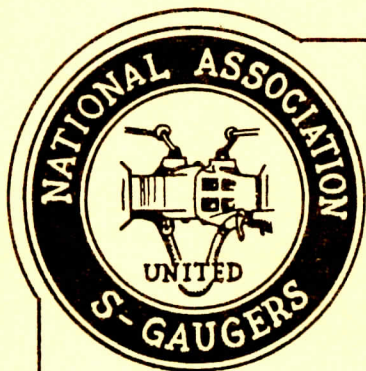
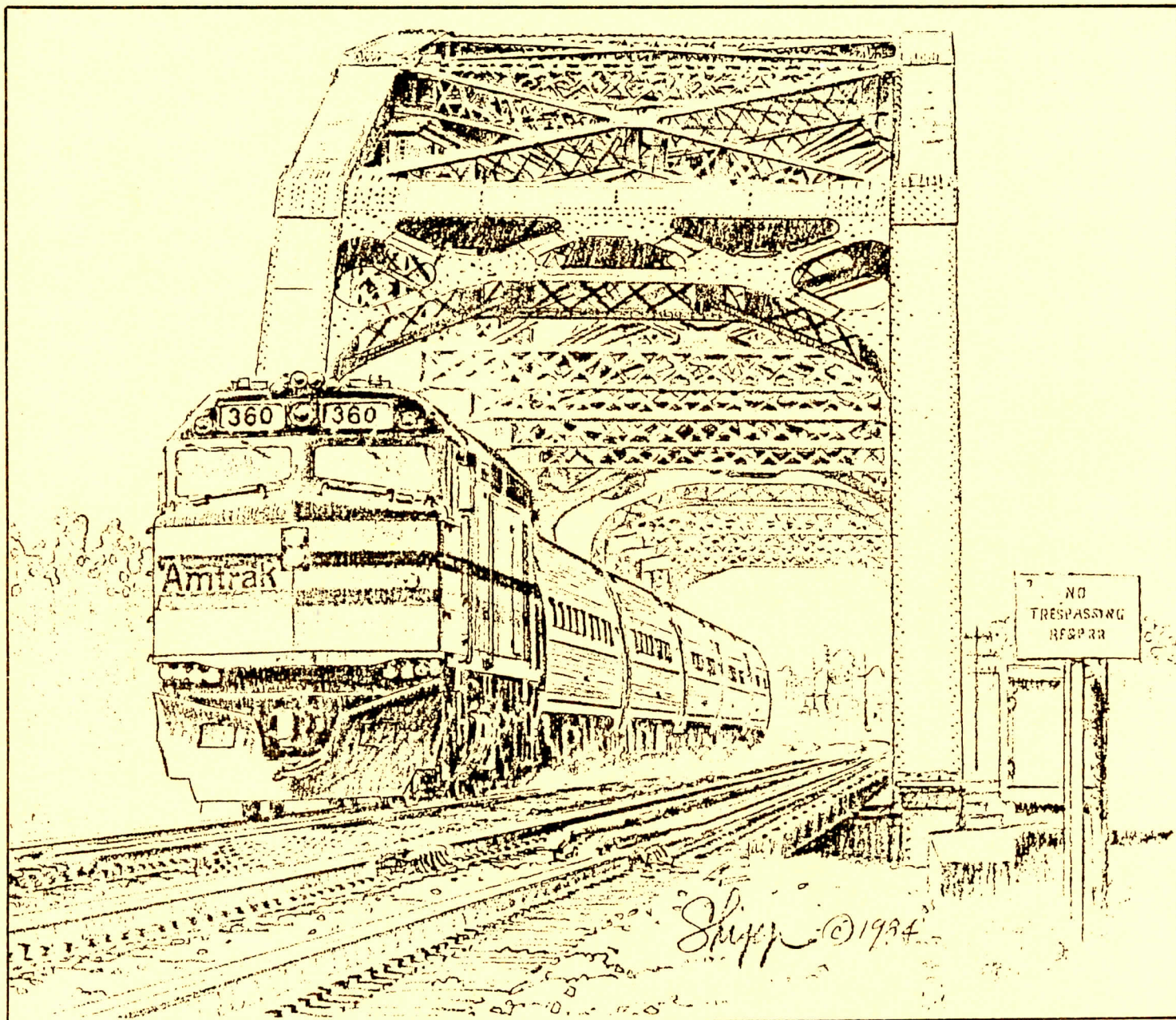




DISPATCH

Volume 7, Number 4

Fall 1984



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DISPATCH

Official Publication of the
National Association of S Gaugers

Editor

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Gaithersburg, Md. 20879

Editorial Consultant

Sam Powell

DISPATCH welcomes articles, photographs, art, cartoons, and other model railroad or railroad-related materials as contributions by the membership. Authors of articles accompanied by high quality photographs will receive \$10.00 compensation for photo processing costs. Photos should be a minimum 4" by 5" with good contrast. Contributions to DISPATCH and correspondence to the DISPATCH staff should be sent to the Editor.

NASG membership dues are \$10.00 per membership year, which runs from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the following year. Membership includes the four issues of DISPATCH dated during this period, regardless of the date you join. Address all membership applications, renewals, address changes and questions about membership to:

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ELAINE'S ELABORATIONS

DISPATCH SURVEY RESULTS

by Elaine Powell

The DISPATCH survey sent out in the Summer '83 issue was returned by 101 NASG members over a six month period. Included with many returns were a number of notes, comments, and many kind words of encouragement which made reading and tallying the results a very pleasant task. We thank everyone who responded for taking the time to think about the direction you'd like to see the DISPATCH take in the future.

Now for the results. The first page was a chart asking you to rate how important it was to you for the DISPATCH to have 16 different items. You could rate your feelings about each item in three categories: very important, somewhat important, or not at all important. We were most eager to learn what things the membership felt were not very important so that as editors we could make more informed decisions when putting together each issue. There would be no point, for instance, in searching for cover art work if the NASG members overwhelmingly felt that cover art was not a very important feature for the DISPATCH. Here, then, is the breakdown of how many surveyed felt these items were not at all important:

Item	Percent
1. an editorial	10
2. a President's message	18
3. cartoons/humor	54
4. photographs	3
5. cover art work	17
6. drawings (to illustrate articles)	1
7. new product information	3
8. advertisements	24
9. club news	14
10. feature articles	2
11. reviews of new products	2
12. how-to articles on modeling	3
13. personality portraits	21
14. letters to the editor	14
15. good quality paper	15
16. large size (8-1/2 x 11)	16

An immediate conclusion we readily drew from these results is that we will not be spending much time looking for model railroading cartoons! Another significant statistic was the (rela-

tively) large number of people who felt advertising in the DISPATCH would not be especially desirable. Currently the DISPATCH is not allowed to accept advertising because of our non-profit organization legal status; but the question of the pros and cons of allowing it continue to be debated from time to time. This survey gives some idea of how the membership views this controversial issue.

