



# ADAM O'BRIEN



**AK.** Hi Adam! I remember when I first saw your AFV models some 10-15 years ago I was impressed by the high level of their finish. When did it started, was your first model a tank an airplane or something else??

Like many modelers, I started many years ago...I was 7 or 8 years old when my father gave me my first plastic kit, it was an Airfix 1/72 Spitfire. I remember building it in our car with a stringy tube of Britfix glue...I built it the moment I got it!

**AK.** Unlike many modelers, me also, you don't focus on a single genre or scale, but rather build tanks, planes, sci-fi and so on. Why so? Is it challenging for you to master yet another set of skills for each genre and scale?

I'm interested in many different subjects. I'll attempt whatever appeals to me. Generally, I'm more interested in aesthetics over history, artistic impression over absolute accuracy. I find that different subjects require different skills, AFV's require multiple layers of weathering, and the ability to understand the type of product required to achieve the intended

result. Aircraft require an extremely subtle approach to their paintwork and weathering. I enjoy the challenge of different subjects and always try new approaches and techniques.

**AK.** What is your favorite genre/scale? Are you going to challenge yourself with something new, e.g. ships?

My favorite subject is IDF armour. I prefer 1/35, but occasionally dabble with 1/72. I find it extremely challenging to take a single colour subject and make it interesting. This problem is compounded with IDF subjects as their sand grey base colours are generally weathered with a sand grey environment. I like to push IDF base colours darker than they are in reality, purely to provide contrast with the final desert-sand coloured weathering. I take a lot of inspiration from reference photographs – particularly taken early morn-

ing or dusk, when contrasts are highest. Sometimes a single photo will spark me to build a model. I regularly try to challenge myself with new subjects and techniques. I have a couple of kits in my stash of subjects I have never tried...such as a WW1 aircraft.

**AK.** What are the main challenges that you face: technical issues, competitive market, piracy or something else?

Technical challenges were and are always present. It is OK. Sometimes they cheer me up and make me think and find new solutions. Competitive market is a good thing and I think that sculptors, makers and customers benefit from that. As for piracy... everyone is aware of this, the problem has been discussed a million times and there's nothing to add here.

**AK.** What is more important for you: building or painting and weathering? How much do you care about the right colors and artistic vs realistic stuff?

I enjoy the construction side of plastic modelling, though painting and weathering, especially with today's myriad of available products, most challenging and enjoyable. Artistic impression v realism is very important to me,



and underlines everything I try to achieve in a model. It may be a contradiction, but I try to instill both philosophies in my work. I'll start the painting / weathering process with a bias toward realism, mostly through reference photography. The final stages of finishing is where I'll add my own artistic impression, usually to exaggerate contrast and apply a scale lighting effect.

**AK.** Do you have any favorite techniques or products, like hairspray, pigments, acrylics, oils etc? Are there any know-hows and advices that you would like to share with other modelers?

I don't particularly have any favorite techniques. I do attempt proficiency in most weathering procedures, and apply them in order to achieve the effects I see on my reference photos. I do believe that the hairspray technique has revolutionized plastic modelling. It's possibilities are endless, and is relatively easy to master. I also use oils

extensively, as their long working time allows for change and flexibility in weathering. My advice to modelers trying to improve their finishes, is to use references closely. I'll take colours directly off reference photos over the kit instructions or the commonly expected colours. I'll normally take my reference photos into photoshop and create a colour palette to base my paint mixes on. Colours look completely different under varied lighting conditions. These are the effects I try to replicate on my work.

**AK.** Tell us about your collaboration with Michael Mass within Desert Eagle publications. What is your role there? Are you somehow connected with IDF?

Michael and I work together to produce the Desert Eagle books. I believe it to be an ideal collaboration, as Michael is an expert in IDF armour, and extremely passionate in providing the best possible publications to IDF en-

thusiasts and modelers. My part is to graphically lay out the books and edit the content. This allows me to choose the absolute best reference photos, and arrange them in a logical order. I am not connected to the IDF in any way, apart from admiration and respect.

**AK.** How many modelers are there in Australia? Is it a popular hobby there, do you have many shops, events, masterclasses?

We have many fantastic modelers in Australia, and I believe the hobby is very popular. Due to our distance from Europe, not a large number make it to the big European shows. We do have a couple of large shows and competitions annually, though I rarely attend.

**Thank you for the interview, Adam!!**







ADAM  
O'BRIEN