

DISPATCH

August 1992
Vol. XV No. 4



Colorado Mineral Belt

Photo by Bob Werre

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NASG DISPATCH

Official Publication of the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
of S GAUGERS

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COVER

Bob Werre's outstanding photography caught this little Sn3 passenger steamer on a trestle as it climbs up grade on Kim Stanley's Colorado Mineral Belt.

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President's Message

By the time you read this, another highly successful NASG National Convention will have concluded. I will have met and talked with many of you at the Convention in Cleveland, Ohio and with others at the NMRA convention in Columbus, Ohio. I have great fun at these conventions, especially our own NASG National Convention, and I wish I could see all of you at them. Remember, next year, both the NMRA and the NASG convention will be held jointly in Valley Forge. It would be a perfect time to meet all of you that I have never had the chance to meet. Why not try to make it?

To all those that I have not had the opportunity to meet and greet this summer, let me say I hope you have a good and enjoyable summer and let me wish for you safe and secure travel as you vacation wherever it may be.

This marks Bob Jackson's last issue as Editor of *The Dispatch*. Without a doubt, Bob, we will miss you. I hope you will be able to contribute articles in the future. You have done a great job for us and I know that I speak for the organization when I say that we really have appreciated your efforts.

The next part of my message will sound like a broken record, but I feel that it is important to repeat myself. Ladies and Gentlemen, *The Dispatch* is only as good as the articles that we receive from the membership. In order for it to be a good publication in service of our members, it must have a good balance between hi-rail and scale. To achieve this balance we must have articles contributed by our members. We cannot always depend on our editor or a select few people to write articles. Complaints about the quality or content or coverage of the magazine basically have to be directed at ourselves. The only ones with the right to complain would be those who have submitted articles that don't get published because the magazine is overflowing with material. Unfortunately, our editors have never suffered from that problem.

I have to conclude my message now. My house is filling up with blue and yellow passenger car boxes which I have to get to work on. At least I don't have to worry about having something to do. I know very well what I will be doing with my spare time over the next few months!

"S"incerely,



Michael R. Ferraro
President

From The Editor's Desk

This is my last issue as the editor of *The Dispatch*. That doesn't mean that you will hear no more from me. I expect to do my best to support Mike Palmiter. Moreover, I will finish all the projects that I started where that is still feasible. I will definitely continue with command control until I have exhausted the matter as it specifically relates to S scale. I have also offered to help Mike continue with several of the features that I began. Of course, that is up to Mike, but I believe that, at least in the beginning, he will keep the format close to what it presently is.

I do want to leave with some thoughts about *The Dispatch*. First, of all the benefits to membership in NASG, *The Dispatch* is the only one that is for everybody. That makes it important to keep its quality as high as possible. High quality invariably means high cost. At Syracuse, there was some thought among the Board of Trustees that dues would have to be raised in order to cover rising costs. *The Dispatch* represents a very large part of those costs. At least a few of the members were opposed to higher dues. As editor, I did not speak at the time. However, I do not think that the cost of dues in the NASG, only part of which is for *The Dispatch*, is in any way burdensome to any of us. I would personally vote for an increase to the dues if that were necessary to keep *The Dispatch* going as a high quality magazine.

Second, having said that, I am bound to point out that there are other impediments to quality that cannot be addressed by raising dues. Perhaps the foremost of these is the material that is received for publication in *The Dispatch*. This material should not only be of good quality but also must cover the range of interests represented by the membership. Unless there is enough of such material, obviously there cannot be six issues per year of good or better quality. During my two years as editor, I did not receive enough useful material to provide six issues of reasonable quality with an appropriate range of subject matter. I had to generate much of it myself. That was by far the heaviest burden of being editor. I believe therefore that the time has come to consider going back to a quarterly schedule. Indeed, if I am asked, I will recommend that *The Dispatch* be published on a quarterly basis with a fifth issue being devoted to the national convention and associated activities. The convention issue, if handled somewhat similarly to the way I did it, requires little in the way of planning and organizing. Its content is essentially determined by the format of the convention. It is therefore considerably less work than the other issues.

A quarterly schedule should lessen the demand for material, but it would also lessen the work burden of the editor. And yes, it would reduce the cost of production of *The Dispatch*. Whether that reduction would be sufficient to avoid raising dues will depend on a number of factors and I am not suggesting reducing the schedule as a way to avoid raising dues. My primary concern here is finding a formula that is sustainable by the editor as he or she goes about bringing us a magazine of good quality.

MEET AN 'S' GAUGER



Dan Navarre

We don't know whether it is the Raisin half or the River half, but Dan Navarre is the other half of River Raisin, Importers of fine S scale brass locomotives, cars and accessories. How did this dynamic duo get started? Sort of by accident, it appears.

Dan, like so many of us, had returned to S gauge after many years of absence, not only from S gauge but also from model railroading altogether. His return occurred somewhat in conjunction with Lionel Trains reintroduction of American Flyer trains. That stimulated his recollections of his American Flyer days dating from his first AF train set when he was in the second grade. He joined the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers in the very early 1980s and it was this association that brought him and Jim Kindraka together. In 1984, Jim was transferred from Milwaukee to the Detroit area and soon made contact with the SMSG. The club had kicked around the idea of shouldering a brass car project but it never got off the ground as a club project and Dan and Jim decided to do it themselves. From that followed River Raisin and the airslide hopper cars, their first import project.

By profession Dan is a licensed forester, licensed in the State of Michigan, where he is the Deputy Director of Wayne

County Parks and Recreation bureau. He studied forestry at Michigan State University from which he graduated before returning to the Detroit area. He is married and has two children, a boy and a girl, ages about 10 and 11. Neither is very much into model railroading at least in part because they lead very busy lives doing other things like water skiing and playing baseball. The Navarres live right near a lake and water sports come very naturally. Boating, especially with his family, ranks among Dan's other hobbies.

He once included coin collecting and running among his other hobbies. He was quite serious about running in earlier days and trained intensively for a marathon. "Training for the marathon was probably the hardest thing I have ever done", he exclaimed. He no longer runs with such discipline, but now and then he still gets out to jog to keep fit.

What brought him back to model railroading? "Well, I like railroads; I suppose that is some of it. My father's father was a railroad man who worked for the Michigan Central and then went to the New York Central. I don't know if that was much of an influence on me or not, but there was a family connection there to railroads. Model railroading, in my mind, has so many facets that there is

something for everyone. You can be as deep into working with others as you want or you can be as alone as you want. For me, model railroading is a release from the burdens of the world so to speak. I am more of a modeler than an operator, and enjoy the solitary preoccupation of model building. Before River Raisin I did a lot of modeling and entered many contests. I won a number of blue ribbons and worked my way up to Master Craftsman status. Since we began River Raisin I have not entered a contest, which means the last three years. However, I have collected a reasonable set of motive power and rolling stock and, one day when we move to a suitable house, I expect to build that dream layout."

Dan's favorite prototype railroads are the C&O and Pere Marquette. These are the prototypes that he expects to emphasize on his ultimate layout. However, long ago he developed his own freelance concept which allows him to use any locomotive or rolling stock that suits his fancy while emphasizing his favorite prototypes. He even had private decals made for his railroad, The Keewenaw Bay and River Raisin Railroad. We can all hope that Dan will find the real estate for the KB&RR road before much longer....RWJ

MORE COMMAND CONTROL

Bob Jackson with John Long

As has been pointed out in previous articles of this series, one of the pluses of command control is the ability to control individual locomotives from more than one point. (This ability is not unique to command control, it can also be a feature of voltage control throttles when appropriately designed.) This capability requires another level of wiring. Keller Engineering employs standard stereo phone plugs with the keypads for its ONBOARD system. These are used because the plugs are very easily removed and re-inserted at the next station. The corresponding stereo phone jacks must be the three conductor, open circuit type. Stereo phone plugs and jacks are not required for command control; other three conductor plugs could be used but they should be easily connected and disconnected. The same electrical considerations will apply to them as do those which apply to the ONBOARD approach to distributed operating locations.

The multiplexing power supply of command control, the "mixer" in the case of ONBOARD, will have built into it a contact point for input from remote operating locations. The ONBOARD system has a small three contact terminal strip located on the edge of the card on which all the electronic components of the mixer are mounted. The three terminals are intended for a +12 volt line, a signal line and a common line. Remote stereo phone jacks are wired in parallel along the lines leading from these terminals. It is essential that all jacks are correctly wired because an error can seriously damage the control units. It is most highly recommended that you use color coded wire to help avoid incorrect wiring of the jacks. The wire for these lines can be much smaller than the wire used for the power bus. However, selection of

the wire size must also take into account the distance that the most remote jack will be from the mixer. Standard intercom cable is usable up to 50 feet. Number 20 wire is usable up to 100 feet. I have used 18 gauge wire for this purpose on my railroad just to avoid having to worry, in any case, about the distance from a remote jack to the mixer.

Location of the remote control jacks is completely arbitrary and can be anywhere you think is useful. Clearly, one of your first considerations is to place them at points of high usage, such as yards or complex industrial locations. After that, you may want to consider the routes that your trains will take and locate your jacks where the train is visible at all times from at least one location. Yet another important consideration is where your turnout controls are located and whether they are remotely controlled or not. Obviously, it would be just a touch more than annoying to have your locomotive arrive at a turnout set against it, only to find that the turnout control is just beyond the reach of your keypad or control unit. You could come to an emergency stop, of course but, as they say, that ain't no way to run a railroad.

An important part of determining location is the length of the tether that your control units have. The ONBOARD keypads are furnished with four feet long cables which provide an effective range of about 10 feet depending on your arm reach. That might be quite adequate if you have enough remote jacks. In all likelihood, however, you will find a longer tether useful, at least at some locations. With stereo phone jacks this is very easy to accomplish. Most stereo stores will have a variety of stereo cables already made up. These are available

in several lengths and either as straight or coiled cables. I prefer the coiled ones since, for a given length, they are neater and require less fuss than straight ones. However, the coiled cables are also heavier and exert a constant tug on the keypad which can be tiring and annoying. For most of my remote operating locations, I have standardized on the following set up. Each location has two jacks, mounted side by side. One of these (Radio Shack 274-312) is mounted directly in the fascia board. The other (Radio Shack inline jack 274-141) is at the end of a six foot straight cable. The jack end of the cable has a small patch of velcro which is used to hold it to the fascia board when it is not in use. This arrangement effectively provides about a 20 foot range at each location when it is needed. It also permits two operators to operate at each location with less likelihood of interfering with each other.

