

The Navigator

The Newsletter of Alamo Squadron

*The San Antonio chapter of the International Plastic Modelers' Society
A registered 501c-7*



September 2019

IPMS/USA Chapter of the Year: 1999 & 2005

IPMS/USA Regional Chapter of the Year: 2016

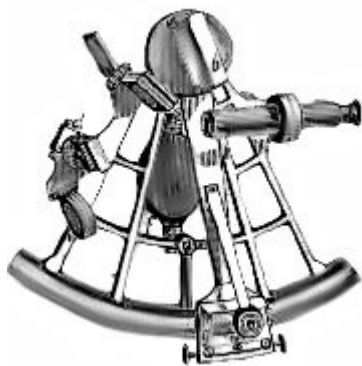
IPMS/USA Regional Newsletter of the Year 2017



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President's Letter

by Craig Gregory

IPMS# 49320



President's Letter: September 2019

My First IPMS/USA Nationals

Fellow modeler Len Pilhofer, my wife Fang and I loaded a rented mini-van and headed to Chattanooga, TN at 4pm Monday, Aug. 5th. We stopped for the night at the Texas-Louisiana border, continued our journey the next morning and arrived in Chattanooga the evening of Aug. 6th. The primary purpose of me attending the 2019 NATS was to meet with vendors and begin selling tables for our 2020 NATS in San Marcos. Len and I had a boat load of NATS 2020 materials to hand out. We knew our time in Chattanooga would be consumed gleaning processes and promoting NATS 2020. But at the last minute we convinced each other that we might as well each take a model to enter. So with the NATS 2020 paraphernalia, models and luggage, we needed a mini-van. We also needed room on our return for any acquisitions made in the vendor hall.

On Wednesday morning we picked up our conference registration materials and setup our NATS 2020 information table. We did not setup for vendor tables

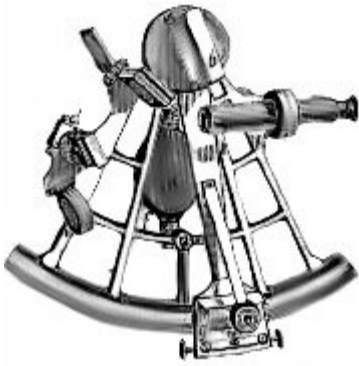
sales, as that would begin on Thursday morning. Initially there were long lines at registration and pre-registration. But after we settled in at our information table, the line for pre-registration was gone. So I sauntered over, picked up my registration materials and was done in literally less than 2 minutes. Dick Montgomery was a registration volunteer and I am sure he learned a lot that can only help out with NATS 2020.

My first moment of shock and awe was upon entering the vendor's hall. Holy cow; my credit card would be taking a large hit before leaving Chattanooga. We held off selling 2020 vendor tables until Thursday so I could greet all the vendors and explain the process for buying tables for next year. Upon seeing the vendor hall, Len and I decided to divide it in two. I visited each vendor on my half, handed out the Vendor Table Request Form and my NATS 2020 business card. I explained the process for buying tables and asked a few questions of each vendor. It must have taken an hour to meet all the vendors on my half of the floor. Did I scout out future purchases? Of course I did. The vendor hall was awesome; lots of new things, lots of old kits and lots of good deals. I actually bought nothing on Wednesday, I was too busy promoting NATS 2020 and manning our information table.

On Thursday at 10am we opened up vendor tables sales for 2020. I was warned by our NATS 2020 committee (Team Texas) that I would be swapped. I was also warned by the Chattanooga crew that it was going to be a zoo. In fact Chattanooga had reserved a side room in the vendor hall. They warned that the vendors would be fighting amongst themselves for the 'best' locations. I immediately and without hesitation declined the room and stuck to our plan to sell tables at our information table. If the vendors were going to



On Our Way

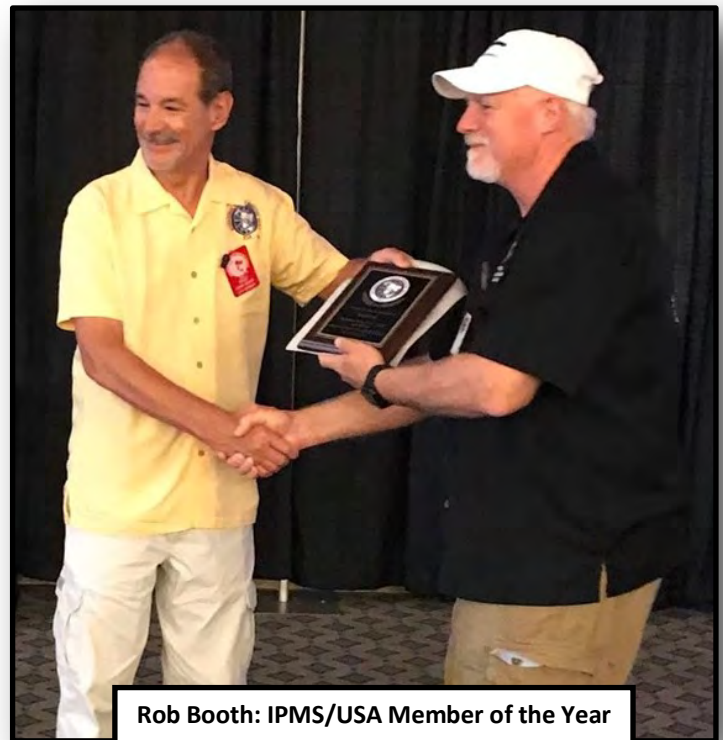


President's Column

fight, I wanted them to do it in full view of their customers. At 10am there were 3 vendors waiting in line. Usually I was sitting idle and occasionally there a line formed of 2 or 3.

