

# Attaching the Braided Tail

This tutorial explains and illustrates the steps to attach the braided tail option to Rio Rondo's "Valor-HP" resin sculpture.

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## Tools You Will Need

- 320 grit sandpaper
- Rio Rondo's Carbide Scrapers or other seam-removing tool
- Rubbing Alcohol, Cotton Pads and Cotton Swabs, Paper Towels
- Small Shallow container to hold rubbing alcohol. *(An empty tuna can works well.)*
- Small Soft Flat paintbrush (filbert or bright) preferably used or worn *(no need to use a good brand-new brush for this)*
- Sculpting Tools/Modeling Stylus\*
- Drill motor and 1/4" drill bit
- Gapoxio or other sculpting-type 2-part epoxy *(do not use standard liquid 2-part epoxy, as it will be too runny for this procedure.)*

\*A modeling stylus of almost any type will work fine . . . you can craft your own from a wooden craft stick and carve or sand it down to a tapered pointed shape. Or use a wooden dowel, a sharpened pencil tip, a small pointed stylus. Alternatively, try a piece of wire with one end sanded smooth. Just about anything will work for this that tapers down to a fine blunted/rounded point.

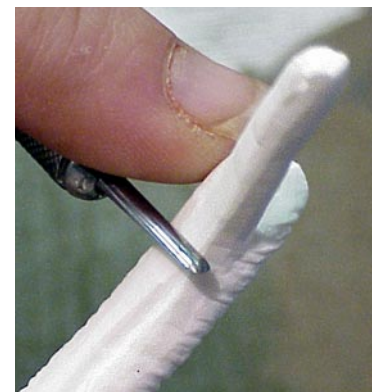
## Prep The Seams and Tail

Prep the seams, paying particular attention to the hind end area since it's easier to work these seams now than after the tail has been attached. Use a scraper to remove any flash or raised material. Follow up with the 320 grit sandpaper to smooth things out nicely.

Remove the seams from the tail, and smooth the underside in particular.

Wipe the area around the tail hole with alcohol on a cotton pad, as well as the tail itself, to remove any residual mold release from the casting process.

Wrap/pad the ears and head area with toilet paper, to protect the ears as you continue.



## Drill Out The Tail Hole

Drill the hole where the tail should be. This area is clearly noted on the sculpture.

Hold the drill bit at an angle that is parallel with the top of the horse's croup area. Do not drill straight into the horse horizontally, or the tail will not "set" into position properly. Drill about 1" or so deep.

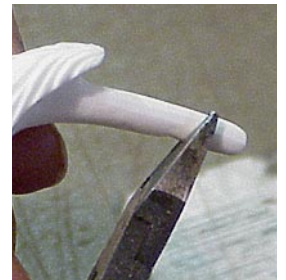


Take your tail and slip the "peg" end into the drilled hole. Check the tail for fit. If the hole isn't deep enough, you can either

- A. Snip off the end of the peg with nippers/cutters
- B. Drill the hole a little deeper

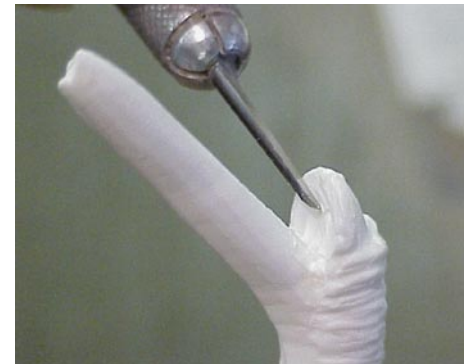
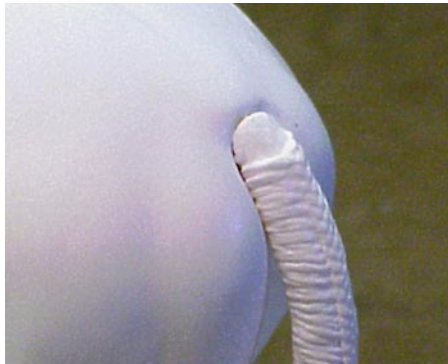
Check to see that the angle of the tail rests where it should.

The fit should be loose, not snug. If it is snug or "catches" as you insert it, use a scraper to remove material from the tail peg.



The upper portion of the tail should fit fairly close to the body of the horse (not sticking out much). Using a scraper or similar tool, trim around the top of the tail, including under the small upper "lip" until the tail sets properly when inserted. **Be sure the fit is loose.**

The top portion of the tail should fit nearly "flush" around the tail hole area. A small portion of the underside of this tail should attach to the dock area, for a more secure attachment.



Wipe off any dust or resin shavings from the tail with alcohol on a cotton pad, and you are ready to attach the tail.

## Mix Putty and Attach the Tail

Pour some alcohol into your container, and have your cotton pads/swabs handy. Make sure your sculpting tool(s) and paintbrush are ready. If you use latex or vinyl gloves to work with epoxy putty, put them on now.

Mix up your 2 part epoxy putty as per directions on the package. Form a small cylinder about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long and a little smaller than about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch diameter. Push this cylinder of putty most of the way into the tail hole. If needed, use one of your sculpting tools to push it farther in. The putty should not be packed in tight. If your cylinder of putty is too "fat", work it with your fingers to make it a little skinnier. You want the putty to be wide enough to "catch" a bit as you push it into the tail hole. Too little putty will not result in the secure hold you want.

