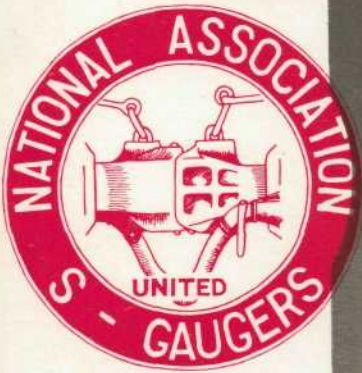




DISPATCH

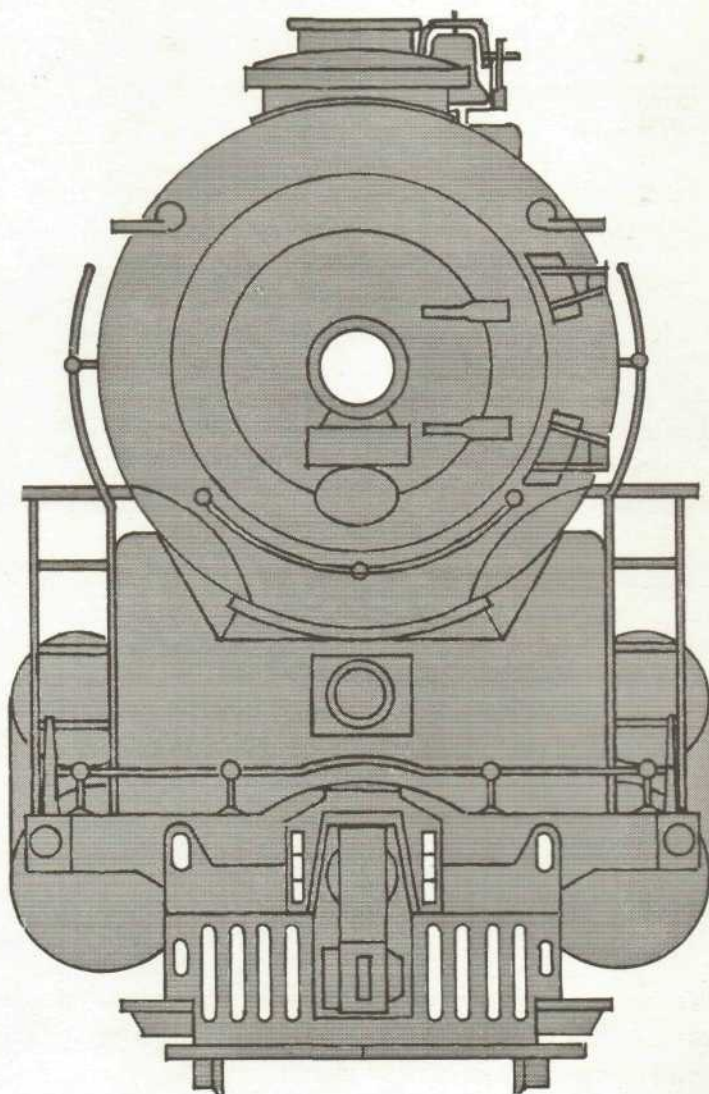
Vol. XII No. 2
April 1989



ON THE READY TRACK

THE NEW YORK CENTRAL L3a AND L4a MOHAWKS

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* RESERVATIONS NECESSARY BY MAY 15 TO ASSURE LATE '89 - EARLY '90 DELIVERY. MODEL BY (SAMHONGSA).

DISPATCH

Official Publication of the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
of S GAUGERS

The DISPATCH, welcomes art, photographs, letters, articles, and other S-gauge-related materials contributed by the membership. Send them to the Editor:

Dick Karnes
4323 86th Ave. SE
Mercer Island, WA 98040

NASG membership runs from July through June, including all DISPATCH issues for the membership year irrespective of enrollment date. Address applications, renewals, and membership questions to:

Don DeWitt
37 Snow Drive
Mahwah, NJ 07430

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COVER

This idyllic scene was shot at the Black River & Western's Lambertville (New Jersey) Station during a fantrip layover at the 1988 NASG National Convention. The NASG extra waits for departure time while, in the background, local street traffic crosses the picturesque Delaware & Raritan canal. *Photo by Dick Karnes.*

DISPATCH is published bimonthly by Goellner Printing Co., 301 S. Main Street, St. Charles, MO 63301-3498. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 1 year \$12.00 which is included in the \$17 dues. All subscriptions payable in U.S. funds. Application to mail at second-class rates is pending at St. Charles, MO. Printed in U.S.A. All rights reserved. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Dispatch* c/o Michael Ferraro, 280 Gordon Rd., Matawan, NJ 07747.

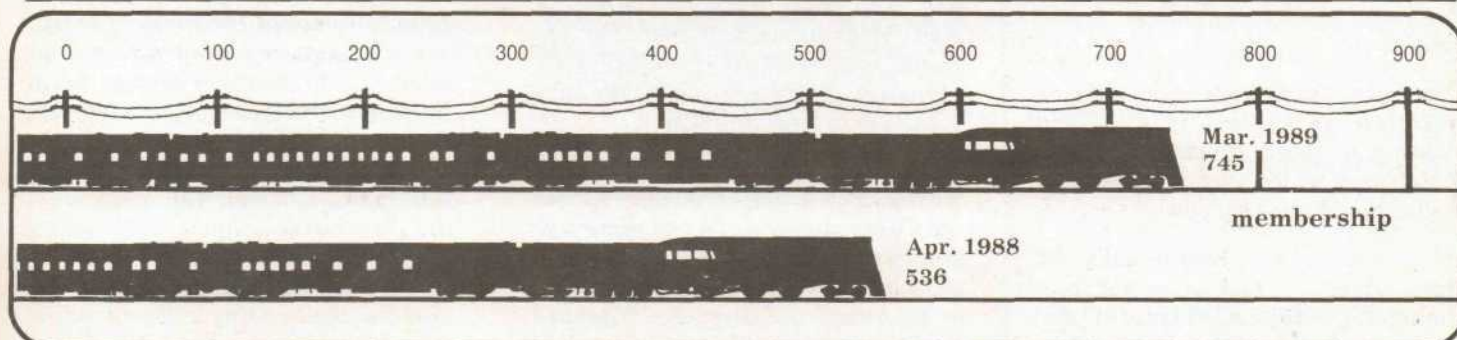
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Pete Mihelich	Publisher

The deadlines for articles are the 15th of Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct., and Dec. for issues dated Apr., June, Aug., Oct., Dec., and Feb. respectively.



ADVERTISING RATES: Full pg \$200; 1/2-pg \$100. Text and art must be sized for 25% printing reduction. Each half-tone furnished by us from advertiser's B&W prints \$25 additional; unscreened negatives \$40 each. Inquire for color rates.

LETTERS . . .

Editor:

[I'd like to respond] to your article "Appealing to the Tinplater" in the Dec. 1988 DISPATCH.

When one has an original Flyer item in fine shape, it's a personal choice whether to modify or not (hopefully not). But when a piece is well worn, and many are, restoration or modification come into the picture. Articles on AF restoration may be appropriate, especially on appearance (matching paints, decals, and even chrome). What new products and methods really do the trick, if any?

Next, AF modification. Articles could range from AF-to-scale (again, hopefully well worn), to just detailing engines with available products without modifying the basic running mechanism. Also, many layout photos show AF locos with different wheel arrangements, even articulateds, but rarely are the methods of kitbashing discussed. And lastly, how about discussions on old plans or kits long gone showing how to build locos out of wood that will accept AF mechanisms?

Since I was away from Flyer and model railroading for some time, many of these suggestions may have already been covered too many times over the years. But a rehash of much of this would be of great help to the new and expanded ranks of S who find themselves located somewhere in the grey area between tinplate, realism, and nostalgia.

Jim Goyner

[These are excellent suggestions. We'll try to oblige. And we'd appreciate raw material from those of you out there who are the experts. — Ed.]

Editor:

I recently came across an interesting question. Is there any standard relating to power trucks on diesels which says which side of the leading truck should [pick up power]?

On a steam engine traditionally the right drivers . . . pick up power from the track, [as do] the left sides of [the] tender trucks . . . except for a few like the Rex Dockside where all drivers [pick up power. My] wiring is

standard, so that a positive current to the right-hand rail produces forward motion.

Who cares? I do. I have a few cases of "smart wiring" where I have inserted stopping sections in the track. Specifically, as the main approaches a crossing (which is relay controlled), if the crossing has power to let a train cross the main, the main has a dead spot. This is located in each right-hand rail as you face the crossing. The dead section is about 6" long, longer than the span of drivers on any of my engines, and is located to end about six inches from the fouling point.

While I prefer to bring my engines to a smooth stop, in case I forget, when the engine on the main approaches the favored crossing [and] its drivers hit the dead right rail it comes to a screeching stop short of the collision point.

However, with the RDC-3, it keeps going until its rear truck, with the [pick-up] wheels on the right, hits the dead section, and by that time the front is in the crossing. I don't consider this a defect, because as far as I know there isn't any standard to say it is wrong, but I recommend that one be considered. I have three choices. One is to try to rebuild the power trucks, but that isn't simple. Another is to move the dead sections further back, but the the steam engines will stop too far back. The third is to tie a string around my finger to remember to keep manual control of the RDC-3 when running on one of these tracks.

Any readers' thoughts would be appreciated.

Wally Collins

[NMRA Standard S-9 requires the lead truck of a diesel locomotive to pick up power from the right-hand rail. The front truck of Omnicon's RDC picks up current from the left-hand rail, and is therefore non-standard. There are two fairly easy solutions to your problem.

The first is to "double" your smart wiring. For example, I have a case where the stub end of a reversing wye is hidden and physically unprotected from locomotives running off the end — and onto the floor. So, I gapped both running rails and installed opposite-facing diodes across each gap such that the locomotive would

stop before reaching end-of-track. This was necessary because some of my locomotives pick up power from all wheels. Reversing the polarity allows current to flow again, bringing the locomotive out of the stub. You could probably do similar tricks with your circuits. This solution is certainly not elegant, but you may find that you need it if you ever acquire or build a locomotive which picks up power from all wheels on both sides of the locomotive. More and more small-scale locomotives are being manufactured this way. Their pick-up reliability and TV interference characteristics are much better than conventionally-wired locomotives.

The second solution is to alter the power trucks themselves. This is easy, and requires nothing more than two screwdrivers — one with a medium-small flat blade and one with a tiny flat blade — and a small flat file or sheet-metal "nibbler" from Radio Shack. (Buy a nibbler. It'll save you about 15 minutes per truck.)

Remove the eight screws holding the floor to your RDC body and drop the floor out. Mark the body and floor so you can replace the floor in the proper orientation. You'll have to work on both trucks in an identical manner. The plastic universal coupling snaps off the joint on the power truck gear tower simply by pulling the universal sleeve to the rear (away from the gear tower). Then you can use your medium-small screwdriver to remove the kingpin screw. Carefully note the sequence of reassembly — you have a spring, a bushing, a washer, and an electrical pick-up to stack up on that screw when you reassemble the unit. (You will need to disassemble the unit to this extent anyway to correct the coupler height and bottom clearance. See the DISPATCH, Vol. XI No. 1, March 1988, pg. 10.)

Having removed the kingpin screw, you now have a loose truck in your hand. Turn the truck upside down. With your small screwdriver, remove the screws holding one of the sideframes to the truck bolster. Both sideframes will now fall away from the power truck. Remove the other two sideframe screws and put the frames and bolster aside. Now unscrew the two tiny screws holding one of the gear covers to its gearbox and lift off the cover. Be careful — if you drop one of these screws you'll

never find it again! Lift out the wheel-axle assembly, turn it 180 degrees (reverse it), and drop it in again. Replace the gearbox cover and its screws. Now do the same thing to the other gearbox and wheel set.

Now you must reinstall the sideframes such that the little pickup wipers are on the other side. However, the bolster will not fit this way because it interferes with the gear tower (the larger gear box). So, with your file or your nibbler, cut a rectangular notch in the bolster, opposite and identical to the notch already present in the other side of the bolster. Now you can reassemble the truck. Be sure that the gear tower is nestled into your "new" notch, and that the wiper fingers contact the back side of the pickup wheels. Reinstall the truck on the car floor and reattach the universal coupling.

Now do the same for the other power truck. Then try out your unit without the body installed. If you did everything correctly, you'll find that the unit runs perfectly, but in the wrong direction. Thus, the last step is to unsolder the motor wire leads, reverse (interchange) them at each motor, and solder them back in place. Replace the floor in the body shell and you're finished.

You should be able to accomplish all this in about an hour.