Let's let John Long relate his experience in wiring his own Swatara and Western Railroad.

"My layout is not large in square feet because it is on a shelf, for the most part, around the perimeter of my basement. This does, however, result in long distances from the power supply to the outer segments of the layout. When I first began construction of my layout, I acquired two large coils of No. 14 copper wire so I first started wiring with this, with blocks controlled by on-off switches. I was then using an old Lionel ZW transformer which I had connected to a rectifier and a double-pole, double-throw switch. This was not very refined, nor was it very satisfactory.

When I received the ONBOARD system, I read and re-read and re-re-read the instructions. The first decision I

made was that I needed larger power bus wiring. I bought a coil of No. 8 wire and proceeded to run two loops the total length of my layout. I marked one at short intervals in order to distinguish it from the other so that I would not accidentally confuse the polarity. (This was my answer to the lack of color coding.) I then connected my No. 8 bus wires to the old No. 14 bus wires by means of short No. 14 connectors at numerous points. In effect, my bus wires were now a combination of No. 8 and No. 14 wire. I then added many more No. 14 connections from the bus wire to the track. I followed the ONBOARD guidelines to determine the number of No. 14 leads that I needed. Finally, I soldered all the rail joint connectors before I felt that I had a truly effective power distribution system. You, of course, will not need two power buses. However, my approach made use of what I already had installed and the same idea may be useful to you. As you already know, the choice of the size of wire used in the power bus will be determined by the out and back distance of the longest run from your power source.

For additional keypad connections, I elected to run three No. 18, color coded, wires as recommended by Keller Engineering. I ran these wires continuously around the layout. I allowed some slack to exist so that I could add stereo jacks wherever experience dictated. I am glad I did that because my experience has shown the need to add them in the course of time.

A special feature that I wanted was an emergency stop capability which would shut down the whole system if need be. For this I ran a light (No. 24) wire loop the entire distance around the layout. Momentary, normally closed push button switches located at every keypad plug site are wired into this loop. This circuit controls a relay switch located between the ONBOARD mixer and the track. Of necessity, I had to add a reset switch to restore power to the track when the

problem was fixed. The reset switch is a momentary, normally open, push button. Figure 1 shows how the STOP and RESET switches are wired into the system.

There are several wyes on my layout. As you know, wyes (and return loops and turntables) present a problem to model railroads because they are places where the rails of opposite electrical polarity can oppose one another and cause a dead short unless some provision is made to avoid the short. For the ONBOARD system, providing a means to avoid these shorts in wyes is a bit simpler than in conventional wiring even though the principal is identical in both cases. This is due to the fact that track polarity does not control the direction of the train with ONBOARD. Thus, I chose one track lead to the wye which was as close to my longest train as I could get and wired a DPDT switch into it. Then, as the train approaches the turnout, I simply flip the DPDT switch to the proper polarity for the leg of the wye that the train will use. The gaps in the rails must be at the same location or else a short can occur as grounded truck wheels cross the gap.

Although it is not necessary to divide a layout into electrical blocks with ONBOARD, (or other command control systems) I recommend doing so. On my layout, and I will bet on yours, there are several places where a short circuit can occur in the track. Also, sometimes I unwittingly leave metal tools laying across the track. Moreover, though infrequently, it does occur that a frog polarity switch will get out of adjustment and cause a short circuit. Whatever the reason, blocks with SPST switches will make it possible to isolate the short to a single block relatively easily and, thus, hasten finding and fixing it.

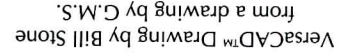
There are other reasons for using blocks. Although, with ONBOARD, as with all command control, you can leave an engine sitting indefinitely in one location (it won't move until it receives a command to do so), it is

often convenient to have spurs or sidings which you can selectively turn the power on or off. Such blocks can be as short as your shortest locomotive or as long as you want them. These can be used to park locomotives or trains that will not be used during a particular session. Or, to "stage" a train which is then left standing on dead track until it is needed. They can also be used to get around the limitation of 20 control channels that are provided by ONBOARD. (Similar limitations apply to certain other command control systems, also). If, for some reason, you must have more than 20 locomotives equipped with ONBOARD, which you want to operate independently of each other, you can use the same channel in two different locomotives and leave one parked on a dead block while the other operates. (Obviously, the use of the same channel for more than one locomotive is also a way of double heading locomotives that are reasonably close to each other in operating characteristics.)

Maintenance has not been much of a problem. I wipe the rails several times a year and apply RailZip (tm). Occasionally, I clean the wheels and wipe the eye of the "chug" synchronizer. With RailZip (tm), I don't seem to need to clean the rails often at all. Of course, DIRT! is the enemy on any layout".

I like John's idea of an emergency stop feature and will try to incorporate it into my own railroad. However, I want to try to find a way to have only the block affected shut down, rather than take down the whole system. When I figure out how to do it, I will let you know.

PLEASE NOTE: I WILL SOON BE PRESENTING A QUESTION AND ANSWER ARTICLE ABOUT COMMAND CONTROL. I HAVE A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS WHICH I BELIEVE WILL PROVE OF INTEREST TO ALL. HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION AND JUST HAVE NOT YET SENT IT IN, NOW IS THE TIME TO DO SO.



PROFILES OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF S GAUGERS

John Metzger

As of June 5, 1992, the membership of the National Association of S Gaugers was distributed as found in the tables that occur below.

POSTAL ZONE / COMPLIMENTARIES W/I POSTAL ZONE

DOMESTIC		LIFE	\$\$\$\$
1.	43	(1)	
2.	22		
3.	142	(3)	
4.	292	(3)	(4)
5.	503	(9)	(4)
6.	91	(3)	
7.	156	(1)	(3)
8.	0		
	1249	(20)	(11)

NUMBER OF MEMBERS BY YEARS

1 - 1966	18 - 1981
1 - 1967	25 - 1982
1 - 1970	28 - 1983
1 - 1971	27 - 1984
1 - 1972	39 - 1985
1 - 1974	27 - 1986
1 - 1975	36 - 1987
34 - 1976	37 - 1988
19 - 1977	167 - 1989
14 - 1978	348 - 1990
18 - 1979	286 - 1991
8 - 1980	144 - 1992

NUMBER OF MBRS BY REGION

732 - EASTERN REGION
335 - CENTRAL REGION
215 - WESTERN REGION
1282 - TOTAL

CANADA

C1	AB	5
C2	BC	2
C3	MT	3
C4	ON	16
C5	QB	3
C6	SK	1
		30

FOREIGN

F1.	AUSTRALIA	1
F2.	GERMANY	1
F3.	SWEDEN	1
		3

RECAPITULATION

(61)	EXP 6/92 S HELPER PAID
(06)	EXP 6/93 S HELPER PAID
(22)	EXP 6/92 CONTRIB MEMBRS
(01)	EXP 6/93 CONTRIB MEMBRS
(12)	EXP 6/92 FAMILY MEMBERS
(01)	EXP 6/93 FAMILY MEMBERS
(20)	LIFE MEMBERS
(11)	COMPLIMENTARIES
890	HAVE PAID 1992 DUES
341	HAVE PAID 1993 DUES
	12 HAVE PAID 1994 DUES
3	HAVE PAID 1995 DUES
2	HAVE PAID 1996 DUES
1	HAS PAID 2000 DUES
1249	USA MEMBERS
30	CANADIAN MEMBERS
3	FOREIGN MEMBERS
1282	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

NUMBER OF MEMBERS BY STATE

AL	3	KY	7	ND	1
AK	0	LA	3	OH	99
AR	5	ME	6	OK	9
AZ	10	MD	41	OR	16
CA	115	MA	56	PA	147
CO	22	MI	42	RI	3
CT	34	MN	16	SC	6
DC	1	MO	57	SD	1
DE	2	MS	1	TN	11
FL	29	MT	1	TX	35
GA	14	NE	8	UT	2
HI	0	NV	3	VA	40
IA	9	NH	8	VT	1
ID	3	NJ	77	WA	25
IL	78	NM	5	WI	32
IN	32	NY	110	WV	6
KS	7	NC	9	WY	1
TOTAL:	1249				

OPERATING AMERICAN FLYER ON DIRECT CURRENT

Bill Krause

(Editor's Note: It appears that many people do not realize that Gilbert American Flyer locomotives are powered with what are called universal motors which can operate either on DC or AC. I have noted that there is an interest in running AF together with scale equipment. Obviously there are obstacles to overcome, but running all locos on DC is not one of them. Bill Krause addressed this matter in the March issue of The Connecticut S Gaugers newsletter and it seems very worthwhile to reproduce his comments here. They have been edited for the purposes of *The Dispatch*...RWJ)

It may seem odd that I as an S scaler should comment on AF operation. However, I am responding to the frequent questions asked of and by the members of The Connecticut S Gaugers.

My response to the question of which sort of electrical power to use for those interested in building their railroad empire and who are interested in operation rather than collecting, is to start right *NOW* by using DC rather than AC to operate your trains. It is also preferable to use a hand-held throttle. To explain that advice, it is necessary to discuss several factors and to understand current product trends.

FIRST, with the exception of a few steam locos made with permanent magnet DC motors, the vast majority of American Flyer locos made by A.C. Gilbert ran on AC. Reversing the direction of the AC locos was accomplished by so-called latching relays which went through a sequence of Forward-Neutral-Reverse-Neutral in typical operation. (Some later relays found in diesel units did away with the neutral positions.) These reversing relays were usually found in the tenders of steam locos or the cabs of diesels. What you may not realize is that these AF locos will operate in the same manner on DC as on AC. In a few cases, the reversing sequence will be more reliably

performed with AC than DC because AC sets up a slight vibration which facilitates the operation of balky latching relays. That is a problem that can usually be solved by a tune-up of the relay. Our Club has been running AF locos with DC on our modules for seven years. Moreover, the Lionel production of AF runs equally well on DC. At a recent Club show, the newly released New Haven EP-5s performed beautifully on DC.

