



December 1993

Volume XVII, Number 6

DISPATCH



*Oregon S-Scalers
Holiday Track Plan
Inventory Your Equipment
Track Cleaning Ideas*

*Happy
Holidays*

STOCKING STUFFER

American Flyer Christmas Boxcar



Spreading the joy of the 1993 holiday season are a few jolly elves featured in this latest addition to the American Flyer "S" Gauge Holiday Commemorative series of boxcars.

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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-gauge-related materials contributed by the membership. Send all such materials to the editor:

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

The Membership Secretary
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COVER

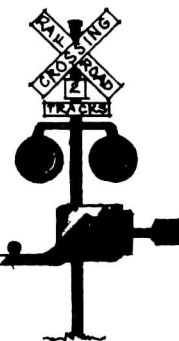
A winter scene on an American Flyer layout at the Famous Barr Store in St. Louis.

Photo by Marty Glass.

ORDER BOARD

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THE DEADLINES for articles are the 1st 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

Gentlemen:

The Christmas holidays have passed and once again trains were a prominent fixture at this time of year in my routine. I trust all of you had a pleasant holiday season and also had the opportunity to operate, visit, or set up a train display. It seems as though from Thanksgiving on, trains—particularly S gauge trains—can occupy a lot of time.

First there are the flea markets from Thanksgiving on. Just prior to Thanksgiving, I attended the S Fest in South Beloit, Illinois, sponsored by the State Line S Gaugers. Quite a show of S gauge, particularly American Flyer, and with 160 tables to browse through, it was a lot of fun! (If you have the opportunity to attend the S Fest, I urge you to do so). As always, in addition to the trains it's a time to renew acquaintances with S gaugers from another section of the country, and that's enjoyable too!

If you belong to a train club which sets up a layout at these holiday flea markets, you have an excellent opportunity to operate, explain and show off S gauge. This is perhaps the best opportunity that we have to actively promote S gauge to the general public. If possible, have a variety of S gauge items on hand: American Flyer, American Models, Pacific Rail Shops, SN3, S scale, etc. You may be interested in only one of these areas, but to be fair to our gauge you should try to have all of them to display so you can point out the wide variety of our gauge covers. (Here's where your knowledge of S is put to the test—and perhaps you'll need to broaden your knowledge of S products so you can provide answers to any questions!) Especially at a public display, we want to show those attending that S gauge spans a wide variety of interests and we can truthfully say we are NOT a “dying gauge, hard to find, or not made any more.”

Also, you can promote S gauge within your family by setting up an oval of track around the Christmas tree. Here's where you can operate a small train (or a bigger consist, if you're so lucky!) to perhaps start a tradition with your family or merely continue a tradition that was begun in your family when you were growing up. (Next year we'd like to feature Christmas layouts in the *Dispatch*, so if you took some pictures of your display this year, editor Jeff Madden would welcome a picture and a short narrative to print in next year's magazine.)

What about giving an S gauge train set to either your grandson (or granddaughter!) or a niece or nephew, so the tradition will continue? As a tradition at the S Fest, a train set is part of the banquet raffle drawing, and the Chicagoland club asks the winner to provide a name of a deserving child that the set will be given to at Christmas. An excellent idea for train clubs or groups, as the spirit of giving a Christmas gift

Continued on Page 30

From The Editor

The holiday season is upon us again. Outdoor activities fade away -- model train interest perks up, swap meets abound, club activities pick up and model building increases as the daylight hours shrink and the weather drives us indoors -- at least most of us.

In addition, the Christmas season gives us an additional excuse for setting up non-permanent S gauge layouts to entertain the kids and grandkids (oh sure). If setting up a temporary Flyer layout for the holiday season isn't your usual thing -- maybe it should be, even if you have a permanent layout taking up most of the basement or garage.

Why? Well, for one, S scalers or S Hi-railers usually have some Flyer equipment collecting dust somewhere and, of course, Flyer operators have plenty of ready-to-go equipment on hand. What better time to set something up for family and friends to view with the added incentive of maybe sparking the interest of any visitors, young or old, in S gauge trains.

What better way to tout your hobby and create conversation than by cranking a colorful train around the Christmas tree which would be sure to impress youngsters and novice adults alike, not to mention your train buddies. A holiday layout creates an ideal opportunity, especially for those who don't have a permanent home layout, to become active in your own home, no matter how small.

Flyer track and trains work pretty well right on a carpeted floor. Track clips would help reduce pull-aparts. And for those handyman types inclined to be more elaborate, a seasonal layout can become a winter project too.

For those wanting a more permanent track base, a simple 4x6' or 4x7' platform of plywood on furring strips (room to hide wires underneath) should suffice. Paint the platform green or brown, paint in some roads, pre-wire, screw down a simple oval (or at least a basic layout) and you're ready to roll. If desired, leave space for tree and stand where buildings or accessories won't be in the way.

After the holidays, buildings and accessories can be cleared off and the platform, with track still in place, stored away on end.

Whether you use a platform or lay track right on the carpet, a snowy scene can be created by using a white felt mat, a white tree skirt or even the old reliable white sheet. A flat mirror edged by fake snow makes an ideal ice pond.

For those inclined to have more track than a simple oval, see my brainstorm article on pages 18 and 19.

And those who really get enamored over this idea can even extend the temporary layout theme to other holidays -- just think: Valentine's Day, Easter, 4th of July, birthdays, etc.

Changing the subject, I'd like to mention that if you want to get your 2 cents worth in about S products you'd like to see produced, fill out the survey enclosed in this issue and mail it to the NASG Manufacturer's Advisory Group.

- Jeff Madden

- S LORE -

Front Coupler for a "283" Pacific

Gary Ippolito

One of the nicest qualities of the American Flyer 0-6-0 and 0-8-0 locomotives is their ability to be double-headed with another locomotive. A double header is impressive, creates clouds of smoke, and allows more cars to be pulled in a train. Unfortunately, it becomes costly to buy multiple copies of these locomotives just for their "play value".

An easy and inexpensive alternative is available by using the "283" Pacific instead. This locomotive is common, inexpensive, and has a front pilot capable of being easily modified. Body shells are also readily available at swap meets and from several dealers.

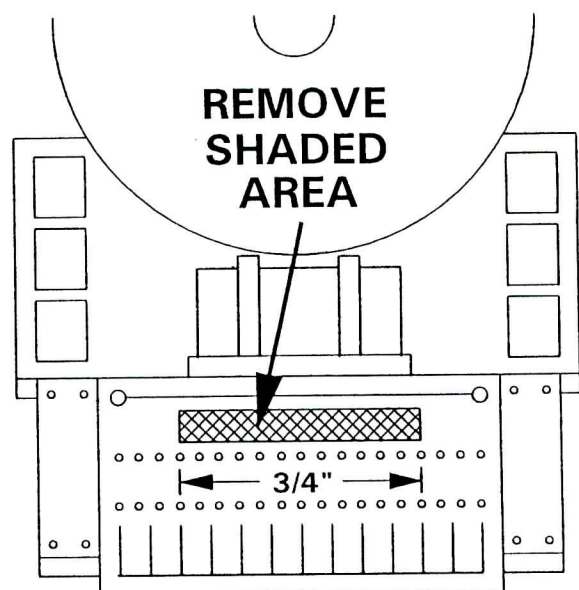
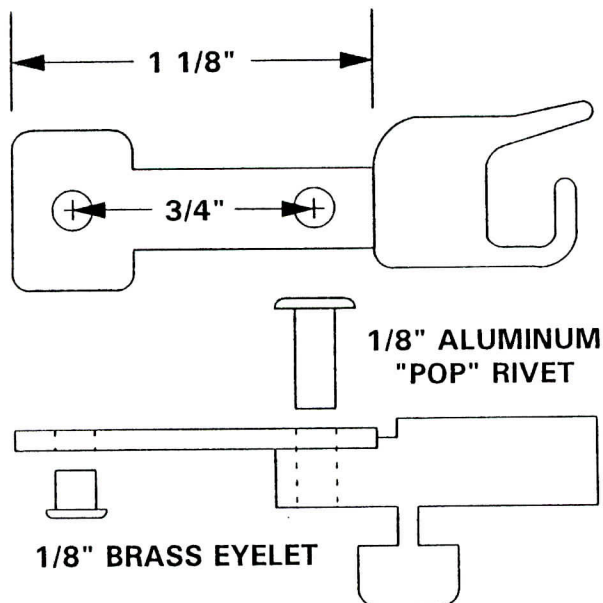
To begin modification for a front coupler installation remove the body from the chassis and mount it securely to your workbench. Use a Dremel tool or file to make a slot in the flat area between the coupler bar casting and top row of rivets. Be sure that it is smooth since the new coupler will slide along it while going through curves. Remount the body to the chassis.

For those of you who like to fabricate, cut a piece of styrene to resemble the coupler draw bar shown on the diagram. For guys like me, scrounge through

your parts bins to find an American Models dummy coupler, cut it to length, and drill another 1/8" hole. By mounting a replacement American Flyer coupler below this bar, you should get the correct coupler height. I attached the two using an aluminum "pop" rivet painted black to get a more finished look.