Good luck!]

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Whither Goest S?

Nearly all S gaugers periodically sit back and contemplate the future of S. A frequent topic of convention conversation and individual thought is the growth of S in the overall model railroading community. In the not-so-distant past, we have seen N scale emerge, become popular, and bypass S in terms of sheer numbers of devotees. More recently, G gauge has exploded beyond belief to become the hottest scale in terms of growth, new products, and consumer expenditures.

In both cases S was left behind!! Thoughtful modelers wonder how that could have happened, given the reality of poor operation of one and the immense space requirement of the

other. After all, S is the ideal size — combining excellent operation with reasonable space requirements. What went wrong?

Numerous theories have been put forward over the years. I can remember when the perfect solution was supposed to be an inexpensive ready-to-run locomotive. The American Models FP-7 was released, but S didn't really mushroom. Then the theorists postulated that flex-track was the key to success. Thanks to Tomalco and 'S'cenery Unlimited, S now has flextrack — but not fantastic growth. Then a 40' steel boxcar was the answer. Then, ready-to-use turnouts. Then, passenger cars. These all came to pass and S still dogged along slowly — growing, but not really very rapidly. Then, the era of imported brass locomotives arrived. WOW!! "Now S would really take off!!" said many of us. "We'll show those HOers!" Even with the impetus of brass diesels, steamers, freight and passenger cars, and even sanding towers, S still rolls along slowly, not really moving into high gear.

"S needs another magazine!" said the chorus. So NASG improved the DISPATCH and Rollie restarted The Herald. Did these two publications start a groundswell? Not really.

"Expose yourself!" said some folks. So NASG arranged for a joint national convention with the NMRA in order to maximize our exposure. Recently the lack of decals and painted locomotives has been suggested as the reason for slow growth in S. Perhaps exposure, decals, and paint jobs will help, but I doubt that anything resembling a miracle will occur. Just more slow, steady growth.

"A ready-to-run complete train set is the answer," sing the multitudes. Did Lionel's reintroduction of AF help much? I haven't really noticed, so the impact couldn't have been too large. How about a scale train set? Perhaps ready-to-run! Now there's a new idea!!

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find an announcement for an S scale bay-window caboose to be produced by that old mold-maker Ron Bashista of American Models. This caboose, along with his recently-announced

plans to produce S gauge snap-track, may be just the growth hormone S has needed. Maybe a minor miracle is in the offing. (Hope springs eternal!)

I'd like to encourage your participation in this caboose project to ensure sufficient orders to guarantee production. Maybe S can significantly speed up its growth rate. It's certainly worth a try.

Ed Loizeaux

EDITORIAL

CHANGE . . .

By the time our new NASG president takes office on July 1, I will have put out 17 issues of the DISPATCH over a period of four years. I plan to hang up my hat then so the new president can appoint an editor of his own choice. I've already informed the Board of Trustees of my intent to retire, and have offered to stay on for one additional issue in case the new editor needs help getting started.

I have been fortunate to serve you during a period of great strength, resolve, and unity among the NASG officers. However, many of them, seeking a well-earned rest, are not running for re-election. There are many talented people among you who could step into their shoes but aren't coming forward.

Don't sit back just because you think someone else will always be available to do the job. NASG is your organization, and its continued success is in your hands — each and every one of you.

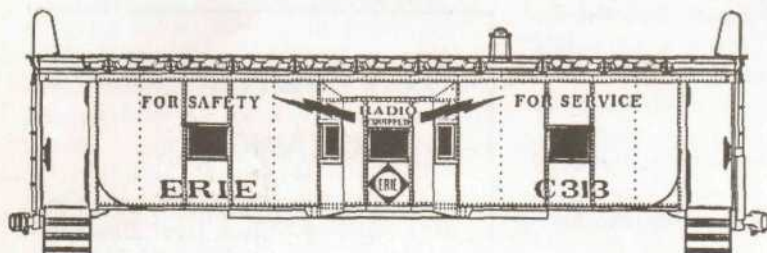
It's been my pleasure to serve you, and I hope that — in your view — I have done it well.

Dick Barnes

MANUFACTURER NEWS

Central Jersey S Scalpers (c/o Mike Cunningham, 2 Roosevelt Ave., Cranford, NJ 07016) is marketing the first 500 of American Models' new bay-window caboose. The prototype was built by International Car Co. in 1953 for the Erie (nos. C301-C350). These were later lettered for Erie-Lackawanna and Conrail. Road names and color schemes available for the models are based on similar cars used by other railroads. They are as follows:

Conrail — Blue car, black roof, white lettering
 D & H — Red car, black roof, yellow lettering
 Erie — Red car, black roof, white lettering, black & white herald
 P&LE — Red car, white lettering, black & white NYC herald
 Chessie/B & O — Yellow car, silver roof, blue lettering
 C & NW — Yellow car, green roof, green lettering
 Southern — Red car, white lettering
 SP — Red car, white lettering



An undecorated version will also be available. Price is \$19.95 plus \$2.00 each for shipping (\$5.00 maximum). Specify scale or hi-rail. Clubs (or individuals with large rosters) can save by ordering ten for the price of nine. (That comes to a total of \$18.46 per caboose when ordered in bulk, as opposed to \$21.95 for just one.)

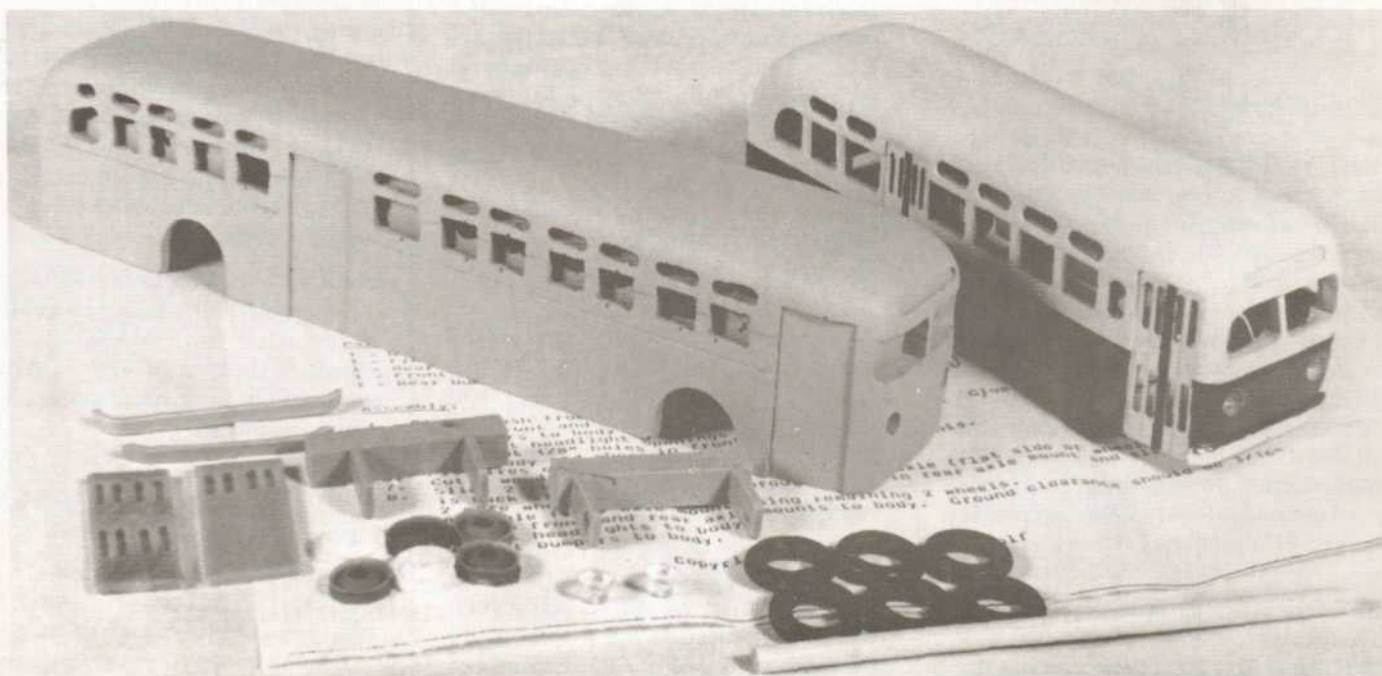
The Central Jersey S Scalpers (CJSS) must pre-sell 500 cars by June 15, 1989 in order to commit itself and American Models. What hangs in the balance may be American Models' ability to put together complete train sets including cabooses. Once the 500 are sold, American Models will also sell the cabooses — at \$24.95. American may make some of the same roadnames, but if they do, they will not reuse any of the car numbers reserved by the CJSS.

Central Jersey S Scalpers (c/o Don Thompson, 2 Roberts Rd., New Brunswick, NJ 08901) has sets of boxcar doors for converting American Models boxcars to other styles. Each set, priced at \$6.00 postpaid, contains five differently-styled pairs of doors: 6-foot 7-panel, 6-foot 5-panel, 7-foot 7-panel, 7-foot 5-panel, and 7-foot Youngstown (like the AM door, but wider). For 20 or more sets you pay only \$5.00 a set.

Hoquat Hobbies (P.O. Box 253, Dunellen, NJ 08812) has a new bus kit from the 1950-53 era. It's a long version of the GMC bus reviewed in the Feb. 1989 *DISPATCH* (Vol. XII No. 1). Kit design and construction are identical for the two buses. The photo shows both buses for comparison. Price: \$12 for the regular kit; \$14.50 deluxe (chrome bumpers).

Hoquat also has a new streetcar body kit — a Birney single-truck "Safety Car." Price is \$29. The modeler must supply the truck, power, and pole.

Be sure to add \$2.00 for postage and handling if ordering direct. NJ and NY residents add appropriate state/local sales tax. Dealers stocking Hoquat kits include Steam Depot, 1838 Walnut St., Ashland, PA 17921 and Scenery Unlimited, 310 Lathrop Ave., River Forest, IL 60305.



Hoquat's new bus kit makes a longer version of the GM bus reviewed in the last issue (right).

Lionel Trains, Inc. (26750 Twenty-Three Mile Rd., Mt. Clemens, MI 48045) announces a color change in its 1989 American Flyer C&O passenger train set. When first introduced, the C&O Alco PA locomotive featured yellow and blue markings found typically on freight locomotives. To be consistent with prototypical C&O passenger trains, the color scheme on the locomotive units has now been changed to yellow, blue, and grey to match the passenger cars.

The new prototypically-correct C&O passenger train will be available this year. It will be produced and shipped late in the summer in time for holiday purchasing and winter entertainment.

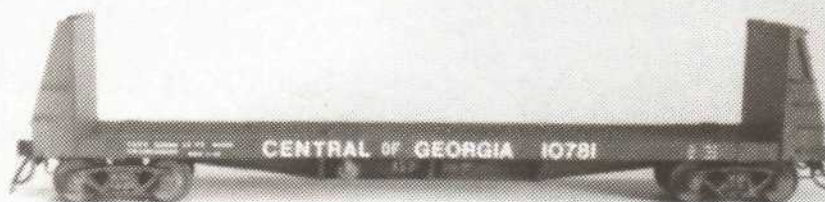
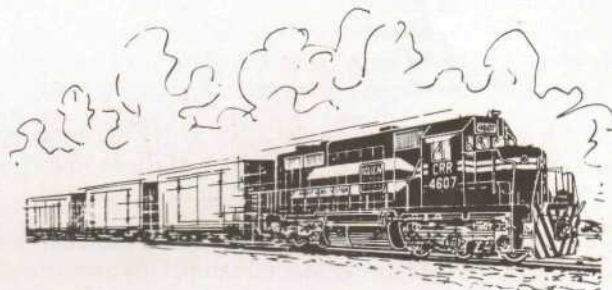
Charlie Sandersfeld of Omnicon Scale Models (50 S. Lively Blvd., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007) phoned us to say he's extremely appreciative of people who have asked him for help with some production defects in his newly-delivered PRR M1 and M1a 4-8-2 locomotives. Charlie will remedy these problems for purchasers if they return their locomotives to him. First of all, the slot in the frame cover plate which accommodates the square sound can on one of the driver axles is not wide enough. Thus, the locomotive mechanism will stop running abruptly whenever that driver axle shifts laterally (such as when the locomotive enters a curve). Enlarging the slot from side to side will correct the problem.

Also, the pilot truck does not have enough lateral movement to negotiate curves much less than 60" radius. This is because the mounting ears on the sideframes overlap the curved slot in the truck bolster. This can be corrected with a round jewelers' file.

