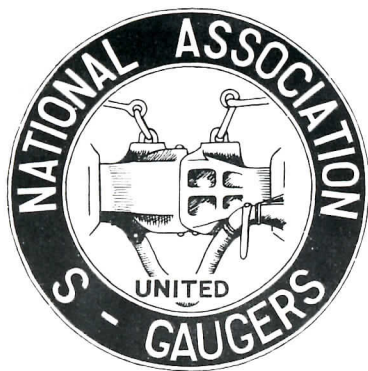
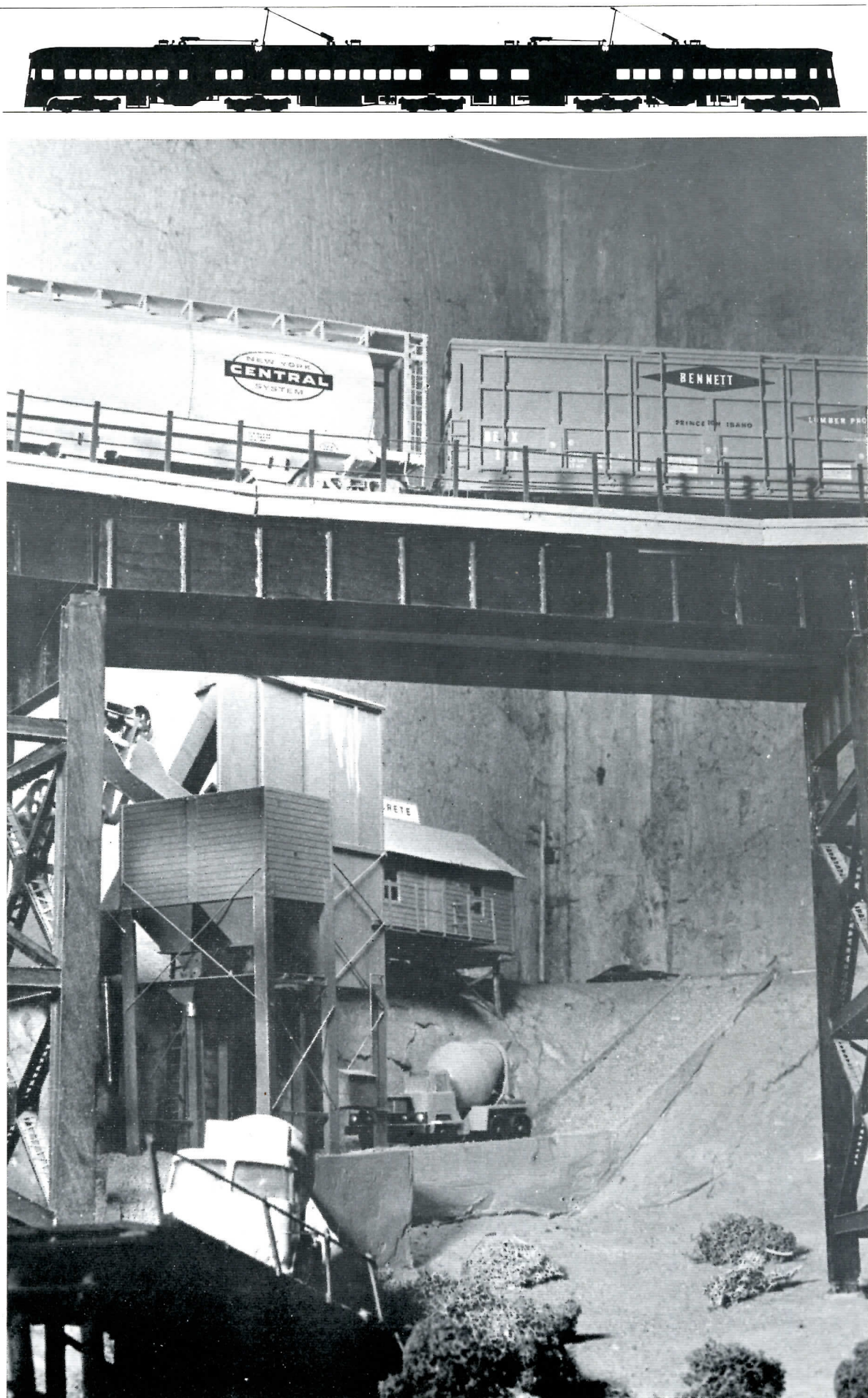




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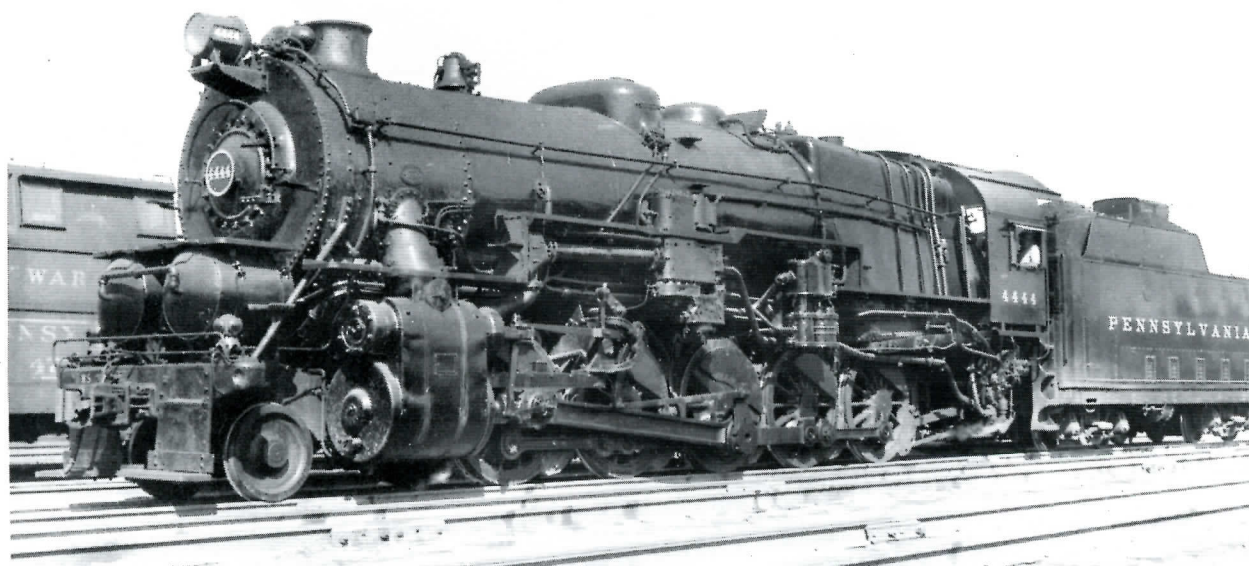
Vol. XII No. 3
June 1989



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DISPATCH

Official Publication of the
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of S GAUGERS INC.

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 enrolment date. Address applications, renewals, and membership questions to:

NASG Inc.
c/o Don DeWitt
37 Snow Drive
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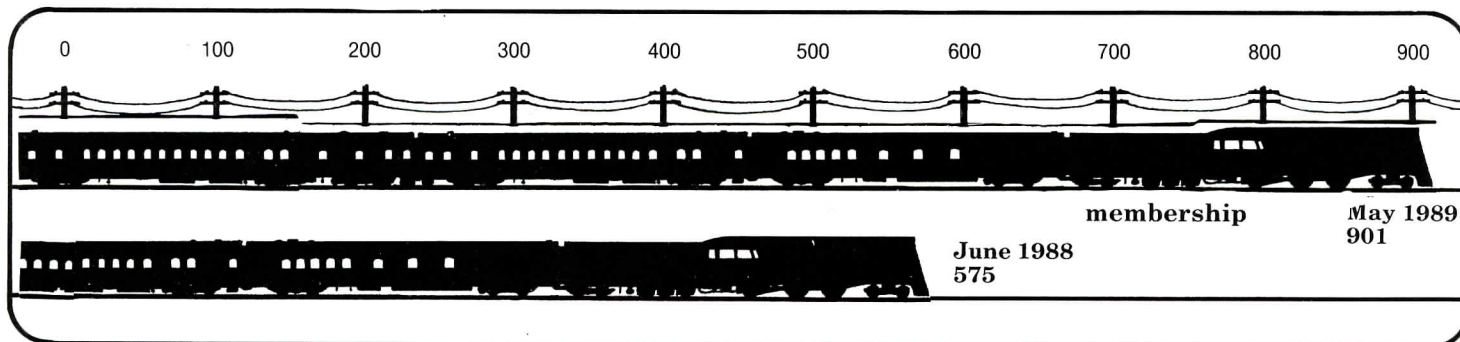
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The deadlines for articles are the 15th of Feb., Apr., June, Aug., Oct., and Dec. for issues dated Apr., June, Aug., Oct., Dec., and Feb. respectively.

COVER

A beautiful steel overpass frames the concrete plant on Ernie Herr's "Tinplate Road." Ernie scratch-built the NYC cylindrical hopper car; the all-door car was built from a Quality Craft kit. For more of Ernie's layout, see page 16.
Photo by Dick Karnes

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last Tango in the Roundhouse

There comes a time when it's appropriate to contemplate the future in terms of past accomplishments. As NASG nears the end of the "Loizeaux regime" and the beginning of a new administration, a brief review of the past four years seems timely.

Since the last election, NASG has undergone tremendous change. A small informal club has been transformed into a much larger, professionally-managed, dynamic, financially-secure organization. Our membership has more than doubled in spite of a 70 percent dues increase. The *DISPATCH* currently ranks as the most respected S publication. NASG has, at last, provided AF members with tangible benefits through production contracts with the Lionel Corporation. Scale brass cars have been imported. Check

gauges and coupler-height gauges are now available. NASG has even convinced the NMRA to adopt our track and wheel standards — number for number — for the next NMRA ballot pertaining to standards. Modular S railroading has literally exploded upon the scene, and NASG has responded with modular standards to ensure compatibility among modules from all over the country. A joint NASG-NMRA National Convention is scheduled for 1990, representing a phenomenal opportunity for S exposure. A cash award for S articles printed in non-S publications has been established. Likewise, a manufacturer-of-the-year award has been instituted to motivate new product introductions. Needless to say, the past four years have been very busy and productive!

These accomplishments are the result of endless hours of volunteer labor on the part of NASG's Board of Trustees, Committee Chairmen, and many

rank-and-file members. All of us work without compensation and at considerable sacrifice with regard to other aspects of our hobby. We believe, however, that these results are worth the sacrifices. Everyone's enjoyment of this hobby has been improved as a result.

NASG's next four years will rest in the capable hands of Mike Ferraro, who has had a long and significant tenure on the Board of Trustees. NASG will continue to grow and prosper under Mike's guidance. Please support him with your talents and energies as you have supported me.

Thank you all for your support.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

* * * * *

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.

* * * * *

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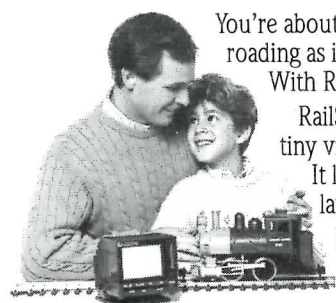
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- Or, advertiser supplies camera-ready ad material and we make copies. Price: \$50 per single sheet insert per issue; \$85 if printed both sides.

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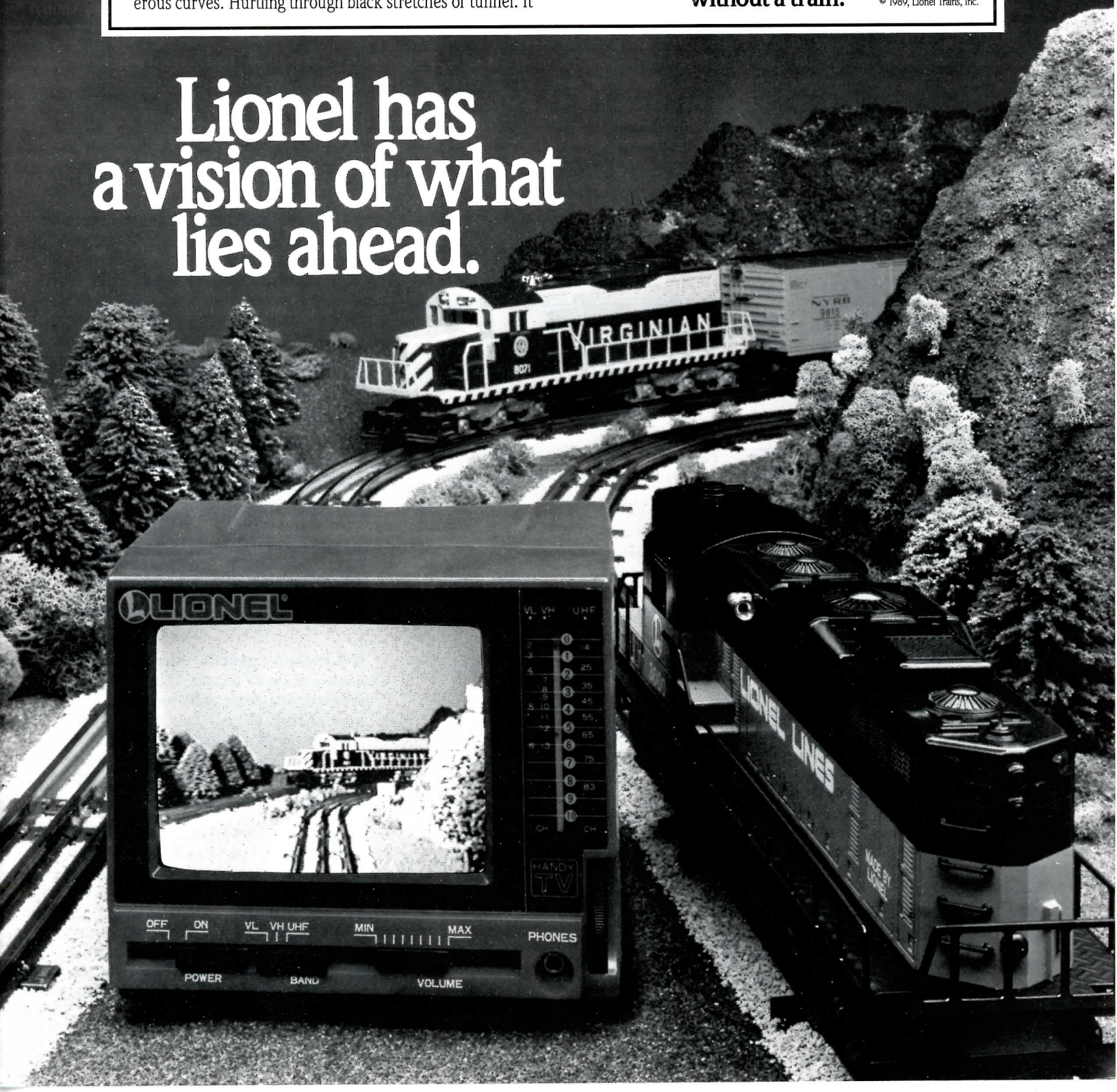
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DECAL CORNER

by Don DeWitt

Microscale has announced 20 new sets of S scale decals! They have 10 done now, but will not ship them until all 20 are completed. Here's their list:

Diesels:

IC 1988 scheme
SP "redwing"
D&RGW hood units
NYS&W 1988 scheme
BN 1985 scheme
AT&SF blue/yellow "war bonnet" 1972-89
NP passenger F units
MKT modern
MKT diesel striping
Diesel loco data 1950-70
(white/yellow/red/black)

Steam:

PRR

Freight Cars:

ATSF 40' boxcar (straight map, curved map)
Burlington 50' reefers
PFE 40' R40-23 reefers
CSX box, gon, hopper
Old-time billboard 40' reefer & box — 2 sets

Prices will be \$3.50 for single-sheet sets and \$6.00 for two-sheet sets.

In addition, several new sets of decals are on the way from other sources. I have also written to Northeastern Decals, as I have heard they may be interested in S scale too.

American Models now has NYC lightning-stripe decals available for their plastic GP-9s, and they are working on an ATSF zebra-stripe set for the geep. American's Ron Bashista intends to generate several other sets over the next year.

John Hall's PRR covered hopper decal sets are ready. They are designed for the new River Raisin Models brass H30, H30a and H32 PRR covered hoppers. John is now working on PRR caboose decals. He also offers Reading diesel decals which can be used on the American

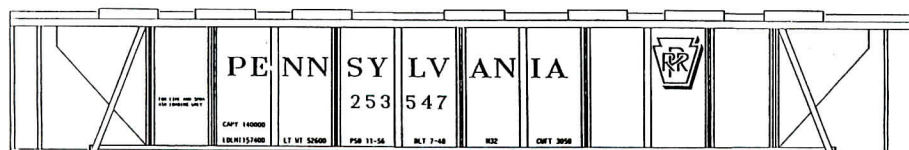
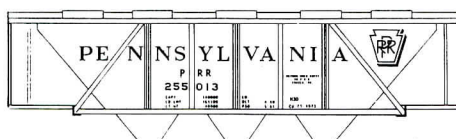
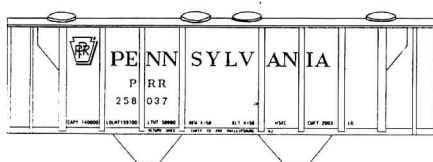
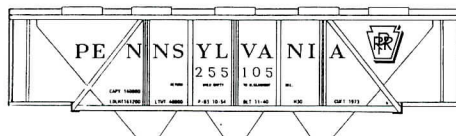
Models GP-9 and other switchers that were prototypically painted olive green with gold lettering. John's sets are in the \$2.25 - \$3.50 range. Write to John for more information about his growing line of decals at 2711 Pecksniff Road North, Wilmington, DE 19808-2177.