SECOND, if your goal is operation, when you start adding new motive power you are not likely to be selecting AF made by Lionel. Why? Because, you can get more up-to-date technology at lower prices and higher quality by buying American Models or S Helper Service locomotives. I realize that this will be a controversial statement to some, but let me emphasize that my remarks are made with the assumption that your primary goal is operation rather than collecting.

While I am at this point let me point out that you can obtain from these sources 3/16 scale locomotives with hi-rail wheels that will operate on your AF trackage, if that is your preference. As normally equipped these hi-rail locomotives have a highly efficient DC can motor. You can obtain them with an electronic gizmo that lets you operate them on AC for an extra \$31 dollars. But why pay for that when, by operating all locos on DC, you don't need the gizmo at all?!

Now, for the second part of my advice, let me first note that A.C. Gilbert production American Flyer locomotives used motors that were far less efficient than today's DC can motors. Many of those motors will have a current draw approaching two amps; locos with two motors could exceed that current level. Therefore, the commonly available power packs may not have adequate capacity to run an older AF loco, especially if it is pulling a string of lighted cars. To run the older AF locos you need a power

pack that can handle 4 amps! (This does not apply to the newer Lionel production.) Such power packs are available but they get pricey and it might be to your advantage to obtain relatively inexpensive bridge rectifiers and use them in conjunction with your AF transformers to convert the power from AC to DC.

I think there is a better way, though. That is to use hand-held throttles which permit you to walk around with your train. Not only does this enhance your sense of involvement but you get a better view of the action which makes the whole thing more interesting. There are two basic designs of these throttles. One has all but the transformer in a hand-held unit. This design, while less costly, has the disadvantage of getting warm in your hand. This is particularly true with units that must carry the current loads imposed by the older AF locos. Several of my throttles, designed more for HO trains have burned out at club modular meetings. The other design has only the control parts of the circuit in the hand-held unit. These devices are smaller and lighter, but the wiring is more complex.

The unit that we currently recommend to club members is the RIX Hand-held Transistor Throttle (RIX Powerplus Products, 5221 Hogue Road, Evansville, IN 47712. Tel: 812-422-6810.) As hand-held units go this is a comparatively simple device that includes automatic circuit breaker, track voltage lamp, overload lamp, PC board mounting rack, and a 12' cord. It is rated at 4 amps at 6 to 24 volts.

To handle 4 amps of current, the secret of this device is it's big heat-sink that is mounted on a PC board which is 3" wide by 6" long. The cost of this throttle is \$50+, but you may be able to find it discounted.

In Figure 1 below, I have diagramed a complete RIX assembly. Note that it has two sections. The first is the PC board

with the heat-sink with the circuit breakers and the input/output wiring. The second is the hand-held throttle with its 12' cable. The PC board with the electronic components can be mounted in any convenient place on the module or layout. However, you can make the entire unit portable by mounting the PC board with electronic components on a 1 by 3 board approximately 15 inches long. This length accommodates mounting of the receptacle into which the hand-held throttle is plugged and also permits immobilizing the wiring with cable clamps.

In Figure 2, I have presented the wiring of the throttle unit as illustrated by RIX, showing the six wires that lead from the throttle to a Radio Shack polarized connector (RS 274-236 and 274-236). Note that in Figure 1 this connector is attached to the 1 by 3 board to facilitate portability.

In Figure 3, I have illustrated the six position connector showing which positions the six colored wires of the throttle are attached to.

Finally, in Figure 4, I have illustrated the Radio Shack 4 position polarized plug (RS 274-204 and 274-205) which is used to connect the AC input and the DC output. The Connecticut S Gaugers have standardized on this plug in order to have interoperability between members modules.

That's it! I hope that others will find this useful.

S-MOD MODULE STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The NASG's S-MOD System standards and recommendations information is available to all members for \$2.50, or \$5.00 for non-members. Please send a check made out to **TED LARSON** or stamps, in the appropriate amount to the address below. (Questions about the **S-MOD** System should be directed to Don DeWitt, 17 Jonathan Ct., Warwick, NY 10990.) If you wish a written response, please send a SASE.

S-MOD SYSTEM INFO PACKET:
5 Kenicott Circle
Fairport NY 14450

FIGURE 1
PORTABLE RIX CONTROL ASSEMBLY

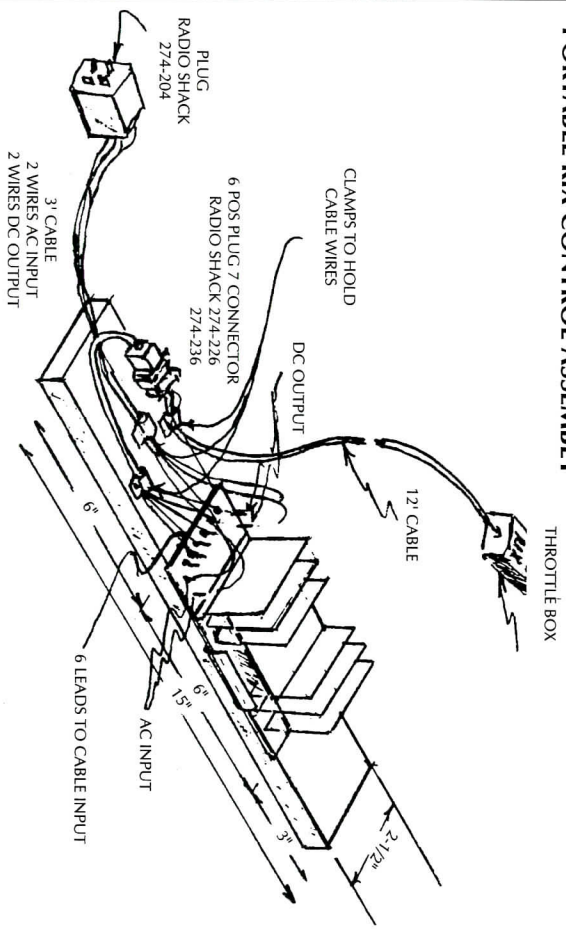


FIGURE 2
RIX INSTALLATION INSTRUCTION

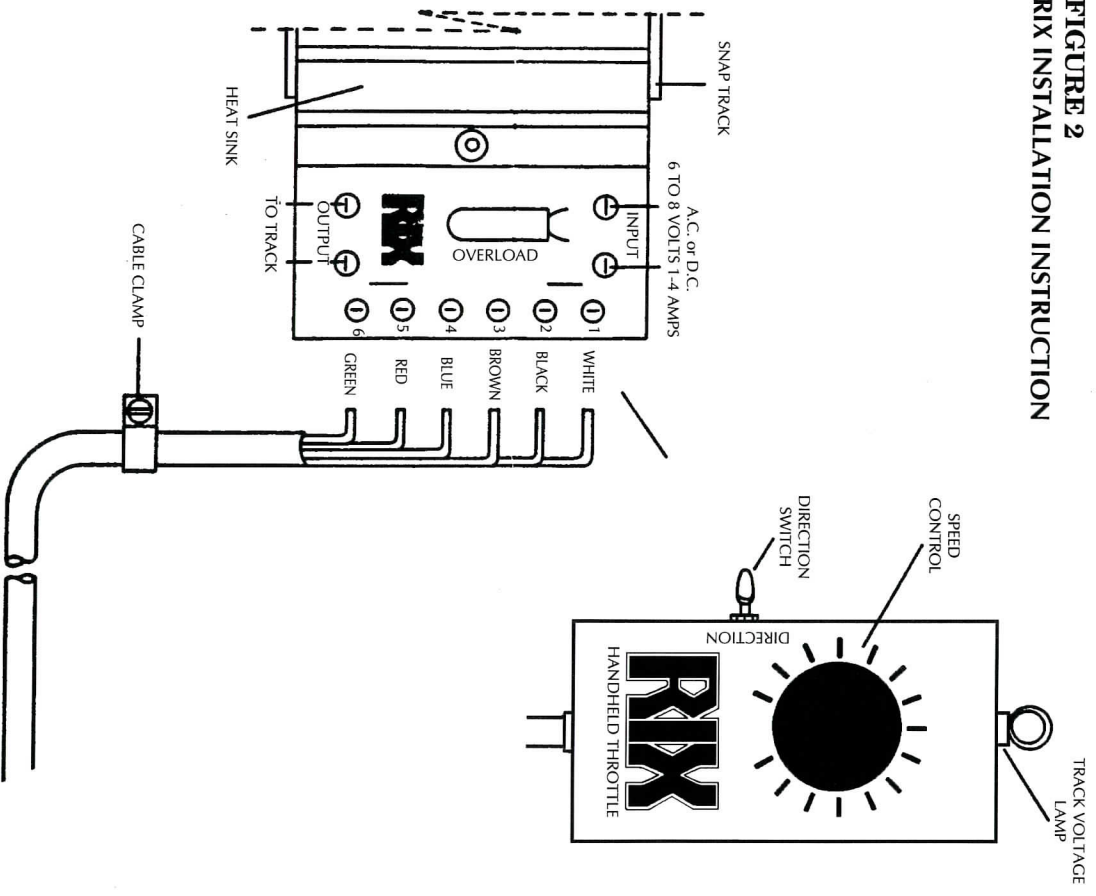
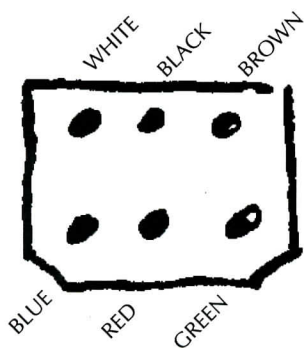
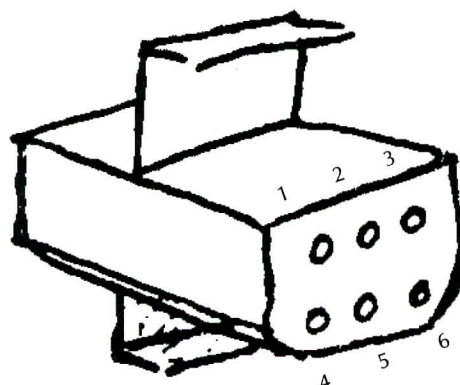


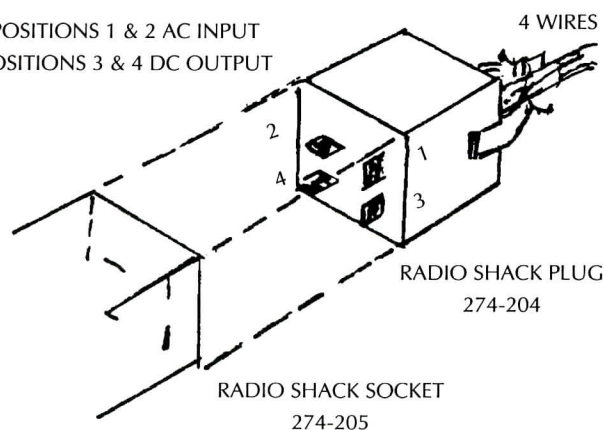
FIGURE 3
SHOWING THROTTLE CABLE
WIRE CONNECTIONS



RADIO SHACK POLARIZED CONNECTOR FEMALE 274-236
WIRE PLUG SAME COLOR & # MALE PLUG 274-226

FIGURE 4
SHOWING AC & DC POWER
CONNECTION

POSITIONS 1 & 2 AC INPUT
POSITIONS 3 & 4 DC OUTPUT



COAST TO COAST IN S SCALE

Bob Jackson

1. The Pattville and Charleston Railroad. Charles Bettinger is a recent convert to S scale. (See "Changing Scales!" in this issue.) The P&C RR resides in Vernon, Connecticut.