Finally, the crosshead guides on some units are not firmly attached. Test them gently but firmly. If they come loose, the mating surface should be cleaned of any residue and the guides soldered firmly in place.

Again, Charlie extends his regrets for any inconvenience these problems have caused his customers. Please feel free to return your units to him for the necessary repairs.

S DeSignS (37 Snow Drive, Mahwah, NJ 07430) is a new company just formed by Don DeWitt. The company is working on Lehigh Valley diesel decals and will also be selling limited-edition runs of custom-painted freight cars from all areas of the country. Their first offering consists of two American Models boxcars. One is a CB&Q Chinese-red car with "Everywhere West" on one side and "Way of the Zephyrs" on the other. The other is a WM boxcar-red car with white "speed lettering." Each is available in two road numbers. Price is \$19.50 plus \$2.00 shipping, or, for two or more, \$18.50 plus \$1.50 shipping for each. Be sure to specify scale or hi-rail.



**'They' said, "You should not do them."
then 'They' said, "You can not do them"**

We did not listen!

We did them... For You



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE OF GENERAL ELECTION

Pursuant to NASG's Constitution and By-Laws, a general election is hereby announced for the following purposes:

- A. Election of President; Treasurer; and Eastern, Central, and Western Region Vice-Presidents.
- B. Membership vote on two proposed amendments to NASG's Constitution.

The list of candidates is as follows:

President

- **Michael R. Ferraro**

Treasurer

- **David F. "Sandy" Davis** (Fanwood, NJ)

- **David J. Davis** (Parma, OH)

Eastern Region VP

- **Douglas Peck**

Central Region VP

- **Paul Stevens**

- **Joel Liebovitz**

Western Region VP

- **Lee Johnson**

Ballots will be mailed by April 15th to NASG members of record as of April 1. Returned Ballots must be postmarked before midnight May 15th to be counted.

The two proposed Constitutional amendments deal with the recently-created Family Membership. One amendment alters wording to allow Contributing and Honorary Members to become Family Members. Currently, only Regular Members can become Family Members. The second proposed amendment places the Family Membership on the same annual renewal basis as all other current classes of membership.

Any amendment to NASG's Constitution requires a vote by the general membership. A two-thirds majority of the ballots returned must favor the amendment for it to pass.

* * * * *

MODULE NEWS

Convention-goers: We need help from those of you who will not have modules at the 1990 (Pittsburgh) convention. We need you to volunteer your time to be part of the 1990 Convention S-MOD Track Inspector Team, headed by Ed Loizeaux, and the S-MOD Rolling Stock Inspector Team, headed by Lee Johnson. We also need help by people who are willing to spend time operating the layout. In addition, S-MOD Engineers, Conductors, Block Chiefs, etc., are needed.

Although we want all NASG members to bring their locomotives and rolling stock to the convention for show or operation, no item will be allowed to operate on the layout unless it conforms to the NASG wheelset and coupler standards. The check gauges (\$2.95) and coupler-height gauges (\$3.95) are available from the NASG Clearing House, 280 Gordon Rd., Matawan, NJ 07747. (Be sure to add 10 percent for shipping.) All rolling stock will be checked by Lee Johnson's Inspectors.

Modular layout space is getting very tight for 1990. I need confirmation from those who are interested in bringing their module(s).

Don DeWitt
37 Snow Dr.
Mahwah, NJ 07430

* * * * *

PROMOTIONAL BROCHURES

New NASG promotional brochures are available. Get them from the Promotions Committee chairman:

George M. Ricketts
2922 Somerton Rd.
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

* * * * *

WHAT? NEVER SEEN A CONSTITUTION? DON'T KNOW THE RULES?

Copies of the NASG constitution, by-laws, and contest rules are available for the asking from the NASG secretary:

James A. Kindraka
44014 S. Umlerland Circle
Canton, MI 48187

Send Jim a stamped (\$.45) addressed 9x12 manila envelope, give him your membership number, and tell him which document(s) you want.

* * * * *

DISPATCH ADVERTISING

The DISPATCH accepts commercial advertising. The rules are simple:

PRINTED in the DISPATCH:

- Advertiser supplies camera-ready ad material for black-and-white ads. See page 3 for terms and conditions. For the latest scoop on color rates, please inquire. You may get a fabulous bargain until we figure out what we're doing!

INSERTS:

- Advertiser supplies 850 copies of 8-1/2"x 11" insert. Price: \$25 per single sheet insert per issue; \$35 if printed both sides.
- Or, advertiser supplies camera-ready ad material and we make copies. Price: \$50 per single sheet insert per issue; \$85 if printed both sides.

The NASG reserves the right to reject any advertising. Subletting of ad space without permission is prohibited. Make checks out to NASG Inc., and send with your material to the editor.

MODEL PHOTOGRAPHY — TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES —

by Bob Werre
(Photographs by the Author — Of Course!)

Never underestimate the power of the press — countries, presidents, and kings all have fallen to it. Favorable press is a very sought-after commodity. Every major corporation, religion, and minority organization fields a public relations effort to get favorable press.

We need much more exposure in the major publications to promote S scale. The major model railroad publications are hungry for well-written articles and meaty photographs. S scale publications (The DISPATCH, S Gaugian, and The Herald) also have a constant need for photos and articles.

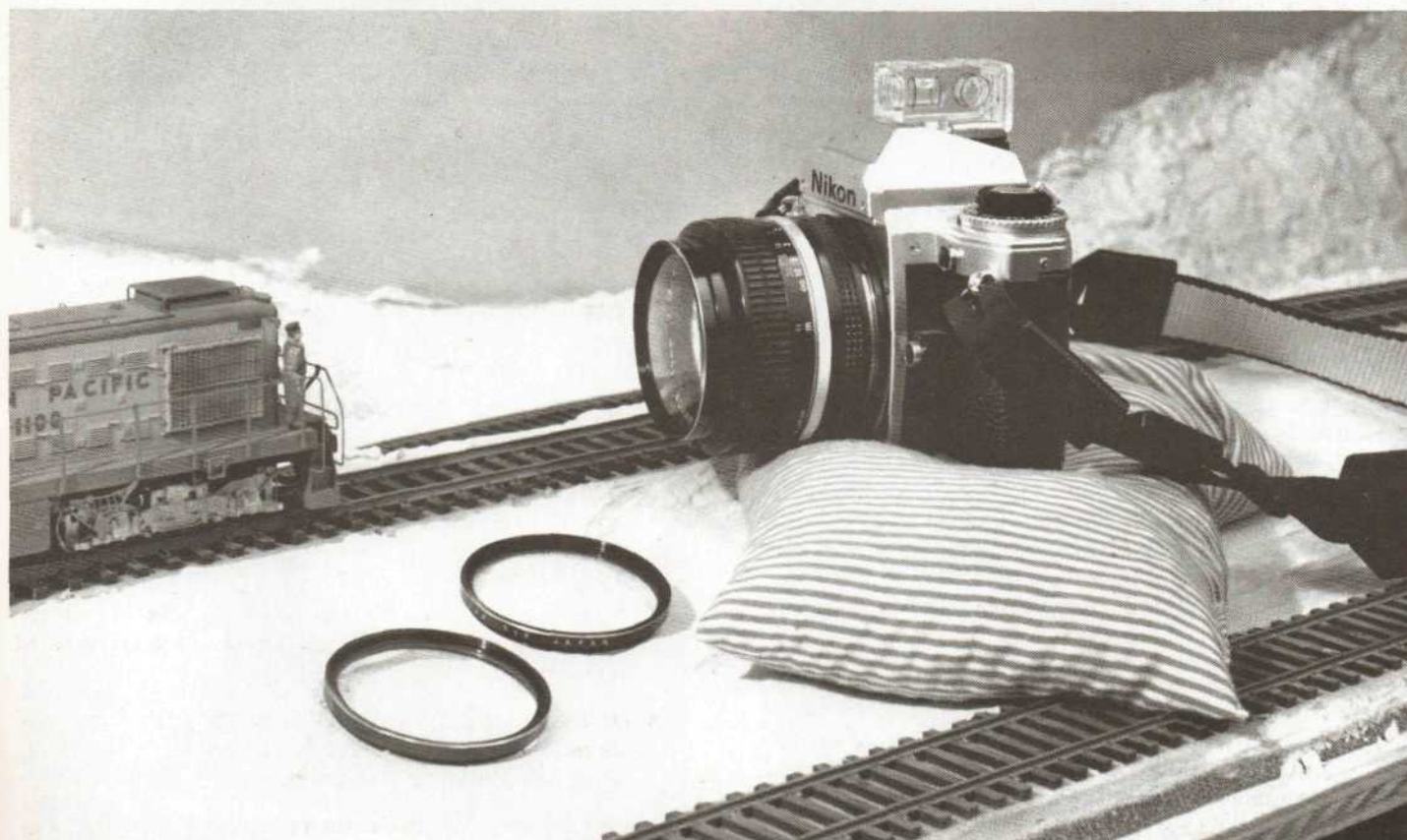
Photographs that appear in the major publications must be far above “snapshot” quality. With this installment we are beginning a short series on basic techniques and recommendations for photographing your models and layouts. We will not discuss how to update your camera, what’s the best camera brand, or where the best deals are. We will concentrate instead on the camera types, lenses, lights, films, and techniques.

Taking photos can be simple or complicated — the subject matter of your photographs will determine this. Getting detail shots for a construction article or a single model can be simple. However, “dropping” a camera and lights

into a crowded layout and making a realistic full-page cover shot can be quite difficult. But the final results can be as rewarding as building a great model.

First, you will need a good 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera with closeup capabilities. SLRs let you view the scene through the lens, so what you see is exactly what you get. Forget about your box Brownie, Instamatic, or Polaroid cameras. On the other hand, super-automated auto-everything cameras certainly aren’t necessary. Actually, the quality of the camera equipment is basically determined by the lens. The camera body and lens combination should be manually adjustable — you should be able to focus manually and choose your f-stop (lens opening size) and shutter speeds. A behind-the-lens meter system can be a great help, and most cameras have them. If possible, choose a lens that will focus close (macro capability) and one that will “stop down” to f/22 or f/32. (The higher the f-number, the smaller the lens opening and the greater the depth of field.) You don’t need ultra-fast or zoom lenses, but you will appreciate the depth of field of f/22 where nearly everything is sharp! I have found that 85mm, 50mm, and 28 or 24mm lenses are good choices for model work. If a macro-type lens is not

MORE →



A bean bag is an excellent camera support which conforms to the layout terrain for your eye-level views. Inexpensive close-up lenses (foreground) work well on non-macro prime lenses. The photographic bubble level on the camera’s accessory shoe is a great aid in keeping the camera level. Always use a cable release to fire the camera’s shutter.

available for your camera, consider an inexpensive set of +1, +2, +3 close-up lenses — they will work reasonably well. These screw onto your camera lens like filters. The higher the number, the closer you can get. However, do not purchase extension tubes — they are used for ultra close-ups and are therefore generally not necessary.

When it comes to funding these items, remember that most of this equipment can be used for photographing the kids too. Also consider purchasing used lenses. However, do purchase major brands — they have earned their reputations.

Because we will be doing "time exposures" of several seconds, you will need camera supports. I use three methods for holding my camera. For S scale eye-level close-ups, a homemade bean bag does a great job of conforming to the terrain of your layout. A miniature tripod with a sturdy ball head is also great when getting

in close on the layout surface. For most shooting in the aisleway, a sturdy tripod is the only answer. Get one with individual leg spread. Its advantages are tremendous when working in tight spaces.

Lighting equipment can be the cheapest but most misunderstood aspect of photography. Great lighting is the most important element you can add to your layout. First, put the tiny strobe you bought in the bottom of your camera case and take it out only when photographing family events and such. I generally use large, heavy, but very powerful strobes to do my lighting. However, you will need to "see" the light, so floodlights are your best choice. I spent years working with them. An inexpensive set of Smith-Victor floods and a couple of stands should do fairly well. And if you want to save even more, the hardware stores sell little floods with spring clamps, which will do OK. The floods work well to lighten dark corners and when painting and wiring the layout too.

Next issue we'll talk about films and what to submit to the magazines.



Here we see an innovative use of a tripod to get over the "set." Better tripods like this Gitzo are sturdy, offer individual leg spread, and let you reverse the column for these downunder shots.



A miniature tripod offers a sturdy support where a large tripod isn't practical.





Dick Karnes

The Washington, D.C. Union Station, saved and restored by the historic preservation movement, was absolutely gleaming just one week after its grand re-opening in October 1988.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

by Gary Jordan

The strange-looking weapon buzzed. A stream of energy hummed through the air toward me. I tried desperately to move, only to find myself... awake and slapping the snooze button on the alarm. The dream was already fading. My mouth was dry. Must have slept with it open again. Probably snored. Yep. My uvula is stretched halfway down my throat.

