

Rochester Model Rails

Dedicated to Quality Model Railroading

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ROCHESTER, NY

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C. N. R. # 6218 rounds the curve at Pungent Pond Station on David R. Lee's Poyntlas & Dreerie RR. David is MMR # 27 and lives in Dundas, Ontario, Canada.

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Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

About the NMRA. I agree. It is obsolete. Let's do away with it. Forty-five dollars per year is too much for what you get. All you receive is a monthly magazine with somewhat dubious articles, pertinent NMRA business, and annual index of magazine articles. A calendar. New standards and recommended practices. National library and museum. National and regional groups with conventions and meets where model railroaders of all scales and disciplines can get together to discuss their concerns, visit layouts, meet new people, renew old friendships, hold clinics and have their skills rated. The MMR program. SIGs. And members and officers who donate their time in trying to keep current in this changing world. (Perhaps we should cut their salaries to save money.)

For some reason I enjoy going to meets and conventions. I especially like to visit layouts which I otherwise would not have a chance to see. I even like to take something I made to the meet to see how I compare with others, but there are precious few other models on display.

Now those lazy louts in charge haven't done much lately. The only developments they came up with recently are the DCC standards, RPs, Model with the Masters, fine scale standards (Proto 1:87), and trying to define new developments in scales and gauges such as On30 (?), gauge 1, LGB and other similar sizes. There may be other things they did but I haven't kept up. I don't have the time.

Can you image what is involved in getting all the information together from experts, manufactures and others, and publishing something they all agree to? You think they could accomplish something they all agree to? You think they could accomplish this in a timely manner.

Politics. It's funny how quickly politics creeps into even the smallest of organizations. Two people can get together and argue about things like scale vs gage (or is it gauge?) or if the NMRA is obsolete or not. You can not image the politics involved in an organization as large and complex as the NMRA. It's enough to make people quit.

If we can do away with the NMRA, then I can settle down to spending \$45.00 per year on trying to get manufacturer "A"'s equipment to work with manufacturer "B"'s equipment (or "C"'s or "D"'s ...) as no one will work with the other guy as each thinks their own way is the right way and the h _ _ _ with the others. (Is this politics?)

Well, I'd like to continue my commentary but I've taken up to much time (and space, if this is printed). Besides I have a railroad to run, right after I send a contribution to the NMRA.

Leo F. Adamski

Leo Adamski is a model railroader in Penfield, NY, a member of the Tuesday Night Gang, and a Life Member of the NMRA. His layout was featured on the cover of the RMR, December 2003.

Letters to the Editor

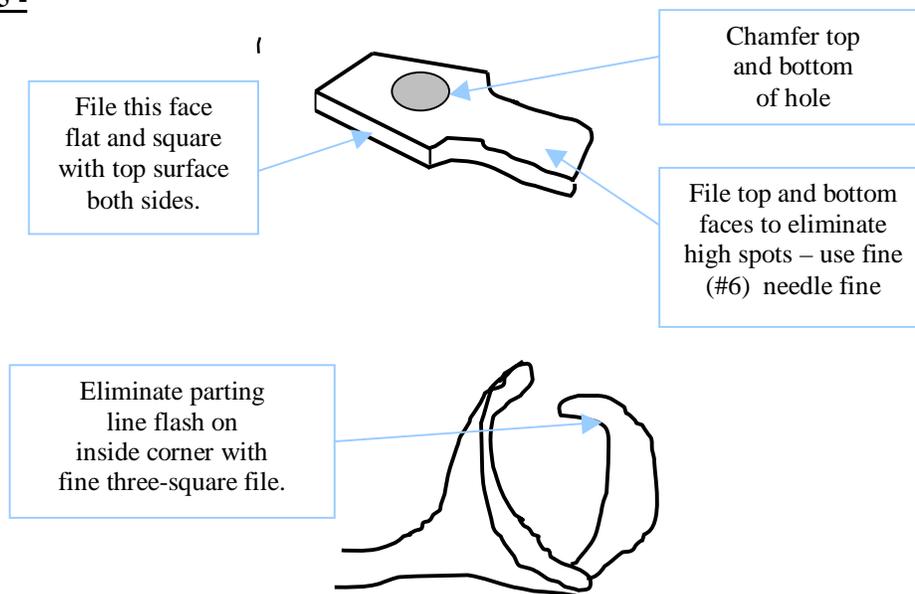
To the Editor:

Comments on the Coupler Replacement Article [in the February 2004 RMR]

The steps shown apply to replacing horn hook couplers with magnetic [knuckle] type couplers on talgo trucks, although some of the steps could apply to body mounted couplers.

