

TAC NEWS

January - February 1999

Modeling Excellence Since 1967

Making the most of GHQ 10mm Figures

GHQ's 10mm figures are available in two exciting ranges. The American Civil War and the Napoleonic lines of MicroForce 10mm™ can be used for other periods with the application of a little imagination and courage. One such period is the Mexican-American War and the Texas War of Independence. With the number of games being played at conventions in the larger scales, my interest in these periods has been rekindled. I first decided to do the Mexican-American War. The period allows for small but colorful armies on both sides. But how do we get to use the 10mm ACW Rebellion™ and Waterloo lines -- conversions, of course! ! !

Some of you may think that conversions are limited to the 15mm figures and larger but this is not true. The key to a good conversion is to first find a base figure that will not require major alteration. The second part to a good conversion especially when you are going to convert armies of figures is to make sure that the conversion you are performing is simple enough to be repeated consistently with each figures. Keeping these two points in mind, let us begin by making a Mexican Infantryman for the Mexican American War.

Looking to the infantryman's uniform, you will note certain features of the uniform that stand out and cannot be recreated merely through the generous application of paint and brush. A typical Mexican Infantryman resembles a French Napoleonic Line Grenadier. He has a uniform of a double breasted coat with lapels, turnbacks, and epaulets. He carries a musket, sword, bayonet, knapsack with great coat roll on top, and a cartridge pouch. The only major difference is that his shake was a stovepipe shake, as opposed to the French Bell Shaped shako. Otherwise, the shake also had a pompom on top, and the shako plates were similar. Now here comes the imagination portion, aside from the shape of the shako, we can use a Napoleonic Line Grenadier as a Mexican Infantryman. There are only a few changes to be made. Here is how we accomplish the changes:

You will need the following tools for this conversion: an X-Acto knife with several brand new #11 blades, a small block of wood, 1" x 1" x 1/2" minimum dimension. This conversion will assume that we will not be replacing the shake entirely.

Only three items need to be altered on the Napoleonic Line

Grenadier to get a run of the mill infantryman in the Mexican Army, the shako's plume, the epaulette fringes, and the cartridge pouch flap. Starting from the top down, this is the process.

SHAKO:

1. After cleaning of the flash and part lines, hold the grenadier figure by the base and put the plume and pompom on the piece of wood, so that only the plume and the pompom are supported by the wood block.

2. Place the X-Acto blade's cutting edge at the junction where the plume meets the pompom.

3. While applying pressure to the blade, gently rotate the figure, so you cut the plume around its circumference. The reason for rolling the figure as opposed to just applying pressure and cutting straight through is two-fold. If you cut straight through from one direction, you may not cut completely perpendicular to the plume and thus you will have a flat-topped pompom. Second, cutting the plume along its circumference, you reduce the chances of the pompom being sheared off when you are cutting through the plume.

Uniform Colors of the Mexican Army 1846-1848

Line Infantry Regiments

In winter, dark blue trousers unless otherwise noted.

In summer, white canvas trousers unless otherwise noted.

<u>Rgt.#</u>	<u>Coat</u>	<u>Lapels</u>	<u>Piping</u>	<u>Collar</u>	<u>Cuff</u>	<u>Turnback</u>
1st	Dk. blue	yellow	yellow	red	red	red
2nd	Dk. blue	red	red	sky blue	red	red
3rd	Dk. blue	crimson	sky blue	sky blue	crimson	crimson
4th	Dk. blue	red	white	sky blue	sky blue	red
5th	Dk. blue	Dk. blue	sky blue	red	sky blue	red
6th	Dk. blue	white	crimson & white	crimson	crimson	crimson
7th	Dk. Blue	none	crimson (yellow laced buttonholes)	green	green	crimson
8th	Dk. blue	sky blue	sky blue & red	red	red	sky blue
9th	Dk. blue	purple	purple & buff	buff	purple	buff
10th	Dk. blue	purple	buff	red	purple	red
11th	White	sky blue	sky blue & red	sky blue	sky blue	red
(Note: 11th Rgt. had crimson trousers)						
12th	Dk. blue	buff	buff & red	buff	buff	red

Light Infantry Regiments

In winter, dark blue trousers unless otherwise noted.

In summer, white canvas trousers unless otherwise noted.

