

**MIKE ASHEY**  
**PRODUCTIONS**  
**PRESENTS**  
**TIPS ON BUILDING**  
**THE TAMIYA 1/350 SCALE**  
**IOWA CLASS BATTLESHIP**  
**USS MISSOURI BB-63**



**BY**  
**MIKE ASHEY**

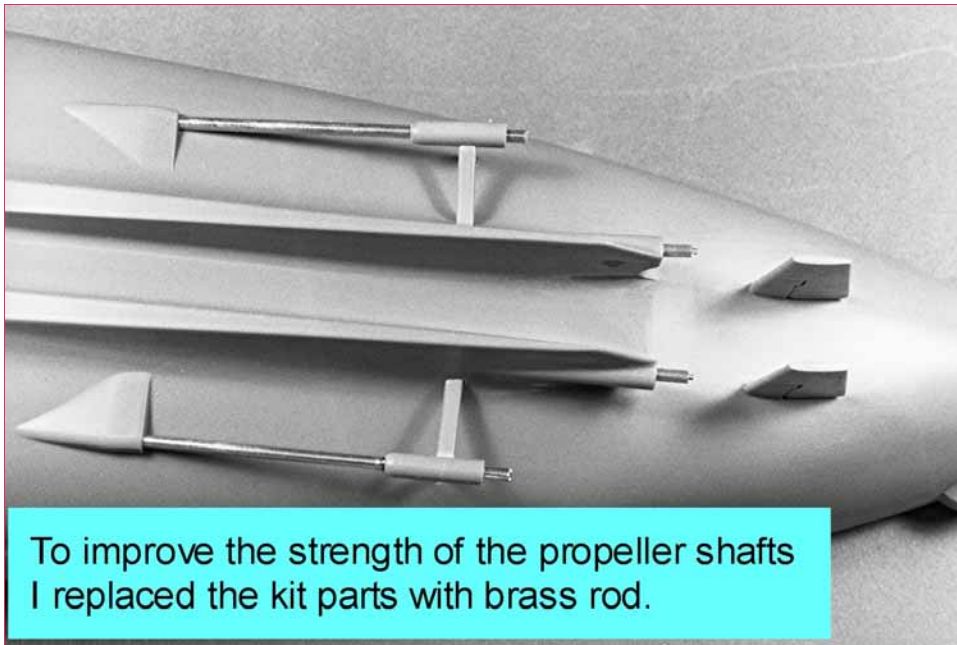
**TIPS ON BUILDING  
THE  
TAMIYA 1/350 SCALE  
IOWA CLASS BATTLESHIP  
USS MISSOURI BB-63**

The Iowa class battleship USS Missouri and her sister ships were the largest battleships built by the United States. The Missouri was named after President Truman's home state. She was selected by President Truman to lead the armada of allied ships that sailed into Toyo Bay to accept the formal surrender of Japan.

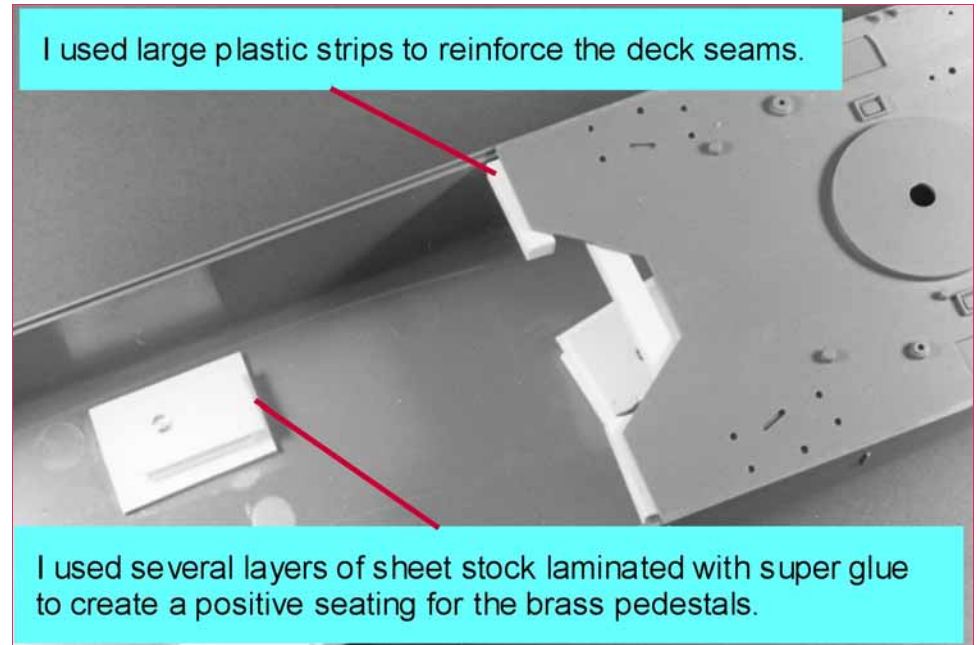
The Tamiya 1/350 scale USS Missouri has been around for many years and it is an accurate representative of this famous Iowa class battleship as she appeared in 1945. The kit is well engineered for ease of assembly, the instructions are very well done, and the kit builds into an impressive model when completed.

The assembly of this beautiful model is pretty straight forward, although there are a few fit challenges. The purpose of this article is to focus on these challenges and present techniques for addressing them. I built this kit over 10 years ago and I used the original issue Gold Medal Models (GMM) photoetch detail set. I also included some suggestions on improving the Gold Medal Models photoetch catapult, crane and radar detail sets for this kit. The improved GMM detail set has finer railings and multi-layered detail etching for the catapults, radars and the aircraft crane. I used Plastruct and Evergreen strip, sheet stock and quarter round shapes for all of my plastic needs. The model was painted with Testors model master enamel paints. The wood base is hard rock Maple with a Minwax red maghoney stain and a clear gloss polyeurthane finish.

Color photos of this finished model can be found in the ship gallery section of this web site.

