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Sd.Kfz. 11 Late Version

France 1944

Step-by-Step Finishing Diorama Bases

By Glenn Bartolotti



A complete Step-by-Step guide to Painting and Finishing Armor Models and Figures

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to Painting and Finishing Armor
Models and Figures



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Materials Used

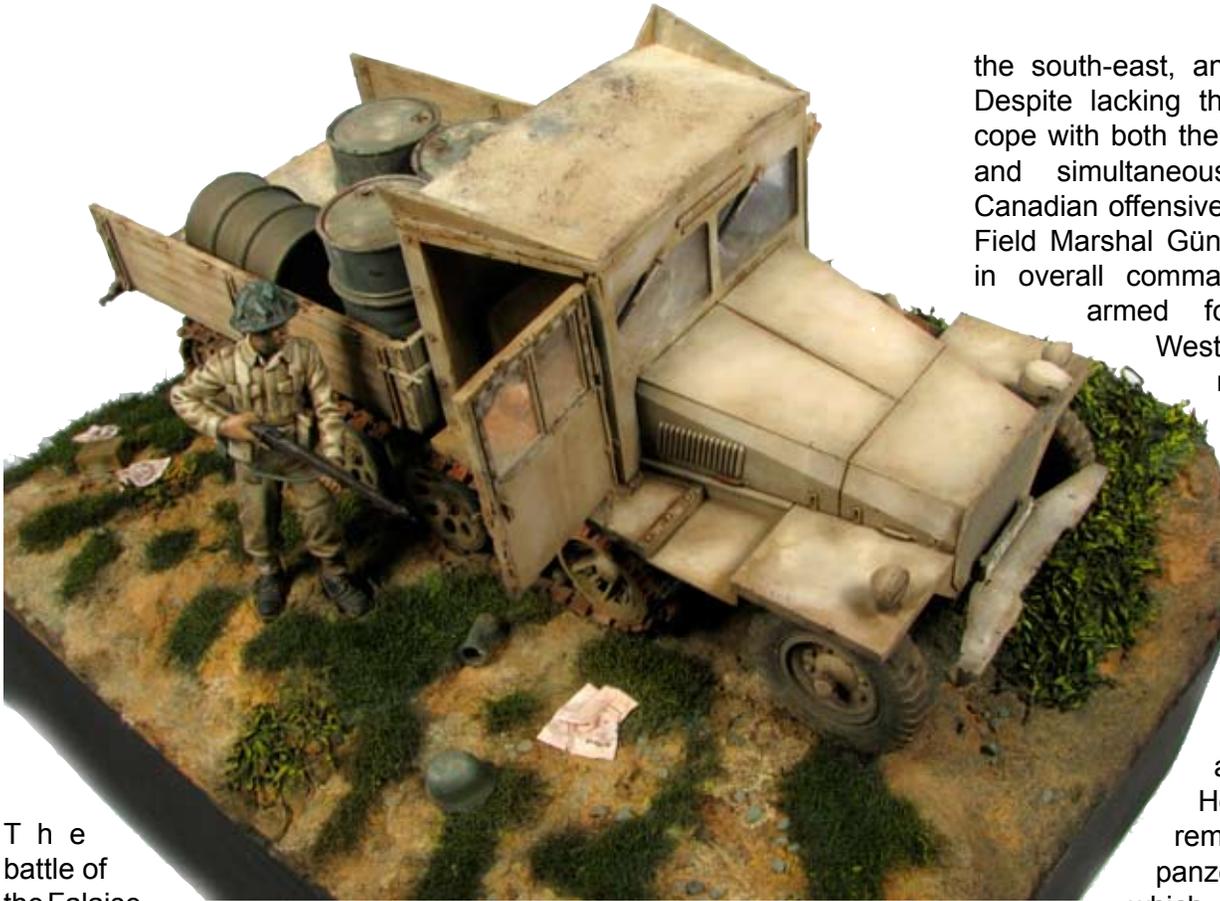
The materials I use are very easy to obtain and simple to use. Most are inexpensive and found in most all art supply stores. Over the years I have learned to use these basic materials to obtain finishes that look very realistic. **Consistency** is very important and following each step is also very important to obtain the desired finish.

You will notice that in none of the steps will you see the method of dry-brushing. I do not like to use this method as some armor modelers do. I prefer a more subtle look in which I feel represents the look of a full scale armor vehicle.



Note: Just a few of the materials used for painting and weathering only.

