

MUD & SPLASHES



New Hyper-Realistic MUD

Mud is one of the weathering effects modelers strive hardest to get right. For many years, lots of home-made recipes and impossible concoctions have been tried. Finally, some model brands launched ready to use acrylic mud products; but the texture was not great and not very realistic. These products, a simple mix of acrylic resin and grounded pumice stone, have been used to create textured surfaces in arts & crafts for many years but are certainly not suitable to use in advanced modeling techniques no matter how good the mud color is. In the year 2002 we began studying this problem in search of a solution, searching for a product and an application method that rendered a realistic mud effect. And it wasn't exactly easy, as various acrylic mud formulations didn't work, it became necessary to develop a new product from the ground up. Finally, and after two years of trials and testing, AMMO has developed the ultimate mud product with not just a realistic

and varied range of colors, but also with many different micro-textures and a great deal of flexibility in the application method. The long drying time allows for touch-ups, corrections, or removal without risking irreparable mistakes. Hyper Realistic Mud dries rock hard and sticks firmly to the surface. Only with a product like this is it possible to make wet-on-wet mixes, just like it happens with mud in reality. The previously available acrylic products dry too quickly, so it is not possible to make corrections at this critical step of the painting process. Below I'll explain how to use Mud straight from the jar, and how to make mud splashes as well as thicker mud textures. These ideas will be put to use on a model to show the different possibilities including combining these products with natural materials. From this moment on, realistic mud effects will be simple, diverse, and within reach of any modeler.

By Sergio Fenoy and Mig Jimenez

Differences between Heavy Mud and Splashes

AMMO has developed two very different but complimentary products. The reference HEAVY MUD is very dense and is intended to create thick accumulations of mud, both fresh and dry. Keep in mind that it doesn't have a rougher texture, but a thicker consistency, so we can obtain fine and thick textures with the same product depending on the application method and tools used. It can also be used to agglutinate different materials like sand, soil, small stones or static grass.

On the other hand, the reference SPLASHES, is better suited as its name implies to depict mud splashes and splatters. This product is much thinner, which allows a more precise application for an extremely realistic finish on

our models. Diluted, it can be used as a wash on horizontal surfaces as well, creating consistent and realistic effects. Both products have a very fine texture that gives the ultimate realistic touch in any scale. Because they are enamel-based, they can be mixed and cleaned with our Enamel Thinner. An extremely important feature of these products is that the color's shade will not alter as they dry, that means the color you see in the jar will be the color on your model. Because moisture content is a critical aspect of real mud, we have created matt, satin, and gloss to better represent the different aspects of mud in all the possible conditions.

HEAVY MUD



MAIN USES

- It's intended to represent large mud deposits on the running gear and the undersides of the vehicle.
- It can also be used to add a fresh sludge effect to a road or terrain.
- It can be mixed with various natural elements, as sand and small stones and roots, as well as static grass and other vegetation products to create larger more varied accumulations.
- It can also be combined with SPLASHES to make various mud textures attached to vehicles sides.

Below there is a detailed step-by-step article explaining how to use the product straight out of the jar, without adding additional textures. The final result is a good example of the many varied finishes that can be achieved with the MUD product.