The second page asked a series of judgement questions. There was much philosophizing on these issues, which is why the percentages rarely total 100%. As many of you noted, these are tough questions to call and involve the weighing of many different factors. Some respondents refused to take a stand and merely elaborated on the good and bad effects of each question. Nevertheless the statistics we do have reveal some general patterns of NASG members thoughts on these issues:

1. Is a bad photograph (poor contrast, lighting, or bad composition) better than no photograph at all?
 Yes, a bad photo is acceptable 43%
 No, use only good photos 44%
2. If one of our primary aims is to be a unifying element in NASG, should we print reviews, which are potentially divisive?
 Yes, print reviews 67%
 No reviews 14%
3. Should the DISPATCH be primarily a newspaper (emphasizing the latest information of products, club activities, NASG events, etc.) or primarily a magazine (emphasizing feature articles, tips, how-tos, etc.) or some combination of both?
 Primarily a newspaper 23%
 Primarily a magazine 7%
 Combination 55%
4. Would you like to see us strive to make the DISPATCH as error-free as possible or get it into your hands as early as possible? (In practice, accuracy and speed tend to be mutually exclusive.)
 As error free as possible 38%
 As soon as possible 23%
5. How many pages would you like to see in each issue?

Fewer than 16	5%
16	30%
More than 16	24%

6. How often would you like to see the DISPATCH appear?

Quarterly	42%
6 times a year	26%
More often	10%

The crucial question, we felt, was #1, for in this we were asking not just about photos but getting at the underlying expectation of what NASG members want the DISPATCH to be. Those who voted that even a poor quality picture was acceptable ("We're so desperate to see what other S Gaugers are doing that we'll take any picture of anything!") were in the camp of those who see the DISPATCH as a publication by NASG members for NASG members exclusively to disseminate information to that group. Those who were against the idea of including a bad photo ("Keep your standards high!") saw the DISPATCH as a vehicle to promote S Gauge to outsiders with the objective of encouraging the growth of the organization. Many excellent points in the "that depends" category were also raised. Some questioned what purpose the photo was intended to serve; others mentioned that it might be of a subject which could not be recaptured again easily.

Response to question #4 similarly got to the heart of this same issue with those who wanted to encourage the DISPATCH to strive for quality voting heavily to make it as error free as possible while those who felt "it's just for us and I want it as soon as possible" favored speed.

There was great tack and sensitivity in responses to the last two questions. Most alluded to the fact that reality had to be compromised with idealism and that having the DISPATCH appear more than 4 or 6 times a year was an unreasonable goal at this time, both for your editors and for the amount of material available.

Needless to say, these results have given us much to think about and will have an impact on the decisions we make for the DISPATCH in the future. Again, many thanks to all who took the time to respond.

S GAUGE MODULES AT NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION

by Tom Hawley

It is to the great credit of S gauge and the NASG, and a tribute to the growing maturity of our scale, that while the main body of S gaugers was assembled at the annual NASG convention, this year very successfully held in Buffalo, there was still a large contingent of S gaugers able to represent S gauge at the concurrent national convention of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) in Kansas City. The Heartland S Rails (Kansas City S Gaugers) set up their modular layout at the convention center, supplemented by three modules brought by members of the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers. Since both clubs had followed the standards developed by the NASG's modular standards development committee, there was no problem in connecting the modules together to form one operating layout. And since two of S gauge's principal manufacturers were also displaying their products at the convention, we were able to run some of their pre-production or pilot models. American Models let us run the full passenger train in its Great Northern livery, and Overland Models contributed their Alco F units in brass, now definitely scheduled for 1985.

Gaylord Gill of Michigan entered his module in the contest and won a blue ribbon. The module features a plate girder bridge over a deep ravine with simulated rapid water running below.

Contrary to the concept of some that S gaugers would be an out-of-place, ignored minority at an NMRA convention, we had the feeling of being a small but highly respected elite in the world of model railroading and were proud of the contribution which we and our modular S gauge railroad made to the convention.

At the conclusion of the convention, we, the Heartland S Rails, the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers, and a

number of other S gaugers from around the country all shook hands and vowed to meet again and set up an even bigger and better S gauge modular layout at next year's NMRA convention to be held in Milwaukee, July 28-August 4, 1985. It's probably going to be the biggest ever since it's the NMRA's 50th Anniversary. The date, incidentally, is one month after the NASG convention in California. We have already been promised virtually unlimited space, and so we want to have as many modules from as many sources as possible. They don't have to be from clubs only; any individual can build a module.

The 1985 NMRA convention in Milwaukee should be the third big milestone in the S Gauge modular development program. The first was the NASG convention at Boston in 1983 where one club, the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers, demonstrated what can be done in the modular format, setting up and operating a formidable layout at the convention, assembled from 4- and 8-foot modules and four corner sections. The second milestone was the 1984 NMRA convention I have just described, where two clubs, using the same standards, were able to put together one beautiful S Gauge layout. The third is going to the 1985 NMRA convention where we look forward to having modules from a great variety of sources.

Our modular set-up in Milwaukee in 1985 will have the official blessing of the NASG Promotions Committee (Don Thompson, chairman), as well as a NASG information booth which Ken Zieska will be coordinating. I have been designated to coordinate the modular layout and the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers has been designated to furnish the four corner sections.

I would like to hear as early as possible from everyone who can bring a module. Anyone who does not have a copy of the standards developed by the NASG's modular standards development committee may obtain one by writing to me: Tom Hawley, 2311 Strathmore Rd., Lansing, Michigan 48910.

CONVENTIONAL OUTLOOK

This year's NASG convention proved that Buffalo does indeed have more to offer than the Falls. Among our favorite moments during the convention weekend were these ...

the look on Frank Titman's face the moment before his body collided with the water in the motel's swimming pool ...

the sigh of relief from Tom Boldt when he finally got his module together ...

how rapidly the room emptied when it was learned that N&W's glorious #611 was on the move in the vicinity ...

the sacrifice of Kent Singer, who, for the first time in recent history, did not enter one of his beautiful models in the contest in order to chair the contest judging committee ...

Mr. Lee of Samhongsas shaking hands with Don Heimburger ...

Randy Sappo proving once again that you can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear ...

More Rex gondolas given away as door prizes ...

Darien Lake's Big Wheel ...

