

PAUL BUDZIK

by Michael Devine



PB. The Mustang was particularly enjoyable because it brought to light a hitherto undocumented aircraft. During the process I was able to meet and talk with James Goodson who was every bit as impressive as I had imagined.



MD. First off let's start with the obligatory questions of how old you are, where you live, and how long have you been building models? How long has it been since you really started to get involved in modeling on a more serious level? How old were you at the time?

PB. I'm 63 years old and I live in California, USA. I've been fascinated by and building models since I was 6 years old. I became more serious while I was model railroading during college. Probably when I was 20.

MD. What is your main inspiration for modeling? What got you started?

PB. My first interest was model trains. I think because it combines all the elements of modeling along with operation, it will always be the most interesting to me. The difficulty is that it requires so much room for a layout.

MD. How active are you in the modeling community such as frequenting the boards, going to shows, entering those shows, model club meetings, group builds, etc. Nowadays I rarely attend shows or model club meetings. I have very little interest in participating in contests. I have been pretty outspoken about my dislike of the first, second, third format. I much prefer the AMPS format, judging each model on its' own merits. I feel it provides a much more constructive atmosphere.

I enjoy visiting a number of the forum boards and I usually check the activity daily. I make a point of avoiding those boards with a less than collegiate demeanor.

MD. Where do you see the modeling industry to be in 10 years from right now. Where are we headed?

PB. In all honesty, I think modeling as we know it might not exist. I can easily imagine a time when you will be able to customize a stock digital file to print a model kit. It won't be necessary to have nearly as many parts and they will be prefinished. The ability to work in 3D CAD will be another essential tool for modeling. One interesting question regarding 3D printing is how that will effect modeling contests.

MD. What is your favorite subject to model?

PB. Currently I am most focused on modeling ships.

MD. When it comes to movies, what movie that is somehow related to modeling is your favorite. Whether it's set in a movie set in an era that you love to model or a movie like The Butterfly Effect with the crazy kid who never leaves his room and builds model planes all day. As long as it has something to do with modeling.

PB. My favorite ship models are square rigged sailing ships and I have to say "Master and Commander" does a very good job of setting the scene.

MD. If you could pick one product and or tool that you feel revolutionized the industry, what do you think it is?

PB. I'll date myself...plastic injection molding. A lot easier than carving a model.

MD. What do you like to eat, drink, and or smoke while you're at your bench?

PB. It's pretty standard to find a cup of coffee on my bench.

MD. How would you describe your "style" of modeling?

PB. I shoot for clean and crisp.



PB. The PB4Y represents the high point of when I was still a regular entrant at contests. Tying with George Lee for the most awards given to a single model at the IPMS US Nationals.



PB. The Boeing 314 is my favorite because I did everything from the plans to construction and everything went as planned without a hitch.

MD. On average, how much time do you get to spend at your bench every week?

PB. At the present time, hardly much at all. Lately, I have been occupied with doing my series of modeling videos.

MD. What is currently on your workbench? What are you working on? Do you have an idea for your next project and if so, what is it?

PB. Currently I'm working on several US Navy WWII cruisers in 1/350th scale. I always have dozens of ideas for the "next project", but I try and not think about them too long because I am easily distracted.

MD. Do you have friends who also share a passion for modeling like you do? What percentage of your friends are modelers themselves?

PB. The majority of my friends are not modelers, and being friends, they are understanding of my errant interest.

MD. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the most, how serious are you about modeling?

PB. Modeling is not my only interest and the amount of time I spend with it has varied over the years. On average, probably a 4 or 5. When I'm working on a project though, it depends on the destination of a particular model. If I get very focused it moves up to a 10. But most of the time, I try and keep it in perspective, so I still do a fair amount of casual modeling.

MD. How well does the term "Modeling Nerd" apply to you? You may ask yourself what I mean by "Modeling Nerd" so let's put it this way, when you hear the term "Naked Model", what comes to your mind first, an unpainted Sherman showing its resin and brass or a beautiful blonde woman showing her ass?

