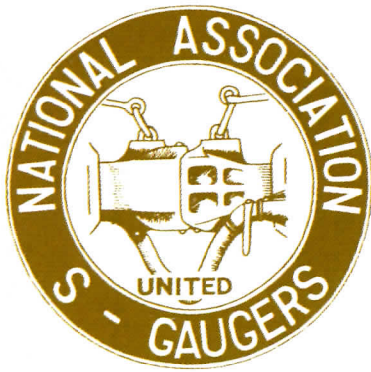




August 1991

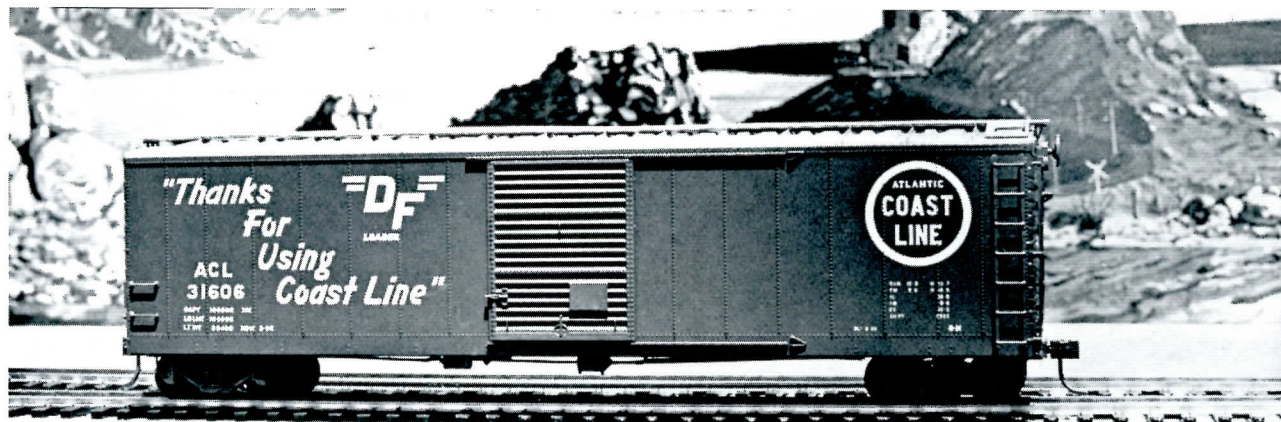
Vol. XIV No. 4

DISPATCH



New Mexico Northern

50 FT. BOXCARS



Don't miss 'em, roadnames will not be rerun. (Downs Hi-Rail trucks, assembled, are available in place of scale on direct orders only. Same price as scale kits. Specify Bettendorf or Roller Bearing, includes Downs dummy coupler. AF compatible \$22.00 each, please include \$2.00 shipping on orders under \$100.

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NASG DISPATCH

Official Publication of the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
of S GAUGERS

The NASG **DISPATCH** welcomes art, photographs, letters, articles and other S-scale-related materials contributed by the membership. Send all such materials to the editor:

Robert W. Jackson
2925 Glenmere Court
Springfield, IL 62704

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The Membership Secretary
NASG, Inc.
c/o John W. Metzger
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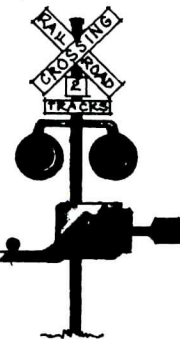
COVER

A scene from Chuck Thurman's SN3 New Mexico Northern. It features some very special scenery. Watch for the full story in December 1991. *Photo by Chuck Thurman.*

ORDER BOARD

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AUGUST 1991



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THE DEADLINES for articles are the 15th of February, April, June, August, October and December for issues dated April, June, August, October, December, February, respectively.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The message this issue will be brief and to the point. It is contained in a four letter word, but I don't mean gutter language. The word is "HELP". It seems that people sometimes find it hard to understand the nature of a voluntary organization such as the NASG. For an organization such ours, now with more than 1200 members, to exist and function well it must receive the gift of free help from many of its members. I would have to say that the people now doing the work of the NASG have been great contributors, a number of them for many years. The problem is that the NASG needs more of you volunteering the gift of your help. At this time, I need to identify help in the following areas:

1. **STANDARDS CHAIRMAN.** At the present time, there is no chairman in this post. I would like to have a technical person that could answer standards questions and perhaps to develop additional NASG check gauges. For example, a check gauge for modules to keep the two main lines the correct distance apart. Another useful gauge would be a three point gauge and possibly an AF check gauge for track and couplers. If there is such an individual out there who will volunteer for this position, the NASG would greatly benefit from your help.

2. **PROMOTIONS CHAIRMAN.** John Craft is chairman of this committee but he is also the only member of it. He needs help in getting out the promotional packets and in other promotional work. If you are interested in promoting S gauge give John a call at (301) 879-6362. He could sure use you.

3. **CLEARINGHOUSE CHAIRMAN.** David Bailey should have an assistant to help him out at the annual convention; he could use a group of assistants to work at local/regional shows that occur in their areas such as "S" Spree and "S" Fest. To volunteer your help call Dave at (215) 395 0773.

4. **CONVENTION CHAIRMAN.** Dave Held is another committee chairman who needs some volunteers. He needs help in planning for future conventions. He can be reached at (313) 739-2932.

5. **FINANCIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS.** The responsibilities of this committee, since the inception of NASG, Inc, have fallen on the shoulders of the Treasurer. Since our organization has grown substantially, I think that it is necessary to set up a committee which would prepare an annual budget and present it to the BOT at our annual meeting. If you are willing to serve on this committee contact me at (201) 566-4159.

Without a doubt we need more members involved so that we can keep this organization running smoothly. We also need to pay some attention to the problem of burn-out. Those who already give of their time and energy frequently find that they verge on burn-out because of the work load but that there is no one already trained and experienced to take over their jobs.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Ferraro
President

THE EDITOR'S DESK

A REMINDER: Even though membership cards are no longer being routinely mailed upon renewal, you can still get yours by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Don DeWitt, the NASG Database Manager at 37 Snow Drive, Mahwah, NJ 07430. Also be sure to save a copy of the mailing label on your Dispatch it has your membership number printed on it.

I would strongly support Michael's call for help. Periodically, the NASG finds itself short of the necessary volunteers to accomplish all that it sets before itself. This appears to be one of those times and with out enough manpower the goals that the NASG has set won't be met.

With this issue The Dispatch is fully back on track. It has been far more time consuming to get us here than I expected. I will be unable to devote as much time to staying on track as I have put in to this point so I can only hope that it will be enough. Thus, let me repeat my call for some help with Meet an S Gauger. I was disappointed to get no response whatever. I need some relief somewhere. If you are not interested in Meet an S Gauger perhaps you see some other way to assume part of the burden.

Despite the heavy effort it has been enjoyable. I have learned a great deal and met some S gaugers I had not known before. I have also had good fortune in finding some new contributors. You will meet Dan Waskes in this issue. Dan lives in El Paso, Texas, or did until just about now. He expects to transfer to the region around DC very soon so some of you Atlantic seaboard types may get him as a neighbor.

(Continued on Page 25)

NASG CORNER

ELECTION RESULTS

The 1991 election for NASG's Board of Trustees has been completed. In all, 536 ballots were returned of 1124 mailed (48%). Of these, one (1) ballot was mis-marked and eight (8) others had postmarks after the May 15th deadline and therefore could not be counted. The breakdown for the remaining 527 ballots was as follows:

FOR EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT:

Morris "Moe" Berk	504
(Nine (9) different people each received one (1) write-in vote.)	

FOR SECRETARY:

Mark McFrederick	288
Charles Taylor	227
(Five (5) different people each received one (1) write-in vote.)	

FOR EASTERN REGION VP:

Doug Peck	234
George Ricketts	77

FOR CENTRAL REGION VP:

Dave Held	84
Paul Stevens	64
(One (1) person received one (1) write-in vote.)	

FOR WESTERN REGION VP:

Lee Johnson	67
-------------	----

The Election Committee would like to congratulate the winners and say "Thank You" to everyone who participated either by running or voting. The enthusiastic turn out can only serve to make this organization stronger. Those individuals elected will take office at the annual convention, this year in Syracuse, NY. The NASG Board of Trustees will then be as follows:

President:	Mike Ferraro
Executive Vice-President:	Morris "Moe" Berk
Secretary:	Mark McFrederick
Treasurer:	Dave Davis
Eastern Region VP:	Doug Peck
Central Region VP:	Dave Held
Western Region VP:	Lee Johnson

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Kindraka
NASG Convention Chairman
June 1, 1991

INSTALLING ONBOARD COMMAND CONTROL IN S GAUGE

John Long, Jr.

Part III: the American Models FP-7

(We resume this series which was begun in the June/July 1990 issue of The Dispatch. John will present his experience in wiring his layout for command control in Part Five. He is presently experimenting with installing the system in an American Models GP-9 thus he may have a Part Six for us some time in the future. We will also present a technical assessment of some aspects of ONBOARD for S scale since we are in the process of installing it ourselves...Ed.)

In parts I and II we examined how to install the ONBOARD system in an Omnicon powered AF Alco PA-1 and a Rex mogul. We now describe installation of the ONBOARD system in an American Models FP-7. Since this is a cab unit, one's first impression is that this one should be easy. And it is...after you have finished fitting all the parts.

Because American Models keeps their drive system with its tall gear towers above the floor, the apparent vast spaces are pretty much broken up into small slivers of space along the sides and over the drive shafts.

ONBOARD is a fine control system even without the presence of its sound capability. But the

sound capability carried on-board the locomotive is a compelling reason to by this system, thus my first concern was to find a place to put the speaker. Remember that the back of the speaker must be in a closed container to function properly. With all the windows open, the engine's body alone won't serve the purpose. I built a box of brass and cardstock to fit inside the rear of the unit, clearing the obstacles on the floor. This was just large enough to hold the speaker which was pointed toward the rear of the body. I cut the window out of the door on the rear of the body for the sound to escape. Then I tried every which way to fit the two modules into the spaces. Nothing seemed to fit. I remembered reading in MR or RMC about splitting an electronic unit into two parts. I examined the sound unit and asked my son (the electrical engineer) what he thought. Upon carefully splitting the heat-shrink tubing off the unit, we discovered that it is simply two boards joined by several connections, all of which are at one end. Taking great care to avoid damaging anything we bent those connections until we had a module twice its original length but only about half as thick. This thinner unit would fit on top of the motor between it and the body shell. We

wrapped the unit (in its new configuration) with plastic tape and proceeded to the throttle unit.