Jeff Wilson lugging one of everything ever made in S Gauge into the convention hall and then lugging it back again ...

those wild Canadian drivers! ...

eager shoppers looking for a bargain on the convention floor ...

the look on Charlie Brown's face when Rollie Mercier stomped on a caboose (but it will take 800,000 conventions for AF cabooses to become rare, Charlie) ...

the surprise and humility of your editors as they accepted the Bernie Thomas award ...

Thanks to all for making this convention one of NASG's best!

NASG CONTEST WINNERS BUFFALO, NY 1984

Best in Show:

Randy Sappo, Sr. -- Residential Block

Master Craftsman:

Steam Locomotives

1st: Samuel B. Powell -- PRR K-4

2nd: Michael R. Ferraro -- NYC 10 Wheeler, F12e

Diesel & Electric Locomotives

1st: William Geracchi -- SOU GP-30

2nd: Stan Stokrocki -- EMD FL-9

Freight & MoW

1st: Stan Stokrocki -- Early ACF center flow hopper

2nd: Stan Stokrocki -- Road Railer

3rd: John H. Bortz -- C&NW Stockcar

Structures

1st: Randy Sappo, Sr. -- Two story flat roofed house

Diorama

1st: Randy Sappo, Sr. -- Residential Block

Craftsman:

Steam Locomotives, K & C

1st: James Moore -- Lackawanna Hudson

2nd: Tom Coughlan -- Berkshire Central 0-6-0

Diesel & Electric Locomotives, K & C

1st: David O. Held -- C&O FP-7 AA

2nd: William Geracchi & Joshua Seltzer -- NKP GP18

Freight & MoW

K & C

1st: Jim Hopper -- D&RGW Stock Car

2nd: R. James Whipple -- Outside braced, wood gondola

3rd: Bob Nicholson -- C&NW 65' mill gondola

Scratchbuilt

1st: Roy Melssner -- BN Lumber Flat car

2nd: Paul Hecht -- D&RGW Box car

Trolley & Interurban, Scratchbuilt

1st: Ralph B. Hodson -- Syracuse car #710

Diorama, Scratchbuilt

1st: Paul Hecht -- Mine & storage buildings

2nd: Jim Hopper -- Pole shed

3rd: Dick Cataldi -- Rollie's Diner

Amateur:

Steam Locomotive, K & C

1st: Charlie A. Brown, Jr. -- Casey Jones Loco

Diesel & Electric Locomotives, K & C

1st: Douglas G. Miller -- EL E-8

2nd: John W. Hall -- RDGE Class RS-1 (Alco RS-3)

3rd: Douglas G. Miller -- EL F-7 AA

Freight & MoW

K & C

1st: Wes Westendorf -- VW Tank car

2nd: John W. Hall -- Reading gondola

3rd: John W. Hall -- MRBX Insulated box car

Special Award*: Steve Butler -- Railcar & trailer

Scratchbuilt
1st: Robert Dare -- Circus flat car, red
2nd: Robert Sudimak -- Scale test car
3rd: Robert Dare -- Circus flat car, white

Passenger Cars

Scratchbuilt
1st: William H. Krause -- Lester Center
Observation car
K & C
1st: William H. Fuhrman -- CP Express
Reefer
2nd: John W. Hall -- Rdg coach #1341
3rd: Stephen Butler -- Railbus

Diorama

Scratchbuilt
1st: John W. Hall -- Tool shed
K & C
1st: John Steinbach -- Station

Junior:

1st: Randy Sappo, Jr. -- Trestle Bridge

CAB (You know what it means):

Arty Doty -- "Hopper" car

* Due to an error in determining the awards, this fine model was overlooked. However, it was judged, and this Special Award may be considered to be the equivalent of a First Place.

Special thanks are due to Don Thompson and Tom Boldt for their help in tabulating points and determining awards, and especially to Bob Nicholson whose beautiful handwriting appears on the certificates.

Compiled by: Kent L. Singer, Chairman, NASG Contest Committee

DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

by Lewis Rennig, Jr.

Details and a little work can turn a typical kit into something truly unique. Platforms are one of the easier things to change. Wooden ones can be turned into concrete or brick. A shed can be added to the rear or an addition to one side. Additions do not have to look like part of the original building. They may be taller or lower and more modern.

Large windows can be replaced by smaller ones. This can be done by bricking in the existing ones, then simply installing a smaller window in the opening.

Other interesting items are air-conditioning units added to the roof, through the window or through the wall. Roof top units can have ducts coming from them and running along the

roof for added interest. Rain gutters and down-spouting add greatly to the appearance of a structure.

Many of the wood buildings are easily fitted with wainscoting. This is any easy modification to any kit and drastically changes the appearance.

Buildings with a foundation look much better than ones with clapboard siding running to the ground. Foundations can be made even more interesting by placing a few windows in them to indicate the presence of a basement. As long as you are going to give the appearance of a basement, don't forget a door for the outside entrance.

Factory buildings can have small penthouses on the roofs to house elevator equipment.

Shades and curtains cut from paper or tape and fastened to the inside of the office windows help give it the "lived-in" look. Window awnings can be easily made from card stock. They take only a few minutes to make and install.

Next time you are installing lights in a building, construct a small box, leaving one or two sides open. Mount it to the inside wall of the structure in such a manner that when a light is located in the box it will give the appearance of only lights in that part of the building being lit. Lighting the office windows will give the effect of someone working late. A factory with a night shift can be easily created by only having lights in the factory area. When lighting homes, put lights in only one or two of the rooms.

Modelers building in the 1940's and earlier, don't forget to build a chimney for the wood or coal fired kitchen stoves they used for cooking.

Sometimes it takes very little effort to turn a kit into something even the manufacturer wouldn't recognize. Next time you are building one, remember to take a little time out to see what can be done to personalize it.

PART IV

by Sam Powell

This final installment of building a steam locomotive frame will deal with the main rod cylinder set and crosshead assembly. Many, if not most of the parts mentioned herein can be purchased from S Scale Loco and Supply. The only items you will have to make for certain are the siderods, since the spacing of your drivers will be different from that of commercially available frames.

This phase of construction will involve the greatest compromises in fidelity. For starters, the drivers for model locomotives are much wider than the prototype, requiring piston spacing that is set out farther from the center of the engine than the prototype. This is further compounded by the fact that most commercial cylinder sets are designed to work with tinplate or hi-rail drivers, which are even wider yet. In addition, our scale model fastenings are bulkier than the prototype. No matter what you do, at its very best the pistons are going to set out too far.

The solution is to minimize each of these problems as best we can and hope that the problems mentioned won't call too much attention to themselves.