Step 4 - Could apply to any coupler, such as *Kadee* #5, that has the same basic configuration.

Step 5 -



Step 6 - All coupler pockets (including body mounted) should be clear of any obstructions (nubs, bosses, etc.) for the coupler to operate properly. Anyone having problems can contact me through *Rochester Model Rails*. I will try to help them if I can.

Step 10 - Burnish spring before installing in coupler pocket. (Step 9).

Step 9 - Install spring against the flat face of the pocket. When installed, it should be above the coupler when set on the track. This is also true of body mounted couplers.

Step 13a - Check position of the coupler and pin with a *Kadee* height gauge. If the coupler head does not line up with gauge, the only way to adjust it is to carefully bend the coupler pocket up or down to obtain proper alignment (talgo truck only). The uncoupling pin should be set to 1/32" above the rail. Also check for full sideways motion in both directions. The coupler should return to the center or normal position when released.

Leo F. Adamski

The 'Model Railroad' Post Office

By Norm Wright

[Ed.- This is the first in a series of articles by Norm Wright about Railway stamps.]

This group of four "model train stamps" from Dominica is part of a 10-stamp set issued on November 11, 1992.

The 55c stamp (below - upper left) depicts a scale model of a U.K. London, Midland & Scottish Railway 3rd Class brake coach, OO-gauge, made by Mainline/Palitoy of Hong Kong in the 1970s. The Scott stamp catalog number is 1506.

The 65c value (upper right) shows a 2-6-0 Wabash Railroad brass HO scale locomotive by Associated Hobby Manufacturing (AHM), Japan, 1958; Scott 1507.

The 75c item (lower left) pictures a 4-4-4-4 Pennsylvania Railroad T-1 Duplex in O-gauge, built in both scale and hi-rail versions for Weaver Models of Northumberland, Pennsylvania, by Samhomgsa Co., Korea, in 1991; Scott 1508.

And the \$3 stamp (lower right) features a 4-6-4 Japanese National Railways brass HO scale Class C62 locomotive, manufactured by Tetsudo Makei Sha, Japan, in 1960; Scott 1510.

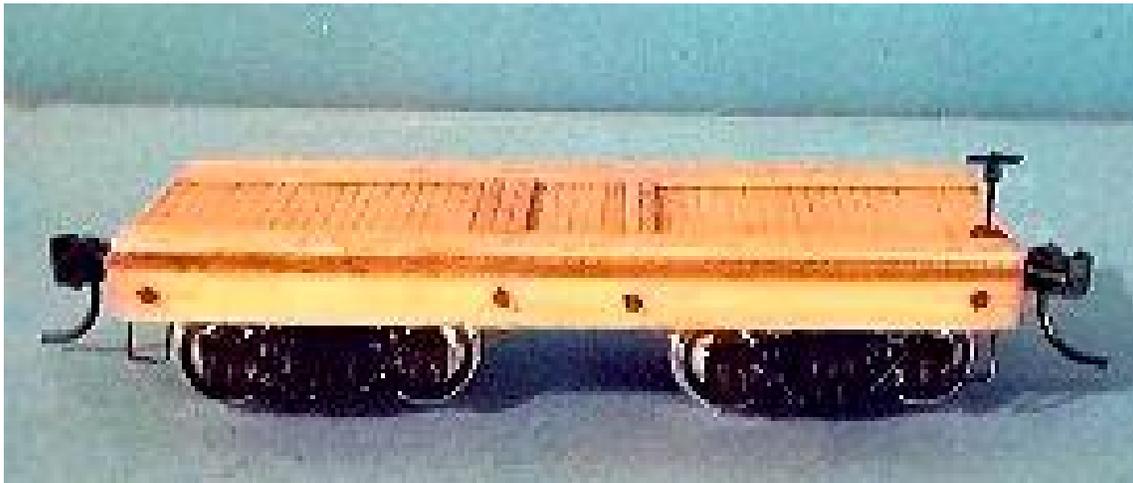
The postmark in the center of the four-stamp layout is a First Day of Issue cancel.



