

A supplement to FineScale Modeler magazine

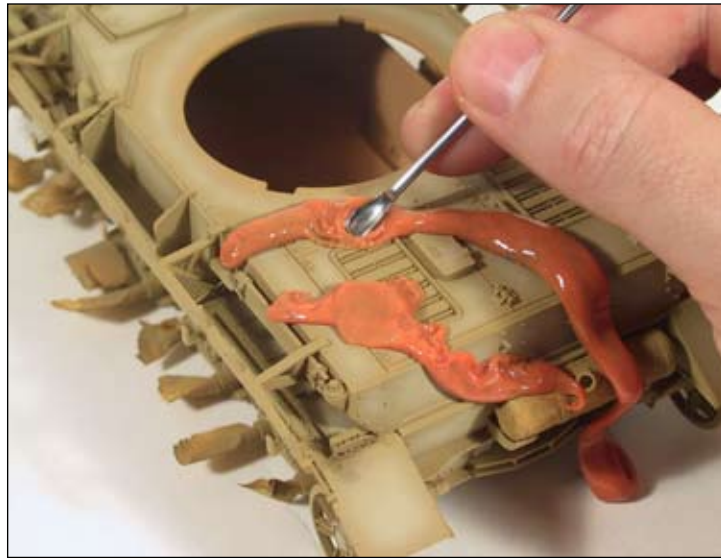
FineScale
Modeler
MAGAZINE

PAINTING TIPS



FineScale Modeler presents

PAINTING TIPS



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Cover photo: Matthew Usher's 1/48 scale Tamiya Focke-Wulf Fw 190F-8.

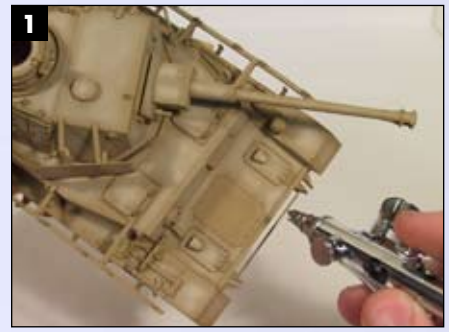
SILLY PUTTY Panzer

Simple techniques
for realistic painting

By Kevin Kuster



Each year around late February my wife and I escape for a long week at my parent's home in Florida and try to mislead ourselves into thinking that a Chicago spring is right around the corner. If five months of winter isn't a "perceived threat" to anyone, I don't know what is.



1 After spraying the entire tank with Tamiya dark yellow (XF-60), Kevin highlighted each panel with a mixture of 60 percent Tamiya dark yellow (XF-60) and 40 percent Gunze Sangyo radome tan (No. 318) at a ratio of 30 percent paint to 70 percent thinner.



2 Kevin used the tip of a Tamiya paint stirrer to push and pull the Silly Putty until he had a shape that looked interesting.



3 After spraying Gunze field green (No. 340), Kevin highlighted the center of the section with a 50/50 mixture of Gunze field green and green (No. 312) at a ratio of 30 percent paint to 70 percent thinner.

Although my father and I have both recently returned to the hobby he introduced me to as a boy, I knew from his daily calls that his new hobby room would not be up and running when I arrived. What could I build on a sunny, sandy beach in south Florida?

Something straight out of the box might be good. I couldn't imagine even my wife's hawk eyes finding any lost photoetched parts in the sand, so box-stock it

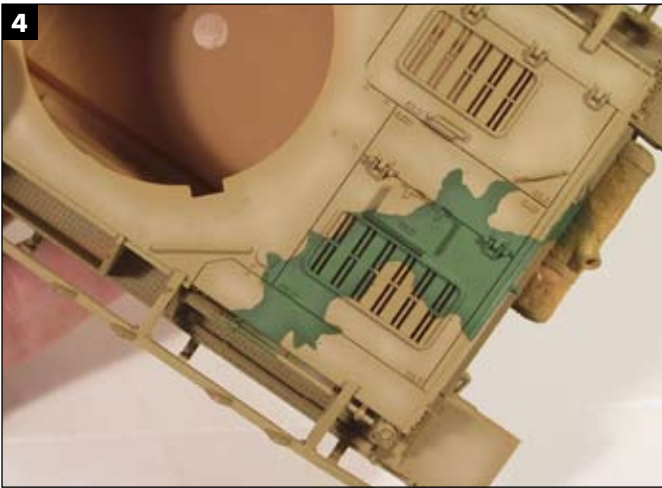
would be. I know many modelers don't find it challenging to build straight out of the box, so I decided this particular piece would be primarily a painting project.