Make sure you have minimized the thickness of the driver. The counterweights can usually be made thinner by filing and the boss for the crankpin can usually be filed down some. The screwhead for the front crankpin can and should be filed down until it's as small as possible while you can still turn it in and out with a screwdriver or a wrench.

Mount your cylinder set so that it is centered on the frame from side to side, level both side-to-side and front-to-rear, so that the hole for the piston is in line with the center line for the driver axles. This may require some filing or shimming of either the frame or the cylinder set or both. I like to hold these together with a 6-32 screw run from the bottom up through

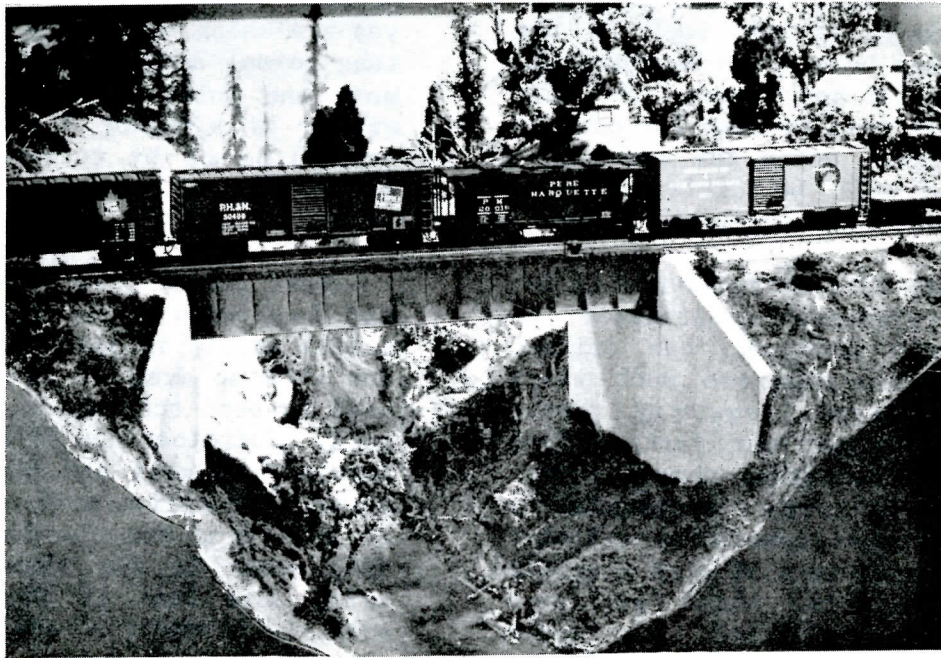
the frame, cylinders, and into the boiler. This will require a temporary 6-32 nut on the top to hold all together when the boiler is not in place. Now slide your crosshead piston assemblies into the cylinders and see how much space you have between the side rods and the crossheads as the wheels rotate. If you have enough space and you are using a cylinder set with wider than normal spacing, you may choose to move the holes inboard at this time, either by plugging the old holes and redrilling or by cutting the end off and making a new end with relocated holes.

Next mount your crosshead guides and fool with these until the piston slides easily in and out of the cylinder with no drag or binding. You may need to bend the piston, the guide, or both. Judicious use of a small, square needle file will aid here also. Your chosen locomotive will have a support of some kind for the crosshead guide. This would be the time to fit this, being sure that it doesn't interfere with the movement of any parts.

Now cut out your blank for your main rod. This is the rod which is fastened to the piston at one end and to the driver long enough to go clear through both the main rod and the side rod. This rod needs to be long enough so that the piston and crosshead assembly is not pulled out of its hole when the crank pin rotates all the way back, and yet short enough so that the crosshead and piston don't bang into the cylinder head when the driver has rotated to top dead center to the front.

I like to fasten the main rod to the crosshead with a 2-56 screw that turns into holes that are tapped on both the side rod and the crosshead. This maintains a fixed spacing between the two parts and keeps them from tightening against each other when you tighten the screw. Once this is done, view your mechanism from above and see what spacing is necessary between your main rod and the side rod. You will no doubt need at least some to keep the side rod crankpin from snagging on the main rod and some for appearance's sake. If your cylinder holes are too far outboard, then you will want to

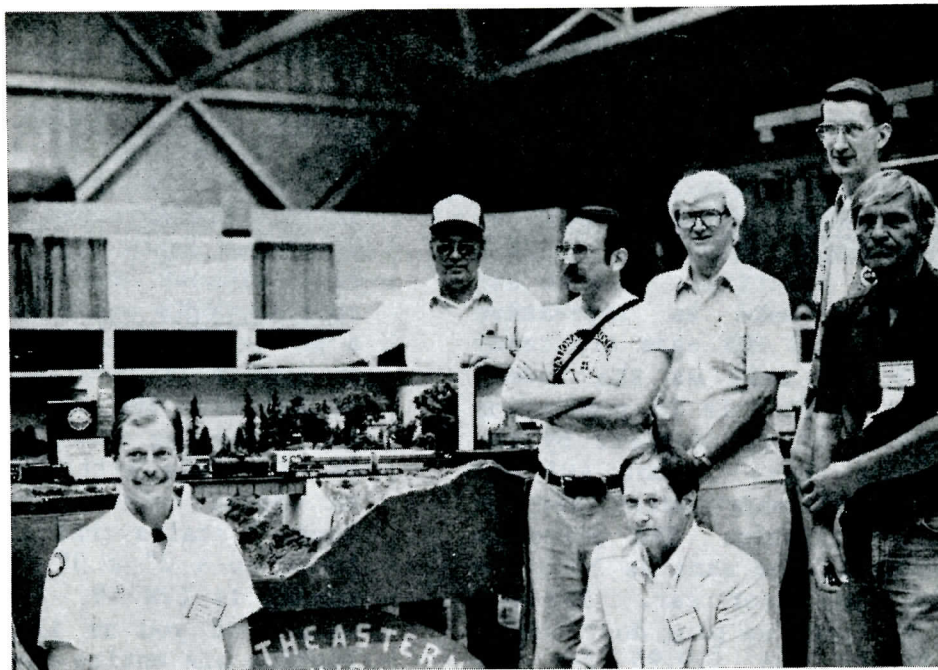
PICTURE SQUE



Gaylord Gill's award winning module included as part of the show at the NMRA convention in Kansas City.



Girl with bicycle watches Frank Titman's Spiral Hill No. 19 set out a reefer for Continental Canning Co. while truck traffic rolls on highway in background.

