Building AMT's Arnie Beswick's 1962 Pontiac Catalina A/SS
By
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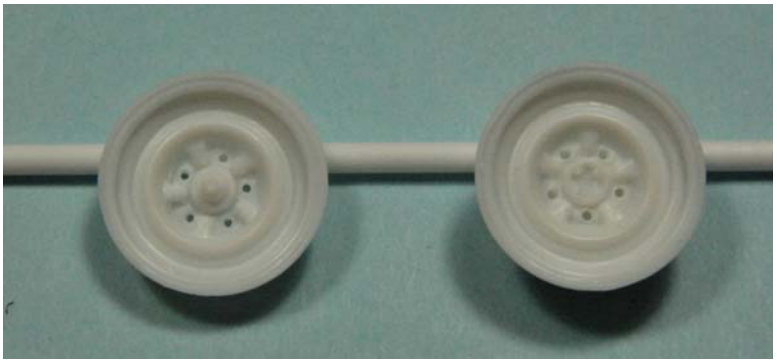
When the AMT '62 Pontiac first came out I grabbed a kit and a set of Slixx decals to build Mr. B's Passionate Poncho, Arnie Beswick's class ruling A Super Stock. I still had not built it several years later when Round 2-AMT brought out the revised kit with Tampo-printed slicks and the custom parts – which made installation of the Model Car garage photoetched grill significantly easier. The kit decals did not appear to be accurate, based on photos, and may be derived from a tribute car. There was an error on the Slixx decal sheet – the hood decals should read "405 H.P." not "405 Cu.In.", a real rarity for Slixx. Consequently, I used the Slixx decals except for the hood markings and license plates, which were from the kit. Follow along as I illustrate some of the simple modifications that make this very nice kit come alive.

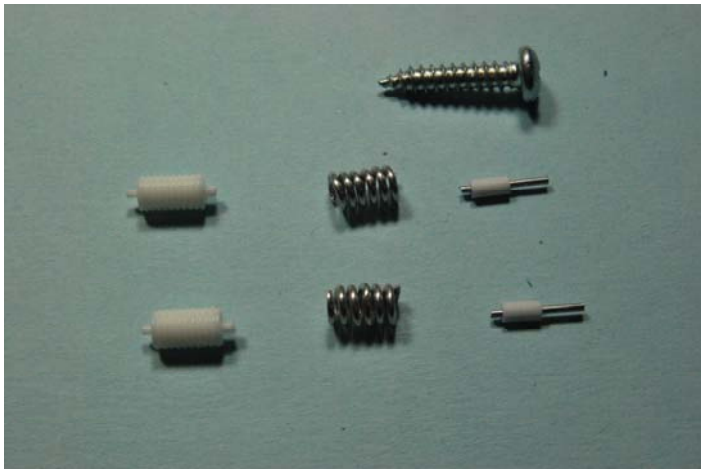
I'll start with the wheels. I removed the molded in lug nut detail using a fine Hasegawa plastic chisel and then drilled out the lug holes. The lugs were represented by short lengths of Detail Master #1 hard line. The lug nuts were made from 0.040" hexagonal Plastruct styrene rod, drilled with a #72 bit, cut to length with a Chopper from



Front and rear modified plastic kit wheels with drilled out lug holes.

Completed front and rear wheels with more realistic lugs and nuts. Valve stems were made from fine insulated wire. The wheel centers were painted with Testor's Steel Metallizer. The lugs and nuts were painted with Testor's Aluminum Metallizer.

