



Hi everybody! I hope you're all finding some time between leaf-raking and other "honey-do's" to sit at your workbenches and get in a little model-building time too...

This is the beginning of the season, I suppose, when most of us do our major model building. The weather is turning too cold to enjoy just hanging around outside, the kids are all back in school, summer vacations are all over, and the clocks have been changed so that it's probably dark by the time you get off from work. All of this should mean that we have more time available for modeling.

But somehow it just doesn't seem to work out like that! The holidays are fast approaching bringing trips to visit family and friends, along with shopping, football, and feasting. With all of this, model-building time will be in shorter supply than we might expect or hope, so enjoy it when you can!

This month we have a guest article for our feature. Brian Domanski explains how he approaches finishing and weathering using mostly acrylics to achieve what many others use artist oils and enamels for. His "Technique-less Technique" addresses one of the problems of "oil dot color modulation" as it has been demonstrated and advocated – That is, when the modeler applies dots of several different oil colors and then blends them in an attempt to create variations in hue and tone on his base finishes, often the final result is really no more than a muddy-colored general wash.

However, Brian's method avoids mixing the distinct colors used for the filters by applying the colors individually and taking advantage of the fact that once cured, acrylic paints are unaffected by subsequent top coats.

His article gave me a lot to think about, and I hope you will find it as informative as I did!

Last Meeting Minutes:

At our last regular meeting on 12 October, we followed the published agenda. We had 10 members in attendance who brought in a total of 10 models, finished or WIP's, to share.

Tim Darrah distributed the shirts ordered by everyone. These were the new, "official" tan-colored club-logo shirts, and they looked really good! We also sent out shirts to a couple of people outside of the club who had contacted us after seeing them in photos from our contest. These were AMPS members Georg Eyerman and Erik Robeson. We also sent a shirt to our friends at AM-Works as a small token of thanks for their support with review and test-build products. This last shirt was paid for from the treasury.

We discussed and voted on the issue of dues for potential junior members. If (when!) we have any junior members, 17-years old or younger, these new members WILL NOT have to pay any membership dues. (See the "Day Room" at the end of this newsletter for more on this subject.)

We had the planned Show & Tell highlighting the WIP's in the group-build and other projects brought in to share.

We held a raffle and added funds to our treasury. And... OH BROTHER!... Once again I neglected to record the winner and the amount of tickets sold, but as usual, that information is available from our treasurer, Scott.

Next Meeting Agenda:

Our next meeting will be at 6:00 pm, Wednesday, 12 October, 2011.

6:00 pm (1800): Meeting starts / Admin Business – This month's business (1) Discuss and vote on sponsoring a trophy package at the IPMS Regional Contest next April (2) Discuss and achieve consensus on any kind of Christmas party or other holiday activity for the December meeting (3) Finance report from Scott (4) Raffle

6:10 pm (1810): Group-Build Discussion and WIP's

6:50 pm (1850): Break / Shopping / Mixer

7:10 pm (1910): Reconvene / Continue: Show & Tell: Builds and WIP's

8:00 pm (2000): Meeting ends (officially – but we'll carry-on as long as the store will stay open)

Regular meetings are held on 2nd Wednesdays of each month at 6:00 pm (1800) at the HobbyTown USA store, 10120 Two Notch Road, Suite 5, Columbia, SC 29223, (803) 736-0959.

Up-coming Events of Interest:

November 9, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road.

December 14, 2011, 6:00 pm (1800): Our next meeting at the HobbyTown USA store on Two Notch Road. **(Christmas party anyone?!)**

February 17-19, 2012: AMPS Atlanta Regional, Atlanta Marriott Century Center, Atlanta, GA.

April 26-28, 2012, AMPS International Show, WW2 Victory Museum, Auburn, IN.

April 28, 2012: IPMS Mid-Carolina "Swamp Foxes" IPMS Region 12 Regional, National Guard Armory, 1225 Bluff Road, Columbia, SC.

July 14, 2012 (Tentative), AMPS Central SC "Wildcats" Model Show and Contest co-hosted with the Mid-Carolina Chapter SCMA, Gymnasium, Ball Park Road, Lexington, SC

Aug 5-9, 2012, IPMS / USA National Convention, Orlando, FL

Newsletter Feature Article:

(See next page.)

The Technique-less Finishing Technique

By Brian Domanski, Alliance Model-Works

Reproducing a realistic finish on our kits is one of the most difficult aspects of armor modeling. A number of approaches have been described and popularized with washes, weathering products and even lines of oil paints specifically designed for the armor modeler. While these techniques and products can without a doubt produce good results in practiced hands, they are generally time consuming and have a tendency towards an exaggerated or "faux" finish due to the excessive emphasis on shadowing and contrast. Additionally, application of subsequent layers of oil and enamel paint before the previous layers have dried and cured results in an inadvertent mixing of colors and an overall neutral finish. The goal of this article is to introduce the modeler to a tempera style technique using acrylic paints to build up successive transparent layers of color over a base coat to reproduce the weathering and fading observed in armored vehicles exposed to the wear and tear of rugged use, the elements, and enemy fire.