Sd.Kfz. 11 Late Version France 1944



The battle of the Falaise Pocket,

the corridor which the Germans fought during the Second World War from 12–21 August 1944, was the decisive engagement of the Battle of Normandy. Taking its name from the area around the town of Falaise within which the German Seventh and Fifth Panzer Armies became encircled by the advancing Western Allies, the battle is also referred to as the Falaise Gap (Later known as “The Valley of Death”) after

the corridor which the Germans sought to maintain to allow their escape. The battle resulted in the destruction of the bulk of Germany’s forces west of the River Seine, and opened the way to Paris and the German border.

Following Operation Cobra, the successful American breakout from the Normandy beachhead, rapid advances were made to the south,

the south-east, and into Brittany. Despite lacking the resources to cope with both the US penetration and simultaneous British and Canadian offensives around Caen, Field Marshal Günther von Kluge, in overall command of German armed forces on the Western Front, was not permitted by Adolf Hitler to withdraw; instead he was ordered to

counterattack the Americans around Mortain.

However, the remnants of four panzer divisions, which was all that von Kluge could scrape together, were not strong enough to make any impression on the United States First Army, and Operation Lüttich was a disaster that merely served to drive the Germans deeper into the Allied lines, leaving them in a highly dangerous position. Seizing the opportunity to envelop von Kluge’s entire force, on 8 August the Allied ground forces commander Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery

ordered his armies to converge on the Falaise–Chambois area. With the US First Army forming the southern arm, the British Second Army the base, and the Canadian First Army the northern arm of the encirclement, the Germans fought hard to keep an escape route open, although their withdrawal did not begin until 17 August. On 19 August the Allies linked up in Chambois but in insufficient strength to completely seal the pocket. Gaps were forced in the Allied lines by desperate German assaults, the most significant and hard-fought being a corridor past elements of the Polish 1st Armoured Division, who had established a commanding position in the mouth of the pocket.

By the evening of 21 August the pocket was closed for the last time, with around 50,000 Germans still trapped inside. Although it is estimated that significant numbers managed to escape, German losses in both men and materiel were huge, and the Allies had achieved a decisive victory. Two days later Paris was liberated, and by 30 August the last German remnants had retreated across the Seine, effectively ending Operation Overlord.

1



1. Leichter Zugkraftwagen 3 ton
Sd.Kfz. 11 Einheitsfahrerhaus
AFV Club Kit No. AF 35047



The AFV club kit is a nice model on its own but I wanted to do something with it because it is very plain.

I planned a small diorama with it abandoned looking as though it was hit in the track while retreating from Caen, France 1944.



Notice I opened the door to add interest. The doors on the kit are not molded open, so I had to cut it out and re-add some detail that was lost with plastic strip styrene and wire for the door handle.

The gray color on the model is Mr. Surfacer 500. It was used to add some texture and fill any seams.

2



2. The base is a clear photo frame purchased at the local craft store. It measures 8"x10"

Styrofoam was used as the base for the ground work as it is light and easy to shape with a knife. It is glued in place with white glue.

3



3. The base was shaped so the Sdkfz. 11 would look as though it was out of control and ended up on a slope off the road. I used a knife to shape the ground contours.

4. The ground work is made from tile grout mixed with water and white glue.
It is spread over the foam and while still wet the model was placed into it.