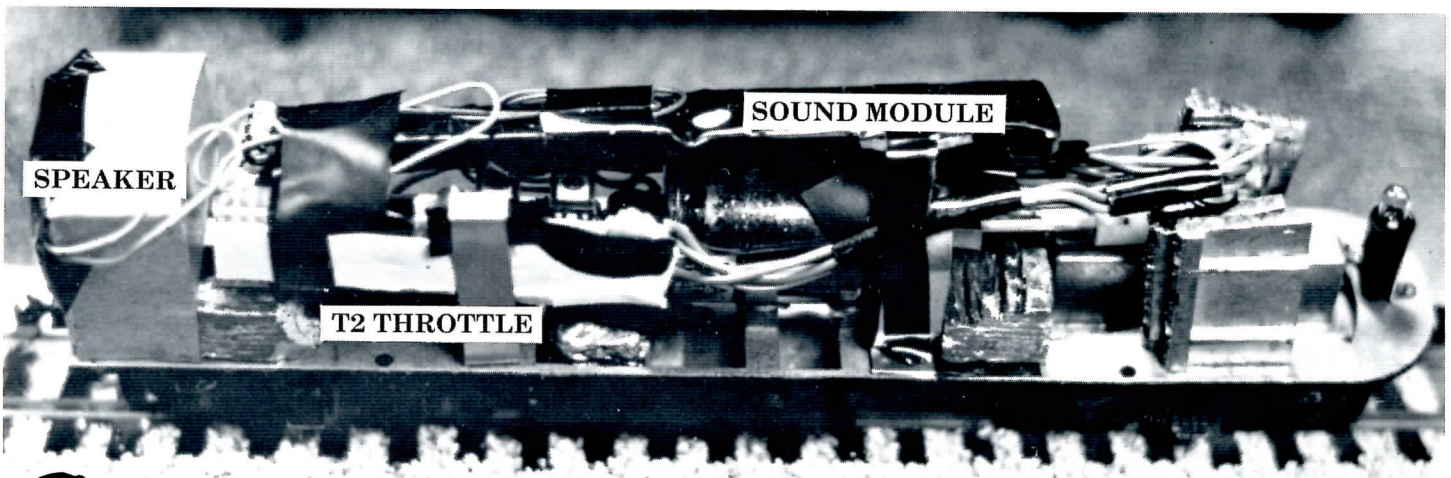
(ONBOARD now has a much smaller sound module which would probably not require these changes...Ed.)

Throttle module, T2, is considerably thicker (taller) at one end than the other. There is room alongside the gear tower for the shorter (thinner) portion and the thicker (taller) part can extend into the space next to the drive shaft. AGAIN, be very careful. You can't have any parts rubbing the drive mechanism. The trucks must be free to swivel. I made a bracket from brass to hold the module in place rather than attaching it to the body shell.

I made a brass bracket to fit around the flywheel. This keeps anything from rubbing and also provides a place to hold things down. Like mortar between bricks, it holds the components apart and together at the same time.

After melting some metal type into weights to fill unused spots, I assembled everything as shown in the picture and wired it as instructed.

NEXT: Part Four, the Omnicon F7 A&B units.



MEET AN S GAUGER

Not all S gaugers can lay claim to driving a Miller race car 133 MPH at the Bonneville, Utah Time Trials. This issue's S gauger not only accomplished this in 1950, but the following year repeated the run in a '34 Ford coupe at 115 MPH. Graham Henry accomplished these feats when his interests shifted from trains to cars after he got his driver's license.

Although Toronto born, at a young age Graham was watching Union Pacific passenger trains, Southern Pacific freight trains, and Pacific Electric trains after the family moved to South Gate in the Los Angeles basin. His dad had a large Lionel layout, thus it followed that Graham's first train set was Lionel. He still operates it at Christmas. Graham became an American Flyer enthusiast after receiving an AF S/O gauge set in 1941.

Automobiles took him away from trains for awhile but following a stint in the Army, Graham returned to trains in a grand way. He bought not only an American Flyer 326 Northern freight set, but also the American Flyer Santa Fe A-B-A passenger set along with 12 dozen sections of straight track--for his dad! As a reversal of the normal "dad buys trains for son", the trains were really for Graham. This resulted in a three track mainline on the floor of the living room, dining room, hallway, and into the bedroom where the trains turned for the return trip. His mother would tolerate this for about four weeks before the railroad would have to be removed. Eventually a portable layout was built using cardboard roadbed.

Graham was a charter member of the East and West Bay S Gauge Model Railroad Club in the San Francisco area. When the club hosted the 1977 NASG Conven-



Graham
Henry

tion, he was the Contest Committee Chairman. After the convention, he attended a meeting of the S scale group which was to become the Bay Area S Scalers. This was the turning point for his move to scale.

Although he started his own layout only 3 years ago, Graham was always helping others with their trains and layouts. He and Barney Daehler completely rewired the S scale portion of the West Bay Model Railroad Club of Menlo Park before the building was moved. As a member of the BASS, he actively helped with the 1985 NASG Convention. He has transported the club's modular layout to NMRA functions and train shows and given many hours of labor to this layout. When BASS member Fred Kahrs' health started to fail, Graham and Barney rewired Fred's S and Sn3 layout in order that Fred could at least enjoy some train operation. Whenever an S gauger, scale or Flyer, needs some assistance, Graham is right there.

Before retirement, Graham worked as a Construction Electrician. For a six year period in the late '70s to late '80s he worked for Southern Pacific as a Maintenance of Way Electrician. Imagine his feelings when he found that at trackside, he had to stop work whenever a

train went by and watch it. This was officially known as rolling the train by, checking for shifting loads or mechanical problems. For Graham, this was called "Heaven".

With retirement came time to make space in the attic of his home in Berkeley for a layout. With the help of BASS members Barney Daehler and Bill Roberts, Graham now has an operable mainline with the yards presently being built. Eventually the layout will include some Southern Pacific Owens Valley narrow gauge. In Graham's words, "there is other narrow gauge besides the ones in Colorado."

He has a high regard for the memory of his mother-in-law whose maiden name was Swayzee and named his S scale railroad the Swayzee Pacific Transportation Company--Attic Division. How many of us would name our model railroads after our mothers-in-law?

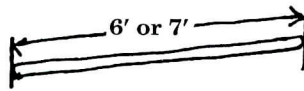
Graham's wife, Jean, has been very supportive of his interests in both the real and model trains. Her support is strongly indicated by the fact that the backyard garden has sprouted a working switch stand, a grade crossing warning sign, and a working grade-crossing wig-wag signal, all full-sized!

---Lee Johnson.

S LORE

SNAKES ALIVE! Details make the difference they say but how often have you considered the wildlife in your model locales? Cows and horses, pigs and chickens often get included. Rats and flies almost never! And how about snakes? It seems doubtful that any of the S scale figure manufacturers will ever offer any of the crawly critters. Well, we have just the technique for you to correct that oversight in your own modeling. Snakes exist everywhere and the technique described works for all species eventhough we will describe how to make an S scale rattlesnake. It's easy. Start by cutting a piece of thin solder to a length of six or seven scale feet long. (We have big snakes out my way.) Sand or file a taper into the last scale foot or so of the tail end to make it thinner than the rest of the body. Gently crimp about 1/32" of the tail end all around using the serrated jaws of your jewelers pliers to simulate the snake's rattle. Place about 1/16" of the other end of the piece of the solder in a vise and flatten it. Bend it as shown in the figure below to form the snake's head. Now bend the solder into a lifelike snake form. Paint the distinctive diamond pattern onto the snake. See the figure below. Outline the diamonds using a black micro-point ball point pen and you're finished. Being made of solder it's very easy to bend the snake to conform to the contours of the ground where you plan on placing it. Making this little viper only takes a total of about an hour from start to finish....Dan Waskes.

STEP #1



STEP #2



Taper Approx 1'

STEP #3



Simulate Rattles On End Using Serrated Jaws All Around.

STEP #4



Flatten Approx. 1/16" To Start Forming Head - See Detail A

STEP #5

Bend Head As Per Detail A

STEP #6

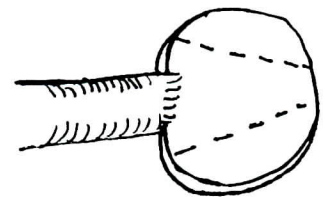


Bend Into Life Like Snake Form. Paint Base Coat.

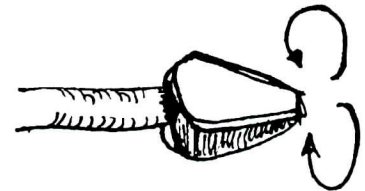
STEP #7

Paint Diamond Pattern On Snake And Outline Diamonds With Micro-Ball Ball Point Pen.

DETAIL A



Bend Flattened Area At Dotted Lines To Form Head.