Tempera painting is an ancient technique where color is built up gradually in thin transparent layers over an absorbent ground. In terms of traditional painting, the colors achieved with tempera are much more subtle than the rich saturated colors achievable with oil painting, but it also has a more pleasing and realistic appearance. When applying this technique to finishing a model, the base coat can be thought of as the ground and the desired effect is the weathering of this coat. The properties of acrylic paints make them ideally suited for this technique.

Acrylic paints are pigments suspended in a water-soluble binder that once dried and cured will not go back into suspension. Acrylics have smaller pigment loads than oil based or enamel paints allowing for a finer control of opacity. These properties allow acrylic paints to be thinned with water and used to build up transparent layers of color that become water-resistant once dry. The acrylic layers dry quickly and can be applied in quick succession, so that results quickly emerge without mixing with the previous layers. The finer control of transparency with acrylics allows one to achieve a more subtle appearance which is useful to depict the scale effect of colors becoming lighter or faded.

To demonstrate this style of weathering, three late war German panther variants were selected. *[Editor's note: See the models in the AM-Works website's Work Gallery for examples of this method.]* The models were assembled from Dragon Smart Kits, Alliance Model Works' detail sets, and Friulmodel metal tracks. Prior to application of the base coat, the models were thoroughly coated with well thinned Creos GSI Mr. Metal Primer. The careful use of metal primer allows paint to adhere better to the metal surfaces, but does not add the thickness of traditional primers. Overdoing the priming step can easily obscure fine details and is best omitted if there is not a lot of PE or resin on the model.

All three vehicles share a common dark yellow base coat but each has a distinct finish. The dark yellow base coat was mixed by adding approximately one part of Tamiya Dark Yellow to 3 parts of Tamiya Flat White, and this mixture was then thinned to 1:5 with rubbing alcohol for airbrushing. The model is painted only until the surfaces are just covered with an even layer of color. More paint will only add more thickness, not color, and, as with over priming, may lead to obscuring fine details.

In this style of painting, the base coat is best viewed as the canvas or ground over which three successive layers or steps of painting will be used to simulate aging of the spray painted finish. The first step in this process is to break up the color of the base coat or the colors in camouflage scheme. The importance of this step is more obvious on a monotone finish where the model looks dull and perhaps a little boring if the entire surface is left as a homogenous single tone. This is well

demonstrated by the *Jagdpanther* modeled here. This vehicle was issued to *schwere Panzerjäger Abteilung (sPzJg Abt.) 654* shortly before the battalion was sent to the Normandy front.

In reality, paint coats are uniform only when freshly finished. After even limited use and exposure to the elements, pigment is lost unevenly resulting in patches that are similar in color but exhibit different tones. This differential fading and variation of tone can be simulated by stacking acrylic filters using a limited number of colors such as Vallejo's Chocolate brown, German gray, German yellow and ivory. These filters are prepared by dilution of paint approximately 1:50 with water and dabbed onto the dampened surface of the model with size 0 round brushes. Since each spot takes only a few minutes to dry and cure, colors can quickly be built up in succession. Essentially, each spot works like a transparent color lens or filter to produce a subtle variation in the base coat eliminating any monotony. This step is repeated until the desired level of color variation is achieved.

The second Panther was modeled after the famous 411 of 11th Panzer Division, captured in Bavaria, 1945. This was one of the last Panther *Ausf G* produced by M.A.N, and showed some distinct late production features. In order to simulate fading of the hard edge factory applied green camouflage on this vehicle, German camo green was added to the list of filter colors used on the *Jagdpanther*. This color was mixed in various combinations with the previous filter colors to produce the more intermediate greens expected from the fading of green camouflage.

The second step of this weathering technique is to break up and define the visually monotonous flat surfaces and panels of a vehicle with both horizontal and vertical streaks of light colored acrylics. Obviously, this step is less important on vehicles such as the *Jagdpanther* which have *Zimmerit*. By applying streaks of beige and ivory the flat surfaces become more visually interesting by allowing for more appreciation of the complexity of the fading effect produced with the previous layer of filters. On vehicles with multiple panels of *Schurzen*, a subtle application of unique streaking patterns allows visual differentiation and contrast between the panels.

In reality, the vertical streaks would be created by rust, dirt and color pigments being washed down the sides by rain water, while the horizontal streaks would be created by direct chipping or scratching of the paint by exposure to the environment. These horizontal abrasions in the paint, like keying a car, usually result in sharp and elongated impressions, so it is important to keep the horizontal streaks thin and straight. Additionally, during this stage of painting the edges of panels are highlighted in preparation for the last step of weathering.