The alarm does its thing again. It's nine minutes later and I'm not out of bed yet. Nine more minutes and I'll do it. It's so warm in here. Mmmm.

AH!! All right. Here we go. It's not as cold as it was a month ago. I can almost stand it without turning the thermostat up. Floor's cold. That does it, 67 degrees here we come. Seems like it's been cold forever, and grey. Clouds look thin. Maybe the sun will show today. At least the office will be warm.

A clean bathroom is a luxury. It won't last long. Two of 'em and mine is the only one they make up in. If they would only wipe out the sink. I wash my face in there!

(Shaving takes five minutes. It's a thoughtless process. Just mechanical. Try not to cut your throat, stupid.)

Furnace must not have run last night. It smells that way. I must be out of it, I forgot to turn the light on. White shirt today. Maroon tie. Yellow is the latest power color. I don't have one. Don't need it. No power anyway. Don't want it. Tan slacks will go again today. Brown shoes. "Brown shoes... don't make it." Keys, wallet, change, all set.

I need a haircut. A little plastic surgery too. Get rid of that baby face. I wouldn't mind looking tough, even rugged. Oh well. Tie tied. Hair brushed.

PB&J sounds good today. Drinks, fruit, bread, jelly, butter, Egg-Os, lunch bags, plate, glass, knife, fork, toaster, peanut butter, chips, cookies, syrup, snack. These kids are getting old enough to eat a whole sandwich each. Try to remember to ask them tonight. Just right, one for me, half each for them. If it weren't for this pre-packaged stuff it would take me twice as long to pack lunches. Fifteen

minutes. Get with it!! Egg-Os in, plate warming, forgot the milk and a vitamin. Time to put stuff away before they pop up. Load the briefcase. OK, butter, syrup, fifteen seconds. Nuke 'em.

Dishes in the washing machine. The kitchen will probably look the same when I get home. Kids! Kiss Kath goodbye. "Mmmnhunmny." She's a stitch. Ray gun for her next.

Work.

Home. Ten hours later.

The mail is in. Nobody home. That's right, number one is at softball practice, so number two is sitting for her. I need something. Drugs? Booze? Chips? Cookies? Milk and Nillas!!!

Better change. This could work out great! Two hours before starting dinner! Jeans, sweatshirt, loafers. It's been a while.

The same. What happened to the dwarfs that were supposed to take care of this stuff? Can't count on anything anymore. Better sit down and sort this out. Repair jobs go over here, out of the way. Tools back home. Rags too.

Light! Action! These power trucks are going to be a pain. The side rods are harder than hell to quarter. Hmm, I could build a jig that would hold...

Dreaming is the most important part of modeling. That must be why I don't get a lot done anymore. I just spent 15 minutes visualizing the finished product.

All the projects I have in boxes are finished like that. They'll all be finished in reality someday. Until then, they will be complete in my mind.

I'm not DaVinci, but I can see a locomotive in a sheet of brass, a boxcar in a piece of styrene. I can see hills and valleys and mountains in an empty room and so can every other modeler I know.

We all have plans. We also have the ability to make them reality.

When I was a kid, I couldn't wait to show my latest model to whomever, grandparents, friends, family. Now I feel slightly reluctant. It's the look in their eyes. Does it say they think I'm a nut? No. Even if they did I wouldn't care. It says "so what?" That's what

really hurts. It makes me feel sorry, for them and for me. It tells me they cannot share my dream, my world.

I used to try to interest them. I can't tell you how many people I've invited over to operate with me. Some were friends, I thought. Some were parents of friends of my children. The response is on the order of "thanks, I'll call" or "that would be fun." I hear from them on that subject — to quote the raven — nevermore. These people must play. Oh, I suppose it's something adult like tennis or raquetball. Nothing like a good workout at the club. Is model railroading wimpy? Unwholesome? I don't know. It is sedentary. You have to be rather still to do most of it. Fine. Model railroading isn't my life, but it IS an important part of it. The creative part. The artistic part.

NAMES FOR 7/8" GAUGE

reprinted from

The Model Railroader
Sept. 1944

A small number of model railroaders have adopted 3/16" scale and there is now going on a not-so-small pow-wow over a suitable name for the gauge. We have been calling it "S" gauge for some time, and that designation has been adopted by the N.M.R.A. We wanted an easily used, distinctive title with significance. S stands for sixteenth, seven-eighths, and sixty-fourths, all prominent in the 3/16" scale system of measurement. Louis Hertz, in a letter published in the current N.M.R.A. Bulletin, tells a very interesting history of some of the names used for various gauges in an effort to prove: 1, that S gauge is also the name for 2-1/8" gauge, and 2, that H1 is a suitable name for 7/8" gauge, and that it has been used [although very little] in the Model Railway News (England) for several years.

I won't question Hertz's second point. But since 2-1/8" gauge is now obsolete, a museum-piece gauge, and especially since literature about it at the time it was in use usually called it "Standard" or "Wide," not S gauge, there would be no conflict today in the use of S for 7/8" gauge. Incidentally, H1 was considered at the same N.M.R.A. meeting that S

was officially adopted.

A real objection can be raised against any gauge name that has more than one syllable if the syllables do not run smoothly together. Contrast *aitch-won* with *oh*, *cue*, or even *oh-oh* and *aitcho*.

But there is perhaps a better answer to this name-for-a-gauge problem in a uniform system for all gauges. For example, suppose we index each gauge by the nearest 1/8". HO, being a little over 5/8", would be 5 gauge. Thus:

HO	5 gauge
OO	6 gauge
S or H1	7 gauge
Q	9 gauge
O	10 gauge

Notice that all names are easy to say.

The strongest point against such a universal change would be the momentum that must be overcome in converting from old to new.

If the effort represented in picking a name for 7/8" gauge is any indication of the effort that will put it across, we ought to see great accomplishments in 3/16" scale.

ARE YOU READY FOR KANSAS CITY?

by Bill Whitmore

As the memories of the past convention are fading from our minds during the winter months, I keep thinking of a remark I heard in New Brunswick: "What could Kansas City offer the conventioners that could top many of our past conventions except some smelly stockyards?"

Kansas City has so much to offer that you should plan on an extra week just to visit some of the noteworthy attractions, be they sports, shopping, museums, the many historical points of interest, or some of the most indescribably delicious foods prepared at the many outstanding Kansas City restaurants.

Calvin Trillin, food columnist for the New Yorker, once wrote "not all the best restaurants in the world are in Kansas City, just the top four or five." While Kansas City is justly famous for steaks and barbecue, traditional fare also includes a surprising variety

of ethnic specialties. You will of course find other American food — seafood, Pennsylvania-Dutch, contemporary — and continental, French, Greek, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Mexican, Polynesian. And above all, don't leave town without trying the great Kansas City steak!

Our convention hotel, the Park Place, is located near downtown in Kansas City, Missouri. That's right, Missouri, not Kansas. Of course, there's another Kansas City, in Kansas, and you can visit it just across the Missouri River near our hotel.

Crown Center, located in the heart of the city, houses the Hyatt Hotel and 70 shops, and is within walking distance of many fabulous restaurants. Tired of walking? Then hop aboard the cable-car-style sight-seeing bus. For \$2.00 you can ride all day or obtain passes to get off and on at any stop. You can ride from the Crown Center through the central business district, Westport, and Country Club Plaza. The Westport historic district contains some of Kansas City's oldest buildings, now restaurants, galleries, and night-life establishments.

The Plaza is the place to discover the charm and style of Europe in America. There are over 185 shops, boutiques, outdoor cafes, restaurants, and theaters. The Plaza is like no other shopping experience in the world.

Meanwhile, back at Crown Center is the must-see Hallmark Visitors' Center. Visitors to this 10,000-square-foot facility are greeted in a spacious lobby and then see greeting cards being made by craftsmen at work. An engraving artist etches delicate images into metal plates that will be used to emboss designs onto the card stock. Hallmark produces over eleven million cards each day. The self-guided tours are available year-round Monday through Saturday.

Be it entertainment or education, or just plain interest, you'll discover something for you in Kansas City. The following list of tours may help you plan your city tour:

Colgate-Palmolive
GM Assembly Plant
Green Mill Candy Factory
Kansas City Art Institute
Kansas City Aviation
(airport)

Kansas City Parks &
Greenhouses
The Lee Co. (clothing)
Longview Farm (48-rm.
mansion)
Salamander (sportswear)
US Post Office
(automatic mail processing)

Some of these tours require advance bookings.

For the genealogists in your group, the National Archives Kansas City Branch offers a public research room for your convenience.

For the ultimate in tours, there is a walk-through tour without walking! That's right, don't miss this one — a drive-through tour of a mammoth underground storage area inside manmade limestone caves.

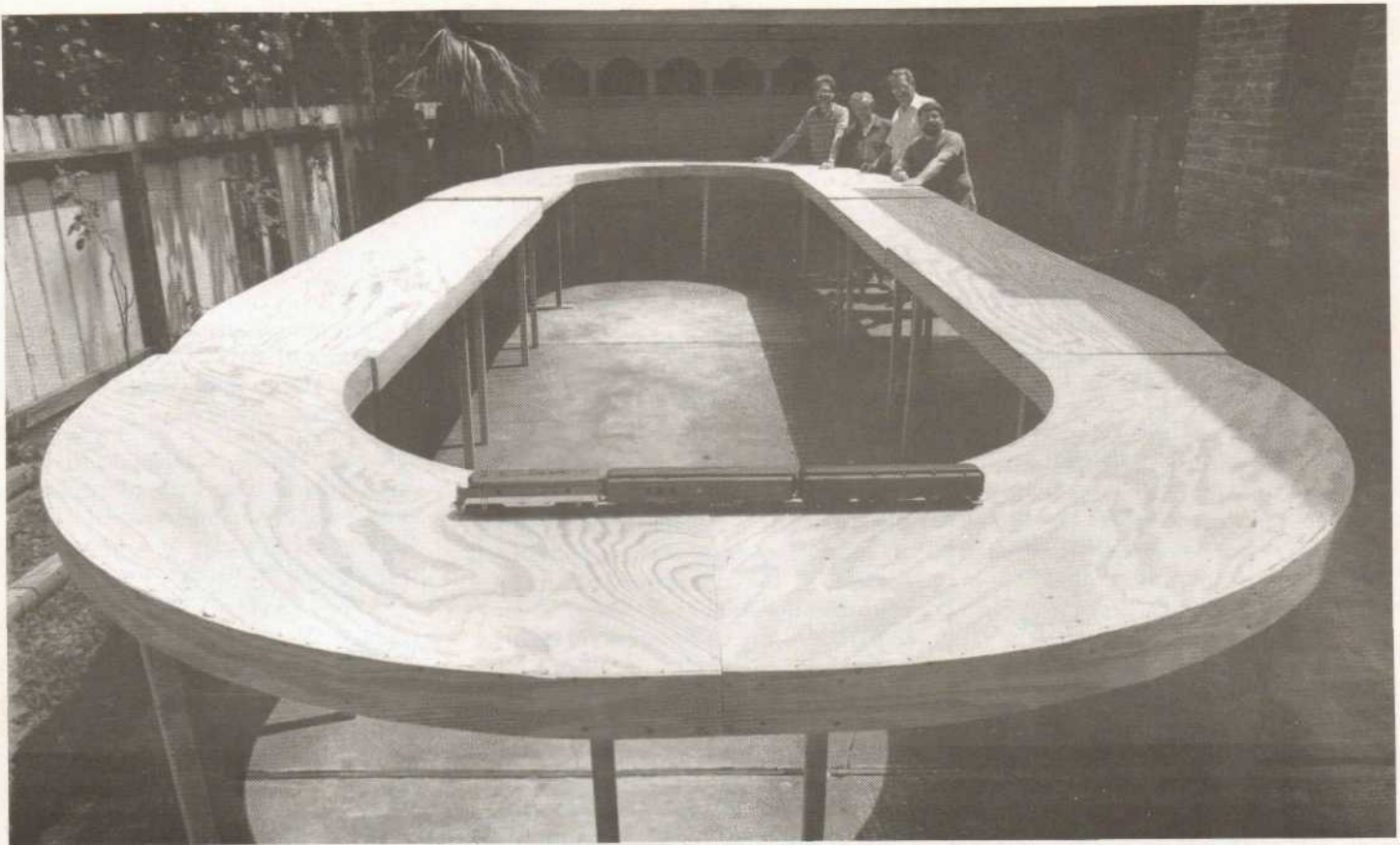
And let's not forget one last tour — the Missouri River Queen riverboat. Come cruise the Missouri River on an authentic old-time paddle boat. Daytime-moonlight, dinner, or Sunday brunch excursions are available.