2 and 3. Two scenes from John Bortz's well known Pennepack Valley and Western in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania.

4, 5 and 6. Roy Hoffman's Penn Western in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. We understand that the Penn Western has gone to the Valhalla for model railroads. We hope that Roy has enough slides for us to do a retrospective of it.

7 and 8. The Minnesota Heartland, found in Plymouth, Minnesota, is Ken Zieska's favorite railroad. A fuller report is in preparation.

9, 10 and 13. Silas Kayle's P T C and D RR is found in Dave Jasper's home in Bloomington, Minnesota. The PTC&DRR initials are derived from his children's names. I will have to go back to Bloomington to learn what they stand for!

11 and 12. The Lehigh and Susquehanna reflects Bill Smith's love for Eastern railroads despite the fact that the L&S is found in Longmont, Colorado. Bill grew up in Washington, D.C.

14 through 20. Despite the fact that it is in Mercer Island, Washington, the Westchester Connecting Line feels a lot like the New York Central. Since it is Dick Karne's railroad, that doesn't surprise.

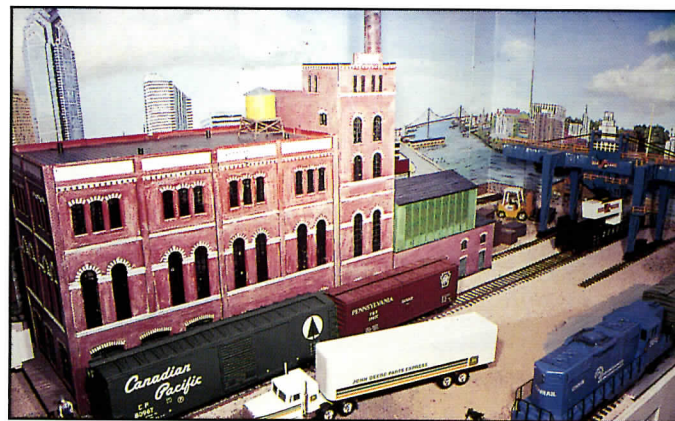
21, 22, 23, and 24. John Tomlinson of Redmond, Washington has the Union Pacific under construction. John has a strong preference for highly detailed scenes which he completes before moving on. We hope another visit to the Seattle area will permit us to check progress.

25, 26 and 27. The Sierra Railway of Northern California was a fabled line in its own time. Barney Daehler's S scale rendition of it is equally fabled among S gaugers.



1

PATTIVILLE AND CHARLESTOWN



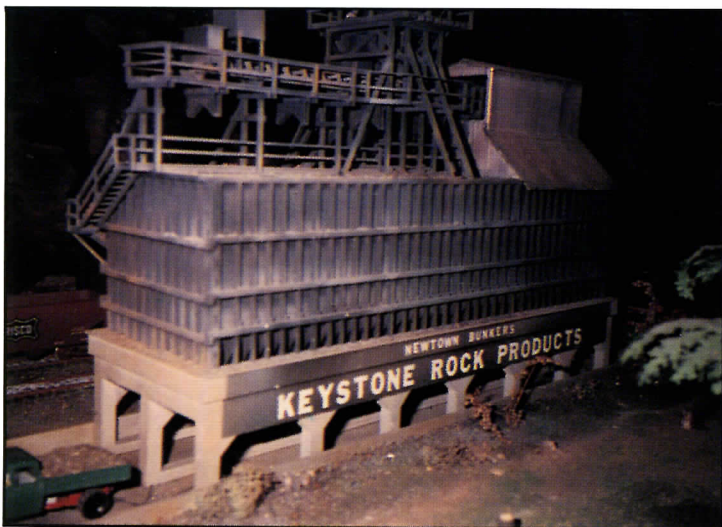
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2



3

PENNEPACK VALLEY & WESTERN

PENN WESTERN

*Coast
to
Coast*



7



11



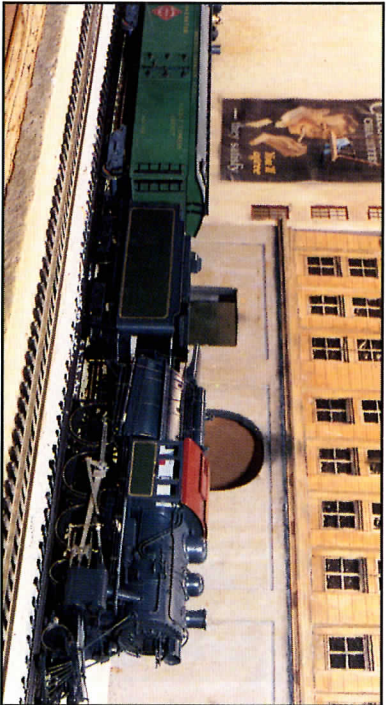
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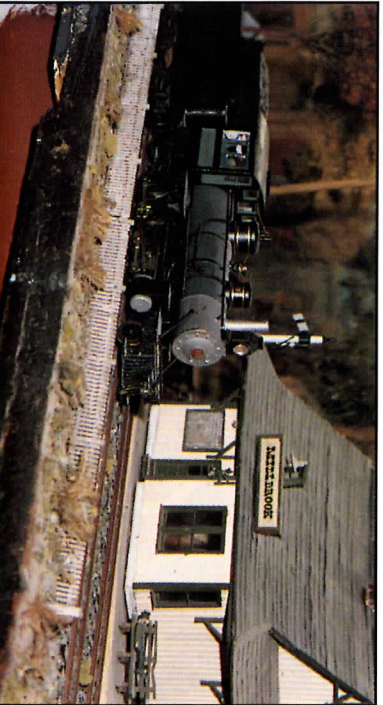
MINNESOTA HEARTLAND

LEHIGH & SUSQUEHANNA

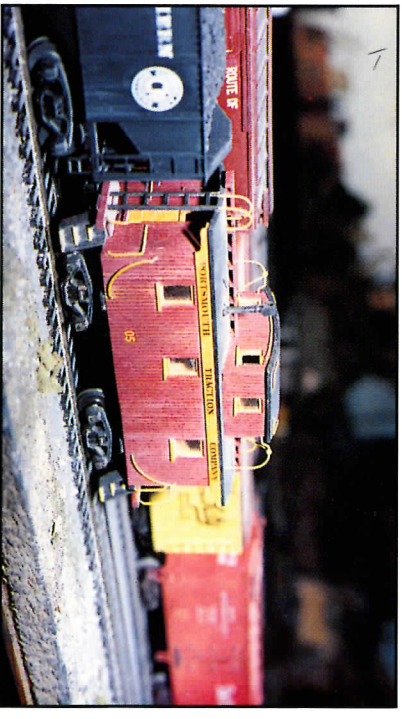


9

*Coast
to
Coast*



10



13

PTC & DRR

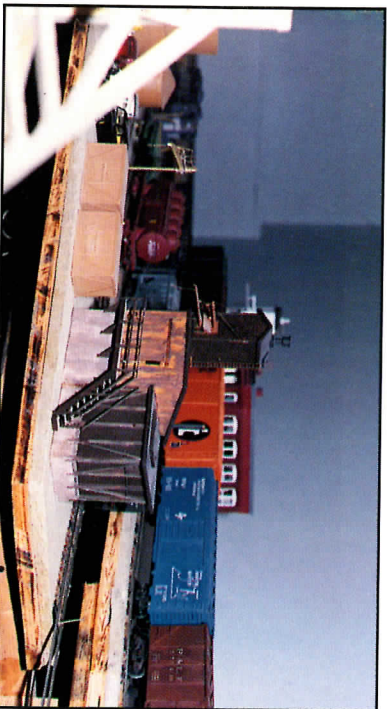
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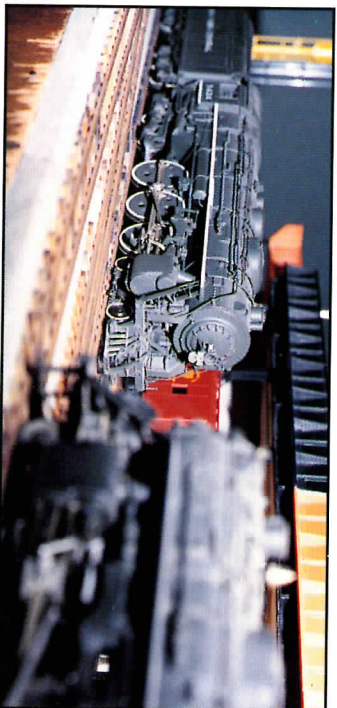
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17