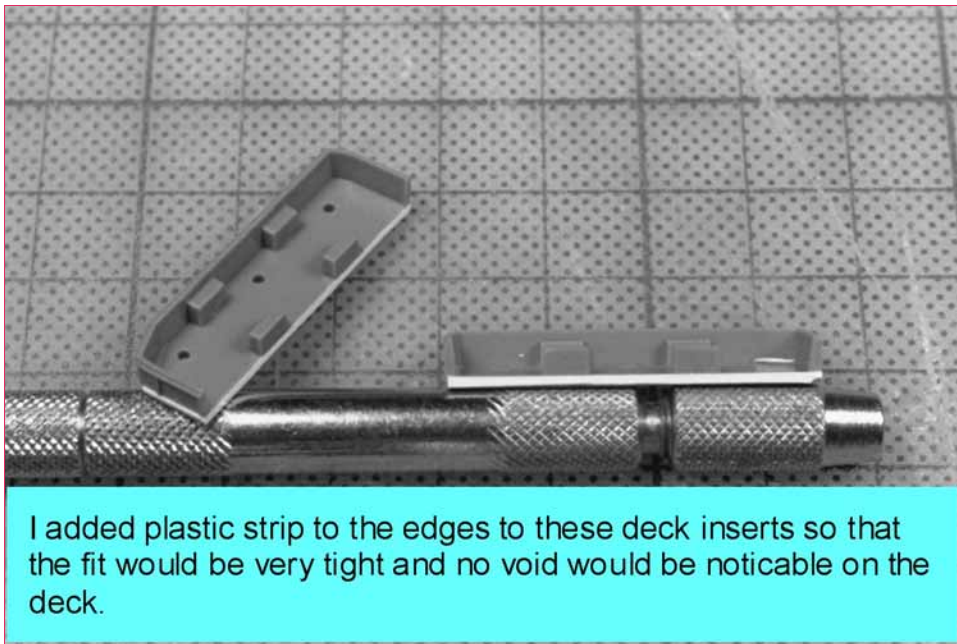


To improve the strength of the propeller shafts I replaced the kit parts with brass rod.



I used large plastic strips to reinforce the deck seams.

I used several layers of sheet stock laminated with super glue to create a positive seating for the brass pedestals.

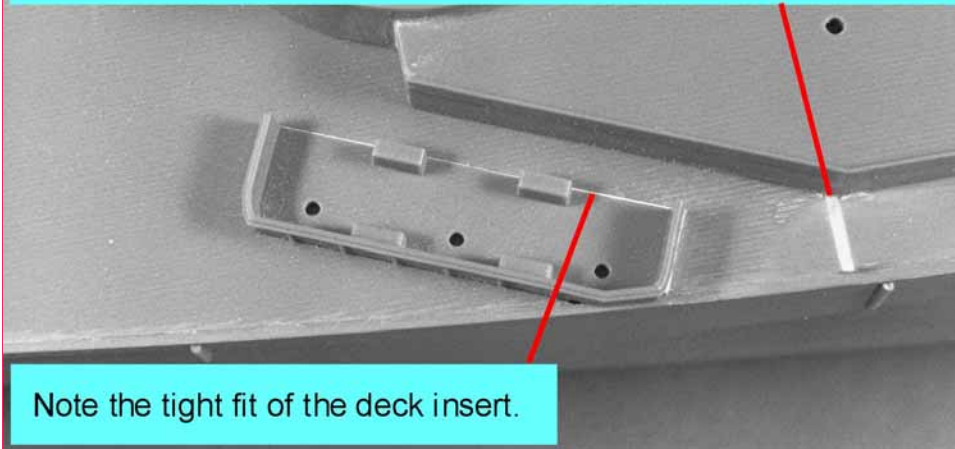


I added plastic strip to the edges to these deck inserts so that the fit would be very tight and no void would be noticeable on the deck.



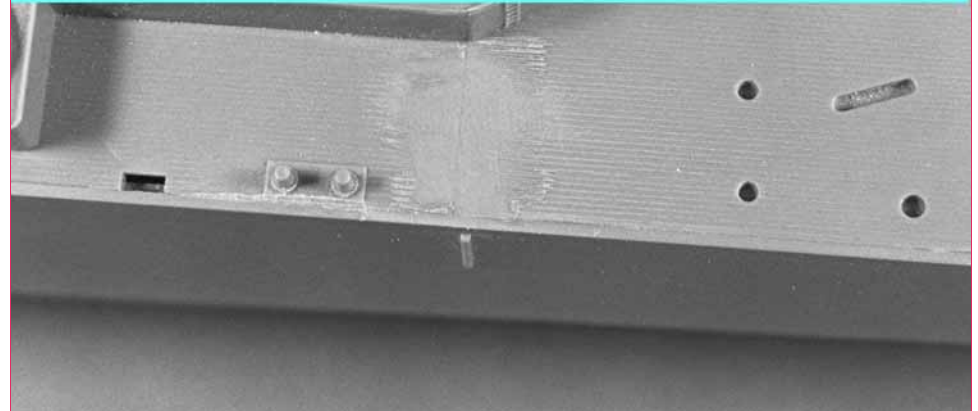
When I added plastic strip to these deck inserts I also had to angle the strips so that they would follow the deck contour.

There was a large void between the forward deck sections. I inserted a formed fitted section of plastic strip, super glued it into place, sanded the surface smooth and then carefully rescribed the deck lines.



Note the tight fit of the deck insert.

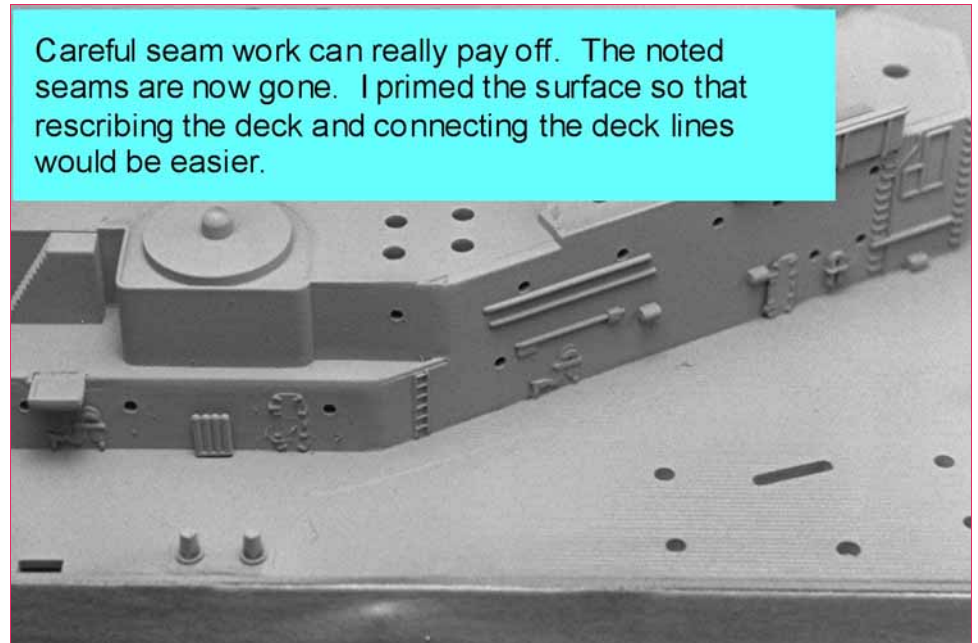
The Tamiya Missouri deck comes in three sections. With the forward deck section void fixed, the rear deck seam just needed a tiny bead of super glue to seal it. Here the super glue has been sanded smooth using a strip of sandpaper wrapped around a small section of balsa wood.