Kansas City will take the first-time visitor by surprise. There are attractions for every taste. Here is just a quick sampling:

Farmers Market
Stockyards — cattle auction
Civil War Museum &
battlefield cemetery
Fort Leavenworth Museum -
history of the US Army in
the West
Jesse James Bank — first
daylight bank robbery
Truman Library
Fort Osage (1808-1827),
restored
Heritage Village —
reconstructed 1850
village
McCormick Distillery
(Weston, MO)
Union Station — nation's
third largest

Now you are equipped to dream of all the sights and activities awaiting you in Kansas City. But this is only the beginning. For more information, call the Convention and Visitors' Bureau at 800-523-5953. They have several publications available, including a handy visitors' guide that will help you plan your stay.

See you in Kansas City!



Here are new carpentry veterans Jerry Brewer, John Siller, Jack Troxell, and Bob Werre standing behind their newly-completed giant "O" which they have promised to fill with track by August.

S SCALE LAYOUT for the 1989 NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSTON, TEXAS

Photos by Bob Werre

Five of our Houston brethren, Jerry Brewer, Fred Paulus, John Siller, Jack Troxell, and Bob Werre are busily preparing an S scale layout for this year's NMRA National Convention there in August. These shots show their progress over the last six weeks.



John Siller, Jack Troxell, and Fred Paulus (l. to r.) are shown attending the first class of "C-Clamps 101."



Here's the gang laying track. Looks great!



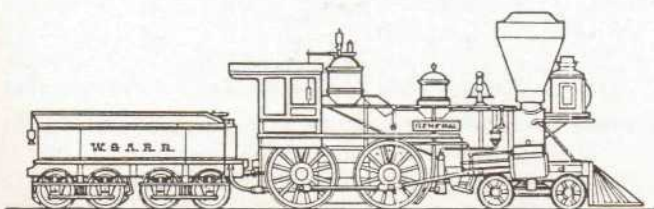
Dick Karnes

Here's avid Pennsy fan Larry Sokol fitting flextrack into his Altoona yard. Larry is building his Pennsylvania Railroad in a 24'x 32' room in a custom-built freight station in his back yard. The well-conceived layout was designed by John Armstrong.



Dick Karnes

Larry's friend Jim Felt is shown inside the double-helix, which takes two double-track lines through a vertical elevation change of about two feet. Jim really feels at home in the helix, which has become his specialty. Shortly after this photo was taken, Larry had enough track installed for the inaugural train to make a complete circuit around his layout.





PRR 255212 is an H30 built in 1940, carrying the 1950s paint scheme and photographed in the early 1960s. The unique "truss bridge" side bracing and the car's low profile versus the other cars in the scene are evident.

PENNSYLVANIA H30/H30a AND H32 COVERED HOPPER CARS

by James A. Kindraka

During a rather extensive period of research on the Pennsylvania Railroad's covered hoppers, it became apparent that the average S scale modeler was going to have a devil of a time gathering correct prototype information on these cars. Because of Don DeWitt's DISPATCH letter decrying just that fact, I realized that something had to be done. The only readily-available source of information on these cars is a two-page spot in the October 1981 issue of Model Railroader. While the photos and line drawing in the article are very helpful, much of the text is inaccurate! The following brief history and technical reference gives you the necessary information to correctly finish and letter these unique cars.

HISTORY

Major quantities of covered hoppers are a relatively "recent" railroad innovation. Until the 1930s, bulk-loaded quantities were generally hauled in the ubiquitous 40-foot boxcar. The New York Central began converting twin open hoppers to covered ones to haul carborundum (a very hard abrasive substance of carbon and silicon used in grindstones) in Detroit in 1929. In 1931 the Pennsylvania

Railroad also began making its own covered hoppers by converting open coal hoppers. These early covered hopper experiments were of limited success, but despite this, the concept of a top-loading/bottom-unloading weatherproof car for hauling bulk commodities had caught on with shippers. Conversion of open twin hoppers had the drawback of limiting capacity (about 1500 cu. ft.) and load weight (50 tons) due to the rather heavy empty weight of the coal hopper itself. In order to make the covered hopper concept pay off, this situation had to be addressed and corrected.

In 1934 the Pennsy sought to gain cubic footage with a 70-ton car in order to respond to shippers' desires. The resulting car was designed from scratch, and beginning in March 1935 the first 100 of class H30 were built. Five more groups of H30 covered hoppers were produced over the next eleven years, bringing the final tally to 1325 units. These cars achieved the railroad's desired 70-ton capacity and held 1973 cubic feet of material, a 26 percent increase in lading space over the earlier "covered coal hoppers." Production and numbering were as follows:

H30 PRODUCTION

No. Built	Number Series	Date Begun
100	254251-254350	May 1935
300	254351-254650	April 1936
300	254651-254950	March 1938
100	254951-255050	April 1940
225	255051-255275	Nov. 1940
300	255276-255575	March 1946

While these cars are generally thought of as cement cars, they hauled many different commodities, some more dense and some less dense than cement. The general lading for these cars, in order of increasing density, included pulverized coal, soda ash (anhydrous sodium carbonate, used for industrial cleaning and chemical or soap production), lime (calcium oxide, used in making cement and mortar), cement, sand, sodium nitrate (saltpeter, used in fertilizers, explosives, and various chemical processes), feldspar (crystalline mineral mainly of aluminum silicates, used in metal alloys), and dolomite (mineral consisting of magnesium and calcium carbonates, used in the chemical and steel industries).

Many of the less-dense commodities shipped in the H30s would actually fill the cars before the weight limit was reached. Because of this, a different version of the H30 was designed. This car expanded the original by adding two additional compartments, and had a coupled length of 53'-6" versus 39'-6" for the H30. The height and width were virtually unchanged. Three hundred of the new cars, classed H32 by the Pennsy and numbered 253500 through

253799, were built between July and October 1948. The H32s are considered by many to be the forerunners of today's jumbo covered hoppers. They had 3500 cubic feet of capacity, a whopping 55 percent increase over the H30s, and yet the cars were only 3500 pounds (six percent) heavier! This was mainly achieved using newer lightweight alloy steel. Many of these alloys were probably the result of wartime innovation. The H32s were also all-welded, while the H30s were riveted cars. This is a major distinction of note to the modeler.

The final group of H30 hoppers were the H30a version. These cars were built from October 1951 through early 1952. Only 250 were built; these were numbered 255576-255825. The H30a was identical to the H30 in external dimensions and riveted construction. The minor differences that distinguished this subclass are covered later in this article. Just a few months after the last H30a was built, the PRR began work on a new hopper design, the H33. While still distinctly a Pennsy product, the H33 was heavily influenced by commercial manufacturers and closely resembled a standard ACF or Pullman PS-2 covered hopper. The era of building the unique "rolling truss bridge" car was at an end. The production period of the H30s, beginning in 1935 and lasting, in only slightly modified form, through 1952 was longer than almost any other class of freight car the PRR ever produced!

As previously mentioned, these cars hauled several different-density commodities. A unique feature of the cars

MORE →



PC 875304 is an old H30 repainted in PC green in 1974. The car's capacity has been increased from the original 70 tons to 77, but this car is stenciled "grain loading only" and it is doubtful that a low-bulk-density item like grain would ever approach this car's weighted capacity. The car is still equipped with friction-bearing trucks, well into the roller-bearing era.

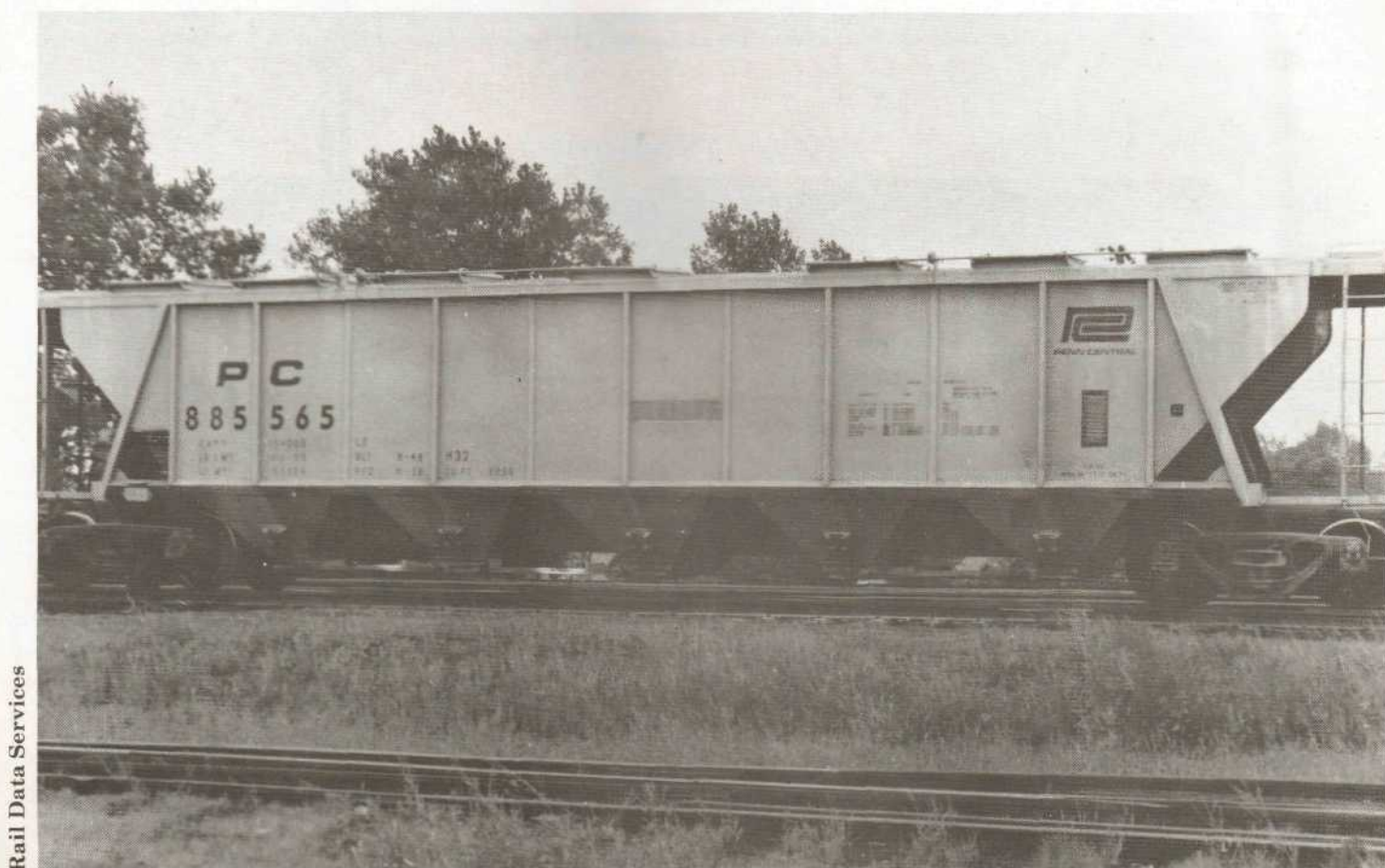
was a cast-iron "loading instruction plate" welded or riveted to each car side. The plate listed several commodities with the proper filling level for each. There were three different plates — one for the H30/H30a, one for the H32, and a final one for the H33. A comparison shows that pulverized coal could completely fill all compartments of both the H30/H30a and the H32, while cement again fills all compartments of both classes but only the H30/H30a could be filled to the top. The plate on the H32 indicates that 3'- 5" must be the "distance from top of hatchway frame at side to top of load." For feldspar lading, the center compartment of the H30/H30a was left empty and the two outboard compartments were filled to within 2'- 4" of the hatch frame. The H32 was filled to within 4'- 11" of the hatch frame in four compartments, again leaving the center compartment empty. These plates first appeared in 1938 and, while many subsequent cars were not built with them (especially the H32), they were later applied to most. Those of you with access to the MR article can see the shadowy outline of the plate under the last "A" in PENNSYLVANIA" in the photo of car no. 255105.