Finally, S DeSignS will arrange for the production of any decals that you might find in the Herald King catalog. The minimum run is 25 sets. Other increments are 50, 75 and 100. A run of 100 will be half the cost of a run of 25. As an initial exploration of this potential, S DeSignS is now accepting orders for the following decals:

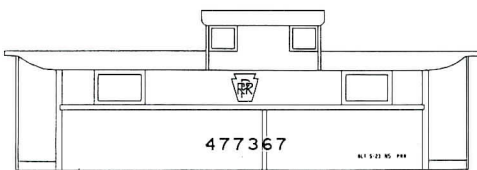
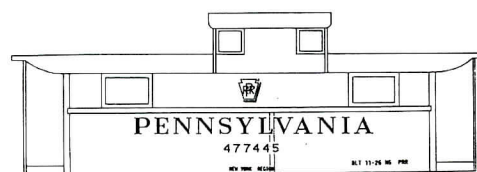
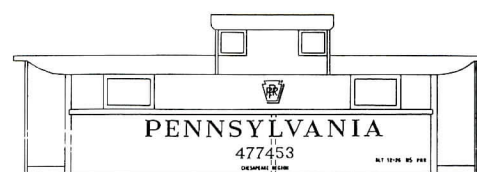
Erie-Lackawanna, D&RGW, and B&M 50-ft. gondola (1960s-'70s era) for use on American Models gondolas

LV modern-era 52-ft. gondola (for American Models gondolas)

LV modern-era 50' box and D&H 50' box (for Pacific Rail Shops boxcar)



AUG. 54 - NOV. 57 LETTERING FOR H32



SET No. G-620: ORANGE GONDOLA (1-76) (Blk Lettering & Herald)

If S DeSignS gets 25 orders, then the price will be \$3 per set; if 100 sets are ordered, the price will be \$1.50. For now, send \$3 per set plus \$0.40 postage to S DeSignS at 37 Snow Drive, Mahwah, NJ 07430. S DeSignS will do as many as nine additional gondola sets if demand warrants.

As you know, S scale decals are about as easy to find as "frog's fur," so let's try to support whoever is working to bring out S decals. As with any correspondence, please send an SASE, as the profit margin on decals is very low. If anyone else is working on decal or dry-transfer sets, please let me know and I'll let our readers know all about it.

REVIEWER'S WORKBENCH

GP-9 Diesel Road Switcher (American Models, 10088 Colonial Industrial Drive, South Lyon, MI 48178, \$144.95 decorated; 139.95 undecorated. Hi-rail AC version with electronic reversing and AF-compatible couplers, \$174.95.)

American Models' new GP-9 comes factory-painted for nine roads (N&W, C&O, PRR, Conrail, NH, NYC (cigar-band), SP, UP, and AT&SF) as well as undecorated. Several different numbers are available for each road name. We examined the undecorated scale DC version.

Over 4000 GP-9s and 357 GP-18s were built in the 1950s and early 1960s. We consulted *Mainline Modeler* for April 1984, Dec. 1984, and July 1985 respectively for prototype data on the GP-9 Phase II, Phase III, and GP-18. All of the model's major dimensions match the published plans exactly. The only real compromise is the pilot steps, which are simplified on the model and project out only about two-thirds as far as they should. This is probably to avoid interference with Kadee glad-hands on coupled cars.

The locomotive really is a "ready-to-complete" kit. The factory-assembled components comprising the basic locomotive are a ready-to-run chassis (similar to the same firm's FP-7) fitted with a one-piece body shell consisting of hoods, running boards, pilots and steps, to which a separate cab has been snapped in place.

There are many conspicuous openings in the body casting — for good reason. The box contains additional parts which enable you to customize your locomotive to several prototype versions and variations. The body parts to be separately applied include two styles of radiator fans, optional dynamic brake blisters with choice of fans, two

styles of radiator intake grilles, horn cluster, optional steam-heat air intake and vent, and cab step skirts.

In addition, there is a separate parts packet containing bolster hangers and brake cylinders for the trucks, plus a pair of scale dummy couplers and draft gear. The detailing of the plastic truck sideframes is exquisite, and the add-on parts contribute greatly to the overall impression.

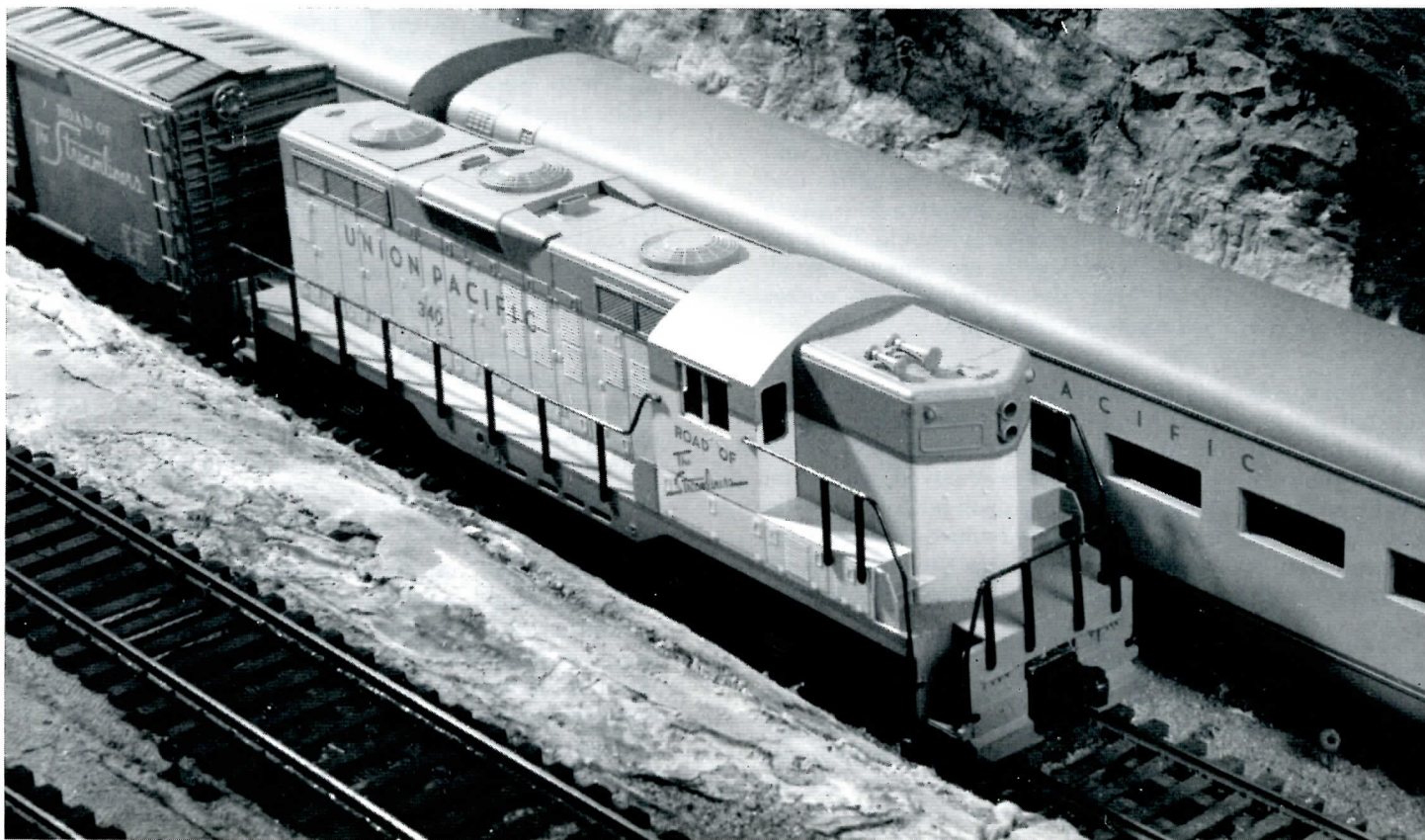
A full set of cast end and side handrail assemblies is also included. They are nearly scale size, but nevertheless seem flexible and tough enough to withstand normal handling without breaking. Some casting flash clean-up with a small X-Acto knife is required.

The instructions recommend super glue (alpha-cyanoacrylate, or ACC) to attach the separate parts. The parts should be cut off the sprues with your knife, and the area where the sprue was attached should then be trimmed and filed smooth on each part.

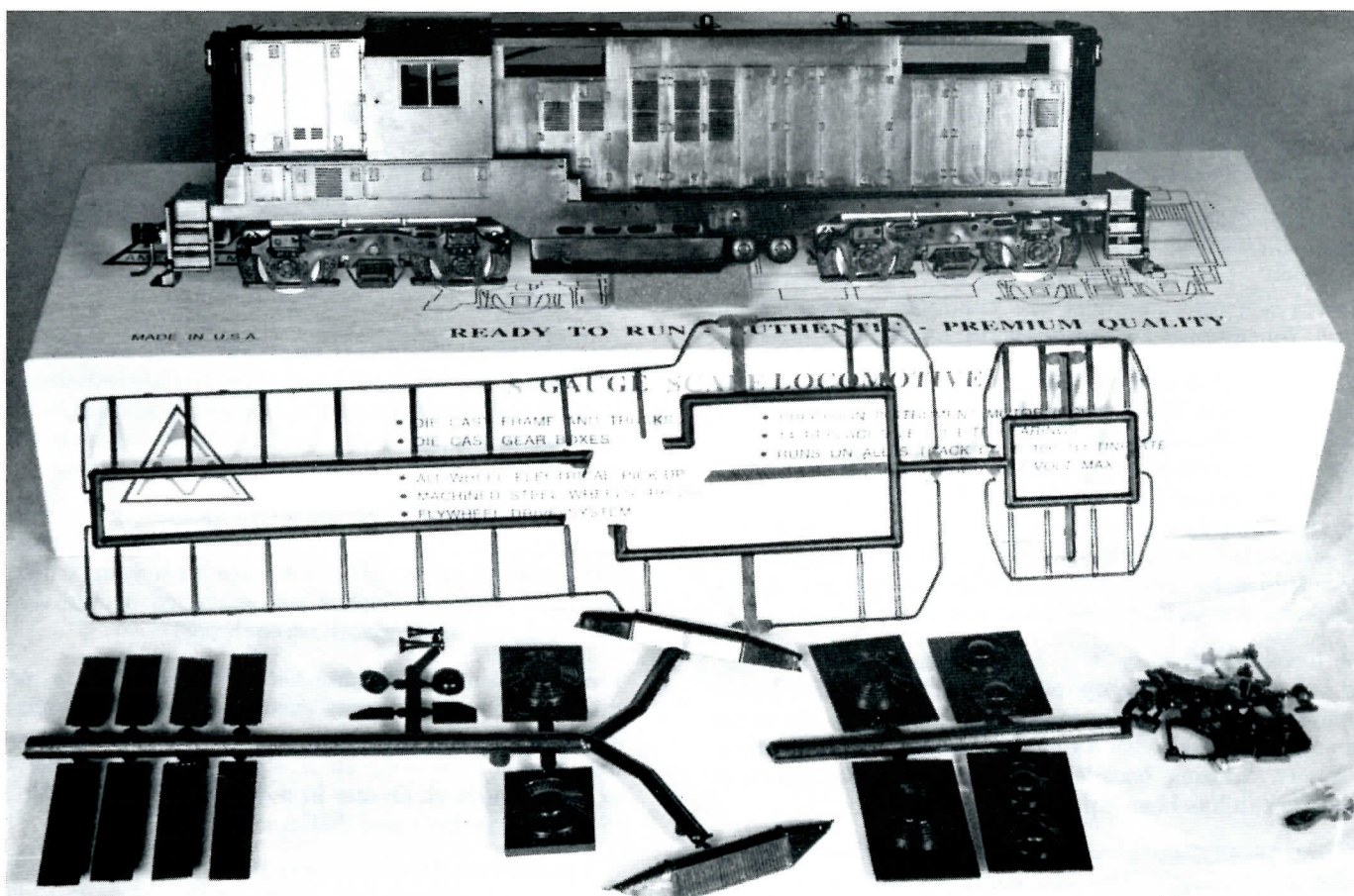
The body has most of the holes cast in place to receive the extra parts. The only exceptions are the steam-heat intake and vent, for which spotting dimples are cast as the inside of the body shell — a nice touch. If you want to locate the horn cluster in a different place, you'll have to fill the cast hole and drill a new one.

All prominent details appear to be properly and crisply represented on the model, including the myriad hood-door latches. The louvres correctly match the GP-9 Phase II. Both the Phase III and the GP-18 differ by having two sets of three louvers instead of a single set of ten on the battery boxes (below the cab toward the short hood).

MORE →



Bob Werre



Proper selection of the optional fans and grilles will make your Geep resemble either of Phase II or III of the GP-9 or a GP-18. The instruction sheet shows side views of each of these three variations. Unfortunately, the instructions do not show a top view. The *Mainline Modeler* references, however, contain a wealth of plans and detail shots of these variations, including roof details. The steam-heat parts enable modeling either a passenger unit (include them) or a freight unit (omit them). The fastidious modeler will pick up additional variations between and within the three versions, particularly in the skirts and fuel filler locations. However, the locomotive is really a kit-basher's delight; creative modelers should have no trouble re-detailing the locomotive to any extent desired. For you Union Pacific fans, the removable cab makes modeling a B-unit an easy conversion job.

The chassis is held in place by four machine screws, located at each corner. In addition, two prongs on opposite sides of the chassis interlock with the plastic body's fuel-filler openings. Once the screws are removed, the center of the body must be gently sprung open with the fingers to let the chassis drop out. This may require some coaxing; I found that the screw-boss recesses in the chassis were snap-fit over the mating bosses in the plastic body casting.

Examination of the chassis reveals that the die-maker believes the short hood is at the front of the locomotive. (A large "F" is cast into the chassis at the short end.) The lone headlight bulb is also at this end. It's easy enough to add a second bulb; American Models offers additional sockets and bulbs for \$3.00 a set. Note that the chassis can be rotated end-for-end if the two prongs are filed off; however, the air and fuel tanks will no longer be in the

right orientation, and they cannot easily be reversed. So, you N&W, NYC and Southern fans, you'll just have to install that second headlamp.

The floor casting has integral coupler-mounting tabs with screw holes cast in them. These have to be tapped for 0-80 screws to mount Kadee S scale couplers. The American Models dummy scale couplers install just fine with the self-tapping screws furnished with the locomotive. A check against the NASG coupler-height gauge shows perfect alignment.

The wheel-set spacing and flange depth meet NASG standards when checked with the NASG gauge. However, the wheel thickness exceeds the .110" standard by about 20 percent. This should pose no operating problems.

The mechanism, mechanically identical to the FP-7, features enclosed gearboxes on each truck which are driven by universal shafts from a double-shafted can motor. All four axles are powered. The motor is fitted with a small flywheel. No brand name is evident on the motor. All eight wheels pick up current from the rails. Minimum radius is indeed small — about 12 inches!

The assembled unit is quite light. It draws 0.3 amps running alone, and, drawing 0.4 amps, will pull a maximum of 15 wooden or plastic cars up a four-percent grade without extra weight. The locomotive can stand a lot of extra weight (at least 10 ounces) before the motor stalls at 0.7 amps, and this would greatly enhance the pulling power. However, the plastic body is tightly-fit against both sides of the motor, and indeed the instructions warn against possible body distortion due to overheating.

I'd recommend adding a few ounces of extra weight in the only really logical place to put it — between the plastic fuel tank and the underside of the floor casting. In fact, American sells a 3½ ounce weight (\$1.50) which fits here. The body cavity is pretty much filled up with mechanism, so there's not much chance of overweighting the unit anyway.

The unit, without break-in, throttles down to a steady 2 scale mph. Speed at 12 volts is 90 scale mph. Unfortunately, my FP-7 runs at 68 scale mph at 12 volts, so the two units fight each other when running in tandem. (I understand, however, that the more recent American Models FP-7s have different, faster motors so the speed difference shouldn't be as great.)

The locomotive has some obvious omissions and simplifications. Nose grab irons are not included, nor are any clear-plastic window inserts or headlight lenses. And there is no safety-tread pattern on the steps and walkways. However, most grab-iron hole locations are spotted on the hood casting, and the thin variety of S scale grabs should fit perfectly. Clear plastic can easily be cemented inside the cab, which simply snaps upward off the body casting. A more difficult problem is what to do about headlight lenses. Some of you may find a source for the proper-size clear plastic rod. My solution would be to find appropriately-sized MV lenses and drill a small dimple in the back of each to let the bulb's light in.

Additional details such as MU hoses, air and steam lines, lift rings, brakeman's handrails across the pilots at the base of the platform railing stanchions, etc., can easily be added.

The American Models GP-9 is a well-engineered, well-executed, attractively-priced model of a very popular prototype; it should delight every S gauger. And the extra parts you don't use will enrich your scrap box for future projects.

Sample Defects

None.

Fifty-Foot Single-Door Boxcar Kit (Pacific Rail Shops, 3205 Helms Rd., Grants Pass, OR 97527, unpainted (but will soon be available painted in several road names and numbers), \$18.95 postpaid).

After a long time a-comin', S gauge has a new manufacturer of easy-to-build rolling stock. Pacific Rail Shops' first entry into S scale is the 50-foot riveted-side boxcar. This basic car is suitable for late steam and all diesel eras. Half-ladders and removable roof walks update the car to the present.

Although I was not able to discover any published photos of this specific car (other than the one in Pacific Rail Shops' ad), published plans from "Freight Cars Rolling" describe the car as an AAR Standard 50-ton, 50'-6" steel-sheathed box. The sides have 16 panels with a single 8-foot corrugated door.

