



**MIKE ASHEY PRODUCTIONS
PRESENTS**

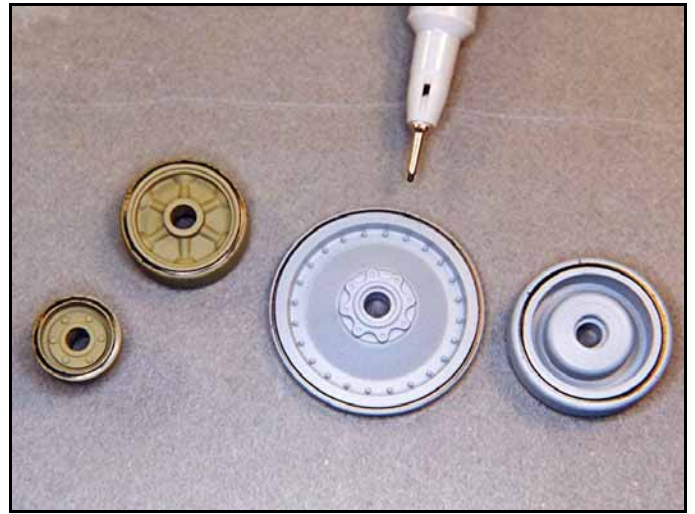
**TIPS ON DETAILING ROAD WHEELS AND TIRES
BY
MIKE ASHEY**

Painting the rubber areas of armored vehicle road wheels has always been a challenge because the surface area on the face of the wheels is so small. All kits have tiny raised lines to define the rubber portions of the wheels and some kits have more pronounced lines than others. To paint the rubber areas I use drafting pens which come with tiny tip sizes ranging from .1mm to .5mm and Sharpie pens and markers all of which use black indelible ink. The ink will stick well to flat colored paints and the tiny tips of the drafting pens will give you sharp demarcation lines between the metal and rubber. To color the rims of metal road wheels, Sharpie makes a silver colored ink pen which works great! To even out the color and hide any ink streaks give the road wheels a coat of Testors clear dullcoat.

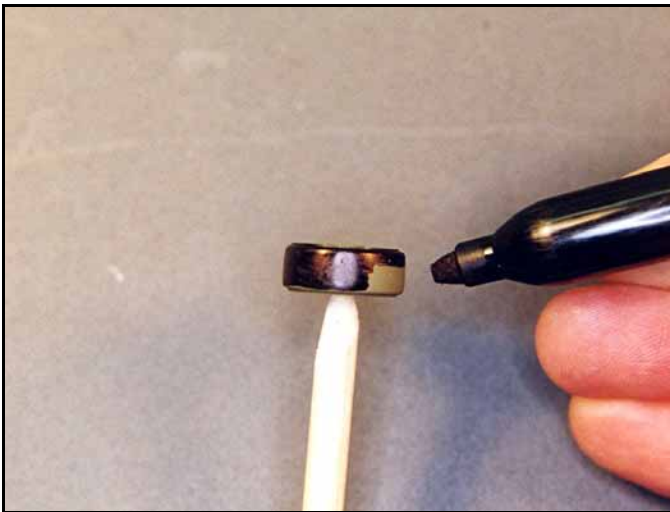
Painting tires and rims can also be a challenge, but with some basic masking techniques and good paint mixing and airbrushing technique you can achieve excellent results. Sharp lines between the steel rims and rubber tires makes a model look very realistic.



After cleaning up the tree attachment stubs, scrape off any mold lines on the surface of the of the road wheels. Lightly sand the surface with a sanding stick to smooth out the plastic and then polish it with 0000 steel wool.



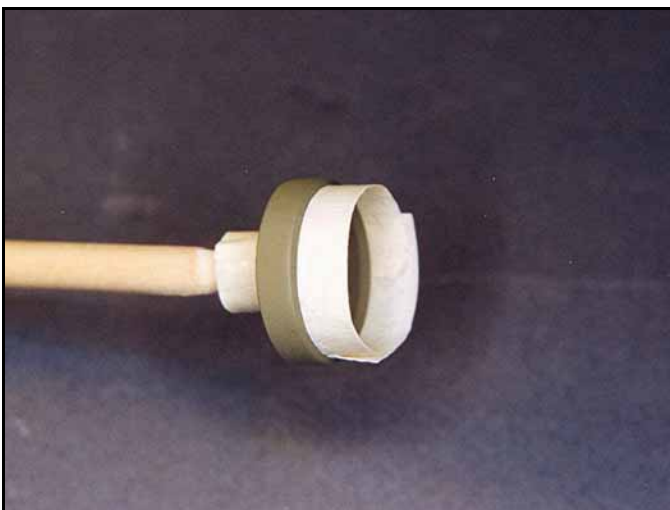
For road wheels that have rubber surfaces, the parts always have a tiny raised line on the surface to define the rubber area. Use this raised edge as a guide for the tip of a drafting pen. Use wider tips to color in the remaining areas.