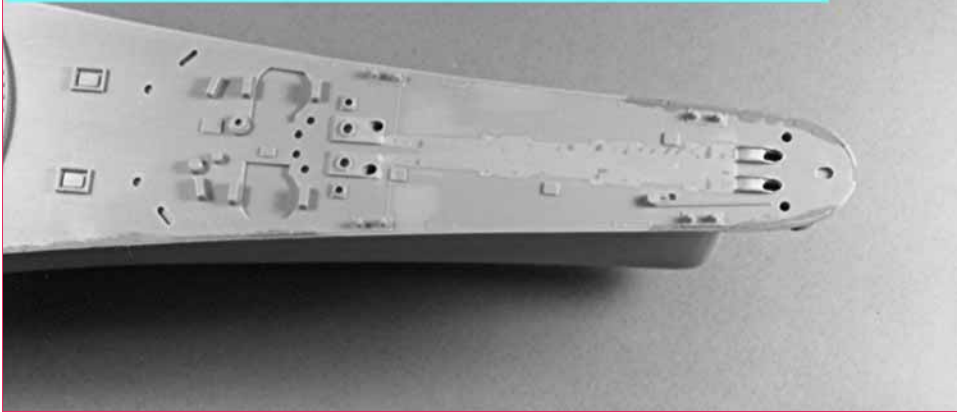
Always check your seam work using Testors silver paint as a flaw detector. Add more super glue to the flaws right over the paint and repeat the sanding process. Polish the plastic with 0000 steel wool.



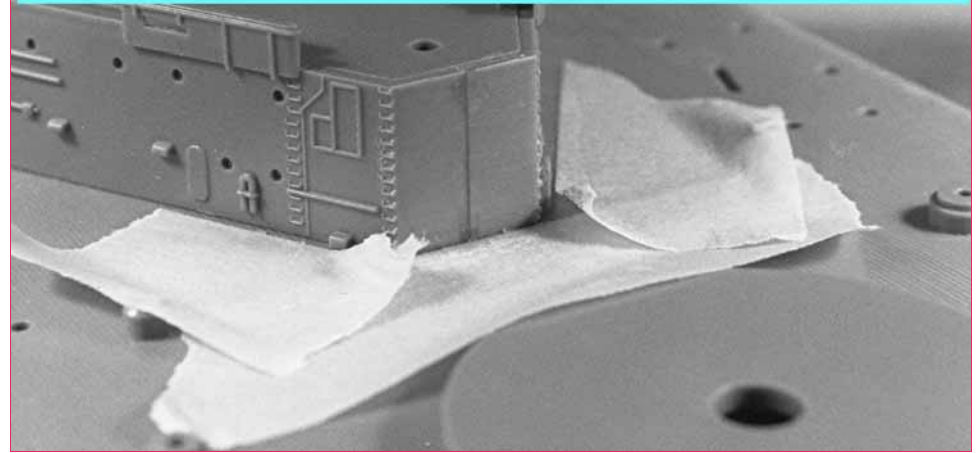
Careful seam work can really pay off. The noted seams are now gone. I primed the surface so that rescribing the deck and connecting the deck lines would be easier.



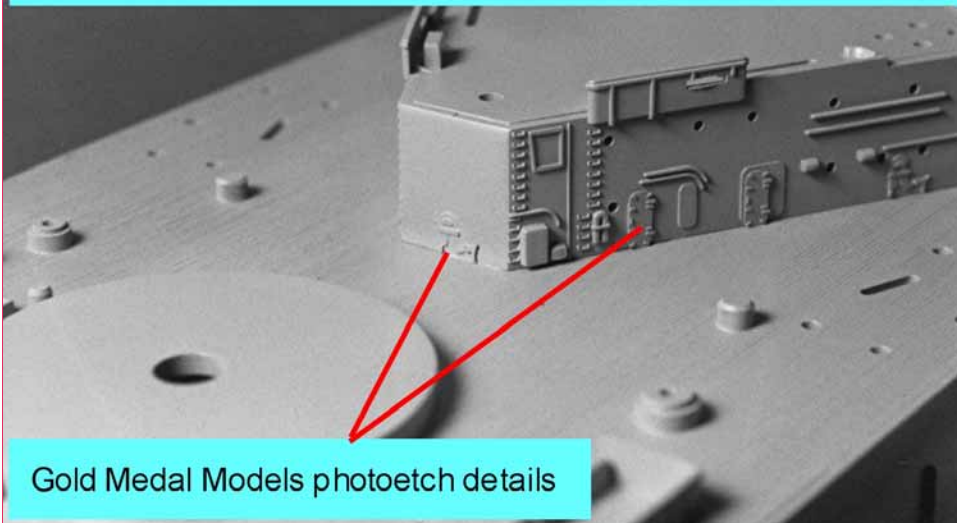
I carefully scrapped off the molded on anchor chain with a sharp stencil X-Acto blade and then gently sand the surface smooth. Knife gouges were filled with tiny amounts of auto body scratch filler and sanded smooth .



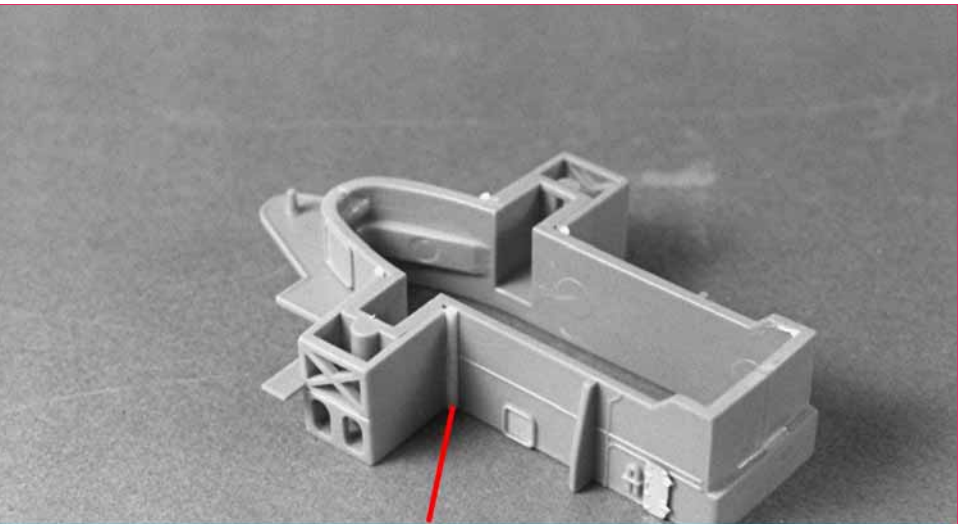
This seam could have been fixed two ways. I decided to fill the seam with auto scratch filler but I could have used a section of small diameter half round to hide it. The masking tape protected the surrounding detail during the sanding process.