Norm Wright, a native of Rochester, has been a model railroader and railfan for nearly 40 years, and a philatelist specializing in railroadiana on stamps since about 1980. He has been the compiler, author and editor of railway stamp handbooks and other related literature for the American Topical Association and its Casey Jones Rail Road Unit for the past decade. Samples of his model railroad layouts and other railroad activities may be viewed on his web site at <http://home.online.no/~jdigrane/normaned>.

Emmett Brannan's
Cache Creek Scale Models
Logging Cars

**Product
Review**



Cache Creek 24 Foot Log/Equipment Mover Flat # LEMF24 – (as sold)

Last November I attended the Syracuse Train Show and was happy to see many vendors of fine model railroad equipment and supplies. One that caught my fancy was E. J. Brannan's *Cache Creek Scale Models*. This company makes ready-to-run HO, HOn3, and On30 free lanced wood logging and mining cars. These fine units are designed and manufactured by Emmett J. Brannan, PO Box 312, Yolo, CA 95697 – web site: www.loggingcars.com

There are quite a few cars to choose from including the 24-foot log/equipment mover flat # LEMF24 (see picture above), gondola, side dump ore car, air pump weed sprayer, tanker with boiler, tank car, water tank steam pumper car, platform tank car, work car, boom MOW, box car, log buggy, disconnect, steam donkey skidder hoist, caboose (or is that cabeese), and others.

I purchased five of these cars and couldn't wait to get them on my *Oil Creek Logging and Mining Railroad*.

The basic flat car (see Page 7 for a drawing of the *Cache Creek Basic Railcar*) is constructed with relatively few parts. It has a basic wood frame on which two large side sills and a center sill are attached. Two *MDC* black plastic archbar # 02922 trucks are screwed to the center sill. Two *Kadee* #47 couplers are also attached to the basic wood frame. Scribed lumber makes up the decking and scale wood is used for the two end buffers. There are also four transverse beams, brake wheel, shaft, & pawl, and some NBW detail. The equipment flat shown above also has some support lumber added to the decking.

I would like to offer some comments about how, with just a little effort, these cars can be improved in both operations and looks.

These cars have *Kadee* #47 (metal medium 9/32" underset shank) couplers which were used to ensure that the coupler height is correct. A small problem was encountered since the car had been sprayed with *Testors* # 1260 *Dull Coat* after the couplers were installed. This made the couplers somewhat sluggish. This combined with the very small profile of these cars, I decided to replace these couplers with the *Kadee* #58 (metal medium 19/64" centerset shank) scale couplers. The #58 coupler has the same coupler pocket, shank, etc. as the # 47 or #5, but a with a smaller knuckle. So it's a quick change to remove the #47 and insert the #58. Both appearance and operations were improved substantially with very little effort.

The trucks on this car are *MDC Roundhouse* archbar # 2922 with

both plastic frames and wheels. I like *Intermountain* 33" wheel sets with blackened brass wheels and axles. They look good, work well, are non-magnetic, stay clean, and sound great. (All the freight cars on my Oil Creek Rail Road have *Intermountain* 33" wheel sets.)