On Thursday afternoon I took a break and visited the vendor hall again, this time with money in my pocket to burn. I knew were to head because of my scouting the vendors the day before. I bought a few old kits I had seen. I bought a few modeling tools that looked interesting. My biggest purchases were aftermarket detail sets for my 1/96th and 1/144th Saturn Apollo kits, a Zoukie-Mura 1/48th F-4J and a Polar Lights 1/350th TOS Enterprise.

On Friday morning I found time to enter the 2 models I brought for competition; more shock and awe. There were more than 5000 models, 3100 entered for competition. While some of the builds were 'average' quality, most were some amazing. Not only in craftsmanship, which I expected, but also incredibly imaginative and creative. The winner of the theme award was diorama of a 1950's family seeing the man of the house of to work. The mother was adjusting the husband's work uniform; the son was holding his father's briefcase and the family dog was nearby. What was imagi-

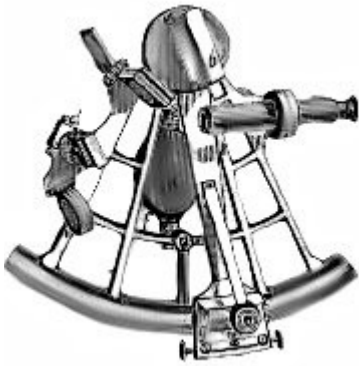


native and creative about the diorama? The man of the house was a Storm Trouper and the wife was helping with his breast plate.

On Saturday night I attended the awards ceremony where our own Rob Booth was awarded the inaugural Modeler of the Year award. A honor well earned.

We decided to drive back to San Antonio in a single day. Promptly at 7:30am Sunday, fully loaded, we pulled away from the hotel. We pulled into Len's driveway a little after 9pm that evening. My experience at my first NATS was terrific. There were many seminars I wish I could have attended had I not been so busy selling 2020 vendor tables. I definitely recommend attend at least one Nats in your modeling lifetime.





Club Announcements

Alamo Squadron Build Days

The most recent build day was held on August 3rd at HobbyTown of San Antonio. The next Build Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 7th. The intent of these build days is to move more of the social and building aspect of our meetings to a more conducive environment...and what better environment than a hobby store! There will be no set format but if a member wishes to see a first hand demo on a certain technique then this is the perfect opportunity to make it happen. We hope that many club members will take the opportunity to participate. And added bonus is that we will be able to recruit for Alamo Squadron while at this establishment answering any and all questions of passers-by.

Monthly Contest Themes

September:	Open
October:	Cold War
Nov:	Open
Dec:	No Contest
Jan:	Model of the Year
Feb:	Fabulous 50s

Monthly Programs:

September: Oil Washes and Filtering – Len Pilhofer

October: Scribing Panel Lines – Rob Booth

November: Working with LEDs – Len Pilhofer

December: White Elephant Gift Exchange

January: Basic Figure Painting – Henry Nunez

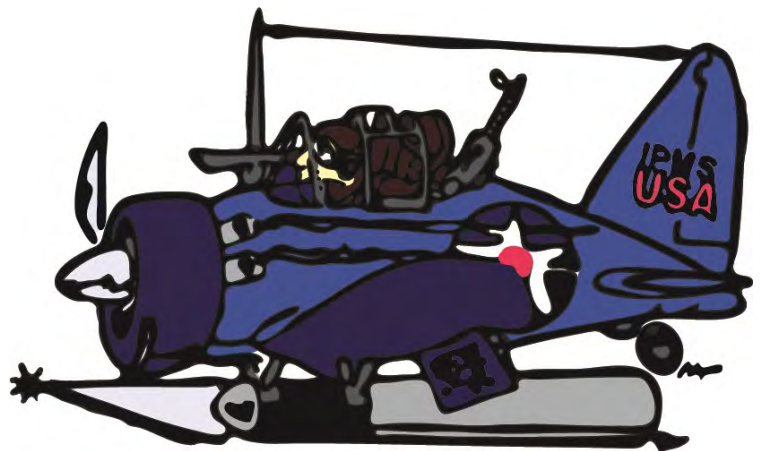
February: What Judges Look For – Rob Booth

March: Aircraft Rigging – Dick Montgomery

April: Hydrodrp Technique—Paul Blackmon

Navigator Articles!

Alamo Squadron's "The Navigator" is quickly becoming recognized across all of IPMS/USA as a high quality local chapter newsletter. Our success is entirely due to the tireless efforts of all of our members who contribute to its contents. In a few short years we have reached our goal of creating a newsletter that captures the learning spirit of our club and helps foster a learning environment. The contents of The Navigator undoubtedly help all who read it improve their own modeling. The club executive board encourages all members to contribute their work to the Navigator. This can be in the form of a feature article documenting a build and all the steps that went into it or it can be a technique demonstration. Or perhaps a review of a recently acquired kit or the review of a new tool that helps the modeler to the finish line. Members can also document one of the many shows attended by our members through the year. The ideas really are plentiful. If you have anything you wish to contribute please send your articles to Len Pilhofer at pilhofer@hotmail.com





