



THE ALAMO SQUADRON

NAVIGATOR

JAN 2025

San Antonio, Texas

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



As the holidays occur, let us remember that the reason for the season is the birth of Jesus Christ. We have much to be thankful for. Please consider that we are living in a country and at a time in history when

we have more than anyone else has ever had. Let us be thankful for the opportunity to have a strong club and pursue our hobby of modeling.

The annual White Elephant Gift Exchange held during the December meeting was kept under control by our local Grinch (Dick Montgomery) and his dog Max (Alan Larrumbide). Several popular model kits were stolen shamelessly several times, all in the spirit of the gift exchange. Alamo Squadron brought a cake and soft drinks. I believe a good time was had by all.

Preparations for Model Fiesta 43 (January 4, 2025) have been finalized. Alamo Squadron will have the entire facility this year and in the future. As most of you know, we will be introducing an open judging system where entries are judged against a standard for Gold, Silver, and Bronze instead of categorized and judged against the models in that category for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. However, since all models are judged,

we are limiting each contestant to five entries. We are encouraging contestants to bring models for Display Only (See Page 2). These models will not be judged. And we encourage Alamo Squadron members to bring their models and awards from previous years for Display Only. Detailed information about Model Fiesta 43 is available at ModelFiesta.com or on the Alamo Squadron website. It is time to start thinking about what models you might enter. Club members are encouraged to take advantage of the pre-registration process.

Our Head Judge Dana Mathes and his team of judges will continue to judge our monthly contest starting in February. This will continue for the remainder of the year. Our current judges will continue to sharpen their skills and new members can be added to the judging team.

The January meeting contest will be for the Model of the Year. If you model placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in any of the 2024 monthly Alamo Squadron contests, your model is eligible for the prestigious Model of the Year Award. Please consider your best models for entry. Please join in at our next meeting on Thursday, January 2, at 6:30 pm at .Jordan Ford on Pat Booker

See Ya' - Keith

Leadership Thoughts by Keith Rule
Model Fiesta by David Auth
The Tragic Story of Cubana Flight CU 495 presented by Julio Caro
OPPOSING FORCE! Detailing the Kinetic F-18C by Joe Chapa
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- What's on your bench? - Alan

The Model Fiesta Memorial Display Tables

As development of our new ModelFiesta “Gold Silver Bronze” judging took place we realized that we needed to set a limit of 5 models per contestant. Since ModelFiesta is much more than just a contest we realized there was an opportunity for folks to bring “display only” models. In other words, models that are not part of the contest and will not be judged. After all, our theme is “**Big**” because we’ve got plenty of room this year.

There is no fee for display models and you can bring as many as you’d like. So, bring your five contest models and some display models above and beyond that. You may also bring any prior awards your display models have won and set them out too. You can even put your name on your display.

These display tables will be dedicated to our good friends and fellow club members Vincent Benevides and Rene Faulk. We lost both Rene and Vincent in May of 2024.



BECAUSE BIGGER IS BETTER.

<http://www.modelfiesta.com>

Click on these 4 Icons below for MF 43 Updates



A large purple poster for Model Fiesta 43. At the top left is a circular logo for the "IPMS/Denver Squadron" featuring a blue biplane and the text "Established 1977" and "SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS". To the right of the logo is a large, stylized sombrero with a Texas flag design. The main text "MODEL FIESTA 43" is in large, bold, orange and white letters. Below it, in a teal banner, is "CONTEST AND VENDOR EVENT". Underneath that, "JANUARY 4TH // 9AM-4PM" is written in white and orange. At the bottom, it says "New Braunfels Civic Convention Center" and "New Braunfels, TX". In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for "BIG SCALES MODELS ALL TYPE OF MODELS". The background is decorated with colorful, patterned paper cutouts.



THE TRAGIC STORY OF CUBANA FLIGHT CU495

First International Airline Hi-jacking originating on American Soil

Presented by Julio A. Caro



Inaugural flight at Santiago Airport, Cuba, of Flight CU-T603 | photo courtesy of Carlos Ferrera. Torres

Greetings, fellow modelers! I am currently building a 1/96 scale Vickers Viscount 755D airliner produced in 1989 by Glencoe Models (Kit #: 05501) shown on page 6.