What came in the box inspired us! The finished car is similar to Atlas O gauge cars in appearance. The four sides and floor are a one-unit casting. Addition of the separate roof casting completes the basic carbody. Two plastic sprues contain all the other detail parts such as doors, underbody frame, brake details, ladders, and grab irons. All the items exhibited a wealth of detail.

Pre-assembled pastic trucks with separate journal lids make the boxcar roadworthy. The trucks are made of a slippery plastic material, including the wheels, axles, sideframes, brake detail, and spring castings. Although they are neither sprung nor equalized, the car with these trucks mounted had no difficulty negotiating my somewhat uneven track. Their rolling quality is quite phenomenal — they seemed to roll forever. The completed car with trucks weighs in at five ounces. (I have been told by owner John Verser that the trucks in the production kits have been reworked prior to factory assembly, so they do equalize.)

MORE →



Bob Werre

Because styrene is a somewhat new material for kits in S scale (American Models' cars are ABS plastic), I decided to run it through my paint shop to see how Floquil paint would work for a "worst-case" test. The results might make one use a non-solvent type paint (ie., Badger Air-Opaque paint). I didn't experience any melting of the detail, but the car was still tacky to the touch after several hours of drying. This slow drying makes the car difficult to handle while painting, and could attract dirt during drying. A faster-drying paint would help. Also, one might make a handle-like device to hold the car by the truck-mounting holes to facilitate all-one-time painting.

With a first kit of this nature, not everything was perfect. Some trade-offs were made; most notably the side doors do not slide — you glue them closed or open. This allows for a thinner door and more accurate door hardware. Also, the scale-size plastic grab irons and stirrup steps are just too fragile for much handling.

Additionally, there are two basic but easy-to-solve problems with the kit. First, the coupler pockets on the sample were too tight to allow the coupler sufficient freedom to move, so I used the Kadee-supplied box instead. The second and most prominent problem was the coupler height itself. Using either the supplied box or the Kadee box mounted directly on the floor, the couplers were about 1/8" too high. I cut away the walls of the supplied coupler boxes (which are fairly thick pieces of plastic) and cemented them to the car underbody so they function as coupler-mounting pads. Then I remounted the Kadee coupler boxes to these pads. The couplers were still not

low enough, so I filed away a portion of each body bolster. Voila! Perfect height, according to the NASG coupler-height gauge.

(John tells me that he is enclosing a note in each kit describing the use of the Kadee coupler box to correct the coupler height and swing problems. He also promised that subsequent runs of the car will have these problems corrected.)

All in all, the Pacific Rail Shops 50-foot boxcar is a model with phenomenal details and excellent rolling qualities. The problems with the model are easily fixed, and the style of the car will fit layouts from most any period. They ought to sell well.

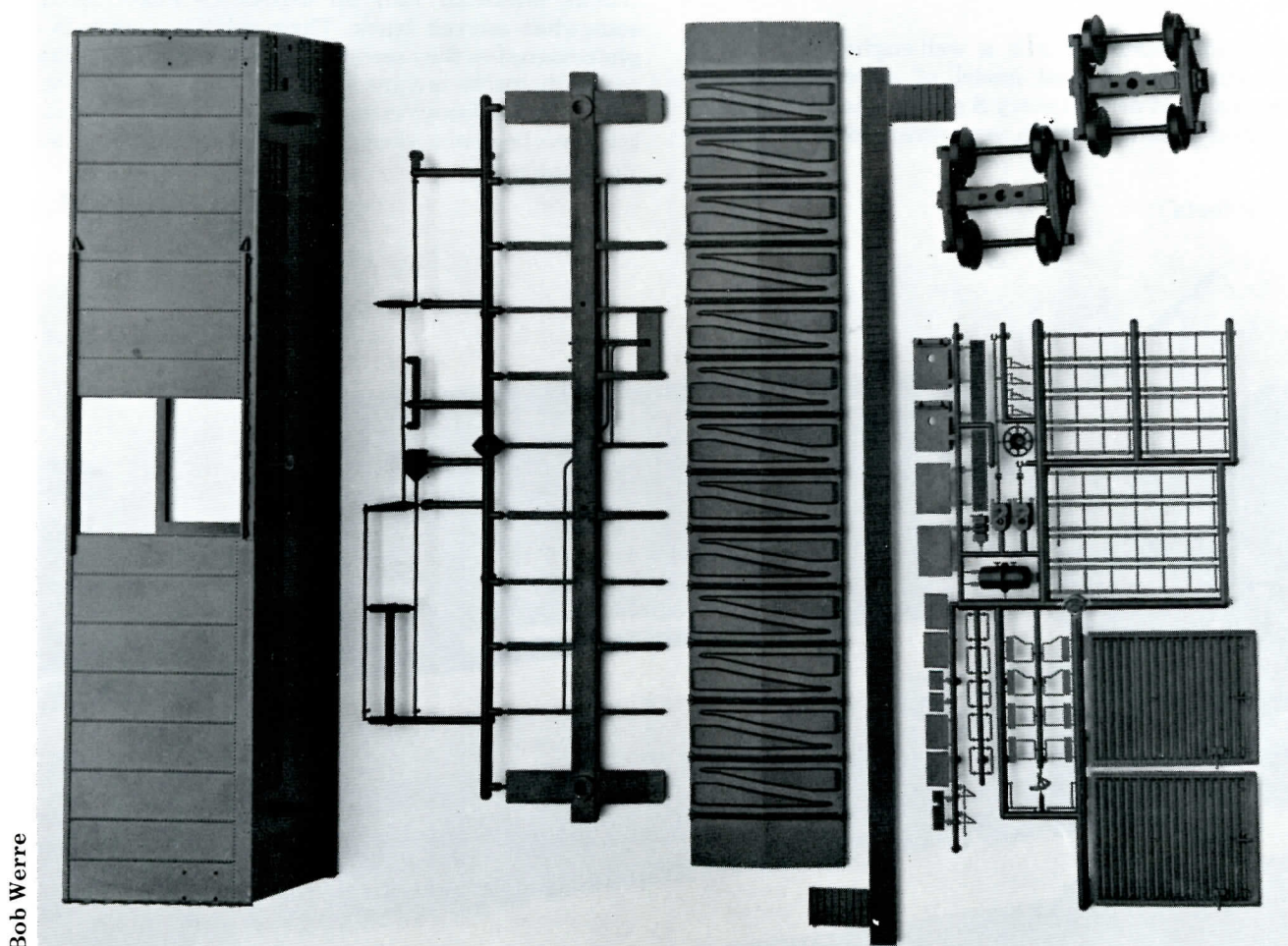
(The production kits contain instructions consisting of two pages of text, a drawing showing where all the parts go, and a photograph of one of the prototype cars (Illinois Central). There were no instructions in my preproduction kit, so I haven't seen them first-hand.)

[At press time, John Verser told us that he now has kits in stock for NYC (three numbers), ERIE (two numbers), and SP (two numbers). They are painted with "Scalecoat II" paint; be sure to use Scalecoat if you want to weather or refinish your car.]

Sample Defects

Our review sample was an unpainted preproduction model; it contained no truck-mounting screws or instructions. The production kits have both.

— Bob Werre



The S-MOD System

BUILDING A PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL for S-MOD RAILCAB LAYOUTS (Part 2)

by Don DeWitt

In the last issue I described the construction of the S-MOD Interface for the Portable S-MOD Control Panel. Before you read the following description of the Control Panel construction, please review the ideas set forth in Part 1.

In Figure 2 of Part 1, we left off with a nondescript box representing the control panel. It is now time to explore our options and begin construction. Remember that our overall goal here is to be able to assign either of the Mainline Cabs (RED or YELLOW) or a Local Cab (BLUE) to one or both of the mainlines in a double-track S-MOD RailCAB layout. There are two common methods for building a control panel that requires Cab Selectors.

ROTARY SWITCHES

Rotary switches that are double-pole input and output are used by many. Double-pole? What's that? Two poles refers to the switch's ability to direct output to two wires at once. In other words, we need to send output to each rail of each track, so we need a double-pole switch for each track. In addition, we need to have several pairs of two-wire inputs, with one pair from each Cab. Minimally we would need two input pairs for the RED and YELLOW Cabs. In addition, if you wish to have the ability to use a Local Cab, then the switch needs three pairs of inputs. Finally, our rotary switches need some way of turning the block off. This can be done by buying rotary switches that have at least one more input position. It is even better to buy switches with two more positions to allow for off positions between each Cab Position as shown in Figure 1. So I suggest using 5-position, double-pole rotary switches.

Remember that in the S-MOD RailCAB System, the RED and YELLOW Cabs can be accessed by any control panel in the division because all control panels can access Cab Lines 1-2 and 7-8, while a Local BLUE Cab can only be used within the block to which it is connected. (Refer to my article in the February DISPATCH.) Thus, a four-block layout would have one RED and one YELLOW Mainline Cab and as many as four BLUE Local Cabs. Note also that one could have two Local Cabs (BLUE & WHITE) if desired. A Third? Color it GREEN.

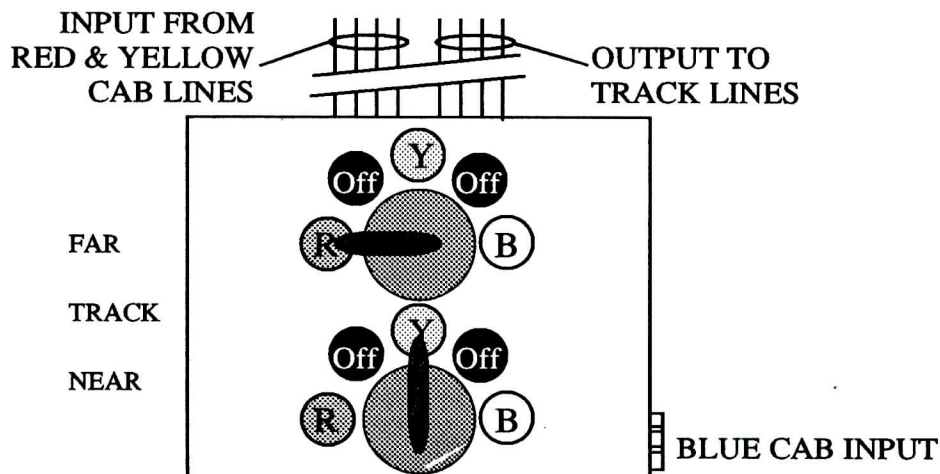
TOGGLE SWITCHES

Another method often used for control panels is a combination of two double-pole-double-throw (DPDT) switches for each track. Two switches per track? That sounds complicated. I thought so too when Ken MacKenzie introduced me to the concept when he and I were working together in the NASG Module Standards Committee. The use of rotary switches has several advantages and of course so does the use of toggle switches. Rotary switches are compact and you can fit several on a complicated control panel or a small control panel. The disadvantage is that it is difficult to determine the maximum current that a rotary switch can handle. For instance, Radio Shack sells some 6 position double pole rotary switches for about \$2. We have used them in the Central Jersey S Scaler club control panels, but I still do not know how much current they can handle. Since we run only scale equipment, our locomotives with their can motors pull so little current that it has not been a problem. (Yes, I asked the Radio Shack people but they don't know either!!)

MORE →

S-MOD PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL (Rotary Switch Style)

Figure 1



One of the purposes of this article is to show how to build a universally usable control panel. In other words, I want a design that I can recommend to our Hi-Rail friends as well as my scale buddies. So I want to build a panel that has switches that can handle at least 10 amps. I recommend using the following toggle switch method because 10-amp toggle switches are easy to find. Because this control panel is designed to handle only two mainlines (or one), there is plenty of room in the box for four toggle switches. Finally, remember also that all wires should be 16 gauge, and it is much easier to fasten 16-gauge wires to toggle switches than it is to fasten them to rotary switches. Sooo . . .

Shown in Figure 2 is the Toggle Switch Style of Portable Control Panel. As in Part 1 of this article, Module 1 is in the control block because Track Lines are connected. Module 2 is not affected by this control panel. When the control panel is placed on the Normal Operator's Side of the modules, and the Control Panel Interface Box is connected as shown, the top row of toggle switches controls the FAR TRACK (Track 1 with Track Lines 3-4), while the lower row controls the NEAR TRACK (Track 2 with Track Lines 5-6). If the control panel is placed on the other side of the module (the NORMAL Viewer's Side), DO NOT DISCONNECT THE INTERFACE BOX AND TURN IT AROUND. The RED painted plug and socket on the interface should always be connected to Cab Lines 1 and 2. If you connect the RED plug and socket to Cab Lines 7 and 8, then the top row of toggles will control Track 2, the new FAR TRACK. The control panel output to TRACK LINES 3 and 4 would go to TRACK LINES 5-6, etc. IF YOU NEED TO PLACE THE CONTROL PANEL on the Normal Viewer's Side, then just twist the cable and plug the interface in as if you had placed the

control panel on the Normal Operator's Side. To "kill" a track simply turn the right toggle to the Center-Off position. To use the Local Throttle with its S-MOD Throttle Interface, connect it to the Blue CAB Input and turn the right toggle to the B position. To switch to Red CAB, turn the right toggle toward the left (the R/Y position), and push the left toggle up to the R position. To switch to the Yellow CAB, flip the left toggle down to the Y position. This sounds more complicated than it really is.

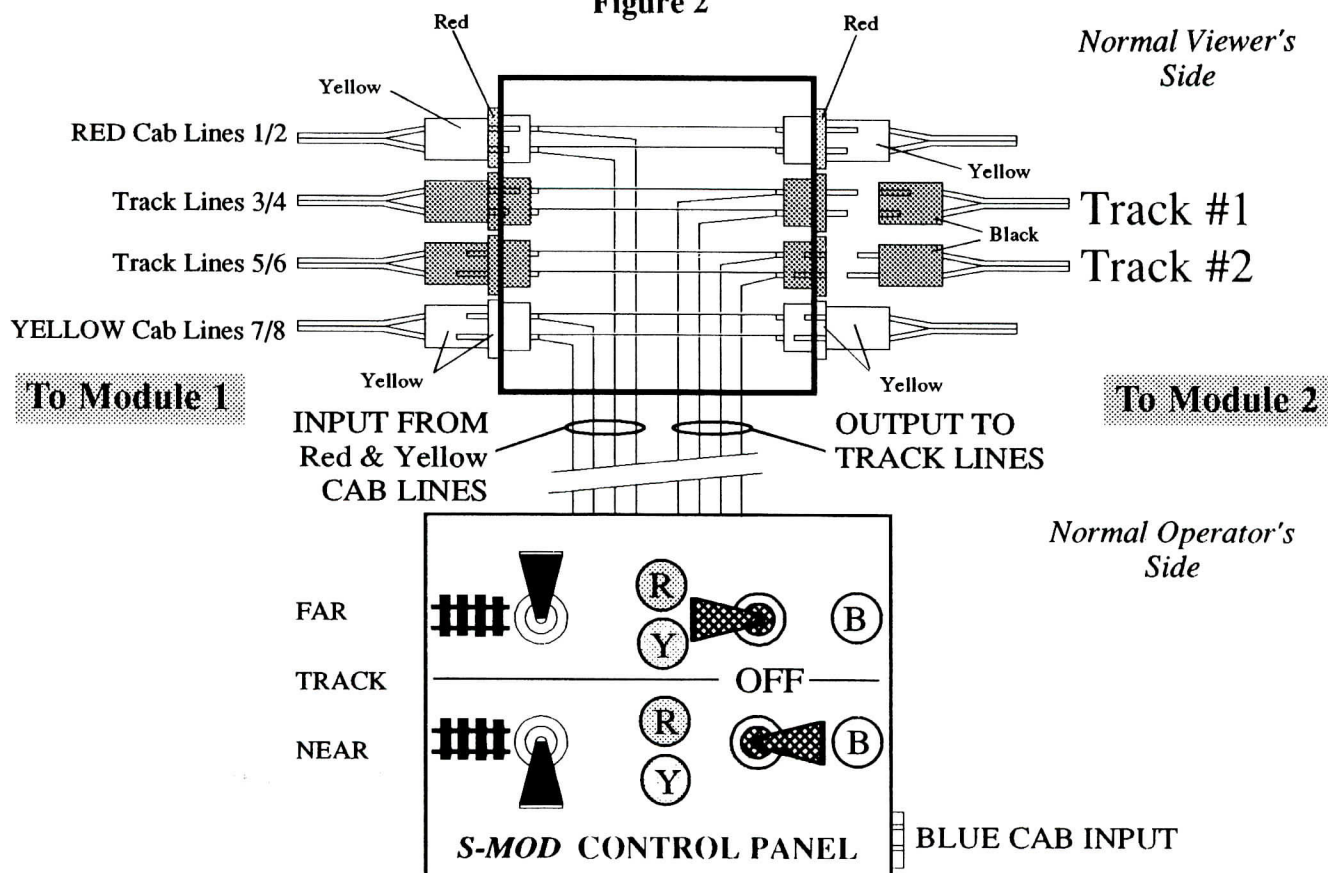
Now let's open it up and start connecting the Input and Output wires to the appropriate DPDT terminals. CAUTION HERE!! There are two common errors that you are likely to make if you have never worked with this type of paraphernalia. Remember that to work on the backs of the switches, we must turn the control panel cover over. That means that everything on the right in Figure 2 is now on the left in Figure 3. Secondly, as shown in Figure 3B, toggle switches are built in a seemingly odd way. If you push a toggle switch to the right, the center terminals are connected to the left pair of input terminals and vice versa. If you remember these two warnings, you should have fun with this project rather than aggravation.

If you look at Figure 4C, you can see where we are going to end up. Rather than simply adding wires here and there, let's do it in an organized way so that it makes sense, and then maybe you can teach someone else in the future. (There will be a quiz at the start of the next class!! Oh, sorry, I knew I shouldn't have written this while I was writing final exams!!)