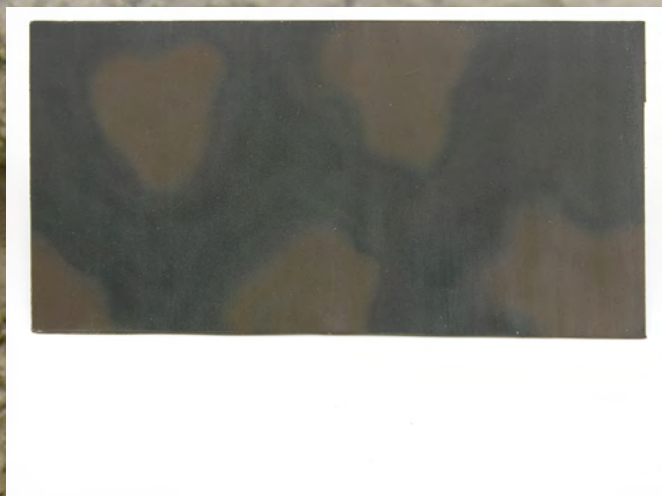
MEDIUM DENSITY MUD SPLASHES



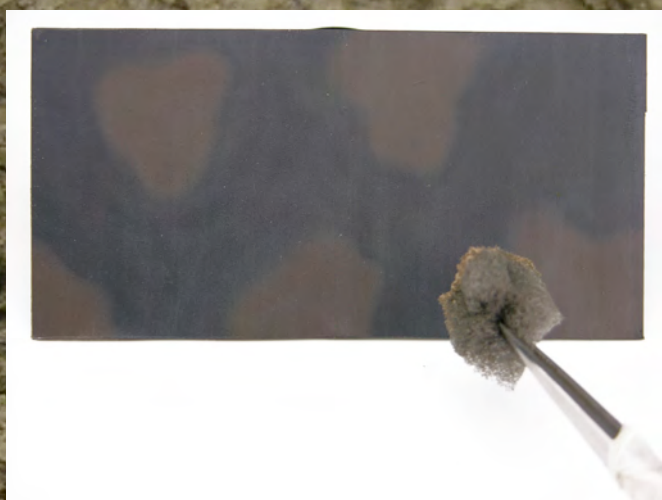
MAIN USES

- It's perfect to create fresh mud splatters in the sides and lower areas of the model using a brush or toothbrush.
- It can be diluted with enamel thinners to apply small deposits of earth and dust on the horizontal surfaces.
- Use it also to apply precise accumulations around details, blending the edges with thinner for a soft, natural effect.
- It can be employed in dioramas and bases to add small dust and mud touches on buildings, roads, utility poles, and fences creating realistic environments.

Next, we give a detailed explanation of how to use this reference straight out of the bottle, with no extra textures added. The final result is one example of the many different effects that can be achieved with the SPLASHES product.



- 1 First we paint the model with an acrylic base color over a primer coat. Remember that a light colored mud works best over darker colors.



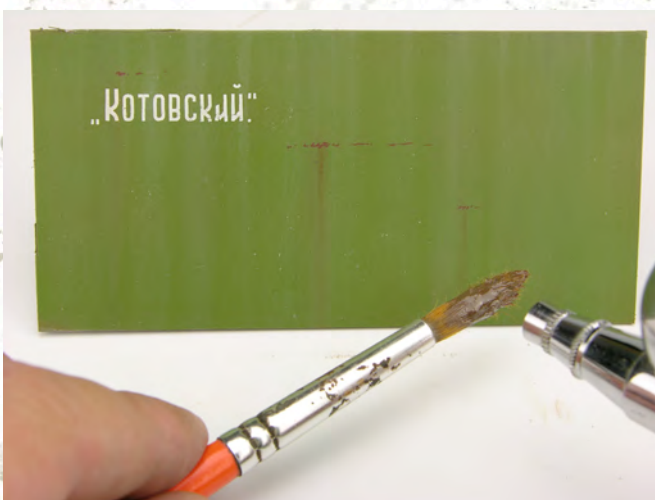
- 2 Mud is applied in the first place with a piece of packing foam or sponge dipped in MUD product.



- 3 It is lightly stippled over the surface several times to create a rough texture. Try using different foams to create a variety of textures.



- 1 First we paint the model with an acrylic base color over a primer coat. Remember that a light colored mud works best over darker colors.



- 2 A paint brush is dipped in SPLASHES product, and then air is blown over it with an airbrush.



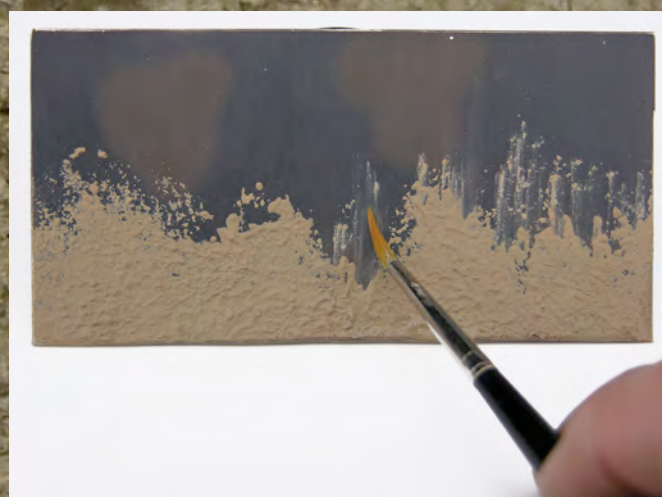
- 3 The air projects the product off the brush to create the first splashes.



- 4 This is the result of the first coat. It will be touched up later.



- 5 Now we use a medium-sized brush moistened in enamel thinners to correct any mistake or areas we don't like.



- 6 Some of the smaller stains are blended with downward brushstrokes to create a less uniform look.



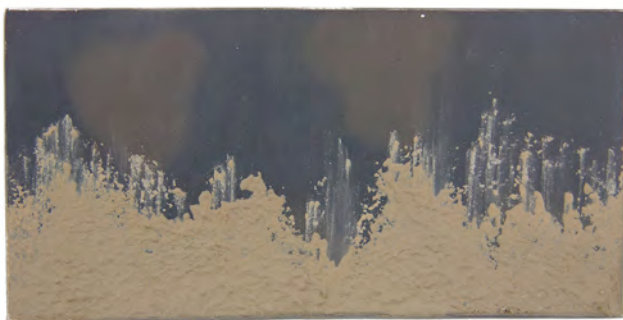
- 4 Apply the splashes randomly, with more intensity in certain areas and less in others.



