

## Airbrush Weathering: Fading The Base Color

by Mike Petty

Before you get out your paint brushes, there is an effective technique to start the weathering process while you are airbrushing the model with its first color coat. It's a fairly common technique and is commonly called applying a "cloud pattern."

The basic concept is to spray lighter shades of the base color in cloud shapes over the centers of the flat panels on the model surface. This establishes a contrast from dark to light and acts to simulate depth.

Mike always washes his model with soapy hot water before applying paint. The wash removes oils from handling. He does not prime the surface, but goes straight to the color, because every paint layer acts in some way to obscure surface detail.

During the demo Mike painted a Sherman hull. He used Tamiya Olive Drab as the base, and then mixed in Dark Yel-



low to the Olive Drab and sprayed this color onto the flat panels. The natural plate joints and recesses were left in straight Olive Drab.

One note Mike mentioned was that the cloud pattern tends to darken a bit when fully cured, so you may want to punch up the color a bit to compensate.

After this stage, markings should be applied. Mike does not use Future, as he believes it to be a "dust magnet." Instead he uses Polly Scale

Clear Gloss. Once the markings are cured, a sealer of flat follows.

Note in this photo how the panel lines are defined despite no dark washes in use. The logical next steps in this process are to apply a dark wash that darkens the panel joints and/or a light earth wash to simulate dust buildup.

Drybrushing a lighter complimentary color to the base color will bring out the full contrast between the dark recesses and lighter highlights.

If you have a German Panzer Grey model, use lighter shades of grey for your fading. Sand colored models can be faded with Tamiya Buff.