After surveying my small collection of German armor for this painting exercise, I began to see I had a particular repetitive style of painting camouflage. I began to think that maybe we develop a personal style of painting camouflage, not too dissimilar to our own penmanship. "Here is

my painting challenge," I thought.

Having assembled my Tamiya Panzer IV (kit No. 35181) in Florida, I began my painting project back in Chicago. I decided I would use Silly Putty as a mask to paint each of my camouflage patterns by pushing and pulling the putty to produce shapes and contours that my particular style would not normally create. I was quite pleased with the results of this simple technique. **FSM**

4



Kevin peeled off the Silly Putty, revealing a unique hard-edge camouflage pattern.

5



Once the green sections were complete, Kevin began adding the brown patterns.

6



Kevin used the same process with the second camouflage color. This time he used Tamiya NATO brown (XF-68) as the base coat and highlighted it with 60 percent NATO brown and 40 percent Tamiya dark yellow (XF-60) at a ratio of 30 percent paint to 70 percent thinner.

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When the camouflage is painted and highlighted, it's easy to think that it looks terrible. Kevin says this is where the fun begins.

8



Kevin applied Eduard's Express Mask (No. EUXT008) for the turret markings. In order to tone down and blend all of the colors, he resprayed each of the outer edges of the panel lines with what he calls a "dirty spray wash" of 50/50 mix of Tamiya red brown (XF-64) and Tamiya flat black (XF-1) at a ratio of 40 percent paint to 60 percent thinner. He applied this spray wash in several light layers to slowly build the color.

9



Kevin blended the entire tank with several light layers of the same wash at a ratio of 20 percent paint to 70 percent thinner, spraying at least a foot and a half away from the tank to get a very light overall application. He allowed each coat to dry before applying the next coat. This allowed him to evaluate his progress.

10



Once the base color and camouflage colors were blended, Kevin applied a pin wash and subtle dry-brushing. For his pin washes, he mixed Winsor & Newton Mars black, burnt umber, Vandyke brown, and Turpinoid at a ratio of 20 percent paint to 80 percent thinner for each color. He dry-brushed with Testor Israeli sand.

11



To weather and "dirty up" the model, Kevin applied a mix of Tamiya putty, Hudson & Allen Studio mud, MIG pigment European earth, static grass, and water.



Once completed, Kevin's Panzer IV had a completely different camouflage style and look.

PAINTING TIPS

FineScale Modeler's contributors share their best painting and weathering secrets

During the course of a year, the staff of *FineScale Modeler* travels to dozens of the world's best model contests. Our first objective on these trips is to find and photograph top-quality models for *FineScale Modeler* and *Great Scale Modeling*, but we also have the opportunity to meet hundreds of talented, clever, ingenious modelers who not only build fantastic models but are willing to share the carefully practiced techniques they used to build them.

Nothing separates a great model from the rest of the pack like

a perfect finish or realistic weathering. Here's a sampler of painting and weathering tips we've collected from our readers, contributors, and staff members.

Ten times a year *FineScale Modeler* magazine provides helpful, step-by-step information designed to help you build better models. If you'd like more information on *FineScale Modeler* magazine or any of our related special publications, visit www.finescale.com or call 1-800-533-6644.

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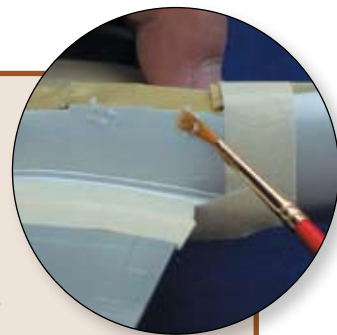
SALT WEATHERING BASICS

FSM contributors Brian Barton, Michael Chorney, and Charles Swank worked together to develop an amazingly realistic method to simulate chipped paint – salt weathering. Their 1/48 scale Hasegawa Ki-44 Tojo fighter is a perfect illustration of the end result.

After applying the model's base color (the one you want to show through) use a paintbrush or a spray bottle to lightly apply water

to the area that is to be weathered. Before the water dries, apply table salt to the model with a brush. Try to avoid making the pattern too even so the weathering will look random and natural.

When the salt dries and you're satisfied with the pattern of salt deposits, spray on the top color. When the paint is dry, wipe the salt from the model with a soft cloth or a stiff brush. You'll be amazed at the results, and the technique works equally well on aircraft and armor models.