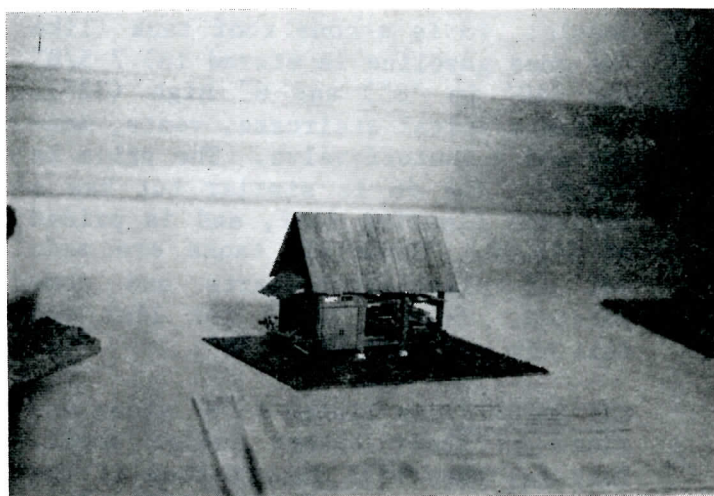


S gaugers form their first multi-club modular layout at the NMRA National Convention. Shown are representatives from the Heartland S Rails and the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers. Front row (l-r): Gaylord Gill, Gene Simmons; back row: Dave Engle, Tom Hawley, Jim Graham, Paul Stevens, Jim Phelps. Photo by Gaylord Gill.

If it doesn't have a wooten firebox, and Don Thompson is still interested in taking a picture, you know the quality must be good.



You can almost hear the din as you look out across the manufacturer's room at the NASG convention in Buffalo.



Jim Hopper (of Hopper Line Models) built this pole shed and won a 2nd prize at the NASG contest for his efforts.

TRADE NEWS AND VIEWS

by Don Thompson

Have you seen the streamline passenger cars from AMERICAN MODELS (22055 W. Brandon, Farmington Hills, MI 48024)? The shells are beautiful. I must admit that they make an impressive train. The GN and PRR cars are ready now (\$34.95) as well as the undecs (\$30.95). A GN FP-7 is in production now and may be at the dealers by the time you read this. A new 40' AAR boxcar, the PRR merchandise service car is now available. The price is \$16.95, which is the same as both the boxcar and plug door car. The new price for the premium plug door boxcar is now \$17.95 and \$19.95 for the classic boxcars. The State of Maine car is now \$21.95. Ron tells us that the two-bay outside-braced open-top hoppers will be ready around Christmas.

GARGRAVES now has the #6 turnout (switch) to mate with their S gauge hi-rail (A.F.) track.

I ran into this issue's new manufacturer at a local show -- ALAN GRAZIANO (2205 Orchard Dr., South Plainfield, NJ 07080), who works for a company making 12" to the foot tanks for some of our local refineries and then comes home and builds models of the same tanks. He is now making 2 "S" scale models: #5 is a cone roof tank (like the ones gasoline is stored in) 7-5/8" dia (40' in "S") and 6" high (32'). It has a spiral staircase, vents, manway and a shutoff valve. The price is \$25.00. The #6 is similar but has a recessed floating roof, and is priced at \$45.00. These RTR tanks are made out of plastistrut parts and come painted. Send a LLSAE for list and tell him you want it in "S".

KEY IMPORTS has listed 5 "S" steam engines on their latest dealer sheet. They say they will import them if the demand warrants. An ATSF 2900 class 3-8-4(?), C&O H-8 Allegheny 2-6-6-2, a NYC L-3a and/or L-4b Mohawk 4-8-2 and a SP GS-4 4-8-4. If you see a loco you like, contact your friends and get them to buy some too. No advertise-

ments are planned at this time. I wonder if Key is short for Low Key?

LEHIGH VALLEY MODELS (1225 N. Arch St., Allentown, PA 18104) announced its latest two kits in "S" scale. LVM 18 is a freighthouse with lots of Mid-Victorian fancy work, a shingle roof, cast windows and door, cast curved roof supports and a long platform with a protecting roof. The model occupies an area 5" x 14-1/2" and has a price of \$34.95. The other is an elevated gate crossing tower which retails for \$8.50. This little model is perched on wooden columns, has 10 cast windows, 2 stairs that are cast and only takes up a 2" x 3" square area. Its number is LVM 19. For a buck, Frank will send you an illustrated catalog listing his entire line.

NASG CLEARING HOUSE sold the last covered hopper at the Buffalo Convention. We are now negotiating on a 10,000 gal. ACF tank car (circa 1930-70). More info as it becomes available.

NORTHWEST SHORTLINE in their Fall newsletter is considering an S Scale Baldwin-Westinghouse class B-1 steeple cab. If enough orders are placed, this 50-ton steeple cab will be made. Also an Sn3 and Sn3-1/4 (H0 gauge) model T Ford railcar is being made. The price is \$99.50 RTR and \$75 for a built-up model with powerkit. Another NS product is a D&RGW #3000 boxcar kit. This epoxy casting kit includes roof, floor, 2 sides, and 2 ends and costs \$20.00.

ORIENTAL LIMITED stated at the NMRA national convention in K.C., that they planned on having the NW-2 by February.

Tom Marsh of OVERLAND MODELS (RR 2, Box 445, Muncie, IN 47302) has found a unique way to market "S" steam engines. On Sept. 1st Tom announced that 100 USRA light Mikes would be imported and he needed \$100 deposit by Oct. 15th for them to be made. Unless Tom makes more than 100, there is a good chance these are now sold out. This may be the first brass engine that has been sold without one advertisement in the DISPATCH. If you

didn't know about this, you should either ask your local dealer why he didn't notify you or start getting a newsletter from Hoquat, G&W or SU. If you haven't ordered one yet, you had better do something soon. Tom is also entering the world of Sn3 steam with a C&S 2-6-0 #9 and #22. These will be made by M.S. Models of Korea. Also, Sn3 a 8 wheeled hack is planned. This was used by the DRG&W, F&CC and RGS. It will be built by Ajin of Korea. The next model scheduled by Tom is the Alco FA 2 and FB 2 due in March. Reserve yours now. The next standard gauge project will be the FA 2 and FB 2 due next Spring. The PRR E 8's are sold out as well as the CN 38-GP 38-2 and SD 40-2.

WALLY METAL PRODUCTS (Box 531, RD 2, Parksburg, PA 19365) has acquired the tooling for Locomotive Workshops S Gauge product lines. If anyone has any comments on new products or how to improve existing LWS S products, please write him.