Smear a little putty on the area as shown on the tail peg. If the putty does not wish to stick immediately, dip your fingers in the alcohol and smooth it on and over the putty to help it adhere. Wipe your fingers with alcohol on a cotton pad to clean off any extra putty.

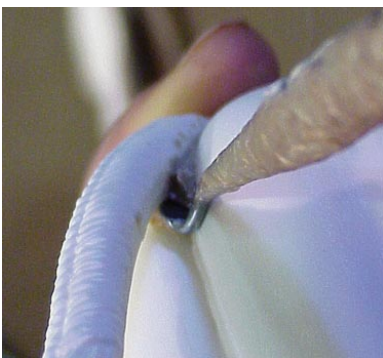


## Insert The Tail

With one hand holding the horse and the other hand holding the tail, push the tail into the tail hole. (The horse can be standing on your work area for this, use one hand to stabilize the horse.)

Gently, but firmly push the tail in until it is flush up against the body. If there is too much putty around the tail hole and you can't reasonably push the tail all the way in, pull the tail out and remove some of the extra putty, then try again.

Some of the putty should squish out and around the edge of the tail and tail hole. If not, you need to remove the tail, and add a bit more putty into the hole.

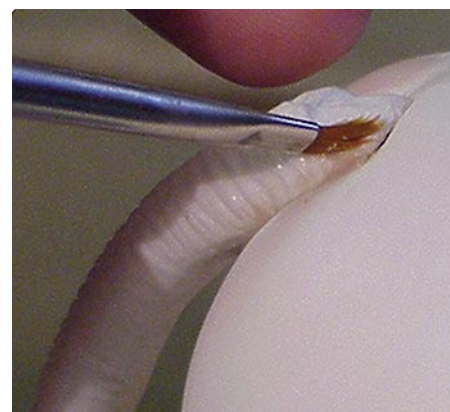
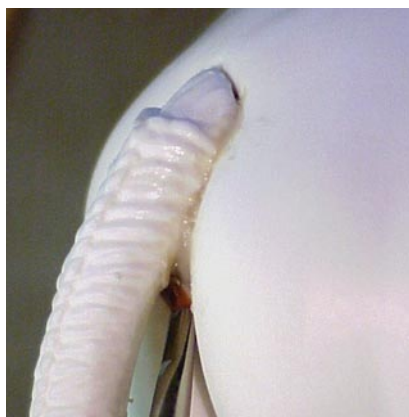


## Touch Up the Putty

Using a tool, gently remove the extra putty from around the seams. Wet the tool in the alcohol to help it "glide" along the seams smoother. Use the alcohol and cotton pads/swabs to remove excess bits of putty from your fingers, tools and the horse as you go.

Shape out the underside of the tail, making sure there are no gaps between the tail where it meets the body. Use your tool to push the material around on the underside of the tail to create a smooth, unobtrusive "joint" under the tail. Remove any extra putty from around the seams.

Dip your brush in alcohol, and lightly blot it on a paper towel. Stroke the brush along the side seam areas and the area up under the tail to gently smooth things out. Rinse the brush in alcohol as needed. Remove any unwanted bits or smears of putty by wiping your tools, fingers and the horse with alcohol on a cotton pad as you go. When you are satisfied with how things look all around the seams, it's time to touch up the tailhead. If you do not wish to "risk" undoing what you've done so far, set the sculpture aside to cure for an hour or so, then return to finish the last operation.



## Filling and Detailing the Tailhead

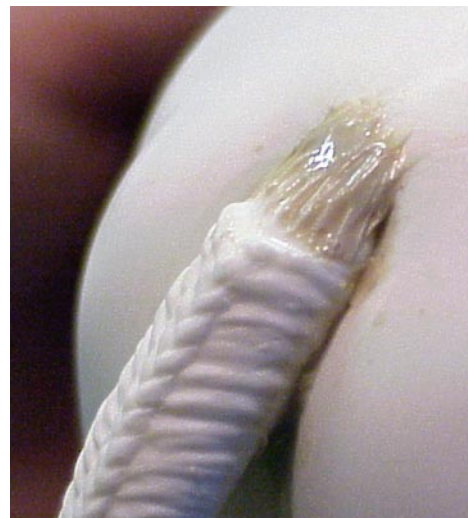
Mix up a new small wad of fresh putty to work with. Apply a small "bead" of putty over the "joint" where the body and tail meet.

Dampen your tool with alcohol, and gently push the putty into the gap, then smooth over the top. Use the tip or edge of your tool to blend in the hair texture at the tail head. Alternatively, you can allow this area to cure, then return later with a little more fresh putty to add some hair texture over the top to blend it all in nicely. Smooth the area over with a dampened brush.

When you are satisfied with how things look, set the model aside in a warm area and allow it to cure. Cure time is about 1 hour at 75 degrees F... add 1 hour of time for each 5 degrees cooler the temperature is.

Don't forget to clean your tools with alcohol, and wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

Once all the putty is completely cured, you should proceed with any additional seam prepping and priming to prepare the horse for painting.



Don't forget to clean your tools with alcohol, and be sure to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water when you are done!