Lay the locomotive on its back and remove the original lamp bracket screw. This is where the new coupler will be mounted. Leave the bracket in place. Slide the coupler assembly through the front slot and line up the mounting hole. Insert an 1/8" brass eyelet into the coupler bar. Install a 3/8" long screw through the eyelet, lamp bracket, and into the body. It may be necessary to place a shim between the locomotive body and lamp bracket to get the coupler bar level. Check the coupler for side-to-side movement. Depending on the replacement coupler used and where A.C. Gilbert drilled the mounting hole, it may be necessary to remove some material from the back of the coupler to get full range of motion.

That's all there is to it. Now you're ready to set it on the track, couple it to another locomotive, and watch the smoke fly!



THE OREGON S SCALERS' PORTABLE LAYOUT

By Dick Karnes
Photos by the Author

It all started when Norm Strain, a machinist for Wagner Mining and Construction Equipment, wanted to form a club to build and operate an S scale layout. Despairing of incidentally bumping into another S scaler, Norm posted signs seeking other S scalers in every Portland-area hobby shop. This simple expedient uncovered five more like-minded people — Richard Eggertson, who owns a record store; truck driver Bob Boring; Gil Hulin, a self-proclaimed gad-about; John Verser, proprietor of Pacific Rail Shops; and prison employee Doug Howard.

The six formed a club and began layout construction three years ago. There are no club officers and no dues. All club members share in the work and the expenses. The layout's locomotives and rolling stock are all owned by individual club members.

Richard is the structures specialist. All members do track-laying. Bob and Ken Heine (an HOer who's an "associate" member) did the wiring. The layout's home base is Bob Boring's "retired" cabinet shop.

The scenery is Sculptamold over styrofoam. Track

is flex - both Shinohara (Scenery Unlimited) and Tomalco. Turnouts are Shinohara. The trackage stops two inches short of the end of each section; four-inch "bridge tracks" complete the track between sections. The bridge tracks are kept in alignment with brass pin-in-tube "keys". A five-amp power supply is ample for the layout's electrical needs.

The layout is portable, not modular. "Portable" simply means the layout is constructed in separable sections for easy transport. The sections must always be reassembled to the same layout configuration. By contrast, in a modular system each section is unconditionally interchangeable with any other section, thus allowing complete freedom of layout configuration.

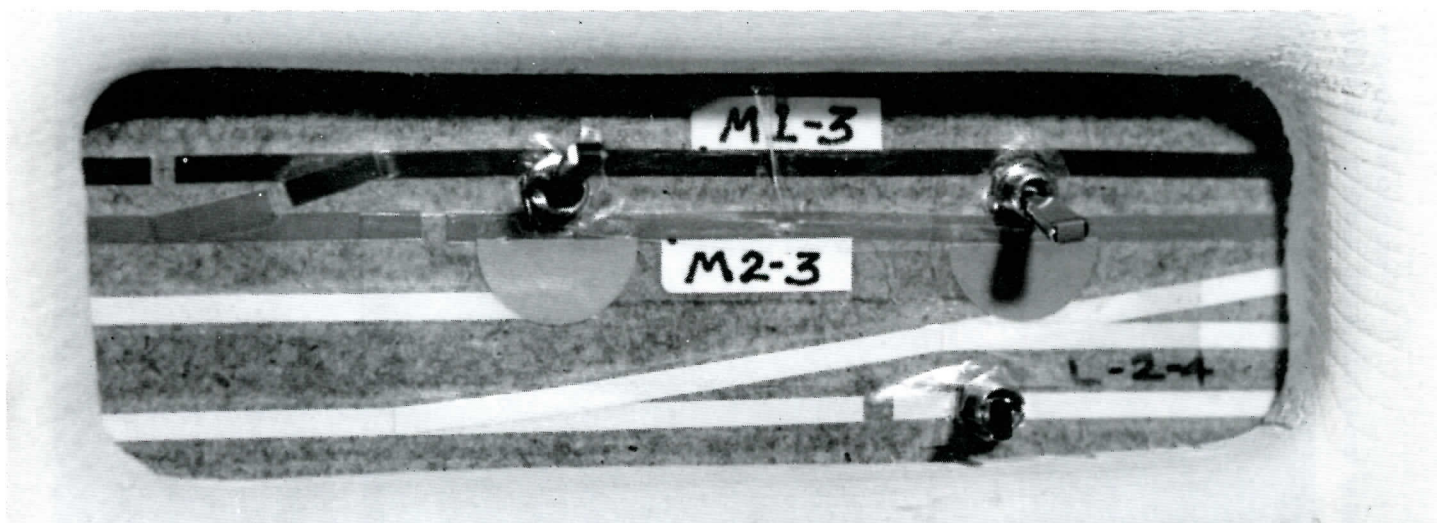
The Oregon S Scalers exhibited their layout at five shows in 1992. Construction plans for this winter include modifying a corner section for compatibility with the S-MOD System, allowing attachment of modules built to the S-MOD standards. This will be ready in time for the upcoming 1994 NASG convention in Portland, OR, where the Oregon S Scalers' layout will be the "host layout."



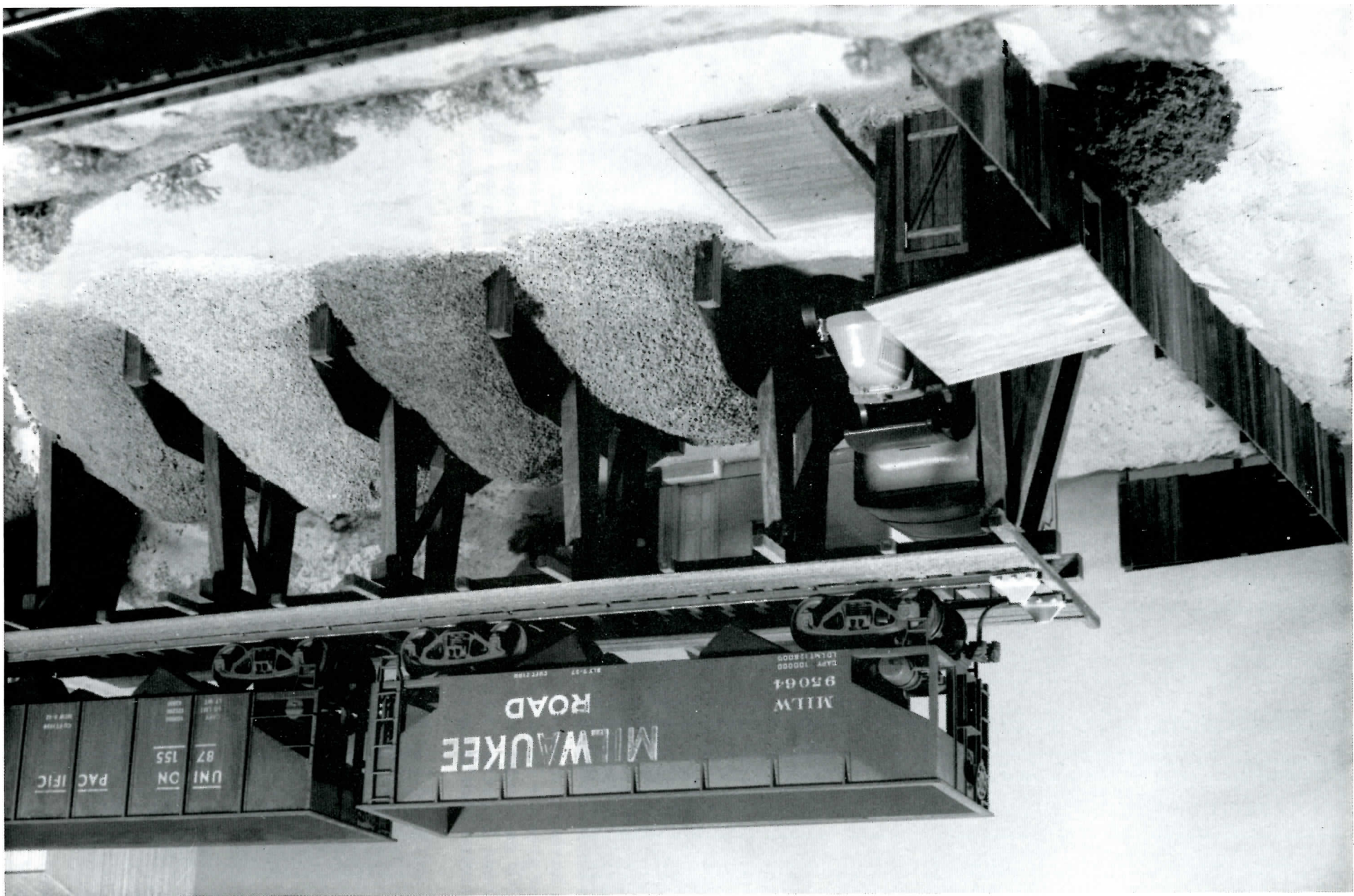
Norm Strain's Overland FEF-3 storms onto a double-track wood and steel trestle built by Richard Eggertson. Norm painted and lettered the locomotive himself.