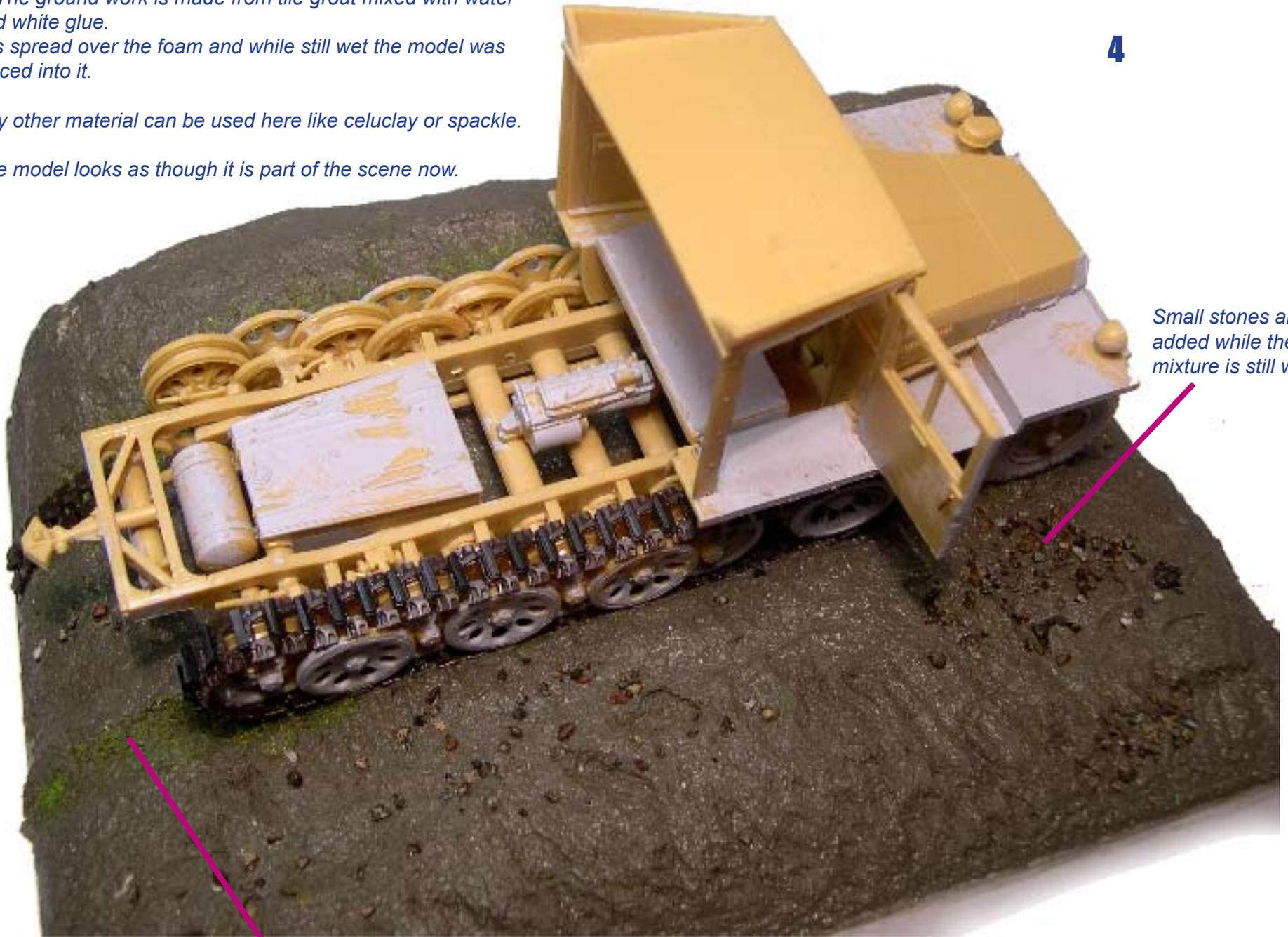
Any other material can be used here like celuclay or spackle.

The model looks as though it is part of the scene now.

4

Small stones are added while the mixture is still wet.

Some static grass is added to the wet mixture area where the tracks have ground it into the dirt.



5



I left the rear cab wall off and bed so I could paint the interior.

The fit is great and it slips right in.



pencil shavings

I added static grass (a product used as model rail road scenery) to the front areas of the diorama. I apply a layer of white glue then sprinkle on the static grass. When dry I just blow the grass that did not adhere off.

I wanted to have foliage that looked different and cover a large area. For this I used the pencil shavings from a electric pencil sharpener

I used white glue to attached the shavings. They were added to the slope. Its was all glued down with white glue.



6



First I tape the base off with painters tape.

The entire scene is painted on the base.

As you can see I do a lot of shading and highlighting with the airbrush to eliminate the need for dry-brushing.

For a complete explanation on painting a Half track with this same paint scheme see my Volume 19 Sd.Kfz 251 Ausf D

The ground is airbrushed with Model Masters 2005 Burnt Umber.

The grass was airbrushed Testors Model Masters 2091 (Dunkelgrun) Green.



As you can see here it is ok to overspray some of the colors. The weathering process will tie it all together and hide these areas.

NOTE: Always use clean turpentine for each step!

My basic weathering to the half track was done at this time with controlled washes of raw umber.

