...* No Ferrari barges on wheel hubs.
- 4** Detailing
- 1** Working Features
- 4+** Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/43
Price: About \$40
Medium: Diecast
www.hotwheels-elite.com

Fine Ferrari: Hot Wheels Elite 1990 Ferrari F40

Enzo Ferrari called it "the best car in the world" when it was introduced, and that may not have been much of an exaggeration. *Road & Track's* September 1991 test of seven supercars placed it first in handling and second in top speed (196.1 mph with Phil Hill driving). Hot Wheels Elite Ferrari models are closely monitored by Ferrari and this one is a gem. Its lines match *R&T* drawings precisely, dimension are exactly 1/43, and photos confirm that all details are correct and executed with excellent scale fidelity. The black paint is super-glossy, with printed Ferrari badges and tiny, ultra-thin Pininfarina logos on the flanks. Interior detail is excellent, with a realistic sheen on the red seats, separate belts, and detailed gauges on the accurate dash. But the view through the glass hatch is even better, with the turbocharged V-8's twin intercoolers, crossover plenum, ducts to the NACA scoops, red rubber connectors, and other details exactly as seen in photos.

See www.hotwheels-elite.com for dealers.



European Chevy: Ixo 1939 Opel Kapitan Sedan

Opel introduced the Kapitan Sedan at the 1939 Geneva show, and while it was just slightly smaller than the American Chevrolet, there was an unmistakable family resemblance. The Four-Door Sedan accounted for the majority of sales before the war ended production, and that's the subject of the latest Museum Series model by Ixo. *Wikipedia* photos include one of this exact car, license HCE 186, which shows that Ixo has gotten the shape and all the details, down to the black stripes in the bumper, exactly right. Considering the world economy, there's a surprising amount of chrome trim on this car and Ixo has done it all, to scale, with a combination of separate plated parts and bright printed chrome. It takes a magnifying glass, but I can read the red OPEL logos on the dog-dish hub caps. Interior details include realistic upholstery with chrome-printed relief handles, detailed instrument faces, and printed silver trim on the black dash. Wild About Wheels (eab_49@msn.com) has Ixo's bargain-priced Museum Series models.

Under The Hood: Ixo Museum 1939 Opel Kapitan Four-Door Sedan

- 4 Realism/Scale *BUT...* Two small areas of painted body side visible in backseat.
- 4 Detailing
- 1 Working Features
- 4 Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/43
Price: \$35
Medium: Diecast
 Wild About Wheels:
 215.322.7593

DIY GTO: Minerva 43's 1962 Ferrari Breadvan

Italian Count Volpi provided funds to help Carlo Chiti and other Ferrari personnel start ATS following the "Great Ferrari Walkout," so Enzo refused to sell him a 1962 250GTO for Volpi's Scuderia Serenissima. Undaunted, Volpi then sent his Competition 250GT SWB to Bizzarini, who relocated and lowered the engine and built a new flat-roofed, square-tailed body using the aerodynamic theories of Professor Wunibald Kamm. Although it never carried any Ferrari badges, the car became known as the Ferrari Breadvan. Minerva 43's first kit builds the car as seen at the 1962 Le Mans 24-Hours. With 141 parts (22 white-metal, 63 photoetched and 30 *very* tiny machined ones) it's a complex kit, and while the castings and machined parts are truly first-class, the instructions are only slightly better than useless. Many parts simply aren't shown on the instructions, so good references are a requisite; *Motor Racing Replica News #6* is one of the best. No filler was needed anywhere, parts fit perfectly once I figured out where they went, and my finished model is very accurate and beautifully detailed. Grand Prix Models (www.grandprixmodels.com) has the new Minerva 43 kits.



Under The Hood: Minerva 43's 1962 Ferrari Breadvan

- 4 Realism/Scale *BUT...* Beautiful kit, but expensive and has poor instructions.
- 4 Detailing
- 0 Working Features
- NA Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/43
Price: \$186
Medium: Various
 mail@grandprixmodels.com



Bad Bantam: Acme 1970 Mental Cruelty Dragster

Southern California drag racer David Bowman built a new AA/FA Fuelie in 1969 whose Bantam body carried an exceptionally wild paint scheme by California painter Molly, and the unusual name *Mental Cruelty*. For 1970 the original Chevy engine was replaced with a blown Hemi, and that's the subject of the latest 1/18 scale model from Acme Trading Company. The body is the first thing to grab your attention; photos (www.draglist.com/artman2) has nailed Molly's psychedelic color scheme perfectly. Other photos show chassis and engine details are equally accurate, although those I found show a chrome wheelie bar. Up front, the Hemi is nicely wired and plumbed, with a rubber drive belt and detailed pulleys, but no throttle linkage. The cockpit has the requisite big go-pedal, roll bar and chassis tubes, and fabric belts with photoetched hardware, while the 'chute pack and ropes are real cloth. Acme's *Mental Cruelty* will be a stand-out in any dragster collection.

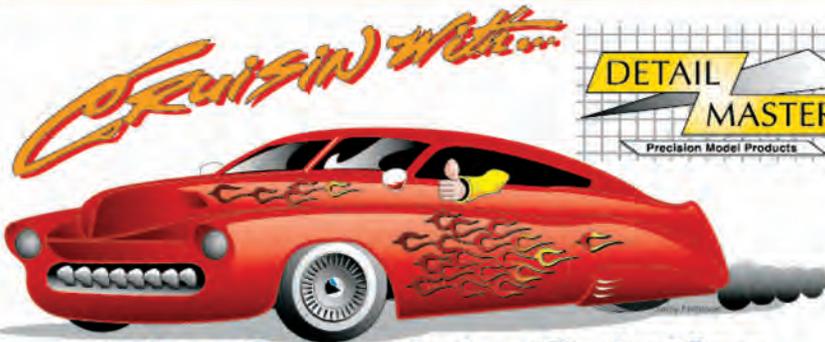
Under The Hood: Acme AA/FA Mental Cruelty Dragster

- 3+ Realism/Scale *BUT...* No wheelie bar.
- 3 Detailing
- 1 Working Features
- 4 Paint and Finish

Scale: 1/18
Price: \$129.95
Medium: Diecast
 www.acmediecast.com

Contact 678.975.3093 for more information.

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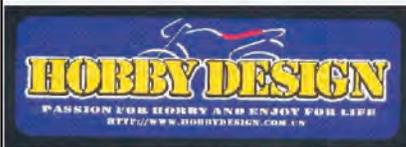


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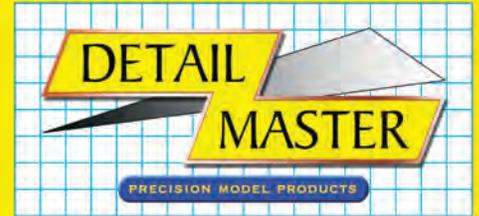
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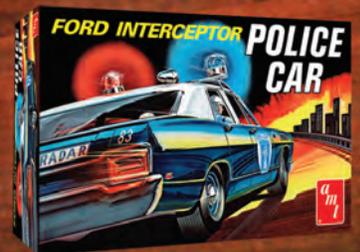
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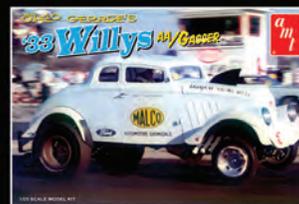
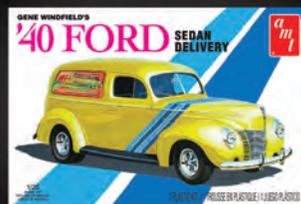
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