Once both outer sides are colored use a large tip marker to color the wheels surface. It will take several coats to completely cover the area and it will appear to be streaky.



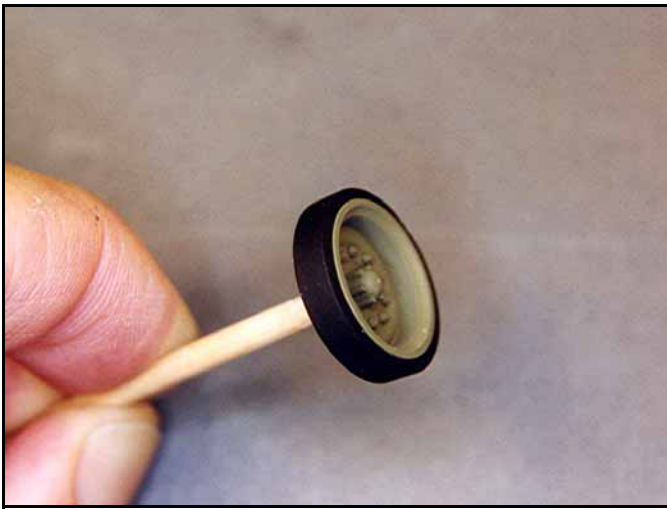
The next step is to give the road wheels a coat of Testors clear dullcoat. This will dull the color and the streaks will disappear.



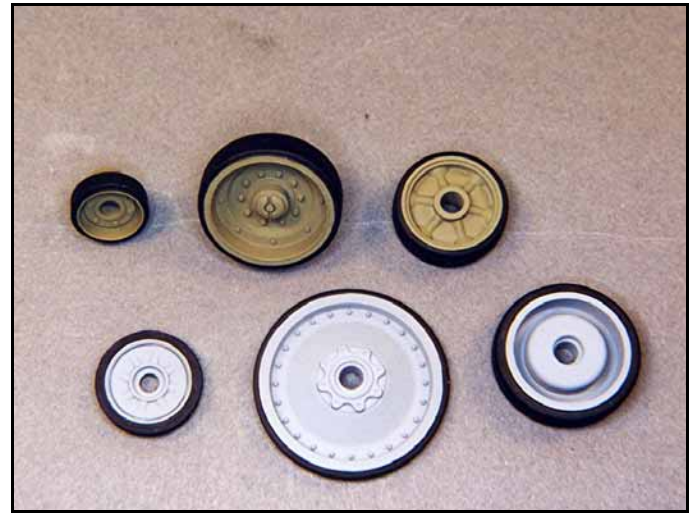
Some kits have raised lines to define the rubber areas that are high enough to attach masking tape to. Cut strips of masking tape using a sharp blade and carefully apply the strips around the raised area.



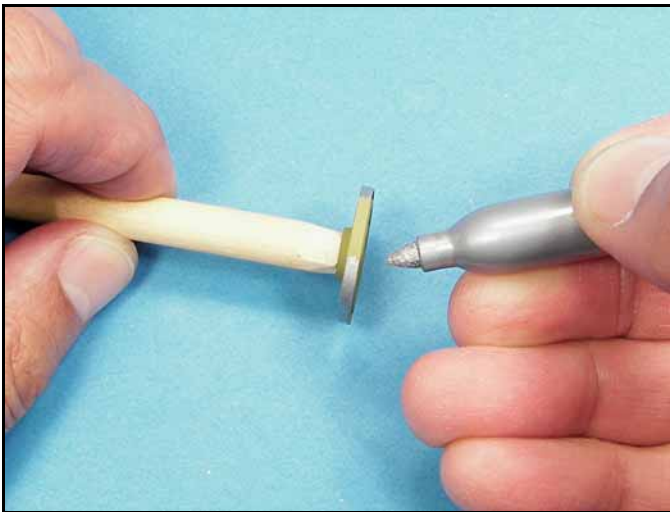
The flat black color was slightly lightened with some flat white so that the rubber color will appear faded. After the tape was applied I used the tip of a round toothpick to press the tape against the raised surface.