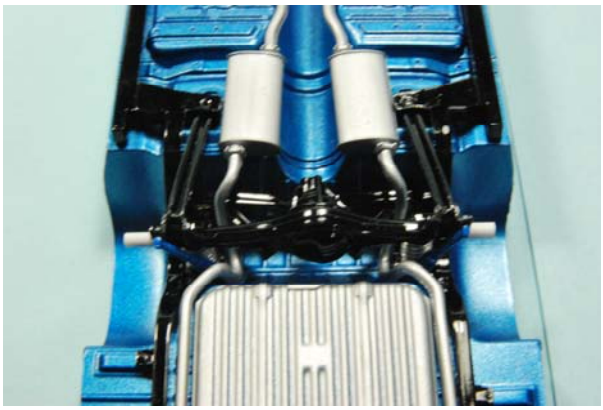
Micro Mark, and painted with Testor's Aluminum Metallizer. The wheels were sprayed with Tamiya Gloss Black. I used front tires from a Lindberg '53 Ford kit to better represent the wide whitewalls seen in photos of Arnie's '62 Pontiac. The tread area of the kit slicks was sanded and valve stems were made from fine, black, insulated wire. I replaced the kit plastic springs and front shocks. I used a wood screw with the appropriate pitch to wind 0.075 inch diameter aluminum craft wire (obtained at a craft store) into springs. The front shocks were made from Evergreen Plastic tube and Detail Master #3 Hard Line and painted Testor's Blue Angle Blue.



The plastic kit springs (far left) were replaced with wire springs (center) made by winding 0.075 inch diameter aluminum craft wire around a wood screw (top). Scratch-built front shocks (far right) were made from plastic tube and hard line.

The chassis was sprayed with Tamiya Semi-Gloss Black and the chassis pan was airbrushed with Tamiya Metallic Blue. The front and rear axles and suspensions were sprayed with Tamiya Gloss Black. The chassis pan was masked and the fuel tank was

sprayed Tamiya Silver Leaf. The exhaust was sprayed with Tamiya Gloss Aluminum and the cutouts and tail pipes were drilled out. A small amount of Tamiya Flat Black was



A view of the rear of the completed chassis and floor pan. Note the narrowed rear axle which was necessary to allow the slicks to tuck into the wheel wells.

placed into the ends of the tail pipes and cutouts to give them depth. The rear axle was narrowed by ¼ inch so the kit slicks would tuck up into the wheel wells.

The molded in windshield wipers, door handles, Pontiac script, and lock cylinders were removed with a Hasegawa plastic chisel. Holes were drilled for the wiper arm mounting points and the door handles. The body was sanded with 1200-grit wet and dry sandpaper to remove light mold lines and finish the areas where molded on detail was removed. The body was washed with dish soap and warm water and dried before spraying it with Duplicolor Primer. The body and all other body color parts were then airbrushed with Tamiya Metallic Blue cut with Duplicolor lacquer thinner using an Aztec A470 airbrush with a 1mm nozzle at 30psi. After the color coats dried for two weeks, a coat of Tamiya Clear was airbrushed on and allowed to dry for a few days. The only kit decals used were the horse power markings on the hood and the license plates. The remaining decals were from Slixx. After the decals dried for a few days, the body was

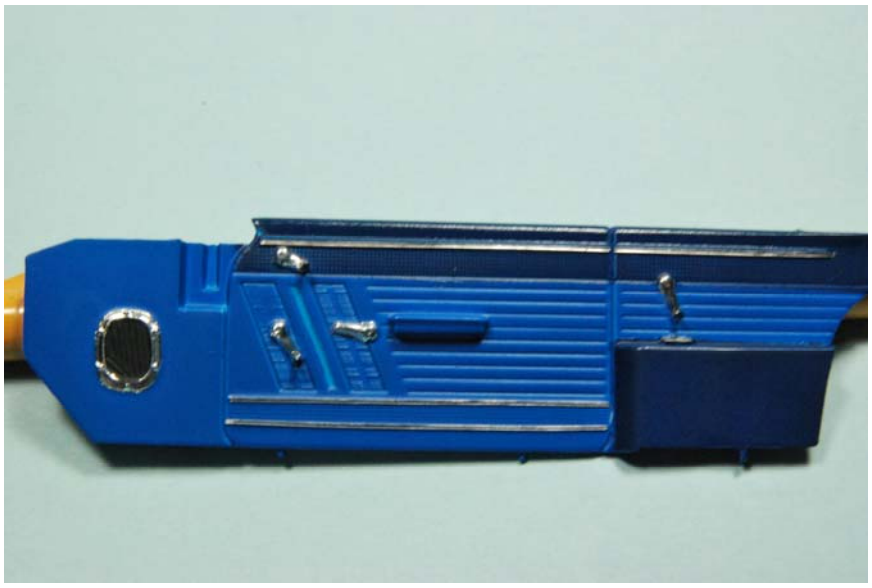
Decaled and cleared body before adding door handles, photoetched items, and Bright Chrome Bare Metal foil.