2

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PAINTBRUSHES

Good quality paintbrushes are one of the keys to great detail painting, and when they're cared for properly, brushes can last for many years and dozens of modeling projects.

After every painting session, clean your brush thoroughly with clean thinner. After the thinner has removed most of the paint, draw the brush backward against a clean piece of paper towel to remove the remaining thinner and paint.

When the brush is clean, use your fingertips to point the bristles while they're still slightly wet. Storing your brushes tip-up in a glass or organizer on your workbench will keep them ready for when you need them



3

SHARPENING YOUR MASKING TAPE

A roll of masking tape will pick up a lot of dust and fuzz as it sits on your workbench – dust and fuzz that can ruin your next paint job.

Whenever you need to mask a sharp edge, remove a length of masking tape from the roll and apply it to a piece of tempered glass. Next, use a straightedge and a sharp hobby-knife blade to trim off both edges of the tape. The fuzz will be removed, and your masked lines will stay razor sharp.



4

WORKING WITH METALLIC PAINTS

Paints like Testor Model Master Metallizers do a wonderful job of simulating natural-metal finishes on aircraft models. Their only downside is that they're sometimes delicate and can be damaged by fingerprints during construction.

When he built this 1/48 scale Tamiya MiG-15, Matthew Usher mounted the model on a wooden dowel from the hardware store. He wrapped the dowel with masking tape until it fit securely into the model's jet exhaust. The dowel acted as a "handle" until the model was completely painted and decaled.



7

GIVE FIGURES A TRY

If you're an aircraft modeler, you probably have a small collection of pilot and aircrew figures in your spares box. Adding figures to your models adds an immediate sense of scale and helps establish a convincing scene.

Rafe Morrissey painted this realistic 1/48 scale Monogram pilot figure using a simple step-by-step technique. After priming the figure, Rafe used a basecoat of Testor Model Master tan to color the areas of exposed skin, then used military brown and radome tan to add the shadows and highlights. Rafe used a strong workbench light to keep track of where the highlights and shadows should appear. When he was satisfied with the fleshtones, Rafe used a similar additive painting process to color the figure's uniform using Vallejo acrylics.



5

WORKING WITH CLEAR PARTS

Masking clear parts can be tricky. Clear styrene is especially brittle and can crack if it's not handled properly. Before you mask large clear parts (like this greenhouse canopy), fill them with Silly Putty. The putty will support and strengthen the parts to help minimize the chance of damage. Also, it won't leave any residue on the parts like modeling clay and can be used again and again.



6

DECANTING SPRAY PAINT

Have you ever wanted to remove paint from a spray can to do touch-up work? Find an old spray-can nozzle and drill out the tip until you can insert a short length of small-diameter aluminum tubing. The tubing should fit snugly inside; when you're satisfied with its fit, secure it with a fillet of gap-filling super glue or epoxy.

An empty airbrush bottle makes a great receptacle for the paint. Cover the bottle opening with masking tape, then poke a hole into it for the aluminum tubing to pass through. Before you transfer the paint, shake the spray-paint can as you normally would before painting. When the paint's thoroughly mixed, insert the tubing into the bottle and spray until you have the amount of paint you need. The freshly decanted paint will have propellant dissolved in it, cap the bottle loosely overnight so the propellant can "gas out" before you use the paint.





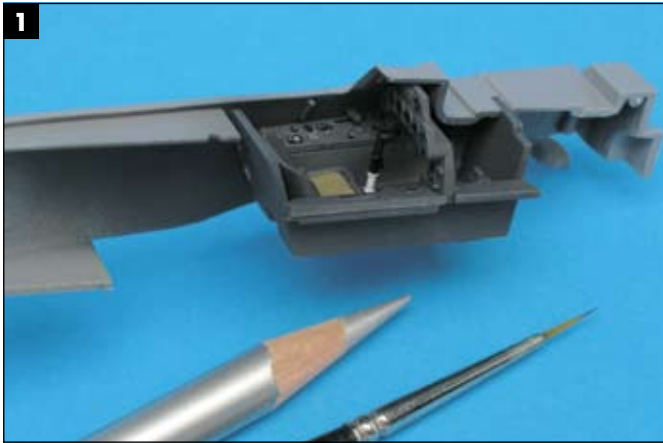
A complex camouflage scheme doesn't always require a high-end airbrush. Matthew Usher applied this eye-catching scheme to his Fw 190 using a simple single-action Badger 350.

