

A Walk on the Wild Side (Making jungle Terrain)

I love Pulp and Pulp games and the adventures I have run were set in part in jungles, one hunting for crystal Skulls in Belize (I still reckon I should sue Spielberg for pinching my ideas!) and the other a lost world scenario.

They were done with rather intricate maps and stuff like that, I hadn't gone the whole hog in making the terrain. I have recently bought Tour of Darkness and will be introducing 'wargamers' to role playing. Now they are still a little unsure, so I thought I would ease them in gently and make it more wargame than role play, so I need the terrain to do that.

First of all I had a hunt around for the materials to make the jungle and for inspiration. Off to the internet again.

To make cheap simple jungle you have to compromise to some extent. Jungle trees can grow to huge heights, The forest floor can be either bare or covered in dense vegetation. If you go for the dense vegetation you tend to lose your figures in it. I decided to mix the two



ideas by making small pieces of jungle that can be moved about and are easier to store.

As I said earlier I had a look at what I had to play with.

The pieces are going to be made with the following.



Polystyrene type stuff (actually it is high performance foil faced rigid thermal insulation called Polyisocyanurate) I got a pile out of a skip, got donated a pile by a local builder and actually bought some too.

Plastic fish tank plants: These will become my jungle vegetation along with flock and static grass

Felt nails—I will fasten the felt nails to the bases and the plants to them.

Grout— This will be used for landscaping the terrain.

Games Workshop 40 mm round bases—I bought a pack of these to base my dinosaurs on and have a whole load left. These will be used for smaller bases. You could use offcuts of card instead. These were available so got used instead of my usual card bases.

I started off by gluing the felt nails to the round bases and then carving my block of insulation to a more natural look. Once this was done I glued the nails to the insulation.

I took an off cut of the insulation, shaped it and stuck it to the large base as a large protruding rock.

Once this was done I covered the bases with the tile grout and sprinkled them with sand and gravel.



I also embedded cocktail sticks into the insulation base to allow for different types of plants to be based. I then left these to dry overnight.

Once dry I painted the bases with a mix of brow poster paint and a PVA sand mix. (This was a mix from an earlier project and seemed a suitable colour for the dark earth of a jungle.) I then mixed up another colour for the rocks. This was a light grey colour. When it dried I actually went over it again making it darker as I felt it looked wrong.



It was at this point I decided to try the different plants for size. I really had to force them over the nails. When I was happy with the results I removed them, taking the nails off the insulation board base. Luckily for me the round bases stayed. I simply pushed in some cocktail sticks in the same spots, glued them in with PVA.

I dry brushed the rock sections of the large base and left this to dry.

The following day I mixed up some PVA and water and covered the base with different coloured flock and static grass.



I then took my plastic plants and arranged them again to see which looked best in which position. Once I was happy I used superglue to fasten them in place.



Figure from my own collection
by Coplestone castings.

On the whole I am really happy with the result. The smaller bases allow for figure movement and the larger one works as a line of sight blocker. They look really good en-masse. The next instalment of the Jungle terrain will be using an old CD as a base.

The downside to using the plastic plants is that they look like plastic plants. But as I said at the start I had to make compromises. I am sure if I gave the whole lot a dusting in mat varnish then they might look better.

If we look at cost. Again a lot of the stuff I had bought already or in the case of the insulation board got for free. The jungle plants I got off Ebay, it was something like 24 plants for £2.50 which isn't bad. To make the bases above took me 23 plants, some of them were doubled to make a denser looking jungle I could have got away with around 8 less if I had used them singly. The amount of flock I used was negligible same for glue etc.

Signing off for now.
Beardy Steve