Club Announcements

August Monthly Contest

First Place: Lincoln Futura

By: John Kress



Second Place: German 88

By: Chuck Blair

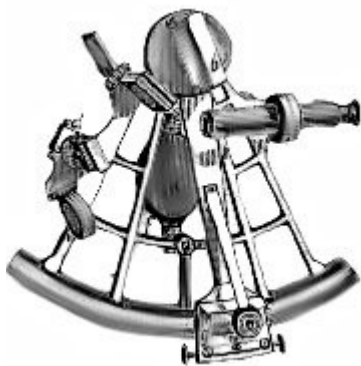


Third Place: River Assault Boat

By: Dana Mathes



River Assault Boat
S. Vietnam 1966



Kit-of-the-Month

Tamiya 1/48 Scale Lockheed P-38 F/G Lightning

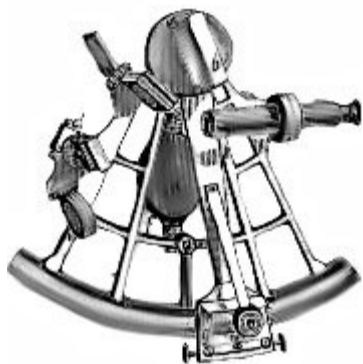
Presented by: Len Pilhofer
IPMS# 49932

Probably one of the most anticipated releases of 2019 is the upcoming Tamiya version of the venerable Lockheed P-38 Lightning in 1/48 scale. Still to be released a few Alamo Squadron members—including myself—were able to get our hands on one at the IPMS/USA National Convention last month in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Tamiya USA had a handful of pre-production versions that were raffled off to convention ticket holders. If your ticket number was drawn, you had the option of purchasing one for \$50. Maybe not a true raffle “win”, it is cheaper than the list price upon release which will be approximately \$80. So, if 1/48 WWII aircraft are your thing, \$50 for a new Tamiya kit is still a bargain.

- P-38F and P-38G variants can be built.
- The model creates a parked aircraft when assembled and complete.
- Features accurate depictions of early P-38 features such as slimline engine cowlings, intercoolers in leading edges, plus the curved canopy front.
- Weights are included in the kit to ensure correct balance of the model when displayed.
- The canopy can be assembled open or closed. When closed, it is a 1-part slide-molded piece with dedicated F and G variant parts. The hatch is shown open sideways on the P-38F, and vertically on the P-38G.
- A detailed cockpit features the wheel-type controls, radio, throttle box and more.
- Comes with parts to recreate two each of 150- and 300-gallon drop tanks.
- Includes two marking options: “White 147” P-38G which took part in the interception of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto in April 1943 and “White 33” P-38F.
- Mirror stickers are included to recreate cockpit mirror and engine cowlings interior surface sections.
- Comes with canopy masking stickers and a full-color painting guide.

Brand:	Tamiya
Title:	Lockheed P-38 F/G Lightning
Number:	61120
Scale:	1:48
Released:	2019 Initial release - new tool
Type:	Full kit





Cover Story

Unicorn Gundam Odaiba Diorama

Model, Story and photos by Jerry Escobedo-Sainz



As with many things in Japan, giant mechas and giant monsters are very important subjects on their culture. In the late decades on the 20th Century, there was a myriad of giant mechas series on TV that were distributed very fast outside of Japan – I used to watch a series in Mexico in which giant robots lived inside a mountain and fly to fight monsters and whatnot.

Gundam is one of the most successful series of this genre that was released in 1979, in which there is no good VS evil script per se, but humans morals and behaviors take place in a war – each side thinking they are acting for the good of humanity. Gundam (Japanese ガンダム, pronounced “Gundamu”) is a contraction of the words “*Gun Freedom*”, so yeah, at first it was called “*Gundom*”, but it was not appealing to the Japanese culture of the 70’s, that was getting into the Western culture, including the English language.

In this sense, the futuristic Gundam series – produced by the Japanese company “Sunrise” - depicts all sorts of giant mechas (giant robots or machines (mechs) controlled by pilots inside them), with powerful weapons. The ***Gundam RX-78-2*** is the first and main character of the Gundam franchise, and there are many versions of it as model kits, all released by Bandai brand.



RX-78-2 Gundam by Hajime Katoki

Bandai released plastic models of airplanes, cars, and toys, since the 60’s. But in the 80’s it found its golden goose with the Gundam franchise, and 40 years and millions of plastic kits released later (called “*Gunpla*”, as in “*Gundam Plastic Models*”), it is one of the most successful Japanese brands of scale models, pairing up with other giants like Tamiya and Hasegawa.

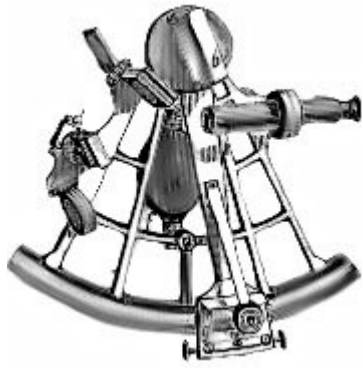
The Gundam Unicorn

One of this mechas in the Gundam Unicorn, that is piloted by a 17-year-old kid called Banagher Links, who tries to show adults that war is wrong. When he gets inside the Gundam he becomes one with the machine, and all his feelings and thoughts are united with the circuitry in something that is called “*Psycho-Frame*” – an active crystal frame inside the machine - and the Gundam transforms into the most highly advanced of all the Gundam machines.

Gundam Unicorn is now a series on Netflix. The action sequences go hand in hand with many philosophical ideas of good, kindness, human logic, the reason for war, and the reason that must be peace among nations – yes, the now classic idea that the Japanese culture was affected in its roots by “*Big Boy*” and “*Fat Man*”. Noticeable is the mind-blowing logic of who’s wrong and who’s right in episode 6, minute 20, by the characters of Banagher, his archrival Char Aznable and the main female character Audrey Burne. I recommend it, so go ahead and check it out! Hey, it might even your induction to the Anime genre in movies, if you haven’t got caught yet.