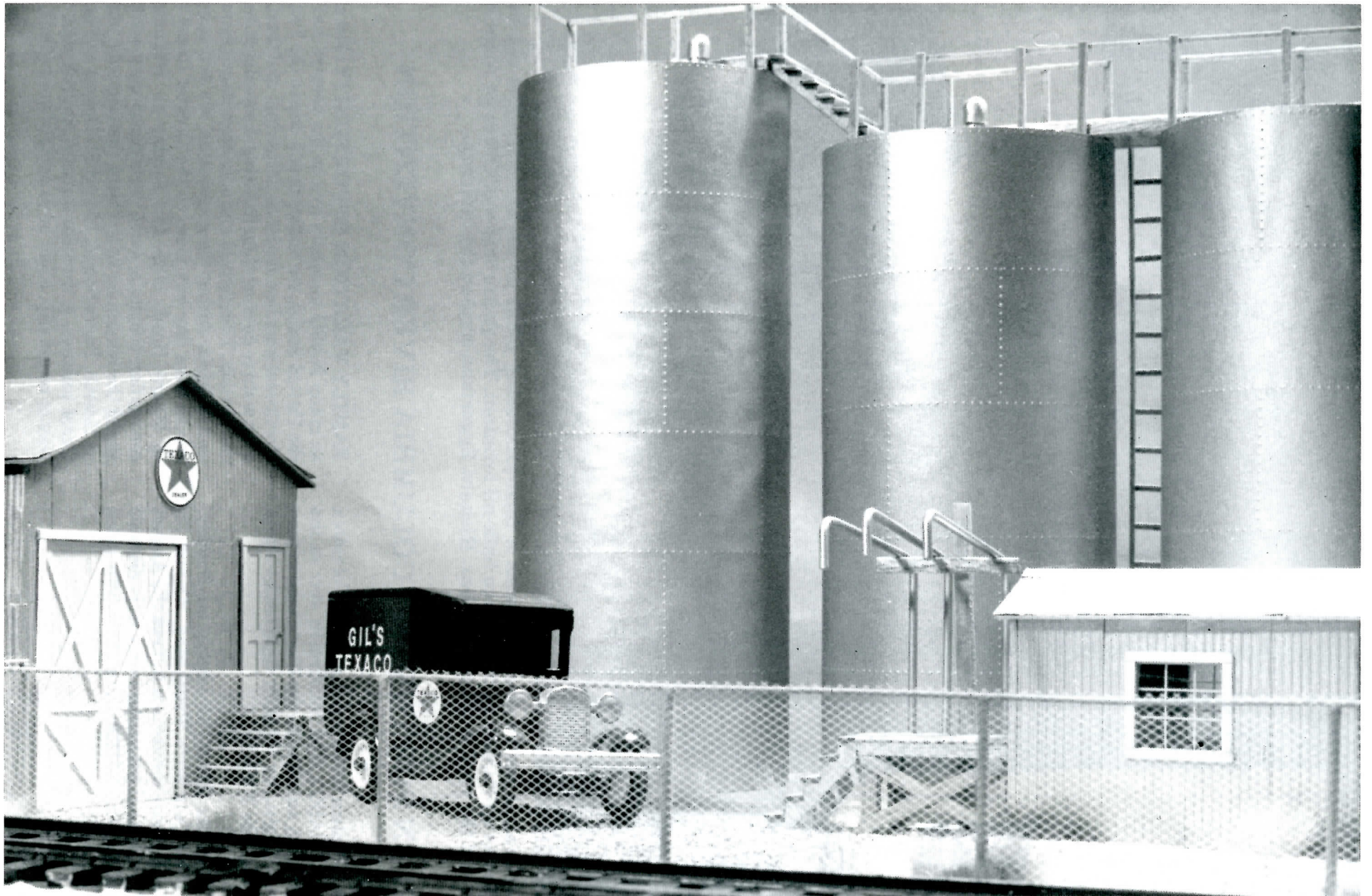
Gil, having just negotiated a better deal with the Texaco bulk-oil distributor, trundles out of the plant grounds in an ancient Ford van on his way back to his local service station. Meanwhile, an NP passenger train with a borrowed UP FEF-3 on the point rushes by in the background. Richard Eggertson built the bulk-oil depot. The old Ford is a Matchbox vehicle; the sedan is a repainted Dick Tracy car. Norm Strain owns the FEF-3, an Overland import.



Electrical expert Ken Heine recessed the block and turnout controls into the fascia on the inboard side of each layout section. Thus, although quite accessible, they are protected from incidental actuation by passers-by brushing against them.



The local crushed rock dealership has its own rail trestle. The structures are Richard's work; the hopper cars are from American Models kits, and the van is a Matchbox "Mack". The crushed-rock piles are made from HO scenery products.



The old Ford wobbles into the Texaco bulk-oil terminal. This nicely done plant is another example of Richard's work.



A PFE mechanical reefer stands outside a food-processing plant as an anachronistic old Ford van trundles by on its way to the Texaco bulk-oil terminal. The reefer was built from an American Models kit and the Ford is from Matchbox. Richard Eggertson created the building.

PLAN FOR THE 1994 COLUMBIA RIVER CONVENTION

The Oregon S Scalers invite you to attend "Columbia River '94", the NASG's first convention ever in the Pacific Northwest, and first on the West Coast in nine years. This will also be NASG's first back-to-back convention with the NMRA.

DATES: Columbia River '94 begins on Sunday, August 21, 1994, and ends Wednesday, August 24. The national S gauge convention follows the August 15-20 NMRA national convention (one mile distant) and the August 19-21 NMRA train show (two miles distant).

FAMILY VACATION OPPORTUNITY: Because so many NASG members live in the eastern half of the United States, we realize that a trip to the Pacific Northwest may be a major undertaking, and families may want to do more than just attend a model railroad convention. To entertain and educate non-rail spouses and children during the convention, we will operate consecutive day bus tours to the Oregon Coast and to Mount Hood. With the Sunday to Wednesday convention schedule, some registrants may want to spend the remainder of the week visiting such sights as Seattle, Puget Sound, Mount St. Helens or Pacific Coast beaches. A transcontinental Amtrak ride, one way or round trip, could be in some of your plans.

BE SAFE, BE ORGANIZED — INVENTORY YOUR EQUIPMENT!

- SHORT, SWEET AND SIMPLE -

By Russ Mobley

Some time ago I made the statement that it's really funny how all this model railroad junk gets collected over a period of years. On the other hand, it ain't so funny how all of a sudden it might disappear, either by natural disaster (the Mississippi floods) or via theft. It usually becomes difficult when you can't remember what was in all those boxes that were destroyed or stolen.

Even if you remember most of the major items you lost, every good insurance adjuster will hound you for detailed information so he can begin to weasel you down on the claim (that is if you were fortunate enough to have a rider on your policy to cover your hobby collection).

During one of my travels, I met up with a real slobbering Pennsy freak who got me started on my own inventory system using a set of cards and an inventory list.

Like his, I use 3 sets of cards: One for motive power, one for passenger cars and one for freight cars. (See Figs. 1,2,3). At the time, I took one of each of these to a print shop and had several hundred made up. For those who want to use my system, Alan Evans of Rocky Fork Printing Co., P.O. Box 30345, Gahanna, OH 43230, has plates of the cards already made up.

After you have gotten all your cards back from Alan or otherwise, go to an office supply store and pick up a small card file box to hold all your cards with room to spare for some dividers -- you know, like a long recipe box.

After you get the estimated number of cards you need, get yourself a legal pad and make divisions and categories as shown in Fig. 4. Fill in the columns neatly. I would list all locos first, then freight cars, then passenger cars, then major accessories. Price each item to include current value plus some for any materials you used in construction.

Next I would list track, turnouts, smaller accessories, scenic materials, parts, tools, trucks and couplers, power packs and so on. You would probably find it most convenient to lump these items into groups with a good guestimate of worth for each group. You will need blank cards (or design your own) for all the items other than those for motive power and rolling stock.

Be reasonable on your values as any good insurance adjuster can see through inflated claims. Most railroad equipment does seem to appreciate in value, so I would get a "rider" on your home policy to cover the overall value of your equipment which is figured out by totaling the list. It would be a good idea to file a copy of your inventory list with the insurance company even if you have to update it now and then. Of course, keep a copy in a safe place around the house too.

Now, after a few hours rest and a good cup of coffee, get out those cards you had printed (Figs. 1,2,3). Fill out a card for each item on the master list even if they're grouped items like track or power packs. Most, of course, will be motive power and rolling stock. Again, you may want to use some blank cards for the non-motive power and rolling stock items.

Next, get out your file box (deep enough for all your cards plus). Use taller dividers to separate all the cards in the file box into categories and subcategories. You might want to subdivide your passenger cars into built-up and kits, for example. Or maybe you want to have all your freight cars under type -- box, reefer, tank, etc.

At any rate, insert all the categories that you think you will need to facilitate your filing system. File the cards in their categories and store in a safe place. Don't forget to update your master list and cards as you buy and sell items. Every now and then, especially after major sales or purchases, give the insurance company an update too. A computer would help for a master list if you have one.

Once you complete your inventory, don't let the other half see it unless absolutely necessary, or you might end up in the "doghouse" or banned permanently from hobby shop visits.



FIGURE 1

MOTIVE POWER RECORD



TYPE	Road	Number	Mfg.	Model	Blt.
	Wheels	Class	HP - TF	Length	Wheelbase
	Material	Acquired	Blt./Painted	Cost	
	Couplers	Motor	Paint	Fair Value	
	Condition				
	Modifications				

Figures 1, 2, and 3 are samples of Russ's inventory cards. All cards plus dividers are stored in a metal file box.