Formed Head Touch Up Lightly With Jewelers' File

Diamond Back Pattern

Light Tan Or Gray Base Coat

TOP VIEW



SIDE VIEW

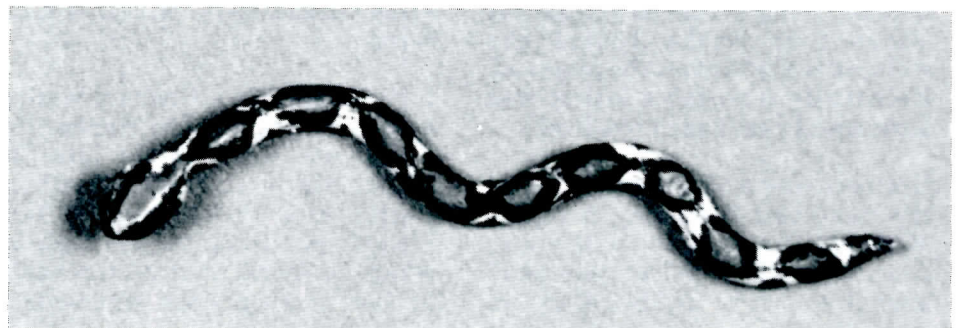
Darker Tan Or Brown Diamonds



Black Outline Applied With Ball Point

D. WASKES 02/91

THESE DRAWINGS ARE NOT TO SCALE. A STRIKING SNAKE CAN BE MODELED BUT IT IS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO PAINT.



TERRY HENDERSON'S AMERICAN FLYER LAYOUT

Bob Jackson
Photos By Keith Erickson

Terry Henderson and his good friend Keith Erickson set up Terry's portable AF layout half-a-dozen times a year at various shows and shopping malls. His layout has been written up before but it is even larger and more detailed than ever and we are sure that The Dispatch readers will be interested to see it. We will let Terry tell his own story.

"My interest in American Flyer trains goes back to when I was 7 or 8 years old. Santa gave me my first trains that year. It became a tradition for many years on Christmas day for the tree to come down and the trains to go up. And up they came--under my bed, between the piano and the piano bench, behind the radio, under and on the TV stand, across the doorway, and under the couch. The '50s were some great years for me and my trains.

Later the interest waned and lay dormant until the mid-70s. By chance, my wife and I stopped by the local train club's layout one Saturday afternoon. The two gentlemen running the layout were Vernon Bisland and Henry Schmitt. They were the only two in the club that owned and operated American Flyer. After talking to these two and watching the layout run, my interest was sparked again.

Within a week I had my trains laid out all over the floor in our back bedroom. It looked real good to me and I spent a lot of time running the trains. Things went alright until I threw a switch and the red light flashed on the transformer. Needless to say I had a real problem and I did not know what it was. I called Henry Schmitt and he said that he would come over the next evening. Henry had a big laugh when he walked in the door of the bedroom. I had made a

reversing loop with no insulating pins! With that visit a friendship started that has continued.

A few months later Henry asked if I would like to attend the TCA train meet. One thing lead to another and I started helping Henry run his American Flyer layout at some local model train shows. For the next few years Henry's layout was the proving ground and the basis for the ideas on how to build my own layout. Even though my layout is not perfect it is much improved over Henry's layout. Mine is more mobile and easier to handle.

To get the layout to it's present state of 10'x24' it took nine years. It was always very difficult to transport Henry's layout. To develop a portable layout I decided that I first needed to make it fit what I was going to be transporting it with. I use a pick-up truck with a topper cover over the bed for this purpose. I installed garage door track on the inside walls of the pick-up topper. The layout is made of modules that fit into the topper. One inch square tubes with garage door rollers mounted in the ends are secured to the module boards with 1/4" carriage bolts. This way when the module boards are lifted into the truck topper they can be rolled into place.

There are several things incorporated into the layout to make set-up and tear-down easier and faster. These include the use of folding table legs with 10" extensions. The extensions are removed and held in place underneath the module board with broom handle clips. We also have quick disconnects on the wiring where the modules join together and on the transformer connections. Table skirting is something else that takes time to

put on and take off. We have used velcro stapled to the board and sewn into the skirting. I can't say that any one change is more important than another; it's more a combination of all of them that makes things go smoother and quicker. Set-up now usually takes about 2 1/2 hours and tear-down is around 1 1/2 hours.

During the early '80s another gentleman came into the picture. I was setting up for the Buffalo convention when I heard a voice say "HI" and ask if I needed some help. From then on Keith Erickson has helped me with the layout. I've been the construction crew and he's been the engineer.

The first track plan was nothing special, the only thing I knew that I wanted was an elevated track. All the rest of the layout just fell into place in the course of time. Most things have changed over the years, except for the elevated track. The present layout is a good plan for Keith and me to run. Since the reverse loop was my undoing on my first layout, I have a double reverse loop in the figure 8 loop that works very well. The outside main is twin-tracked about 3/4ths of the way around the layout. With this system two trains can run on the same main at the same time. This is really easy to do because if one train is running slower than the other, I can run the slower train into the siding. If we run two trains in this manner then we can have 4 trains running at the same time. Otherwise, we usually have 3 trains going at the same time. In addition, a train can be operated in one of the two yards at the same time.

The scenery isn't really fancy, but, what is on the layout really catches the eye. We have an action train which consists of two rocket launchers, a TNT boxcar, and a

car-unloader. We have a mail pickup on the front main which gets the crowd involved because we have them pick up the mailbags and place them on the pickup arm. We also have Gabe the Lamplighter, a barrel loader, 3 coal loaders, 2 log loaders, a sawmill, cattle yard, people loader, and cow-on-track, just to name a few.

With over 40 switches and somewhere around 275 feet of track, a person would think it would be a difficult layout to operate. But once you learn the basics, it is fairly easy. Sherry, my wife, and our five year old son, Jacob; Keith and his wife, Nancy, can all run the layout. People marvel at Jacob when he operates the accessories -- he really puts on a show for the crowd.

Sherry and Nancy put the houses, people, trees, bushes, cars and tractors on the layout. Nothing is

the same from set-up to set-up; the girls make changes each time and try out different things to see how they look.

The layout has traveled as far as the NASG conventions in Buffalo, NY; Cleveland, OH; and Chicago, IL. The layout has been set up at more than 30 times at meetings and shows. It has brought a lot of satisfaction to me. I like to be able to work out problems and think of ways to make things go smoother and faster. I am a collector as well as an operator. I have a lot of doubles in my collection. I am still adding and looking for a lot of items for my collection."

Terry and Keith, and their families, set up the layout once again this past April in the Jumer's Mall in Urbana, Illinois. I made arrangements to meet them there to see and discuss the layout. Keith is also the photographer of

the team and he took the photos that are presented here. The layout was a crowd pleaser. Terry observed that people gathered when the trains were running but if they stopped running even for a short time the crowd would dissipate. Terry said that he was beginning to get the urge to make some changes. He felt that the layout needed greater visual impact and that he was thinking in the direction improving the scenery. We will have to keep track of the progress of this busy AF layout. It may well merit another look in a year or two.

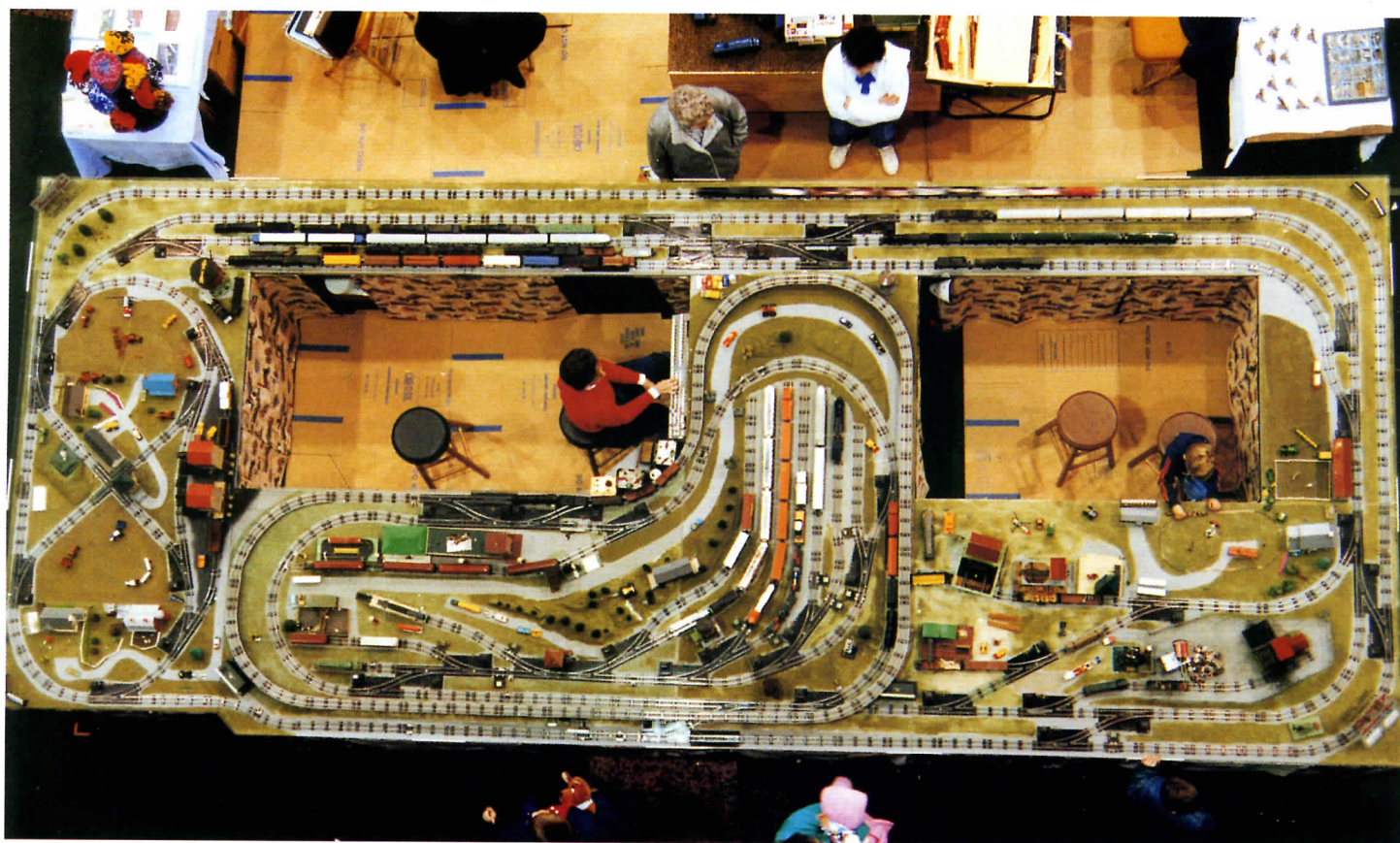
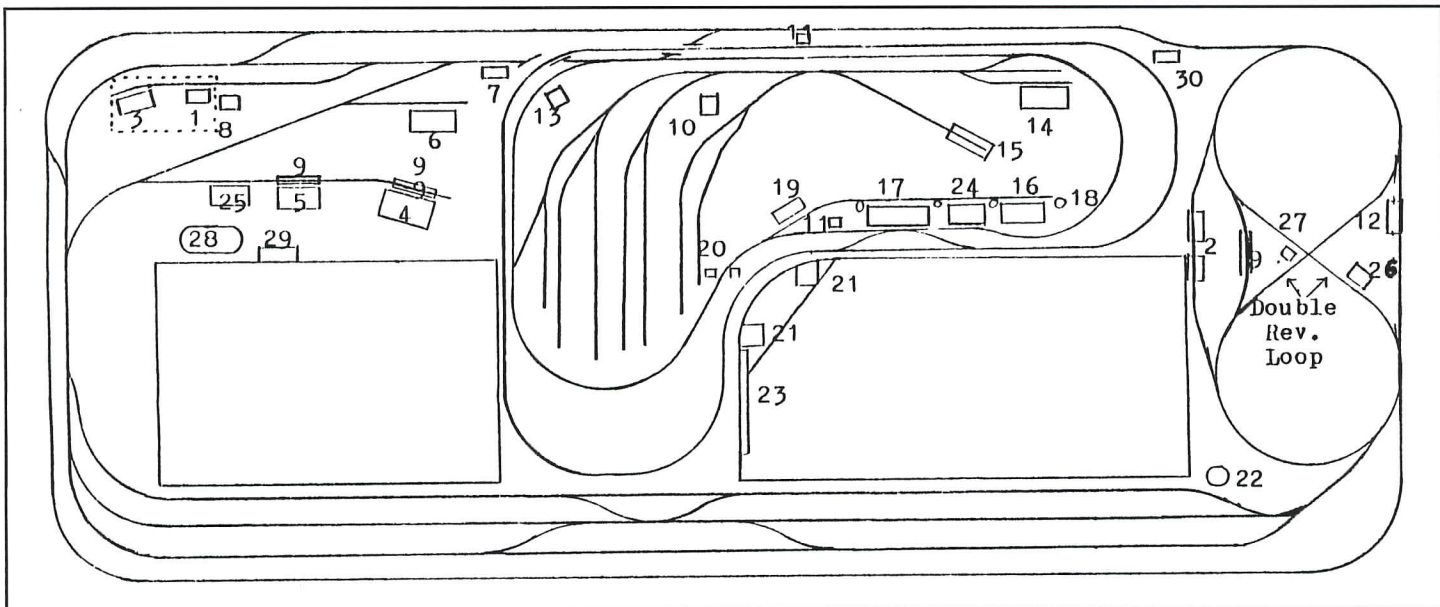