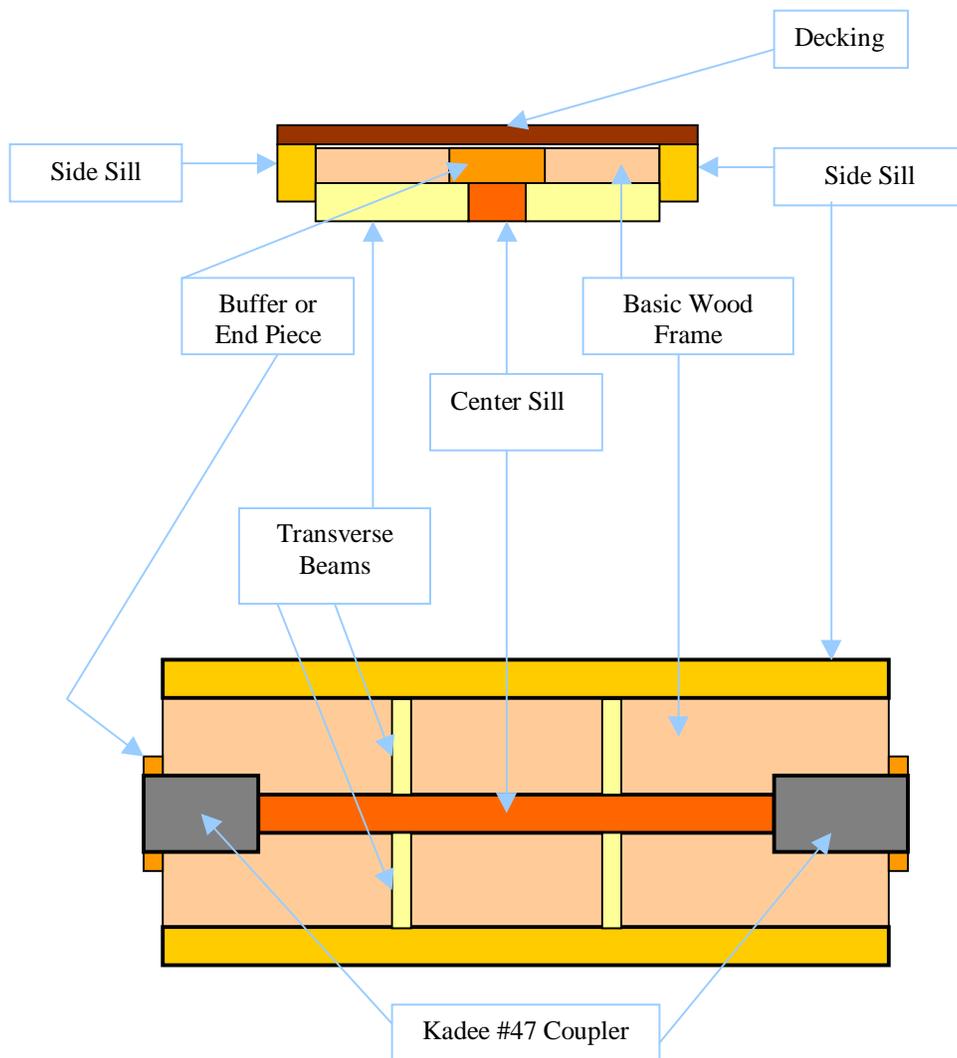
So I quickly changed the wheel sets installing the *Intermountain*. The combination of the plastic *MDC* frame and the metal *Intermountain* wheel sets made the car extremely free rolling. I did a roll test comparing the *Kadee* 501s to the *MDC/Intermountain* combo of the plastic truck and the metal wheels. The *MDC/Intermountain* won the contest by a few car lengths. You would not believe how free rolling these cars are and how far they rolled in the test.

The other feature of the cars that could stand some improvement is the weathering. There is none. This is OK as the modeler can add weathering as desired. But since the car was sprayed with *Dull Coat*, this is not as easy as weathering bare wood. So I carefully "stained" the wood with a solution of denatured alcohol and black leather dye. It darkened the car and improved the appearance. Emmett Brannan suggests using *Badger* water soluble paint, such as *Badger Tucson Red* # 16-14 and *Camouflage Brown* 16-98, and also various colors of chalks.

All in all, these are fine little cars. With just changing the wheels to *Intermountain* 33" metal free rolling wheel sets, adding the more realistic *Kadee* # 58 scale couplers, and weathering the car, these make a fine addition to your logging railroad.

Cache Creek Basic Railcar

End View



Bottom View

Wheel & Car Maintenance

Interview with Leo Adamski

Wheel Maintenance

1. Check the gauge using NMRA wheel gauge. Adjust as necessary. Replace wheel set with RP-25. If you use coupler magnets, make sure your axles and wheels are non-magnetic.
2. If dirt is built up on the wheel treads, clean wheels with a brass wire brush and lacquer thinner.
3. Check for burrs on the end of each axle and file or wire brush smooth.
4. Very slightly ream the outside edge of the axle holes on truck frame to remove any burrs. A *Reboxx Exxact Socket* tool can be used. (Note: there are now other tools on the market similar to the *Reboxx Exxact Socket Tool*, such as *Micro-Mark Truck Tuner # 82838*.) Check the inside faces of the truck frame. Remove any burrs that may affect the rotation.
5. Re-install wheels into the trucks and the trucks into the car body. Spin the wheels and make sure they run freely. Run the trucks on the track to assure the trucks run straight and true. Then assemble the trucks onto the car. If possible, tighten down the trucks until they start to bind. Back off about one half turn of the screw on the truck so that it rotates but does not wobble. The other truck could be allowed to wobble enough to conform to track irregularities.