washed with warm water and dish soap to remove any decal glue. After air drying for a few days, three clear coats were airbrushed over the decals. The paint jar was loaded with straight Duplicolor lacquer thinner after the last clear coat was applied and a wet coat of thinner was airbrushed over the parts to level the clear and yield a high gloss. After the final clear coat dried for two weeks it was wet sanded with 8000- to 12000-grit polishing clothes, rubbed out with Meguire's Scratch X, and waxed with Turtle Wax Clear Coat Teflon-containing wax. The headliner was painted with Tamiya Flat Blue acrylic.

Chromed metal 60's-style 1/25th scale door handles (found on eBay) were added along with photoetched items (lock cylinders, grill, Pontiac script, and front and rear Pontiac emblems) from the Model Car Garage detail set. The custom headlight bezels were modified to take stock lenses instead of Lucas lenses. The windshield wipers were photoetched items from Detail Master. The chrome trim was covered with Bright Chrome Bare Metal foil. The kit bumpers were stripped of chrome and mold seams were removed before refinishing them with Alclad II Chrome over Tamiya Gloss Black. A photoetched hood release plate from a Model Car Garage engine detail set was added along with a striker pin made from brass rod and fine wire for the spring. A hood latch was made from fine wire. The radiator was sprayed with Tamiya Semigloss Black. A filler neck was added with a photoetched cap from Detail Master. A coolant overflow hose was added which was made from red insulated fine wire. A resin tachometer sending unit from Scale Auto Details was sprayed with Tamiya Semi-Gloss Black, mounted on the firewall, and wired. A resin ignition coil from Scale Auto Details was sprayed Tamiya Chrome Yellow. A coil mounting bracket was made from thin metal and the wired coil was mounted on the firewall. Wires and panels on the firewall were detail painted different colors. The steering box and brake master cylinder were sprayed with Tamiya Silver Leaf. A brake line was added to the master cylinder. The positive wire was removed from the kit battery which was then sprayed with Tamiya Semi-Gloss Black and detailed with Tamiya White Acrylic. The battery terminals and battery hold down were painted with Testor's Aluminum Metallizer. A positive wire was made from red insulated fine wire battery cable hold downs were made from thin metal and painted Semi-Gloss Black.

The interior sides and seats were sprayed with Tamiya Light Blue. After drying for a day, areas to remain light blue were taped off with Tamiya masking tape and the parts sprayed with Tamiya Brilliant Blue along with the dashboard. The parts that were to remain Brilliant Blue were then taped off and the last color, Tamiya Blue, was sprayed onto them along with the steering column. The tape was removed after the paint dried for about 2 hours. After drying for a few days, the upper door moldings were taped off and all of the interior parts were sprayed with Testor's Dull Coat. Lock buttons for the doors were made from stripped wire. The dash gauges and trim were from the Model Car Garage '62 Pontiac photoetched detail set. The door handles, speaker grilles, and dome light body were covered with Bright Chrome Bare Metal Foil. The speaker bodies were painted with Testor's Semi-Gloss Black., leaving the frames chrome. Mylar Chrome tape 1/64th of an inch wide was used on the door panels for trim. Boyd's flat white was used for the dome light lens. The wired old-style tachometer was a turned aluminum item from Detail Master and was mounted on the dash with a bracket made from thin metal that was painted semi-gloss black. An ignition key was added to the dash along with a Pontiac key fob from the Model Car Garage detail set. The dash knobs were detailed with Bright Chrome Bare Metal Foil dots made with a Micro Mark punch set. A set of performance gauges from Detail Master were added under the dash.

Tri-color painted and detailed seats.