While doing some research on this aircraft I discovered that in 1958 one of Cubana's Viscount 755D airliners (CU-T603) was hijacked by pro-Castro rebels on a flight from Miami (MIA) to Varadero, Cuba (VRA) with deadly results. When I found out about this, I decided to dedicate this build to the memory of the innocent victims who perished on that flight that fateful day due to the political whims and ambitions of a power-hungry egomaniac. Read on for more details.



In the fall of 1958, Fidel Castro came up with a new terrorist tactic that endures to this day. His sinister plan called for the hijacking of commercial airliners. Unlike earlier commandeering of commercial aircraft as a way of travel for the desperate, or cash for criminals taking hostages and property to ransom, Castro's plan called for the hijacking of commercial aircraft for the sole purpose of obtaining publicity and political gains leading to one of history's most notorious hijackings was that of **Cubana Flight CU495** which took place in late 1958.

On November 1st, 1958, Cubana Flight CU495, a Vickers Viscount 755D four-engine turboprop airplane was hijacked during a flight from Miami, Florida to Varadero, Cuba. Minutes before landing, five passengers drew firearms announcing they were rebels for Fidel Castro's 26th of July Revolutionary Movement and that they were seizing the aircraft.

Holding the passengers and cabin crew at gunpoint, Castro's hijackers pulled up the aircraft carpet and opened a hatch retrieving 26th of July Movement (M-26-7) uniforms and military gear stowed in a sub-floor compartment. In full view of the passengers, the rebels stripped to their underwear and donned olive green rebel uniforms. Two of the hi-jackers broke into the cockpit and ordered Captain Ruskin Medrano Portuondo and First Officer José Combarro to take the plane to a small airstrip near the Sierra Cristal. When Captain Medrano argued a Viscount was unable to land at a small airstrip, he was pistol-whipped. There have been conflicting accounts about who flew the airplane after that. Some claimed a hijacker with flight training, Edmundo Ponce de León, seized the controls. However divers who recovered passenger remains reported Capt. Medrano's body was recovered from the pilot's seat, indicating he was at the controls at end of the flight.

The rebels were smuggling a shipment of arms, grenades, and military supplies for delivery to Castro's headquarters in the Sierra Cristal. The bold rebel plan was ill-conceived. Among the weaknesses of the plan was the landing area chosen. In addition to selecting an airstrip where it was impossible to land a Viscount, there were no airports nearby suitable of handling the Viscount's weight and speed. Even the largest airport nearby, the paved but short runway at Preston (a United Fruit Company sugar mill) could not accommodate aircraft larger than a DC-3. Under the best of circumstances, a Viscount forced to land at Preston would have resulted in a controlled crash causing significant damage and injuries. These circumstances were far from the best: low on fuel, no radio contact, and night operations in darkness (the airfield at Preston had neither radio communications nor runway lighting).

After apparently making a number of aborted landing approaches in the Mayari area, the Viscount attempted to land at Preston. On approach to Preston a hijacker exited the cockpit and taking a seat at the back told the passengers to brace for a crash because they were out of fuel. Instants later the Viscount crashed into the dark shark-infested waters of Nipe Bay, at 9:00 PM.

The Director of Preston Hospital, Dr. Octavio Ortiz Padró, rapidly set up emergency facilities for victims of the disaster. However, only three survivors were rescued: Osiris Martinez (whose American wife and their three infant children perished in the crash), Omara González and her young cousin Luis Sosa (both traveling with their grandfather, who did not survive). Ten passengers (seven of them Americans) and the entire crew of four perished.

Though news accounts of the time indicated there had been 17 fatalities, it was later discovered that three of the hijackers were never found and presumed dead were actually rescued by Castro's rebels. Of these, two quickly ascended through the ranks. Edmundo Ponce de León was promoted to Lieutenant and two months later was assigned to a police station as second in command. The other, Manuel Fernández Falcon, rose to become Chief of the Counterintelligence Directorate at the Interior Ministry.

Remarkably, in 1994 hijacker Ponce de León sought and was granted admission to the US as a naturalized citizen. In a strange twist of fate, he lived near the two surviving passengers of the Viscount crash until his death in October of 2011. Cubana Airlines pilot Captain Armando Piedra was thrice touched in three weeks by Castro's pioneering air terror campaign. The week before the Viscount hijacking he had been the pilot of a Cubana Airlines DC-3 hijacked by Castro's rebels at gunpoint. An experienced scuba diver, Piedra volunteered to assist search and recovery operations in the shark-infested waters of Nipe Bay where Flight CU495 finally came to rest. He had the burdensome task of un-harnessing and removing the body of his friend and colleague Capt. Medrano from the pilot's seat. A few days later he would be the pilot in command of yet another Cubana DC-3 hijacked by armed rebels. The hijacked DC-3 passengers and crew were taken hostage and used as bargaining chips to force compliance with Castro's financial and political demands.