<u>Rgt.#</u>	<u>Coat</u>	<u>Lapels</u>	<u>Piping</u>	<u>Collar</u>	<u>Cuff</u>	<u>Turnback</u>
1st	Dk. blue	red	red	red	red	red
2nd	Dk. blue	red	red	red	red	red
3rd	Dk. blue	red	red	red	red	red
4th	Dk. blue	red	red	green	red	red

Other Infantry Units

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Coat</u>	<u>Lapels</u>	<u>Piping</u>	<u>Collar</u>	<u>Cuff</u>	<u>Turnback</u>
1st Active militia	Dk. blue	yellow	yellow	red	red	red
<i>sky blue trousers with red piping</i>						
typical militia	Dk. blue	red	yellow	red	red	red
<i>sky blue trousers with red piping</i>						
Grenadier Guards of The Supreme Powers	red	sky blue	white	sky blue	sky blue	sky blue
<i>sky blue trousers with red piping & 20" tall bearskin caps</i>						
Marines	green	crimson	yellow	green	green	red
<i>crimson trousers with yellow piping, yellow epaulettes</i>						
Regular Standing Battalion of Mexico	white	-none-	red	green	green	green
<i>sky blue trousers with red piping</i>						

Artillery Units

<u>Units</u>	<u>Coat</u>	<u>Lapels</u>	<u>Piping</u>	<u>Collar</u>	<u>Cuff</u>	<u>Turnback</u>
All	Dk. blue	black	crimson	crimson	crimson	crimson

Line Cavalry Regiments

<u>Rgt.#</u>	<u>Coat</u>	<u>Lapels</u>	<u>Piping</u>	<u>Collar</u>	<u>Cuff</u>	<u>Turnback</u>	<u>Pants</u>	<u>blanket</u>
1st	Dk. green	yellow	yellow	green	green	yellow	grey	red
2nd	Yellow	sky blue	sky blue	sky blue	sky blue	sky blue	dk. blue	dk. blue
3rd	Dk. blue	white	green	green	green	green	dk. blue	green
4th	Sky blue	red	white	red	red	red	dk. blue	green
5th	Dk. blue	red	sky blue	red	red	red	dk. blue	red
6th	Green	white	red	white	white	red	green	red
7th	Crimson	green	green & red	green	green	green	green	sky blue
8th	Dk. blue	red	red & white	white	red	white	dk. blue	green
9th	Green	crimson	white	crimson	crimson	crimson	dk. blue	green

EPAULETTES:



1. Use the X-Acto blade to score the fringes of the French Epaulette at the junction of where the fringes meet the epaulette. Make sure that the score line goes through all the fringes.

2. Holding the figure by the base, place the X-Acto blade at the bottom of the fringe. Tilt the blade at a 45° to the figure so that the blade is angled toward the top of the figure. Slowly apply pressure so the fringe is planed away from the figure. When the knife blade reaches the score line from step 1, the fringe should fall off the figure. Repeat until all the fringes is off. Be careful when you apply pressure to the blade that you do not slip and the blade takes the lip of the epaulet off. This is where a new, sharp #11 blade is so important. If it does come off, a drop of Krazy Glue on the epaulette will replace the damaged lip.

For NCO's, you do not have to remove the fringes.

CARTRIDGE POUCH:



1. Using the X-Acto blade, shave the grenade badge off of the cartridge pouch flap. The best way to accomplish this is to lay the blade on the pouch flap and slice the badge off by applying slow and steady pressure to the blade.

Those are all the conversion steps for a regular Line Infantryman.

Now the figure you are left with is a perfect match for the Texas War of Independence. Apparently, Santa Anna changed haberdashers between the two wars. If you wish to have your Army dressed in the correct shako for the Mexican American War infantry, you have two options.

1. Purchase a bag of Napoleonic British Light Infantrymen, and remove their shakos and glue them in place of the shakos worn by the French Line Grenadiers.

2. Remove the French Grenadier's shako right at the lower shako band. Use the same technique used to cut off the plume.

3. Take a piece of .47 inch styrene rod. Cut a length of rod as long as the piece of shako that you removed in step 2.

4. Krazy glue the rod onto the head of the figure aligning the rod so it forms the new shako.

5. The new pompom can be made from a small ball of epoxy putty attached to the top front edge of the shako. The correct size for the putty ball is approximately 1mm in diameter.

Conversions like this are not difficult. The biggest step is getting over the fear that you will never be able to put the figure back together in a form that resembles a soldier. Give it a try. Viva Santa Anna !!!

United States Infantry

Now for the *gringos*. U.S. regular infantry and, for that matter, any US



regular troop can be made using these simple conversion techniques.

Looking to the U.S. regular infantryman's uniform, you will note one feature of the uniform that stands out and cannot be recreated merely through the generous application of paint and brush. U.S. regular and militamen dressed quite similarly to his descendants in the American Civil War, at least his Southern Descendants. He wore a fatigue uniform of a single breasted jacket without lapels, turnbacks, and epaulets. Known as a "roundabout" this garment very closely resembled the "shell jacket" of the War between the States. He carries a musket, bayonet, haversack, and a cartridge pouch. The only major difference is that his fatigue cap, which looks like a porkpie, as opposed to a kepi. Otherwise, the look is the same as ACW infantry in kepi and shell jacket. So how do you make a porkpie from a kepi? Here is how we accomplish the changes:

In addition to the knife, blades and wooden block listed above, you will also need some ribbon epoxy. This is regularly sold in the plumbing or adhesive aisles in hardware stores.

• 1. After cleaning of the flash and part lines, hold the infantry figure by the base and hold it such that the head is supported by the wood block.