FIGURE 2

FREIGHT CAR RECORD



TYPE	Road	Number	Mfg.-Shop	Blt.
	Length	Capacity	Ld. Lmt.	Lt. Lmt.
MFG.	Material	Acquired	Built	Cost
	Couplers	Trucks	Paint	Fair Value
	Condition			
	Modifications			

FIGURE 3

PASSENGER CAR RECORD



TYPE	Road - Owner	Number	Mfg.-Shop	Blt.
	Name	Capacity	Length	Vestib. Lg.
MFG.	Material	Acquired	Built	Cost
	Couplers	Trucks	Paint	Fair Value
	Condition			
	Modifications			

FIGURE 4

Model Railroad Equipment List:

AMOUNT	MANUFACTURER	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1	Ames Models	40' Box Car - NYC #215670	\$22.95
1	PRS	50' Box Car - U.P. #479683	\$27.50

Your inventory sheet should look something like this. You can be neat and set it up on a computer or just hand rule and print on a legal pad.

- ONE CLUB'S SOLUTION -

USING ELECTRICAL BLOCKS ON THE S-MOD MODULE SYSTEM

Gaylord Gill

Introduction

This paper describes the electrical features of the S-MOD Module System. It also points out some of the principles adopted by the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers.

Track Wiring

A basic wiring principle of the S-MOD electrical system is that each rail of each mainline track is connected via feeder wires to a buss wire running under the module. This is different than the technique of common rail wiring which SMSG originally used. Wiring each rail independently allows S-MOD modules to be reversed (front to rear), maximizing layout design possibilities.

Two-Pin plugs

Another key feature of the S-MOD system is the use of two-pin plugs as a way of providing a standard interface between modules. Note that the two pins of each plug (and socket) are different sizes, which helps insure that the connections are always made the correct way (Fig. 1). The plugs should be wired so that the larger pins are to the outside of an imaginary centerline between the tracks.

Two Subsystems

1. Wire-To-Rail

The wire-to-rail subsystem is the more elementary one. Modules wired this way have a minimum of two plugs (carrying four wires) at each end for the 4 rails of the mainline tracks. With this subsystem the power packs are essentially hard-wired to the tracks. SMSG does not have any modules using this subsystem.

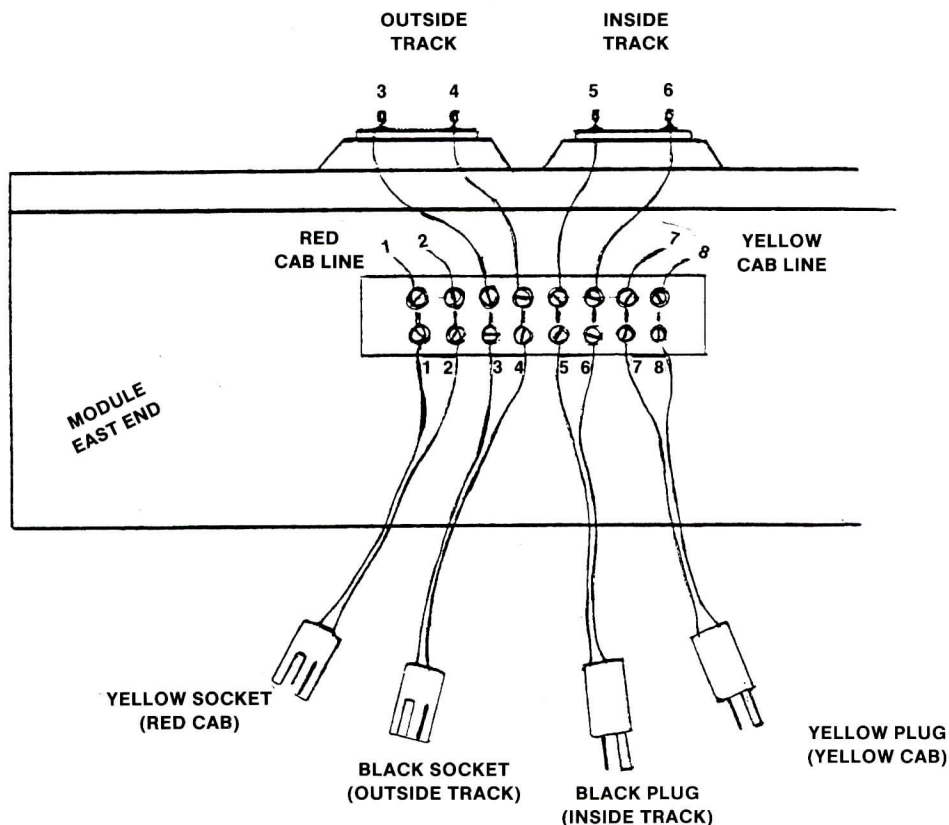
2. Rail-Cab Subsystem

The rail-cab subsystem is the more versatile subsystem and the one SMSG uses. Modules wired this way are characterized by four plugs (carrying 8 wires) at each end. The two additional plugs are the cab plugs. The balance of this article will further describe the rail-cab subsystem.

Cabs Defined

As the term implies, the cab is the control point of a locomotive. In the S-MOD system each cab consists of a pair of buss wires connected across modules by the standard two-pin plugs. A key point to remember is that cab circuits are never broken, but are always connected continuously across all modules.

FIGURE 1



Identifying Cab Lines

The cab lines can be identified easily by the color of the plugs at the end of each module. All cab line plugs in the S-MOD system are painted yellow, while the track line plugs are left black.

Two Mainline Cabs

The S-MOD system provides for two mainline cabs. The standard designations for the two cabs are Red Cab and Yellow Cab. (Note that even the red cab line has yellow plugs at the module ends) -- slightly confusing, but one of the compromises which allows the modules to be reversed.

Local Cabs

There are also provisions for local cabs, which as the name implies, are cab circuits restricted to a localized area. There are no S-MOD standard connections which will carry local cabs to other modules.

Attaching Power To Cabs

In the Rail-Cab subsystem, the power packs are connected to the cab lines. SMSG has customized connectors for this purpose. Since the cab circuits are continuous around the layout, it doesn't make any difference where we introduce the power. Once a power pack is connected to a cab, it carries the designation of the cab circuit and should be marked with the cab's color (red or yellow) by the use of a stick-on dot.

Attaching Cabs To Tracks

Since the cab circuits are independent of the track circuits, we need a way to connect a cab to a track. This could be done in one of three ways: 1. Jumper wires across circuits. 2. Combinations of toggle switches. 3. Rotary switches. SMSG uses rotary switches.

Rotary Selectors

The rotary switches are used as selectors to connect power from a cab to a designated track. One selector is needed for each mainline track. The switch settings for most SMSG selectors (from left to right) is: Red cab, off, Yellow cab, off, Blue cab (local).

Blocks Defined

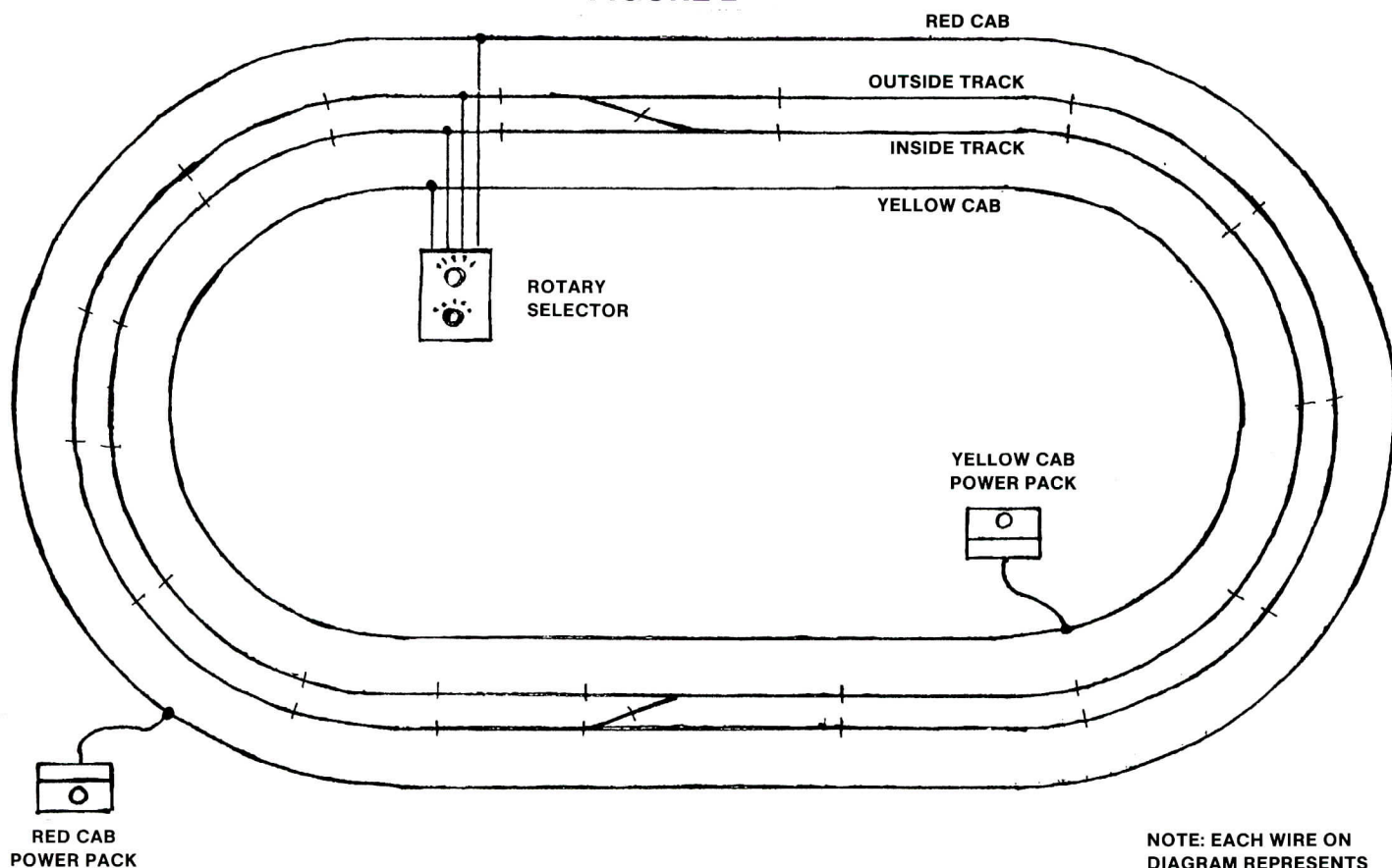
Unlike cab circuits, the track circuits may be purposely broken to establish blocks. A block is a defined section of the layout that can be electrically isolated from other sections. This permits the independent operation of more than one locomotive on the same physical track.