With the seam fixed, I then added some Gold Medal Models details such as hatches and fire hoses.

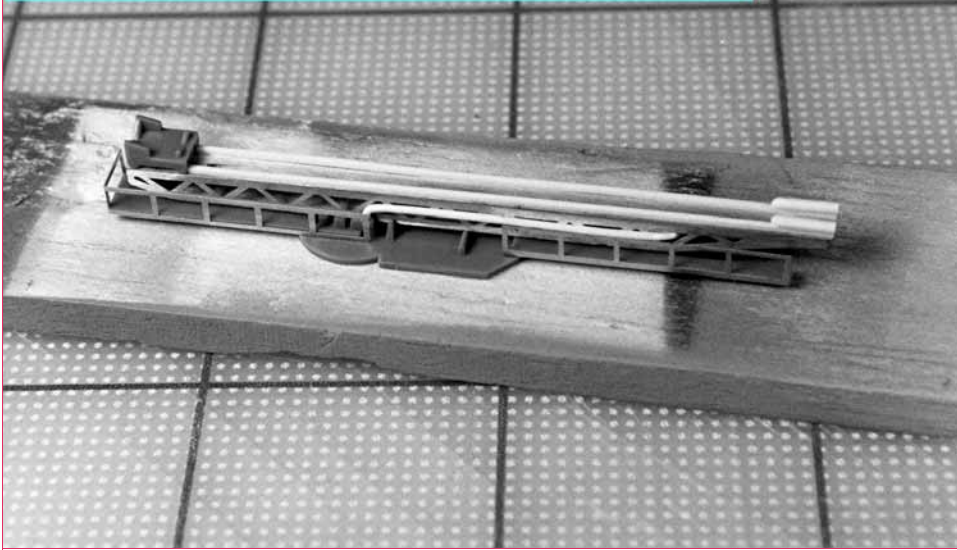


Gold Medal Models photoetch details

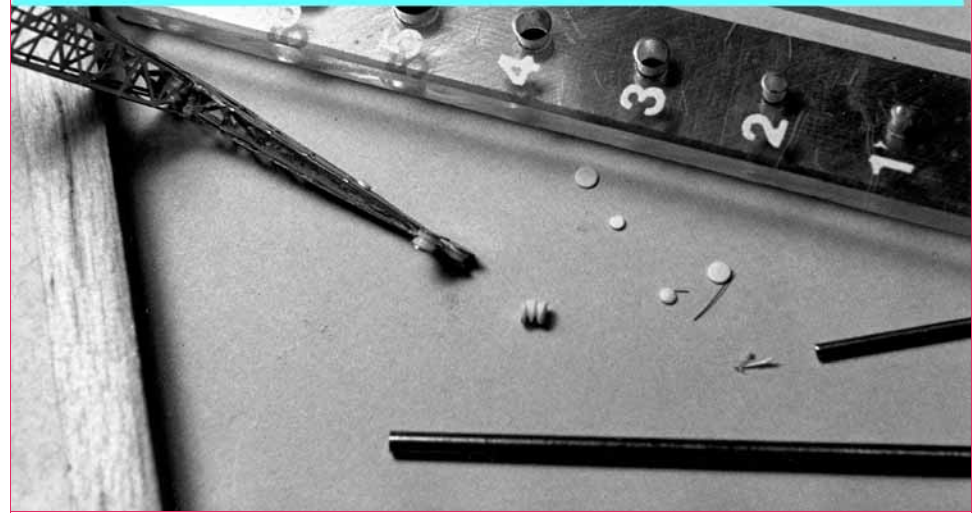


This inner corner seam is just about impossible to fix so the alternative is to hide it with a small diameter quarter round.

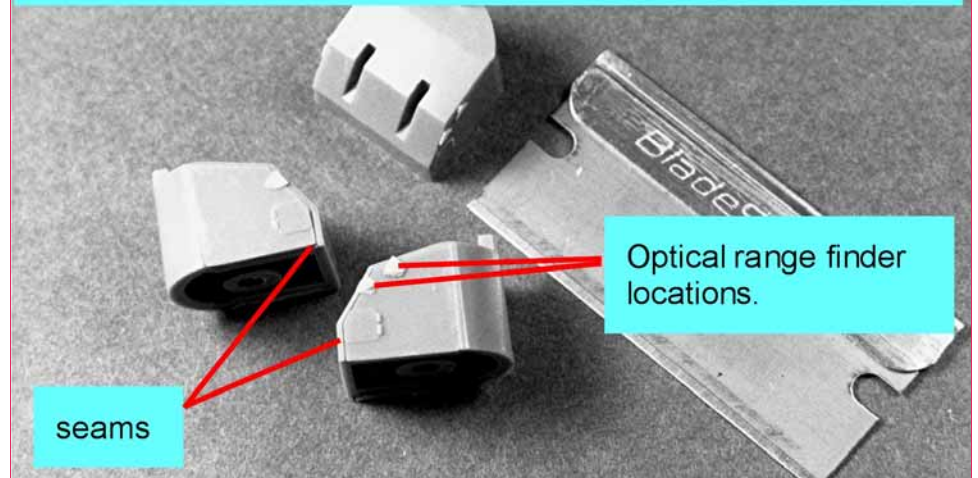
I dressed up the Gold Medal Models photoetch catapults with plastic strip and round stock.



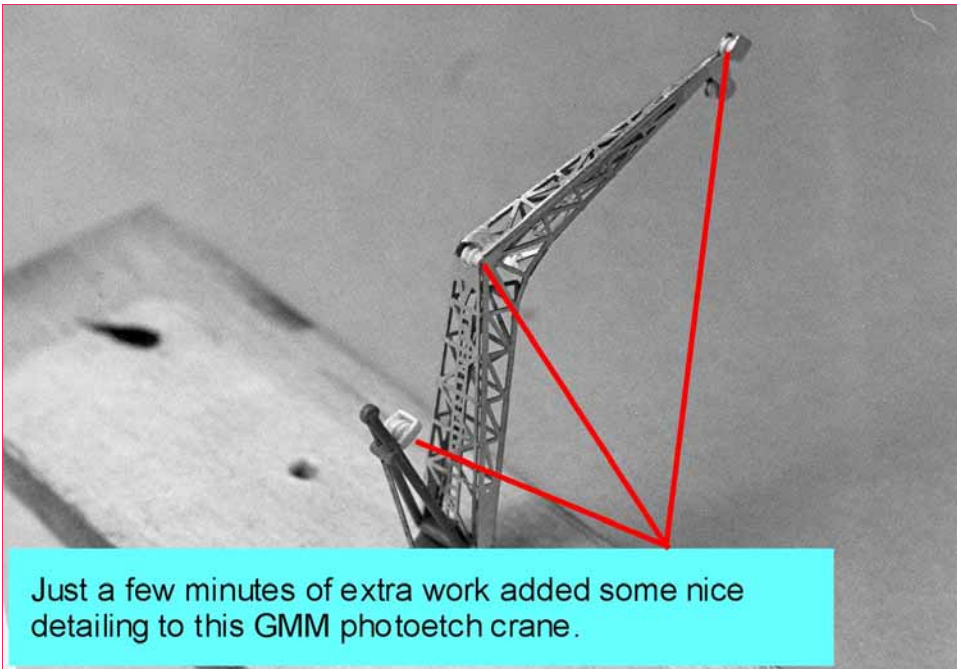
To enhance the GMM aircraft crane I used my trusty Waldron Products punch set to make pulley parts. I highly recommend a Waldron punch. It has a thousand uses.