Cubana's Flight CU495 has the unfortunate distinction of having been the first recorded hi-jacking of an aircraft anywhere resulting in the deaths of innocent passengers and crew.

Sources:

Cuba 1952-1959 Blog Spot:

<https://cuba1952-1959.blogspot.com/search?q=cu-t603>

Vickers Viscount Network:

<http://www.vickersviscount.net/Index/VickersViscount091History.aspx>

KIT INFORMATION



1/96 Scale **GLENCOE MODELS VICKERS VISCOUNT** (Kit # 05501), produced in 1989

OPPOSING FORCE!

Detailing the Kinetic F-18C

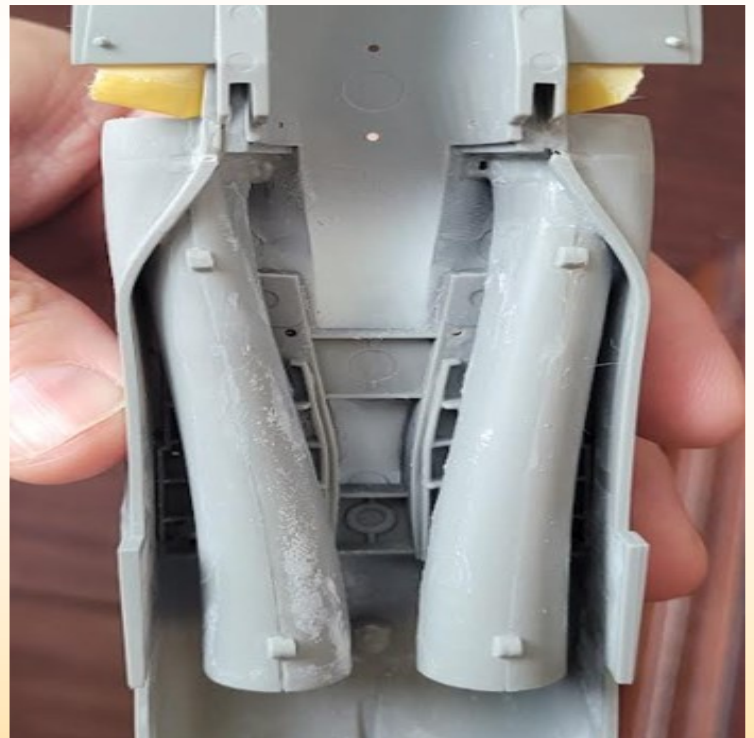
By Joe Chapa



The Kinetic F-18C kit was both a fun build and extremely challenging due to the engineering and aftermarket upgrades such as Eduard, Quinta Studio and Reskit's offerings. I picked this kit up long ago and it had been sitting in my stash for about year. I was inspired to build it because I came across the different paint schemes used by the NSAWC (Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center or "En-Sock). I really loved the Russian Splendor scheme over the worn-out gray colors we see most often on Navy aircraft.

Overall, the kit quality is very good and went together well though I had 2 major hurdles, the air intakes and fuselage. The 1st build attempt was sanding the intakes completely smooth, I was unable to achieve my goal so I purchased another kit, but on the 2nd attempt I got brave and added the large photo etch parts to the intake, bad idea, it was a huge failure and I was unable to get the metal PE flush and retain its details. So, I ordered a 3rd kit but this time I made sure to glue these parts that were mostly flush from the beginning to reduce the amount of sanding and no PE. This step is extremely important with Kinetic kits because the plastic is soft and the panel lines are shallow, this means you can blow away all the detail and getting them back is almost impossible, so I made sure I got all the joints as smooth as possible to re-

duce sanding. I don't mind sanding, but the kit does and you will lose all detail if you sand too much. Actually, I sanded so much, you could see light through the intakes because I sanded a lot of material away. It was not a problem because I painted and it was the interior part of the intake.



This part of the construction has about 5 parts and getting it smooth is no easy task, it can be done, but you need 2 kits to learn how to the build it. As I stated earlier, the 2nd hurdle was the fuselage due to the butt joint where you attach the main fuselage and nose that contains the cockpit. Getting these pieces together can be a challenge because one side may be

flush and the other not so much but that's the hurdle, you have to sand and if you do, you lose details. So strategic sanding is crucial as the plastic is soft and panel lines are shallow.