PHOTO BY KEITH ERICKSON



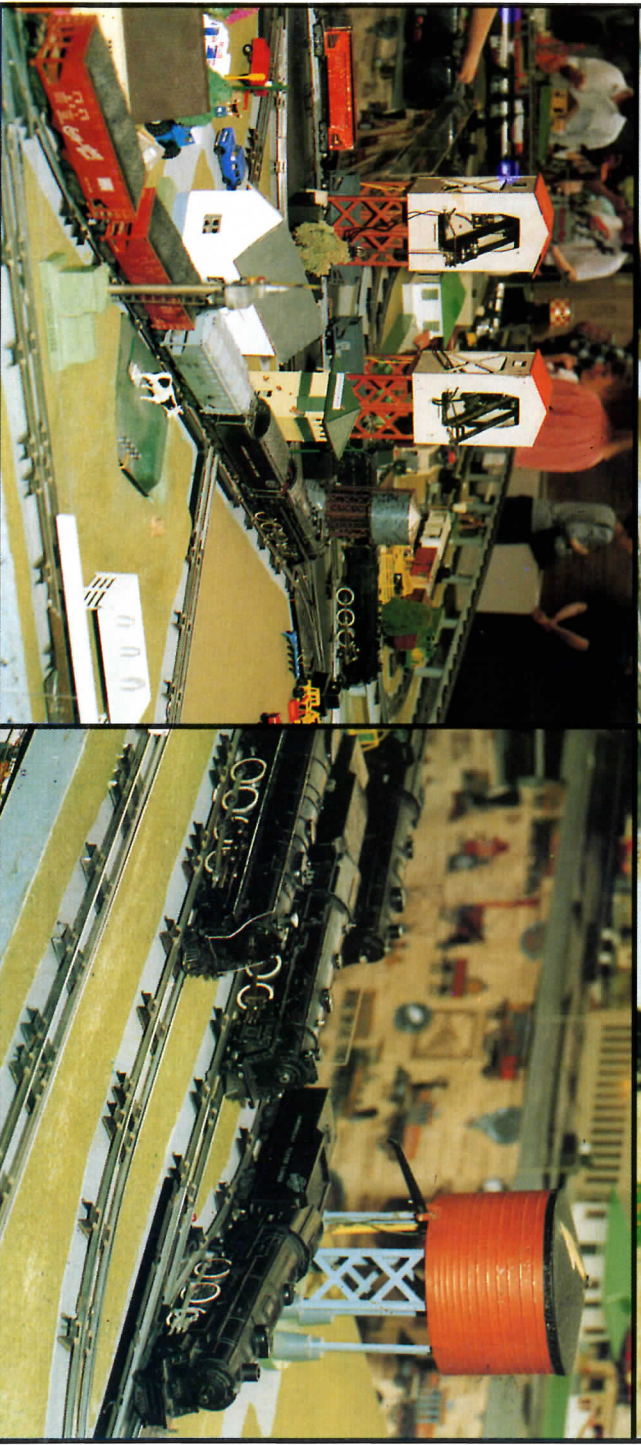
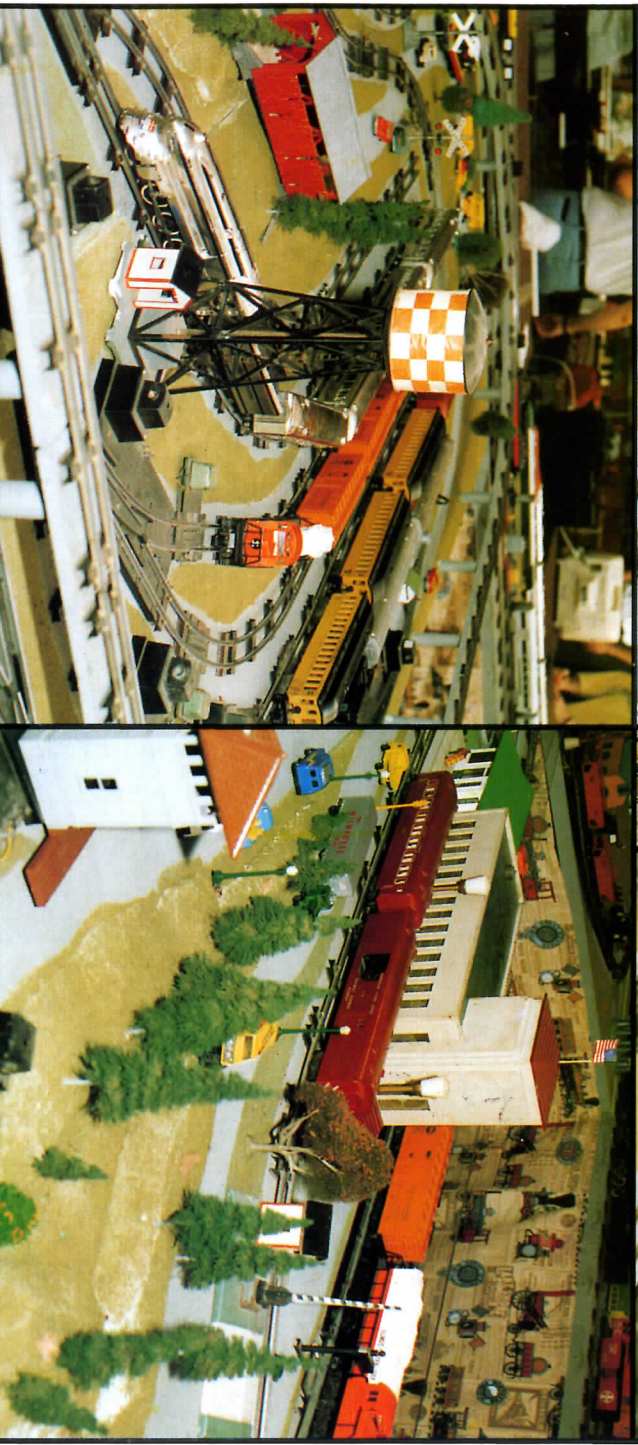
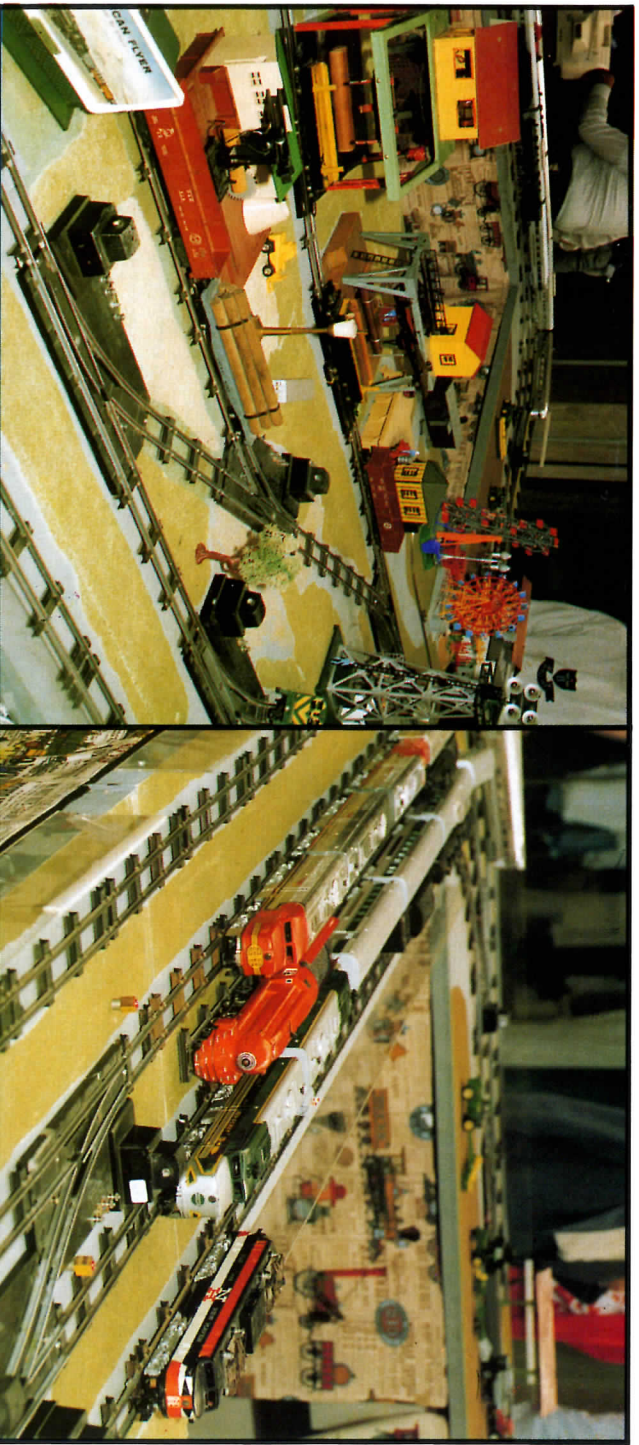
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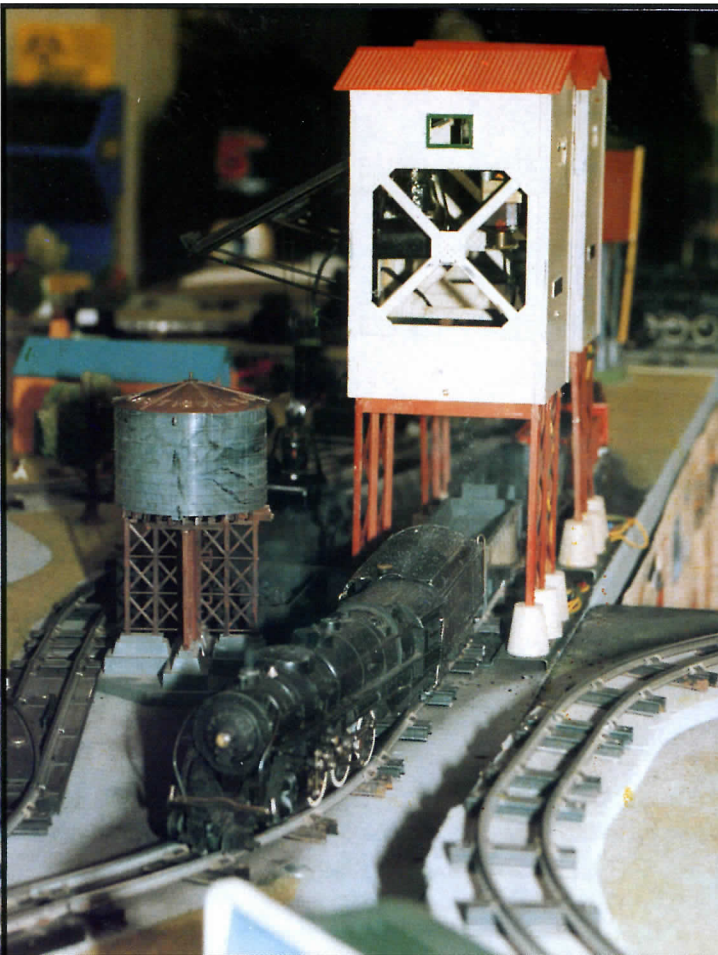
1. 583 Electromagnetic Crane
2. Two 785 Coal Loaders
3. 752 Seaboard Coal Loader
4. 751 Log Loader
5. 787 Log Loader
6. 23796 Remote Sawmill
7. 566 (B) Whistling Billboard
8. 23780 Gabe the Lamplighter
9. 710 Between Rail Track
10. 772 (D) Checker Water Tower
11. 711 Mail Pick Up Post
12. Gilbert Milk Platform
13. Floodlight Tower
14. 771 Stock Yard
15. 23830 Piggyback Loader
16. 766 Animated Station
17. 799 Talking Union Station
18. 749 Street Lamp Set
19. 592 (A) Crossing Gate
20. 760 Highway Flashers
21. 12B Dual Control Transformer
22. 596 Water Tower
23. Switch Control Panel
24. 789 Station & Baggage Man
25. 779 Oil Drum Loader
26. 23791 Cow On Track
27. 23590 Control Tower
28. "Z" Gauge Carnival Ride
29. Auxiliary Switch Control Panel
30. 561 (A) Billboard Horn