So, the Japanese went ahead and built a 1:1 scale model of the Unicorn Gundam. The Statue is located in Odaiba, an artificial island in Tokyo Bay, Japan. The 65-foot statue was unveiled on September 24, 2017, standing next to a Tokyo Plaza Mall called DiverCity. The statue opens its plates and shows the Psycho-Frame, that is lighted and fumes come out of its rocket exhaust, while a short of the anime is played in a giant screen behind it on the mall façade.

Adjacent to the statue is the Gundam Café, a place where food and drinks are all Gundam related subject.



Cover Story

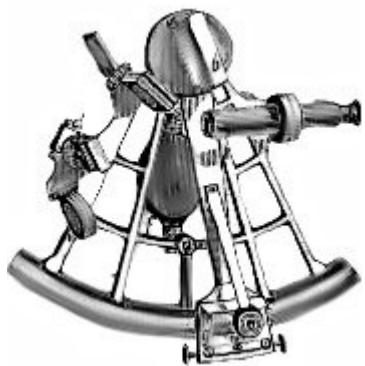
The Diorama

My diorama depicts the Odaiba plaza in front of the mall, with the Unicorn Gundam showing the Psycho-Frame.

PLAZA

I made the main plaza with a photograph frame for the whole diorama, using the back of the frame as a base. I applied texturized paint to simulate gravel and other kinds of flooring. The trees, grass and flowers are from Winmodo. The lighting posts are Evemodel, powered by 2-10-volt batteries in the back of the diorama.





Cover Story

Unicorn Gundam Odaiba Diorama

GUNDAM FIGURE

The figure is a **Bandai HG RX-0 Unicorn Gundam in Destroy Mode**, in red Psycho-Frame. I repainted the whole inner frame with metallic paint, and the armor plates with acrylic white.

The idea is to leave it as clean as the actual statue. Nevertheless, a very light shadowing was applied with Tamiya Weathering Master for depth effect, and a spray of clear matte coat. The decals are waterslides from Bandai, instead of the stickers from the original kit.

The figure is placed in the diorama by means of a metal rod in one of its foot that serves as anchor to the base.



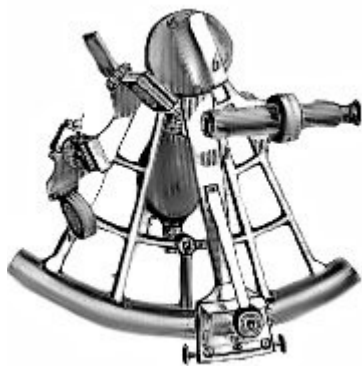
DIVER CITY FAÇADE

I made the mall façade with a 5mm plastic sheet, and treated with acrylic colors. I created the divisions (squares) with a hobby knife. The clear parts are made of acrylic plastic. I made the lettering with bond paper cut with hobby knife (from my days on paper-scale-modeling). The Gundam Café logo is made with an actual Bandai Gundam V-fin (the “antennas” in the forehead of Gundam mechas, a reminiscence of the Samurai’s “kuwagata”) and paper. The screen is an Amazon Fire tablet, that when connected to the Internet, I log in to my Netflix account and play the Gundam Unicorn series on it.



The back of the façade, or structure, was made of old iPhone boxes and blocks of polystyrene.

On the left side of the façade there are some logos of the stores inside the mall. I changed the logos of the mall to logos of local modeling stores here in San Antonio, Texas. Of course, I asked proper authorization from the store owners to display their store’s logos. Can you recognize them?



Cover Story

Unicorn Gundam Odaiba Diorama

PEOPLE

The people figures are Toogoo brand in N scale (1/150), and even when they were already painted, I re-painted them with acrylics to add details (eyes, mouths, cloth details and accessories... and some with eyelashes!). I also needed to sand the rough ends of the figures.



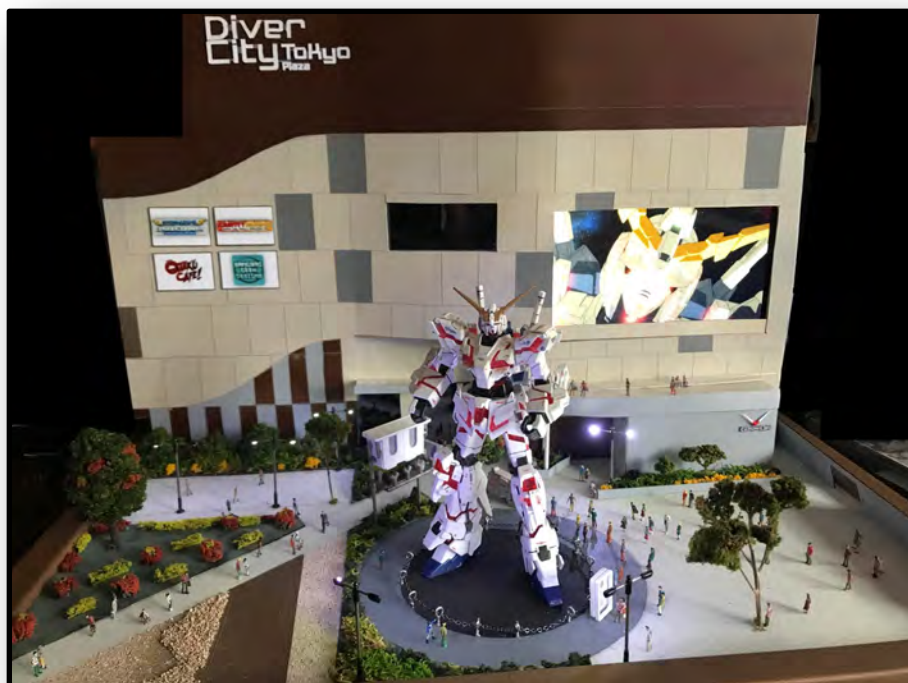
Every Gundam is a space-war-ship, and it is piloted by a human (or in the Gundam lore, a “Newtype” human), and has total control of the mecha. When you buy a Gundam kit, you’ll find that it comes with the figure

