



“Tools & Tips”

Cutting Tools

by Ed Hall, MMR

When I returned to the model railroad hobby in 1981 I was, well let's put it this way, I did not have much money least for any good tools. When building plastic kits I resorted to using my toe nail clippers to cut parts from the sprue, in fact I still have two clippers sitting in my tool crib although I don't use them any longer, yes I still cut my toe nails. My friend Al C. saw my need for a little more sophistication in the tool department and GAVE me three tools, one was a white handled 4.5" smooth jaw pliers, one a 4.5" carbide tip flush cut pliers, and the other tool was a 4.5" carbon steel cutting tweezers. These tools were “left-overs” from a build he did for NASA. The 4.5" carbide tip super flush diagonal cutting pliers were sharp enough to “shave” skin. I really liked this tool and used it all the time. One evening I accidentally dropped them damaging one side of the carbide tip. This started a “HUNT” for replacements that lead me to an expensive turn but that's a story



for another day. Some of the diagonal cutters cost up to \$246.50, I did not buy those but I may later, I did buy about a half dozen lesser valued ones that are very useful.

Let's talk about the tweezers, at first I did not use them at all, I thought they were unsophisticated, too simple, I thought they were clumsy. Today I use them almost every time I work at the “wurkbench”. This started me thinking about that “HUNT” I did for the diagonal cutters years before, what if the tweezers broke? Would I have to go back to my toe nail clippers? I picked up the tweezers and looked for any stampings, marks, or indications of what I could use to search on the “inter-web”. I noticed a stamp EREM on one side so I typed it in and WAHOO!! I

found the website, I was in tool ecstasy looking at all those pliers, cutters, and tweezers.....yes you know what I'm talking about. I ordered my replacement oblique cutting head tweezers for soft wire up to 0.25 mm diameter that were on sale for \$42.55 and received them in a few days, oh they are so beautiful. Even the case was nice, a compressible square tube with foam at one end protecting the sharp tip.

Yes there are “replicas” similar to the look of this tool but don't be fooled these are the real deal cutters, all, I mean ALL of the other cutting tweezers are cheap copies and you would waste your time and money buying them.

This tool is so useful when building plastic kits (yes you remember what a kit is), removing parts from the sprue, especially that brake wheel that has to be cut out sooo carefully. I use the very tip of the tool and nip the gate just enough to not distort the brake-wheel. It also will cut soft wire, I use it whenever I install a decoder because it gets into small spaces nicely. Remember though do not under any circumstances cut hardened wire with this tool, you will, I repeat you will, damage them and they can not be repaired so be careful with them and treat them with respect.

I am a tool junkie, yes I admit it “I are”, but I never get stuck in a “build” wishing I had made that tool purchase when I had the chance to buy a nicely designed tool.

Here is a link to find EREMcutting tools.....
enjoy.... I know I did!

<http://www.testequipmentdepot.com/erem/index.htm?gclid=CNPcienNuMACFUJqfgod0gwAKA>

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