CONSTRUCTION

Physically, the H30/H30a hopper cars were unique because of their external construction. These cars had 48-degree diagonal braces angled opposite the slope sheets, which were also angled at 48 degrees. The lower sidesill member was angled in and the unloading bays were also angled at 48 degrees. The angled bracing opposite the slope sheet and the heavy side-brace construction gave the car

its unique truss-bridge appearance. Both the H30 and H30a were riveted cars, differing mainly in roof detail. This is a significant fact for the modeler, given that most layout models are viewed from the top. The H30 roof was flat steel riveted to the car with no overhang at the sides. The roof walks and brake platform were patterned rolled steel called "Alan-Wood Super Diamond." The roof walk was welded directly to the roof plate, not to separate supports as is more typical. The H30a roof was a more traditional design with stamped raised panels, angled stiffeners, and a slight overhang at the side sheets. The roof walk was open tread welded to supports. Hatch detail was also slightly different, but the number of hatches and their operation were identical. The H32 differs not only in length and all-welded construction, but also in that the angled braces are set at 70 degrees while the slope sheets remain at 48 degrees.

All of the cars were built with a fishbelly center sill, not a common feature for 1930s and newer PRR freight cars. Even more interesting, all the center sills were peaked at the top. This was an innovative way of providing a better support surface for the slope sheets above. The use of cast versus welded bolsters is not a defining feature despite MR's reporting to the contrary. The first 400 H30s were built with cast bolsters, but subsequent cars had welded ones of various designs. At first these fabricated bolsters were patterned after the cast ones, but as time went on the design varied. The H30a cars continued with the fabricated (welded) bolsters, but strange as it sounds, several of the cars were built with cast ones. Conjecture



H32 885565 was repainted in PC colors in November 1968, relatively early in the merger. The car lacks a loading instruction plate, but the information from the plate has been stenciled directly on the car's side toward the right end.



H. W. Ameling Collection

PRR 255657 is an H30a photographed in 1966. Note the overhang of the roof and also the loading instruction plate below the angled brace. The paint scheme, applied in 1963, is a late version with number and reporting marks moved to the left end. The herald has been simplified.

is that the old cast bolsters were buried somewhere in storage from the early H30 production days and, having been "found," they were simply used up during H30a construction. Whatever the reason, bolster construction cannot be used as a spotting feature between the H30 and H30a versions.

A final difference, also reported incorrectly in MR, concerns the trucks and wheelsets. The H30 and H32 rode on 33-inch wheels in 5'- 8" wheelbase friction-bearing trucks. The H30a cars rode on 36" wheels in 5'- 10" wheelbase trucks. Once delivered, the type of truck undoubtedly varied because of shopping, bad order, and parts availability. There is evidence of these cars riding on Bettendorf, Symington heavy-duty, Andrews, and National Type B trucks. It should also be remembered that the Pennsylvania was a very conservative organization and did not exactly rush into roller-bearing trucks with the rest of the industry. This was especially true when it came to retrofitting older cars. Consequently, very few if any of these covered hoppers ever moved on roller-bearing trucks throughout their lives under PRR management. In fact, there is photographic evidence of at least one H30a repainted in Conrail colors and still riding on friction-bearing trucks!

FINISHING

The H30 hoppers were delivered in tuscan paint with white lettering and a small circular PRR herald. The H32s of 1948 appear to have been delivered this way also. In fact, in both cases the lettering on both car types was identically placed except for the herald. All of the white lettering was placed on four body panels, two on either side of the car's center vertical member. On the H30 these are the only rectangular panels on the car side. The PRR circular herald was positioned in the triangular body panel above

the diagonal brace on the right end. However, on the H32 there were six additional rectangular panels (three on each end) with absolutely no lettering. The herald was placed on the far right end panel. Apparently the PRR paint shop didn't care how big the car was, they weren't going to change their stencils.

In the early 1950s, as the H30a began to be produced, a grey paint scheme with black lettering and a large keystone herald began to appear. This is not to say that all of the H30a cars were grey. The PRR builder's photo of the very first H30a, no. 255576, shows the car in tuscan paint with white lettering. Interestingly enough, the MR article shows two H30s coupled together. One, with a June 1946 builder's date and a March 1950 repainting date, is tuscan with white lettering. The other, in grey with black lettering, was built in November 1940 and repainted in October 1954. The prototype modeling rule of thumb would be to stick with tuscan paint and white lettering if you're modeling until 1950. If your modeling period extends later than 1950, then both paint schemes would be appropriate. The H32 covered hoppers also appeared in both paint colors. The H-32 grey-scheme lettering stencil was changed to off-center the 13-inch-high letters of the word "Pennsylvania." The first eight letters were placed left of the center vertical member and the last four to its right. This was balanced by the large keystone herald on the far-right panel.

These two paint schemes remained throughout the cars' lives under PRR ownership. Some of the tuscan cars, repainted in the 1960s, lost their heralds. In both cases, as the Pennsy became absorbed into the Penn Central, the word "Pennsylvania" was replaced with a simple 13-

MORE →

This information is intended to provide basic background on these unique and interesting railroad cars, which will soon be available in S scale. I hope the information presented herein is helpful to those of you who purchase a car, and entertaining to those who don't.





Gary Mueller

This beautiful wood-sheathed caboose is easy to build, and will be an eye-catcher on any layout.

JERSEY CENTRAL CABOOSE ... AN A.F. CONVERSION

by Gary Mueller

Here's an easy project which will give you a really different caboose. Start with an American Flyer Reading caboose (no. 630, 638, or similar). First, remove the chassis and the stamped end ladder/railing pieces from the caboose body. Then, with a file and an X-Acto knife, remove all cast-on trim items from both sides, both ends, and the cupola sides and ends — railings, rivets, window frames, etc. But leave the end doors and roofs alone, and leave the rivets on the corner posts (see photo).

Now fill the side windows with pieces of styrene sheet plastic. (You don't have to be fussy here, you will cover the windows up shortly.) I used Evergreen styrene for this project, but any brand can be used. I did all my gluing with Testor's liquid styrene cement.

Next, cut and apply 1/16" scribed styrene sheet to both sides, both ends, and all four cupola sides. Remember not to cover the doors or corner posts. Now cut new windows into the sides. The windows start 12 boards from each end and are five boards wide. Drill a starting hole, and file the openings out into neat squares. Use the original window openings on the cupola — just cut through the styrene sheet.

After the windows are squared out, apply 1/16" styrene strips to the windows to make the window frames. Make the awnings from thin sheet styrene. Now bend the handrails from .025" wire and drill no. 72 holes in the body where the handrails go. Test-fit them, but do not push them permanently in place yet.

Now paint your caboose. I painted the body and the original smokejack and stamped end pieces Floquil Caboose Red. If you brush-paint the body, apply several light coats, allowing each one to dry thoroughly, to prevent the Floquil paint from attacking the styrene. Now paint the handrails yellow. After the paint is thoroughly dry, push the handrails into the pre-drilled holes, apply CDS dry-transfer lettering, and overspray the whole caboose body with Testor's Dullcote.

Finally, glue pieces of clear styrene sheet behind the window openings and reassemble the caboose to its chassis.

Drawn by C. R. Yungkurth.
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Model Railroader magazine.

MAKING STEAMERS PERFORM — Part 2

by Joe Scales

Photos by the Author

[Last time you learned how to make your frame and siderod dimensions equal. This time you'll learn about wheel concentricity, quartering, and crankpin offsets. Ready?]

OK, Nerve up? Let's take a good look at your drivers. ARE THEY ROUND, TRULY ROUND? Do they wobble? In quarter? All spacing between crank pins and axles equal? The usual answers are no, yes, no, and I don't know. Let's check 'em out.

All axles are the same size, so put the frame on the workbench upside down. Drop a wheelset in the front axle slot. Rotate it by turning the axle slowly with your finger. Watch for wobble and out-of-roundness. Most wobble can be taken care of by shifting the tire on the wheel. Make sure you do not get the flanges out of gauge. This operation you do by eye. Most of us don't remember seeing steam engines in regular service. Those of us who do will recall that the smaller ones did sorta weave and wobble as they went about their chores — not because of elliptical wheels, but due to bad track. Here we are working on a small slow-speed loco that more than likely never saw any good high-speed track. As a matter of fact, most model railroad yards have better track than the prototype. I feel like a little weave and bounce due to a slightly out-of-round driver on this loco gives it character. Says you, "I WANT MINE ROUND!" OK, we will get back to that in a bit, but first let's check crankpin hole spacing. This locomotive has its driver crankpin holes tapped for 2-56 screws. Measure the diameter of the heads of your crankpin screws. You should get two the same size or EXTREMELY close.

Now it's time to build something (Fig. 9) you will use for years every time you work on a steam locomotive — a quartering jig. Take your time and do it well — a

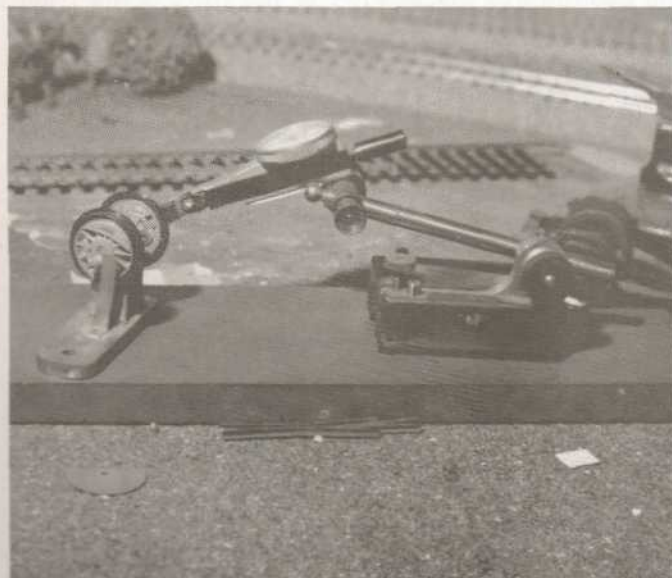


Figure 9. The driver quartering jig is shown with a wheelset mounted for measurement with the surface gauge.

multipurpose wheel checker. It will check crank spacing and quartering. AMAZING! Scrounge up the following:

- 1 piece steel, 1" x 2" x 3/16" thick or so
- 2 pieces brass .015 to .025 x 7/16" x 2"
- 1 piece brass .015 to .025 x 1/4" x 1-3/4"
- 1 surface plate — anything that is perfectly flat and thick enough to stay that way. I use a piece of ground stock about 4" x 12" x 1/2" thick. 'Tain't cheap, but it's accurate.

Take your small piece of steel, place it in a vise so the long side is vertical, the short side is parallel to the top of the vise jaws, and about 1/2 inch is protruding from the jaws. Tighten the vise with malice in mind. Now, with a hammer, pound the two corners enough so you can tell you've done real damage. You should have bumps at the corners of both flat surfaces; no accuracy required. Now loosen the vise, turn the steel end for end, and reclamp. Find the midpoint between the two corners, and leave the corners alone. (If the corners are not smooth, make them so.) Now, with a round steel object about 3/16" or 1/4" in diameter laid across the clamped steel piece at the center point, swat it a good lick so as to mash a bump on both surfaces halfway between the two corners. Remove the steel piece from your vise and place it on your surface plate. If done correctly, you should have three points (the bumps) contacting your surface plate — one in the middle of one short side, and one each at the opposite corners. A three-point suspension, my man! Always accurate. Flip it over and see which side looks the best. Save the side with the most even bumps; they will become your three-point suspension. File the other surface smooth again.

Take one of your two long pieces of brass. Start at one end and make a scribe mark 1/8" in from the side about 1/2" long. Make a little scratch-mark you can see about 3/8" down the first mark. The opposite edge of the brass is 5/16" across from your scribe mark if you did it correctly. Locate a point 1/4" down this opposite edge and make a little scratch-mark at the very edge. Now scribe a line connecting the two scratch-marks. The end result should be two scribe marks which meet at about a 70-degree angle. Now, about 1/4" from the unmarked end, make a 90-degree bend. Fig. 10a shows what your piece should look like.

Do exactly the same to the second long piece of brass, but make the final 90-degree bend opposite to that in the first piece.

Now cut out the 70-degree wedge from each piece. You should have two pieces that look like Fig. 10b, with one foot facing left and one facing right.

Make a right-angle bend 1/4" from the end of your remaining piece of brass (Fig. 10c).