WESTCHESTER CONNECTING LINE

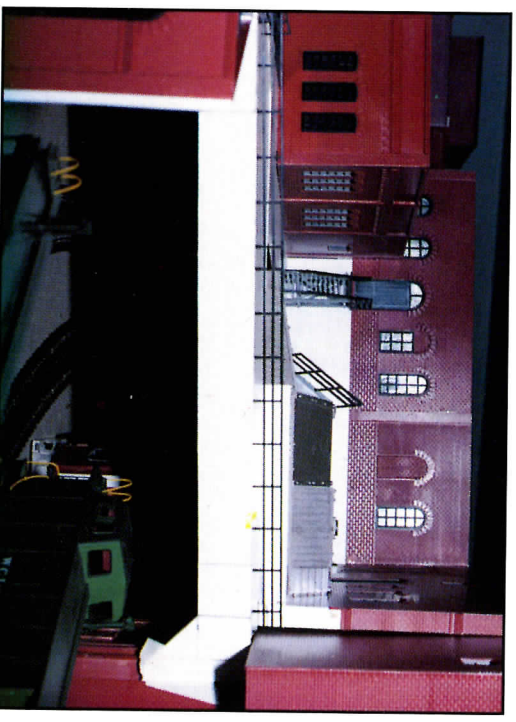
Coast to Coast



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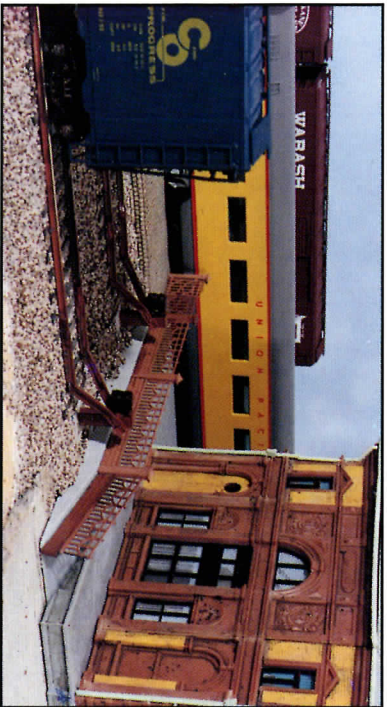
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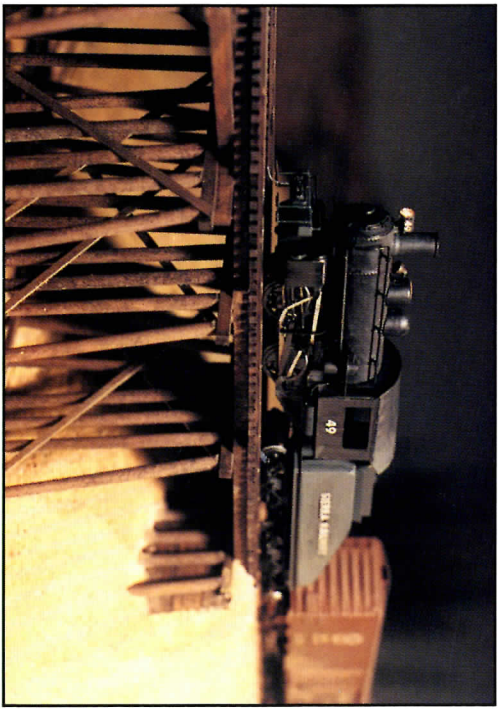


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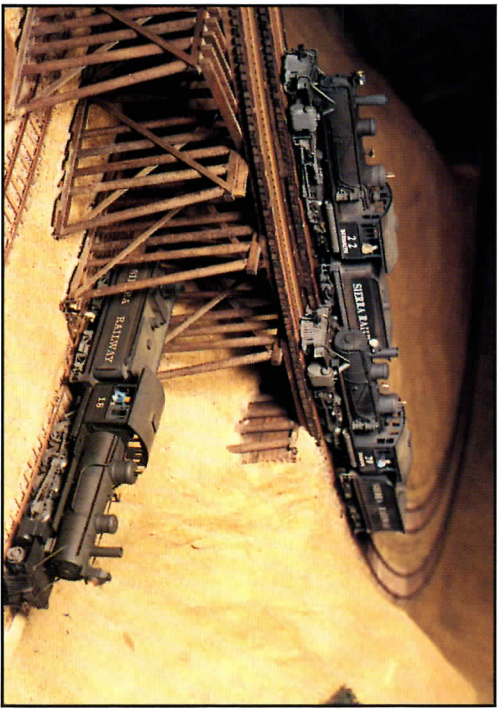


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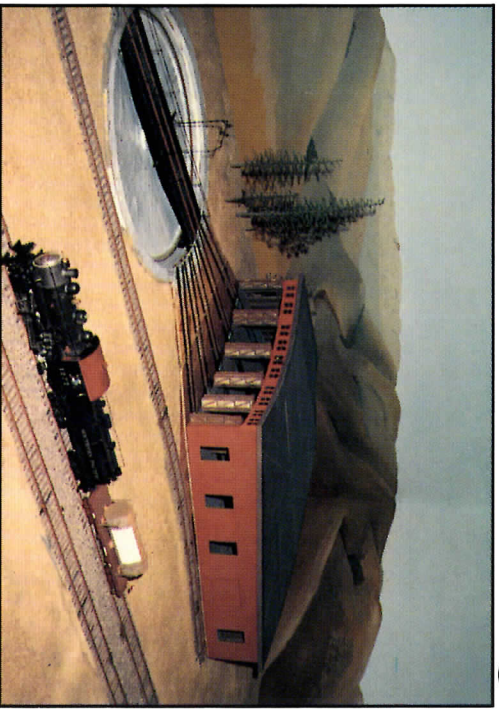
UNION PACIFIC



25



26



27

SIERRA RAILWAY

Coast to Coast

SHORT AND EASY

Kent L. Singer

A Quick Bridge Railing

JOHN LONG, an occasional contributor to the Short & Easy column has come up with a rather interesting idea for a bridge railing.

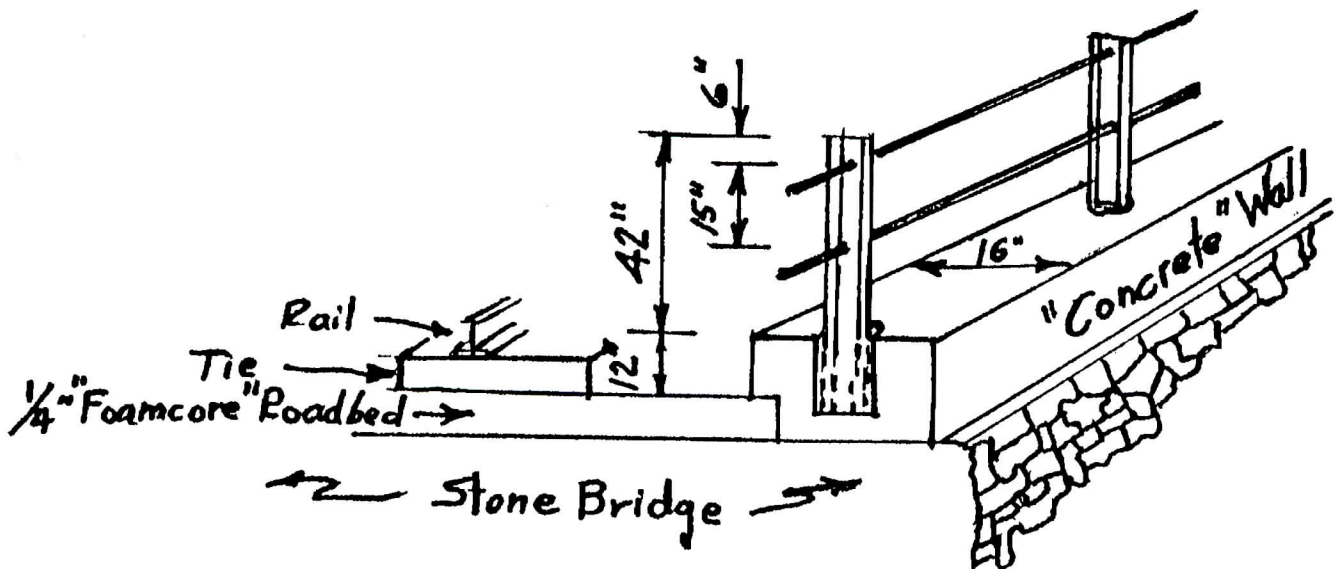
Furthermore, John took the time and effort to write up the concept and provide a usable sketch, something that's always appreciated, and certainly above and beyond the call. So without further nonsense, I'll turn the column over to John.

The stone arch bridge over the river

at Rickville Junction needed a railing to be complete. I had poured a "concrete" wall along the sides of the track but had not erected the railing. My answer to this need may provide the answer to yours. It's quick, easy and inexpensive.

I used 3/32" (6") channel from Plastruct and 1/32" (2") piano wire. The dimensions for assembly are shown on the sketch. I cut the posts 1" long; this scales out to 64". I drilled 7/64" holes in the "concrete" wall at 1-1/8"

(6") intervals. You can space the posts at any convenient interval from 5 to 8 feet. I put all the posts on a pair of pre-cut wires at the approximate intervals, gluing only the first one to the wires until after erection. I filled the holes in the "concrete" wall with white glue and inserted the posts. It helps to first let the glue set a short time to hold the posts where they belong. Also, use a small object to consolidate the glue to avoid air pockets.



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.

CHANGING SCALES!

Roger W. Slack and Charles Bettinger

Editor's Note: This article is a composite of two articles in which the converts leave HO for O Gauge in one case and S scale in another. The idea for this article occurred when I read an article by Roger W. Slack which was published in O Gauge Railroading in February, 1991. Mr. Slack had converted from HO to O Gauge and his article described the sometimes painful transition. I felt that there might be some lessons for us S gaugers which could instruct us how better to encourage others to convert to S. I contacted O Gauge Railroading and received permission to reprint the article. OGR put me in touch with Mr. Slack who agreed to respond to a list of questions that I had provided him. However, Mr. Slack, a comparatively recent retiree, never quite got around to responding. Later, in an offhanded way, I learned that Charles Bettinger had not too long ago converted to S from HO. I then asked him if he would provide a companion article. I leave it to the readers to extract some "lessons".