The twin 5 inch mounts have separate sides and the seams are a real challenge to fill. I carefully removed the optical range finders and saved them for reattachment. I then filled the seams with super glue and sanded the surfaces smooth.



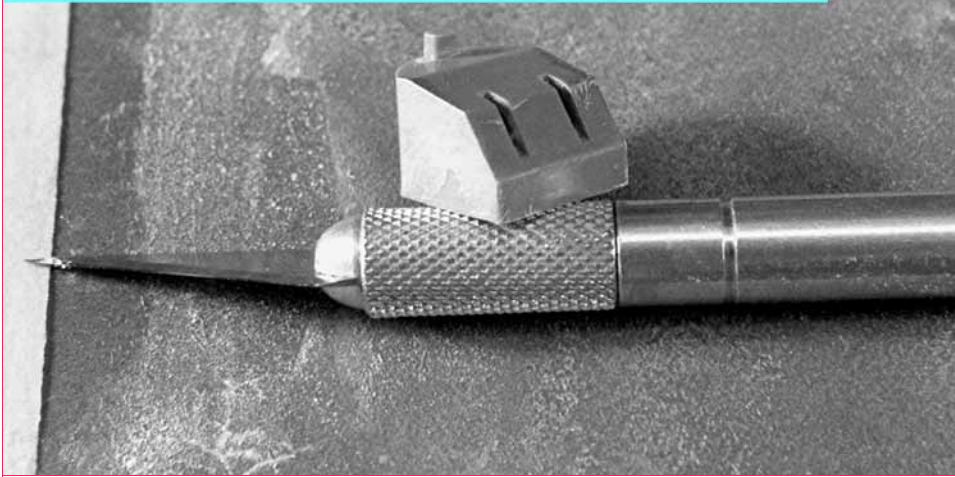
Just a few minutes of extra work added some nice detailing to this GMM photoetch crane.



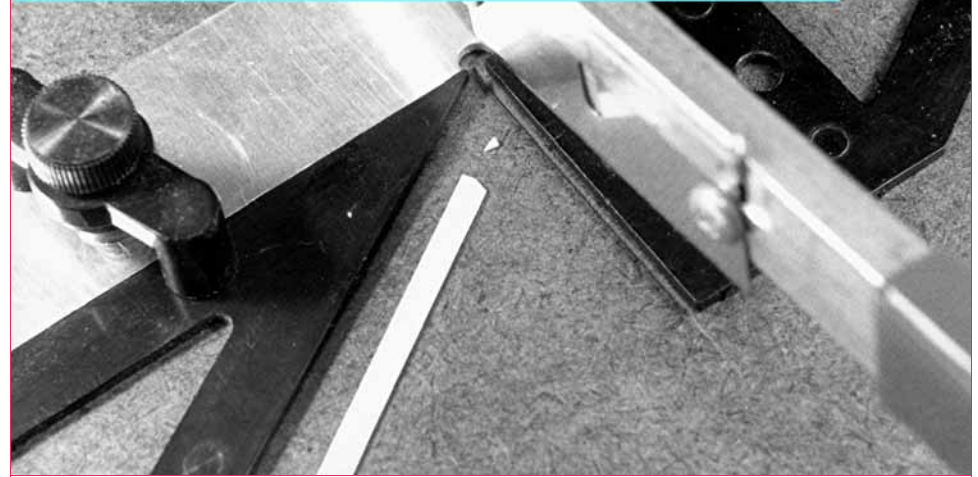
seams

Optical range finder locations.

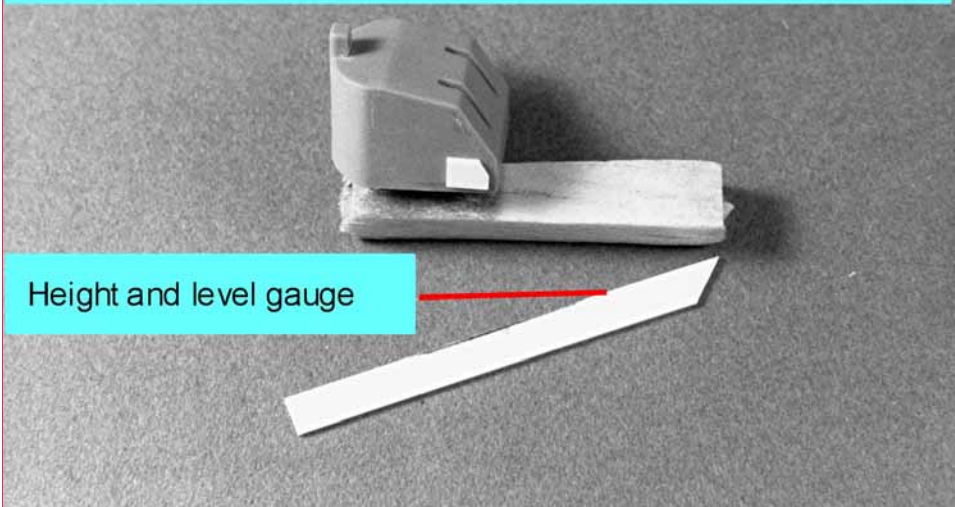
To maintain the sharp edges on the turrets I carefully sanded the sides on a stationary piece of sandpaper using a circular figure eight motion. Testors silver paint was applied to check for flaws.



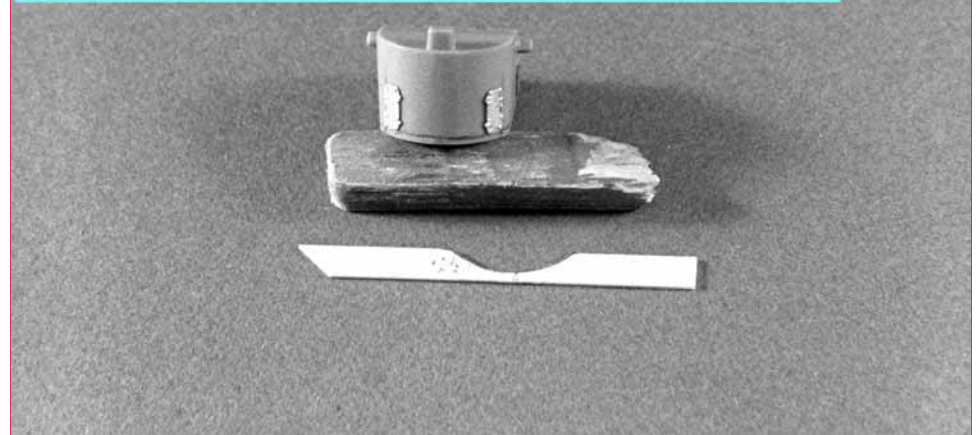
To replace the angled hatch detail on the lower front sides of the turrets I used my trusty Northwest Shortline chopper to create the hatches and duplicate the shapes. I highly recommend this tool.



