



Customizing Tips

by: Therron Thomas

Tools

Lots of paints

200 grit sandpaper

Brass Rod and a Drill bit that matches the same size 3/16 suggested

Kneadtight 2-part epoxy ribbon
<http://www.polymeric.com/kneadatechs.htm>

Several brushes from 000 to ?

Bel-Decal Sheets

Super Glue

A two arm clamp "HELPING HANDS"

Exacto knife

Spray Primer

Sculpy Putty

Decal Setting Solutions

A great imagination and some good pictures.

Parts

You can take off any of the moving parts. You can also disassemble the helmet. Both are helpful. The moving parts usually break so they need to be glued and or pinned back.

Pinning is a way to insure they don't come back off. You just drill a little hole in each part and use a pin (needle or small brass rod) to reinforce the parts. (see Chrebet modifications below)

I also shaved off the bulb of the part that hold the head and arms that holds them together. You'll see what I mean when you take them apart. That way they just slide back together as opposed to popping back together.

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Paint

I use brake cleaner to clean the mold-release off of the figure and then dish detergent water to clean the brake cleaner residue off. Sounds lengthy but it will get all the stuff off. I then use Krylon White Primer or Ultra-Black spray paint to prime depending on if I want to do light or dark.

Don't use Testors. All I use are the cheap acrylic paints from Wal-Mart craft section. The PLAID brand are great. \$.44 each is a great bargain and they are chemically not very different from the expensive Citadel brand Wargaming miniature paints that run \$4.00 a bottle. I bought a paint rack at Michaels Art Store and now I have about 100 different colors on hand. A couple each visit to Wal Mart and you will never notice the cost. Took me about four months and I had a huge collection. If all you do are football, you wouldn't need nearly as many. Also, I refuse to mix paint because you never know when you will need more of the same shade. Use pure colors.

Use Testors Dul-Coat spray on almost complete figure. I keep the head off until it is almost done. Spray Testors Gloss-Coat on the helmet while the chin strap and facemask are still off and the players face is masked a little with some paper. Dul-Coat the figure and then reassemble the head and put it on.



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Painting Stripes

I use an overlapping technique. I paint one line at a time, then overlap it when the next one as I go. I start out with my arm, painting the middle stripe wider than I intend it to be.



I follow by painting the next line (it's white, sorry it's hard to see) so that it overlaps the gray, framing and sizing the gray the way I want it.



Next, I paint in my next color, overlapping the white I would like covered as shown.



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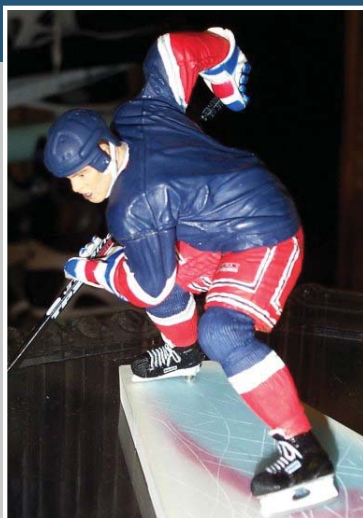


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Painting Stripes

Finally I paint in the blue to frame in the last white line. After I have defined the borders, I put a second coat of paint over the red and blue. The finished product gives me a new york rangers arm. I apply this technique throughout the whole figure, and this is what I end up with this.



The only comment that I would add is that - whenever possible work from light to dark

Mark Messier: New York Rangers

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Care of Brushes

Ugly, dirty , unkempt brushes? Only things I can say are these:

Don't EVER leave your brushes standing in the water or thinner.

Clean them each time you change colors are brushes.

Don't saturate the brush with color from tip to stem.

To clean your brushes, simply slosh them around in the water and grab the bristles with a paper towel and pull away from the stem. Don't twist the bristles. Get some brush soap (Made by PLAID or any other paint co.) and clean your brushes Just get the soap on your brush and paint a rough surface like a DISH BRUSH or TOOTHBRUSH. Then clean it off like you do after each paint change. Make yourself a paint brush stand by using an old plastic peanut-butter jar. Just drill holes of various sizes in the lid, screw it on and put your brushes in it bristles up.