of its pilot, that you can pose beside you completed model. There are 6 figures that are the actual pilots of 6 different Gundam kits, all in 1/144 scale, and that I painted with acrylics. I place them scattered in the diorama as a game for the onlookers of the diorama to find (think of “Where’s Waldo?”).

CONCLUSION

I really enjoyed building this diorama of the Odaiba Unicorn Gundam, and I learned a lot. As Gundam models are becoming more and more popular, especially among youngsters (and the young at heart), the Bandai company is not stopping here. At 40 years form its commencement, it looks like the Gundam franchise is just starting to take flight.

Every month there are many new Gundam kits, roughly every 6-9 months there is a new Gundam anime series, merchandise galore, and the first upcoming live-action movie by Legendary Pictures, and Gundam filling up more and more tables on the IPMS events, maybe you also will get your feet wet on this category of scale modeling... and you are welcome to do it!





Feature Story

IPMS/USA National Contest 2019

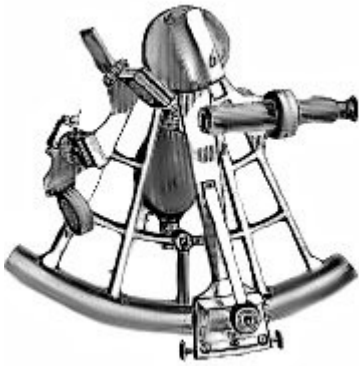
Alamo Squadron Winners

Several members of Alamo Squadron made the trek eastward to Chattanooga, Tennessee last month to attend the 2019 IPMS/USA National Convention. A good number of our members who attended and entered their models ended coming home with some hardware. Here is a round-up of these winners...

Member	Category	Award	Entry
Rob Booth	OOB Hypothetical, and an ISA—	3rd Place	Bv-155 (1/72nd)
John Kress	OOB Hot	3rd Place	1970 Plymouth
Eric Syver-son	Cat 135b-32nd Scale	1st Place	MiG-3
Craig Gregory	Space-Sci-Fi (Other)	3rd Place	Space 1999 Eagle Transporter



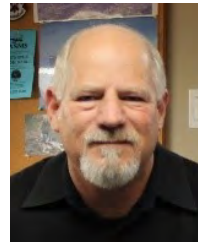
Feature Story



Some Thoughts on Judging

Story and Photos by Rob Booth

IPMS# 37548



I have been an active IPMS member for about 20 years now. My main modeling interest is Aircraft, thanks to my Air Force family upbringing. I try to attend 5-7 of our Region 6 Modeling Events, and the IPMS USA Nationals each year. I have been fortunate enough to attend the UK Nationals in Telford, England, twice now. Unless I have other specific commitments at a show, I always offer my time to assist with the contest judging at every show I attend. Occasionally, I'm told that the host club has lined up plenty of judges. But usually, my offer is enthusiastically welcomed. I figure it is the least I can do to help out a group of volunteering modelers that donate a considerable amount of their free time putting on a modeling event for the enjoyment of others.

That said, let me state emphatically that I am an average to good model builder. I am not a "great" or expert model builder. I have some strong skills. I have many more not so strong skills, and more often than not, they produce a mediocre to maybe a little better than average finished subject. I suspect that that is the case for most of us in this hobby. Not all of us are, or will ever be, Best of Show caliber modelers. We all aspire to that end, to be sure. That is as it should be. We are engaged in a hobby ... a pass-time, as it were. I think we all try to get a little better with each model we complete. The vast majority of us, however, will never receive a Best of Class award, let alone a Best of Show award for our work.

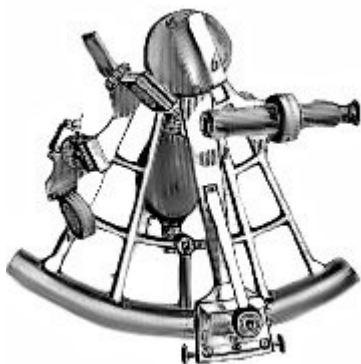
That does not, and should not, preclude us from evaluating the work of others according to the IPMS (or other groups, as appropriate) guidelines applied to contest judging. During my very early days as an inquisitive member of my local club, a couple of more experienced modelers took the time to mentor me and encourage my participation in judging at our local and regional shows. In fact, judging at model contests has been the single best investment of my time in improving my modeling skills. And it still is to this day. Closely evaluating the models that the rest of you put on the tables sharpens my attention to details, building sequences and techniques. I often seek out a win-

ner after the contest to inquire about his or her technique to create a certain effect or detail. Judging makes me a better modeler. So I participate as often as I can.

I have spent enough time judging here in Region 6 that I am sometimes asked to serve as a Head Aircraft judge. I also have served as the Chief Judge for our local ModelFiesta event in San Antonio for several years now. I consider that an honor, and a huge compliment from my fellow modelers. Serving in either position is mostly an administrative effort, and my actual judging of models is usually limited to tie-breaking or consulting on the finer points of the rules and guidelines. The only downside is responding to those rare modelers who complain loudly and obnoxiously when his or her entry wasn't chosen as the best in its category. More on that to follow, but nonetheless, I still enjoy it all.