Block Delimiters

There are two ways to electrically isolate a block: Insulated rail joiners at the bridge rails and permanent gaps in the module rails. SMSG uses permanent gaps.

Note that in addition to gapping the rails, the track circuits underneath must also be broken. SMSG

FIGURE 2



accomplishes this with block delimiting switches - one DPDT switch for each track. The switches can assume the states of "closed" (track circuit continues through the switches) and "open" (track circuit ends at the switch). (Fig. 4)

Block Selectors

Once blocks have been established on a layout, we need a rotary selector for each block (otherwise we would have an isolated block with no way to assign cab power). There are two ways SMSG attaches block selectors: 1. permanent within the module. 2. Portable between modules.

Using Blocks

Blocks are generally defined as part of the set-up of a modular layout. The appropriate block delimiter switches are opened and left in that state for the duration of the operating session. The assignment of cabs, however, may be changed within each block as often as necessary. Remember that a block selector controls its track in both directions until it hits an open block delimiter. This could span several modules.



"SPIKE"

(Compliments of 3/16" Scale Railroading)

Thanks Ed

FIGURE 3

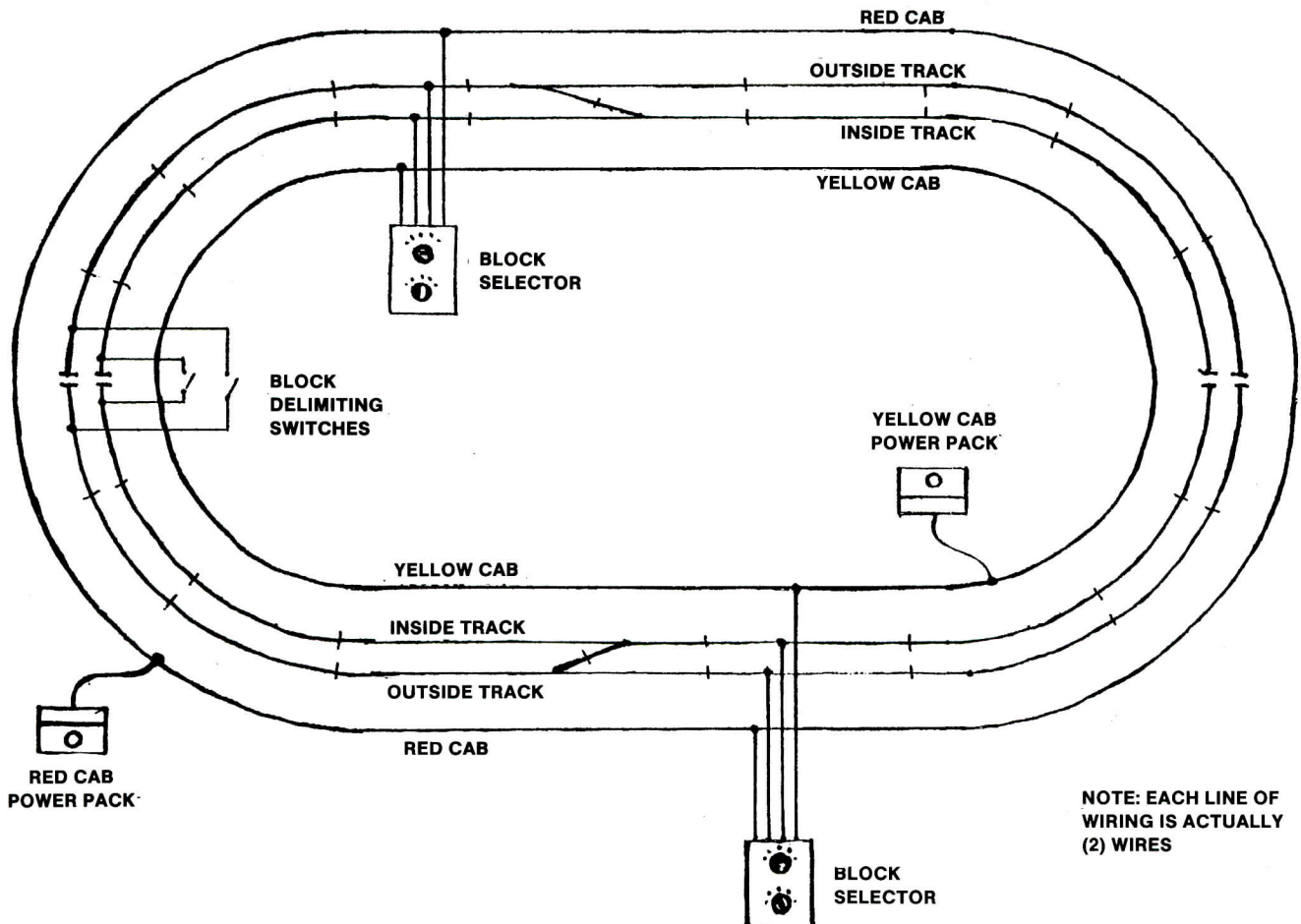
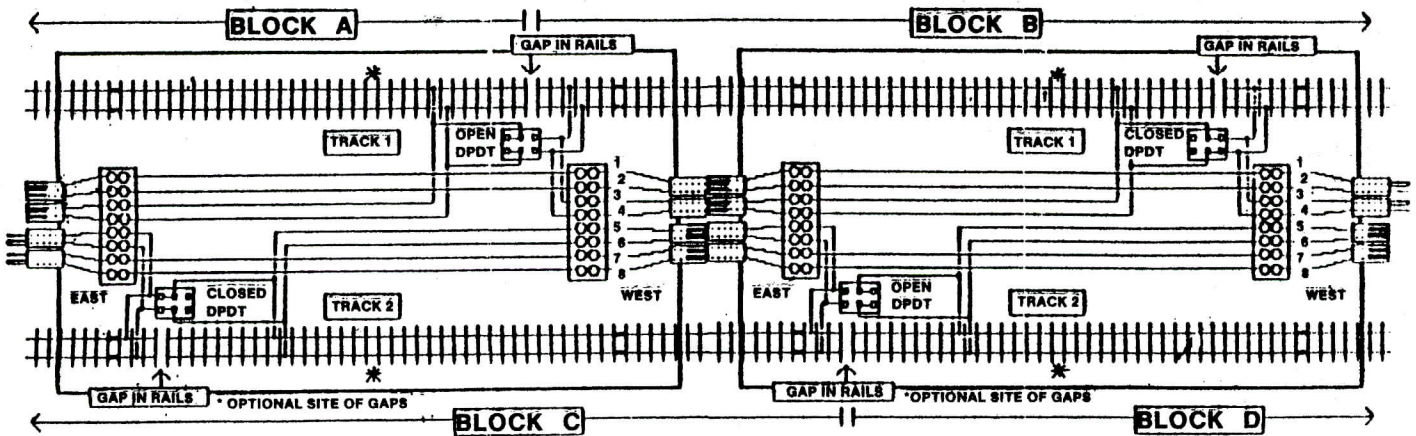


FIGURE 4

**S-MOD Rail-Cab Modules with OPTIONAL
Block Delimiting Switches & Gaps.**

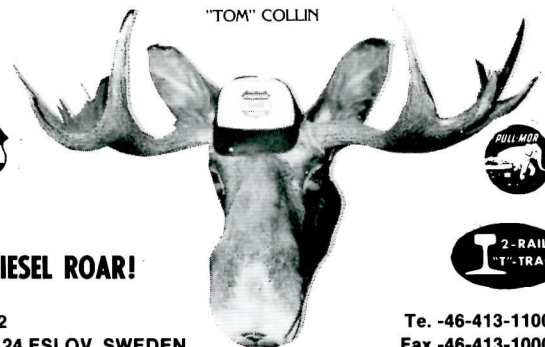
BLOCKS A & C CAB SELECTOR
PANEL BETWEEN ADJACENT
MODULES AT LEFT

BLOCKS B & D CAB SELECTOR
PANEL BETWEEN ADJACENT
MODULES AT RIGHT



D. Levitt 5/87

PERILS OF TRAIN CHASING



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HOLIDAYS & REMEMBERED



A 1988 Christmas scene at Mike Schafer's home in Waukesha, Wisconsin. A Flyer train usually runs around the room similar to an article in this issue. *Photo by Mike Schafer.*



Railfan Editor Jim Boyd and Associate Editor Mike Del Vecchio are enthralled with a "Flyer Fest" held in Dixon, Illinois at the home of Flyer operator Mike McBride. *Photo by Mike Schafer.*



Marty Glass of St. Louis - 1953, 40 years ago.