Terry Henderson and Keith Erickson discuss the game plan for showing at Jumer's Mall.

BOB JACKSON





Short and Easy

DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE, DOUBLE YOUR FUN!

This time around, Denis Fortier was thoughtful enough to send in an idea for providing some variety on a small layout. Although I've heard of this before, I can't remember where. Besides there are probably enough newer model railroaders in the NASG now to make it worth repeating.

To increase the the number of different looking cars without buying a lot of rolling stock, letter the same car differently on each of its two sides. This works especially well on a point-to-point shelf type layout that doesn't have a loop or a run-around.

Denis recommends that the cars be the same body color, which seems to make sense, but I'll go a step further. Only the roof and ends have to be the same color! In what is still known as the billboard reefer scale, there are a lot of reefer sides floating around that require a car with boxcar red ends and roof. Your imagination can take it from there.

Another useful aspect of Denis' idea is a savings of money on lettering. Typically, when I purchase lettering for a car, I get twice as much as I need (i.e., two sets). My theory is that if I screw up the lettering at nine o'clock at night (or whatever time), I don't have to wait until somebody can mail me another lettering set.

Now if I only have to letter one side of a car (or engine), I only need one set. What's that you say, I still have to buy two (different) sets? Sure, but I'll get two different cars, well, sort of.

So have fun with the idea, play with it in your imagination. One side of a car can be lettered humorously. If mixed company is coming, just turn the car around. Or, if you're committed to a specific prototype and the lettering scheme on a car of that road's competitor is something that especially appeals to you, apply Denis' concept and your friends never need know that as a NYC fan, you've got a Pennsy 40' boxcar running around.

GOT AN IDEA? Perhaps you've created some detail to stick along your right-of-way, set on a loading dock, dress up a building, etc.,etc. We're always looking for fresh projects. If you'd like to contribute, the rules are simple: The project should be somewhat related to railroading and it should be capable of being completed in one or two evenings. You needn't worry about drawings or photographs. We can do the drawings and have photos taken. All that is necessary is a sketch of the project with some dimensions, a list of the materials and a short description of how to build it. Submit your ideas to Short and Easy, c/o Kent L. Singer, 105 Highland Dr., Baldwinsville, NY 13027



THE SANDY CREEK AND PENNSYLVANIA R.R.

Don Thompson

Question: What is the name an S gauge layout in Allentown, PA? Answer: The Spiral Hill pike of Frank Titman. Wrong! Try again. No? Well, then try "The Sandy Creek and Pennsylvania Railroad". This fine S scale pike is owned by Barry Mertz. Don DeWitt and I had the opportunity to take a pleasant tour of the Sandy Creek and Pennsylvania this past winter.

Like Frank, Barry is a member of the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (the name was changed from Delaware Valley S Gaugers). He also is very fond of steam and coal. Unlike Frank, Barry's favorite Railroad is the Pennsy.

his city row-house that is only 15' wide. I was very impressed by how much track work could be snuggled into such a small width. The scenery is representative of a colorful autumn in the hills of central Pennsylvania during the early Fifties. It is hard to describe how Barry was able to fit the 4 track main of the fabulous Horse Shoe curve in a width of only 12 feet, but he did and it looks good.

Most of the action of this layout is handled by a herd of Pennsy steam engines: K-4's, K-5's, L-1's, M1a's (I saw this Omnicon Mountain handle a 36" radius - yes, Barry has modified it) and even a J-1.

the PRR at Keystone Junction. And here, even Frank would admire a RDG I-10 pushing a string of empty hoppers to the coal breaker. The other main commodity on this pike is timber from the Sandy Creek R.R. Logs are cut from a local forest and hauled off to the lumber mills to be cut into boards.

I wish that I had had more time that day to take more photographs and do justice to this layout, but I am sure we will be seeing more in the magazines. I do suggest that anyone who does get a chance to visit the Allentown area to give both of these fine layouts a call.