This month our guest model vehicle editor is Ted Larson, soon to be from Rochester, NY. He gives us this list of motor vehicles he's come across in the last year:

Corgi -- international 3 axle flat bed
with 20' intermodal container load
-----Good
Corgi -- Mercedes semi tractor with
40' trailer. Trailer is somewhat
low -----Fair
Hot Wheels -- 65 Mustang convertible
#5908 -----Very Good
Hot Wheels --83 Cadillac Seville #1698
-----Good
Hot wheels -- 55 Chevy 2 door #5179
-----Good
Corgi -- Mercedes school bus #15
-----Very Good
Matchbox -- -Ford narrow box pickup
FWD #53 -----Very Good
Tomy -- 56 Mercedes Gull Wing #F19
1/63 scale -----Excellent
Hot Wheels -- 67 Camaro #3913 -----Good
Ertl-40 -- Ford #1835 -----Fair
Hot Wheels -- Classic Packard #3920
-----Excellent
Tomy -- Willys Jeep #125 Scale 1/57
-----Fair
Hot Wheels -- 40 Ford #3919 -----Fair

I would like to thank George Lloyd MFBB, who sent me the complete listings of the Whyte System of loco classification after he found an error in my last column. Let me apologize to my readers: a UP Challenger is a 4-6-6-4 and not a 2-8-8-2. Also a tip of the hat to Ken Zieska, Tom Hawley and Ed Loizeaux for keeping us abreast of the "S" activities at the NMRA convention in Kansas City and to Walt Danylak for his MRJA update and to Jeff Coleman for the NWSL information.

If you know of any new S products, please contact Don Thompson (2 Roberts Rd., New Brunswick, NJ 08901) or call him after 4 p.m. (201-545-9306). When ordering products or requesting information from any of these manufacturers, please mention that you got your information from the DISPATCH.

THE WINTER '85 DISPATCH

As most of you know by now, the NASG '85 convention will be held in Sacramento, California, from July 4 through 7. The Bay Area S Scalpers, an extremely well-organized and enthusiastic group, are hosting this event and will provide detailed information on plans for the big event in the Winter '85 DISPATCH. For anyone too excited to wait until then, contact Ed Loizeaux, Publicity Chairman, for details.

Ed Loizeaux
P.O. Box 2042
Los Gatos, California 95031

DEADLINE NOTICE

The deadline for material for the Winter '85 DISPATCH is January 15, 1985.

THE COVER

Amtrak 94, streaking for its next stop at Alexandria, VA, dusts off the RF&P's Occoquan River Bridge at Woodbridge, VA. Cover art by Wayne Shipp.

NASG PROMOTIONS

by Don Tompson

The NASG Promotion Committee is planning the following activities and looking for volunteers to help:

SLIDE SHOW: We would like to expand our slide show from the current show to several different shows. A layout tour (scale, hi-rail and AF), a rare and one-of-a-kind AF show, and an Sn3 show are all in the planning stage. Please write to Don if you have slides that we could use. We will make duplicates from your slides and return the originals.

NATIONAL ALL GAUGE SHOWS: We would like to have an NASG booth and an "S" modular layout at national all-gauge shows. So far the SMSG club in conjunction with the NASG modular committee will be representing the NASG at the 50th anniversary NMRA national convention. The Promotions Committee will send the corner sections and have a display at the NASG booth. Tom Hawley is looking for NASG members to bring straight module sections to this show. The NASG booth at this show will be set up by Ken Zieska, who would like some help setting it up and manning it.

"S" PRODUCT EXPOSURE: How many times have you looked through an MR or RMC and seen no new "S" products listed when you know of new things on the market? We hope to be able to send news releases to the major magazines of new products in "S". Kent Singer has volunteered to handle this for us and is looking for someone who can take 35mm photos of new products. We could also use someone who can do darkroom work.

50th ANNIVERSARY OF "S" GAUGE: We believe that 1987 is the 50th anniversary of successful products offered to the public in 3/16" scale (C-D gauge). Both RMC and MR have agreed to run feature articles on the history of "S" and the 50th anniversary. Sam Powell has agreed to write one of these articles. We need photos or negatives of early built-up "S" equipment. If you could help us with this, or just own

early built-up stuff and would let us photograph it, please let Don know.

Please help us promote "S" Gauge. If you have a nice model or section of a layout, take pictures and send them in. We will try to get them put in a magazine. Remember the purpose of NASG is to promote 3/16" model railroading.

MINOR ADJUSTMENTS: FIXING THE AMERICAN MODELS PASSENGER TRUCKS

by Robert B. Nicholson

The new streamlined passenger trucks from American Models are just one more example of the high quality products S scale modelers have come to expect from this firm. They are basic, meaning a modeler can detail them to his taste; and they are equalized, giving them exemplary tracking characteristics.

However, at the recent NASG convention in Buffalo, they showed tendency to fall apart because the Delrin plugs holding the bolsters to the sideframes had a tendency to work loose during operation, no doubt due to the slippery nature of the Delrin.

There is a very simple solution to this problem, and that is substituting screws for the plugs. Actually, this is not my original idea, because Tom Boldt suggested it to me at Buffalo and Josh Seltzer provided the screws, and in fact had altered some trucks for his own use. Basically, the truck is disassembled by removing the Delrin plugs, and the holes in the sideframes tapped for 2-56 machine screws. Finish up by reassembling the trucks using 2-56 RH screws either 1/8" or (and not over) 3/16" long.

Tapping the holes eliminates the possibility of the pivot bosses on the sideframes expanding when the screws are inserted, causing them to bind on the truck bolsters, which would interfere with the equalizing action. That's all there is to it.

RAIL JOINERS

News of Local S Gauge Clubs

by Silas Kayle

Many thanks to all the faithful club secretaries that keep us informed, and a special request, please send all club information to:

Rail Joiners
8900 Birchwood Lane
Bloomington, MN 55438

If your club or group has not filled out the yellow questionnaire from the summer DISPATCH please send it in ASAP. Thanks.

In this issue we will highlight the State-Line 'S' Gaugers with a brief history taken from their own directory.

SLSG ... A BRIEF HISTORY

The State-Line S Gaugers was conceived in December 1980, the idea of two American Flyer enthusiasts, Nick Segalla and Dave Tanner, who felt that there was a need for club affiliation in the Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin area. Other S gauge clubs in the region are the Badgerland S Gaugers with headquarters in Milwaukee, and the Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers, both well over 75 miles away.

After personal contact with a few of the other S gaugers in the area, and with their help, word about the new organization got out. When the first meeting was held in January 1981 (actually an informal get-together) there were about eight people who attended. From that humble beginning SLSG grew to well over 30 members in two short years. In October of 1983 SLSG applied for and was registered with the State of Illinois as a non-profit organization. The State Charter was issued October 20, 1983.