A NEW TWIST ON...

A SEASONAL TRACK PLAN FOR YOUR AMERICAN FLYER TRAINS

How many of you set up a seasonal only Flyer layout? If so it's probably a loop around the Christmas tree, which is traditional and always a great idea. For those who don't have room for a permanent layout, the holidays can offer the perfect excuse to slap down a Christmas oval and run some trains.

In this article though, I'm going to propose an alternate idea for a Christmas season layout which might capture your imagination and which has a lot of advantages over the typical oval (see sketches).

Advantages:

1. Use of longer trains with longer runs.
2. Staging trains out-of-sight behind furniture, such as a couch, adds surprise interest.
3. The teardrop loop around the tree takes up less space than an oval.
4. Entertainment value for you, your family and guests is enhanced.

The open dogbone style shown here in the article is only one option, but this style is a good simple format for operating 1 or 2 trains (in the same direction) without any complex wiring. I included a siding simply for storing an extra engine. The tracks are purposely routed around the walls of a room and behind furniture for obvious reasons.

The simplicity of this layout also makes it ideal for youngsters to operate.

Naturally, some of you may want to get carried away by adding sidings, reverse loops, and yard staging tracks -- I'd say whatever the "yard boss" will put up with.

I would recommend starting with something on the order of what I've sketched here, perhaps expanding a little each year, you know, creeping inflation.

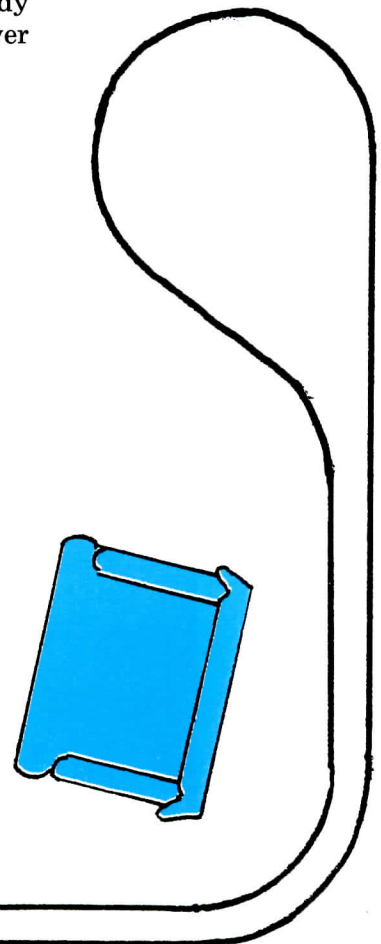
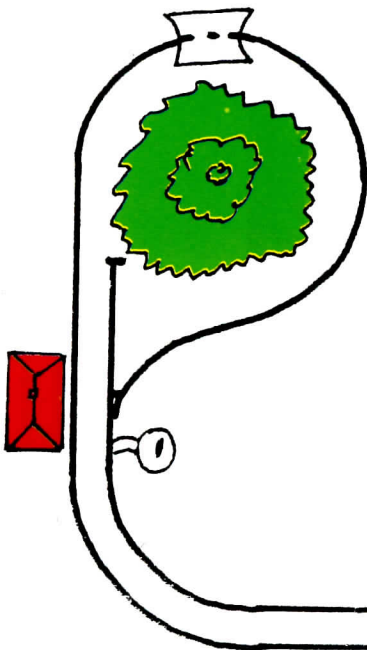
A seasonal layout like this one, or even the simple oval around the tree, should be ideal for those who live in condos, apartments, small homes, and even for those younger railroaders who still live at home.

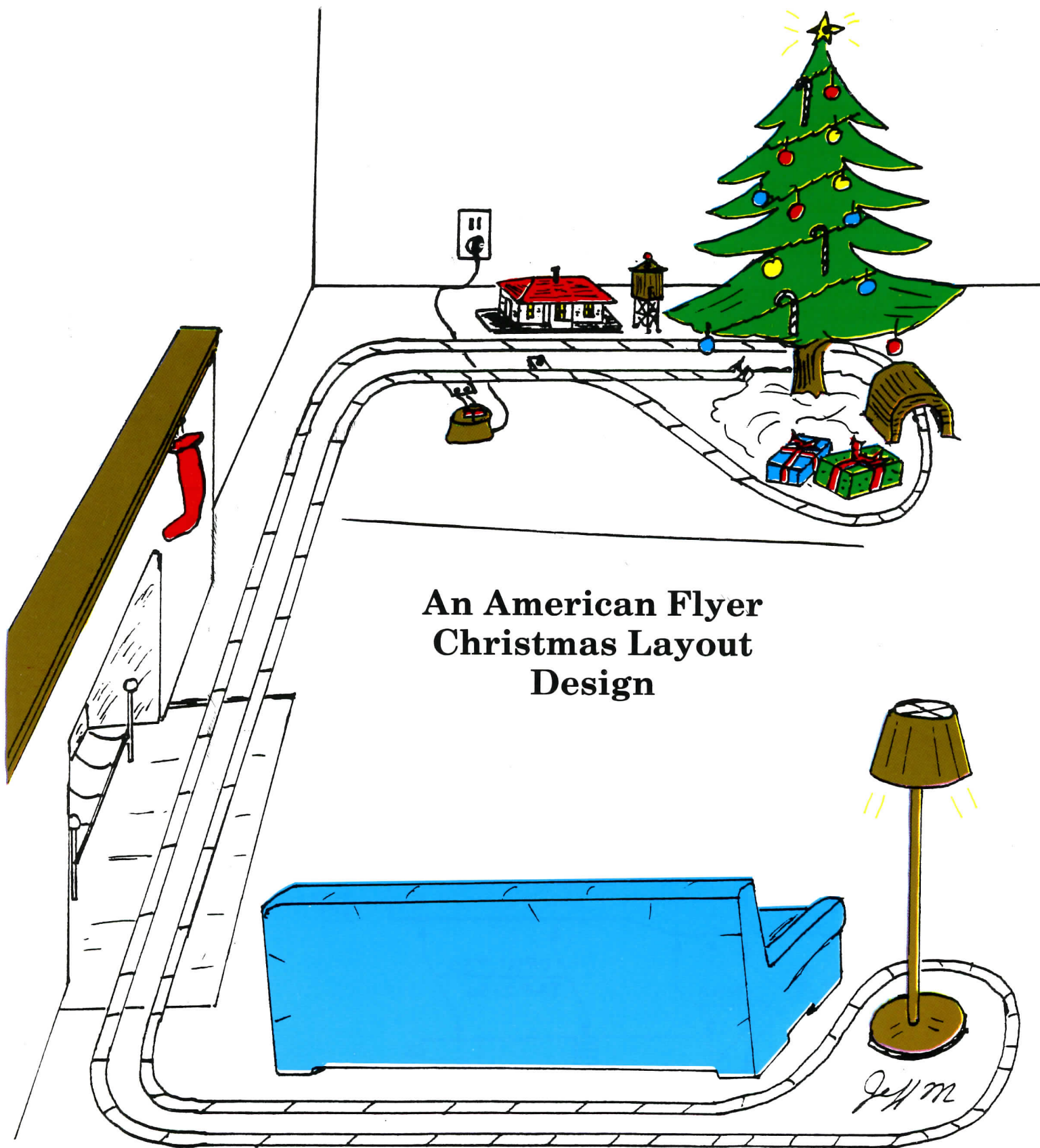
Some tips for a floor format layout.

1. Hopefully most trackage will be on tight weave carpeting. Use rubber roadbed or carpet padding scraps when crossing smooth surfaces such as a hearth.
- If on solid flooring or real shaggy carpeting, you might consider using rubber roadbed throughout.
2. Bend track pins out slightly to provide better track joints.
3. Use track clips if you can get them.
4. When possible keep track arrangements out of traffic areas such as doorways, room centers, halls and so on.
5. A terminal strip with an on-off switch is handy to use with the power pack.

Good luck and
Happy Holidays

-- Jeff Madden.





SHORT AND EASY

by
Kent L. Singer

— CENTERLINE RAIL CLEANER ADAPTOR —

John Long has been a contributor to this column for some years now. His current project is a neat little item to adapt the Centerline HO Rail Cleaner for use in S. Although the following is slightly edited, this is just about how John told it. The drawing you see is by John and is of the adaptor he fashioned to enable the use of the track cleaner on his S scale Swatara and Western. From here on, the words are John's.