The layout is in the basement of

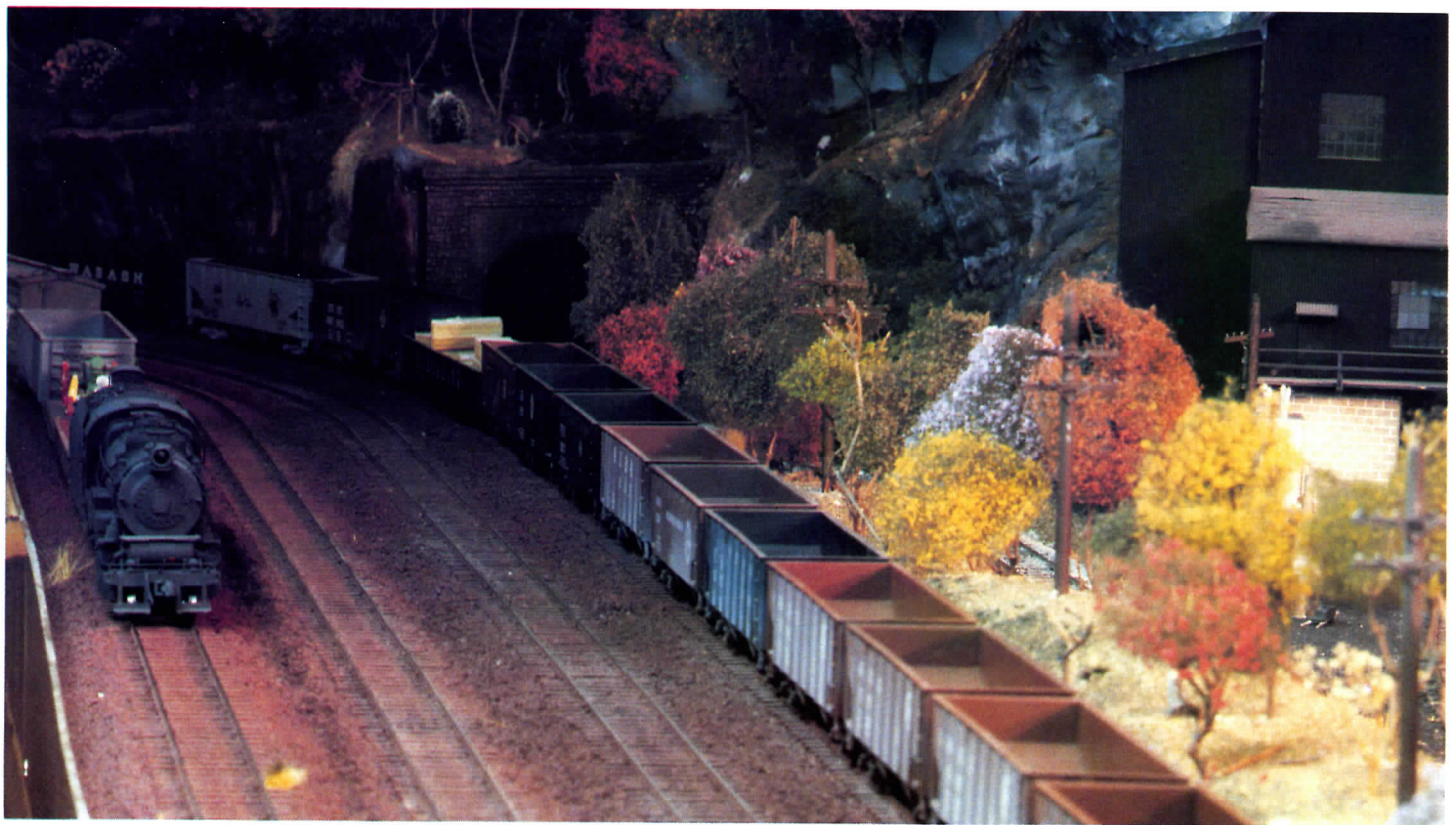
The Reading interchanges with



A huge PRR J-1 with a cabin car moves westward up the approach to Horse Shoe curve. We can see another steamer picking up train orders at Keystone Junction in the background. (Photo by Barry Mertz)



A Reading coal breaker fills the empties with clean burning anthracite coal. Coal breakers were used to make, sort and clean different sizes of coal. Sizes that were used for home furnaces were stoker, nut (or chestnut) and pea. The coal breaker is a LVM kit. (Photo by Don DeWitt)



A train of hoppers returns eastbound on Horse Shoe curve to the mines to be filled. An L-1 is on track 1 with a local freight to Pine City. The L-1's are highly prized brass locos. They were imported as part of the K-4's order that Samhongs made for Omnicon Models a few years ago. (Photo by Barry Mertz)



A PRR brake man climbs on top of the reefer. The PRR N6 was a kit that Barry offered a few years ago. The reefer sports a set of "Bulletin" S gauge sides that the NMRA included a few years back with its newsmagazine. *(Photo by Barry Mertz)*



We see a distant freight leaving the Pine City freight station in the foreground. The freight station was built from a Lehigh Valley Models kit. An American Models PRR FP-7 awaits a future assignment on the Reading branch interchange track. *(Photo by Barry Mertz)*



A Pennsy J-1 moves up the grade towards Pine City with a string of empty hoppers rumbling along behind. PRR gondola #380625 sits in the Pine city yard team track. In the background, the 9th Ave overpass bridges Pine City with Keystone Junction. (Photo by Don Thompson)



Reading I-10as consolidation pulls a string of empty hopper from Keystone Junction to the coal breaker on Reading branch for another load of "Black" anthracite diamonds. The I-10as is a Lehigh Valley Models kit, the hoppers are from American Models. (Photo by Don Thompson)



A K-5 and an L-1 fight up the curve. Double heading and the use of pushers were standard on most trains of any tonnage at all. The K-5 is a nicely done American Flyer conversion. (Photo by Don Thompson)



Action on Horse Shoe curve! It is impressive to see several trains moving at once in this scene. Barry has successfully recreated the feel of the prototype in a surprisingly narrow space. (Photo by Don De Witt)

OL' LONESOME ADOBE

by Dan Waske
Photos by Chuck Thurman

This article is about an easy to build structure that will fit the bill for all of those who are modeling the desert-west landscape. One of my buddies here in El Paso is building a fine American Flyer layout that is set in a desert-west locale. I wanted to build something for his layout that would fit in with his desert southwest scenery and have it look as if it really belongs.

One of the first things that really caught my eye on moving out to West Texas were the lonely ruins of abandoned adobe structures standing out in the middle of nowhere, located miles from the nearest habitation. These structures are fascinating remnants of times past. One wonders what tales they could tell if they could speak. Time has erased their uses from our memory as it is also has the old timer's who knew what the structures were originally used for. I decided to build one of these abandoned adobes for his layout. This little structure is one of those fascinating details that you can add to your layout with about a night's work, or two nights at most.

I constructed the abandoned adobe house by using tempered 1/8" Masonite for the walls and the base that the walls are mounted on. Thicker material may be used for the walls, or it can be doubled if desired, but using the 1/8" Masonite provided a scale 8" thick wall which looked good enough to me. The Masonite that I used is called "door skin" at the local lumber store and is quite reasonably priced. All of the structures that I build are mounted on Masonite bases so that they can be easily added to a layout and look as if they're actually part of the scenery and not something perched on top of it. Nothing looks worse to the eye than a building

that has daylight showing under it. The Masonite base's edges are very easily blended into the existing terrain using your current ground cover materials, and yet the structure can be easily removed or relocated with minimum amount of damage. I think that, if you start building your own structures with their own bases, you will never go back to building structures without them.

There are no precise measurements involved in the structure of this lonely little desert sentinel. Start by laying out four walls, or three, or two walls for that matter, on your chosen material, following the general configuration shown in Figure One. The only limiting factor in building this structure is in the amount of deterioration that you wish to depict. From your using all four walls to show a relatively intact structure, to using just two or three walls jutting up out of the sand, to give a hint of prior habitations. You can also use this Masonite method to build the walls for an adobe structure that is currently in use merely by eliminating the deterioration. Door and window size and placement is up to the builder. Windows in these structures were usually on the small side.

Cut out the wall pieces that you drew on the material that you are using, and glue them together making up your basic box form. Cut out the desired size base and glue your structure to it. Using a base for the structure helps serve two other purposes. It greatly increases the structure's strength and it gives you something to hold onto while your working on it. This same rule applies to any other structures that you may choose to model. After the glue has set, fill any seams on the exterior of the adobe with filler and sand them

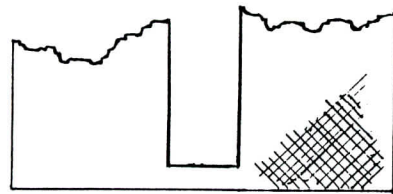
smooth. To simulate the rough finish of eroded adobe get the finest sand that you can find. Then brush full strength white glue on the walls, inside and out, and onto the broken edges of the walls too. Finally, sift the sand onto the walls covering all areas well. Let it dry. (This step can be repeated if a rougher finish is desired.)

After the walls are dry, brush off any loose sand and paint the walls and edges with your base color. Pactra makes some fine flat military colors that I like to use. They are available in many shades of tan and brown. I used a light earth color for the base color, and then I touched up the broken edges with a darker brown. To simulate the faded whitewash effect that I wanted to use for the walls, I brush-painted the walls with full strength Polly S Dust, applying three coats, letting each coat dry before re-coating. This left enough of the white color on the walls to simulate the faded look that I was looking for.

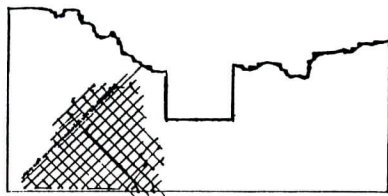
Then you have to decide just how much debris and detritus should be in and around the structure and on it's base. I used a weathered piece of 3/16" square strip wood to simulate remains of a 12 x 12 door lintel lying inside of what remains of the structure. You can get really creative here, especially if you plan on making one of these adobes into a foreground model, just by adding all kinds of interesting residue and clutter. You will notice that I got very creative by adding some rattlesnakes to the scene. Like they say in St. Louis, its just for fun.

Next, figure out where the prevalent wind direction is coming from and build up the sand on the base in a dune on the windward side. The build up should occur both inside and outside the

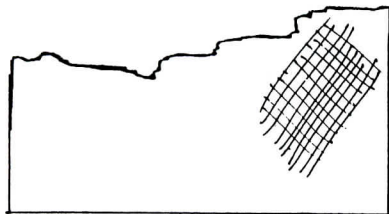
structure. See Figure Two. When you're pleased with your sand and debris placement, anchor everything down in the same way that you anchor your track ballast down and let dry. When the structure and everything is dry, dust it down with appropriately colored pastel chalks and set it in place. Enjoy.



