

### WARMASTER SCENARIO TERRAIN

This piece of scenery for Warmaster represents a pontoon bridge, thrown across a wide river by the army of the Empire (or some other army) on its relentless advance. A pontoon bridge is a bridge resting on floating pontoons moored in the river. Another name for it is a 'bridge of boats'. These pontoons are usually flat barges or boats, anchored in position in a row across the river from one side to the other. The pontoons are connected by long, flat, timber sections of bridge, resting on the pontoons and lashed down. This creates a temporary bridge across the river, strong enough to support an army on the march.



The advantage of a pontoon bridge is that it can be constructed rapidly and easily from materials near at hand by the troops in the army. Instead of boats, they can use rafts. A further advantage is that it can float on the water, saving the time and trouble needed to sink timber piles into the river bed to support a conventional bridge. When the army is across the river, the pontoon bridge can be dismantled and loaded onto carts and moved up to the next river, or floated along the river to another crossing point. If the army is retreating, then a pontoon bridge can be dismantled after the army is safely across, to prevent the enemy from following after them.

### Making the Pontoon Bridge

In this section I describe how I created the Pontoon Bridge as an item of scenery for Warmaster. I made the model in the following stages.

- Planning and gathering materials.
- Making the pontoons.
- Making the bridge sections.
- Details
- Painting the model.

### Planning the Model and gathering the materials

A wide river in Warmaster scale would be at least 2 or 3 inches across, maybe as much as 4 or 6 inches wide. Such a river would need between two and four pontoons to make a pontoon bridge. Assuming three pontoons, these would require four bridge sections to span them. Two of these would rest on the river banks at either side. Therefore the entire bridge can be made up of seven separate elements. If these are not glued together, but assembled from separate pieces, then the bridge can be shortened or lengthened according to the river width. Also extra elements can be made and added if required.

As to the width of the bridge, I shall resist the temptation to make it 40mm wide, or in other words, the width of a Warmaster base. Even though this may seem sensible, it is not realistic. A bridge would probably not be made that wide on campaign and nor could it be done easily or quickly. The bridge should really be about 20mm wide or 30mm

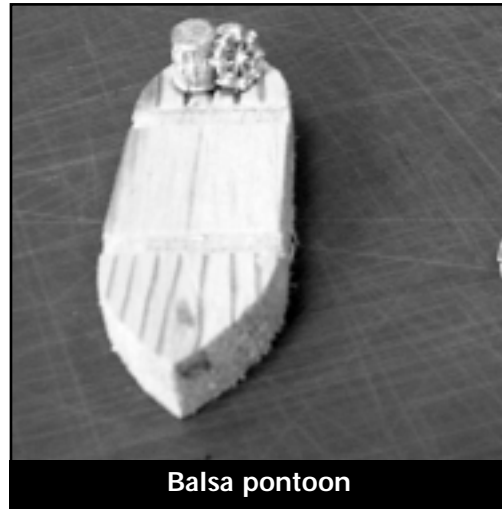
at the most. This is wide enough for Warmaster cavalry to cross in a long column. Infantry would also have to form a column to cross the bridge, represented by turning the bases sideways. This realistically represents the movement limitations and delays imposed by a pontoon bridge constructed under campaign conditions.

Plan to make the pontoon bridge wide enough to cross your own river sections. By making the bridge in sections, or by making one or two spare pontoons and sections of bridge that can be added to lengthen the span, the bridge can be extended to cross river sections of varying width.

Next I considered the tools and materials I would need which were as follows:

- Balsa wood strips and batons. Various small lengths about 1cm thick or less.
- Some strips of thin wood, card or plastic card.
- Cocktail sticks and/or matchsticks.
- Glue (PVA glue and another glue for more precise work).
- Modelling knife (safe, retractable type) and modelling saw.
- Paint (Browns, Greys, Yellows, Black & White).
- Bits from the bits box; including bits cut from Warmaster strips and plastic warmaster bases.

Note that this model does not need a base and is placed directly on the river section where needed.