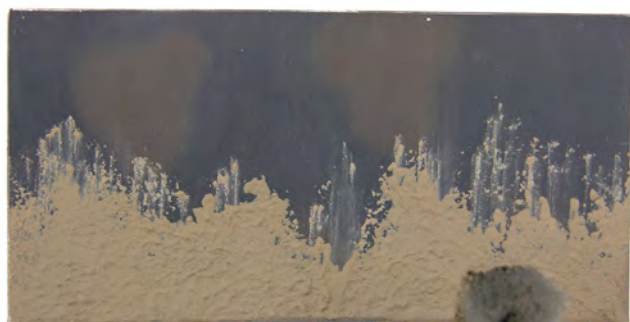
- 5 Now a medium brush moistened in thinners is used to blend the tiny specks with downwards strokes.



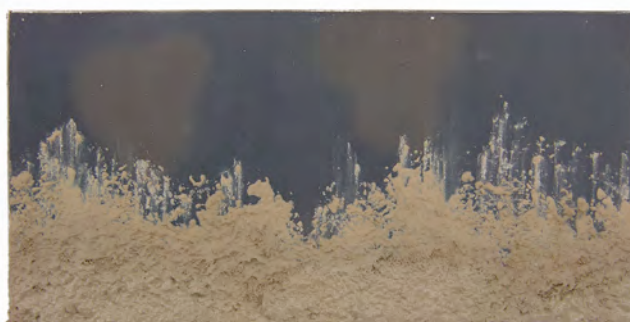
- 6 All the specks are uniformly blended in vertical motions.



- 7** It needs to dry now for at least 24 hours, although it won't be fully cured until 3 or 4 days has passed.



- 8** After a day, the same process is repeated with more MUD product applied with a sponge.



- 9** Working in several layers we'll obtain extremely realistic-looking results as well as in scale texture with no extra additions.



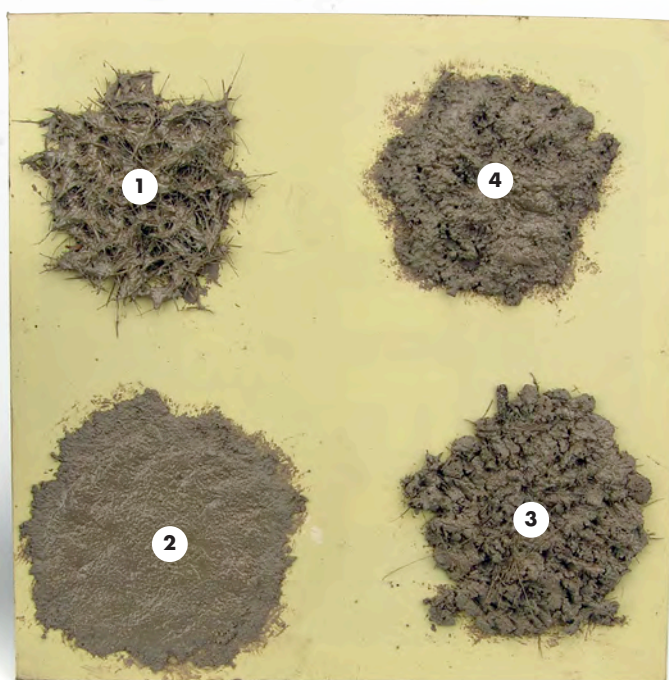
- 7** Now, we let it dry for 24 hours before continuing with the next stage, where we'll add more mud accumulations.



- 8** We can use a mask made from a piece of foam or paper to add more precise splashes in specific areas.



- 9** By combining various layers, we'll obtain a realistic and natural looking texture. We can also slightly dilute SPLASHES product to get finer and more precise splatters.



1

MUD products can be mixed with different natural elements to obtain extremely realistic textures. The MUD product works as binder, and once dry it will not become lighter or changes the color in any other way.



1



2



3



4



2

The two products are used with different techniques on this Tiger model. The SPLASHES product is used first.



- 3** When applying complex mud effects you need to start with the lighter color and Splashes. Begin making paint splatters in the lower areas by blowing air with an airbrush over a brush loaded with the product, as explained above



- 4** Apply the splashes slowly, letting them dry a little bit between coats to developing the grainy texture we normally associate with mud.



- 5** The result after several layers of splashes has to be like this. The lighter color (dried mud) should take up more surface area than the darker, fresh mud.



