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RUSTY BROWN (Greeley, Colo.)

On panel lines and dry transfers

Having lived in a high altitude, Colorado and western Kansas, all my life, the need for lighter finishes became apparent. In any event where appearance counts, or personal pride enters in, good finishes score high. Since it is an accepted fact that paint is heavy, a need arose and panel lines came into existence. The use of India ink and dry transfers will change your plane from "Ho hum thats nice" to "Could I have a picture of that?" Panel lines can be used to enhance scale appearance by copying beaks in the surface of full size aircraft. Details taken from photos can be simulated with ink lines, control surfaces, doors, hatches etc. can all be "inked on." On stunt planes I use panel lines to cover joints in planking on wings and fuselages. After a plane ages a year or so many of the seams will come to the surface, and a black line sure helps cover these up. Black is my preferred color, but I have used red, green, and blue. I have tried white but could not get it to show up to suit me so I took it off. You can put lines any place your imagination see's fit, it's your airplane and you designed it that way. I mentioned the use of "dry transfers", what are they? When you get tired of decals that say "Ringmaster by Sterling" or "Chipmonk by Sig" and would like some originality on your equipment get a sheet or two of dry transfers. I like "Chartpak-Velvet Touch Lettering". With these you can put lettering on to suit yourself, all of the stenciled instructions you see on full size aircraft can be adopted to your particular plane. This lettering comes mostly in black a few colors are available, but not much of a variety. Once again black goes good with everything, I've only seen one black stunter in years.

O.K. so you made up your mind to make a better looking plane, what will you need? First of all a year or two of highschool drafting will help a lot. Putting panel lines on a plane is about like inking a plate. There is a problem though, this plate isn't flat, it has bumps and curves. So you will need a flexible straight edge, one of the soft rulers work fine. You will need a longer straight edge like a t-square. Use the arm off an old one and glue thin foam rubber to one side to keep it from slipping. Of course you will need pens and ink. For ink regular "Higgins" drawing ink is fine, the green label is preferred, it is vinyl and goes on better. As for the pen "Rapidograph", by Kol-I-Noor are top of the line. They have interchangeable points, sizes 0, 1, 2 are most commonly used. A regular drafting pen with adjustable tip works well if you have had some experience with one. They can also be used with paint instead of ink. At the bottom of the scale are "Pilot" brand drawing pens. They come in a variety of tip sizes and are disposable. The permanent ink tends to fade in sunlight, but is better than nothing. These pens are much easier for ~~to handle~~ beginners to handle though. You also need a can of talc powder, and a bottle of rubbing alcohol. Rubbing alcohol doesn't move fresh paint but will take off ink mistakes if you hurry.

Lets get down to the nitty gritty and put some lines on an airplane. If this is a new plane in the process of finishing, it probably is fairly clean. When you have all the color on to suit, then spray on a couple of thin coats of clear. This will seal up the color, I have found that it is much easier to remove mistakes on clear rather than color. India ink is permanent and will discolor dope. If this is a plane that has been flown it needs soap and water, a cleaner like Prep-Sol and a light sanding with 600 wet or dry

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