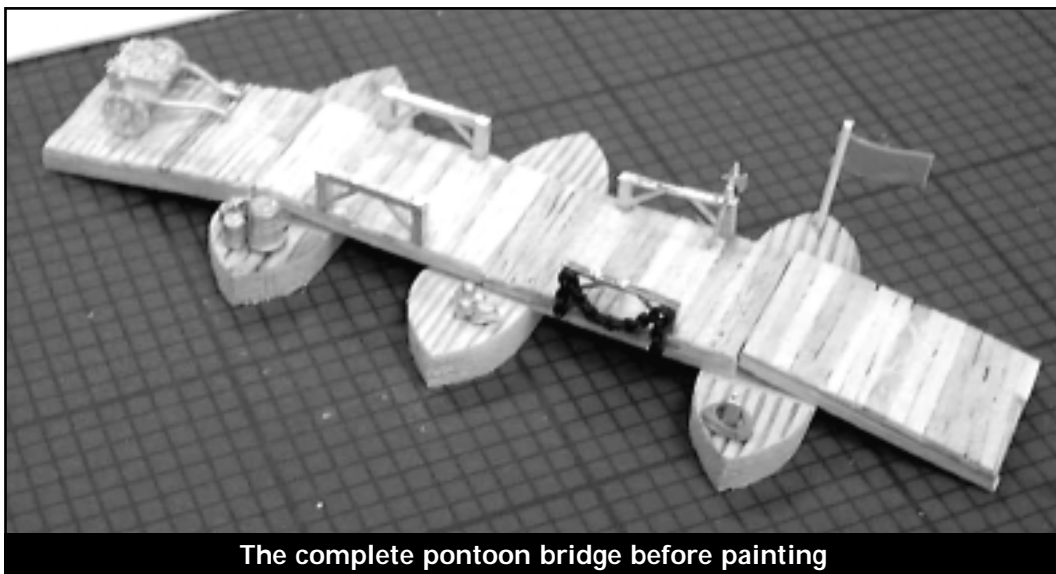


**Balsa pontoon**

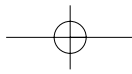
#### **Making the pontoons**

The pontoons are basically flat bottomed boats. More than likely they would be requisitioned river barges. These would be stubby vessels, more or less flat and lying low in the water. The bow and stern would be the same or they might have a flat stern. The bow would be rather blunt. This is a fairly simple shape to carve out of a baton of balsa wood. It would be a good idea to draw the shape onto card and then cut it out as a template. If the bridge is 20-30mm wide, then the length of the pontoons should be about 40-60mm and their width should be about 20mm. They should be about 10mm in depth.

Draw round the template onto a block or sheet of balsa wood of the right depth for the pontoons. Then cut them out using a modelling saw. Smooth down the pontoons



**The complete pontoon bridge before painting**



## Pontoon Bridge



with files and sand-paper until the shape and finish is correct. At this point you could attempt to detail timber planking on the pontoons by scoring the balsa with a modelling knife or saw if you wish.



Balsa bridge section

### Making the bridge sections

Each bridge section needs to rest on a pontoon and cover half of the top of the pontoon. This is where it butts up to the next section. Assuming the pontoons to be spaced roughly 30mm apart, the connecting bridge sections will therefore need to be 50mm long and 20-30mm wide. Cut out a rectangle of these dimensions from card and use it as a template for the others. When all the sections have been cut out of card, they can be converted into bridge sections by gluing two matchsticks or cocktail sticks, or strips of balsa lengthways on the long edges of the sections.

Then turn each section over and glue short lengths of matchstick,

cocktail stick or balsa strip across the breadth of the sections. This will look like a lot of short timbers resting on long timbers.

### Details

Details are useful to indicate the scale of a piece of Warmaster scenery. However, unlike a hill, or wood or river section, the pontoon bridge should look right for the scale without much extra detail, providing that the timbers do not appear to be too large. Further details that could be added include very thin thread to represent ropes tying the sections together, thin timberwork parapets on the flat sections, made from plastic strips, and a wagon or cart actually crossing the bridge. A suitable wagon can be scratch built using plastic card and artillery wheels from the Warmaster range.