The cockpit was upgraded with Quinta Studio's and Eduard photo etch parts for the canopy,



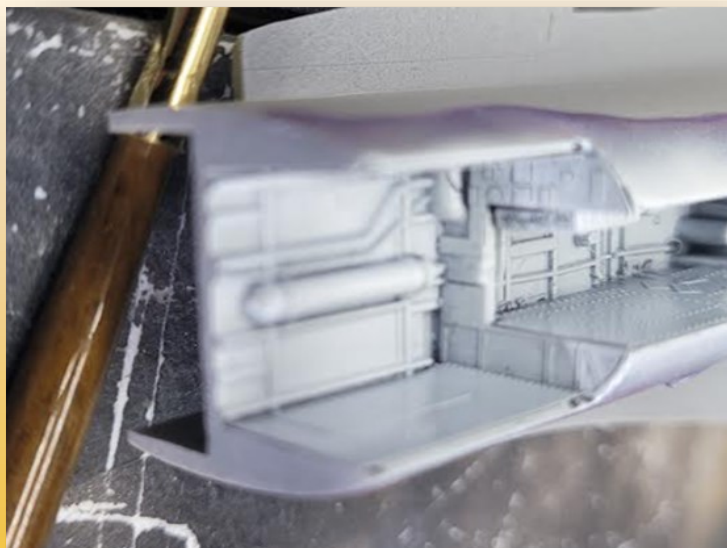
the detail provided with these new 3D sets are amazing and there is no amount of painting that can match a 3D printer. I understand some call this cheating but I would argue using PE, airbrushes, and decals would be considered

cheating as well. But you know what, "each to their own". The engine exhaust was also upgraded with Reskit resin parts, in my opinion, a nice visible upgrade.

Once I completed the main build, the F-18C finally made it into the paint shop, I used Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 mixed with Mr. leveling thinner for pre shading and primer. I used MRP paints for the Russian Splendor scheme and a set of Aeromasks. The masks were wonderful, the lines were sharp and crisp, no fuzziness. For weathering, I used a combination of Tamiya washes and Mig Ammo washes. The only regrets I had was using the Eduard exterior PE parts, I just don't think it is worth it, with the exception of the canopy upgrade, that was a fun upgrade and added a lot detail that can be seen.

Lastly, I used the ACMI POD from the Tamiya F-16 aggressor kit, the Kinetic kit lacked the part needed for the Russian Splendor subject, I also added some spikes to add detail to the POD.

So, would I suggest this kit? Yes, but I would caution the modeler on the challenges regarding the intakes and fuselage especially for a novice builder, this could be a nightmare. Though with patience, and extra kits on hand, it can be done!





J'S WORK **AIRBRUSH CAMO-MASK**

Airbrush CAMO-MASK for 1/48 F/A-18C NSA4WC 'RUSSIAN SPLENDOR' BUNO 163746 2009 Camouflage Scheme
Item No. PPA3161

■ Intermediate Green ★ ■ Tan Earth ■ Sand Yellow

REMARKS:
Suggest using Airbrush Camo-Mask marked with addition (+) to be the first camouflage color and the first Mask within on the.

Save



AMT 63 Chevy II Nova Station Wagon gets "Ruled"

By Keith Rule

I know. A 1963 Chevy II Wagon does not sound like a very exciting custom. I'm not very good at coming up with original ideas for a build, but I'm very good at "borrowing" ideas. I saw a Chevy II Wagon with a dual sunroof in Model Car Magazine and decided to "borrow" this idea. After receiving the kit, I found that the roof was indeed flat and would accept a flat clear product. I purchased a box of 1/16" acrylic sheets I found on Amazon.

I had also been doing some experimenting with my airbrush. I had purchased several mesh type fabrics to airbrush through and see what effects I might get. Most of these experiments failed to produce anything useful, but one set of products proved interesting. I had found a set of patterned sheets made for crafts, not sewing. I also have in my supplies several types of lace trim used in sewing that I have airbrushed through in the past. I decided to design a paint job using the effects I had achieved with these experiments.