In Figure 3A, I have shown how to connect the INPUT wires coming from Cab Lines 1-2 and 7-8. Now you can see how these DPDT switches are used to make a selection between RED or YELLOW Cabs. Note also that if you

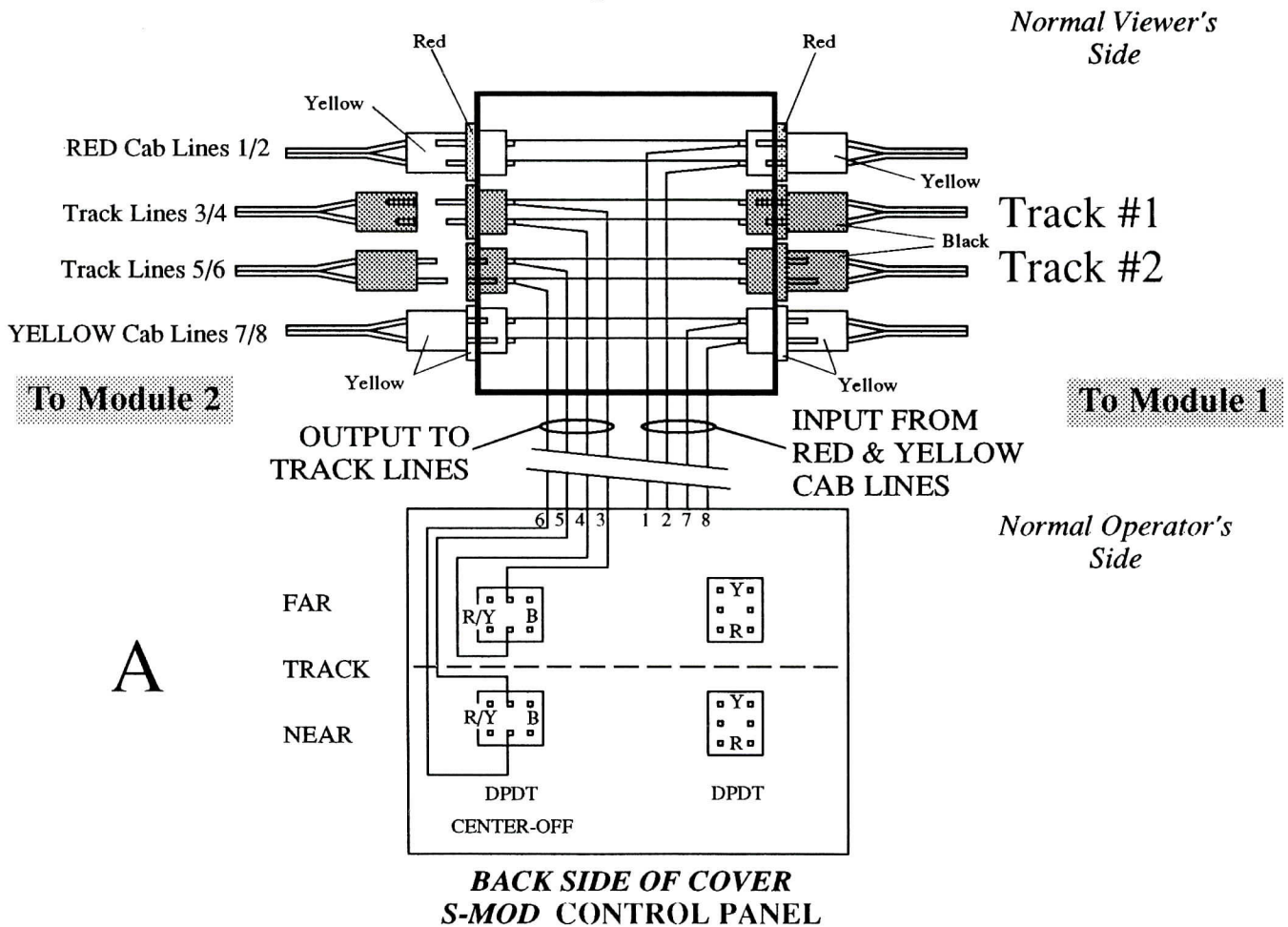
S-MOD PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL (Toggle Switch Style)

Figure 2

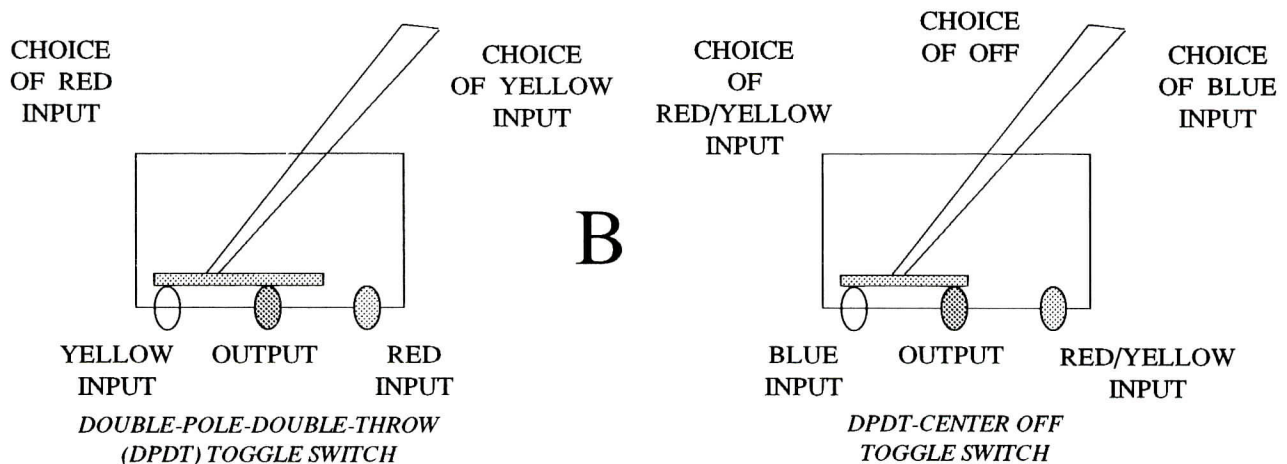


S-MOD PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL

Figure 3



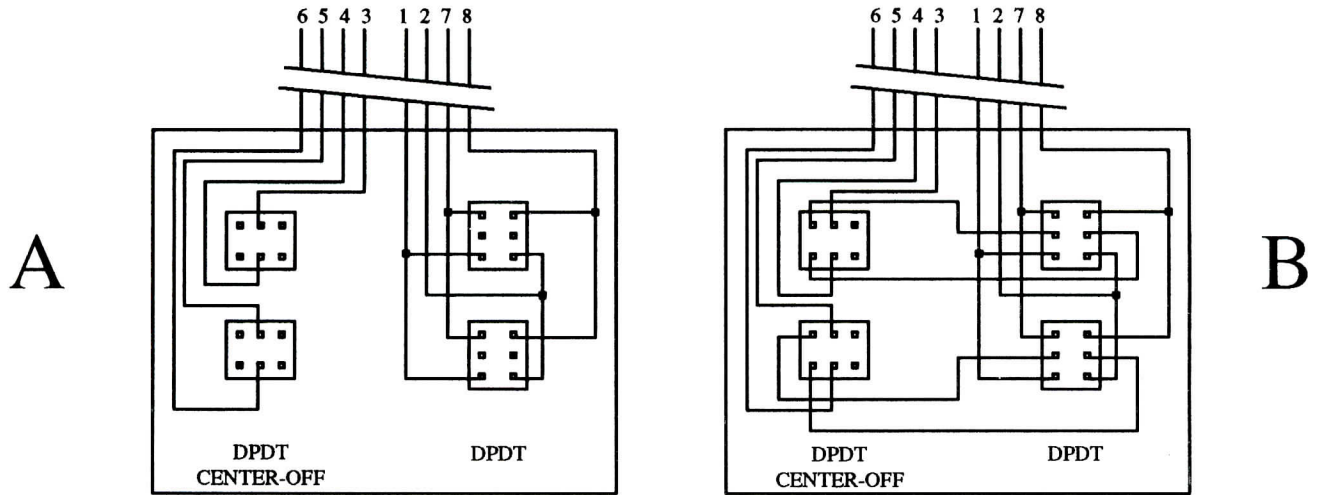
The Control Panel cover has been removed and the entire assembly has been flipped left to right in order to view the back sides of the toggle switches. The wiring from the DPDT-Center Off toggle switches to the Track Lines is shown. Note that the terminals for a toggle switch choice are on the opposite side of the switch, as shown below in a side view of the two kinds of switches. The outputs of the toggle switch are the center two, while the outer, left and right pairs are inputs.



MORE →

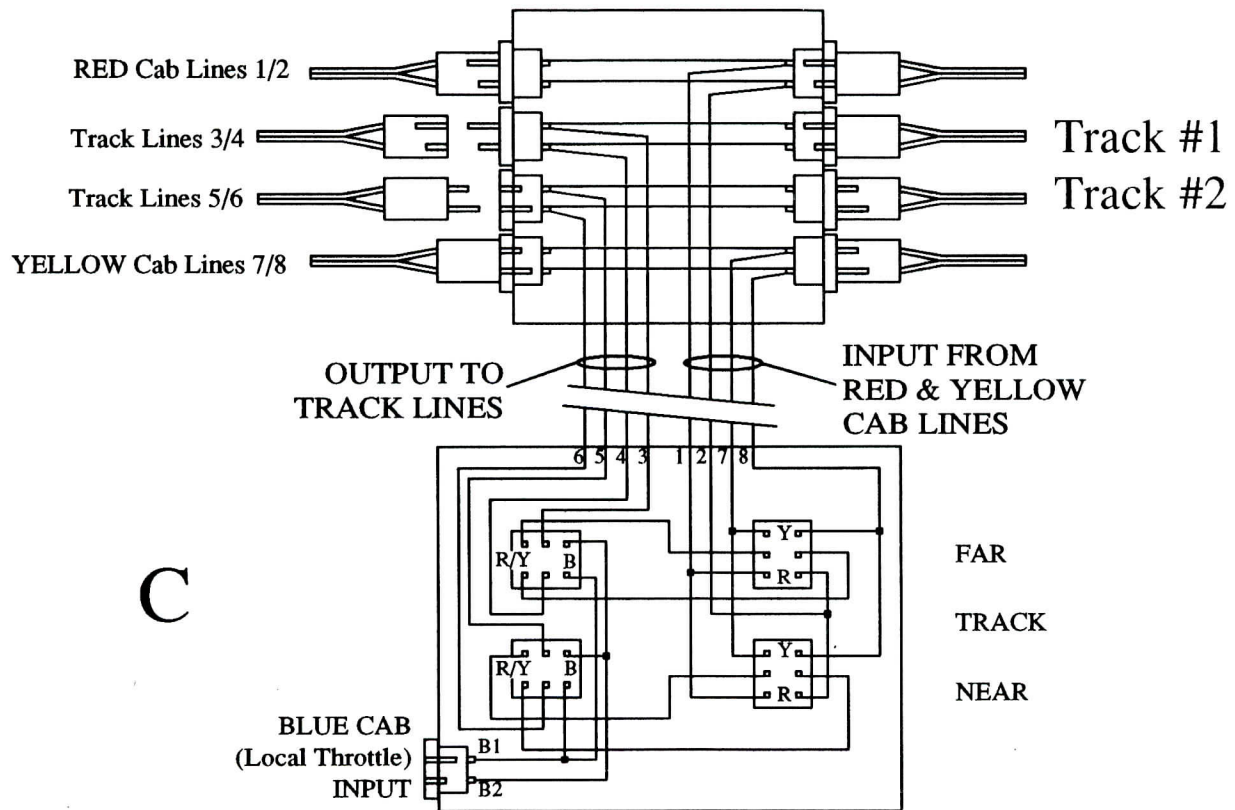
S-MOD PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL

Figure 4



Addition of Red and Yellow Cab Inputs to DPDT Toggle Switches.

Addition of Output lines from DPDT to Red/Yellow Inputs on DPDT-Center Off Toggle Switches.



Final Configuration. Addition of Blue (Local) Cab lines to Blue Inputs on DPDT-Center Off Toggle Switches.

do not intend to add a BLUE Cab option, then the entire panel gets much easier to build. I recommend however, that you make the effort to add the BLUE Cab. When someone is running the mainline trains with the RED or YELLOW Cabs in another block, you can do some local switching with your BLUE Cab by flipping the DPDT center-off switch to B. When the mainline trains are ready to enter your block again, simply flip the DPDT center-off switch back to R/Y position. OK, so lets deal with the switch that allows a choice between OFF, RED/YELLOW Cabs, or BLUE Cab.

The DPDT center-off switch is the master switch for each track. Figure 4A shows how to connect the wires leading to Track Lines 3-4 and 5-6. Make sure you connect the top switch to Track Lines 3-4 and the lower switch to Track Lines 5-6. Figure 4B shows how to connect the output of the DPDT switches to their corresponding terminals on the DPDT center-off switches. All connections must be followed exactly or you will not be able to move a train on Track 1 over to Track 2 when both tracks are connected to the same Cab. Finally, Figure 4C shows how it is supposed to look when you are finished. The last step involves adding the BLUE Cab input lines to the DPDT center-off switch.

Now that you are all done, does it work? DO NOT EVEN CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT YOU HAVE CONNECTED EVERYTHING CORRECTLY. Here is a way to test all of the options. Do not plug the interface box into anything yet.

Testing the Control Panel Interface Box

1. Kill each track by turning the DPDT center-off switch to OFF.
2. Get out your Module Testing kit that you built after you read my article in the DISPATCH two issues back.
3. Check to make sure that Lines 1 through 8 on one side of the box are connected only to the same lines on the opposite side of the box. Use your ohmmeter for this and check for continuity and isolation.

Testing the Entire Assembly

1. Turn the DPDT center-off switch to either R/Y or B. All Lines 1 through 8 should NOT still be isolated. That is because we want the Track Lines to be connected to the Cab Lines. The question is: Are they connected correctly?
2. Turn the FAR TRACK DPDT center-off switch to R/Y and the FAR TRACK DPDT switch to Red, and then YELLOW. Then turn the DPDT Center-Off switch to Off, and finally to BLUE.

TRACK LINE	connected to	CAB LINE	DPDT C-OFF SWITCH	DPDT and SWITCH
3		1	R/Y	RED
4		2	R/Y	RED
3		7	R/Y	YEL
4		8	R/Y	YEL
3		-	OFF	RorY
4		-	OFF	RorY
3		BLUE1	BLUE	RorY
4		BLUE2	BLUE	RorY

During this testing of the FAR TRACK, if the NEAR TRACK DPDT CENTER-OFF switch is OFF, then Track Lines 5-6 should be isolated from all CABS.

3. Turn the NEAR TRACK DPDT center-off switch to R/Y and the NEAR TRACK DPDT switch to Red,

and then YELLOW. Then turn the DPDT Center-Off switch to Off, and finally to BLUE.

TRACK LINE	connected to	CAB LINE	DPDT C-OFF SWITCH	DPDT and SWITCH
5		1	R/Y	RED
6		2	R/Y	RED
5		7	R/Y	YEL
6		8	R/Y	YEL
5		-	OFF	RorY
6		-	OFF	RorY
5		BLUE1	BLUE	RorY
6		BLUE2	BLUE	RorY

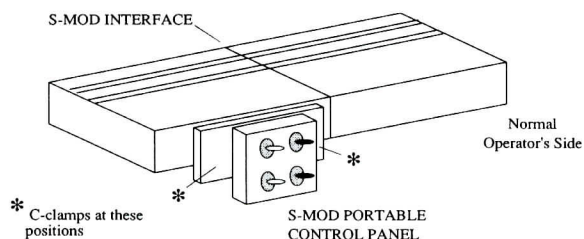
During this testing of the NEAR TRACK, if the FAR TRACK DPDT CENTER-OFF switch is really OFF, then Track Lines 3-4 should be isolated from all CABS.

4. Now turn the NEAR TRACK DPDT CENTER-OFF switch to R/Y and turn the DPDT switch to R. Then set the FAR track to operate via the Yellow Cab. Re-test for these conditions. Switch around. Hopefully, everything is ok.

Now I can just hear you after reading this test procedure. "I'm not going to waste my time doing all of that testing!! I'm just going to plug it all in and see what happens!!!" OK, go for it!! When it doesn't work, maybe you can use this procedure to figure out what went wrong. The problem with just plugging it in is that you may not remember to try every different combination. Then of course the missed combination will be needed during the next show, and WHAM . . . "How come it doesn't work, Don? I tested it in my basement but I only had one throttle," etc., etc., yawn . . . blah . . . blah . . . blah. Well boys, it looks like we'll be eating lunch under the module!! "Hey dad, how come I can't run my train?" The moral of the story is that you can spend the time before the show, or during the show, checking your new S-MOD Control Panel. Guess which one will make your Layout Coordinator happy??

