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## MMP Powders In Review

By Daryl "D" Dancik

In the world of scale modeling we modelers are always aspiring to create a more natural, realistic look for our little metal, styrene and resin works of art. Armour modelers in particular are constantly looking for ways to replicate the myriad of elements that cause an AFV to be “weathered” and “battle worn”. We like to leave the pristine, factory-fresh finish to those pretty boy airplane builders and create something that looks like it’s been through the tough battles of Stalingrad, the frigid Ardennes and the vast expanses of Afrika all in one day! Recent trends in the hobby tend to shy away from the heavy drybrushing and washing techniques giving way to more subtle means such as airbrush shading and the use of powders and pastels. I was asked to do a simple, honest review of these exciting new powders and to give a brief description of how I use them on my models. I will attempt to show the versatility of this new product and a few examples of how they can be used to make a beautiful, weathered finish on any type of model.



MMP powders are manufactured to a much finer consistency than ordinary chalks or pastels enabling them to be used in a variety of weathering techniques. They come in a wide range of colors and shades to suit just about any specific need from rusting to the “toning down” of that complicated “ambush” scheme. Each plastic bottle contains enough powder for many models, depending on the respective technique used. They are offered individually or can be purchased as a set and are rather inexpensive.

To me, the real fun of armor modeling is the painting and finishing. After the grunt work of adding the photo-etch, metal tracks, resin upgrades and other items associated with AMS (Advanced Modelers Syndrome), it's time to get to work on the painting and weathering. I have never been a huge fan of gaudy dry brushing, it has some uses but overall I believe it makes a plastic model look like a plastic model, not like a scale miniature of the real thing. Look closely at any real AFV or airplane and the edges are not ten shades lighter than the base color! I still prefer to use oil washes and delicate airbrush shading as my primary methods of weathering, but products like MMP powders are increasingly appealing for their extremely flat finish and subtle shading effects, along with ease of use.



I basically use MMP powders as my final weathering step after the washing and airbrushing. I have found them to be very easy to work with, however you want to use a quality mask and have adequate ventilation when working with them, as the fine dust can be harmful to the lungs. I am sure there are many different ways to use them besides what I will describe, but I can only speak for the techniques that I personally use.

The first technique I use MMP powders for is track weathering. If I want a rusty, worn-in set of tracks, I will first paint them a flat dark brown color, then drybrush (yes I still use drybrushing occasionally!) the tread part with a dull aluminum color. I then mix MMP light rust together with some acrylic rust paint and water in a small mixing jar. The consistency should be somewhat grainy and on the thicker side. With a firm brush simply apply the pasty mix into every corner of the tracks, covering the entire length on both sides. One advantage of having multiple powder colors is they can be mixed to achieve any variation you like. If a faster drying time is wanted, mix the powders with rubbing alcohol, which evaporates much quicker than good 'ol H2O. After the mix has completely dried, use a soft towel, or in my case my fingers, to rub away the powders from the high areas, leaving the rusty mix to settle into all the corners and low points, giving the impression of highly weathered and worn battle tracks.

**An example of this technique is my late war Henschel Jagdtiger...**



When I'm looking for a muddy finish, I use a concoction of white glue and some model railroad scale stones and grass to create my mud mix. The MMP powders can be used as a tint or even for the mud itself if desired. After the mix has dried I apply MMP powders directly onto the chassis making sure there is an even application. I vary the colors a bit to give the impression of depth and scale.

**A good example of this is my early Tiger I and Kursk Ferdinand...**



I have also used MMP powders to create a sandy, dusty finish like those found in the deserts of Afrika. This is achieved by mixing some light sand with water and applying the mix to the entire vehicle or chassis. After sufficient drying, carefully wipe away the excess from the high points leaving the very flat sandy color to again rest in the corners and crevasses, much like an oil or enamel wash. If done correctly this can be a highly realistic weathering technique that some modeler's prefer over oil washes. Be sure to practice this method on your designated 'test prototype' vehicle before applying to the model you're working on.

**My DAK Panzer IV F-1 looks like it has been in the desert....**



MMP powders can be used much like regular pastels to achieve subtle variations of base colors. This technique has been around forever and is in my opinion one of the tougher tricks to master. I applied mixes of earth browns and grays to achieve a highly weathered winter finish on this Marder III...



**I also used variations of MMP camo green and rust on this early Jagdpanther...**



Other uses for MMP powders include mixing them with Cast a Coat surface simulator to give some color to the nice textured finish found on many WW2 AFV's.

**A good example of a cast-metal texture is this winter JS-2....**



So overall I give MMP powders a big thumbs-up. I believe they are superior to regular pastels, easy to work with and relatively inexpensive. I do not use them as my exclusive weathering tool, but in combination with other techniques. As stated before I'm sure there are other uses for them besides what I have described, these are simply examples of how I have used them in my weathering process. MMP powders and new-age products like them represent yet another tool for those of us always looking for a more realistic finish to our models.

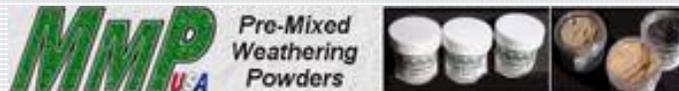
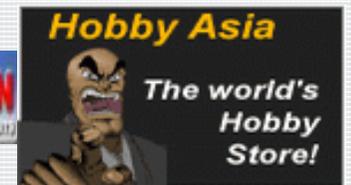
-- Daryl Dancik



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