PB. Well, if I hear the term "naked model", my first assumption would be that the subject was a girl. I try and put a limit on my eccentricities. Not everything is about scale models.

MD. A lot of people are going to read this interview. That includes a lot of people who own companies in the modeling industry. Now that you have their attention, without calling them out by name, tell me in broad and respectful terms what would you like to say to the people involved with the business side of the hobby? What are they doing right? What are they doing wrong? What would you like to see them do? The floor is yours...

PB. I would suggest that more attention needs to be paid to the accuracy of general dimensions and shape. If the size and shape is wrong, then the whole point of the model comes into question. Please pay foremost attention to engineering by how you break parts down and locate sprue attachment points. There is no need to over-engineer a kit. Any included surface detail needs to be in scale and represented accurately or save your production costs and leave it off.

MD. What are your general thoughts of what goes on in the forums?

PB. Most well moderated boards are extremely constructive and build a real sense of fraternity. Modeling is a pretty solitary hobby so bulletin boards can serve a real purpose.

MD. Disagreements and debates are part of life. Having a nice healthy respectful debate with like-minded people is not necessarily a bad thing. With that being said, is there anything you'd like to say to those who can't disagree and debate in a respectful manner on the forums and instead just try to belittle others and make them look foolish while simultaneously letting the world know just how wonderful they think they are?

PB. It is doubtful if it would make a difference. Those that are respectful already are and those that are not ... well ... they're not.

MD. Do you have anything to say to all the beginners out there who are so inspired by other modelers work but they doubt that they will ever get to that skill level?

PB. There is no point in being discouraged because it should always be a hobby first. That means that you do it for enjoyment. Use other modelers' efforts as inspiration and a vehicle to learn. Every model is a chance to learn something new.

MD. In your early modeling days, was there any modeler in particular whose work you really looked up to and have always wanted to emulate?

PB. Without a doubt, the mentor that kept me on my toes was Oscar Neubert. Some of his words still rattle around in my head.



PB. The Tempest will always be that enigma that finally got finished. The main landing gear was the most complicated piece of machine work that I have ever done.

MD. What area of modeling have you struggled the most with in the past? PE? Painting? Weathering? etc.

PB. Finishing a project. One of the reasons that a particular project interests me is that there are problems to solve, usually involving basic construction. Once I solve the problems, the rest of the construction becomes routine and is not as interesting.

MD. Now every modeler has at least one part of modeling that they just plain hate to do. For me it's cleaning up road wheels, what's yours?

PB. I would have to pretty much agree with you. I don't enjoy doing production work ... in other words, I don't enjoy doing twenty of the same thing. I don't even have the motivation to build another model of the same subject.

MD. Now to flip things around, what is your favorite modeling task?

PB. I really enjoy adding the decals.

MD. If a manufacturer were to come to you and ask what three models you would like to see them produce and add to their product line, what would you say?

PB.

1/350 Atlanta Class Cruiser

1/350 Baltimore Class Cruiser

A proper 1/48 Hawker Tempest.

MD. Now if a tool manufacturer were come to you and ask what three new tools you would want them to develop that would solve or improve a modeling problem that you and other modelers have, what would these tools be? What problem would the tools solve?

PB. A true miniature bending brake. For precision bending of sheet stock and photoetch, especially long pieces. The ones I see are either too large or too flimsy.

Something on the order of a paper cutter that would actually let you cut very precise styrene strips from sheet stock. That way you could dial in a custom dimension.

A precision, slow speed miniature disc sander that would easily fit on your bench. The miniature ones that I have seen are cheaply made, turn far too fast and have no torque. I have one that has a reasonable slow speed, but it takes up too much room on the bench to make it convenient. I would like to have it be small and handy for when you want to quickly square something off.

PB. The McLaren represents the last of the Tamiya cars that I built and a reminder of my minor involvement with F1.