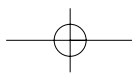
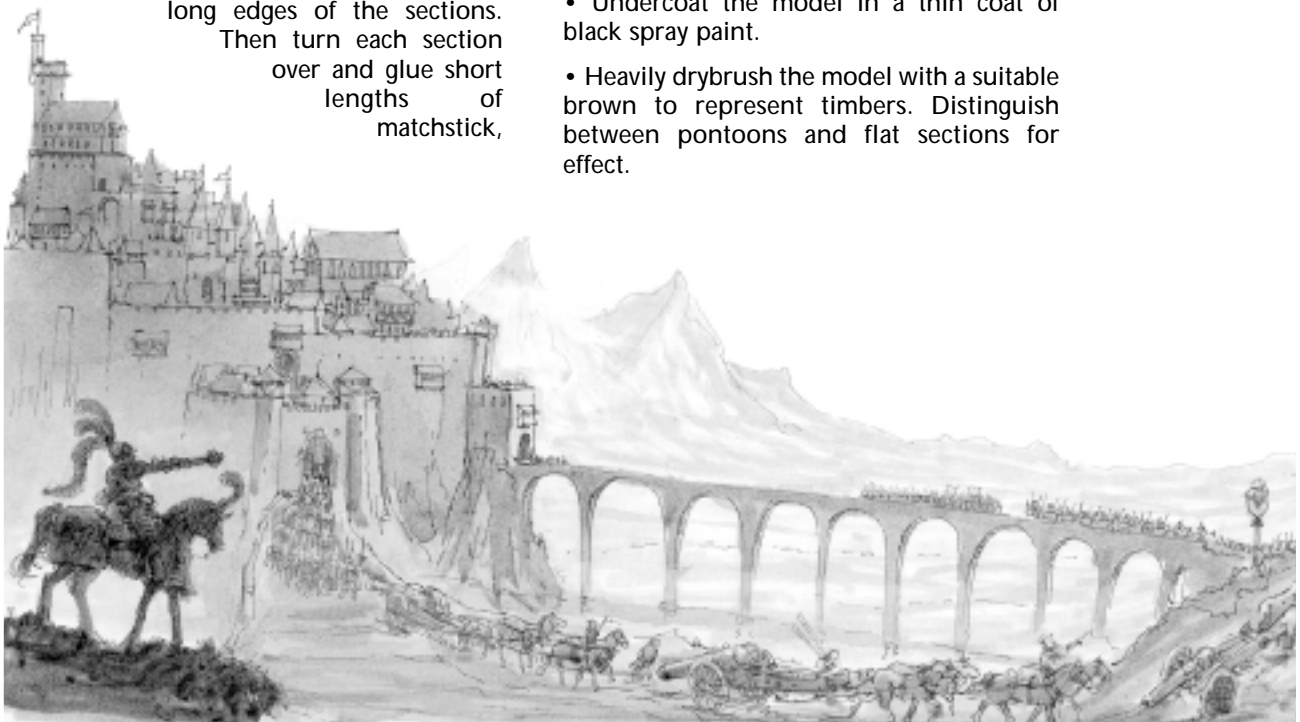


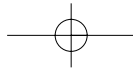
### Painting the Model

At this stage I handed over the model to the experts.

My suggested painting scheme for the model is as follows:

- Undercoat the model in a thin coat of black spray paint.
- Heavily drybrush the model with a suitable brown to represent timbers. Distinguish between pontoons and flat sections for effect.





## Pontoon Bridge



A pontoon bridge spanning a fast flowing river

- Paint or drybrush the bridge in suitable colours (use several light shades of brown).

- Dry-brush the bridge with lighter shades of brown, light greyish-brown, brownish-yellow, or whitish-brown.

- Paint any extra details which have been added.

And there you have it, a groovy bridge to add as interesting scenery or even to base a scenario around...



*Tune in next issue and check out Nigel's truly mammoth Orc idols modelling article – sneaky peek above!*

