

1/350 Scale | Finishing

# SHIP PAINTING TIPS

A colorful account of  
World War I Germany's  
SMS *König*

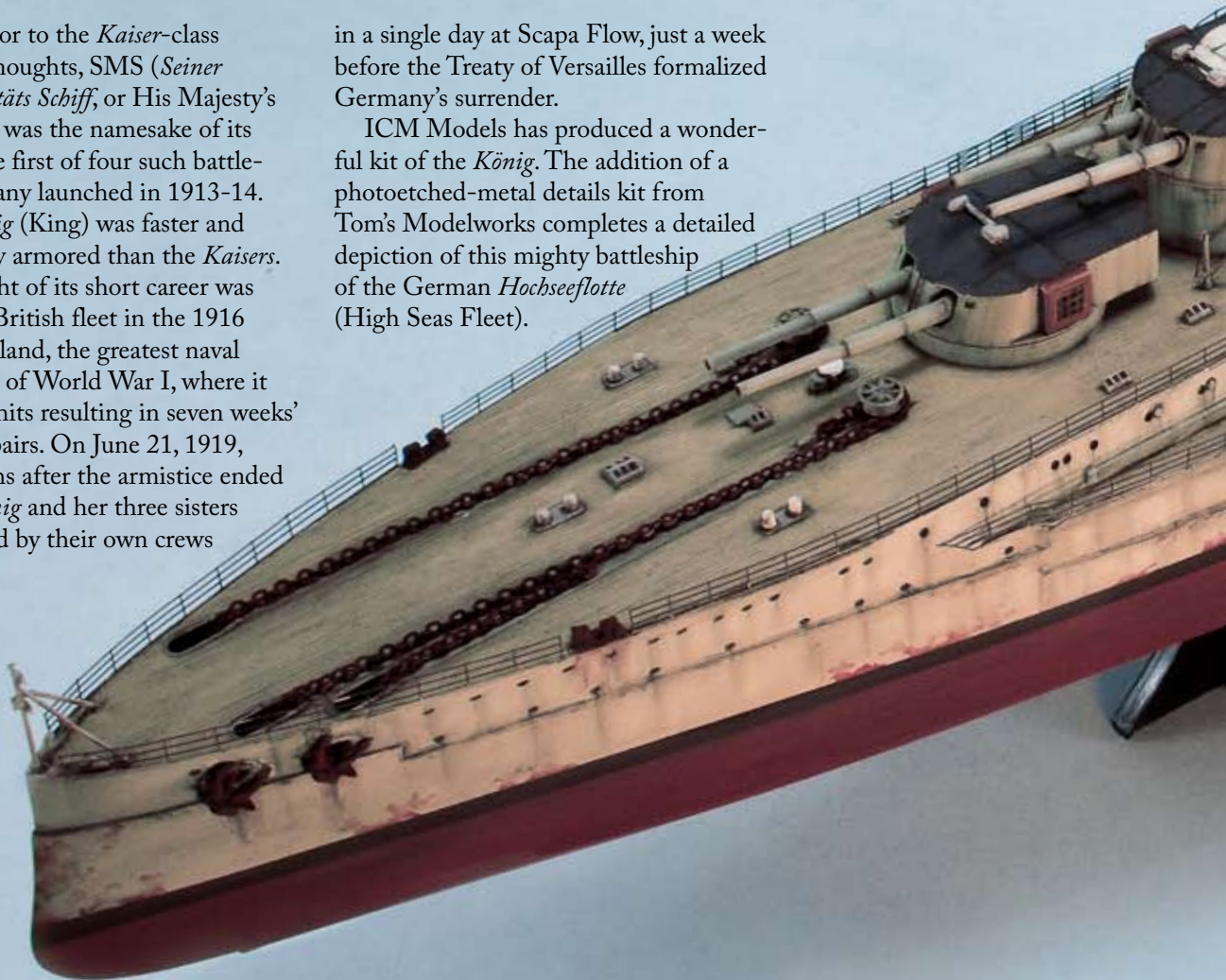
By Alfonso Martínez Berlana

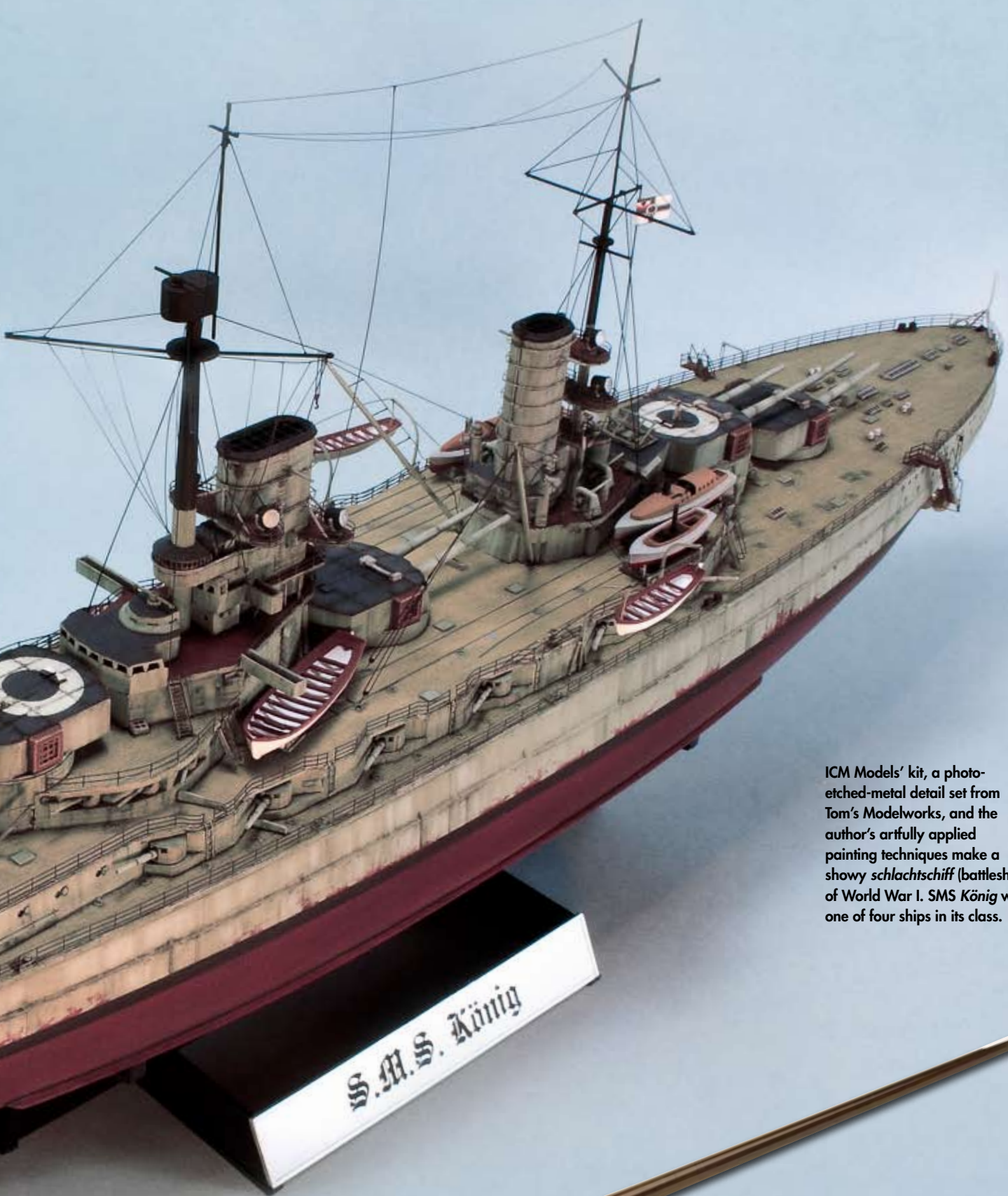
Successor to the *Kaiser*-class dreadnoughts, SMS (*Seiner Majestät's Schiff*, or His Majesty's Ship) *König* was the namesake of its class and the first of four such battleships Germany launched in 1913-14.

The *König* (King) was faster and more heavily armored than the *Kaisers*. The highlight of its short career was against the British fleet in the 1916 Battle of Jutland, the greatest naval engagement of World War I, where it suffered 10 hits resulting in seven weeks' worth of repairs. On June 21, 1919, seven months after the armistice ended the war, *König* and her three sisters were scuttled by their own crews

in a single day at Scapa Flow, just a week before the Treaty of Versailles formalized Germany's surrender.

ICM Models has produced a wonderful kit of the *König*. The addition of a photoetched-metal details kit from Tom's Modelworks completes a detailed depiction of this mighty battleship of the German *Hochseeflotte* (High Seas Fleet).





ICM Models' kit, a photo-etched-metal detail set from Tom's Modelworks, and the author's artfully applied painting techniques make a showy *schlachtschiff* (battleship) of World War I. SMS König was one of four ships in its class.