What I typically find in fielding complaints from disgruntled contestants is that they felt the judging of their entry was either biased and unfair, or poorly evaluated by unqualified judges. Unfortunately, I must concede there are those very, very rare instances when they have a valid argument. But those cases are less than one in a hundred in my experience. In a not so unusual coincidence, that same disgruntled contestant is usually the person griping the loudest if the awards ceremony doesn't start exactly on time because the judging took too long. We depend on vol-





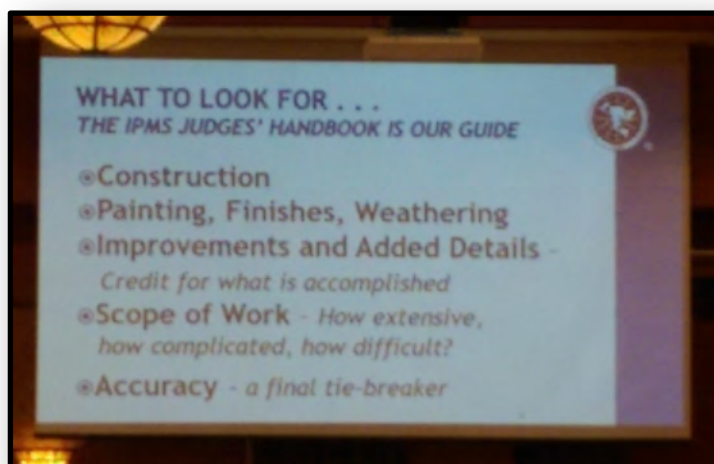
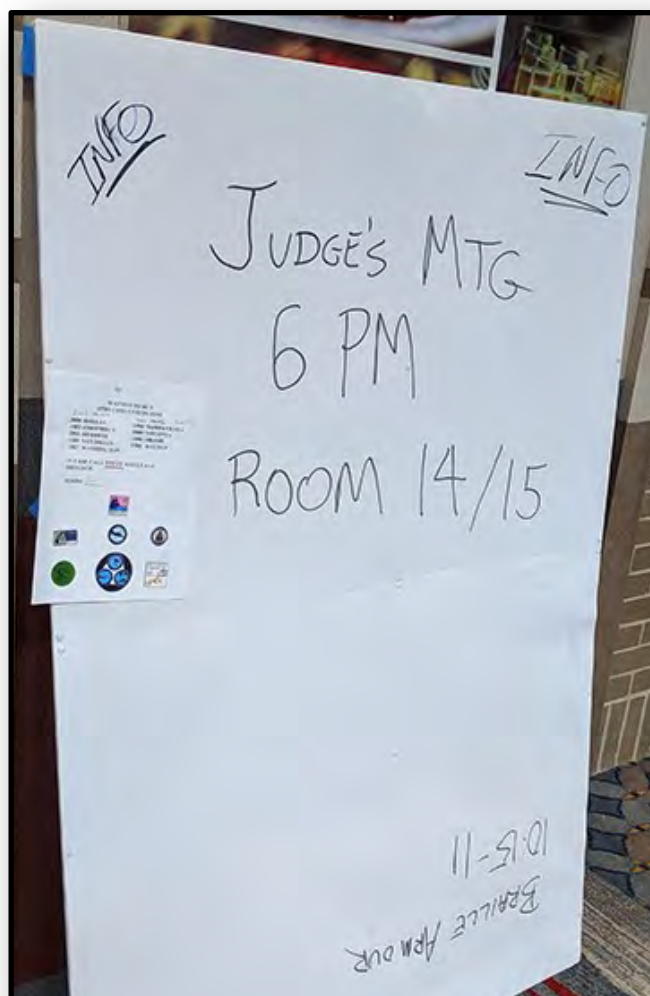
Feature Story

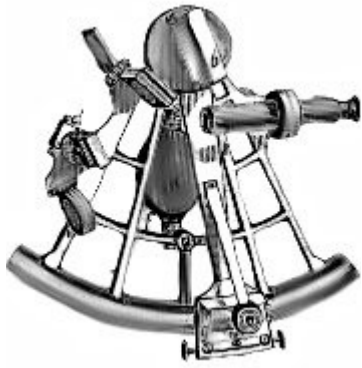
Some Thoughts on Judging

unteers to do this. None of what we do is set up for perfection. As a modeling friend of mine so often says, "You pay your money, and you take your chances." What I also ask of these disgruntled contestants is whether they participated in the judging at the show. In every case to date, the answer was no.

My point in all of this is to make a case to encourage all of us to participate regularly and enthusiastically in the contest judging at our modeling events. We spend countless self-absorbed hours crafting our entries, and more time travelling to a show, and enter them in a contest seeking validation of our long hard work by a small group of volunteers ... at a show hosted by yet more volunteers! Isn't it only right to volunteer an hour or two of our time, to return the favor to the other judges and contestants if we're physically able to do so? Please consider that when you hear the call for judges at the next show you attend.