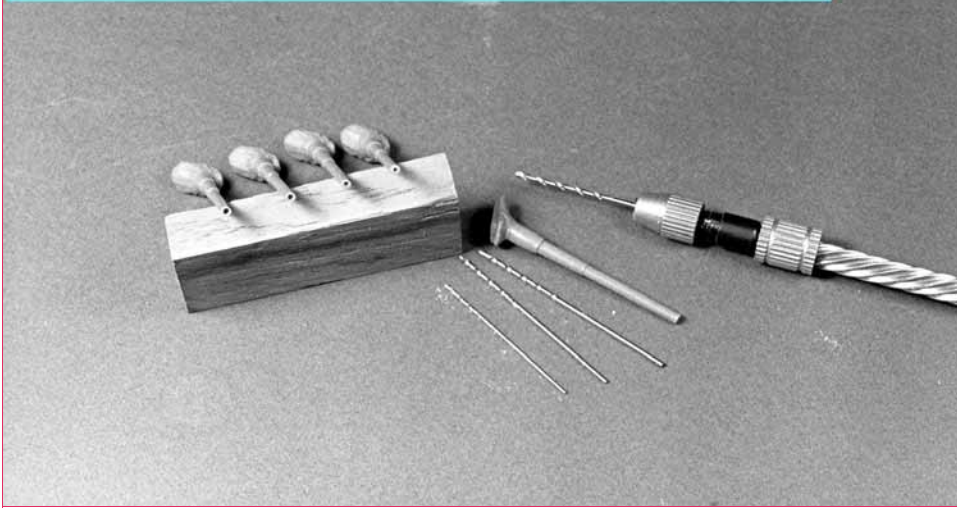
I used a plastic strip with the thickness I needed to set the height of the parts I made and to ensure the parts would sit straight.



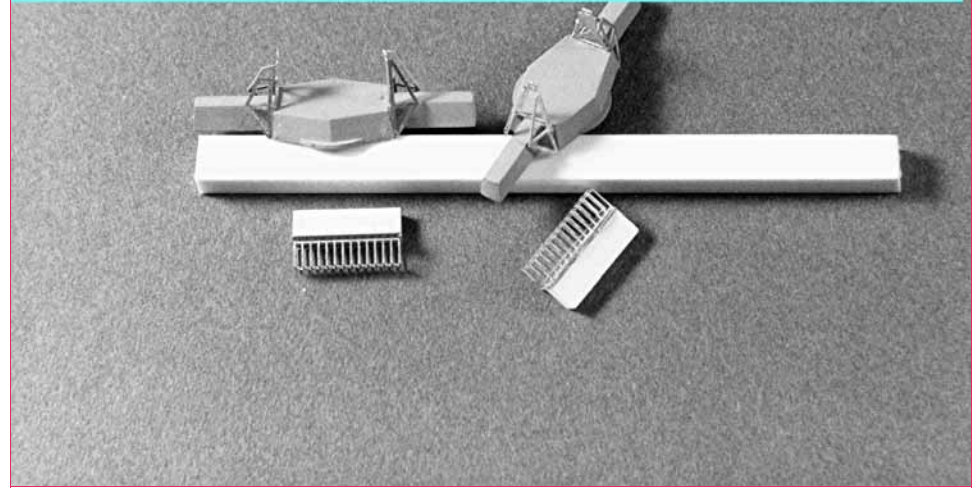
I added Gold Medal Models photoetch hatches to the backsides of the turrets. I first curved the hatches by laying them flat and running my X-Acto blade handle over them. I then made a height gauge so that the hatches would all be positioned properly.



To hollow out the ends of the 16 inch barrels I used four different drill bit diameters to achieve the desired opening.



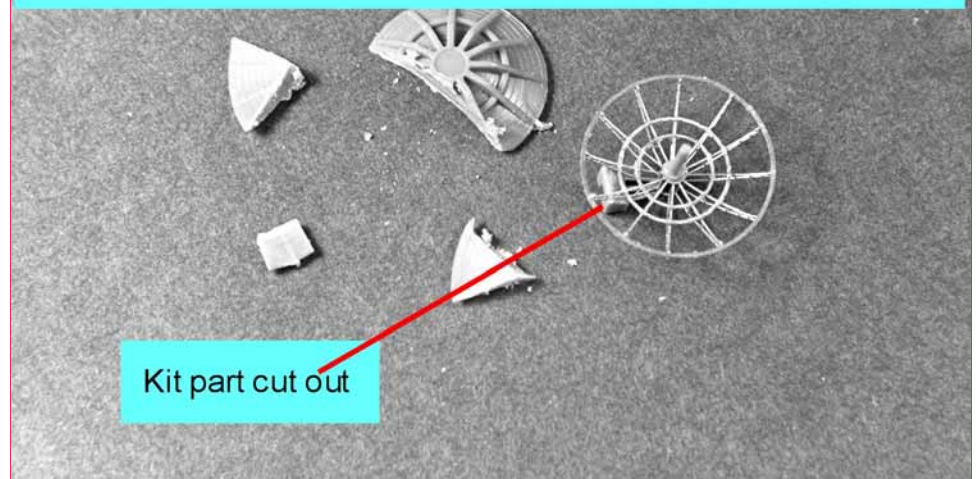
I used Gold Medal Models photoetch radar details for the main gun directors. The solid plastic blocks were cut using a razor saw and a miter box. The edges were squared using a Northwest Shortline true sanded.