Car Maintenance

1. Check coupler height and air hose height with a *Kadee* coupler gauge. Adjust as necessary.
2. Check to see if car uncouples over the magnet when the train is moving. It should not uncouple.
3. Check to see if couplers uncouple when over the magnet – they should and spread right-to-left for the delayed magnet.
4. Check to see if couplers stay open when over magnet so that the car can be spotted.

Note: All cars should weigh approximately the same. My cars are in compliance with the NMRA standards. That is, $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce per inch of car length plus one ounce. [A 5.25" car should weigh $(5.25 / 2) + 1$ oz. or (2.6 oz. + 1 oz.) or 3.6 oz.] I can run a 20 car train through *Atlas* snap switches onto a parallel track and also proceed backward with no derailments. *Leo Adamski*



Ask Doctor Dick (The Scenery Doctor)

Mary writes:

I want to make very realistic scratch built conifer trees. How do I do this?

Doc:

Here are the steps for making stick built good looking conifer trees.

1. Collect straight, thin branches of discarded Christmas trees after the holidays. Norway spruce works well. Look for a tree that has some straight branches and small round spots around each needle. In HO scale, a 12" section is an 87' tree, not counting the tuff at the top. So you may want to go with a 6" to 10" length.
2. Cut a section to be used for the trunk, and pull out all the needles. You should see small round spots where the needles had been. If there are some small branches, break these off leaving about 1/2" on the tree to simulate dead branches.
3. Sharpen the thin end of the trunk to a fine point, gradually tapering the point to the rest of trunk. Darken only this light shaved area with paint/stain to match the bark of the rest of the tree before proceeding. I used some thinned Polyscale Oily Black here.
4. Insert a double sharpened nail into the base of the trunk and glue with white or yellow glue.
5. Insert the nail into a small piece of *Homasote* or foam for a stand while working.
6. Procure caspia from a craft store or florist and lay out on your worktable. Sort sections with flowers and those sections that look dead. Pick out a nice looking vertical piece for the top tuff of the tree. I used very old caspia that had faded and now looks much more realistic. The

newer dark green caspia may look too bright green.

7. With your needle probe, carefully poke a small hole (or split) in the very top of the tree trunk. Glue the selected top tuff into the tree using white glue. Since the branch is relatively green, the probe should go into the tree easily. This soft green tree makes the job much easier than drilling each hole into cedar wood. Also, the green tree branch can be bent to straighten out small bends.
8. Add more white glue where the top tuff meets the tree trunk so that the taper from the tuff to the tree is gradual. Cover this small glued area with sifted dirt or brown chalk as necessary to blend colors.
9. In the area that was carved or sanded, poke random holes into the tree and glue caspia pieces into the tree with white glue. Put a small amount of white glue around each branch where it goes into the tree to enhance the appearance that the branch is actually growing out of the tree. In the area that was not sharpened or sanded to a point, poke the holes into the *small round spots* that are on the tree branch where you removed the needles. If you populate the tree using every small round spot, the tree will look very realistic. Your new branches are now "growing" out of the holes where the needles once grew.
10. Put the smaller pieces of caspia on the top of the tree, larger pieces in the middle, and smaller dead looking pieces (the more brown pieces) toward to bottom of the tree.
11. Plant tree on your layout in odd number groupings (3, 5, 7, etc.).

[Ed. - Dick Senges will be giving a Tree Clinic on May 1, 2004, at the NMRA NFR ID Meet at Grand Island, NY, which will include the tree described above.]

How to Make Good Looking Structures - Fast

By Dick Senges

Over the years it always took me forever to build my structures. Probably because I wanted them to look good and also had in mind the NMRA AP certification for Master Builder – Structures. Having achieved this certification and wanting to continue to populate an area with buildings quickly, (especially my new Bath & Hammondsport Railroad with nine new buildings), the question is how to accomplish this.

Let me offer some suggestions. Purchase an already built structure at one of the local train shows, like Batavia or Syracuse. There are many plastic and wood buildings sold at these shows at very low prices which may not have been built with expertise resulting in a good looking building. But with a few changes, the building can really be improved.

Some of these buildings have glue showing, smudged plastic windows, and have not have be painted or weathered well. And, they have that shiny plastic look. First, carefully tear out the plastic windows. If the structure can be re-painted, this can be done with a simple can of *Krylon* spray paint. The trim can be painted by hand using a brush.