Easy airbrush camouflage

Simplify complex patterns with “soft masks”

By Matthew Usher

I love Luftwaffe aircraft, but as a modeler, they drive me crazy – the machines are interesting and great to model, but most of them have horribly complicated, seemingly impossible-to-airbrush camouflage schemes. More often than not, I find myself taking the easy way out and applying the simplest (and usually the most-boring) scheme to whatever I've picked to build.



1 Assembly started with the pilot's office. Since Matthew planned on modeling his 190 with a closed cockpit, he didn't add any extra parts, but instead concentrated on highlighting the kit's great out-of-the-box detail. A fine-point paintbrush and a silver art pencil helped pick out the dials and switches.



2 The kit fits together nicely. A little gap-filling super glue and some fine-grit sanding took care of all the fuselage seams.



3 Not much of the 190's BMW 14-cylinder radial engine is visible inside the fuselage – a large cooling fan covers most of the opening. Matthew airbrushed the engine flat black then dry-brushed it with Floquil old silver enamel (No. 110100) to highlight the cooling-fin detail.



4 A lot of paint was going to go onto the fuselage, so Matthew masked the canopy with chrome Bare-Metal Foil. Working a pane at a time, he added a piece slightly larger than needed and buffed it with a clean cotton swab.



5 Trimming foil can be tricky. Matthew installed a brand-new No. 11 blade in his hobby knife, then blackened the blade with a permanent marker. The black finish cuts down on the reflections between the highly polished blade and foil and makes it easier to follow the line of the canopy framework during the trimming.

When I bought Tamiya's 1/48 scale Focke-Wulf Fw 190F-8 (No. 61039) I started to rethink things. The kit includes markings for a 190 stationed in Italy in 1944; its unusual tropical scheme was field-applied over the aircraft's factory finish. The upper-fuselage markings were completely painted out, and what markings remained were covered with bits of overspray. I was hooked. I knew I had to model that scheme, but how would I apply it?

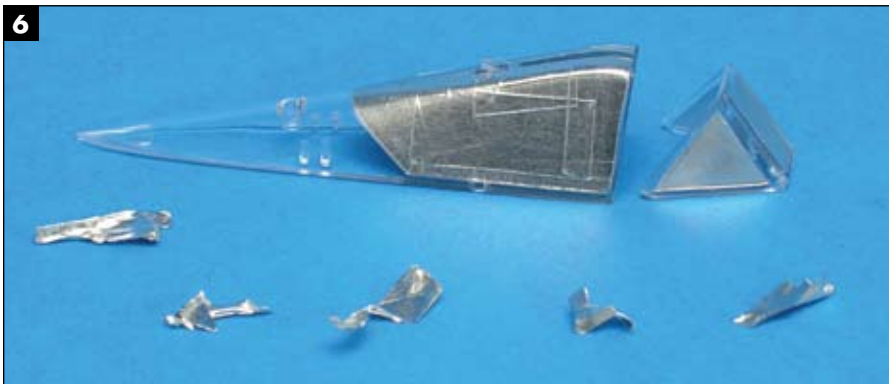
As I plotted my plan of attack, I wondered if I could take things one step further – could I apply a complicated finish without breaking out one of my tricky-to-clean double-action air-brushes? The challenge was worth the effort.

I have a soft spot for Badger's 350 airbrush. Decades ago, it

was one of my first serious modeling tools. It was the airbrush I learned to paint with, and with it my models stopped looking like spray-painted toys and started looking like realistically finished miniatures. Even though I've graduated to more expensive air-brushes since then, I've always kept a 350 ready to go in my toolbox.

I thought combining the 190 and the 350 would be a fun challenge, and I'd have the opportunity to dust off another one of my favorite painting tools, soft masks. Soft masking enables you to apply complicated schemes with simple tools – it's an easy-to-learn technique that produces striking results. Follow along as I give my "butcher bird" a cool camouflage pattern without making things so complicated it spoils all the fun.

6



Matthew masked the entire canopy, installed the headrest, then added the parts to the fuselage with Microscale Micro Kristal Klear.

Right: Matthew planned to use Testor Model Master enamels for his 190's finish. Many of the Model Master Luftwaffe colors have a scale semi-gloss finish. To give the paints a dead-flat finish, Matthew thinned them with Ronsonol lighter fluid for airbrushing, using the same mixing ratios he uses for standard paint thinner.

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A "soft mask" cut from an index card will narrow the airbrush's spray pattern and still provide a soft edge for the camouflage pattern. Matthew cut a roughly circular hole in one end of a card with a hobby knife.

