

Vol. 6

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Step-by-Step Simple Figure Conversions

By Glenn Bartolotti



A complete Step-by-Step guide to painting and finishing Armor Models and Figures

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and finishing Armor Models and Figures



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bladerunner8u@netscape.net

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Figure Conversions

Converting figures can be fun and rewarding, with all the many figures available on the market to choose from as stock you can change them to give them your own touch. There also comes a time when you may look for a figure for a special project which may not be available or is not quite posed the way you want it to be.

In this Volume I'll share some of my converted and re-modeled figures with you and also explain some of the methods and materials used in doing so. When some modelers and figure painters hear the word "converted figure," visions of Dr. Frankenstein enter their heads and they become concerned their effort may turn out the same as his! But one must remember that merely swapping arms, heads, legs, etc., from one figure to another without any major rework can give you a completely normal looking model figure, but use good judgement in doing so.

Materials

There are many materials used in converting model figures. The most important ones are cutting tools, body putty, glues and sanding materials. For cutting metal, resin, and plastic parts, razor saws are your best bet because of the ease in handling them, and X-Acto knives can be used for trimming and cleaning parts, and also small cutting jobs.



One of your most important items is body putty. I have found Magic Sculpt modeling putty. It is the easiest to work with its advantage over other tube putties is its drying time

and workability. It dries in about an hour or more depending on how much hardener you add, and once dry it is very hard and can be sanded and even drilled. It also does not stick to your fingers like most other putties. I have yet to find a surface it will not stick to. I have used it on lead, plastic, wood, and metal. Regular plastic model cement can be used for plastic figures and cyanoacrylate (Super Glue) for lead figures and resin,

The most important thing to remember in converting figures is to make sure that the anatomy is correct. A head turned too far around unnaturally, or an arm or leg too short or long can make a good idea turn bad. Don't be afraid to try and sculpt with putty either, there will be times you 'will have no other choice for that great idea you have in your head!

Many figures which come with most model kits look to stiff and dummy like. Some times just turning a figure's head to one side or another is enough to give much needed life and realism' to it. The easiest conversions are just simply swapping parts within



a kit of figures or with other kits.

A final thought on converted figures. Converted figures can be major reworks or minor little changes that make the figure look different or add new life to. But at any rate they are very unique and will give your models, dioramas, or vignettes a very personal touch, which will make your finished work a one-of-a-kind. Just always remember that your imagination is the limit!

A future volume will cover painting figures.

Feldgendarmerie
13th SS "Handschar", Darva 1944

It was inspired by photographs from various books on the 13th SS. The cobble stone base was made from Magic Sculpt. It was painted in oils.

Base figure is From Tamiya's Motorcycle and orderly set. Hornet head, a new hand, map case and side arm.





This figure comes with the Tamiya 1/35 Kubelwagen.

Hornet bare head with Magic Sculpt hair, new boots and Photo etch shoulder boards.





“Shell Shocked” 1944

These figures come from the older DML 1/35th scale set. They are one of the better sets before the Gen2 that are now out. I added Hornet heads and hair from Magic Sculpt. Helmet is from a Gen2 kit. The groundwork is Magic Sculpt also. Painted in oils. The Sign was made as a decal on my Apple computer. I used a Verlinden sign as reference.



British Officer, El Alamein, 1942

Artillery played a major role in the outcome of the battle of El Alamein and can be seen by the smile on the face of this officer. This is a Hornet conversion in 1/35th scale that was painted in oils.

Base Hornet figure with Hornet head, cap from a Verlinden head and lanyard mad of wire.





This figure is made from a Tamiya figure with a Warrior head and boots. I also added new hands and a head set.

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This figure is a old Jaguar resin HG guy which comes with a MG42 but I replaced it with a panzerschrek. I also used a head with a fallshirmjaeger helmet that came from Warriors.

The scene with be set in Italy 1944.



This conversion was done by using Tamiya's 1/35 scale German (right).

I added a new head from Hornet and helmet from a DML Gen2 kit.

The K98 and ammo pouches are from the DML Gen2 kit also.





Panzergrenadier 12th SS, Normandy 1944

1/35 scale figure from Hornet with a Hornet conversion head. The helmet is from a DML GEN2 figure kit and I tilted it back and added hair made from Magic Sculpt. The Teller Mine 43 is from Tamiya. He is painted as a 12th SS in Normandy 1944 with camo pants and smock. He carries the tools of the trade to destroy allied tanks!





This figure is from the DML Mine Detector Team, but converted him with a Hornet head, lead straps and a K98 instead of the Mine Detector.





Normandy June 5th D-day minus one

The figures are from the Tamiya German motorcycle and Orderly set which comes with a DKW Bike, 2 nice figures which were given replacement heads from hornet and Warriors.

I also added straps from lead foil to add more detail.

The field police was convert by adding a new left hand, MP40 ammo pouch and a MP40 machine gun.



Towards the end of the WWII the bicycle replaced the horse to an increasing extent in organic German infantry reconnaissance units. In addition Bicycle combat units were often an integral part of Horse Cavalry formations. The Waffen SS 8th. Division Florian Geyer Horse Cavalry contained some large units of Bicycle Cavalry!

Italeri bike

Lion Roar PE set to upgrade the bike since it would be a major part of the figure.

*The figure is from Warrior's.
The figure comes holding a rifle.*

The figure is a bit over sized scaling to a good 6ft plus and did not look good next to a tank but as I looked at it a few times the bike idea came to mine.



Stay Tuned!

Be on the look out for more Step-by-Step Armor Finishing



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