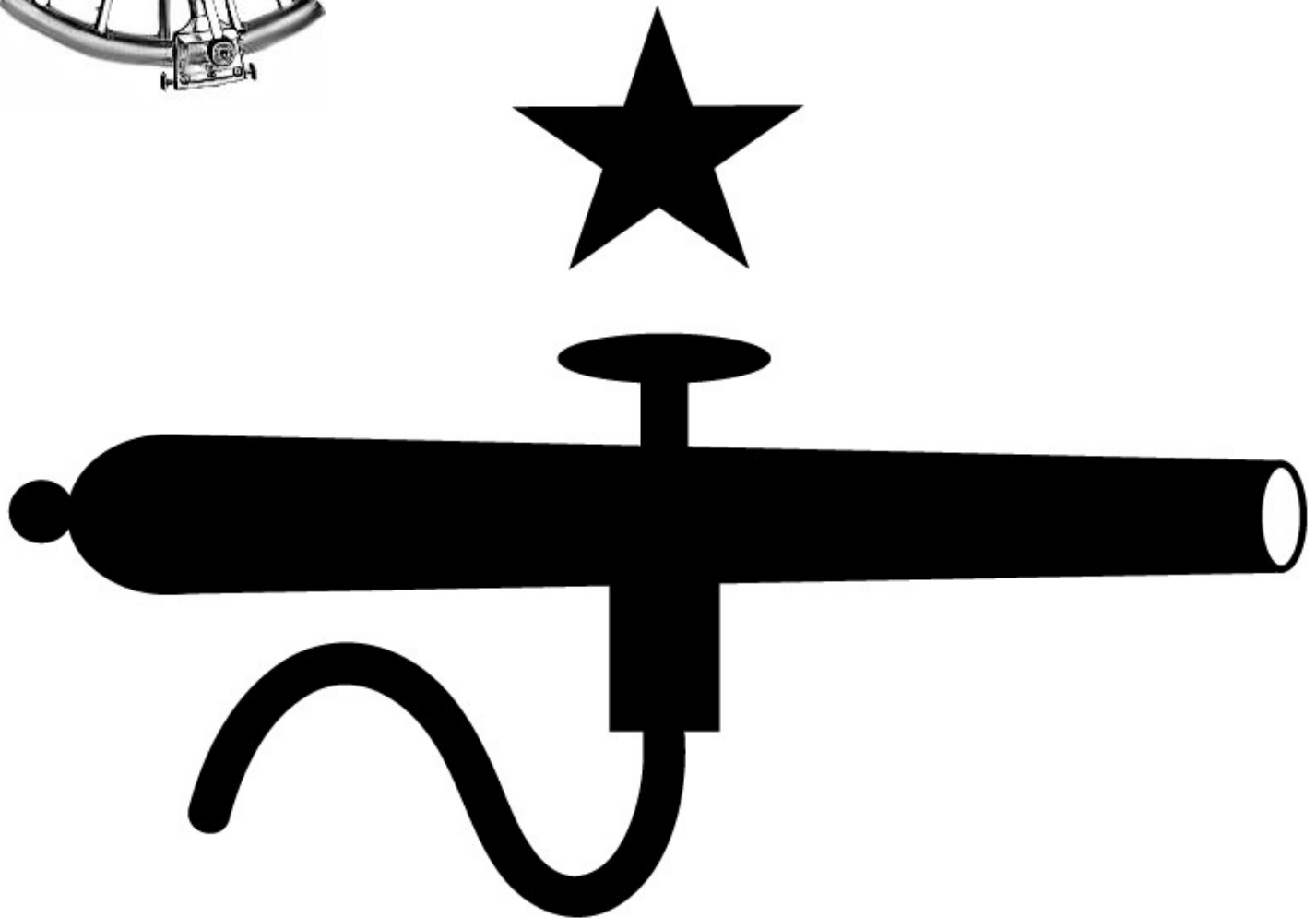
There are so many positives to be gained by participating. You always learn something. You help things run on time for you and everyone else at the show. Your fellow modelers will appreciate your time in volunteering. You meet other modelers with similar interests. You might even gain a new friend. You help increase the judging ranks at future shows by mentoring the OJT participants. And again, you ALWAYS learn something to help you become a better modeler.





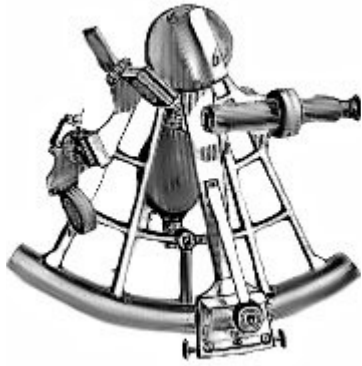
IPMS National Convention 2020

Because It's Never Too Early to Start Building



COME AND MAKE IT
IPMS/USA NATIONAL CONVENTION
SAN MARCOS, TEXAS
JUL 29 - AUG 1, 2020

WWW.NATS2020.COM



Upcoming Events

IPMS Region 6

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 5th, 2019 at 7:00PM

Location: Northside Ford of San Antonio

Sept 14, 2019

SuperCon 2019 Hosted by Ft. Worth Scale Modelers
Bob Duncan Community Center
2800 S. Center St. Vandergriff Park
Arlington, Texas

<http://fortworthscalemodelers.org/SuperCon.html>



Sept 28, 2019

2019 Sprue Doo Hosted by Central Arkansas Scale Modelers
(See club website for updated information on location)
North Little Rock, Arkansas

<http://www.casmodels.org/>



Oct 5, 2019

Capitol Classic-2019 Hosted by IPMS Austin Scale Modelers
Travis County Expo Center
7311 Decker Lane, Austin, TX 78724

<http://www.austinsms.org/contest.php>



Oct 19, 2019

Cajun ModelFest 33 Hosted by Baton Rouge Scale Modelers
LSU Ag Center's Minifarm Bldg.