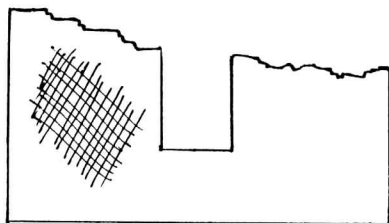
FRONT



RIGHT SIDE



LEFT SIDE



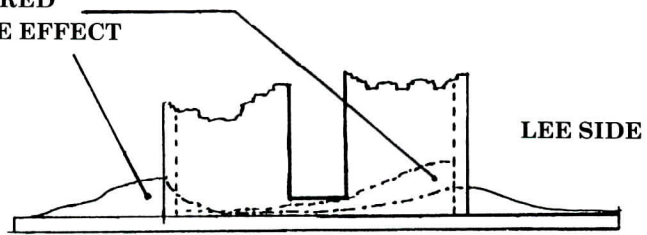
REAR

SUGGESTED SIDES
(Optional)

FIGURE #1

PREVAILING
WIND DIRECTION →

DESIRED
DUNE EFFECT



PERSPECTIVE

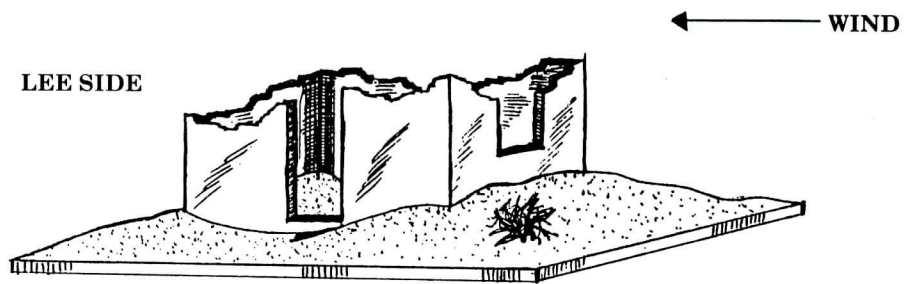
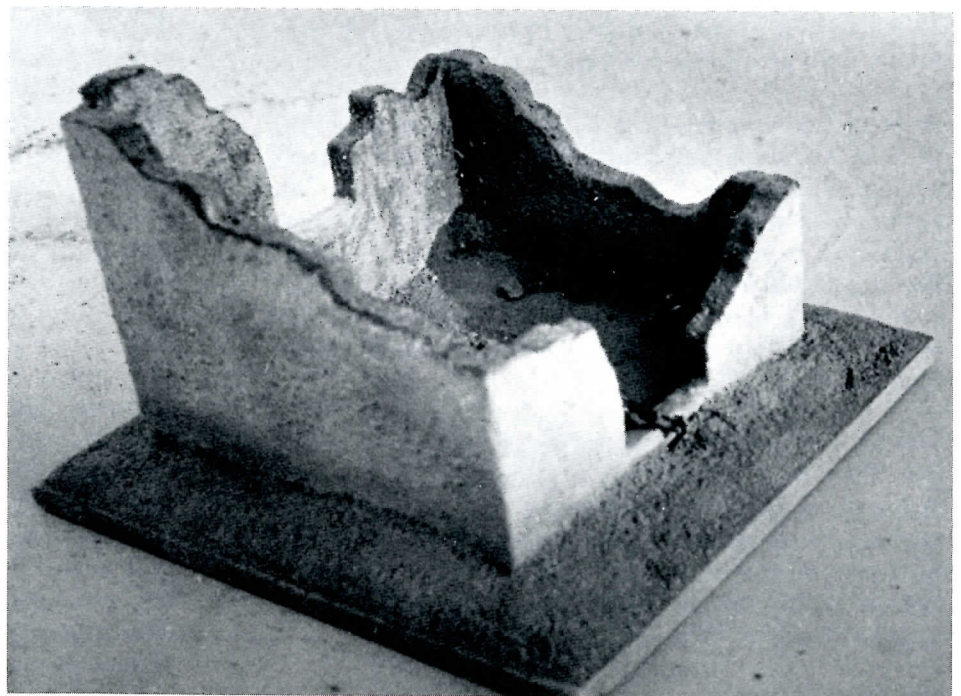


FIGURE #2



The finished product just before placement on its site on the layout.

DEAR @#\$\$%&*!!

Editor:

We S gaugers need a reasonably priced source to supply us with the most commonly used type of vehicle, the ubiquitous four door sedan. With the exception of the '30s Chevy and Ford sedans that Ertl released in their Dick Tracy series, and the Hot Wheels '40s "Woodie" Ford station wagon, I know of no other four door sedan or station wagon type vehicle that is readily available for us to use in our S scale modeling.

The one vehicle model that I'd really like to see someone produce for us is the Checker four door sedan. The basic Checker design spanned several decades and was used by almost every taxi cab company in North America. Every S scale depot could use a couple of these cars parked out in front, waiting to pick up arriving passengers. Can anyone out there in S gauge-land entice the Ertl people into producing some? Could they be induced to produce a collectors set containing the various taxi-cab company vehicles? A set like this would be both colorful and eye-catching to collectors. Could we convince Ertl that issuing a line of cars from the '40s and '50s, composed only of four door vehicles, would be a profitable venture?

How about someone else producing a generic '40s or '50s four door sedan kit? The '40s version would use detached fenders and long hood, while the '50s version would use the body integrated fenders. Including a supply of different grills and trim in the kits would make for some interesting kit bashes. I think that making this type of vehicle available to us would be welcomed by the whole S gauge fraternity.

Would a grass roots campaign generated by all of the NASG members writing to Ertl's product research division be productive? I think that if a manufacturer received over a thousand letters from all parts of the country, requesting that a certain article be produced, he'd give the request some serious thought. What do you think?

"S"incerely,
Dan Waskes

Editor:

As a member of NASG and a newly rediscovered

S-scaler (from childhood American Flyer days), I am excited about the recent growth in commercial offerings in the scale and the "new respect" S is receiving. Lest the time lag mislead you, it was at the Pittsburgh convention that I caught the fever, though I did not send in my membership check until January. I believe everyone who contributed to the 'S' effort in Pittsburgh is to be congratulated for an impressive show.

I just received a thick pile of this year's issues of The Dispatch, and I would like to comment on a few of the articles:

In Vol. XIII No. 5, the idea of offering complete starter sets is great, but why on earth would you want to introduce newcomers to the hobby by giving them thirty-to-forty-year-old equipment? This is like trying to get people excited about their first automobile by offering them a '54 Plymouth. It seems to me that a collection of American Models equipment to scale would do a lot to show newcomers what they can look forward to in S scale. I respect AF for its positive influence in my own childhood, but by contemporary standards of detail, I believe it is woefully inadequate even for beginners. I realise that having said this, I am now on many members' hate lists, but I don't think Gilbert is rolling over in his grave. In fact, I think he would agree with me.

In the same issue was a good article about easy modifications to the Pacific Rail Shops fifty-foot boxcar. I think it would have been better to divide it into four articles and finish each car. More prototype information, including number series and lettering, would have completed an article that was left hanging for anyone who wants to build one of these cars. Incidentally, the author did note that the PRS car is the 1955 AAR design, but did not qualify that the side-panel-spacing and end-corrugations are inaccurate for the C&EI (built in '53) and the Mississippi Central ('52) cars.

Thirdly, in Vol. XIII No. 6 was a great article about Milwaukee Road's horizontal rib design box cars. However one could have easily gotten the impression from it that the MILW's motivation for the design was solely for the sake of distinctiveness. It is hardly believable that a serious business would go to such lengths just to make their equipment recognizable in a crowd. The real story is tied to the history of the era: commercial welding was just becoming economically practicable, and the MILW was one of the railroads whose mechanical department was sufficiently progressive to pioneer in applying this new technology to rolling stock. The horizontal-seam design was an attempt to find an assembly configuration, different from the AAR-standard vertical seam, that would exploit the ability to construct a lighter, stiffer structure with welding

techniques. While probably successful from a technical viewpoint, considering the long service lives of MILW's thousands of cars, the idea was not so compellingly superior to convince other roads to try it, hence the uniqueness of MILW's use of it. Later commercially successful welded designs, like the Pullman-Standard PS-1 (not yet available in contemporary S scale, by the way), were close to the AAR-standard in appearance, but without rivets.

At several points, the author referred to an "Intermediate Dreadnaught End", which only serves to further confuse an already complicated situation. Dreadnaught Ends and Improved Dreadnaught Ends were registered trademark of the Standard Railway Equipment Manufacturing Company and were not made by any other companies. The change to Improved came in 1945 (possibly late '44) and is a watershed in identifying a freight car's era. A second subtle but notable change was made in 1954, but the company did not modify the name at that time. The PRS car has the post-1954 end, while the AM car has the pre-1954 style, which some HOers are calling an "Interim Improved Dreadnaught End". I think using the word interim implies that the design was intended to be temporary while a better one was under development at the same time. This was definitely not the case, so I prefer to refer to "early" and "late" Improved Dreadnaught Ends when discussing the pre-1954 and post-1954 designs, respectively.

All of the Improved Dreadnaught Ends (IDEs) applied to the MILW horizontal-rib cars were early IDEs, as particularly on car 23055 pictured on p. 27. While the caption says it was built in 6/44, the IDE indicates later, and the proof lies in the reweigh date, "NEW 10 45", stenciled after the light weight. Though the built date is illegible in the photo, a NEW reweigh date is always identical to the built date, so this car was built in October, 1945. As for car 33059 on p. 29, it is not "anybody's guess" how it received its mixed end, since it is obviously a repair job. Half the end required replacement due to either wreck damage or a shifted load (common in hump switching). The seam appears to be held together with Huck bolts, which would indicate that the work was done no earlier than the late sixties when Huck bolts were introduced. I would venture to guess that the upper Dreadnaught half is original and the lower IDE could have come from a sister car on the scrap line, since it appears quite beat up already.

Still on ends, the practice of using flat-top ends so that flat-bottomed roof assemblies could be attached by welding along a straight line is evident in many of the photos in the article, an interesting and unique feature. However, other cars shown in the article clearly employ the more conventional seam along

the roof peak, so the flat-top technique was apparently not universally used on these cars.