To achieve sharp demarcation lines between colors be sure to use a sharp number 11 blade when cutting the masking tape. Careful application of the tape also makes a difference.



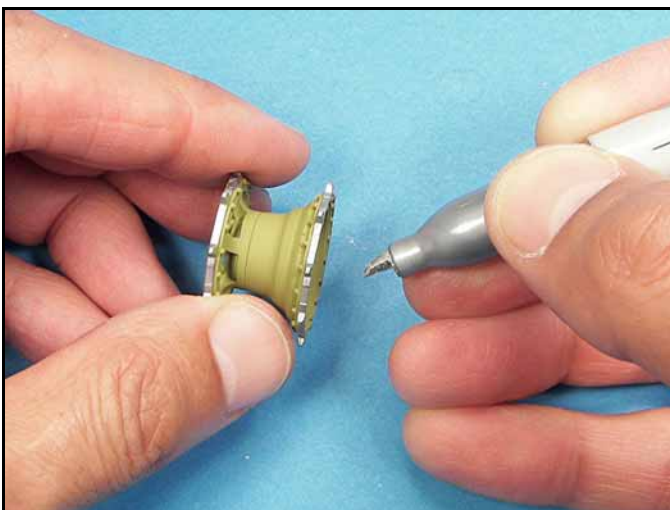
The top center road wheel was masked and airbrushed. The others were inked with various drafting pen tip sizes and wide markers. The pen ink will stick well to flat paint and Testors clear dullcoat evens out the inked colors.



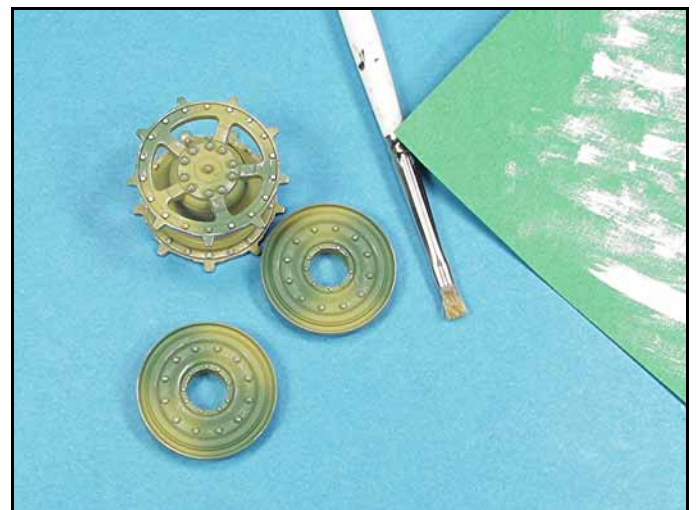
For road wheels that are steel use a silver sharpie to color the surfaces. Several coats will do the trick and be sure to let each coat dry.



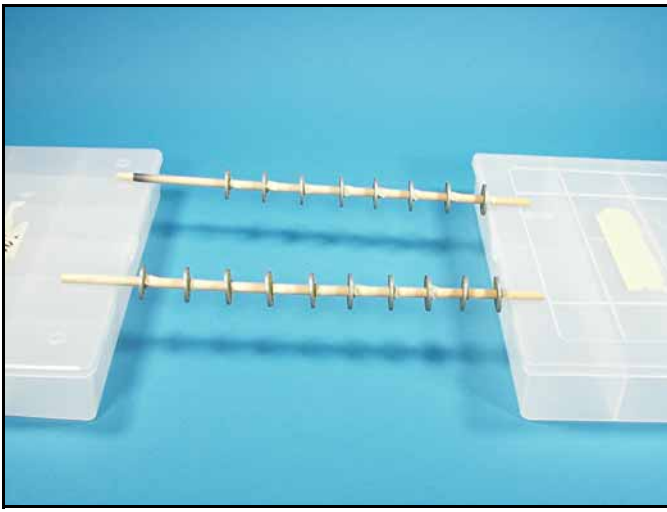
To smooth out the color slightly rub the inked surfaces with 0000 steel wool.