THE TRAUMA OF MOVING UP TO O GAUGE

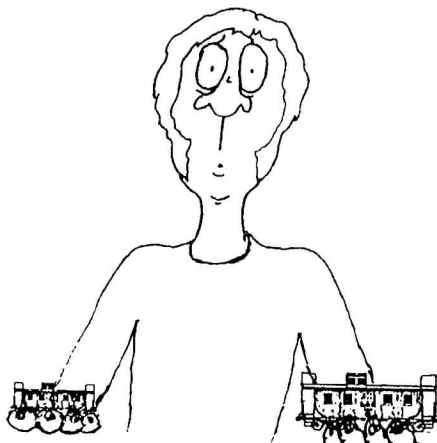
By Roger W. Slack

(reprinted by permission from O Gauge Railroading)

Do you remember what it's like to be a novice? To be in a group of model railroaders and not understand half of a conversation? Well, I just found out you don't have to be new to model railroading to have that feeling—and I had forgotten how lost you can feel.

Recently my wife and I sold our small business, which left time for me to take up model railroading again. Although I am a longtime HO modeler (mostly armchair), this seemed the time to try my hand at O scale for the new layout. This fulfills a longtime dream for the larger size, mostly ignored because we never had enough space for a large layout. Even now space is cramped for O gauge, but the time has come to change. In addition to the dream, I have come to realize that after the age of 50, HO is smaller than it used to be. The decision was cemented in place by selling all my HO equipment. There was now no going back. The next step was to determine what was possible in the available space, and what was available to go into that space.

I started by reading advertisements in Railroad Model Craftsman and sending for catalogs. Then came the discovery of *O-Gauge Railroading*, which helped me focus on O scale equipment and manufacturers. I soon felt like someone in a foreign country, who did not know the language. Lionel terms and acronyms were a whole new lan-



Drawing by Roger W. Slack

guage, while previously familiar terms now had different meanings. In HO scale terms are pretty straightforward and consistent, but not so in O. Scale and gauge are used interchangeably (but not always). "O Scale" seems to be neophyte, usually to refer to scale 2-rail equipment and operation, while "O Gauge" most often refers to tinplate. And Hi-rail and 3-rail appear to be synonymous with tinplate. But then, I found that O-27 meant 27" diameter, not a 27" radius! And switches—the word "turnout" isn't used too much in O gauge literature, where tinplate switches are sold by the diameter of the circle and not by the frog number. What have I gotten myself into?

The next step was to determine what was available and where to get it. I

knew that I needed track, roadbed, switches, structures and rolling stock, but first I had to learn the differences between scale and tinplate rolling stock, locos and track. About this time someone pointed out GarGraves phantom track—the tinplate dream that will help the layout look more realistic.

As I studied OGR and the catalogs I'd received, I quickly discovered that most of the HO manufacturers and distributors familiar to me were not in O scale. This meant learning who made what, with no help from past experience. I poured over the catalogs and back issues of OGR to become acquainted with the suppliers. Compared to HO scale, there were far fewer manufacturers, fewer products, and less selection available. I had known that O Gauge had far fewer advocates than HO, but I had not translated that into product availability. (No wonder so many O gaugers are scratch-builders.) This meant adjusting my wants to coincide with what was available, then finding out where to get these products. None of the dealers in my area has much to do with O scale/gauge—I live in an O scale desert! The primary means of getting the products needed in building my new layout will have to be mail order, with an occasional trip to Roanoke, VA hobby shops (about 80 miles away).

As layout planning progressed, there

have been other learning experiences as well: clearances, grades, and just plain overall size of everything. It's amazing how much clearance space is required for bridges, tunnel portals, and parallel tracks. The space it takes to raise one track over another really hit home. Then the amount of space that structures and scenery required almost did in the whole project. Although I knew the overall size differ-

ence between HO and O water tanks, the impact of the footprint difference did not register until I tried to find that perfect place for the water tank.

What has evolved is that not nearly as much can go into a given space as I first anticipated. The layout planning has included several "back to the drawing board" sessions when things just did not fit into the allotted space.

However, things are moving ahead well now. Structure and scenery planning is finished and the sub-roadbed is almost complete.

Changing scales has been truly an education. I'm looking forward not only to getting the track in place so trains can move, but finally, after so many years, having a finished layout complete with scenery.

GETTING STARTED IN S SCALE

By Charles Bettinger

About five years ago, after having been in HO since about the age of 12 and after having several times started on a layout and then changed my plans part way through, I realized that something about HO just did not quite fill the bill for me. Of course my wife tells the story just a little bit differently. She claims it was part of my mid-life crisis since it was that year that I hit the big FIVE-OH! She may have a point since it was true that I had found that my arms weren't quite long enough any more. Whatever the reasons I decided that I needed a change from HO.

In casting about for information and ideas, I started attending NER conventions to observe what I could. I paid more attention to the O, On3 and S scale layouts, large and small, than I had before. I found that I began to appreciate the larger scales. To get my feet wet, I started to build some On2 freight cars. It did not click with me though and I persevered with HO.

Later, I obtained the Kalmbach video tapes which featured Dick Powell's S scale railroad among the collection of first rate model railroads. That rekindled an old memory. Joe Scales used to live in my area and I had always admired his S scale railroad. The wheels started turning and I began to develop a real longing to create a railroad that was different, challenging and fulfilling.

Still later, I attended the NER convention on Long Island and, while there, visited an S scale home layout. Not bad, I thought, small, but nice. The pangs of hunger for a larger scale began anew. Forget it, I thought, you've got too much invested in HO! For a time longer I ignored the pangs and continued on in HO. But, one day in 1988, I bought one, just one, (having remembered my On2 experience) S scale box car. That was the end of me, I WAS HOOKED!!!

To complete my conversion and make my commitment final, I began tearing down my HO layout and started selling whatever I could at train shows or to friends. I also, little by little, began acquiring S scale equipment as I found it. Needless to say, during this period my HO friends thought that I had totally lost it. My wife discussed whether or not I should be committed (to an institution, I mean.)

Thus did I become an S scaler, not 100% sure that I had done the right thing. Still, the die was cast. I joined the Connecticut S scale group from whom I got some good help. I also linked up with a former co-worker who is in the same scale and that has been a major help.

The biggest problem I had was finding S scale equipment, track, cars, engines and so-forth. Luckily, I found a hobby shop in Warren, MA which

had an AM FP7, GP9, some track, turnouts, cars and so-forth. Not much, but it was what I needed to get started.

Next, I needed a good track plan. With help from my friend, we drew up a plan and were very pleasantly surprised that we could get a very satisfactory plan in the same physical area that my HO layout had occupied. One of the big problems here was getting the old brain upstairs to scale up to 3/16ths. Like they say, teaching an old dog new tricks is not especially easy, but eventually I mastered it. We then set about building the tables and benchwork.

One of the hard learned lessons was that some of my old HO buildings were just the right size for S scale. Yep, you guessed it. I had already sold them. Bad move! Oh well, hindsight is always 20-20! Now, I look for either HO or S scale buildings that will fit my needs.

With all this behind me, I now have a good running railroad, which is what I wanted. I am very happy that S scale is my scale.

If it weren't for the Connecticut S scalers group, talking with other S scalers, and most of all, the support of my Wednesday night group, "The Roundhouse Boys", I would not be where I am today. Thanks to all for your help and support.

TRADE NEWS & VIEWS

By DON THOMPSON

AMERICAN MODELS (10088 Colonial Ind. Drive, S. Lyon, MI 48187) is waiting for the test shots of the handrails to the GP-35's. Once the tooling for this, the fuel tanks, windows and horn is finished, they will be able to ship. Ron has received the first test shot of the Alco PA (Phase 1). American Models is still planing to sell the PA's in the PRR tuscan and the NP two tone green scheme as A-B-A sets. The GG-1, will be offered in the 5-stripe tuscan scheme as an exclusive from S Helper Service. They are trying to have the sectional track back on the market by the convention. A new jig had to be made to pre-bend the rails for the curved track sections.

BILL'S TRAIN SHOP (PO Box 1672, Seffner, FL 33584) is working on models of stock pens. These will include two loading/unloading ramps. One for single level, the other for two level stock cars. The price is to be determined. BTS still has the piggy-back ramps and loading dock kits in stock at \$16.95.

GREENBERG PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC (7566 Main Street, Sykesville, MD 21784) has released its new **AMERICAN FLYER S GAUGE PARTS LIST** and **EXPLODED DIAGRAMS**, 1979-1991 by Gary T. Svehar. This 40 page booklet contains all the diagrams and parts lists which are indispensable for repair and maintenance of Lionel Trains production of American Flyer. It sells for \$9.95 at your hobby dealer.

NORTHWEST SHORT LINES (Box 423 Seattle, WA 98111-0423) now has weathered (blackened) replacement wheels sets for American Models and Pacific Rail Shop trucks. These are made to the NASG standards (code 110 with 0.800" min back-to-back) with pointed axles. The price is \$5.95 for four. They do give discounts

for bulk orders. S Helper Service bought 1000 (half 33" and half 36"). A tip of the hat to Josh Seltzer who convinced NWSL to blacken these wheels for us.

OLD PULLMAN (8195 25th St., Vero Beach, FL 32966) now has NASG code 100 three point check gage. These are used in keeping the rails in correct gauge and are especially important while laying curved track. The price is \$3.95. Other products from Old Pullman are code 100 turnouts (#4, \$14; #5, \$14.50; #6, \$15, #8, \$15.50; and curved 30/48" radius, \$18; both Right and Left) and a 90 degree crossing, \$19.95. All turnouts and crossings come with a template. I wonder if Josh can get them to offer these weathered?

OMNICON (50 S. Lively Blvd., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007) expects production models of the NYC Mohawks any time now. Once they have been all inspected, they will be shipped.

PACIFIC RAIL SHOPS (3205 Helms Rd., Grants Pass, OR 97527) are now expecting the Canadian National 50' boxcars with the noodle logo. The single door car will come with a yellow door, the double door car will have the green (lumber) or boxcar red door. They are working on the NP car with the large NP and logo. The 1937 AAR 40' boxcars may not be finished for the NMRA national convention. You can order these cars until October. More roadnames for the 1937 AAR cars later this fall.