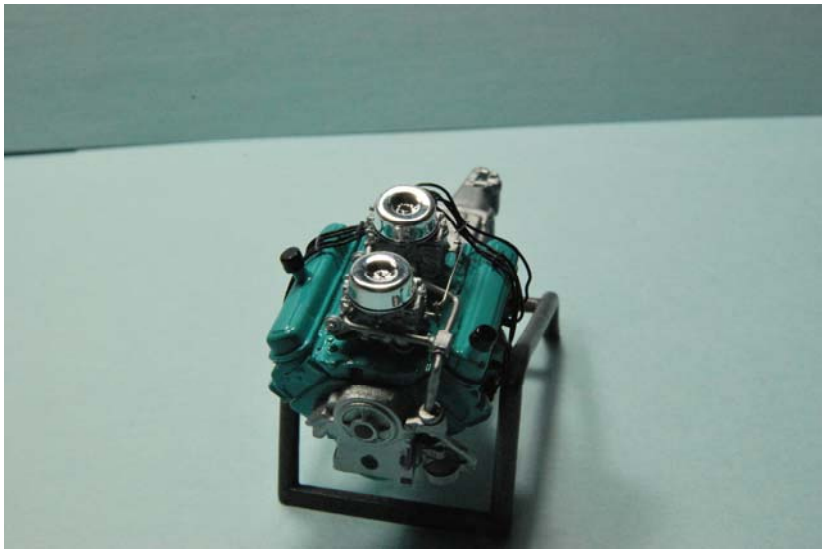


Tri-color painted and detailed interior tub side panel.

Bi-color painted and detailed dash before adding the tachometer and under-dash gauges.

The kit engine was assembled and primed with Dulpicolor Primer. The engine, intake manifold, valve covers, oil pan, and heads were airbrushed with Boyd's Pacific Blue cut with Duplicolor lacquer thinner. The engine was masked and the bell housing and transmission were sprayed with Testor's Steel Metallizer. The water pump was sprayed with Tamiya Gloss Aluminum. The starter, valve cover breathers, and generator were sprayed with Tamiya Gloss Black. Resin AFB carburetors (found on eBay) were sprayed Tamiya Gloss Aluminum and detailed with linkage made from fine wire and photoetched levers from Detail Master. A return spring was made from fine wire wound around a #70 drill bit. The air cleaners were from the Revell '32 Ford 5-window coupe. The distributor was a turned aluminum item from Detail Master with the cap painted semi-gloss black. Ignition wire, wire looms, and spark plug boots were also from the Detail Master distributor kit. The exhaust headers were sprayed with Tamiya Silver Leaf. Freeze plug detail on the side of the engine block was simulated with small disks punched from gold Mylar film using a Micro Mark punch set. Engine pulleys were resin items from Scale Auto Details that were sprayed with Tamiya Silver Leaf. The fan belt was made from $1/60^{th}$ of an inch wide live rubber. An oil dip stick and tube were made from 0.05 inch stainless steel tubing and fine wire. The kit radiator hoses were used and sprayed with Tamiya NATO Black. Hose clamps were made from thin strips of Bright Chrome Bare Metal Foil. The thermostat neck was painted with Boyd's Pacific Blue. The kit fuel lines were sprayed with Tamiya Silver Leaf along with the fuel pump.

This was a very enjoyable build without any major problems. Final assembly was tight and the body snapped over the interior tub and floor pan. All four wheels sat on the ground. The Tampo-printed slicks are very nice additions and inclusion of the custom parts facilitated use of the Model Car Garage photoetched grill. The figure was a modified Fujimi Mechanic that was painted with various Testors' colors and sprayed with Testor's Dull Coat. The wrench was from the Fujimi Garage Tool set.



A view of the painted and detailed engine before adding the water pump, pulleys, fan belt, exhaust headers, and generator.

A front view of the model showing the tachometer on the dash, the finished engine installed in the engine bay, and additional detailing of the radiator, battery, and firewall.

Rear view of the model showing the Bare Metal Foil chrome trim and decal placement as well as photoetched items from the Model Car Garage detail set.