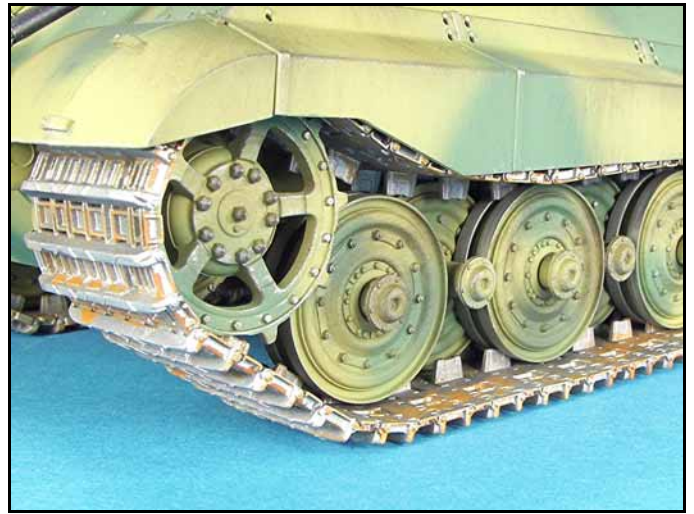
A silver sharpie also works great to color the surfaces of the drive sprockets where the paint gets worn off. I flattened one side of the felt tip by cutting off half the felt to prevent ink from getting onto the sides of the sprocket.



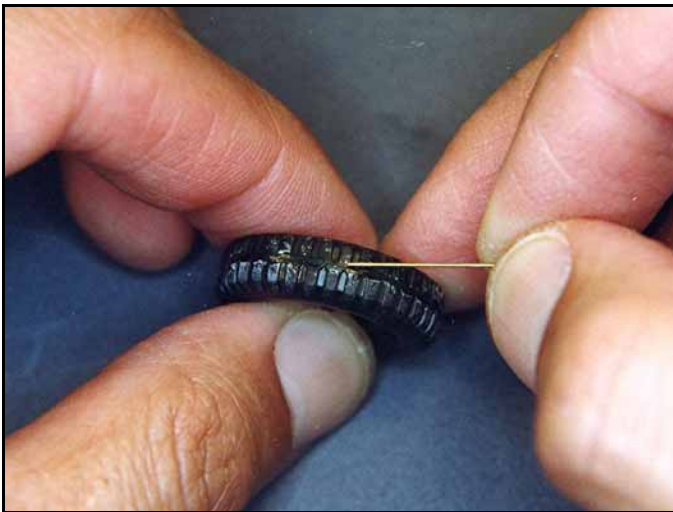
Drybrushing the surfaces of the road wheels with Testors silver will enhance their appearance. Always remember that subtle effects are better so don't overdue the drybrushing.



To airbrush Testors dullcoat on all the road wheels, I slide the wheels onto a wood dowel and use small pieces of masking tape to hold them in place.



The road wheels on this King Tiger tank look pretty good thanks to a silver sharpie marker!



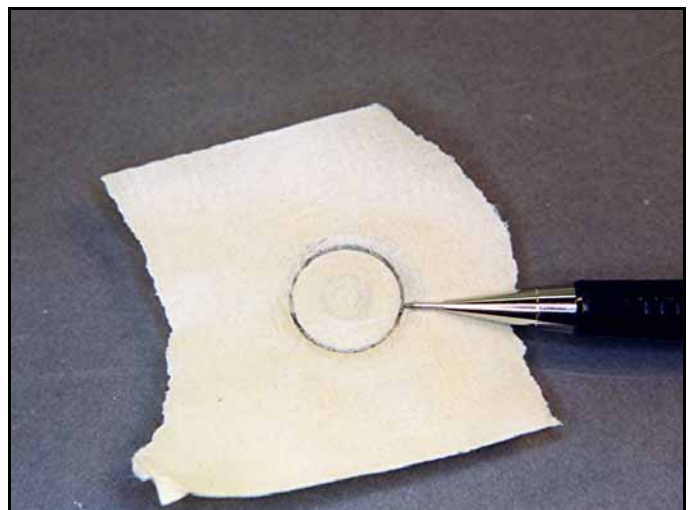
To glue plastic tires flatten out the surfaces by running the parts across sandpaper. Line up the tread and then run a bead of super glue along the seam line. The capillary action of the super glue will pull it into the seam and also fill it.