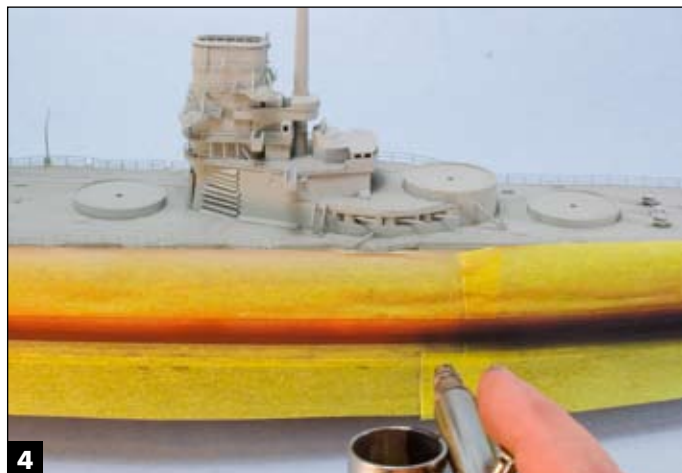
**1** Alfonso says the photoetched-metal kit's instructions are cryptic and must be thought through to the end. With very few exceptions, he installed the photoetched metal before painting it. "Take your time," he says, "and you won't be obliged to take pieces back off as I did."



**2** The base coat is an airbrushed mix of Tamiya acrylics, light sea gray (XF-25) and deck tan (XF-55). This flat base improves adhesion of subsequent layers of hand-brushed acrylics and artist's oil washes.



**3** Next, Alfonso masked above and sprayed the lower hull with a mix of Tamiya flat red (XF-7) and hull red (XF-9). Wait at least an hour before applying masks to fresh paint, he advises.



**4** Tamiya thin masking tape produced clean lines of demarcation between the hull red below and the hull gray above, with a blank spot in between where Alfonso airbrushed a boot stripe of Tamiya flat black (XF-1).



**5** Vallejo acrylics are great for hand-brushing: Here, Alfonso paints deck planks with Vallejo tan yellow (912). Hand-brushed Vallejo mahogany brown (846) replicates non-skid linoleum deck surfaces.

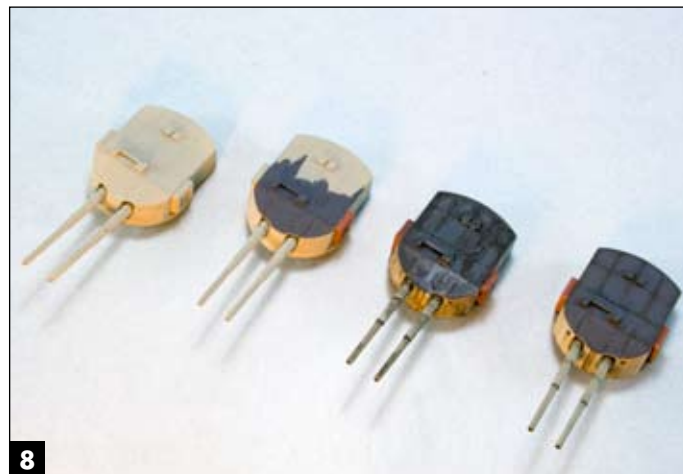


**6** The funnels and upper masts are Tamiya flat black. The two hull-colored lines at left are the anchor-chain races. Alfonso used a fine brush to paint the rails Vallejo dark gray (994), then proceeded to dark washes.



7

The washes deepen recessed details and weather the finish. Alfonso uses black and burnt umber artist's oils with mineral spirits for thinner, which will color or tint without cutting through the acrylic colors underneath. Heavier touches of rust are tinged with Humbrol scarlet matt (60).



8

Alfonso aims his turrets at demonstrating his painting process. From left: 1) Tamiya base coat; 2) Vallejo dark gray (994) on the top, hull red (985) on the rafts; 3) a black wash overall; 4) thinner blends the wash and brings raised details into greater relief.



9

Alfonso used a circle-cutter and thin Tamiya tape to make masks he cut out for painting air-recognition marks on the tops of two turrets.



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A light, thin coat of the Tamiya base mixture on the vertical surfaces, and similar, hand-brushed layers of the deck colors blend other effects into the finish. Sundries such as anchors, boats, cranes, and towers were painted off the model and added last. The battle flag came from a Revell kit.



With stretched-sprue rigging super glued and *Kriegsmarine* battle flag flying, Alfonso's *König* begins its reign. He enjoyed building the model, but noted, "It's a pity there are no ships of its time from other nations to oppose it in my display cabinet." **FSM**