If the structure can not be repainted easily or the paint looks pretty good, then spray the whole structure with

Testors # 1260 Dull Coat. This will cover up any glue or shiny paint that is showing and give the whole structure a flat, dull finish.

Significant improvement can result by shingling the roof with *Campbell* profile shingles. This will make a definite improvement vs the plastic-roof look. An alternative to this is to tar paper the roof using black construction paper.

If you use some weathering powders on the structure, make sure you powder and spray with *Dull Coat* before you add the glass windows. If not, you will frost all the windows.

The next enhancement is to add real glass windows. I use *Ward's Natural Science* (Henrietta, NY) microscope slide rectangular glass coverslips. These are 24mm x 40mm (item # 14 V 3245), and about 0.006" to 0.008" thick. The thinner ones are labeled #1 and the thicker ones labeled #2. They can be easily cut with a glasscutter and ordered on the Internet: <http://wardsci.com/>

Lastly, add some figures. My favorite figures are *Fun and Games* www.scalefigures.com from Missouri. To sum up: re-paint, shingle roof, spray with *Dull Coat*, powder, install real glass windows and add figures. Wow – what a substantial difference with a just little time invested.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION.

Or

HOW TO MAKE GOOD PHOTOS BETTER.

by Leaf Shutter

Guideline No. 5 - Lines

If possible use leading lines to point to your subject. Lines that intersect at angles draw the eye to the intersection. The nearer the angle is to a right angle, the stronger the pull. Parallel lines that run across a picture area tend to carry the eye right out of the picture.

Never let a line cut a picture in half – either horizontally or vertically. The horizon line should never be in the middle of the picture. Place it about one-third the way from the top or bottom.

Long lines that run right out of the picture area should be interrupted before they leave the picture area. This will keep the viewer's eye within the picture. This guideline is especially true of our railroad tracks. By having a train on the tracks serves as an adequate interruption. Railroad tracks should be angled through the picture frame, not straight across.

S curves are especially welcome in photographs. Use them whenever possible to lead the viewers eye into the photograph. Preferably they should lead toward the subject.

Coming Next Month

*Product Review –
2 Stall Brick Engine House*

*Going – Going – Gone
The Story of the B & LE*

Virginia is for Layouts

*Ask Doctor Dick –
“Making Peppergass Trees”*

**Don't Forget to Visit the
Medina Railroad Museum**

www.railroadmuseum.net

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[Recommended Train Events for 2004 – Updated](#)

February 7 – 8	West Springfield, MA - Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show
February 13 – 15	Pasadena, CA - 19 th Sn3 Symposium -
March 7	Niagara Falls, Canada – Niagara Falls Model Railway Show
March 20-21	Rochester, NY - Rochester Model Railroad Club Open House
April 4	Batavia, NY – Train Show/ Sale at Batavia Downs
April 24	Sonora, CA – 17 th Annual Logging Modeler's Convention
May 1	Grand Island, NY – NMRA NFR International Division Meet – Tree Clinic
May 21 – 23	St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada – National Convention – Canadian Association of Railway Modellers. For details: www.caorm.org
June 11-13	Tacoma, WA – Northwest Logging Modeler's Convention
July 3	Medina, NY – American Military Weekend, Medina Railroad Museum
July 3 - 4	Galeton, PA – PA Lumber Museum Bark Peeler's Convention
August 4-8	Chantilly, VA - N Scale Collector's Convention 4 th – 7 th - N Scale East Convention 5 th – 8 th - www.nscalecollector.com
August 19-22	Durango, CO – Railfest 2004 – Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge RR
September 1-4	Santa Clara, CA - 24 th National Narrow Gauge Convention
November 6 – 7	Syracuse, NY – Train Show at Fairgrounds
November 14	Batavia, NY – Train Show/Sale at Batavia Downs

For a detailed listing of events, go on the Internet to:

CAORM.org

Shows

Look for dates and location

GATS.com

Great American Train Show

Show Schedule

Month of Year

Look for your city

Railroad.net

Events

Look for date and location

GSMTS.COM

Great Scale Model Train Show

Dates and Events

TTOS.org

Calendar

month of the year

Look for your area

Modelrailnews.com

Events

Look for your area

Trains.com

Schedule of Events

Events