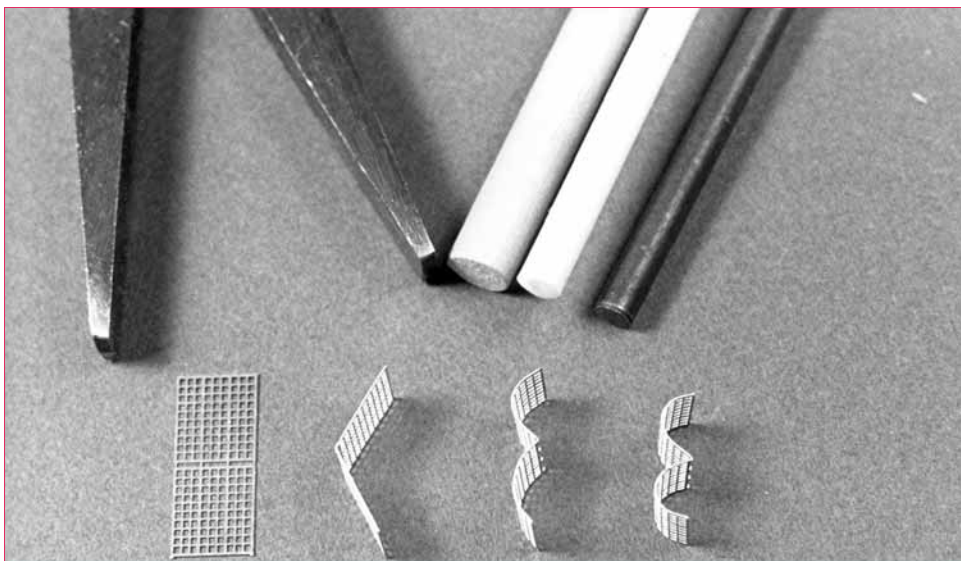
The search radar was a multiple piece assembly that required careful positioning and assembly. I constructed it on top of a piece of wax paper because super glue does not stick to waxed surfaces.



Whenever possible I like to use kit parts in combination with photoetch details to strengthen the assembly. Here I cut out the base from the kit supplied part and attached it to the base of the photoetch assembly.

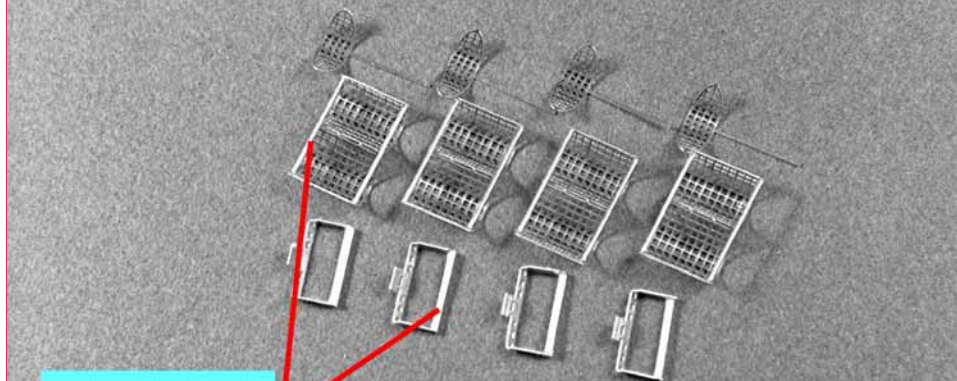






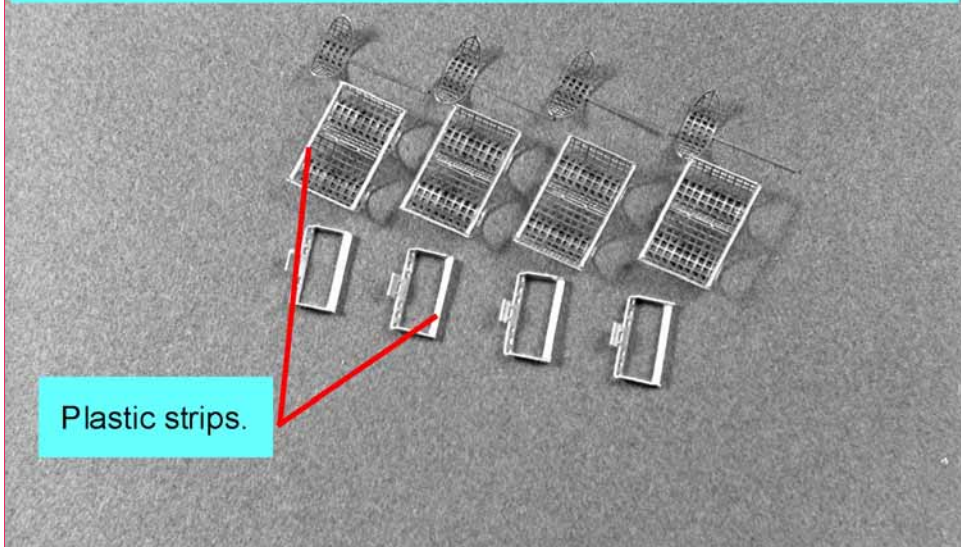
This sequence demonstrates how I shaped the Mk-37 radars. Several different dowel diameters were used.

The Mk-37 radar assemblies are taking shape. I used small plastic strips to supplement the photoetch assemblies.



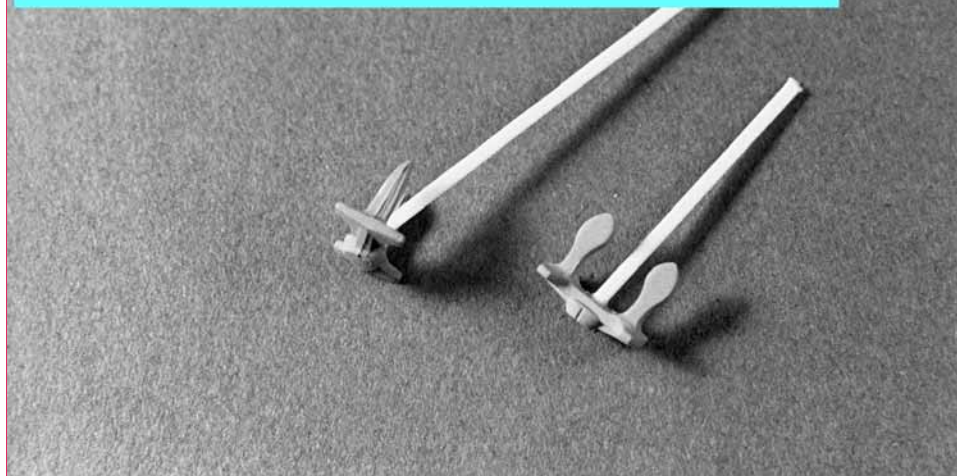
Plastic strips.

