

AMPS Central Virginia 2011-2012 Club Project
Tamiya M-8 Armored Car

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22 March 2012 – Project wrap-up

Well, we've managed to work through our first AMPS Central Virginia project. At this point, you should be in the final construction phase and just about ready to display your completed project. Along with improving our research and build skills, the goal for this project was to have as many participants finish their build in the allotted time of five months. We'll take our completed models on the road next month to the 2012 AMPS International Convention.

Each of us approaches the completion of a project in a different manner. Some spend as much time in the completion phases as they do during the build. Others are so glad to get their model off the bench that they rush through the completion phase so they can get to the next project. I know it's time to complete a project when

I start knocking stuff off the model. At this point, it's time for me to wrap up construction and break out the paint.

I'd like to share with you my approach to completing a model for display.

Setting the time frame and historic context: As I went through my research I decided to build an M8 as used by a unit in Northwest Europe during late 1944 or early 1945. This resulted in building the M8 without fender skirts and using some combination of tires with chains. I also added stowage to the turret and back deck as seen in many pictures of M8s from that time period. The stowage I used is a combination from the Black Dog M20 accessories set and the parts box (Figures 1-2).



Figure 1, Stowage



Figure 2, Stowage

Several years ago I had the opportunity to conduct some oral histories with members of the 823rd Tank Destroyer (TD) Battalion. This unit was credited with the highest enemy tank kill rate of any TD unit in the European Theater of Operation (ETO). It served on the northern shoulder of the bulge in the areas around Stoumont, La Gleize, Stavelot and Malmedy, Belgium. They engaged elements of Kampfgruppe Peiper with their towed 3-inch guns and a few M10 TDs. This unit had M8s in each of its three reconnaissance platoons. I decided to complete my M8 as a vehicle in one of these platoons. Note: I've found setting the time frame and historic context for a model helps me in writing the research reference material for an AMPS competition.

Setting the scene: I've learned over the years not to make the base for my models too large for a couple of reasons. First, a large base can distract from the model display and second, I have limited space to display my completed models. I've collected a number of wooden bases over the years so I'll use a few to see how the model will look. Once satisfied with the base, I pick a figure or two and some other assorted materials to set the scene I'd like to capture. In this case, I'm using figures from an Alpine US Officer set and a tanker figure from S&T. These figures have some casual poses and are dressed appropriately for the time frame I want to depict. I've decided to have these guys standing next to some dragon's teeth anti-

tank obstacles which were found in the Ardennes area. I moved the model, figures and other materials around on the base until I'm satisfied with the layout (Figures 3-4).



Figure 3, Project layout



Figure 4, project layout

Now the fun part starts with the painting and weathering of the model, painting the figures and dragon's tooth and developing the groundwork. These are tasks each of us will have to tackle to complete the project.

We can spend some time at our next meeting discussing any of the steps we completed during this project or your plans to display your M8. I hope you've enjoyed this first AMPS Central Virginia group build.