Moving on to doors, the photos indicate that MILW used some doors that were as unique as the welded sides. MILW may have specified its own welded door design which suppliers were to follow. If these were built as Camel doors, then they were made by Youngstown Steel Door, who had ownership of the Camel name. Sometime in the late thirties, YSD stopped using the Camel name for its doors, but continued to use it for door hardware, a curious change of policy. The photos show that doors of standard Youngstown design were also used. If MILW's records show a transition of source from Camel to Youngstown, these could very well be the same doors, reflecting merely the name change. I believe the same situation applies to Creco and Superior. I can't prove it, but I suspect they are the same company: Chicago Railway Equipment (Creco) disappeared around 1940 and Superior showed up at about the same time.

At one point in the article, there was a reference to cars 13000- 13499, which I presume was a misprint, intending to refer to 13500-13999. The 13000-13499 were built in 1936 and were not horizontal-rib cars.

I am curious as to what was significant about splitting the main group of forty-foot cars around car number 21187. The transition from full-length to standard ribs came at a higher number, as did the transition to IDEs. The Equipment Registers also split them up at 19040. What was the significance of these numbers, as well as 23937?

Also, it appears that many of these cars were renumbered into 30000 series sometime in the sixties. Any information on this? Was this done at rebuilding?

I would have appreciated a table of the various cars with their features and built dates sorted out, and when and how they were renumbered. I found it difficult to glean this information from the text and photos.

Overall, I have to say this was the best article I've seen yet in any of the S scale publications. We have a couple of brass cars now, but this article shows us the broad variety yet unmodeled. One of the reasons I decided to get into S scale is because the models are big enough to actually see the differences between various prototypes. I'm looking forward to modeling a variety of freight cars, and I hope others catch the excitement as well.

Yours truly,
Jeff English

Kindraka's reply to Jeff English's letter:

In the article I didn't mean to imply that the Milwaukee Road built horizontal rib cars purely for distinctiveness; rather, that designs built for technical reasons sometimes endure for their distinctiveness rather than for their technical merit. The Milwaukee Road was obviously caught upon the horizontal welded rib concept since they applied it to cabooses, passenger cars and steam locomotive tenders, as well as freight cars, over almost a 15-year period.

A discussion of freight car ends could go on forever and I'd be the first to admit I am no expert in the field. The terms "Intermediate" or "Interim" were used by my sources at the Milwaukee Road Historical Society (MRHS). They contend that the 4/4 Intermediate Dreadnaught End (4/4 INTDE) was different from both the pre- and post-1954 Improved Dreadnaught design. Both the pre- and post-IDEs (as exemplified by the AM and PRS "S" scale models) have a rectangular raised area in place of the uppermost rib. The 4/4 INTDE has four identical and complete ribs on the top section. The MRHS people refer to this as an "Interim" design, employed on the Milwaukee Road cars from 1945 through the final production lot in 1949. I agree with their perspective but I understand that there is room for wide interpretation of it. The presence of the lumber door masks things a bit, but you'll clearly see the difference by comparing an AM or PRS end to the photo of MILW 55230 on page 29 of the article.

Jeff correctly points out a couple of errors in the article's text that escaped proof reading. As both The Dispatch Editor and Publisher will attest, the inclusion of both Milwaukee Public Library photos on page 27 came at the last minute and was somewhat "touch and go"! The caption was written hurriedly from incorrect information on the back of the photo. Examining the photo itself shows MILW 23055 was indeed built in 10-45. (Whoops!)

The break in numbers at 21187 is significant. That number marked the end of production in 1940. The next car (#21188) wasn't built until 1944. Also, when production began in 1944, the cars had an inside height of 10'9"; earlier cars, #18000-#21187, had only a 10'6" inside height. The application of standard length ribs did indeed begin in 1944. While I have no photographic evidence that MILW 21188 was the first standard length rib car, I do have a photo of 21329 (built 06-44) with standard ribs. I can provide a photo of this car, if you wish. Interestingly enough, in reviewing that photo I noticed that 21329 was a 10'9" car but the ladder was still eight rungs - another variation from the original article! Car #23937 was supposed to indicate the end of the mid-rib cars as it closed out production in 1947; however,

this is very arbitrary. I have no data, other than individual photos, to nail down which number series actually had mid-ribs and which did not.

I did not go into renumbering because my data was not complete and I was afraid the article was confusing enough already. The renumbering (I believe) took place during rebuilding in the early 60's. At the same time the lettering was changed to the familiar Milwaukee rhomboid logo. By the way, anyone who has access to the old (ancient!) Enhorning decals will find in set SN-54 or SB-378 the words "Route of the Electrified Olympian." While a little under-sized, the decal does offer the possibility of lettering a car similar to MILW 21176, shown on page 27 of the article, a nice variation.

Finally, I very much appreciate Jeff's comments. After going to considerable effort to do all the research, it's gratifying to know someone thought enough of your work to comment on it and offer insight, corrections and constructive criticism.

Sincerely,
Jim Kindraka

Editor's Note: Both Jeff English and Jim Kindraka provided some tables of data which I am sure would be both useful and interesting to S gaugers. However, for reasons relating to space and format they will not be presented with their letters. Instead, the tables will be presented in the October 1991 issue.

Editor:

I read the article "A View From a Hobby Shop Owner" (Dispatch 14/7]:30) by Brian Jackson with great interest. It is insightful and has provided a valuable contribution by discussing issues which remain largely untouched in the S gauge press. After some reflection, I thought I might offer a few comments on the article. Take them for what they are worth.

Firstly, the author's viewpoint seems to be distinctly lie within the scale segment of the S gauge community. By choosing to ignore the collector segment, he has eliminated a significant proportion of S gaugers. Published demographic data (Dispatch 12(5):14) illustrates that 57% of the NASG members demonstrate at least some interest in AF hirail trains. I am certain that if there were no support for S gauge products, as evidenced by lack of sales, LTI would cease production of their AF line. On the contrary, Lionel's AF line seems to be expanding. I would also venture to guess that a sizable proportion of NASG's growth during the last few years is due to the AF (collector) car linked to membership. It has proven a successful marketing strategy for NASG. Thus, the AF collector-operator

remains a significant force in S gauge. However, I would agree with Brian that collector-oriented products do little to attract "new blood" to the S gauge community.

There seems to be a consensus among S gaugers that the availability of inexpensive, ready-to-run sets would be a significant boon to growth. One strategy along this vein is the availability of "Starter Sets," consisting of refurbished, used AF (Gilbert production) equipment. It seems to me that this approach requires a dedicated group of volunteers to be successful. I suspect that most modelers would lose interest after completing a few sets. Also, this approach carries with it an inherent liability. The resource upon which Starter Sets depend is limited. If production ever assumed significant levels, the prices of the old AF equipment would rise as demand increased, thus removing the finished product from the inexpensive arena.

There is some hope on the horizon for the availability of inexpensive, S gauge sets, though. There may be a company which intends to produce entry level sets in the formation stage (S gaugian 29(2)25). Of course, this kind of development has been proposed before, only to end in failure (e.g. Continental Flyer, 1977 and 1989). Perhaps a wait-and-see attitude would be prudent at this point. So, what do we do in the meantime? At the risk of sounding like a broken record, promotion of G, both at the grass roots, level as well as an organized campaign, certainly can not hurt.

I also agree with Brian that the S Helper Service/American Models collaboration has been the biggest "shot-in-the-arm" for S gauge in quite a while. During its relatively brief existence, this group has produced two NEW engines (not repaints) and have now announced the production of heavy weight passenger cars. Not bad! I would encourage the entire S gauge community / scale / hirail / tinsplate) to support this effort. To do otherwise is to promote stagnation in S.

On a final note, I would like to commend you on the fine job you are doing as editor of The Dispatch. During the two years that I have been a NASG member, I have seen The Dispatch progress from, essentially, an organizational newsletter to a valuable resource for the entire S gauge community. Maybe I will drop my subscriptions to 3/10 "S" scale Railroadng and S Gaugian (just kidding)! Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Jay E. Mellon

The Editor's Desk

(Continued From Page 4)

Dan is/was part of a group of three S gaugers in El Paso which Dan referred to as the Border Runners. Dan models in standard gauge, Chuck Thurman models in Sn3, and Sim Burtner is an AF operator. Dan has a strong sense of humor and you will see more of his writing in the future. We will feature Chuck's Sn3 railroad in color in the December 1991 issue. Meanwhile the cover of this issue will whet your appetite for the full article.

We are also working on the first of what I hope will be a series of articles in which we will showcase a contemporary railroad and illustrate what you can do to model it in S scale with the currently available equipment. Our first article will deal with the Illinois Central. We will be contacting other S gaugers who are known to be knowledgeable about different railroads to solicit their help with these articles.

As this was written (mid-June) River Raisin was still a couple of dozen reservations short of the needed minimum to guarantee the production of the FTs (and the re-power units for earlier F3s and F7s). If you are a fence-sitter act now otherwise there won't be any FTs.



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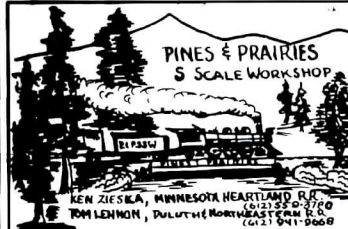
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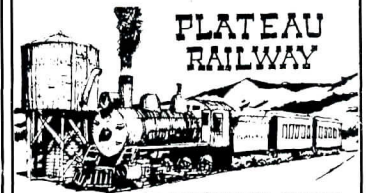
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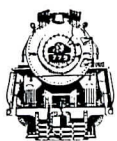
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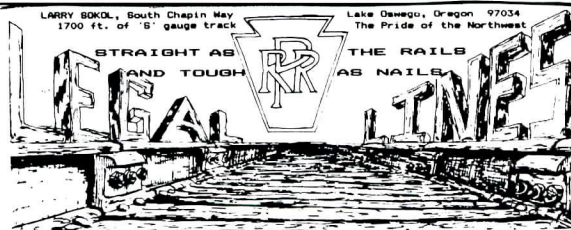
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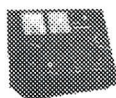


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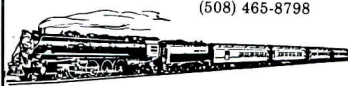
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