<http://www.brscalmodelers.com/>



Jan 26, 2020

CALMEX XXXIV Hosted by IPMS SWAMP
Lake Charles Convention Center,
900 Lakeshore Dr. Lake Charles, LA

www.ipmsswamp.com

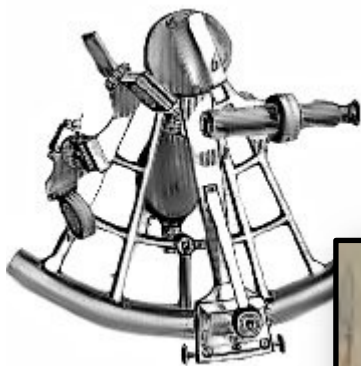


February 15, 2020

ModelFiesta 39 Hosted by IPMS Alamo Squadron
San Antonio Event Center
8111 Meadow Leaf Drive
San Antonio, TX 78227

<http://www.alamosquadron.com/modelfiesta>





About Alamo Squadron

Executive Board 2019-2020



President
Craig Gregory
IPMS #49320



Vice President:
Len Pilhofer
IPMS #49932



Treasurer:
Chris Settle

IPMS/USA Alamo Squadron was founded on November 17th, 1977 in San Antonio, Texas, for the enjoyment of building scale models and the camaraderie of the members. It is a hobby-centered social organization which, at its core, is focused on scale modeling of all kinds. It is an excellent source of information for those who wish to enhance their modeling skills and improve their modeling techniques, and is open and inviting to visitors and guests. Dues are \$12.00 a year, due to the treasurer on September 1st of each year.

Alamo Squadron has been hosting ModelFiesta since 1981. Locations have included the Wonderland Mall, a Holiday Inn, the Seven Oaks Motel & Convention Center, the Live Oak Civic Center and the new location in 2013, the San Antonio Event Center.



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www.alamosquadron.com



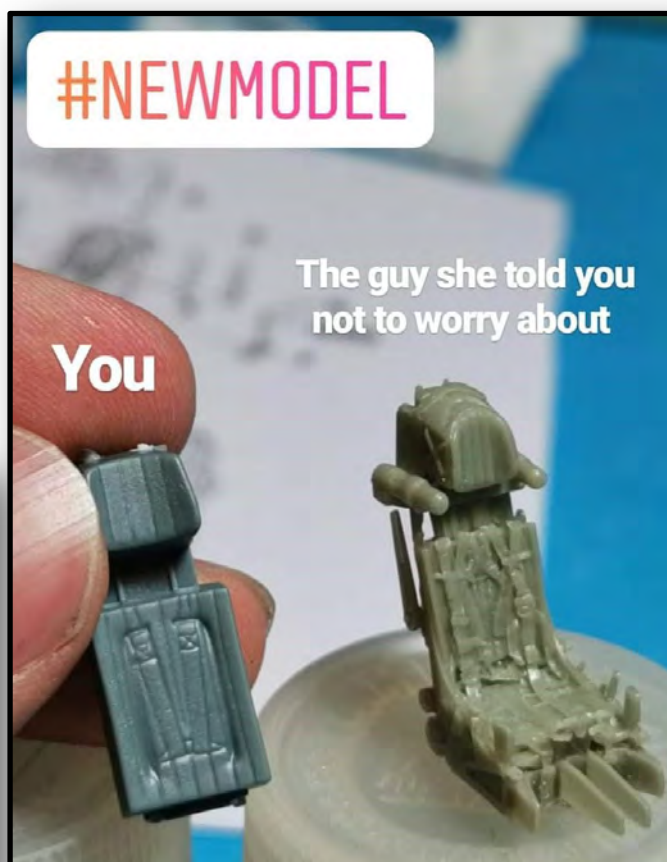
Final Words ...



Alamo Squadron's newsletter, "The Navigator", is published monthly by IPMS/USA Alamo Squadron of San Antonio, Texas for the enjoyment of the members of Alamo Squadron and its friends around the world. Articles, reviews, news items, and other hobby-related contributions are very welcome. Send text file, photos, and web sites as well as feedback to our editor, Len Pilhofer: pilhofer@hotmail.com

<http://www.ipmsusa.org/>

IPMS/USA MEMBERSHIP FORM			
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Address: _____	(if Respending)	First	Middle
City: _____	State: _____	Zip: _____	
Phone: _____	E-mail: _____		
Signature (required by PO): _____			
Type of Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult, 1 Year: \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult, 2 Years: \$58	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult, 3 Years: \$86
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior (Under 18 Years) \$17	<input type="checkbox"/> Family, 1 Year: \$35 (Adult + \$5, One Set Journals)		How Many Cards? _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Canada & Mexico: \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> Other / Foreign: \$38 (surface) Checks must be drawn on a US bank or international money order		
Payment Method: <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Money Order			
Chapter Affiliation, (if any): _____			
If Recommended by an IPMS Member, Please List His / Her Name and Member Number: _____			
Name: _____		IPMS No.: _____	
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Join or Renew Online at: www.ipmsusa.org		St. Petersburg, FL 33732-6023	

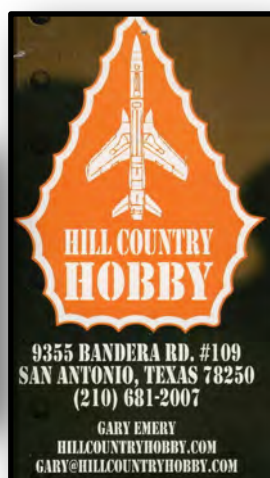


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