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Holding the card about $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the surface of the model, Matthew applied a quick burst of the camouflage color, RLM 80 olivgrun (Testor Model Master No. 2089).

14



Even up close, the pattern looks like it was painted with an ultra-precise airbrush. A little green overspray ended up where it shouldn't have, so when the green paint was dry, Matthew cut a fresh soft-mask card, filled the airbrush with sandgelb paint, and went back and "erased" the overspray.

15



After a couple days of drying time, Matthew masked the model and applied the underside color, RLM 78 hellblau (Testor Model Master No. 2087). A hard line separates it and the upper-fuselage camouflage. When the hellblau was dry he masked and painted the wheel wells gray.



Matthew first gave the entire fuselage a coat of RLM 79 sandgelb (Testor Model Master No. 2088). It's the base color for the camouflage pattern, and the overall coat works nicely as a primer coat to point out imperfections.



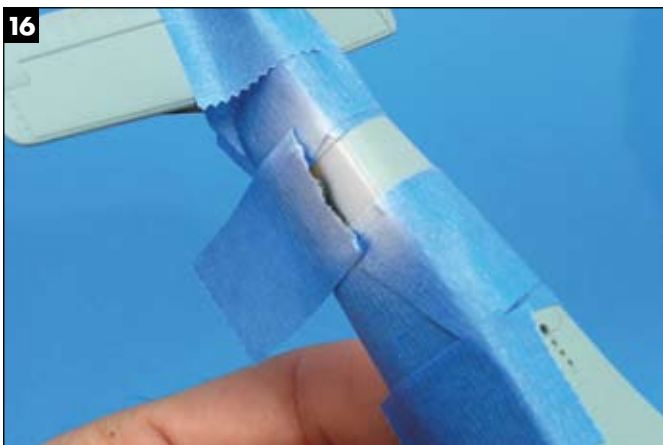
Fitted with a medium tip, the Badger 350 produces a spray pattern that's too big for fine camouflage work. There's a way around that, though.



Despite the large burst of paint, only a small spot makes it way onto the model's wing through the hole in the card. By working slowly and applying the pattern a spot at a time, Matthew was able to apply the pattern precisely.



Overlapping the spots produced larger shapes and patterns. Starting at the left wingtip, Matthew applied the pattern a spot at a time as he worked toward the fuselage. When a soft-mask card soaked up too much paint, he discarded it and cut a new one. Note that he let the pattern overlap onto the canopy and around the lower edge of the fuselage.



A decal is provided for the white ID band on the tail, but Matthew decided it would be easier to apply with paint. He masked the band's vertical edges with tightly applied masking tape, but for the upper edge, he tore a larger piece of tape and didn't stick it all the way down.



The hard and soft edges of the tape produce an ID band that looks like it's been partially covered by the tan-and-green camouflage pattern.



With the model painted, Matthew moved on to the decals. After applying a coat of Future floor polish to the model, Matthew applied the kit decals using a little Microscale Micro Set to tighten them down.



Most of the upper fuselage markings were obscured by the field-applied camouflage pattern, but the balkenkreuz and number on the fuselage side weren't totally covered.



After the decals dried, Matthew gave the model an overall coat of Testor flat clear lacquer (No. 2015). When it cured, he broke out the green paint and soft-mask cards again and blended the edges of the decals into the camouflage scheme. This gives the scheme a field-applied look – as if a hasty groundcrewman got a little overspray onto the factory-applied markings. Remember, when you're painting a potential target, you tend to work quickly!

A little silver paint simulated chipped paint along the 190's panel lines, and some pastel powder made realistic-looking exhaust stains. The finished model's unusual field-applied scheme really makes it stand out in Matthew's collection of World War II fighters.



Fw 190F-8: The ground-attack "butcher bird"

In the early stages of World War II, the Ju 87 Stuka was one of Germany's best weapons. Especially effective in the air-to-ground support role, it was perfect for Germany's blitzkrieg across Europe.

The Stuka's days were numbered, though. As the war rolled on, the aircraft's lack of speed and maneuverability made it an easy target. Focke-Wulf's Fw 190, one of the Luftwaffe's best fighters, made an ideal replacement thanks to its tough construction and versatility. It went into ground-attack service as the Fw 190F in 1943. The aircraft was based on the airframe of the Fw 190A and was fitted with extra armor protection. The outboard 20mm cannons were removed and underwing weapons racks were installed. The Fw 190F-8 (modeled here) started rolling off assembly lines in 1944 and was the most widely produced Fw 190 of the "F" series.

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