6 As the Splashes product takes several days to fully dry, we can modify and touch it up with ease.



7 Some of the previous splatter marks are blended with a brush moistened in enamel thinners in downward motions. Although at first glance it seems the product dries quickly, it actually takes a day or two to fully cure.

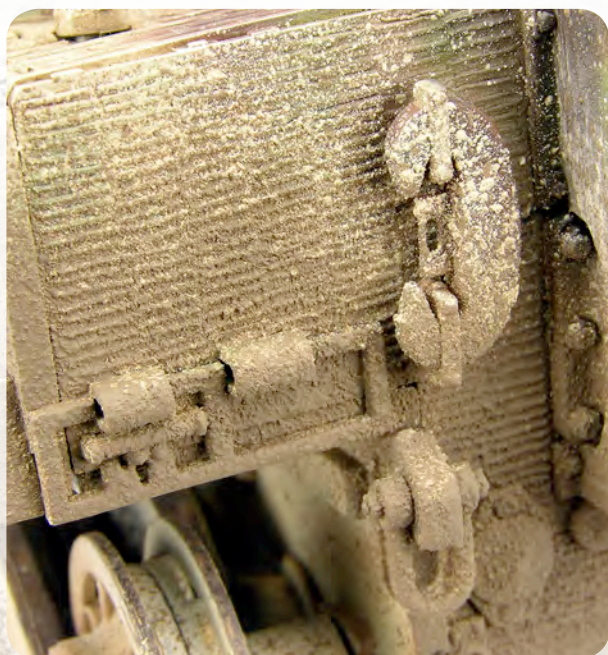


8 Now a darker, fresher mud layer is applied. It has to cover less space than the dry mud. Although the previous layer hasn't fully dried yet, this new color can be readily applied one hour later.



- 9** It is essential to choose the right color range. MUD and SPLASHES are available in different shades to add variety and realism to your models.

- 10** The previous step is repeated, with a darker color this time. The darker the color used, the glossier it needs to be, because in reality mud becomes darker when it's fresh.



- 11** The surface is covered a little at a time, and in thin layers, allowing to dry between them to emphasize the realistic texture of these products. On the other hand, if you flood the surface, the grainy texture will be lost.

- 12** The more layers applied, the more satin the color will be.



13 Now we are going to create a thicker mud buildup adding fine earth and roots collected in the backyard.

14 We add more or less amounts of MUD product depending on the desired consistency. The mix looks like rubber.



15 Then it's applied with a brush over the desired areas, like running gear and other lower surfaces, mudguards, etc. Start adding a tiny amount in a low visible area to check the thickness.



16 Next, you can continue mixing in more earth, sand, etc. little by little to thicken the mud, especially if you go for a thick buildup.



17 While it's drying, we can further refine the texture with a pair of tweezers or other pointed tools, and so achieving an even more realistic and natural appearance.



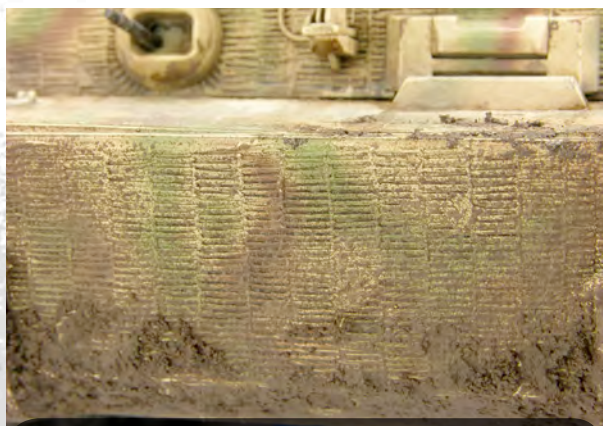
- 18** Observe the differences between the Mud with added natural materials in the upper areas and the tracks, where the product has been used directly from the jar and the result is shinier.



- 19** The small natural fibers can add a great deal of realism to the tracks.



- 20** Add thick mud randomly over the areas used by the crew to climb on the tank.



- 21** The front areas need careful attention and detailed work to add an irregular and natural appearance.



- 22** The resulting random areas of different opacity created with mud are extremely realistic. Always try to get an irregular and random look, avoiding symmetric and regular shapes that result in an unconvincing, artificial looking model.



It is far too easy to ruin a model with a poorly applied and unrealistic mud effect, when using the new AMMO MUD & SPLASHES product, a realistic result is almost guaranteed. By following the simple steps in this tutorial and allowing the product to dry before adding each new layer, we can easily create the textures and appearance of mud and splashed earth. The increased drying time should be used to correct and refine our mud areas until we get the perfect result. With this step-by-step article, you are now ready to enjoy the brand new AMMO MUD & SPLASHES products on your next project!