RIVER RAISIN (6160 Upper Straits Blvd., West Bloomfield, MI 48324) expects the Model 40 Burro cranes may be here by the convention. The price is \$299 unpainted and \$325 painted in either yellow or orange. They are still taking reservations on three versions of the GE C30-7 diesels

and a U33C. A \$200 deposit will reserve one unit or \$150 each for multiple units. The price for one unit is \$550, a pair will cost you \$995. Hopefully, we will see a pilot model this fall. In addition to the announced NYC steel bay-window caboose (lot 782 and 827 Nos. 20203-20497), they have added a C&O "90000-series" steel cupola caboose. The C&O cabooses were built from 1937 through 1947. These survived into the Chessie era. The C&O cabooses are due in September and the NYC are due in October. The price for either of these gems is \$159, but if you order and send full payment before August 15th, your price is \$149. They will be imported through Overland Models and built by Ajin of Korea. NYC decals for all the F-units and E-units should be available for the convention. The price will be in the \$10 range.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN PUBLISHING (2929 Blake St., Denver, CO 80205-9920) I usually don't include books, but when they are about a favorite modeling subject that so many S models can be used for, I just couldn't resist. **RAILWAY EXPRESS-An Overview**, by Vic Roseman, is a comprehensive look at one of the most interesting aspects of American Railroads. This 128 page book is chock full of photos, drawings, lettering diagrams, tables and text of how parcels were moved when rail was king. This is a must for anyone who wants to model any aspect of REA operations. I am looking forward to converting several Days Gone and Hartoy trucks to Green REA trucks, as well as one of South Wind's NYC express reefers. This book is a real bargain at \$12.95.

S HELPER SERVICE (2 Roberts Rd., New Brunswick, NJ 08901) has ordered another run of the bodies for the 72' cars. As reported last issue, they are out of the 5 car sets for PRR,

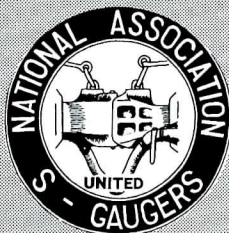
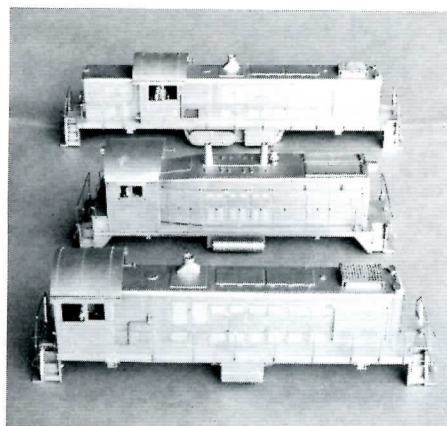
NH, CNW, NYC B&O & Pullman green. They are now putting people on a waiting list and are planning to have them in the Fall. By the time you read this, all the heavyweights should have been delivered. They expect the GP-35 later this summer with tooling being the hang up. They have had a positive response in regards to offering sets with track and transformers. Right now they are looking at heavyweight passenger car sets that would include either a FP-7, RS-3, FA or the new PA. These would be for 1993 and they may have a color catalog.

SOUTHWIND MODELS (P.O. Box 9293, Plant City, 33566) is still taking deposits on several projects. These include: the 9 car 1939 Santa Fe "El Capitan" set of Budd built light-weight passenger cars, the B&O wagon top caboose, PA's, the Harri-man and the PRR passenger cars. If any of you would like any of these, please give Jettie a call so we can get moving.

S SCALE AMERICA (PO Box 671, Kenmore, WA 90828-0671) is now finishing the 48' containers. The cost will be 2/\$10. Larry said they will be making all the other sizes of containers. He has sent a sample of the 48' container to Micro Scale so that they can start on the artwork for decals. Hopefully we will be seeing BN American decals later this summer. The Dash-8's are in the planning stage. Maybe we will see some movement on this in the next few weeks.

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Phone: (09) 833-8711



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POST ITS

FOR SALE FOR SALE

Brass passenger cars and cabooses; American Models undecorated GP-9's and AM FA's painted for Western Maryland; car, structure and switch kits; trucks and automobiles and other miscellaneous items. SSAE or Call. Roger W. Huber, 1218 Wentwood Drive, Pasadena, TX 77504. (713) 487-9088.

WANTED WANTED

Oriental NW-2 or SW-1 (notched hood versions preferred), NASG covered hoppers, Omnicon 4-6-0, River Raisin H-30/30A covered hoppers, Overland B&O Wagon Top boxcars. Roger W. Huber, 1218 Wentwood Drive, Pasadena, TX 77504.

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

Winslow Junction Scale Train and Railroadiana Meet. September 13, 1992 at Winslow Fire Hall, Hall and Hay Streets, Winslow, New Jersey. 10AM to 3PM. \$3.00 per person, Family \$5.00. 150 passes to be issued for a free ride on the caboose on the Southern RR Co. of N.J. Passes issued only to advance reservations. \$3.00 person to obtain passes, no discounts. Contact Bill Powell, 306 Broad St., Williamstown, NJ 08094. (609) 728-1327 'til 9PM.

FOR SALE FOR SALE

S Helper Service Cotton Belt RS-3, new in the box, \$130 plus \$3.00 for shipping. SouthWind PRR R50B Express Reefer, extraordinarily well done custom paint with bronze lettering, \$150.00. River Raisin 40' Pfaunder Milk Car, highest quality custom paint as Bowman Dairy car, \$150.00. Overland GP38-2, NIB, OMI-1782, low hood, extended range dynamic brakes, \$375. Brian Jackson, 2925 Glenmere Court, Springfield, IL 62704.

S LORE

LIGHTING ERTL FIRE TRUCKS: Every S Gauger is always looking for new projects to draw attention to the many scenes that the has created. One attention getting project is a blinking fire truck. There is a simple way to get one with a Micro Liting kit from GRS. The kit is N 1009 LBI, Emergency "Lite Bar Dual Independent Action".

First, I completely disassembled an Ertl fire truck (1/64 scale, of course) to get to the plastic lite bar. At first, I was going to use the lite bar from GRS, but came to feel that it was too small for the S gauge truck, so I used the Ertl light bar.

The Micro Lite kit is great! You should first test the unit with a 9 volt battery. If you are like me, you will be very excited about your purchase.

Wiring is very simple. Drill two holes into the red plastic lite bar, being very careful not to go all the way through. After you have drilled the holes, put the lite bar back on the engine and fish wiring around the wheels.

I placed my truck in front of a Plasticville fire station so as to hide the circuit board. The board can be connected to any AC or DC power source. I use DC, about 9 volts or so, and it works great.

This lighting kit is expensive (about \$32.95) but everyone who sees the fire truck working is very impressed. It adds a lot to an otherwise static scene....John Kosich

GOOD FLYER OPERATION WITH ESHLEMAN'S CLOSED FROG TURNOUTS: (From the Connecticut S Gaugers newsletter.) American Flyer's metal wheels sometimes short circuit at the point and frog areas of Eshleman's closed frog turnouts. First you must use the

power routing method of getting the current to the point assembly and frog area with a micro-switch. Don't depend on the point rails touching the stock rails to do it. In turn, paint your rails with Rail Brown to insulate them. That should solve the problem of shorts occurring with Flyer metal wheels. Jeff Laverty has used Crazy Glue to achieve the same end. Another problem that occurs with Flyer wheels in Eshelman closed frog turnouts arises as a clearance problem. The back-to-back width for Flyer wheel sets is .668 inches. Eshelman turnouts have clearances between guard rails and closure rails that varies between .685 inches and .670 inches. So the solution is to unsolder your guard rails and position them so that the clearance is below .668 inches. You could actually eliminate the guard rails. I don't put guard rails on my scratch-built closed frog turnouts. Finally, note that the flange depth of American Flyer wheels is .106 inches, therefore, code .125 rail should provide sufficient clearance provided that you use Small Spikes by Railcraft....Bill Krause.

SOME USABLE ITEMS AND IDEAS to be found along the way: I have seen the 1/64th scale NASCAR Racing Team semis at K-Mart and auto shows. The modern moving style van could, with a proper paint job, make a very creditable UPS van. The UPSZ decals could probably be made up from letter sets. The tractors could be loaded 3 or 4 to a flatcar as though they were being shipped to a dealer from the factory. Price is real good at around \$9.00

The AHM HO Warren Truss bridge, #2590C, would make a very nice one-lane auto bridge, either as an entrance to a factory, or as a country road bridge. With widening, it could possibly be used as a light weight standard gauge S scale RR bridge.

ERTL has a nice late model Ford pickup, but I have only seen it with monster truck tires. Put those tires in the scrap box for a construction site or for industrial equipment, and replace them with standard sized wheels. A bit pricey at \$4.00, but OK to get 1 or 2 for variety's sake on your roads.

Look for a MAJORETTE display. They have a very nice Jeep Grand Wagoneer and also a modern police car, both of which are nicely scaled and detailed. At \$2.00, a good buy...Ted Larson.

NASG Dispatch Back Issues

Issues Available

1990

Vol 13 1, 2, 4, 5, 6

1991

Vol 14 1, 2, 3, 5

1992

Vol 15 1, 2, 3

Please contact Secretary,
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DEAR @#\$%&*!

Editor:

It is hard to express how I feel. I have never seen a NASG train show anywhere near my home in Lowell, Massachusetts. In fact, I haven't even seen a "S" gauge train show of any kind around here since 1987. I do not believe that I can do much about it, considering that I do not have the money to run a show such as this. I do hope that you will consider having a show of some sort out here sometime or another. If you did, there would be no way that I would miss it. I may be able to help such an effort in some way (not much unfortunately) but I would try. Thanks very much for your time!!

Sincerely yours,
From a concerned NASG member
13 year old David Cunningham

(Well, David, I very much appreciated getting your letter of concern. I do believe the last national convention held near you was in Boston in 1987, as you stated. You would have been about 8 years old at the time and I suppose that 5 years ago would seem like quite a dry spell to you. The national convention needs a local sponsoring group to do the dirty work of setting things up and running the show. Maybe you can work on the Bristol group to sponsor another NASG national convention soon. The Editor of *The Dispatch* does not carry much weight in determining where the NASG holds its annual meetings, but I will forward your letter to Doug Peck and to Mike Ferraro, the President of NASG...Ed.)