ATTACHING YOUR NEW S-MOD PORTABLE CONTROL PANEL

Figure 5



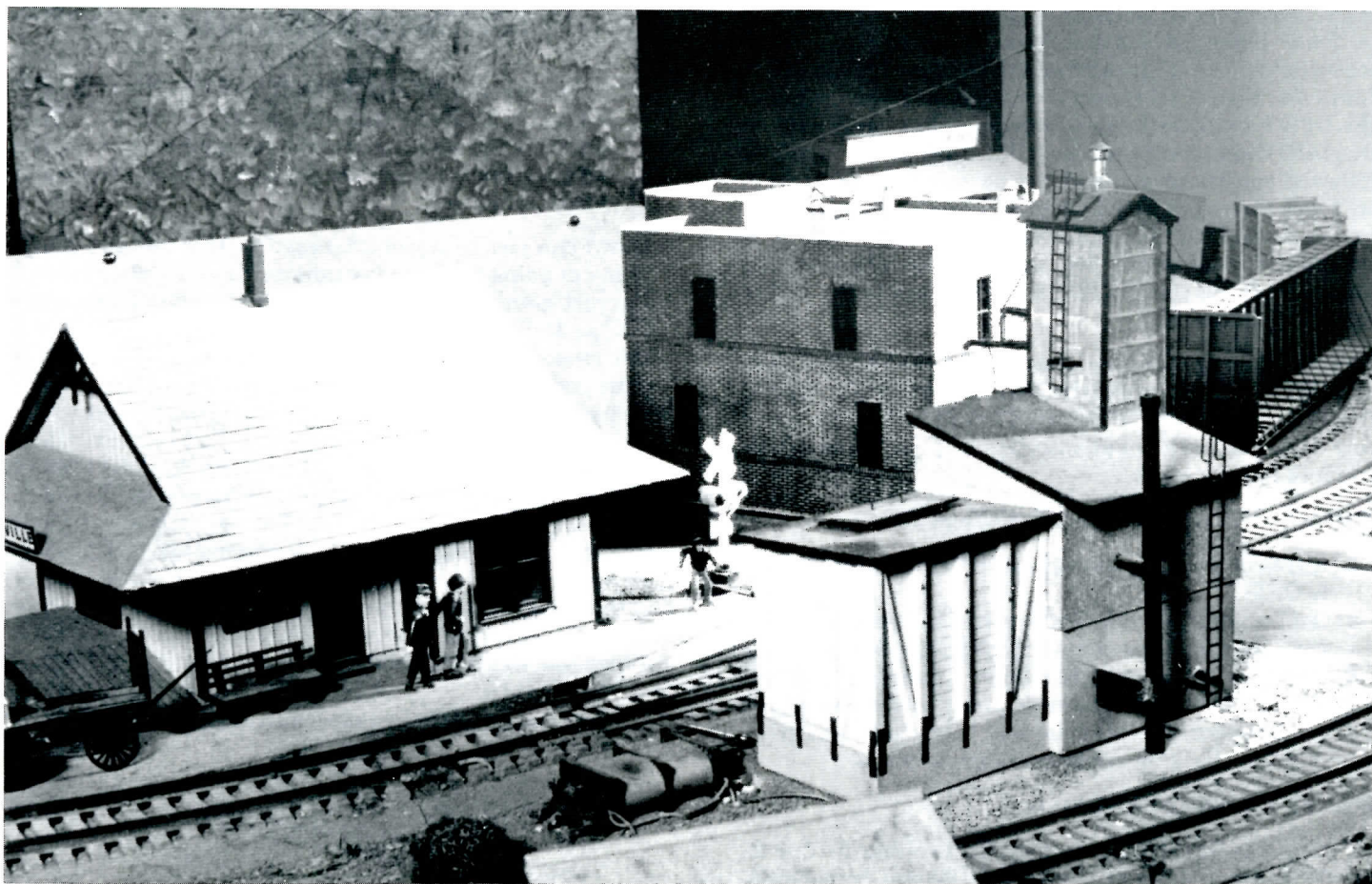
OK, IT WORKS!! NOW WHAT? How do I attach it to a module? If you attach the panel to a board as shown in Figure 5, then you can C-clamp the assembly to the side of any module. Make sure that your cable from the control panel to the Interface Box is long enough to handle a 3-foot-wide module, as that is the widest that we recommend. Also allow enough slack for the angle the cable will take from the middle of the module to the electrical interface.

In the next issue I'll complete the testing procedures for single-track modules and begin answering questions that you may wish to send me. If you expect a direct answer, please include a self-addressed, stamped business-size envelope.

THE TINPLATE ROAD

by Dick Karnes

Photos by the Author



The picturesque town of Colville is located on a curve in the mainline. The sandhouse in the foreground was built from a kit once put out by the Potomac Valley S Gaugers. The station is a Lehigh Valley Models kit. Ernie built the lumber flatcar and Carver's Cozy Casket Works (the brick building) from scratch. Notice how the details around the station make the scene come alive.

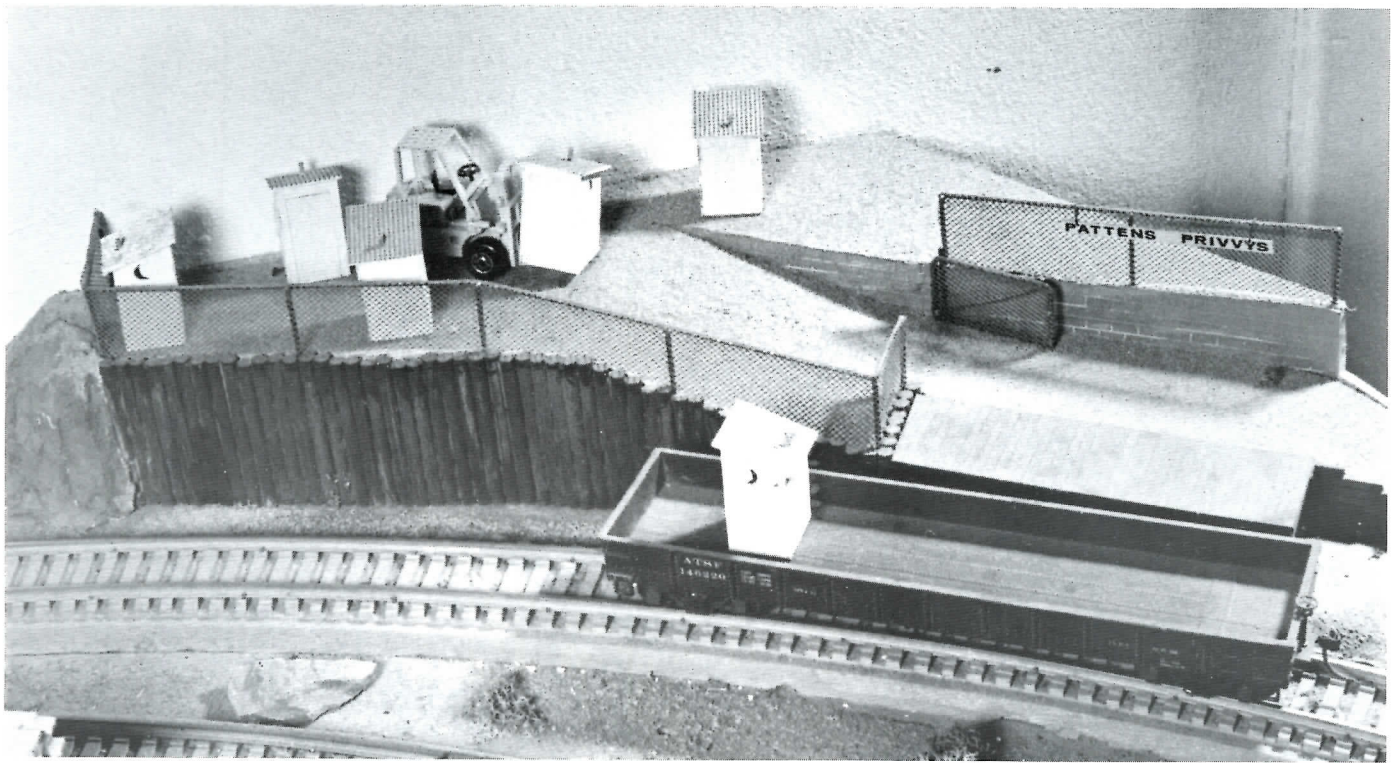
Ernie Horr has been an S gauge activist for a long time. He was the editor of the fledgling NASG newsletter in 1979 when he suggested that it be named the DISPATCH, thus becoming the DISPATCH's first editor. Ernie was instrumental in forming the Inland Empire S Gaugers Association of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN), and he still keeps its fairly far-flung membership glued together with the club's monthly "S-Train Rail" newsletter which he edits and publishes.

Like most of us S gauge "oldsters," Ernie started with American Flyer equipment. He gradually began building his own models, from kits at first, then later from scratch. One thing Ernie did when he built his layout was to use .172 rail so he could continue to operate his American

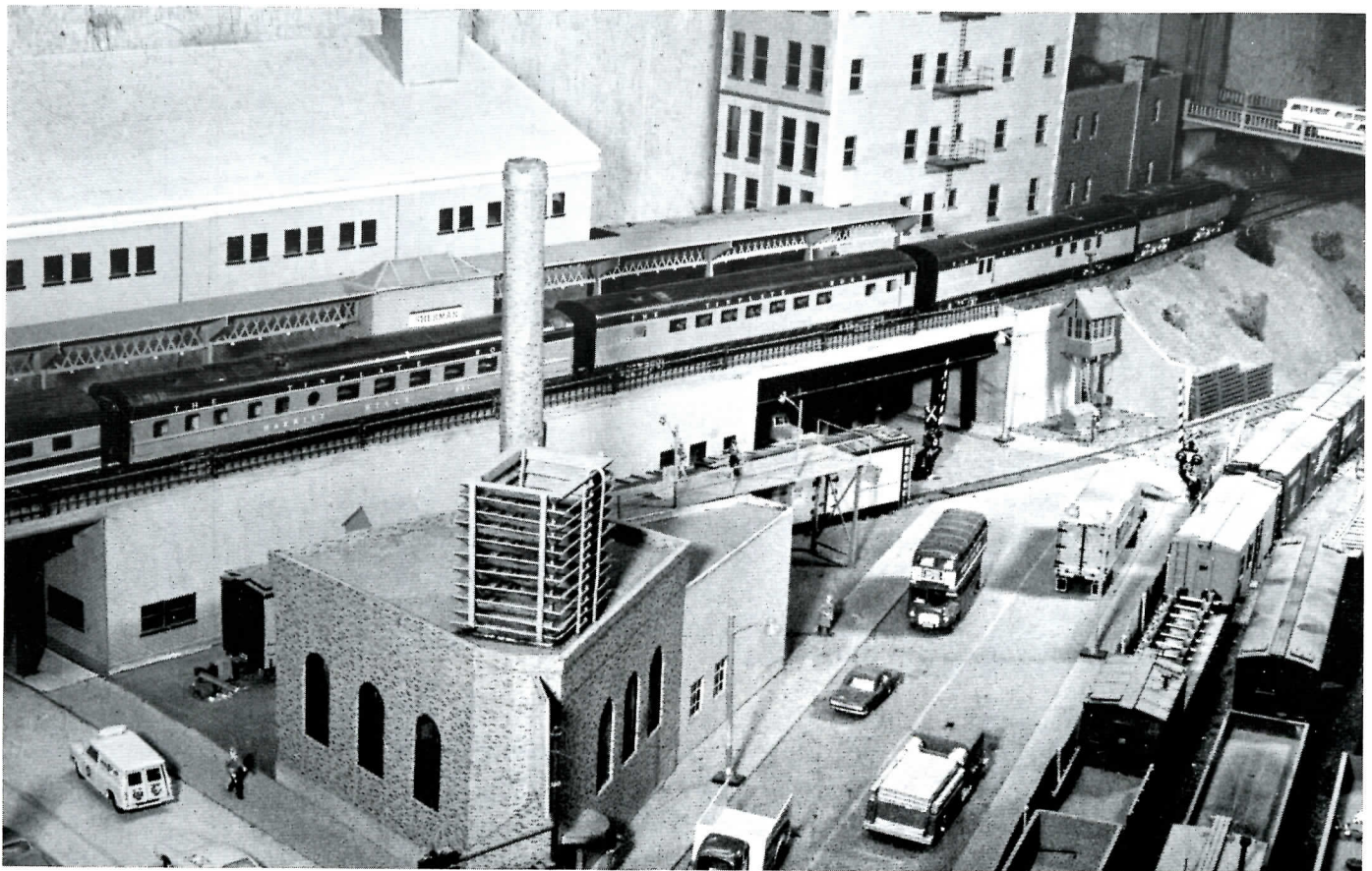
Flyer locomotives and rolling stock even while adding new scale-model cars. Today, the only things remaining of the old tinplate days are the .172 rail, the hirail wheels, some of the locomotives, and the railroad's name — "The Tinplate Road."

Ernie has evolved into the kind of model railroader who truly models railroads. He rarely operates his layout any more, preferring instead to build rolling stock models of particular prototypes and create highly-detailed layout scenes to show them off. Most businesses, industries, and towns on Ernie's layout are named for friends, family members, and IESGAPN club members.

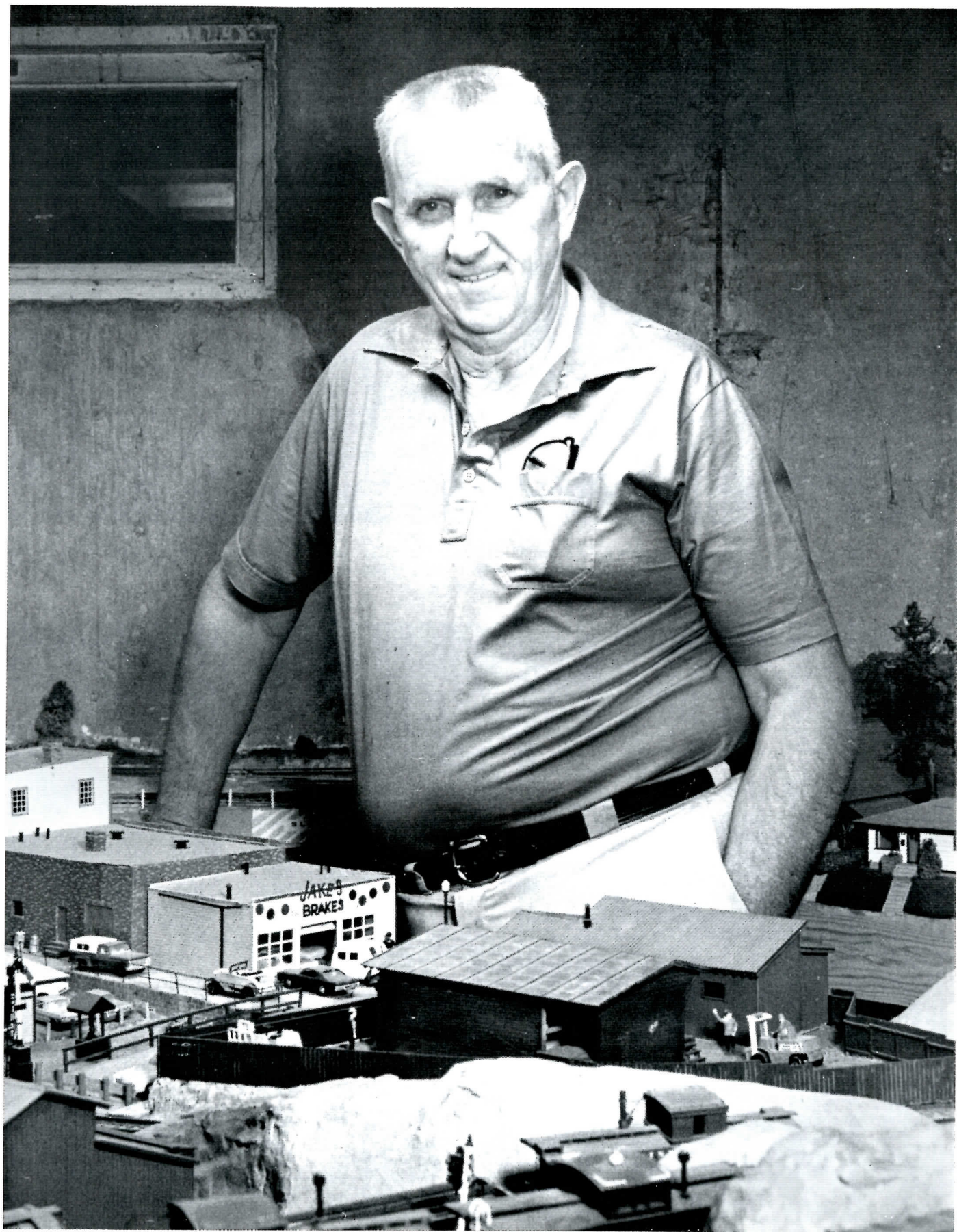
Ernie and his wife Harriet live in Spokane, Washington.