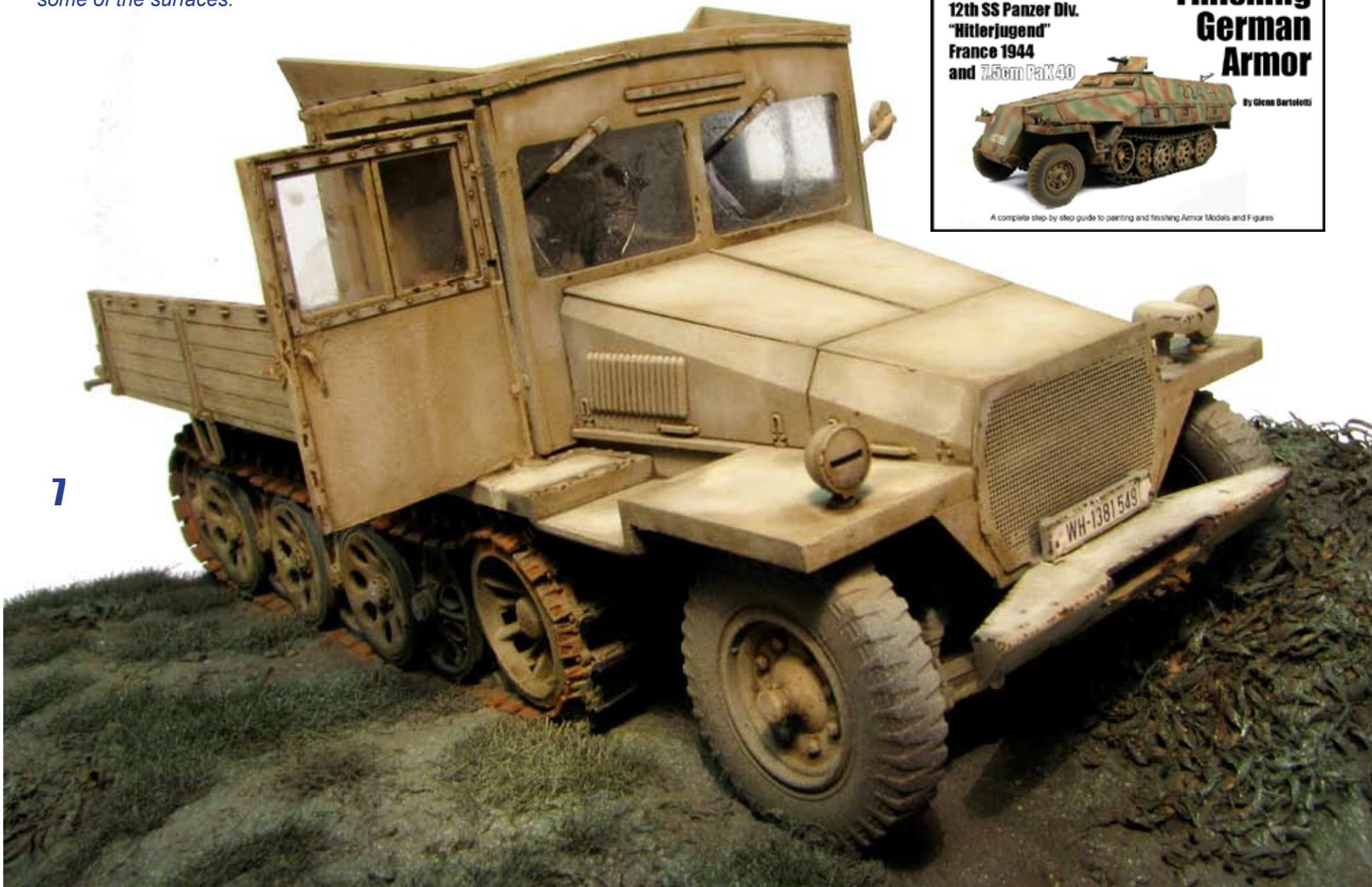
I also used some white oil paint thinned down to add some faded effects on some of the surfaces.

Further weathering will be done when the groundwork is done so it ties into the half track into it.

For a complete explanation on painting and weathering a Half track with this same paint scheme see my Volume 19 Sd.Kfz 251 Ausf D



7



8

I used pastel powder I made by sanding a pastel art stick into powder. The pastels are \$1.00 a stick at the art store and come in a large variety of shades. I use a file to grind them into powder.

The pastel powder is mixed with turpentine and applied with a brush.

The tracks get pastel washes using shades of rust, brown, and olive green pastel powder. Apply the rust shade first and then add blotches of the brown and olive after. When the wash dries it is quite convincing giving a good representation of weathered iron.





Ground work is taking shape.

The grass and pencil shavings are high-lighted with yellow oil paint. Just use a very small amount of yellow and add more if needed. Just touch the ends of the grass.

Paint some of the small stones with various earth shaded last.



As stated in step 8, I once again used pastel powder for creating the ground shade colors.

The pastel powder is mixed with turpentine and applied to the ground area of the diorama with a brush. Various earth colored pastels can be used to create interesting ground shades.

You can see below the pastel mix dries dead matte with a convincing effect.

Add this mixture thinned with more turpentine to the lower parts and wheels of the half track. This will tie the scene together.



10



I made small scratches in the rear bed by mixing artist oils and then using a small piece of a abrasive sponge to create the very small wear from storage being moved in and out of the bed.

Here you see the scratches being made with the sponge. I used oil paint paynes gray and raw umber mixed on a pallet.



The figure is from New World Miniatures # NWM35013 sent to me from Chris Mrosko. It is nicely sculpted and has good detail.

I will add a strap to the rifle and prime it for painting.

The figure will be painted in Model Color acrylics.



Finished Model



Finished Model



Finished Model



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Armor Models
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Stay Tuned!

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