Editor:

Thanks for publishing a second "Front Cover" photograph of mine. It is sure rewarding, besides, I like very much the way "Spring Thaw" is printed. It gives a lot of impact to the photograph.

Sorry to see you go as Editor. I was planning to meet you in Cleveland, but I will not be able to make it. Another

time perhaps.

Did you notice in "The Helper Service" on page 29 that my GP38-2W is missing from the picture in the advertisement? This is the second time it happened in three years. Such is life, I guess.

By the way, on page 24 there is a Canadian National GP38-2W, it would be nice to have a better view of it. Did you know that there were only 10 of the wide nose GP38-2s made? I own two, there are two in Winnipeg, one in Calgary and one on Jim Kindraka's module. Can you find out where the other four are?

Happy "S" Railroading,
Denis Fortier

(It was my pleasure to publish your photographs, Denis. Perhaps you will have others to send to the new editor, Mike Palmiter, so that he can share them with the membership. Sorry to learn that you will not be at the Cleveland convention this July. Yes, oddly enough, I did notice that the photo was missing from your Helper Service ad. However, I probably did not notice it soon enough to get it corrected in this issue. Something went awry during production. I will bring it to the attention of the publisher. As to the whereabouts of the remaining GP38-2Ws, maybe our readers will fill me in and I can send the answer on to you. I am reasonably certain that Billy Click has one beautifully done up in MKT livery...Ed.)

Editor:

First, let me congratulate you on the job you are doing on *The Dispatch*, that is why I miss it when it doesn't show up. The last issue I received was February 1992. It seems like a long time ago. Has there been an issue since?

Thank you,
Ernie Horr

(It was a long time between the Febru-

ary and April issues, Ernie. Far too long! Your letter, dated May 17, 1992 gives me an opportunity to explain and to apologize to all for the great delay with the April issue. To begin with, I am "covered up" as they say in this part of the country. Rather than move into a serene and slower paced part of my life, as I anticipated two years ago, I have actually entered a very complicated period and I have far too much to do to without being editor of *The Dispatch*. I can't do a good job with it under the circumstances and therefore submitted my resignation. But to back up a bit, despite my being swamped, *The Dispatch* should not have been nearly as delayed as it was. I was about 3 1/2, perhaps 4, weeks behind my expected schedule in submitting the magazine to Goellner. Since there is a small amount of leeway in the schedule, if all had gone well, most members would still have gotten the April issue in late April or the very first week of May. In point of fact, it did not get in the mail until we were well into May. Production and mailing was beset by some problems including having to wait for mailing labels. I believe that some lessons were learned and that we should not encounter such delays in the future. For my part, I apologize to all members. I caught up with much of my own delay with the June issue. The current issue, the August issue, will be completely back on schedule, barring the unforeseen...Ed.)

Editor:

I wish to respond to your editorial that appeared in the April issue of *The Dispatch*.

Your statement: "Train sets have not been available in S gauge since the mid-60s, yet there has been growth in numbers and in product, especially in the last decade."

My response: The growth that you mention, I believe has been on the SCALE side of S from American Models, Pacific Rail Shops, and other scale producers. Lionel Trains Inc. has reintroduced some train sets and for those people that want the sets that they did not get as younger people, I give Lionel Trains a hearty "Well Done". Unfortunately, these sets do not contain, to my knowledge, either track or a power supply. If I am wrong,

I apologize to Lionel Trains. If the sets do not contain the above items, how does Lionel Trains expect American Flyer to grow?

Your statement: "Train sets have been available in O gauge for some time (and from more than one manufacturer), yet there has been no appreciable increase in the market share held by O gauge."

My response: Lionel Trains has always had the controlling say as far as the train market in O gauge and Lionel has always used three rail track. Only the scalers have used realistic two rail track that is hand laid. There has not been, to my knowledge, an O scale train set available. Williams and Right-of-Way have produced pieces in both three rail and scale, but I do not believe a scale set.

Your statement: "Train sets were used to introduce both G and Z gauge. G gauge established itself in third place (though a distant third place behind N..."

My response: Unless you have a very large basement or a secure backyard, where are you supposed to set up a layout of more than a simple loop in G? The minimum radius is close to 2.5 feet. I give credit to Marklin for the technical development of Z, but do not sneeze and do have excellent eye sight

As for the future of the American Flyer division of Lionel Trains, it would really not take much effort on managements part to make American Flyer really active if they wish to.

The one thing A.C. Gilbert did right when he took his company into S, was to keep the cars and locomotives in scale, but he messed up with the wheels, couplers and the power source. It is true that the details that a scaler would be looking for are not there but

then I am not talking about selling to scalers, but to young people going into HO and N scales.

Make these changes and sponsor a trailer-truck similar to the one now carrying a Lionel layout and they may see growth in the American Flyer group. Don't forget the set with the track and power source.

As for the exposure of S, that will be up to the clubs and people who have layouts. They let it be known that they have S and are willing to show it off on a regular basis, growth will come.

Sincerely.

Michael Scivoletti
NASG, NMRA

(Mike, I left unstated the part of the "train set argument" which suggests that train sets are essential to bring in the beginners, most of whom are young children. Without them, so goes the argument, us old fogies will get older and thinner in ranks until there ain't no more S gaugers. All by itself, the argument makes some sense. I was trying to point out that it should not be taken all by itself; it needs a larger context to determine whether or not it really is true.

When is a train set not really a train set? Why, as you observe, when it does not contain anything to power it or to run it on. As you point out what Lionel Trains reintroduced were the AF trains which us old fogies did not get when we were kids. We already have the track and transformers we need to run them. In short, they appealed to the collectoritis in each of us.

I doubt that it matters whether the introductory train set is scale or not. If it did, most of N would have to be

regarded as made to "tinplate" standards and thus should not be nearly as popular as it is. N scale may be the most remarkable of scales today because of the marvelous detail that much of it now exhibits and because the mechanisms in the higher priced items are as smooth and reliable as any of the larger gauges. Yet, with rare exception, the wheel tread, flanges, and the commonly used trackage is way oversized, which is to say, "tinplate". In this same connection, it should be remembered that K-Line has marketed true O gauge train sets for many years. Lionel does not own that market all by itself. K-Line has also brought back the O-S Plasticville buildings, only under its own name. Perhaps it is not generally known that K-Line is also a source of supply for S gauge track (but not track switches).

You ask, rhetorically, "...if the sets do not contain (track and power supply) how does Lionel Trains expect American Flyer to grow?" Have you considered that perhaps the answer is that they DON'T expect American Flyer to grow? Perhaps they are quite satisfied to supply us old fogies with those sets that we "did not get as younger people." It is not for nothing that the Lionel train sets they produce DO have track and power supply.

I am sure you are right to suggest that clubs are an important factor in exposing S, but I am very skeptical that clubs can serve as the principle vehicle for promoting growth of the gauge or scale, whichever term one prefers, by such exposure. What is your honest answer to the 15 year old novice who, attending your club show, asks you whether he would be better off going into HO or S?...Ed.)



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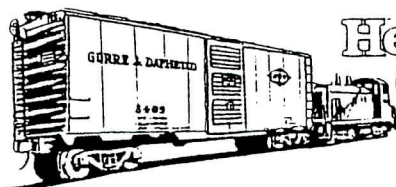
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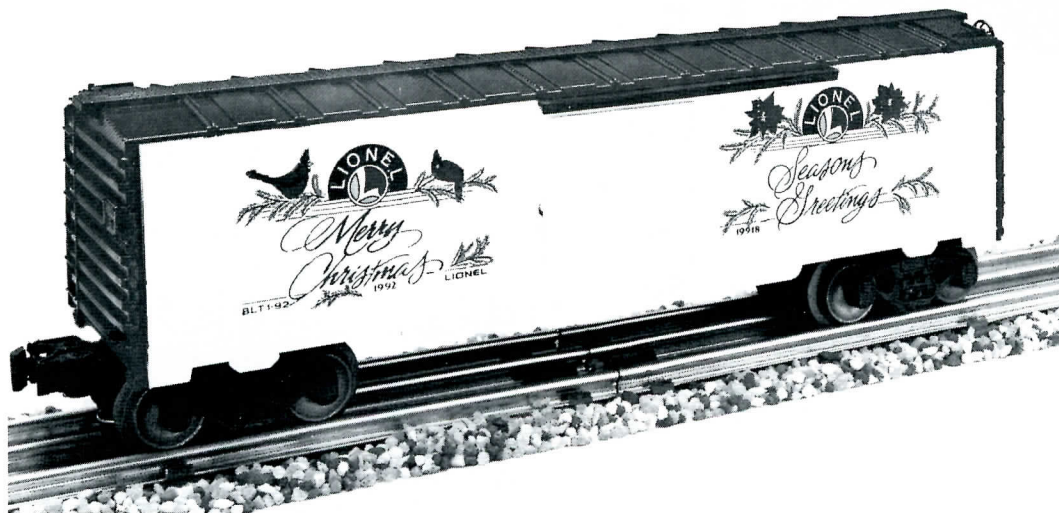
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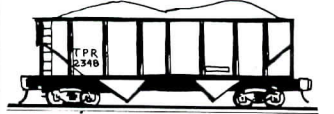
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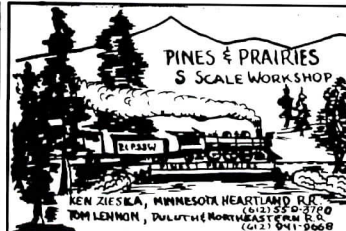
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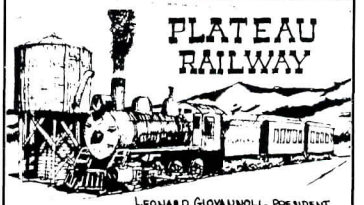


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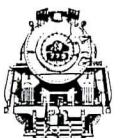
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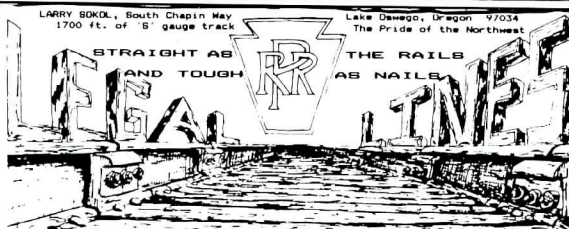
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