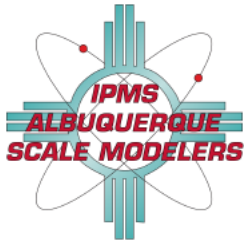


ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

January 2014

THE FEZ SEZ TONY HUMPHRIES

Well, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, ho ho ho, and all that good stuff. It's a little late really to pass on the Compliments of the Festering Season I suppose but I'm going to do it anyway. Hopefully you and all of your family had a wonderful Holiday period and Santa brought you everything that you were looking for. Or at least, everything you needed, and certainly that included lots of modeling stuff, I hope. In common with most of you, I suspect, I didn't get everything that I wanted. Santa really let me down with that request for \$1 million in fine-cut diamonds that I mailed to him, I have to say. Still, it could be worse. With a little luck you got lots of cool stuff (as I did) and even found some time to put some plastic together too and we look forward to seeing it on the table in one of this year's upcoming club competitions and perhaps at Chile-Con in June also.

Did anyone order anything from the online retailers this Christmas, I wonder? If so, what was your experience like? I'm assuming that many of you will have ordered at least something from one of the online retailers like Amazon? If you haven't ordered (or bought locally) any Xmas presents by now, you're presumably sleeping in the shed by this point and so the question is somewhat moot. A lot of the retailers like Amazon and also the model specific ones such as Squadron

and Sprue Brothers have allegedly been making great efforts to improve their online ordering and delivery processes and I wonder if the effort has been noticed by you, the consumer? From my own experience, I ordered a number of books from Amazon, several weeks ahead of time and all of which duly arrived. Late. So I can't say that I was very impressed with them... I also ordered some resin figures from Sprue Brothers. They arrived three days later, well packaged and exactly as ordered. Nothing missing, nothing wrong, no problems, no excuses. Fast delivery and exactly what the Doctor (or in this case the Prez) ordered. So, full marks to them. Their prices may not be as good as places like Lucky Model, but they aren't generally too bad and their service is excellent. At least in my experience. I have found much the same to be true of Squadron also. Well, except for the prices part. Unless you wait for one of their better sales, their prices are fairly eye-watering.

It's a shame that some of the Chinese based retailers (Lucky Model for example, though they are not alone here) can't follow Sprue Brothers example though. I don't know if any of you have ordered anything from them before? I certainly have. Their prices are great but even if they actually have the item that you're looking for in stock (which is a relatively rare experience for armor kits anyway, unless it's a very recent release) then it'll take so long to get here that you'll have forgotten what you wanted it for, by the time it arrives. If it



December business meeting in progress.



isn't in stock, they'll take your order, take your money and you'll wait three months for it to come back into stock, if it ever does. I've had to cancel more than one order from them in the past when the item is unavailable even though their website never tells you that it is. I don't know what the Chinese for "good customer service" is, but it's pretty clear to me that they don't either. At least I have an excuse... If you tried to order anything for this Christmas from Lucky Model, you're probably still waiting. Make sure you make a note for next year: if you want it in time for Christmas, make sure you've ordered it by Labor Day at the latest. Actually, August would probably be safer. Otherwise, prepare yourself for disappointment. Especially I've noticed, if you want any AFV Club items. These are routinely out of stock and take two to three months to backorder apparently. Why, I have no idea... Hong Kong to Taiwan is about 500 miles by my reckoning. You could swim there and back in less time than Lucky Model routinely takes to restock AFV Club kits. Perhaps that's how they deliver them? I don't know. I've pretty much given up on them these days though and use eBay for anything that I can't get for a reasonable price elsewhere.

Having said that, the real alternative of course, is to buy locally and that may be the best bet of all. So go and see Brian at Hobby Proz for all of your modeling needs. He'll be happy to help out. They do a great job of ordering things for you if they don't have it in stock and Brian's delivery service is second to none. The way he carries that kit from the shelf and delivers it to your waiting hand is a joy to behold. In fact it makes you proud to be American. I know that it's hard for them to complete on price with places like Lucky Model and other online stores, but do remember that you get a club discount as one of the many advantages of being an ASM member. So make it a Happy New Year for all concerned and make a New Year's Resolution to go out there and buy a kit or two from your local Hobby Store. As we all know, with the way things are going these days, it's a case of use them or lose them. After all, do you really want to have to rely on Hobby Lobby or Michaels for local modeling supplies? No, I didn't think so...

OBAMACOLOR

CONFIRMED: the US Government is immediately discontinuing the Federal Standard (FS) color chart as a printed product; if you want to get one, you have until January 31 to order it (while supplies last—might want to hurry if you don't want to

Year 2014 Contest Quick Reference Chart

Titles in **blue** indicate contests for points

- 03 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1**
SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY
Sponsored Contest: "Frickin' Laser Beams" (Patrick Dick)
Sponsored Contest: "Best Ford-themed model" (Patrick Dick)
- 07 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 07 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 04 Apr** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2**
FAMILY TIES
- 02 May** **Japan**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 13 Jun** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3**
WORLD WAR I
Sponsored Contest: "D-Day, June 1944" (Mike Franklin)
- 11 Jul** **Speed Demons**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Sponsored Contest: "Best French Subject" (Tony Humphries)
- 01 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 05 Sep** **SPECIAL CONTEST #4**
SEAPLANES / AMPHIBIANS
Sponsored Contest: "Electronic Warfare" (Gil De La Plain)
- 03 Oct** Sponsored Contest: "Adversaries" (Mike & Matt Blohm)
- 07 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Sponsored Contest: "Russian Bombers" (Tim Wood)
- 06 Dec** **Model of the Year** competition!
Sponsored Contest: "TBD" (E-Board)

end up paying premium prices for one on eBay). The color standard itself will still be maintained in digital form, which is basically useless for matching colors of real-world objects.

You can order swatch books from the Government Services Administration (<http://www.gsa.gov/colorstd>).

Thanks to John Tate for the Heads-Up!

IN THE BONUS PAGES!

JOE WALTERS

No Bonus Pages this issue! Sorry!

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ASM members are encouraged to submit articles, reviews and other items as appropriate. Contact editor Joe Walters for details and specs. Submission deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month.