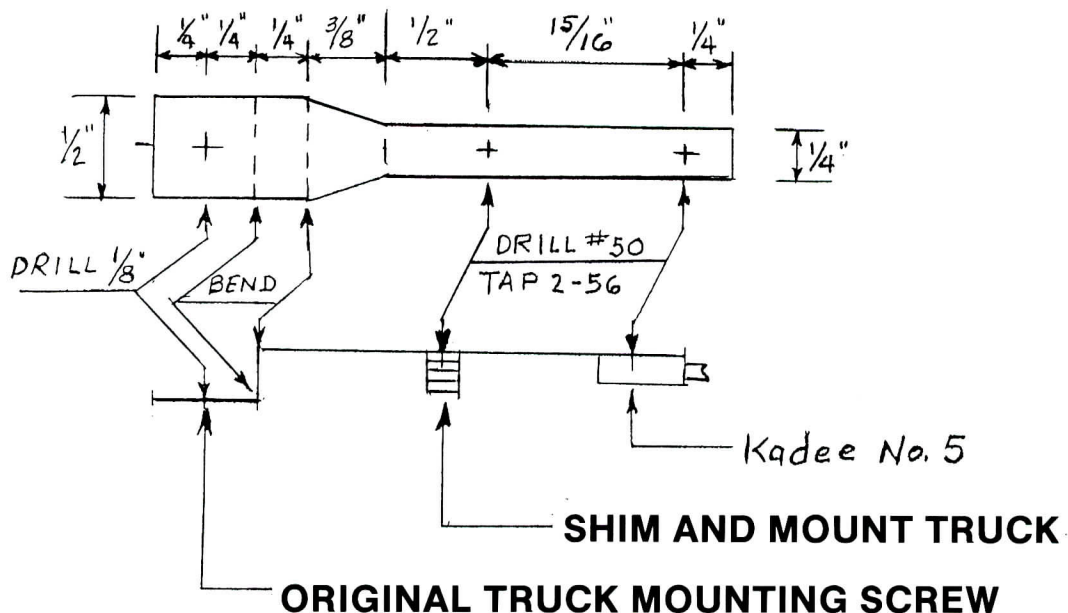
I tried several home-made track cleaners with varying results - mostly so-so. I heard glowing reports on this one and decided to try it.

An adaptor is needed to obtain clearance for the wheels and to fasten the coupler. The bend helps keep the body close to the track. I used .0175 hard brass. This pair was made in about 1 hour.

I haven't given this a rigorous trial yet but demonstrations have been impressive. The price is \$42 but dealers at shows with older models in stock are asking \$35 more or less.

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.

DIAGRAM FOR "Centerline Rail Cleaner Adaptor"
(Kent Singer)



A TRACK-CLEANING CAR FOR YOUR TINPLATE LAYOUT

by Gene Kelley

You can fashion a track-cleaning car from an old metal AF flatcar and some easily obtainable hardware items. You'll need the following:

AF metal flatcar

1/4" Masonite®, cut to 1-3/4" x 3-1/2"

two 8-32 x 1" trusshead screws

two 8-32 nuts

one 3/16" x 2" or 7/32" x 2" compression spring (for slight pressure)

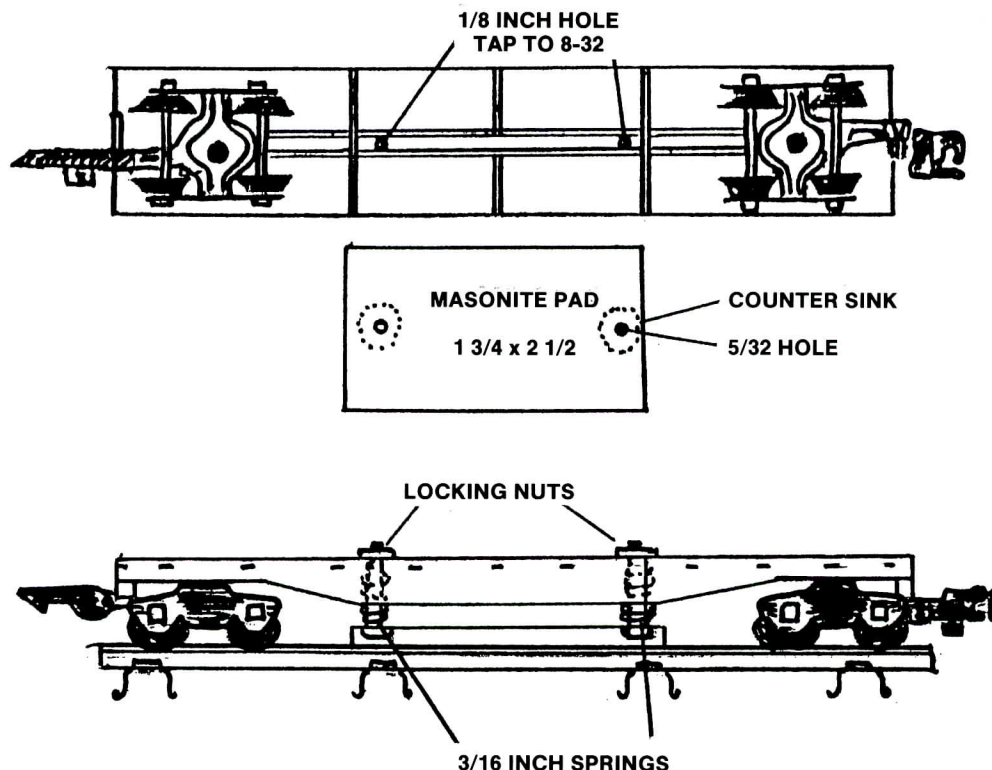
8-32 tap

Drill bits: 1/8", 5/32", and 3/8"

Begin by drilling two 1/8" holes at each end of the masonite pad, lengthwise, in the center. Use these two holes as a guide to drill the two holes in the center of the flatcar. Enlarge the holes in the rough side of the Masonite® pad with the 5/32" drill. Then, with a 3/8" drill, enlarge these holes just deep enough to countersink the screwheads to ensure no electrical contact. With the 8-32 tap, tap both holes in the flatcar. Cut the spring in half, and insert each piece into the channel on the underside of the flatcar, over each hole. Push the two screws through the Masonite® and into the springs, and screw each to the flatcar.

With the car on a section of track, adjust the pad to rest on the rails with slight pressure. When adjustment is made, carefully lock both screws with the 8-32 nuts. This may require slight readjustment of the pad. Nuts can be covered with a lumber or log load, or whatever else you can fashion!

Mount a knuckle coupler on one end and a link coupler on the other. Then you can use it with any engine. Run this car around your track, periodically, and it will remove accumulated grease and dirt. You could even trail it with the traditional AF track-cleaning car, using its felts to clean the track even better!



ADDING OPERATING DOORS TO PACIFIC RAIL SHOP BOXCARS

By John Porter

Note from Doug Peck who offered this article as printed in the "Bristoliner:" One of the few "weaknesses" of the PRS boxcars is that the doors are not equipped to be movable. Doorslides are not provided for. Master-Modeler John Porter, who won Best-In-Show in the recent NASG convention model contest at Valley Forge, determined to correct this oversight, and he provides the following instructions for creating sliding doors on these cars. Try it. After watching John do one at a recent workshop, it's not all that difficult to do.

Materials Needed:

- 1"x3" S-scale styrene strips (Evergreen 1/64" x 3/64" strips).
- Tenax-7R liquid cement
- Appropriate paint to match car
- Floquil 130015 flat finish spray (optional)

Carefully cut the doors from their sprues. I use single-edge razor blades. I prefer them over hobby knives and haven't used one for over 20 years.

Test-fit the doors between the existing door guides, making sure they slide freely the entire length of the guides, but not too loose. I use TRIM emery boards for sanding the top and bottom edges a little at a time, testing the door for an easy, but not loose, fit. In fact, the doors should move with a little "drag." Make sure the doors are flat as per the PRS instructions.

To install the new door-guides, you'll need to make a little jig. I made mine from two pieces of basswood glued together in such a way that the top piece is set back from the bottom piece by just slightly under 1/32" (See Fig. 1). When you butt the guide edge against the bottom of the molded-in guide, the upper surface of the jig edge should be slightly lower than the molded-in guide (See Fig. 3).

Tenax 7R cement is recommended. Use it very sparingly. It actually "welds" the plastic together, leaving nothing unsightly.

The diagrams should be self-explanatory (see Figs. 2, 3). The molded-in guide keeps the door in alignment and takes most of the friction. The "lip" which you are adding is meant only to keep the door from popping out.

On the doors I used a flat jeweler's file to file the "lip" of the door, top and bottom, a bit thinner. Then, twisting the file 90 degrees, file the top edge of the

door as shown, but not too much. File just enough so the door fits into the guides without binding. If you start cutting into the rivets, you've gone too far. Test fit the doors often as you go along, making sure the door slides smoothly throughout the entire length of the door guides (see figs. 4,5).

