



DENVER & RIO GRANDE W



No fixative is necessary. Artist's pastels will work, too. Scrape them with a razor blade or sandpaper to create a fine powder and then apply.

The final step is to pick a lighter shade of chalk than the road-dirt-plumber's-putty mix. Blend it into the road near the black and dark gray chalks you applied earlier. The road then will display several shades and the realistic appearance you want to achieve.

Finally, the step involving glue: Choose the details you want and decide where you want them. Some modelers spend a lot of time on that step. By that stage I'm too excited about the scene coming alive and have spent months assembling, painting, and weathering details so I just get to work and have yet to hear anyone say, "The oil drum would have looked a lot better had you moved it an inch to the left."

To glue down cars, file the tires where they contact the road. It is best to do that before assembling the model or you might break an axle or the tire itself. The result is the impression of weight; it looks as though the tires have compressed on the road. It also provides more surface area



for glue.

I prefer Woodland Scenics® Hob-e-Tac®, a very sticky white glue, for cementing detail (and for many other jobs). Apply it with a toothpick to the flat tire sections. Position the vehicle. Immediately use a fine paintbrush to saturate the areas around the tires with matte medium. The result will be a hideous glue spot. Don't worry; let it dry about





half an hour and, before it is completely dry, use a bushy paint brush to dust the glue with the lighter colored road chalk. That completely will camouflage the matte medium.

Sometimes the area still needs work; it looks too dark. Take a small paint brush with a fine tip, apply denatured alcohol, then re-dust immediately.

The glue bond will be very strong and, as I promised, invisible. If you are skeptical, wait a day or two and test the strength.

Fastening Detail

To glue such small details as sawhorses, use the same technique: A strong cement, matte medium, and colored chalk. I frequently move my dioramas and must secure each item, especially something as large as a train car. I do that by wrapping thin wire around each truck bolster, pre-drilling holes through the track to the bottom of the base,

turning over the base and hollowing out a cavity for small wood screws, then passing the wire through the tracks to the underside of the diorama base. Wrap the wire around the screws and then turn the screws to tighten the wire even more. The screw heads sink below the underside of the base (meaning no problem for the furniture below) and the wire will be invisible.

Passing a wire through the base of a flat diorama is easy but it is impossible to pass a small wire through a thick base. To overcome that problem find a plastic straw and drill a hole of a slightly larger diameter through the scene. Glue the straw in place if necessary. Put tissue paper inside the top to avoid plugging the hole with plaster, Sculptamold, or scenery material. When the entire diorama is complete, attach the cars.

I hope you learned some new tricks. I really enjoyed building the diorama. I love narrow gauge and the 1930s.