• 2. Use the X-Acto knife to cut the top of the kepi flat and parallel to the brim of the kepi. The object is to leave about a millimeter worth of the kepi above the brim on the figure.



• 3. Mix a small amount of ribbon epoxy, enough to make a small ball about the diameter of the top of the kepi.

• 4. Using the X-Acto knife, carefully center the ball of epoxy on top of the kepi.

• 5. Using the flat of the X-Acto blade, squash the epoxy ball so that it flattens out onto the kepi. If done properly, the epoxy should evenly spread past the sides of the kepi. Remember you want to have part of the original kepi's body showing.

That's it.

From experience, I would suggest doing this in assembly line fashion. Prepare several figures first by cutting off the kepi top. Then make sufficient number of balls out of the epoxy and then apply them. It also helps if you dip your Xacto blade in water before you use it to mash or pick-up the epoxy. This helps the epoxy from sticking to the X-acto blade.

This procedure can be used to convert any kepi-wearing figure into a pork-pied figure.

Conversions like this are not difficult. The biggest step is getting over the fear that you will never be able to put the figure back together in a form that resembles a soldier. Give it a try. Remember the Alamo!!!

by V. Paul Bernardino III

Painting MicroForce 10mm[®] Figures

As a *Tacnews* readers and GHQ customer, you have already got your own styles and techniques for painting GHQ models. The MicroForce[®] range of 10mm troops presents a few different challenges from painting MicroArmour[®] and Micronauts[®]. Net many of the proven “tricks” for painting larger soldiers are not applicable to 10mm, N scale miniatures. As an exercise, let’s paint some of the Mexican American war conversions described in Paul Bernardino’s preceding article. The Americans are US Army regulars, the Mexicans from the 1st Line Infantry Regiment.

Preparing to Paint

Prep all Rebellion[™] figures as you would ships or armored vehicles. After cleaning any partlines and vents off the figures, they are mounted on the heads of galvanized roofing nails with a drop of “superglue.” Make sure you leave some base overhanging the nail so you can pop him off once finished. A block of styrofoam is used as a stand for the nails.

Unlike vehicles, I prime Rebellion[™] figures with a white or light grey paint. Floquil metal figure primer works quite well, but take care not to use too much. It would be a pity to clot paint into the super detailed figures!

Never paint miniatures without magnification. Opti-visors work well, but I prefer a magnifying glass/light combo mounted on a cantilevered arm. You may consider it the best \$25.⁰⁰ investment you will ever make in this hobby.

Painting

Begin by painting the face and head a flesh color.



For painting very small figures, it is generally a good idea to paint the figures in the order in which you (or they!) would have gotten dressed. So paint the white pants on the Mexicans, and the entire uniform sky blue on the US troops.

Paint the mexican coatee dark blue, but try to avoid painting the lapels, as the yellow will cover the white primer much more easily than dark blue!



Keep applying colors, being careful not to make too many mistakes. The best way to fix little errors in acrylic painting is to



rapidly clean the brush with water, and then “scrub” the excess wet paint off using the watery brush.

Dry the brush and use it to sponge the water off the model. Allow to dry before proceeding.



The trim is now applied to the Mexicans: yellow lapels, red cuffs, collar, turnbacks and shoulder boards. Then the white cross belts on both sets of troops. Carry the straps onto the sides of the backpacks and cartridge boxes. Next paint the Mexican backpacks brown, covering the excess white straps. The bed rolls are light grey. Paint the American forage caps dark blue.

It is generally a good idea to paint black as the last main colors used. Many great painters prefer to paint from white to black, lightest color to darkest color, in progression. This ensures that rarely will it be necessary to cover a dark color with a light one. In the case of shoulder belts, however, this is not usually available, especially on a

10mm miniature.

Divide the areas to be painted black into two types: shiny black (polished leather) and flat black (canvas gaiters, felt on a shako...).

Use a grimy black/charcoal grey for the flat black, and a true black for the leather.

For the Mexicans, paint the body of the shako grey and the top, upper and lower bands and visor black. The pompoms are red.

Paint the wooden musket stocks deep brown.

Move now to the metallics: silver and brass or gold. Paint the musket bayonet and barrel silver. The gold goes on the Mexican shako plate and chin scales, the hilt and scabbard top of the sword, and the musket furniture (they were British surplus Brown Besses). On the Americans, the belt, cartridge box and breast plates are brass. Get clean water before painting non-metallics, or shiny flecks will glitter your paints.

Examine each man, and touch up every mistake you see. Once satisfied, lightly spray with dullcote lacquer to protect the finish and flatten the effect.

Mounting your Army

Pop each man off the head of the nails. Consult the rules to be used in the game for basing suggestions. We used a thin metal base available from Wargames Accessories. Super glue the figures to the base. Choose a base material that will compliment the terrain you will be gaming upon. Here we used a very light tan earth color paint and Woodland Scenics yellow grass “turf.” Use the tan paint as glue to hold the turf to the base.

Happy Gaming!

