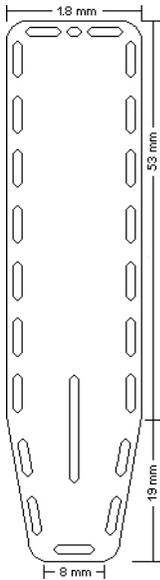


Making 1/25th scale backboards

by Brandon VanNess



So you want to make a backboard to go along with your scale fire/police/EMS vehicles. Well, you'll need the following:

- 0.040 sheet styrene
- 0.040 or 0.080 half round styrene rod
- Ruler, pencil, X-acto knife
- #54 drill bit (or similar size)
- Sand paper (emery boards will work)

Most backboards are 72" x 18" x 1 to 3" deep (depending on runners and board thickness).

Therefore, take a sheet of styrene and cut a 7.2 cm by sheet width. Then, cut a handful of rectangles out at 1.8 cm width.

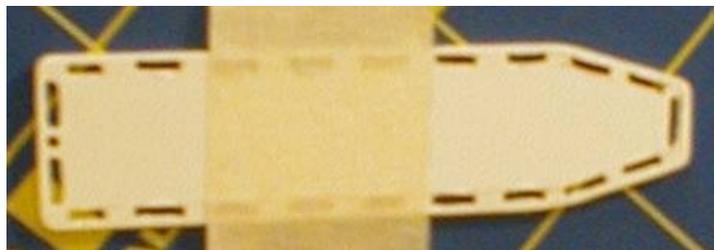
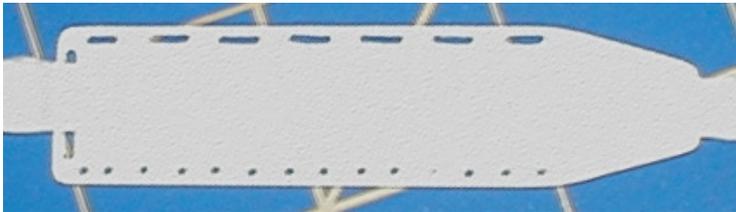
Now, from one end, move up 1.9 cm and place a pencil mark on each side of the rectangle. On the short side, place marks at 0.4 and 0.6 cm from each long side. Use your ruler (place some scrap 0.040 under the ruler) and cut off these triangles at the 0.4 cm mark to give your backboard a tapered look. Use the 0.6 cm marks as a guide to round the edges off.

The easy part is done, now you get the chance to drill out the hand-holds. The easiest way to do this is to use the template to mark the hand-holds on the backboard. Typically, mark a straight line 0.1 cm from each side, and another at either 0.2 cm. Then, use mark off 0.5 cm wide portions to mark the top and bottom of the hand-

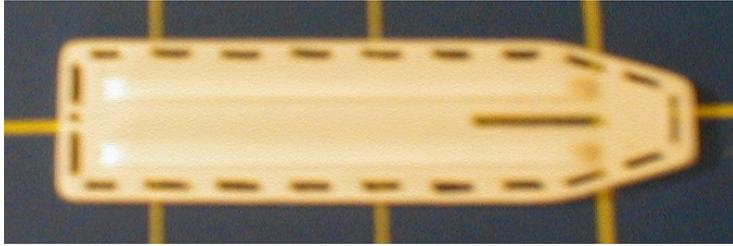
holds, with a 0.2 or 0.3 cm spacer between hand-holds, depending on how many hand-holds you want. Use the drill bit to make the initial cuts at the top and bottom of the hand-holds, and then

follow through with the knife blade to cut out the remaining plastic. Repeat this for the slopes and the bottom in order to get a similar effect. For the center cut, you'll have to measure 0.85

cm from each edge in order to just remove a 0.1 cm piece of styrene.



When you are done with the hand-holds, flip the backboard over and tack a 5.5 cm strip of 0.080 inch quarter round 0.4 cm in from each side, 0.5 cm down from the top. If you gently



sand down the edges of the quarter round before you attach to the backboard, a slope typical of many backboards will result. Don't forget to put your department's name down

the center of the board, between the runners.

Additional items, such as straps and head splints can be made easily. Try using masking tape for the straps (reference Scale Auto Magazine, February 2006, pg 20) and cutting strips to 3 mm width, and folding over before painting black. Use a scrap of 0.040 sheet to make a 3mm x 4mm buckle, black with a red or silver center. Since some backboards are stored with the head pads mounted, cut a piece of 0.040 to size, paint orange, and then use two rectangles of 200 grit sand paper painted flat black to simulate the Velcro backing. Although I don't have specifics, I'm sure you all can use your imagination to construct the head pads.