The paints for this project would be Tamiya White Primer, Scale Finishes Bright White, and House of Kolor Planet Green, Lapis Blue, and Zenith Gold. The window Trim would be Tamiya Matt Black over the clear coat. Tamiya does not market a paint in matt black, so I have found



that a mix of 2 parts flat black to 1 part semi-gloss black gives a satisfactory matt black. I use Tamiya primers, both rattle can and airbrush, exclusively, although there are others out there that I'm sure are satisfactory. Scale Finishes



makes great products – they have matching automotive and racing colors and an interesting line of pearl colors. House of Kolor paints are also available through Scale Finishes. House of Kolor are custom automotive paints popular with custom car and motorcycle painters. They are outstanding airbrush products. Model Car World produces a line of lacquers and enamels. I would still use their lacquers, but have quit using their enamels and 2K Enamel Clear Coat.



The enamel clear coat comes in small quantities and the activator has a nasty habit of hardening within a few days after it is opened. I haven't mentioned Gravity or Zero paints, although they are used extensively in the model car world.

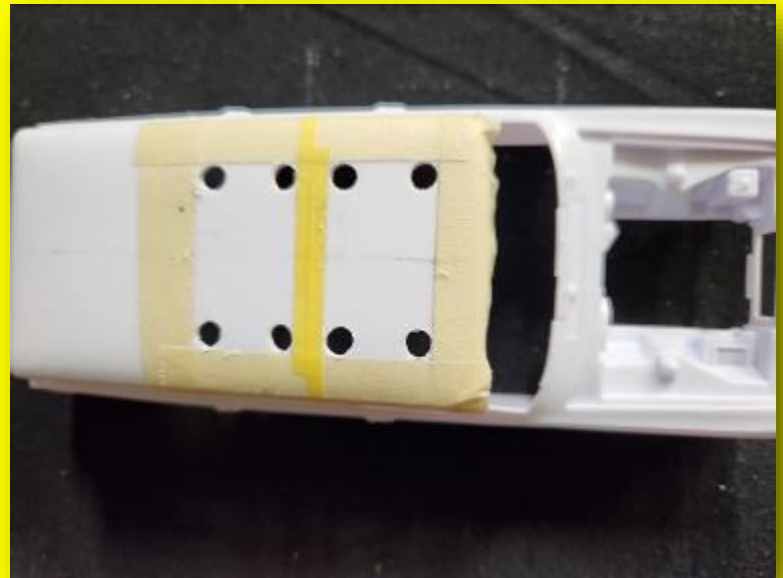
The clear coat would be Restoration Shop Hot Rod Gloss 2K Urethane. I have a quart that has been opened for several years and continues to produce a beautiful finish. There are several other 2K urethane clear coats in quart quantities out there – House of Kolor Show Clear, PPG, Diamond Finish, etc. that are used by car modelers. They are all basically the same. If you can't justify a large (lifetime) quantity, Splash Paints, Scalefinishes, and Zero Paints sell small quantities. Having a quart means you never have to worry about mixing too much or too little, or running out before your project is finished. A WORD OF WARNING – all of these clear coats must be used in an area with plenty of ventilation – your garage or outside – NOT IN THE HOUSE, unless you want a divorce. And with gloves and a respirator. I have a table in my garage with compressor and lighting. Airbrush must be cleaned immediately after each use with 2 K urethane clear coat. I know – this is getting complicated.

I prepped the body by sanding off all molding, trim, and badging. The custom front and rear pieces were glued to the body and puttied with JB Weld Steel 2 part putty. This product is dark

gray, takes 16 hours to cure, but WILL NOT shrink. I have been using it (or Tamiya Quick Type Epoxy Putty) for all major repairs. I will use Tamiya White Putty for minor repairs.

I laid out the dual sunroofs with masking tape and drilled out the corners first. I then used the back side of a number 11 blade to scribe out the straight sections. After removing the two roof sections, I

could see that the openings weren't perfectly square with the roof, but some aggressive sanding squared things up. A backing piece was cut from .030 styrene sheet and fit to the underside of the roof, making sure it didn't interfere with



the windshield installation. Then it was time to cut and fit the 1/16" clear acrylic sunroof pieces. I cut these with a razor saw and then sanded carefully to fit. The backing piece and opening perimeter would be brush painted Tamiya Matt Black.

The windshield was less than pristine. Clear plastic can be polished back to clear as follows: sand with 2000, then 3000, and 5000, then Meguiar's Scratch-X, then Meguiar's Ultimate Compound, and then, if necessary, Meguiar's Ultimate Polish, all by hand with microfiber cloth. The rear window unit was tinted with air-

brushed Tamiya Smoke.