Monthly meetings at members homes give everyone a chance to get together and "talk trains." While American Flyer is number one with most of the members, S Scale and Sn3 interest has grown steadily. During the course of meetings, members have learned to appreciate each other's interests and have learned from one another insofar as collecting, operating, repairing, layout building, and model building.

During its short existence SLSG has distinguished itself not only regionally but nationally through outstanding modeling efforts by some of its members. Phil Hodges gained national attention in 1982 when he won top honors at the National Association of S Gaugers convention in Cleveland, Ohio. Phil's scratch built water tank won first place in the Craftsman Division for structures and also took home the coveted "Best of Show" award. Phil models in Sn3. SLSG president, Paul Geerts, has a number of first place awards from the annual Fall S Fest, as well as a second place effort at the national convention in 1982.

One of the purposes of SLSG is to promote S gauge, and it has done so with displays at various model railroad and train shows. The first club venture was a display at the 1981 Midwest Regional NMRA Convention. Since then, there have been displays at Monroe, Janesville and Madison in Wisconsin; as well as Rockford, Cherry Valley, and Freeport in Illinois. Besides

these displays, another SLSG activity is an annual family picnic held in August. One of the club goals is to someday sponsor open train meets.

Membership in State-Line S Gaugers is open to any S gauge train enthusiast whatsoever his or her interests: collecting and/or operating American Flyer, S Scale, Sn3 or just "armchair" interest.

For more information contact Nick Segalla, 2645 Lorado Lane, Rockford, IL 61103. The club has a promotional jacket also available through Nick.

STATE-LINE "S" GAUGERS This summer the SLSG club has reported successful promotions at shows at Rockton and Freeport, IL. Art Doty displayed his twelve-panel All-Aboard layout, Terry Price his multi-level figure-eight, and the clubs set up of A.F., S Scale and MPC Flyer.

DELAWARE VALLEY S GAUGERS The Delaware Valley S Gaugers are back at the construction of their modular layout. They have set up in Dave Bailey's large basement and are now laying roadbed on the completed sections. Both S and Sn3 will be featured. Tomalco track, and #6 and #8 turnouts will be the standard. The goal is completion by their get together with the New Jersey Club. The DVSG has just purchased a new logo tee shirt to promote their favorite pastime.

INLAND EMPIRE S GAUGERS ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST The thirty-seven members and spouses who attended the annual secret project meeting were treated to the following:
* "Saranac River" electric power plant diorama by Tom and Phil Brooke.

* "Wilbur, Wash." depot scratchbuilt by Doug Sassman; also a G.N. covered hopper kit.
* "Inna Pickle Co." vat cars, by Bob Beshore.
* Street Car, O gauge, Mike Carver.
* Boxcars, Am. Models kit, and Lionel and A.F. conversions, by Ernie Horr.
* 4-wheel streetcar, O scale, by Ted Holloway.

Jess Bennett reported a visit by the MR staff who photographed his masterwork to accompany an article he prepared. He believed it was scheduled for publication soon. I wish there was space to cover all the tips on S conversions and "found" products from their fine newsletter.

CUYAHOGA VALLEY S GAUGE ASSOCIATION Work continues on the new modular layout with 14,000 ties laid. The layout includes foam scenery, three main lines with numerous passing tracks and switchcovers. All track is built to accommodate any type of tinplate, scale or fine scale wheel in S. The custom trailer, which holds their layout, has a hydraulic jack, 3rd wheel, spare tire and is ready to log a lot of miles promoting S gauge. Their latest decision is to refurbish the old layout for second shows on the same weekend or for display at schools.

The group has donated an etched metal plaque to memorialize John Sudimak of REX. The award will go to the most popular model by convention-er's vote at the NASG convention. One of their own club member's, Bill Geracci, received the award in Buffalo.

BRISTOL S GAUGE RAILROADERS The Bristol S Gauge Railroaders club has held regular meetings. In May they met at Bill Marter's. He has an extensive AF collection of boxcars and large operating AF layout. In June they met at Chuck Wingate's where he has a neatly built and finished layout. In September they met at Win Brador's and enjoyed his fine layout.

'S'o long for now -- Syllas Kayle

READERS REPLY

Dear Elaine,

I would like you to report the passing of Ted Loomis, NASG #82R0037, on Wednesday, July 25, 1984. Rev. Steve Butler asked in his opening prayer at the NASG banquet that he, along with two others, be remembered.

Besides being a member of the Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers, living in East Cleveland, Ted was not only the oldest member of Circuit Letter S 172S-1, started back in 1958, but had the most seniority having joined the Circuit in 1960. About three years ago I started to dig into the history of this particular Circuit and found that Ted had joined it when it included such names as Claud Wade, Len Walker, Herb Kind, Dave Engle, and Bob Shaft.

Having joined the Circuit in 1967, I can attest to the fact that Ted has been a very active member right up to the end. His letters always reflected interest and energy in S Gauge. At NASG Cleveland, I met Ted and his wife Jene for the first time. At that time, Ted drove me, along with Steve Butler and Joe Scales to his home in East Cleveland, where we all had an enjoyable time seeing his big 11x26' American Flyer layout. I will never forget the joy reflecting in his eyes when showing us his layout for the first time. The layout was once featured in the Cleveland Plain Dealer with the headline: "This Railroad is a Model-Business Boom." Better still, I remember when he went beneath his layout and started to show us his "treasures" of AF parts of every kind. He was in heaven!

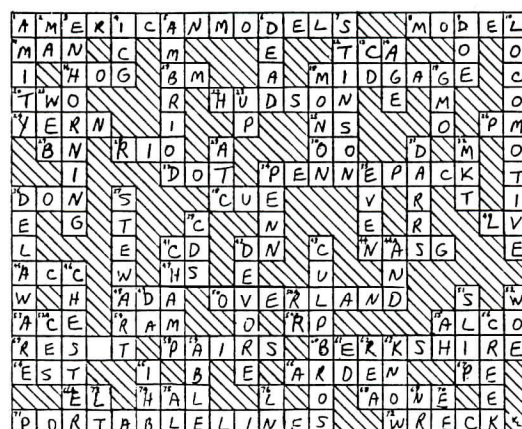
When I last talked to his wife Jene, she indicated that he was determined, even though he was confined to a wheelchair, to make NASG Buffalo to be with his friends once again.

Those of us who knew Ted and Jene feel we have lost a true S friend with his passing. Wherever he may be, I'm sure he will be checking out all the American Flyer flea markets to see if he can pick up some bargains for his overwhelming collect.