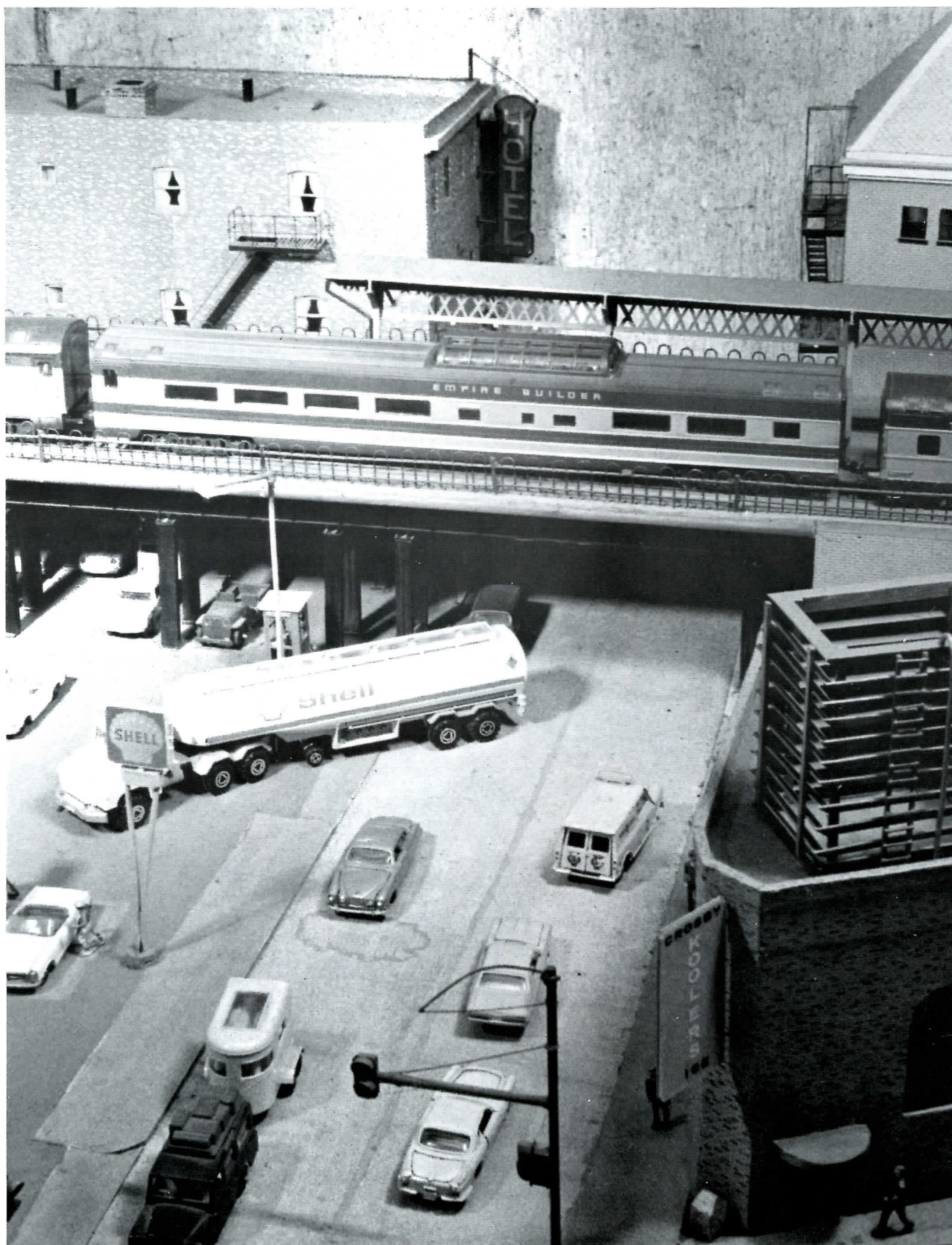
A fork-lift busily loads a gondola at Patten's Privvys. The little industry is simple but effective. Ernie's attention to small but easy things makes the scene seem real. Note the slightly uneven heights of the timber pilings, the irregularly-visible mortar in the cinder-block wall, and the diagonal brace on the gate.



"The Tinsplater," pride of The Tinplate Road, has just pulled into the city of Sherman. Every structure is scratchbuilt. We particularly like the odd geometry of the streets. As usual with Ernie's modeling, attention to detail makes the scene. We like the elevated station's umbrella shed with the little hip roof at its center, the fire escape, and the odd-shaped ice plant. The diesel is AF, the baggage-mail car and coach behind it are from old Chester kits (now JC Models), and the diner "Harriet Hills" is a Midgag kit. All have added detail.

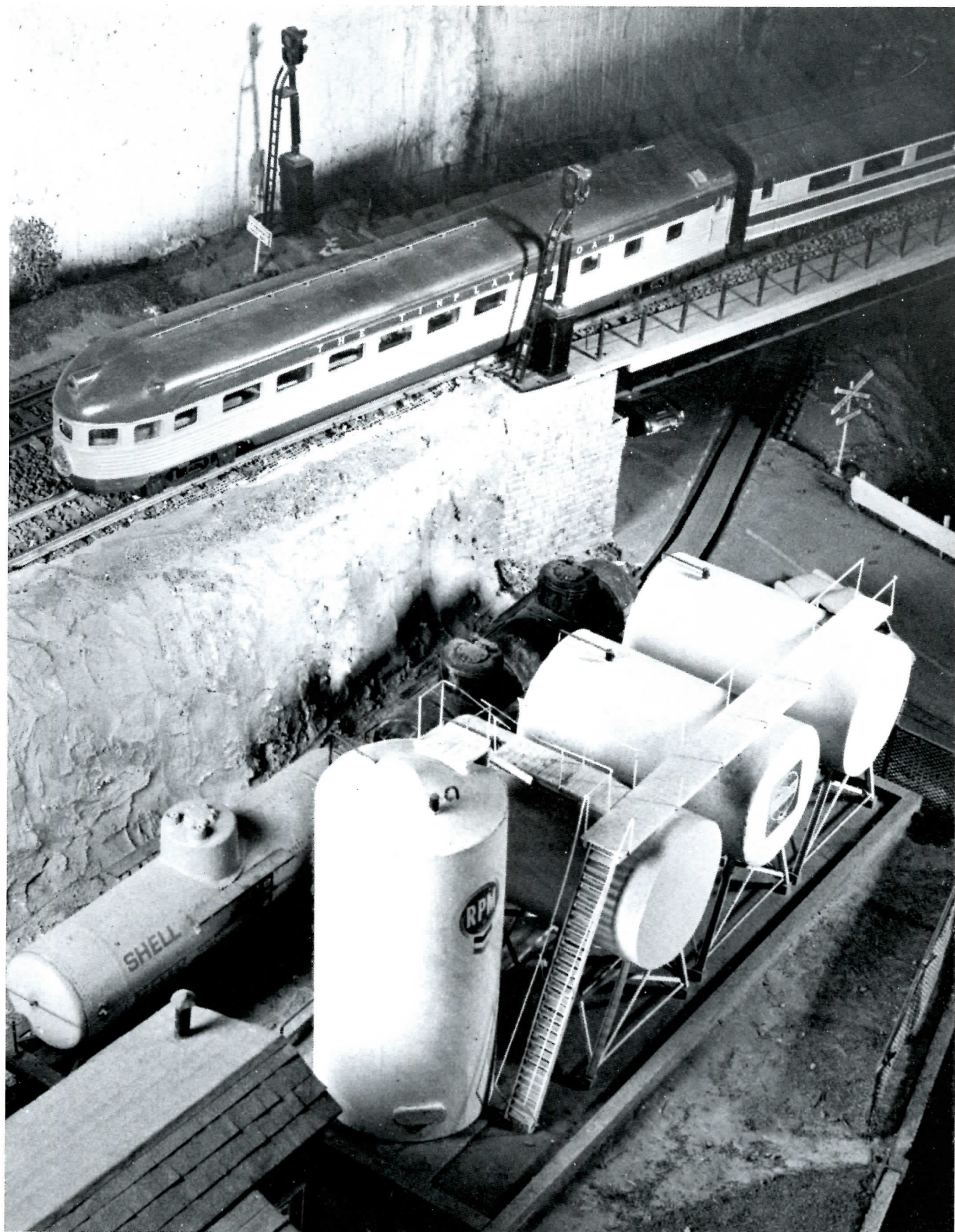


Ernie himself stands in a "pop-up" in "The Tinplate Road." Ernie built every building in this scene from scratch. The house at Ernie's left elbow is a replica of his own house of 35 years. Figures, garbage cans, roof details, vehicles, fencing, etc. all make the scene believable — except for the giant in the middle!

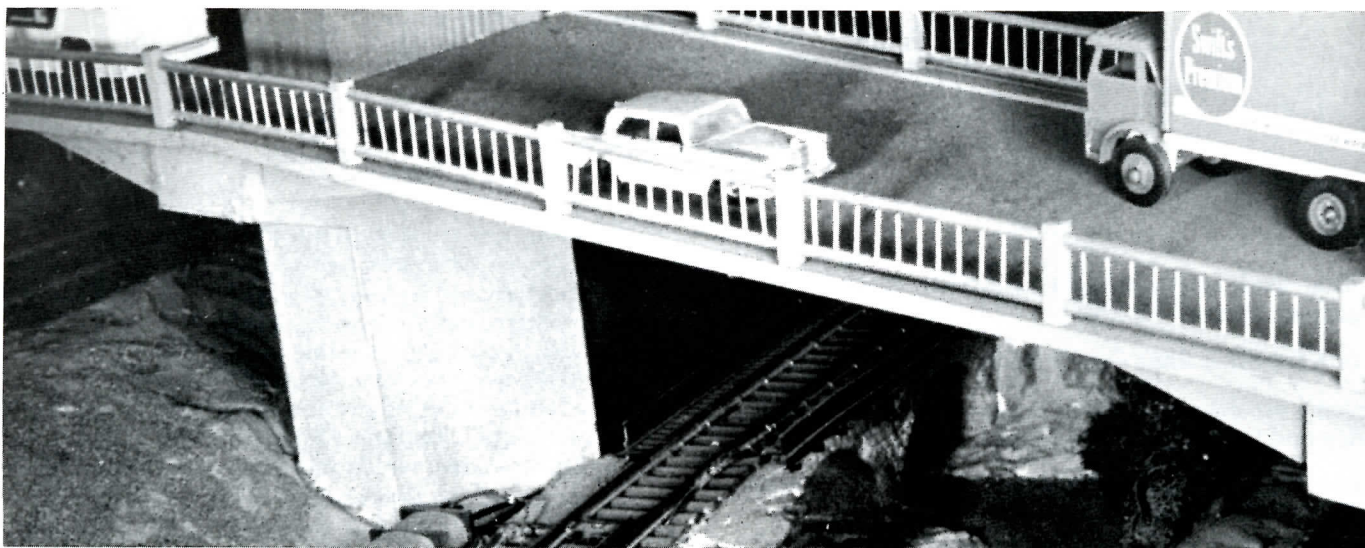


This close-up of the west end of the Sherman Station viaduct reveals extraordinary attention to little things. There are curtains in the windows of the Campbell Hotel behind the train, a downspout at the end of the umbrella shed, life-like stains on the street, and curbs and driveway aprons. The "bobby-pin" fencing on the viaduct is a particularly nice touch. The dome car is an American Models kit.

MORE →



The Tinplate Road has lots of on-line industries. Here's "The Tinplater" racing by the Chevron bulk oil depot. Note the well-worn path around the end of the fence in the lower right. The observation car is a lengthened American Flyer car riding on Nixon PRR trucks.



We couldn't resist this shot of a background highway bridge. Usually only dimly lit, it's there only to fool the viewer's mind about what it disguises — a 2x4 stud wall supporting the house overhead. Each bridge pier is a detailed, painted stud. (You can see the rest of a stud projecting above the roadway surface.)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS . . .

Walter H. Agarand
Curtis G. Barry
David Baule
Gary R. Becker
Earl D. Beegle
David S. Blashill
Robert A. Bozell
Thomas H. Brinker
Dennis F. Call
John Cassidy
Richard J. Charmoli
David Chubirka
Frederick R. Claassen
John R. Clancey
Robert L. Coelln
David Curtis
Edward A. Dahl
Robert L. Dove Sr.
Leslie Double
William East
Robert T. Eckenrode
Steve Footer
Robert A. Gamble Jr.
Martin Giesecke
Daniel Gills
Franklin Goodman Jr.
R. Brian Green
Joseph Greynolds
Charles E. Groff Jr.
Peter J. Hansen
Herbert L. Hayden
W. A. Hiester

Jerome J. Hillier
Richard Hinkel
Galen Eli Hoover
David J. Hutchinson
Jake Jacobsen
Joseph C. Johnson
Gregory J. Kenna
Vincent Kosobiecki
Edward R. Kowalski Jr.
Wally Krocsko
Michael E. Lapp
Wayne R. Lensu
Jan W. Leonard
Gary D. Lewis
Ralph Loveless
David F. Lundgren
Leonard S. MacDonald
Bruce Mack
Arthur James Mahood
Diane Marlowe
Constance McDonald
Jerry Memmer
Donald Meth
Gregory W. Miller
Jack Mitnick
Thomas W. Morton Jr.
Stuart C. Mut Jr.
Dennis J. Najarian
Dr. Gray K. Newman
Dan Olson
John R. Parten
Daniel R. Pestal

Charles Picariello
Richard Poffenberger
Dr. Lee T. Popejoy Jr.
Fred V. Quercetti
James R. Riley Jr.
Mike Rosenberg
Jay Schmielewski
Alfred K. Schoenberg
Tom Schurman
Lenny Sedlak
Donald R. Sentz
John K. Shipe
Ted Silver
Bruce Smith
Herman J. Smith
Irwin Sternberg Jr.
George F. Stevens
James J. Stockfisch
Robert J. Stubblefield
Hans Sturm
Emil Suda
Paul Sugrue
James C. Tanley
John Thomas
John L. Thousand
J. Tilts, DDS
Jack R. Tonkin
Randall A. Toth
Robert J. Tufts
Joseph Urban
James M. Walsh
Carl Weigel

EDITORIAL

A friend of mine approached me a couple of months ago and asked if I'd be interested in chopping the nose off an American Flyer Alco PA and building an Amtrak SDP40P nose in its place. And while I was at it, perhaps I would change the roof line too, just like the Amtrak unit. But he said he wasn't interested in detail changes to match the Amtrak unit, just the general geometry. He wanted to be able to replace the body shell on his AF Alco chassis.

Well, I wasn't thrilled at first. Then I remembered the letter from one of our readers, who responded to my plea for more ideas for tinplate members. This is just the sort of thing he was asking for! So, I located 3/16" scale plans for an FP45 (close enough!) in Mainline Modeler and began to tackle the job. With a little luck, you'll see the results in a future issue.

The August issue will contain the traditional NASG convention coverage, and we will have the final installment of Bob Jackson's NASG History for you too.

Dick Kames

MODEL PHOTOGRAPHY TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Conclusions

by Bob Werre
Photos by the Author

FILM

The film used in the camera can make or break any assignment. First the don'ts:

1. Don't use fast films — with exceptions I'll mention.
2. Don't use color print films — publications generally demand transparencies (slides).
3. Don't go to typical drugstore processors — their standards just aren't high enough.

Regarding films, generally the slower films have finer grain, better sharpness, and, in color, better saturation. My favorites are Kodak Panatomic-X, a new film called Kodak T-Max 100, and an odd-ball fast film called Ilford XP-1 (the exception to the No. 1 "don't"). For color, Kodachrome 40 or 64; Fuji 50 or T64; and Ektachrome 50, 64, or 100 all will work. Of the bunch, Kodachrome is by far the best and most popular film ever made for the 35mm camera.

Film processing should be handled (if you don't do your own) by the best lab available. There is nothing worse than a whole roll of great images with a scratch running through them. Black-and-white film is best done by hand in a professional lab. The newer films such as T-Max 100 require extra care in processing, but the results can be superior. The Ilford XP-1 film is truly an odd-ball — it's fairly fast (ASA 400) and is actually processed in color chemistry called C-41 and the negatives look strange. Examples of XP-1 in print are the black-and-white images published in *Model Railroader's* "50 Years of S Scale." Some of the better one-hour-type labs will process XP-1 and produce black-and-white proof-type prints on color paper — quite convenient!

Processing of the color emulsions should also be handled by a lab with people you can talk to, not a drugstore counter with envelopes. The Ektachromes and Fujichromes are processed in a chemistry called E-6. If you live in a medium-to-large city, processing in a couple of hours is available. Kodachrome, on the other hand, is normally processed only in several major cities having Kodak labs. Other cities have Kodak pick-up stations which offer 24- to 48-hour processing.

Now let's talk about the right film for the job.

Obviously, if you intend to do a black-and-white submission, you need to pick your black-and-white film, do your photography, and have the film processed. Next you will need a contact sheet from which to make your selection. Select your chosen few and have 5x7 or 8x10 glossy (not matte!) prints made, write captions, and submit them along with the contact sheet (in case the picture editor wants other images to choose from), and hope for the best.

If you shoot color film, the publication can run the images either in color or black-and-white as it chooses. The color

film you select must be compatible with the light source. Basically, if you are using floodlights or standard tungsten lights, you will need a type B film or Kodachrome type A with the filter recommended on the film box. However, if fluorescent lights are flooding the room, use a daylight-balanced film with a correction filter (normally a filter called 40M). If you are using large strobes or have large skylights, daylight film is the ticket. You'd best not mix light sources, which might mean blocking windows or turning off the fluorescents. Your color film can only accept one kind of light source — others must be eliminated or modified to match the film.

Submission of the transparencies (slides) is best done by collecting the best images in a "slide page" which holds about 20 slides. Make sure your name and phone number are on each slide. Captions and other information can be included on a typewritten page.

LIGHTING

The last and probably most important requirement for a great photo is the lighting. Face it, you built your layout to operate in the space available (dark basements, low-ceiling attics, through mazes of water pipes and around the furnace, and over the dryer).

One basic rule to remember is that if you look at a scene — your favorite layout corner — your mind and eyes are forgiving. The camera is the opposite — cold and critical. Lighting, if properly done, can help hide the defects and create a mood that will look good in a photograph.

"Effect" lighting can be divided into two major types. "Soft" lighting, for simulating foggy or overcast days, is done with fluorescent lights and floodlights bounced off the ceiling or reflector cards. The other type, "raw" or direct light, follows the pattern of bright sunlight, overhead spotlights, or direct flood lights. Usually the latter will be used with some soft lighting to "fill" the shadows, much like the sky and atmosphere do on a bright day.

Now, if you're striving to light your entire layout room, overhead fluorescent tubes and/or a couple of floods bounced off the white ceiling or wall are probably called for. On the other hand, if you're trying to show a close-up of your roundhouse crew knocking off at 5:00 pm, you might want a very low direct light to indicate a "five o'clock shadow."