The door and tailgate panel lines were scribed with the backside of a number 11 blade and filled with a Tamiya Flat Black wash after the clear coat.

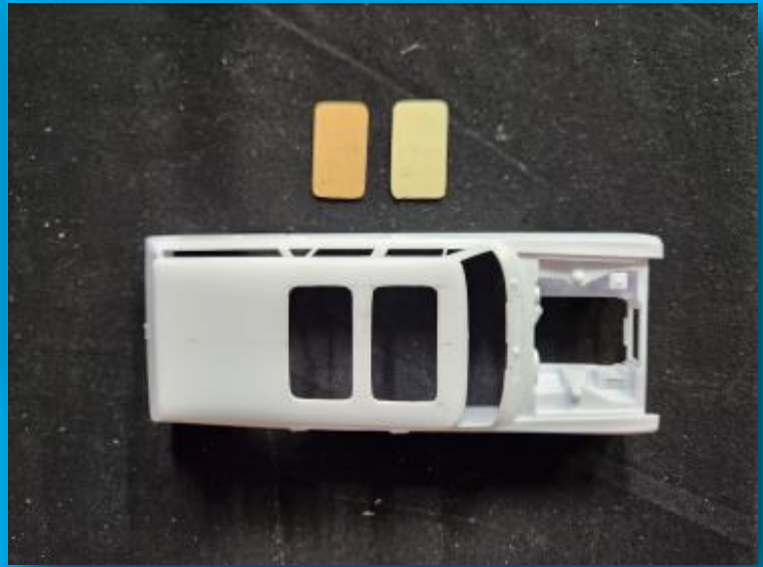


I tried to fit a 3D printed Pontiac Tri-Power engine from Iceman Collections in the engine compartment. This could be accomplished with major surgery to the model, but I decided it wasn't worth it. I used the kit's stock inline 6 adding some wiring and plumbing.



The wheels and tires are from my spare parts box. Adapting the wheels to the front spindles and the rear metal axle required some scratch building. The green Brembo Brakes are also scratch built.

The kit's stock interior would not do for a custom build. I ordered four 3D printed custom seats from Iceman Collections. I have recently ordered several items from Iceman Collections and I find his 3D printed parts to be quality products. He has a wide selection of parts including complete engines, wide body kits, seats, wheels, and etc. etc. I cut out the front bench seat and repaired the floor with .030 sty-



rene. This repair didn't need to be perfect as future carpet flocking would hide the repair. A new console was scratch built from sheet styrene. I tried to finish the seat with blue and green flocking as I have seen this done well, but it didn't work out to my satisfaction. The seats were dunked in Castrol Super Clean (can also be used to remove chrome), washed, and painted with the House of Kolor Lapis Blue, Planet Green, and Zenith Gold. The dash and remainder of the interior were finished with the HOK paints, gauge decals, wire trim rings, and Molotow Chrome Pen.

I hope you have found something to add to your modeling skills.

Keith



Dibbles Hobbies

1029 Donaldson Ave,
San Antonio, TX 78228
(210) 735-7721

Hill Country Hobby

9355 Bandera Rd Ste-118
San Antonio, TX 78250
(210) 681-2007

Hobby Town

1309 N Loop 1604 W
Vineyard Shopping Center, Suite 101
San Antonio, TX 78258-4769
(210) 236-5527



Model Fiesta Cuarenta y Tres (43)
Website

<http://www.modelfiesta.com>



Alamo Squadron Website

<http://www.alamosquadron.com/index.html>



For IPMS Membership
information please visit:
<https://myipmsusa.org/>
Go to membership page



Alamo Squadron Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/114044928625406>

Date	Event	Location
January 4	<u>Model Fiesta Cuarenta y Tres</u> <u>MF (43)</u>	New Braunfels Civic Center 375 S. Castell Ave New Braunfels, TX.
January 25	<u>Winterblitz 2025</u>	Museum of the American GI 19124 Hwy 6 College Station, TX 77842
March 15	<u>RiverCon 2025</u>	LSUS University Center 1 University Place Shreveport, LA 71115
March 22	<u>MCMA Showdown</u>	Willow Creek Fellowship 1804 P Ave. Plano TX. 75074
May 3	<u>ModelMania</u>	Stafford Center 10505 Cash Road Stafford TX. 77477

Navigator Editor

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