The third and final step of this technique is essentially the application of a final layer of filters and the addition of paint chips to achieve the desired level of wear and tear on a vehicle. This finishing step also allows for the balancing of the warm colored streaks with a darker layer of filters and paints chips as needed. Chipping is simulated with 2 colors. a light shade of the vehicles base coat for shallow scratches that have not reached the metal surfaces, and a chocolate brown /German gray mix for areas within the chips where bare metal would be exposed and rusted. The lighter color is applied like highlights to corners and edges and this step should be done immediately following the horizontal streaking so these effects appear more natural together. Chocolate brown /German gray color spots were dotted judiciously throughout the vehicle, around and inside areas of the lighter color chips using a size 000 brush to emphasize the areas with more wear.

The final vehicle modeled is a combat hardened Panther *Ausf. G* of *I./Pz.Rgt.26* abandoned in Mass Lombard, Italy in April, 1945. Production time of this panther, with individually supported mufflers with exhaust shrouds and the strengthened mantlet without extended chin armor can be dated to between June and September 1944. In other words, by the time it was abandoned, this vehicle had seen endured more than half year of combat during some of the most intense fighting seen by men and

machines. To reproduce this veteran state on the vehicle, heavier layer of filters and chips were applied using all three of the steps described.

The properties of acrylic paints allow better control of transparency and, overall, are much easier to work with than oils or enamels. However, there are some instances where oils or enamels can be used to further enhance or achieve a specific finish not obtainable with acrylics. For example, the exposure and weathering of factory applied primer on German vehicles is difficult to achieve with the homogenized red browns available in acrylic. A better or more color rich result can be delivered using a mixture of Testor's enamel Chrysler Engine Red and Dark Tan. Additionally, limited use of pastel chalk can greatly enhance both the tones and texture of the weathered model. This is particularly useful on rusted areas and tracks. Ultimately, the modeler will assimilate what types of paint and techniques are needed to obtain the effect or finish they are looking for. This level of aptitude can only be reached with practice and experimentation.

In conclusion, the acrylic tempera technique described and demonstrated here allows the modeler to easily titrate the amount of weathering desired to produce a specific realistic finish by the successive application of three relatively straight forward steps. The quick drying time of acrylic agents offers a distinct advantage over oils and enamels though these agents can certainly be added at any step. It is the strong opinion of the author that this tempera technique offers a more subtle realistic finish, as opposed to the color rich faux finish achieved by the use oils and enamels.

Editor's Note: *Brian Domanski is not only the lead product designer and developer for Alliance Model-Works, but he's also a very accomplished model builder in his own right, and his finish work features an incredibly realistic style. I would encourage anyone interested in the methods explained here to visit the AM-Works website and view the models in their Work Gallery:*

<http://www.am-works.com/store/work-gallery-c-8.html?osCsid=eq0rofoqqu9fon2msfheob7n14>

All of these models were finished using "The Technique-less Finishing Technique," and I believe that you'll agree with me that the results speak for themselves!

Thanks for taking the time to share this with us, Brian.

MDR

“The Day Room”

During our road-trip up to the Fayetteville, NC IPMS Lafayette Scale Modelers show on Saturday, 5 November, my traveling *compadres* (Tom Wingate and Bob Spagnola) and I had a great discussion about the future of our hobby and what we can do to attract newer model builders to join our ranks.

Although we didn't have any amazing epiphanies, we did conclude that we all could do a better job of making potential junior members feel more welcome and encouraged.

One thing that we all thought that we should do is take those fleeting opportunities that present themselves to us at the hobby shop during our meetings. The next time that we see younger patrons in the shop, we should all make an effort to invite that young potential model builder to join us for the meeting and later. This could also be extended to chatting-up these young folks and their parents during our shopping breaks to see what their interests are and offer some advice or suggestions to help them with their shopping decisions.

Another thing that we thought we should do is to follow-up our "foot-in-the-door" success at the SE Model Soldier Show at the SC State Museum. Next year, we really should expand the size of our club display and include our IPMS friends, adding some other military related modeling subjects, like aircraft, to a combined display. We also need to do a better job of collecting and following up on those potential recruiting contacts that we generate at the show.

So, as I said, it was a really good discussion, and it has motivated me to try to do a better job on encouraging younger folks to take up scale modeling. The next time any of us notice younger patrons in the hobby shop, let me know, and we'll call a short halt to the business at hand in order to extend an invite to that young person! Also, those of you who are "duel-hatted" AMPS-IPMS members, think about making a motion or supporting a vote in your IPMS chapter to join us in a combined display-recruiting effort at the SE Model Soldier Show next year.

I'd certainly like to hear any other ideas or suggestions that some of the rest of you might have about this issue. I'd especially like to hear from any members who are familiar with and active on any of the newer electronic social-media, like FaceBook or Twitter. These newer social media definitely offer us some potential avenues to communicate our message to kids who might not otherwise be exposed to the hobby of scale modeling.

Give it some thought, guys!

Happy modeling,
Mike