Some problems to watch out for and solve are:

1. Open-beam ceilings. Here, white card sheet or foam core can be tacked to act as bounce sources.
2. Double shadows. Every time you add a light source, you add a potential shadow. Because we are trying to imitate the sun, we must try to have only one direct shadow or, with bounced light, a very soft additional

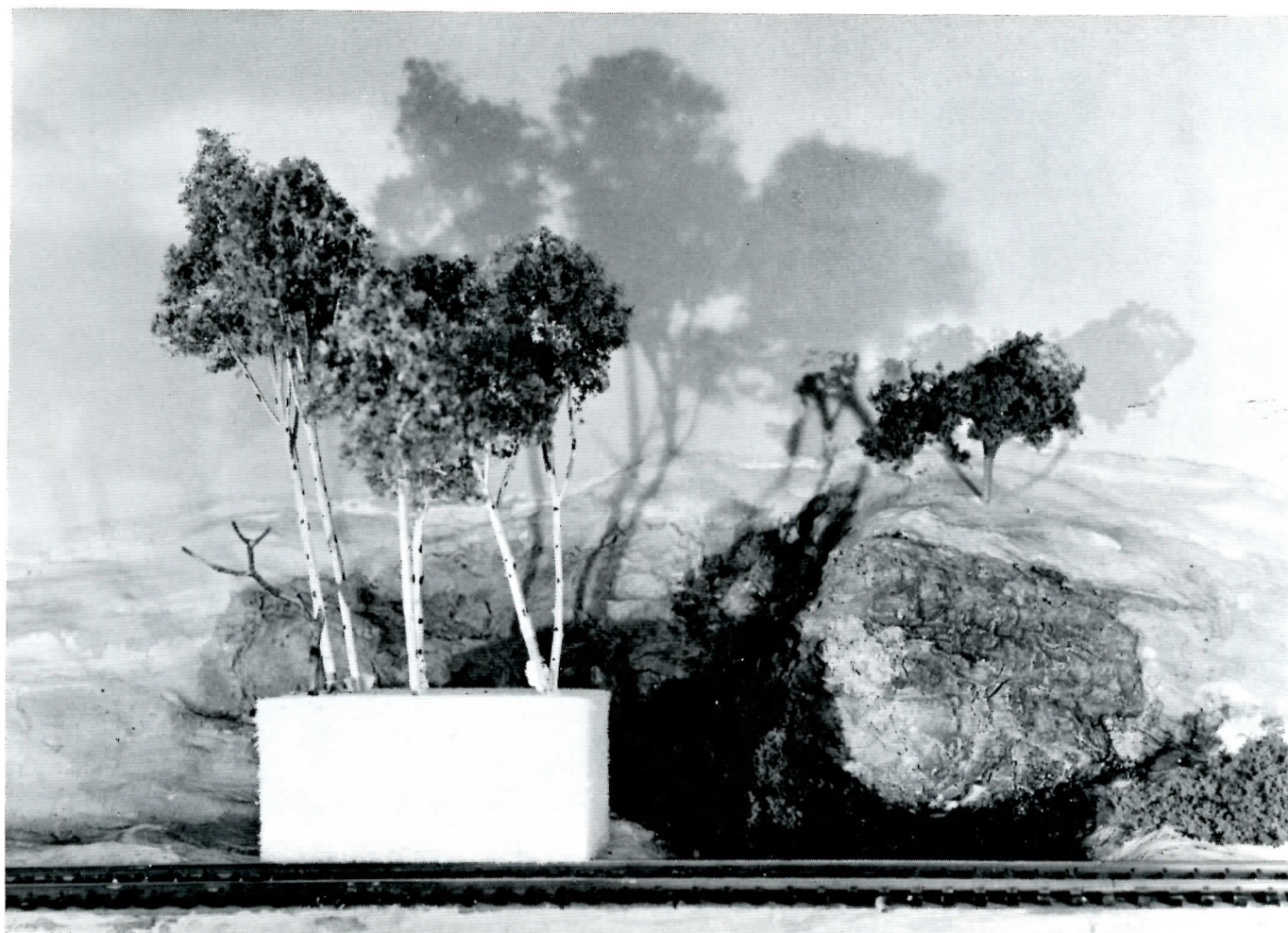


Fig. 1. Improper lighting can throw shadows in unwanted places, in this case the “sky” — a big no-no.

shadow. Objects near the background (Fig. 1) can be extremely troublesome. You must not have a building or a tree casting shadows on the sky!

3. Hot lights. Cardboard, foam core, carpet, and paints will burn! That favorite plastic boxcar will melt! Don’t get too carried away — have someone keep an eye on the lights.

A bare bulb suspended near the ceiling, out of the lens view, simulates a good bright daytime light source (Figs. 4 and 5). A sturdy 1x2 or electrical conduit will serve as a temporary boom. Side lighting and — in some cases — backlighting make for the best mood lighting. Highlights and texture are very important when imitating real life.

SETUP

Let me talk you through a simple setup.

The Scene

First, pick an interesting scene on your pike. Maybe your train crosses an intricate trestle or runs down a curved cut with a tall stand of timber at the edges. Or maybe one of “June’s Small World” people and you have just stepped outside the Revell bakery as the train enters the yard. Across the tracks is a weed-grown, much-weathered Lehigh Valley Models freight station with crates, boxes,

and a few workers. Next to that is a rusty siding (code .083 for sure) serving a furniture warehouse (probably a Heljan brewery with lots of soot and pigeon droppings). As soon as the caboose clears the frog, an S-2 switcher will pull out with an old weathered outside-braced boxcar . . . In other words, set a scene, and decorate it as well as you can.

The Camera Position

Let’s place the camera and its support to best cover the scene. In most scenes, we must create a “hero” (center of attention) for the shot, with the rest of the scene serving as atmosphere. Crop the scene to eliminate non-railroad items — wooden paneling, those water pipes, outlets, and any foreground table-top that still has that “plywood” look. You might need to raise the camera angle, lower the camera, do your scene vertically, or pick a better scene. If you can’t eliminate the bad background, consider a portable sky background. You can even use black fabric.

Now position your “hero” and further decorate your set. Don’t get too junky, just give it a realistic feeling. Aim the lens at the hero. Next, twist the focus ring to make the foreground sharp, and then to make the background sharp. Notice your footage indicator and the f-stop you need to carry the depth of field. (Your camera’s instruction manual can help here.) If you can’t get the entire scene in focus, you can try one or more of the following tactics:

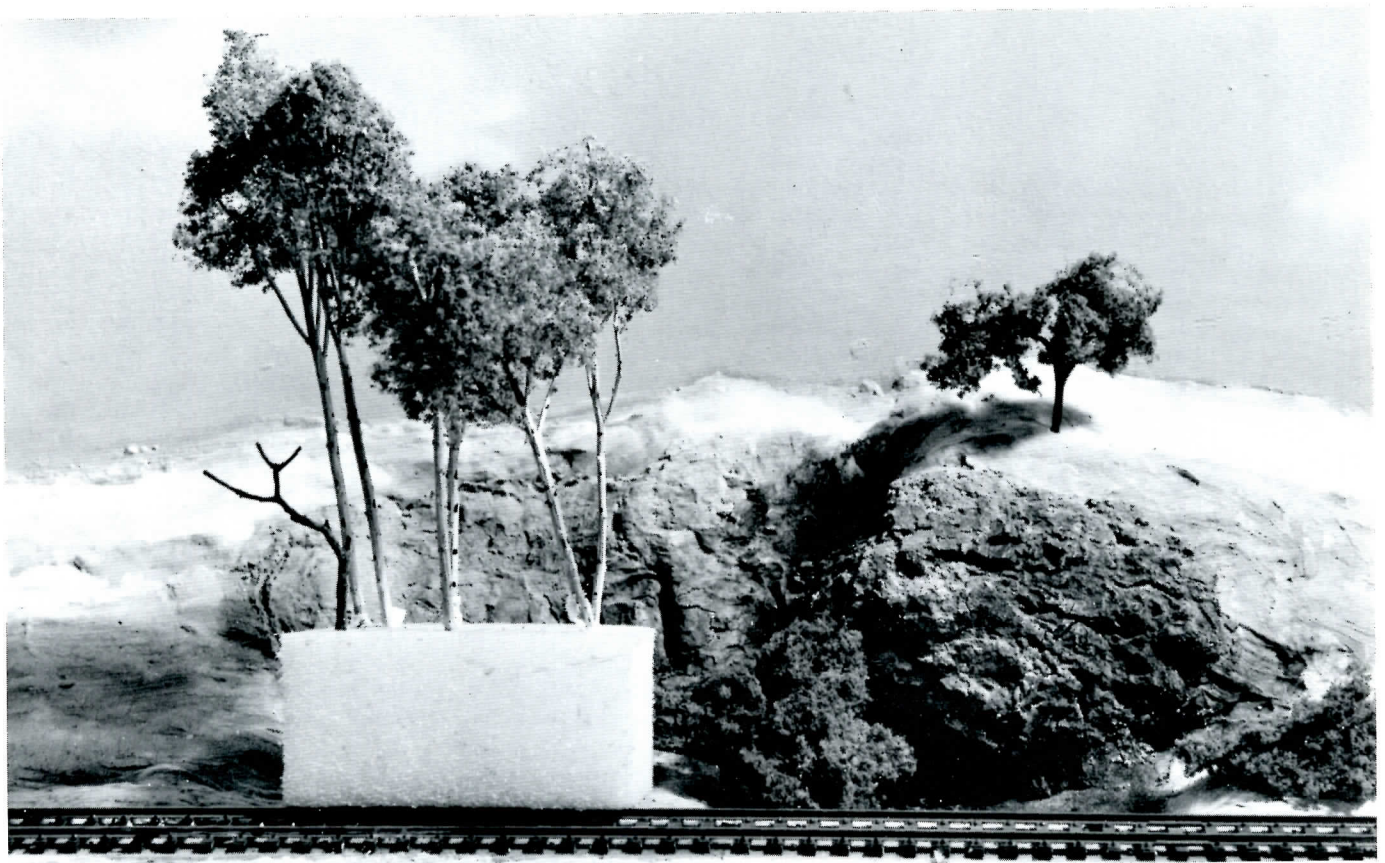


Fig. 2. In this improved scene, overhead light (near noon) throws shadows downward. Wall shadows are gone, and the textures on the trees and rock outcropping are looking good.

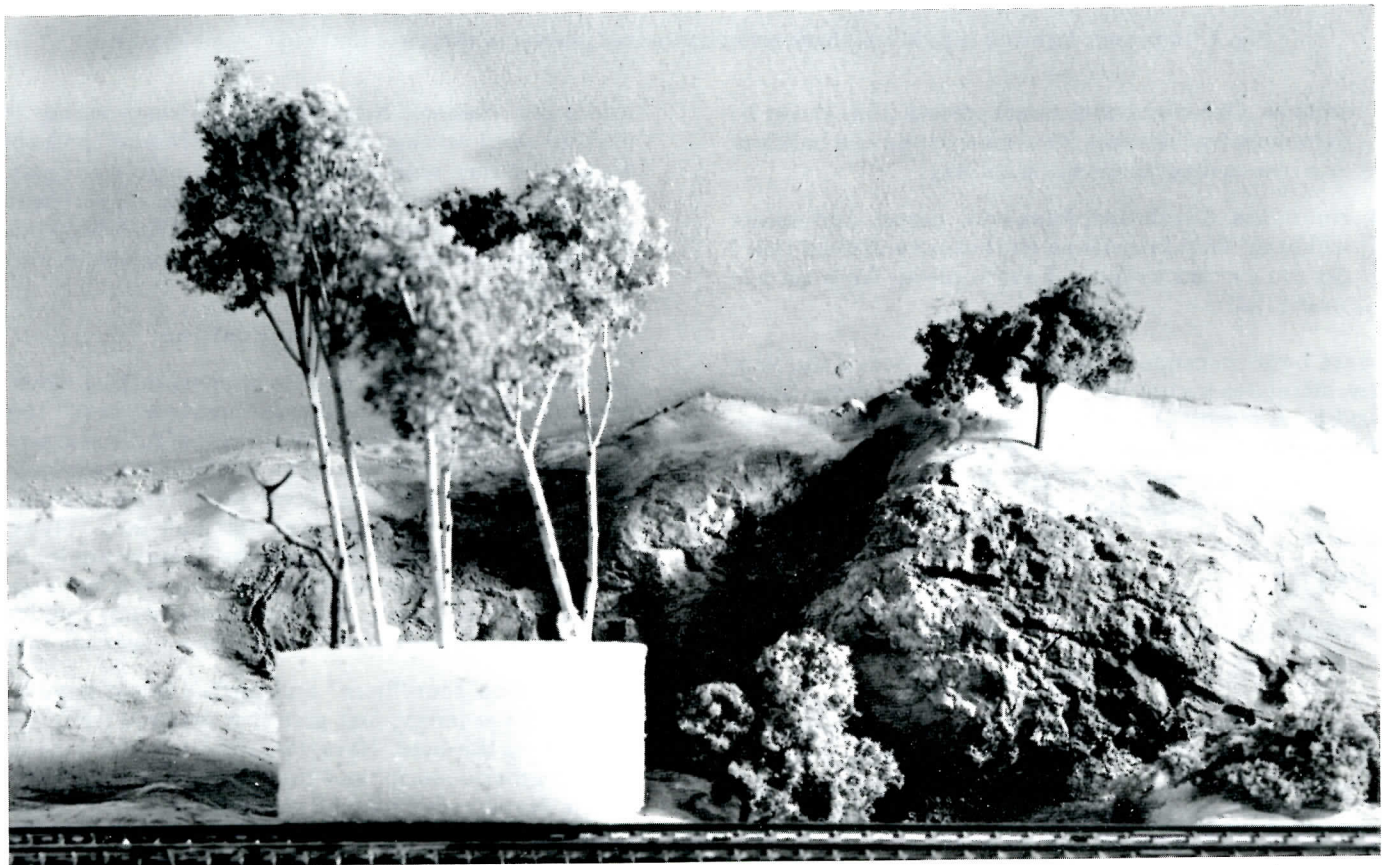


Fig. 3. We've improved a bit on Fig. 2. The direct light has been lowered to about 4 o'clock. This further improves the texture of the rocks, and adds highlights to the trees for a better 3-D effect.



Fig. 4. This close-up shows lighting that resembles daylight very closely. It's also beneficial when trying to light a moderately large set (say within a six-foot circle) if the bulb is placed near the ceiling. White ceilings and reflector cards add fill to "open up" the shadows.



Fig. 5. This view of the setup for Fig. 4 shows the positioning of the bare bulb. (Actually, the light has been positioned unacceptably low just to be visible in this shot. It should be placed as high as possible, to simulate the sun.) Be certain to shield the lens from any direct light path, as it will cause lens flare, quite apparent in this photo.

1. Back the camera off a bit.
2. Move your hero back a bit and crop off the foreground.
3. Switch to a wider lens (35 mm instead of 50mm), as they have greater depth of field.
4. Allow some part of the scene to be out of focus — this can be very effective in making your hero stand out in the scene.

The Lighting

Now let's try to light the scene. Usually, if the scene is small, I try to "hard-light" it to create distant shadows similar to those you see on bright days. Generally speaking, your hero should be lit with this light. Next you will probably have to add a "fill" light to "open" the shadows a bit. This happens in real life with clouds, smog, and light-colored earth adding the fill. I usually create my fill by bouncing a second light into a reflector source such as a white ceiling or 30x40 white card stock (see Figs. 6 and 7).

The Film and the Shoot

Now that the scene containing your hero has been composed, decorated, and lit, let's shoot some film. Let's try black-and-white first — probably T-Max 100. Set your camera's meter or hand-held meter (better) for the proper film speed (ASA/ISO 100 for this film). Remember that your depth-of-field limitations probably put you at $f/16$ or $f/22$, so with floods you have exposure times that run around four seconds or so. Now we look at our subject and see that we have lots of dark subject matter — black engines, dark buildings, dark foliage. We need to realize that these objects absorb light and reflect very little back to the film. We then do a "bracket" of exposures — perhaps starting at about 3 seconds, then 5 seconds, then perhaps one in the 8-to-10 second range. This assures us that we'll get a good exposure among the several shots. If the scene contains a KCS or Soo Line off-white diesel next to fields of golden wheat at high noon, we might under-expose a bit — say 1 to 2 seconds, then 4 seconds, then probably 6 seconds maximum. These exposure variations will give your lab the best choice to work from.

You will need a fair amount of practice and practical experience, so use the rest of the roll of film to try different lighting and different compositions. Fill that roll with four or five variations and keep notes. Next, get the roll processed, and have a contact sheet made. You might want to order an enlarged contact sheet. Seeing the images side by side will help you compare results, and the larger size helps with the small detail.

Now for the acid test. Look at photos that have been published by the "biggies" and do an honest evaluation. You might discover some pretty fair results, or you might decide that your layout isn't quite ready for the critical eye of the camera. Don't give up — this is a great benefit. Use the photos as study material to improve your layout. You will find that if you can please the eye of the camera, you will have improved your layout immensely. Then get the color film out and do a feature on your layout — Railroaders all over the country want to see what you've done!