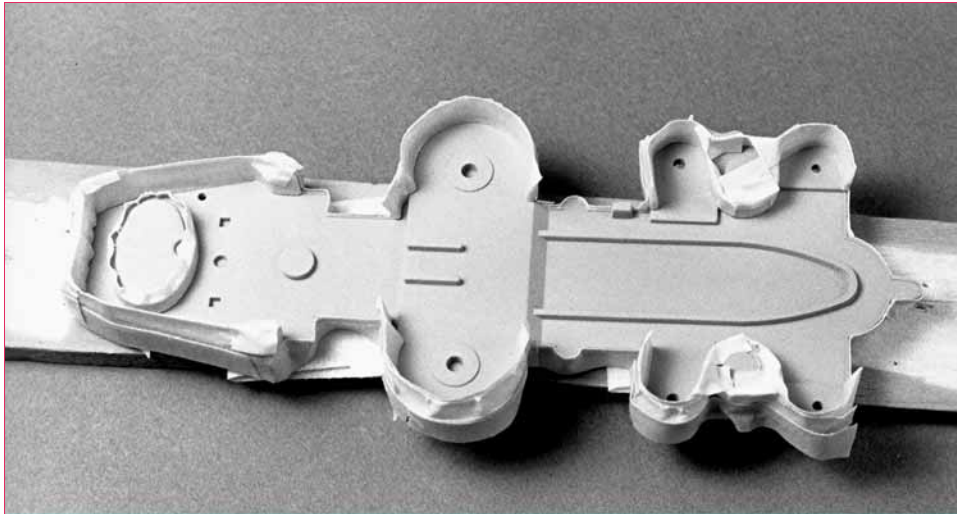
The Mk-37 radar assemblies are taking shape. I used small plastic strips to supplement the photoetch assemblies.



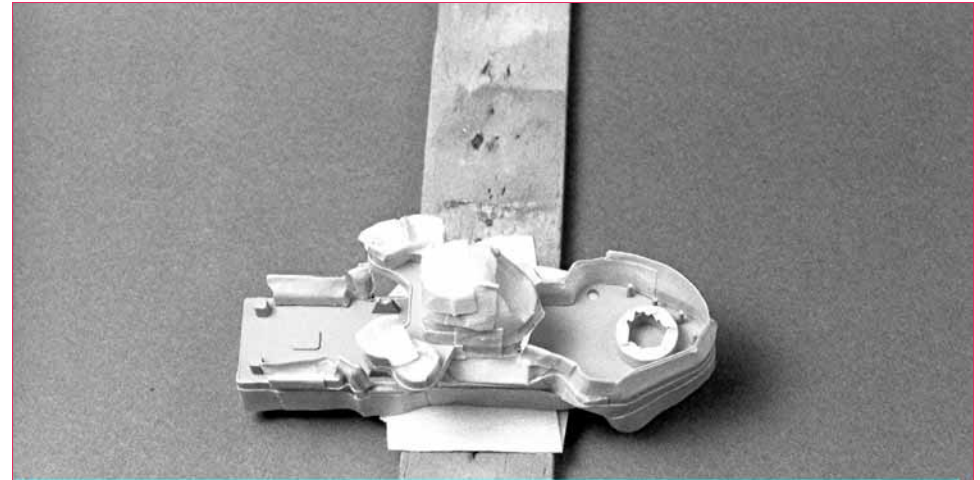
Plastic strips.

I cut off the anchor stems, drilled small indentations into the bases and super glued new stems that are angled so that the anchors would sit correctly up against the hull.



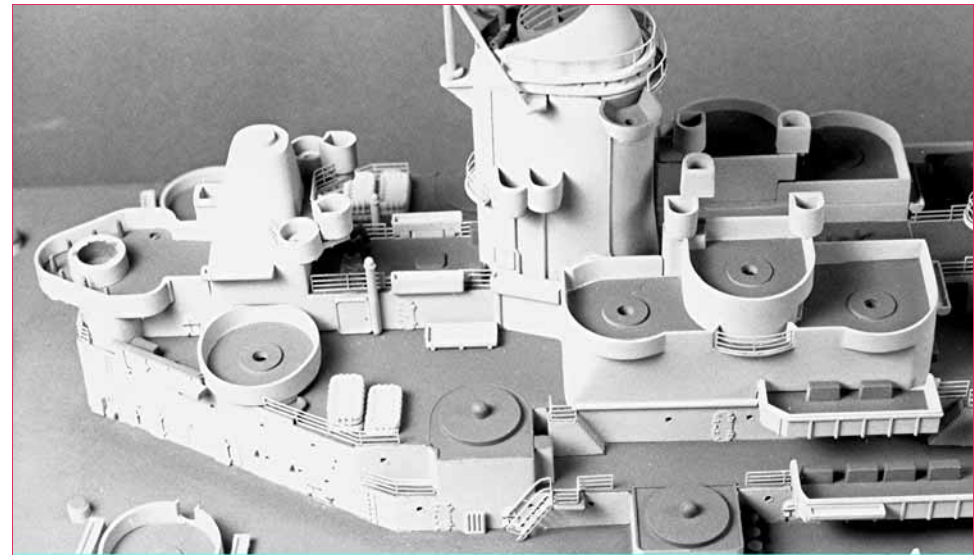
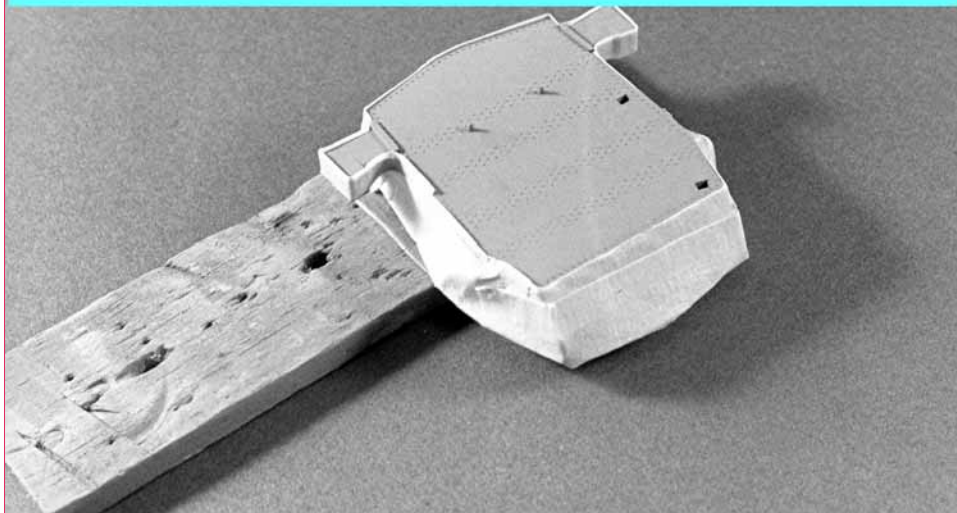


Once of the secrets of sharp demarcation lines between paint colors is the careful application of masking. I like to use Scotch 3M painters cream colored masking tape.



I lay two layers of masking tape on top of each other on my cutting board and then use a straight edge and a sharp number 11 X-Acto blade to cut small strips of tape. I peel away the top layer of tape and apply it to model.

To apply masking tape around edges like those found on turrets, I use narrow strips so that they will conform to the shape they are covering.



Although masking is a time consuming process, the results are well worth the effort. Note the sharp lines between the paint colors.