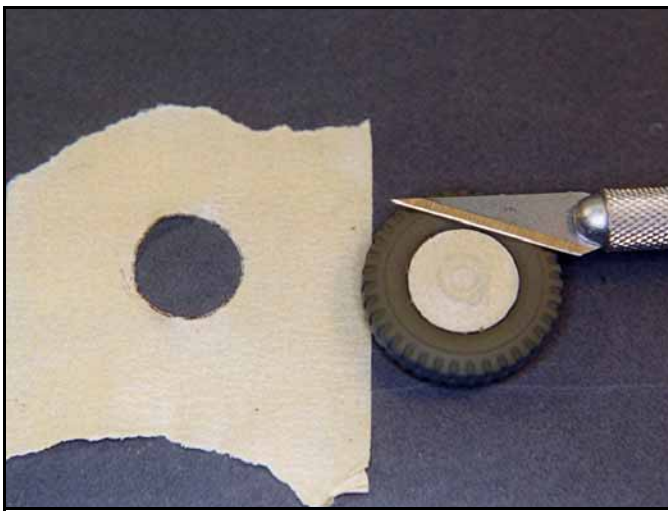
Once the glue is dried carefully scrape the surface of the seam to remove any excess super glue.



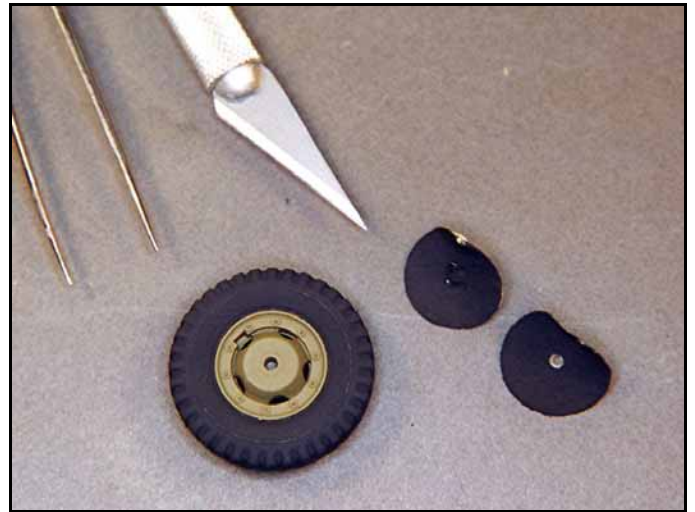
Next carefully smooth out the seam line by wet sanding using water proof sandpaper.



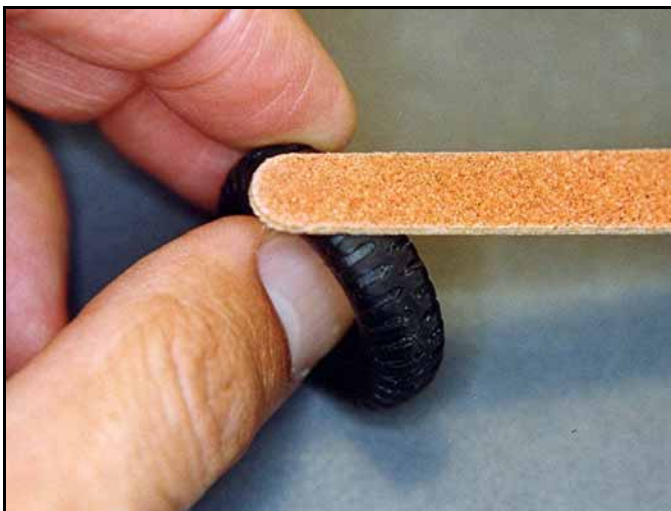
Prime the part and then paint the rim color first. Cover the surface of the tire with masking tape and outline the raised plastic demarcation line between the rim and the tire with a pencil.



Cut out the masking tape along the pencil line with the tip of a sharp number 11 X-Acto blade. Use the tip of a round toothpick to press down the masking tape along the raised rim which defines the rim and the tire.



The tire was painted with flat black with a few drops of flat white added to lighten up the color just a tiny bit.



The mold lines on vinyl flexible tires can be a challenge to remove. I put the tires in the freezer and then sand off the mold line with a coarse sanding stick.



These vinyl tires will look much better once they have received a coat of Testors clear dullcoat. The clear flat paint will remove the shine and even out the color.



The wheels on this kit were one piece resin castings. The sharp demarcation lines were achieved with masking tape, good paint mixing, and good airbrush technique. You can see more pictures of this model on the gallery web page.



Another good example of fine demarcation lines between light and dark colors. Good masking technique makes the job easy and the results impressive! You can see more pictures of this model on the gallery web page.