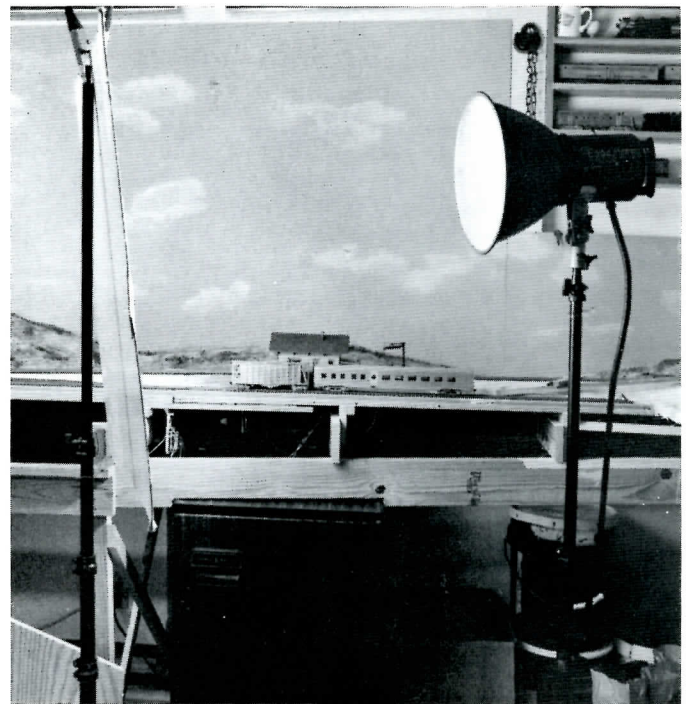


Fig. 6. This setup shows an even, soft lighting that can be created by "bouncing" the light off a large piece of card stock. A second light bounced off the ceiling would complete the lighting.



Fig. 7. Here we use direct "2 pm bright sun" (left light) and bounced fill (right) near the camera.

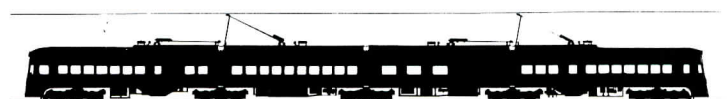
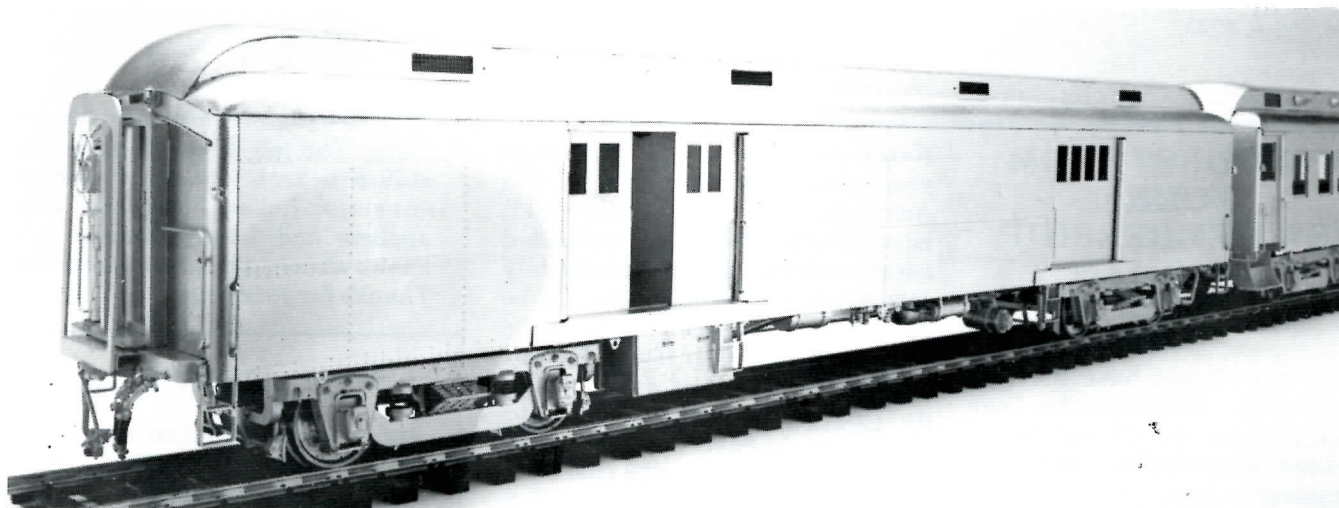




Fig. 8. Here's the finished view as seen by the camera in Fig. 7.

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MANUFACTURER NEWS

The Central Jersey S Scalpers (c/o Mike Cunningham, 2 Roosevelt Ave., Cranford, NJ 07016) have asked us to help scotch two rumors which have been hurting their American Models cabooses sales. The first rumor is that the CJSS has pulled out of the project and the cabooses will not be done. **This is false.** The second rumor is that there's no hurry because American Models will do the caboose anyway. **This is also false.** The deadline for receiving orders for 500 cabooses is still June 15th, and as of April 27th only 120 orders are in hand. If the CJSS does not make its quota, there will be no cabooses from them and no cabooses from American Models. If the quota is met, then the cabooses will be made and delivered.

See "Manufacturer News" in the last DISPATCH for road name availability and ordering details.

We received an interesting letter from Chuck Burns, who owns Miniature Locomotive & Car Shop, Rte. 1, Box 284, Copperas Cove, TX 76522. We quote:

"I have been building small steam locos in O and S scales for a little over two years, and am doing pretty well for a one-person operation. I am now doing a USRA 0-6-0 in S scale. These are all-brass except for domes, boiler front, and cylinders, which are soft-metal castings. The detail parts are Omnicon and S Scale Loco & Supply. The tender is an S Scale Loco & Supply kit. Each has a can motor and an NWSL gearbox. These are built almost the same way as any imported brass loco. They are test run for a half hour or more as needed, so they run like they should. I usually build one at a time, but in this case I am doing 7 at once.

"The USRA 0-6-0s are offered factory-painted (unlettered) ready-to-run with Kadee couplers and constant headlight lighting. I sell to whoever wants one. Price: \$225.

"I also have a PRR A-3 0-4-0T for \$180. Future plans include a PRR A-50-4-0 in two months and a PRR B-8a 0-6-0T saddle-tanker in five months."

Chuck has promised us a photo, which we will print if possible. You might want to write him or give him a call at (817) 547-3932 for more information.

The National Association of S Gaugers announces that their 1989 Lionel/AF MKT tank car is a sell-out. There are no more available, so please don't send in any more orders. And for you lucky ones, thank you very much for supporting the project and the NASG.

The Patch Corporation, our most recently acquired advertiser, is bankrupt and out of business. We talked to Chuck Weiser, the owner. He has made arrangements for River Raisin to honor the reservation deposits he took in for the PRR H-30/H-32 hopper cars. The NYC L-3a/L-4a Mohawk project reverts to G&W.

It's not fun for anyone to go through this sort of thing. Chuck has our best wishes for a speedy financial recovery.

River Raisin Models (6160 Upper Straits Blvd., West Bloomfield, MI 48033) was caught by surprise by Patch Corporation's bankruptcy, as Patch had contracted to underwrite a portion of the River Raisin's Pennsy covered hopper project. Not exactly good news. However, River Raisin is continuing with the project; the cars should be in their hands for you to purchase by the time you read this. Consequently, they will have a large inventory of cars to sell on their own.

So, if you had contemplated purchasing any of the PRR H-30/H30a/H32 covered hopper cars from Patch, please contact River Raisin instead. The H-30/H-30a cars are \$104 each, the H-32s are \$110.

A REQUEST FROM YOUR NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Don DeWitt

By now you should have the 1989 Membership Booklet. As you probably know, the AF car project has been a fantastic success in increasing our membership. Consequently, we have many more members today than we had two months ago when I put the booklet together. We now have over 900 members, and keeping track of everyone is becoming a tremendous task for one person.

Now is the time for 1990 renewal. If you haven't renewed through the American Flyer order form, then I'll be sending you a renewal notice and question sheet. You'll have until July 15th to renew. At that time I'll be generating the mailing labels for the August DISPATCH. If you haven't renewed by that time, there will be no DISPATCH arriving at your house in August. Please renew promptly; make your \$17 check out to the NASG, Inc., and not Don DeWitt.

If anyone, or better yet, any club, is interested in helping with the renewal mailings, please let me know. I need to send out about 800 renewal notices, and later 900 membership

cards. The job descriptions include stamp lickens, envelope stuffers, envelope lickens, mailing label appliers and finally someone who knows where the post office is located. Thanks for your help.

IN MEMORIAM

Jim Benson came to the end of life's journey on April 22, 1989, after a brief illness. Jim was a hi-rail operator with a basement layout, lived in the Pittsburgh suburb of West Mifflin, and was active in the local group. His untimely passing came as a shock. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

President Edward M. Loizeau
2221 Via Maderos
Los Altos, CA 94022

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

Central Vice President Thomas G. Hawley
2311 Strathmore
Lansing, MI 48910

Executive Vice President Michael R. Ferraro
280 Gordon Road
Matawan, NJ 07747

Treasurer Don Thompson
2 Roberts Road
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Western Vice President Lee M. Johnson
2472 Lariat Lane
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Eastern Vice President Douglas G. Peck
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BEACH BOTTOM RAILWAY

T. D. KERNS, Supt. WAYNESBURG, PA.



Your editor has mixed feelings about buying some of the newer imported brass locomotives. Reason: They would make his older-vintage equipment of the same type look less than acceptable by contrast. Here is one of those vintage locos — a Miller Alco S-4 switcher. Its old axle-mounted motors have been replaced with a custom drive designed and built by Gary Jordan. All wheels are powered; each truck contains a 16 mm Sagami double-shaft motor with integral gear heads plus auxiliary gearing. All-wheel pickup plus a capacitor wired across the motor leads filters out TV interference. Performance ranges from a barely-perceptible crawl to a top speed of about 25 mph. No. 8531 shunts cuts of 16 or more cars in Albany Yard, built on a one-percent grade. Rail is code .083.

WANTED!!!

Editor for NASG DISPATCH. Must have general railroad knowledge and particular familiarity with S gauge. Writing, grammar, and spelling skills required. Access to computer with word-processing software highly desirable. Contact:

Michael R. Ferraro
280 Gordon Rd.
Matawan, NJ 07747

THE AMERICAN FLYER ENTHUSIAST

by Ted Larson

Screw Holes Stripped? Sideframes Broken? Try This.

I've been using "Plastic Metal" from Bondo in a tube for repairing my AF locomotive shells. I had several stripped and broken screw posts on my original 1957 Atlantic shell. I filled the stripped holes with "Plastic Metal," inserted the screws, and allowed it to set. The screws come out and go back in readily.

I had tried a number of glues to repair screw posts that were split in half. "Plastic Metal" was the first to work.

I also used it to repair a freight car sideframe. A small metal chunk had broken out. I filled it with "Plastic Metal," sanded it, and it looks great.

The next time you have broken screw posts or chipped metal or plastic parts, try Bondo "Plastic Metal."

LETTERS...

Editor:

I recently became a member of NASG and [saw in the Business Meeting Minutes a paragraph] referring to the Burlington Roundhouse. Mention was made that the CNYSGA Club had ordered the sandblasting unit, paid for it, and had received nothing.

I had a similar experience within the past year and I think I can offer a potential...solution. After I had placed my order and paid in advance, I was unable to receive any contact or communication with the Burlington Roundhouse. Incidentally, Mr. Randy Daniel is the apparent owner of the business. Through our corporate attorneys, I was advised to contact the Department of Justice, Consumer Protection Division of the State of Iowa. I did so and with their help I was able to have my order completed and received a refund for the amount of the order they did not provide.

I would strongly urge anyone having a problem with the Burlington Roundhouse to contact the following:

Robert R. Reiber
Department of Justice
Consumer Protection Division
Hoover Building
Des Moines, IA 50319

Telephone (515) 281-5926

If you or anyone else has any questions, feel free to call me at my office. It took a year to get satisfaction, but with the help of the Consumer Protection Division, I did get satisfaction.

I hope you'll be able to pass this on to [anyone] who might be interested. Again, I'd be happy to discuss this with anyone if they wish to call me. Apparently, I was not the only one having problems, according to Mr. Reiber.

Warner H. Gustavson, M.D.
home: (715) 848-0165
office: (715) 842-6530

Editor:

The April "President's Message" asked why S hasn't flowered the way two newer scales, N and G, have. The answer seems obvious to me. Both N and G were introduced to America through massive, sustained publicity campaigns backed by committed firms who made strategic marketing decisions to break new ground.

We all laughed at N in the early 1960s when it was introduced (then as OOO) by two substantial European firms. However, both operation-oriented and space-cramped modelers saw its potential for them. Apparently sensing this, the fledgling ConCor company took the plunge into serious American-prototype N scale and displaced N's European originators from the American scene.

Then, in the 1980s, the large-scale narrow-gauge LGB line offered by European toy giant Lehmann began to catch on with American tinplaters who yearned for the durability, bulk, and reliability of American toy trains of an earlier era. LGB runs well and runs forever, and is highly detailed. So, when LGB American-prototype equipment started appearing, that's all that was needed to stimulate many serious model railroaders who wanted narrow-gauge equipment with "heft."

In addition to those already ripe for these new scales, both N and G were fortunate to have new demographic markets to which to appeal — young, upwardly-mobile professionals who live in newer, smaller urban townhouses; and successful professionals who can afford the very-large suburban three-car-garage homes currently in fashion among leading architects and builders. By contrast, the percentage of "conventional" homes being built is diminishing because most of the money to be made today in the home-construction industry is in high-density and high-priced housing. These new trends favor both the very large and the very small. S, by contrast, is middle-sized and thus has its largest potential appeal to owners of "conventional" homes.

Is S therefore doomed? No, I don't think so. The plurality of Americans still live in "conventional" homes — both existing and new — which continue to sell well.

So what do we need that we haven't got? We need to reduce our marketing to each other and start marketing — seriously — to everyone else. We need to think like promoters. The NASG should put together some comprehensive PR with demographic studies, market analysis, and economic projections, and go "sell" the scale to a major firm.

We have a long way to go. In 1961 I was one of only three who responded to a ConCor request for interest in products in minority scales. In 1987, Pecos River folded its S scale tent for lack of expressed interest. We don't find out about such opportunities because we insulate ourselves from the non-S press — and therefore don't see the occasional feelers aimed at us from the outside.

Some of us claim that non-S manufacturers have to learn how to market to us. What an arrogant position for such a small handful of modelers to take! We need large numbers of new S modelers to generate and sustain success. These new faces will not come from "us," but from "them." I challenge the NASG to rise to this opportunity!

Dennis R. Karchar

Editor:

Here's some "new products" news: ERTL has a new John Deere historical tractor set for \$9. Three of

the tractors are from the '50s and the fourth is from much earlier. Very nicely detailed; better than the previous series. Get them from your local John Deere dealer.

Does anybody have a good recommendation for gluing the wonderful brass roofwalks we now have to American Models cars? I'm getting good results gluing plastic-to-plastic with 3M general-purpose glue (I have nothing better), but the metal eludes me. Even "Crazy Glue" lets loose.

Ted Larson

Editor:

Thanks for all your good work on the magazine. A few issues back you were asking for help in editing it. I can volunteer. In S gauge I'm strictly Flyer but my grammar, syntax, spelling and style are very good and my overall railroad knowledge is high. Don't I remember you from [the Puget Sound Railway Historical Association at] Snoqualmie nearly 30 years ago?

Art Hamilton

[Thanks, Art. I've forwarded your postcard to Mike Ferraro to give to the next editor, whoever that might be. And yes, you do remember me. Small world. — Ed.]

Editor:

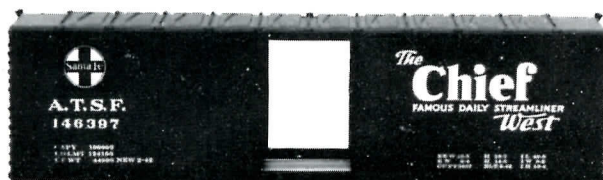
I enjoyed Mr. Kindraka's article on the Pennsy's H30 hoppers in the April DISPATCH. It is informative and very timely, and I hope there will be more articles like this.

I would like to paint one of my hoppers for the Norfolk and Western if I can get decals or dry-transfer lettering. An article on building the N&W HC-1 hopper car was published in the Nov. 1954 Railroad Model Craftsman, and a photo on page 23 of that issue shows the lettering. The car was painted light grey with black trucks. Mr. Kindraka's article says the N&W HC-1 cars were numbered 70210 through 70269. That is correct for when they were built, but I think there must have been a renumbering later. An April 1956 equipment register shows the 60 cars numbered 70160 through 70219.

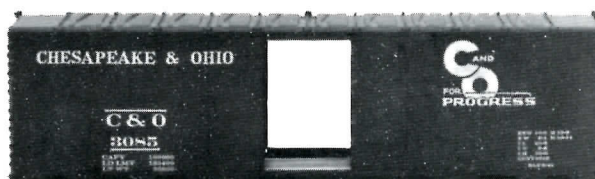
Also, there are plans and photos of the Pennsy H32-class hoppers in the Feb. 1968 Railroad Model Craftsman.

C. J. Brummond

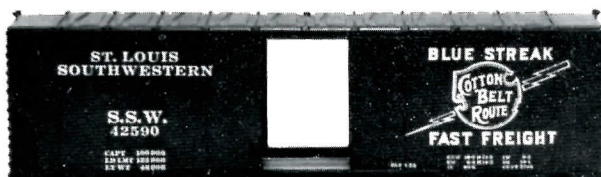
OLD CARS WITH NEW FACES



#115 IN TWO NUMBERS



#119 IN TWO NUMBERS



#103 IN TWO NUMBERS



#114 IN FOUR NUMBERS

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, #117 SP, #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. Available in hi-rail or scale.

CODE .148 FLEXTRACK

Now in stock and shipping, \$6.49 per three-foot section. Rail is weathered and looks fantastic. Nothing like it has ever been made. It will accommodate AF and American Models hi-rail or scale products. Weathered rail joiners also available, 36 in a pack for \$1.80.

SECTIONAL TRACK AND TURNOUTS

We expect to have our new .148 sectional track (also with weathered rail) in stock in about a month. Our turnout will have an approximate radius of 27 inches (AF is 20 inches). We are working out the final engineering details now and expect to make shipment in late July or August.

AC HI-RAIL LOCOMOTIVES

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