Helmets

As far as the face mask and chin strap goes I will try to explain it like this.

Use an exacto knife. Lay the knife flat on the helmet so the blade edge is going to slide under the mask. Just imagine if you were to cover the ear hole with the blade and then slide the blade under the mask. Pry up a little at a time until the mask starts to break free. If you are lucky it will and the pegs will remain. If not just saw the pegs off as you work the knife under. Up top is a little harder. Same style but very seldom will you get the mask to pop off. I have to pry / saw almost all the time. By the way, this is the same method I use on chinstraps. Start at the end farthest from the face and saw / pry inward always making sure the knife edge is as perfect as you can get it so you don't scrape the helmet and don't cut the strap. You will usually have to glue them back on. That's okay though because you can usually get them straighter than they come new.

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Chinstraps

I use super glue to put everything back together. The strap is just very easy to cut in two when removing it. Also be careful when gluing it back as the super glue can sort of melt the paint.

Bottom line: USE VERY LITTLE GLUE. Unless you plan on playing with the figures then go ahead and glob it on.

Pinning

To get the best results do this. Look at the foot and decide the angle you wish the figure to be. Here's a hint, there is only one angle possible unless you work some serious magic!

Get yourself a couple of drywall screws. The smaller the better. You should be able to get them about 3/4 inch long buy 1/8 inch thick. I use two sizes of brass tubing, 1/16 and 3/32 I think. Get whatever you need and also buy a good all purpose drill bit that matches the size to drill your holes.

I use two sizes because the thicker stuff is obviously more sturdy but can also be hard to hide in certain joints.

I get both at a local hobby store but some hardware stores carry it too. Position the figure on the base and mark where each toe will be (use a black marker). Drill a 1/8 (or whatever size screw hole through the base on each mark.

Here's the tricky part. DON'T DRINK ANY COFFEE BEFORE YOU DO THIS!!

Drill a hole into each toe with a bit slightly smaller than the screw (you need it to be tight but not split the foot). Make sure to drill this hole deep enough for the screw and make sure you drill straight up the foot.

See diagram on the next page.

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Pinning Diagram



Drill the hole straight up like this

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Imagine you have this hankering to make a custom of Sweetness but all you have is a George figure that the peg broke off of.

No problem. Just grab a saw and start cutting. Start with the knees.



Pinning
Walk-through

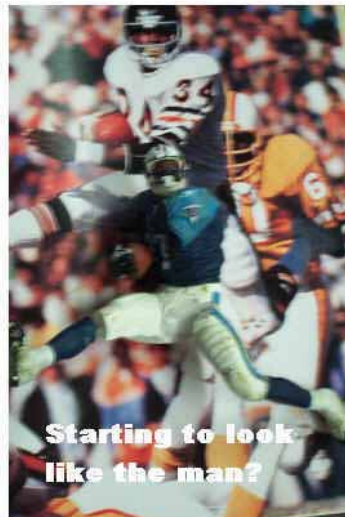


This is where all that crap you learned in anatomy 101 comes in handy. Adjust the knee areas and cut the thigh at the logical hidge point. Lose ya yet?

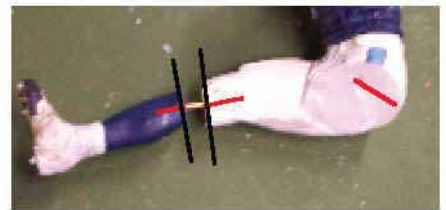


Pinning

Get some small brass wire/rod and drill out holes were the bones would be.



Starting to look like the man?



Piece together the parts with rod and super glue.

Make sure to leave space where you have cut away some of the fig as you will have to fill this back in with putty. (To be covered in another sheet) and sculpt it to look like the missing area.

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Ankle/Arm Wrapping

The Teflon tape that is used to wrap pipe threads is the PERFECT stuff to use to simulate taping of arms/hand/ankles, etc. It is flexible, thin, sticks to itself, and (in my opinion) is perfect. I just wrapped it on, over-sprayed it with clear dullcoat and it is permanently on!!

Here is a couple of photos of what I'm talking about.



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