Assemble the parts to resemble Fig. 11. The two notched pieces should be soldered to the steel base (your three-point-suspension masterwork) so that the crotches of each of Parts A can hold a driver axle next to the inside surface of each drive wheel. The out-to-out spacing of these pieces

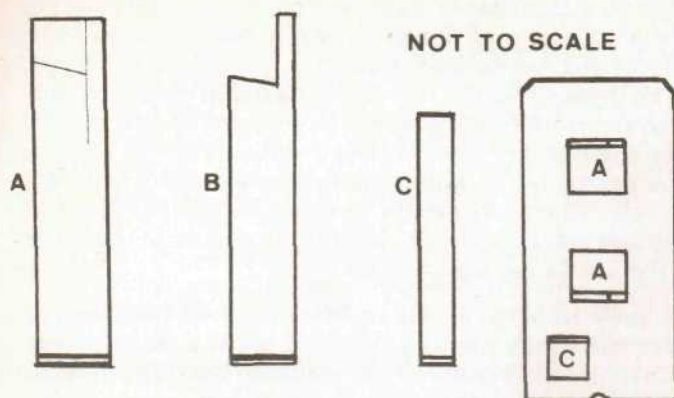


Figure 10. These are the pieces you need to make for your quartering jig.

should be somewhat less than B_{min} (.800"), the NASG standard for minimum back-to-back distance between wheels, so you have about $3/32"$ end play. Now solder the short piece of brass to the steel base as shown in Fig. 11. Leave enough space between Part A and Part C to insert a drive wheel. Your jig is now complete.

With a wheelset in the jig, rotate the wheels so that when you install the crankpins that you measured for likeness, one of them will be hitting Part C in such a manner that the crankpin is directly under the axle. A few degrees either way is OK. With a wheelset so located in the jig, rotate the jig around and you should see the crankpin parallel or nearly so to the jig base if you have the wheelset properly positioned in the jig. I have found that this jig will work with any drivewheels I have tried it on.

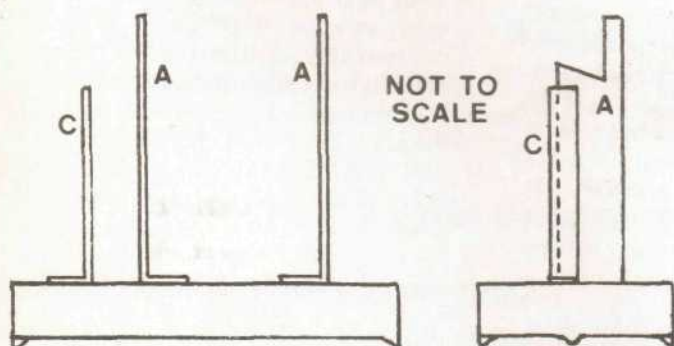


Figure 11. Assemble your jig per this drawing.

Aaah, you say, what makes it work? Well, jump into your two-or four-wheeler and go on down to the tool store again, 'cause he's gonna get some more of your green again. Yep, I aim to keep the economy of this country going with your greenbacks. After all, if I did, so can you! Not only that, but everything you've bought for this project you have needed in times gone by. Now you'll be able to boast "I got what I need." When you leave this time, you should have a surface gauge and a dial test indicator like Starrett #257-9" and #71GS plus the proper accessories to mate them together to become a height gauge. Practice with this until you become quite friendly with it. You will come to like it. CAUTION! THIS IS A VERY DELICATE INSTRUMENT.

When you check a set of drivers, they are placed on the jig as described. You read the horizontal crankpin with the dial indicator while holding the axle in the crotch with the other crankpin against the stop (Figs. 9 and 12). All drivewheel sets should measure the same within plus or minus .003". If not, loosen the wheel on the axle so you can get the reading you want and "Loktite" it back in place. Always loosen the insulated driver. Watch gauge! What we are doing here is making all wheelsets match one. On the mogul, you will at most have to do two axles because you are making them match the one you did not adjust. I normally leave the geared set alone and match the others to it. It doesn't matter if you are not exactly on 90 degrees with your setting. Anywhere between 85 and 95 degrees is OK. What does matter is that they are all identical.

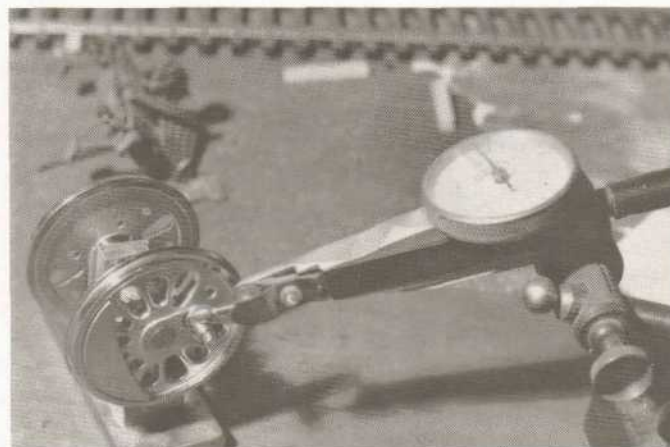


Figure 12. The surface gauge and quartering jig are being used to check the position of the crankpin.

Learn to use this equipment because you will use it as lot more than you think.

Use your height gauge to check the distance from crankpin to axle for each driver. Locate top dead center of the crank pin and measure to the top of the crankpin. They all should match to plus or minus .002". If not, return them for a replacement set. (There's nothing you can do at home to fix this!) Be sure to explain the problem in detail.

We have by now fitted the frames and siderods, and quartered the drivers. Put the wheelsets back in the frame, noting where the insulated-side marks are, and mount the siderods as they should be. Do not mount the valve gear or motor. Lightly lubricate all moving parts. Will it roll freely? If any binds show up, check your shims. Cover plate too tight? Siderod screw binding? Foreign particle trapped anywhere? If you did what I have told you, it should roll freely.

Once free and debugged, reinstall the motor. Check the gear mesh and adjust according to the kit instructions. Lubricate the motor and place a small dab of good grease on the gear. I like teflon-filled grease. When you are satisfied with motor operation, add your cylinders, main rods, and valve gear. I recommend the use of the original Rex motor due to the limited space. It's a good motor for the job it has to do. Make sure the shaft is not bent and there is no excessive vibration.

MORE →

The locomotive should be blocked up safely on the bench for initial testing. Note — safely blocked! Slight vibrations have a habit of making things move. After all you've done to this poor li'l engine, it now has power and is gonna do its best to get away from you like a whipped puppy. After a few minutes of blocked-up running in both directions and all seems OK, remove power and attach the tender to see how we do on the track. If you put the engine back together with the insulated wheels where they belong and the tender trucks did not rotate 180 degrees, it should run from track power. If it doesn't, you've got some searching to do. I think it will run, so I aim to continue onward... After a while of track running, remove the loco from the track and the tender. Reinstall the superstructure per the instructions. Check all screws and connections for tightness. Run it. It should run like a Swiss watch.

How about that wobble you mentioned some time ago? OK, so the wheels are too far out of round to your liking. You have two choices. First, you can take all of the drivers to a local machine shop that specializes in small items and have the wheels turned round and exactly the same

size! Caution! Make sure the machinist understands about the tire and flange angle. Of course, if you have a lathe you can do it yourself. Hey, I could have told you to visit your friendly tool dealer again! The other choice is to return the geared wheelset for replacement. On the Rex engines they use the three-point suspension system. The geared set of wheels controls most of the wibbly-wobble. When you get the new set in, you will have to check crankpin spacing, quarter in relation to the other drivers, roundness, and gauge.

Ya know what, go on out and get that 10-inch lathe from your tool dealer anyway. You will use it more than you think, and while you're at it, get that nice shiny vertical milling machine. On some of the next projects coming you'll need one. Your tool dealer will really appreciate your hobby!

Ya know, I did exactly what I'm telling you to do. Yes, I have gone out and bought every tool mentioned in this article!! You can even go to your local community college and take a machinist's class. Then come teach me how to use mine!!!

DECAL CORNER

by
Don DeWitt

[As you all know, S gaugers are not exactly blessed with an overabundance of commercially-available decals for these nice new models which have come out over the past several years. Well, our association has come to the rescue. Don DeWitt has been named by President Loizeaux as NASG's "decal coordinator." One of the first things Don did was to write to Greg Krasel, owner of Microscale Decals, who had recently indicated an interest in expanding his line into scales other than N and HO. What follows is a distillation of Don's second letter to Microscale.]

Dear Mr. Krasel:

Thank you for your reply. We're excited about your possible S scale decal venture.

You should obtain catalogs from John Hall (enclosed), CDS, and Clover House, to avoid duplicating lettering sets already available. (John is also working on PRR H30/H32 hopper decals.) G&W, the only other source, had made some decals for Overland's GP-38s and SD-40s, and plans decals for Southwind's new

NYC passenger cars. Contact them for availability. S DeSignS is doing LV diesel decals, but would gladly defer to you.

There are currently three ready sources of "decalable" S items. American Models has FP-7 A units, GP-9/18s, house cars, hoppers, gondolas, and streamlined passenger cars. American seems hesitant to do complex Geep schemes like the NYC lightning-stripe (which would be a hot item). Notably absent in FP-7 schemes are C&O, SR, C&NW, RI, RDG, ACL, and B&O. Check with American on current/future roadname availability.

American's freight cars come in a myriad of roadnames; in addition, several clubs have distributed custom runs in many special paint schemes. Therefore, you should limit new 40' boxcar decals to complex schemes which continue over the doors (e.g., WP silver with full-length feather). Some AM cars are a tad under-height; you should obtain samples before designing any decals.

Omnicon's plastic F3 A/B units (not available painted) would benefit greatly from decal availability. They also import many beautiful unpainted brass steam locos, all of which need decals.

Finally, Pacific Rail Shops has a new

50' boxcar. There is great potential here for decals.

Besides the above, you should contact Overland, River Raisin, and Southwind. These and Omnicon are S's primary brass importers.

Your best opportunity is the plastic cars and locos. (Brass volume is comparatively limited; however, sometimes a specific brass prototype is produced which requires special decals.) PRR and NYC have the largest S following, but not by much. PRR diesel decals are severely needed, as are NYC lightning stripes for Geeps, Fs, and Es. However, we need to conclude our survey before I can be more specific.

We will assist you in any way we can. Please tell the S manufacturers you contact that the NASG has referred you to them.

Sincerely,
Don DeWitt

The S-MOD System

BUILDING A PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL for S-MOD RAILCAB LAYOUTS (Part 1)

by Don DeWitt

The S-MOD electrical system is divided into two subsystems called "Wire-to-Rail" and "RailCAB." Before we can consider how to build a control panel for RailCAB modular layouts, you need to review the differences between these two subsystems. This information was printed in the last issue of the DISPATCH (Feb. 1989).

The RailCAB subsystem is a cab-controlled system and has four Track Lines and four Cab Lines running beneath all two-track mainline modules. Single-track modules also have four Cab Lines but only two Track Lines. In the RailCAB subsystem, you have the option of dividing the layout into one or more control blocks. When you do this you need a control panel for every block. You can either build a control panel permanently attached to a module, which then becomes a Permanent Control Module, or you can build a portable control panel that can be connected between any two modules. In the latter case, either or both modules can be considered the Control Module. All modules attached to the Control Module become part of its block if Track and Cab Lines are connected. However, to make a block break between two modules (see Fig. 1), you must:

1. Disconnect only the Track Line connectors (not the Cab Line connectors)
2. Place insulated rail joiners between the bridge rails and the rails of one of the modules in all four mainline rails (if the block break is for both tracks).

In this two-part article we will consider a portable control panel for a two-track mainline layout. The same principles apply to a permanently-attached control panel. The advantage of the portable panel is that it can be used anywhere.