I thought others should share my experience with Ted.

Bill Krause

Here's the answer to Kent Singer's crossword puzzle in the Summer DISPATCH.



continued from p. 7

space the ends of the main rods out some so that they approach being parallel to the centerline of the engine. The eccentric cranks for the valve gear are the last thing to go on and get tightened between the head of the screw and the tubing that goes through the side rod and main rod holes.

The only remaining topics to be discussed involve the motor and the valve gear. Perhaps at a future time, if there seems to be reader mail requesting this, I will devote an article to motors and gearing and to valve gear assembly. As a way of rounding out the discussion let me say, test each part for movement as you add it and solve any problems before you add more parts. In this way you will produce a mechanism which is smooth and free of binds.

Dear Fellow S Gaugers,

During the recent NASG National Convention in Buffalo, New York, a new club modular layout, that of the Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers, was introduced for the first time. None of us who had worked on the layout knew for sure whether everything would run all right. Even the wiring was largely unchecked. It lent a certain air of excitement and uncertainty to the show. Fortunately, everything ran correctly and we were able to breathe a good sigh; but we rapidly found it was not the layout itself, but the track on the layout that was causing a lot of controversy.

You see, the CVSG had decided to "dump" the proposed NASG standard size rail (code .100) and instead laid their track in code .148 rail. We went to Earl Eshelman, who made us a run of closed frog code .148 S Gauge switches, which were also installed.

Now those of you dedicated S Scale fanatics who find your upper lip involuntarily curling at the thought of code .148 rail on an S Scale layout can understand why I was asked several times, "Why in the world would you decide to put that stuff on a layout?"

I decided after the Model Railroad Industrial Association show in Dayton, Ohio, that the question was important enough to be answered in the DISPATCH, so here it is. Please keep in mind that this is just the collective thoughts of the CVSG and that, of course, there are other opinions, but that we feel this is the right train of thought for an S Gauge portable display.

The promotion philosophy of our club is built right into our club charter: "That any and all currently produced items in S Gauge will be displayed, if possible, and that no member will be restricted in what equipment he wishes to run on the layout." It is not unusual to see a Lionel S.P. passenger set running beside a brace of FP 7s with a string of American Models boxcars. Even a string of A.F. hopper cars pulled by my hi-rail M-1A looks good beside a couple of GP-38s.

Add a few S sized buildings and kits and you have a very interesting display indeed!

Perhaps the single most important thing we have found from our previous layouts was that viewers attention is drawn to the items on the layout, not the layout itself. No matter how fancy it is, how much scenery is included, or, yes, how perfectly to scale it is, the layout draws little attention by itself. It's what's running on it that counts. You see, the layout itself is inconsequential! It's little more than a fancy card table with tracks to most people. What they want to see is the products displayed on the card table, not the table itself.

Now please, guys, spare me the details on how beautiful your display is, or how many people say they just love it. If you want to show your modeling ability, take them to your basement and dazzle them with your genius. What we're talking about here is S Gauge promotion, not your modeling abilities or your devotion to finescale. Anything short of bare wood seems to work as a background for the running equipment on a modular display.

As a medium for displaying all S products, code .100 is a total loss and code .126 might as well be, since it takes the very fragile Miller tie strip or HO spikes to accommodate hi-rail and tinsplate. Code .148 is perfect! The railhead is nearly identical to code .126, as is the base. The only difference is the height of the rail. If the roadbed is properly painted and ballasted, this difference is almost totally unnoticed, but think how much more versatile your display layout is. You can now run anything, have guests run their equipment, accommodate anybody, as well as have a sturdier layout to boot. You can attract A.F. tinplaters as potential converts to hi-rail or scale instead of driving them away from the start. And all the time your scale equipment still runs great and looks great.

Now after this, what possible reason is there for staying with code .100, a very narrow and restrictive rail, other than, "it's scale." The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association couldn't justify it, so we went with what was logical. Since we have attracted more S Gaugers in one part of the country than anywhere else, we rest with the philosophy that attracting any potential S Gaugers is better than attracting none at all. You may also find a lot more harmony in your local club.

Sincerely,

Lee McCarty
Executive Vice President
NASG

Dear Elaine,

I remember your formal introduction to us S Gaugers at the 1983 NASG convention in Woburn, as the editor of the DISPATCH. As I recall, it was a forum in which a number of issues were discussed with you as a member of a panel of individuals who play important roles in the promotion and development of S Gauge. One of the issues that was raised was the kind of information that should be covered in the DISPATCH. My purpose in writing is that I have stumbled on to a subject that clearly should be developed by the DISPATCH: coping with the NASG standards!

For months our Connecticut S Gaugers have been reminded that there are significant dimensional changes from the old NMRA standards to the new NASG ones. For one, the American Models turnouts (switches) are in conformity with the NASG standards while Shin-hara's conform more to the NMRA's. I'm sure the brass importers have had some problems in deciding which standard? From my non-technical observations, they have sometimes split the difference between both standards. Moreover, when I think of most of the great S layouts, I'm sure they were built to conform to the NMRA standards.

Now I don't want anybody to get the idea I'm knocking the new NASG standards because I think they will

help all of us in the future. During this interim period, I think we need help in (1) adjusting wheels to the new standards without damaging the bearing surfaces, (2) what kind of gear or wheel, and (3) easy ways to modify the flangeway of our existing turnouts. Since NASG put these new standards in effect with their Standards Gauge, I think articles on "How to," etc. should be forthcoming from the DISPATCH.

I take note that the Jersey S Scalers are having a Fall Get Together on Nov. 3, featuring a modular layout. Everyone is urged to bring their module so long as it fits the module standards. Any equipment that we hope to run on the layout must conform naturally to the NASG standards. In their earlier notice, which includes helpful information on their module standards, they include information on how to adjust Shinahara-Heimbουργers turnouts to fit NASG standards. The kind of information is needed in the DISPATCH as soon as possible to help all of us.

I hope this message doesn't sound negative in nature but it is one that needs to be addressed by our organization. Just within our small group of Connecticut S Gaugers there are at least three of us who are about to build new scale layouts. I believe we should be building to the new standards, but there are many reasons why we should hesitate -- or get advice from the best in S.

Sincerely,

Bill Krause

In light of the recent new manufacturers' interest in S Gauge, this is definitely a question of concern, Bill. Our own immediate editorial position is fundamentally in favor of the new NASG standards, even though no position is without compromise. The editorial for the Winter '85 DISPATCH will present a more thorough explanation of our stand on this subject. As always, readers opinions are invited and welcome.