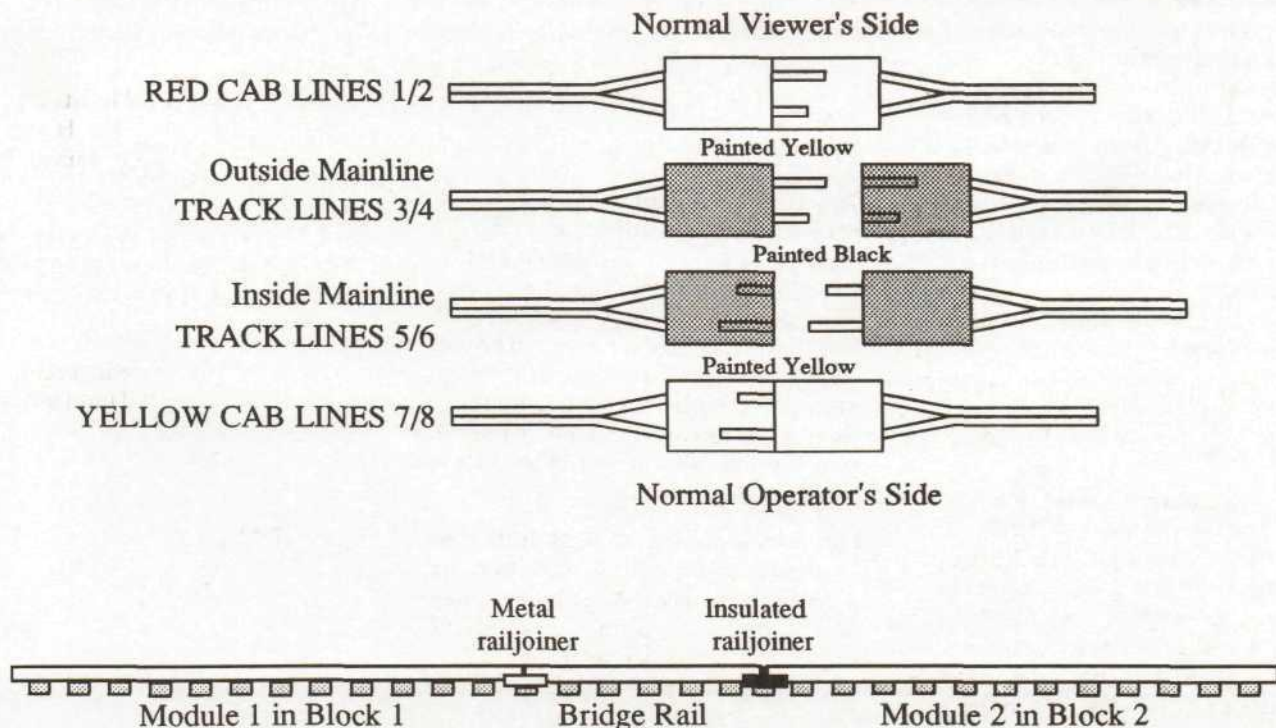
The basic function of the control panel is to accept throttle input running in the two Red Cab Lines (1 and 2) and the two Yellow Cab Lines (7 and 8), and then send the output out to either, both, or none of the mainlines in the block. The usual method is to use rotary switches to assign a Cab to a Track. Thus, one switch is needed for each mainline. An alternative method is to use a double-pole-double-throw (dpdt) center-off switch and another dpdt switch with no center-off position for each mainline.

There are two major components to the portable control panel: The S-MOD Interface and the selector box.

MORE →

S-MOD BLOCK BREAK

Figure 1



S-MOD INTERFACE

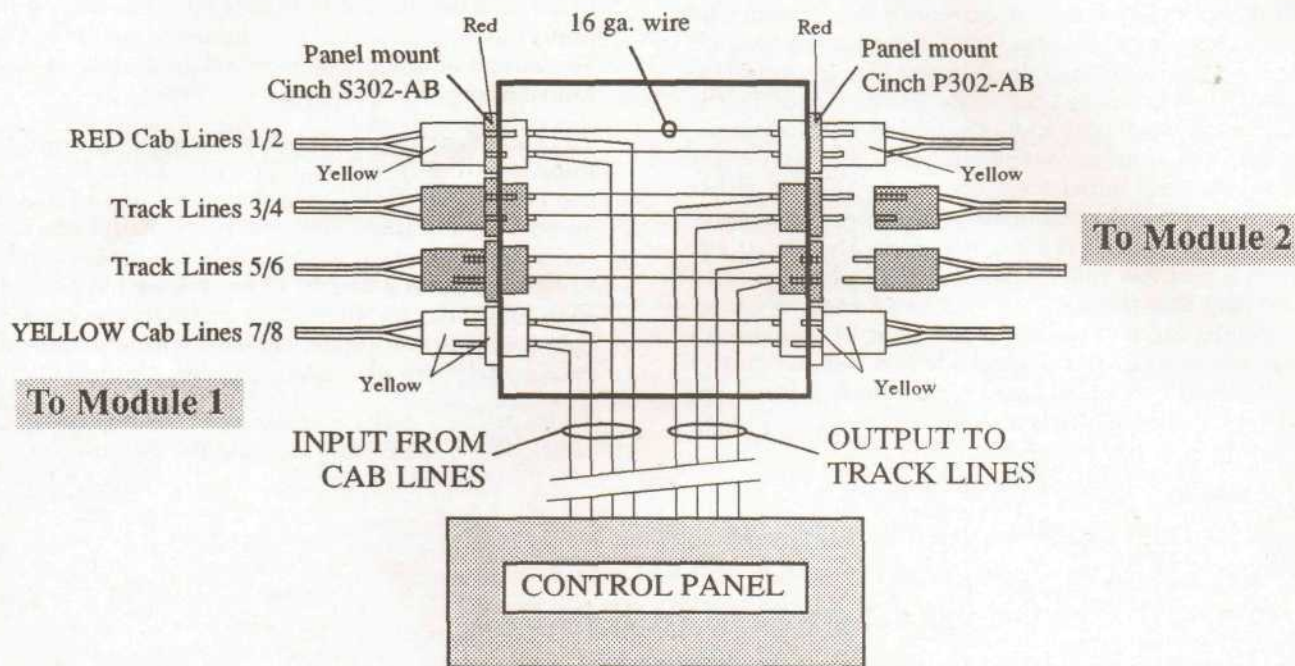
Refer to Fig. 2. In order to place the S-MOD Interface between any two modules, there must be a male and female 2-conductor connector (for example, panel-mount Cinch P302-AB or S-302-AB) for every pair of Track and Cab Lines. I recommend that you build your S-MOD Interface by placing panel-mount male and female connectors on opposite sides of the panel. A box that I have found useful is the blue plastic Radio Shack "Economy Case" #270-

Mainline Rotary Selector output connects to lines 5 and 6 via the OUTPUT lines. AT NO TIME CAN LINES 1 and 2 or 7 and 8 be connected directly to TRACK LINES 3 and 4 or 5 and 6. If this occurs, you will be unable to use the control panel to direct cab control. Finally, IN ALL CASES, 16-gauge flexible wire should be used with the portable control panel.

Note also that a block break can still be made between the modules shown in Fig. 2 by disconnecting the Track

S-MOD CONTROL PANEL INTERFACE

Figure 2



Module 1 is in the control block because Track Lines are connected. Module 2 is in another block because Track Lines are disconnected (and insulated railjoiners are in place at the bridge rails). To include module 2 in the control block, just connect the two Track Lines Connectors and thus bypass the insulated railjoiners.

222 or 270-223. In this way, the S-MOD connectors from adjacent modules can be connected quite easily and the internal wiring is fairly straightforward. In all cases the male and female connectors on each panel face, for each Track or Cab Line, are connected so that Line 1 continues through the box. The same logic applies to each of lines 2 through 8. From lines 1 and 2 (the Red Cab output) and from lines 7 and 8 (the Yellow Cab output), input feeders are also sent to the control panel via the INPUT lines. From the control panel, the Outside Mainline Rotary Selector output connects to lines 3 and 4, and the Inside

Lines and placing insulated rail joiners at the bridge rails. If the Track Line connectors are connected, the insulated rail joiners have no effect. Finally, remember that a block break can be made in one mainline independent of the other mainline by disconnecting the appropriate Track Line connector and adding insulated rail joiners.

In the next installment I will describe the construction of the control panel with the two methods for selecting and assigning cabs to tracks. Later we will cover the testing of single-track modules and control modules.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS . . .

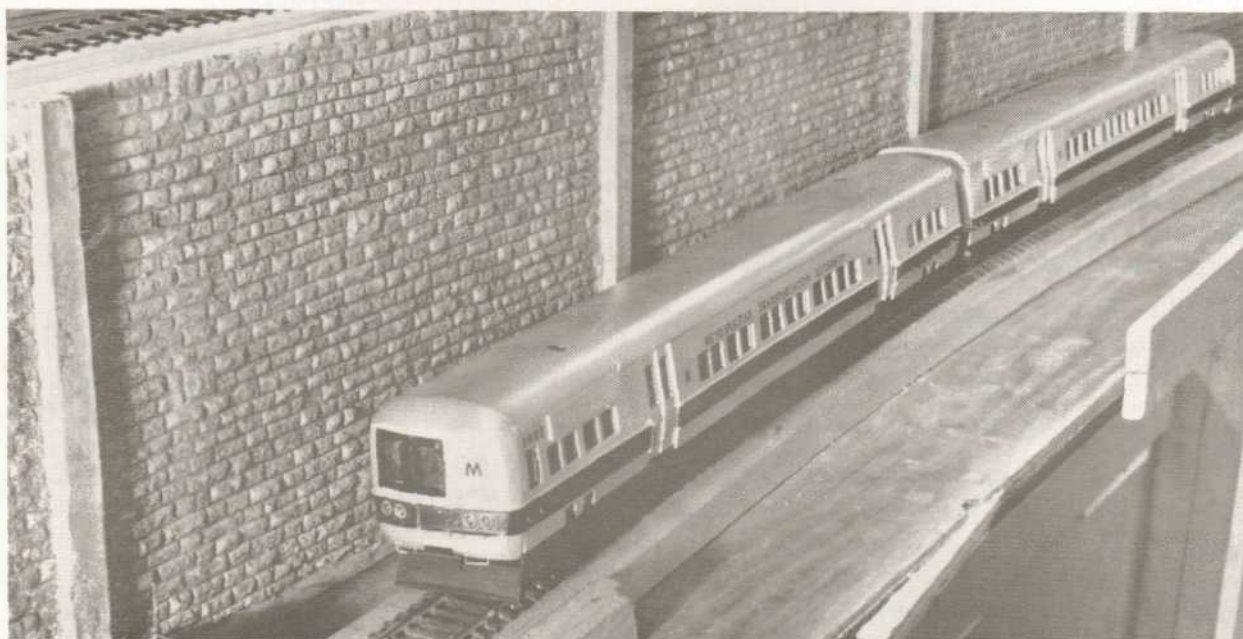
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Ed Loizeaux

Bill "Mac" McArthur's New York Metropolitan Transit local descends in a masonry cut on the Inland Terminal Club layout in Los Angeles. Mac, who worked on the prototype's motors and control system, built the cars from styrene. The smooth-running models have fibre-optic lights that come on when the doors open.

RETURN TO THE HEARTLAND

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We are updating our older line of boxcars. Pictured above are the first. We are also adding two new numbers on #104 CP, #108 GN, #116 Seaboard, #118 UP, and #220 State of Maine. We are discontinuing #120 C&O blue and #106 and 107 GTW. We only have a few left and then the printing plates will be destroyed.

CODE .148 FLEXTRACK

We are now taking orders for our .148 flextrack and should be shipping this month. With the huge increases in the metals markets, the price is going to be high. However, we think we can hold at \$6.49 per 3-foot section, or \$38.95 per bundle of six. Our track, made in the U.S. (as are all our products), is not to be confused with an imported advertised track.

DECALS

We now have in stock NYC lightning-stripe decals made primarily for our GP-9 locomotive. Also coming this month is the zebra-striped AT&SF decal set. We are planning to slowly add road names to our line of decals.

American Models

10088 COLONIAL INDUSTRIAL DRIVE
SOUTH LYON, MI 48178
(313) 437-6800

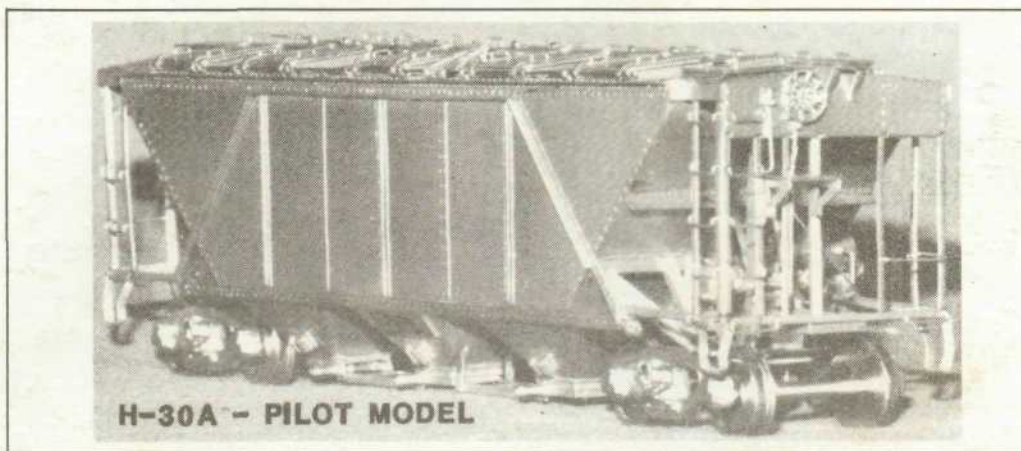




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