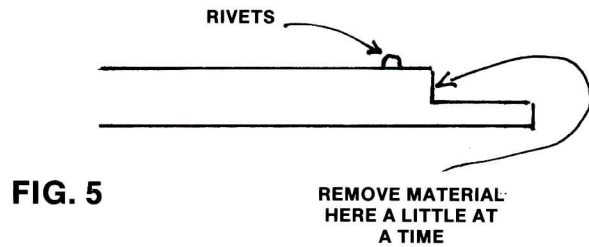
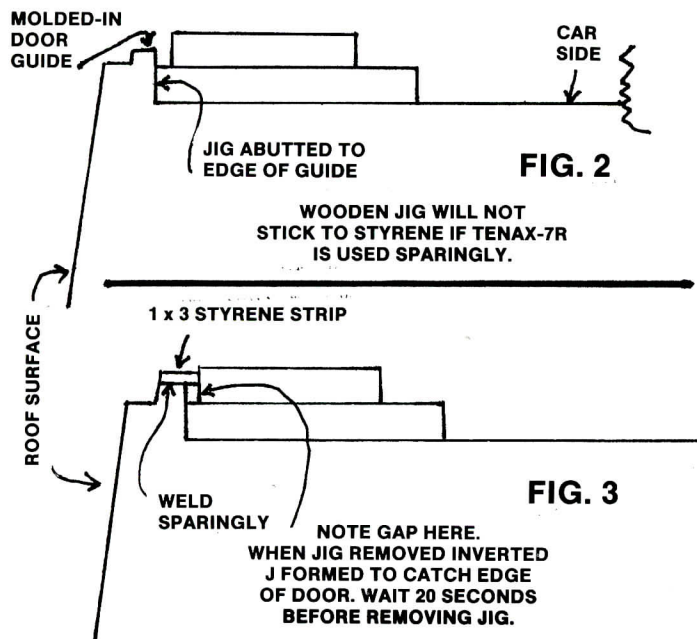
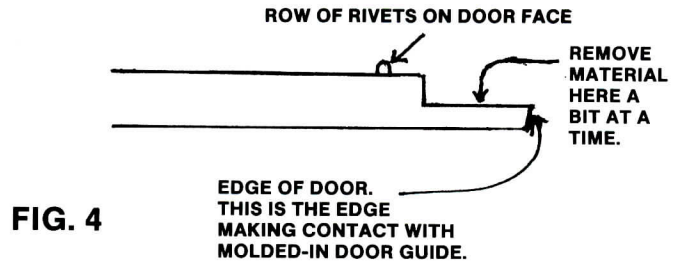
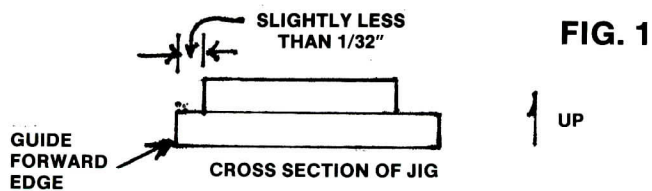
Do not install the door yet. First, cover the inside of the door-guide pocket with a single coat of paint, just enough to cover the white styrene guide you just installed. Then, coat the outside with two coats of paint. Let it dry thoroughly. You may want to use Floquil Barrier first, but I didn't. It is unnecessary on such a small surface. Now you can see that only "one" coat of paint on the inside surface has added thickness which may interfere with door operation.

Now install the door. It should slide freely with a very slight drag.

Last (and you only need one) create a doorstep on the lefthand side of the bottom guide. Make it so it matches the doorstep on the opposite end. Use a double thickness of the styrene strip material, flat side cemented against the end of the guide. When completely dry and "solid," carefully carve it to match the one on the other end, and paint it.

Another addition made to these cars is to add a support for the end lateral roof walks. For some reason PRS didn't mold in a support for the lateral walkways on the eave end. So I created a small styrene support, about 2" x 3" x 11/32" long, and cemented it between the lower surface of the walk and the roof. I ran it parallel to the eave edge of the lateral walk and painted it to match.

For those who purchased the 1993 Pennsy convention cars, I found that Floquil's Boxcar Red is a perfect match for this color. I then overspray very sparingly with Floquil 130012 Flat Finish. This blends the new and the original paints. It also makes any decal film disappear, and it will fix dry transfers permanently as well as any weathering you may have added. You can then handle the cars freely without leaving marks or fingerprints. I'm surprised so few modelers know of Flat Finish; I had to special-order mine.



SINGLE ERA-AREA MODELING - A PLANNING DECISION -

By Jeff Madden

Did you ever notice that most layouts published in the commercial model press have a certain look about them that establishes a particular time frame as well as geographical location. The structures, details and rolling stock seem to be unified to a certain time period, and the scenery is appropriate to a certain part of the country.

It's pretty common for a complete home layout to have that period atmosphere since perspective is usually narrowed to a favorite era and locale that the owner remembers through actual exposure while growing up or through local railfanning.

We can easily get hung up on collecting and aimless accumulation of model equipment, especially during our early years in the hobby, but what happens when it's time to settle down and build a complete layout just like the ones we see in the magazines?

Complications and decisions, most of all decisions, arise at this time. What kind of servicing facilities? What will be my operating scheme? What kind of scenery? How wide do I make my curves? How long do I make my passing sidings? Did Hi-cube boxcars run behind steam? Should I build a spindly wood trestle or a substantial steel truss bridge? How do I justify running all my engines -- I've got UP PAs, steam engines, Dash-8s??

Since Sn3 modelers are more narrow minded (ha, ha), they can probably focus their building, rolling stock accumulating and layout schemes more easily than standard gaugers who have more prototype options and a wider variety of equipment available to them. So S standard gaugers especially, both scale and hi-rail, may find this article some help in the decision making processes we all go through.

Well, let's start with a basic premise regarding rolling stock accumulation. Simply separate the "collecting" from the "operating" when getting down to actually planning your rail empire. Even if you've already started the collecting and accumulating process, it's still a good time to pause and begin sorting out all your goodies.

First, if you already have a substantial stash of equipment, separate out the collector stuff which you don't plan to run very much, from the equipment destined to operate on the layout. Get some nice showcases or shelving and put your mint AF Santa Fe PAs, circus train, convention cars and the like on display. A friend of mine made a six foot long narrow plexiglass display case which he has

suspended from an I-beam in the basement. I made a display case strictly for commemorative and convention cars which normally were not used on the layout.



Next, any deadwood rolling stock and motive power left over can always be traded off or sold once you decide on what to keep for operational purposes and special displays. I am always weeding out items as newer ones of better quality come out, or sometimes I simply decide that a particular car or locomotive is redundant and its off to the swap meet pile.

If early on in your modeling career you decide on a specific operating and collecting theme, all you have to do is discipline yourself to buy only those items which fit your goals. You're way ahead of the guy who has accumulated half a hobby shop in his basement. See we're back to the decisions.

Self-disciplining yourself can yield healthy rewards, especially if you have a limited budget, as opposed to a helter-skelter approach which often ends in frustration.

As an example of self discipline, Allen McClelland, famous for his HO Virginian & Ohio, decided to switch from a 1950s steam-diesel theme to late 60s mainline diesel one. His older power, rolling stock and details were sold off to help finance the updating. Tony Koester, a current columnist for "Model Railroader," did the reverse -- he backdated.

Layouts of S Gaugers Frank Titman and Sam Powell appear to have the self-disciplined unified look I'm talking about. Everything on their layouts seems to fit, both equipment wise and geographically.

Here are some hints to consider when in the layout planning and accumulating stages:

- Separate your accumulated motive power, rolling stock and accessories into that intended for display and that intended for operation. Out-of-era or collector pieces can be displayed as mentioned above, and those for operation placed on the layout or stored in boxes. For example, S scalers might have a separate collection of AF tinsplate which they don't want to operate regularly but like to show off.

- Carrying this even further, you can narrow your collecting and building to a specific modeling era and geographic region. Think 1930s Colorado, Midwest farmlands, Pennsylvania mountains. Choose between 1940, 1957, 1968, or 1987. This will automatically focus your collecting and layout planning, thereby saving you a bundle of money by eliminating unnecessary and impulsive purchases - well, most anyway.

- Even if your budget is unlimited and you must have it all, at least separate your hordes of equipment into groups by either prototype, era or both. By doing this you can rotate equipment onto the layout, and each time your layout will still maintain a cohesive look.

For several months you can run all 1950 era equipment, then you can switch to an all modern theme. Or you can narrow the focus even further by operating one time with 1950s Pennsylvania Railroad steam locos and 40' boxcars with roofwalks and the next with 1980s era Santa Fe U-Boats, modern freight cars and Amtrak.

The main hangups with switching railroads and/or time frames instead of focusing on one theme for your railroad, are budgetary and the layout itself. Cost is obvious, if you must have it all. But also consider your layout when you switch from one era to another or from one railroad to another.

If you want your layout to be cohesive and consistent when swapping out locomotives and rolling stock, you must also switch out accessories and details. Vehicles, signs, details, some structures may be out of place. If you jump from eastern to western geographic areas, your scenic treatment may not suit the rolling stock. A CSX Dash-8 in the Rockies? A billboard advertising a 1956 Chevrolet on a hillside above a passing Amtrak train? Of course, anything is possible, just not probable.

- Even if you don't totally narrow your collecting and operating theme to one particular prototype or a

combination of railroads which would have operated together, or even a free-lance option, you might at least consider modeling only one geographic region and collecting only those roads which might have operated there. This would give your layout more credibility.

As an example, if you model the midwest, you might want to have a layout that has a midwestern look -- farmlands, rolling hills, grain elevators, and so on. Roads such as the Rock Island, IC, Burlington could conceivably mix together. Or if you're of a modern bent try the C&NW, UP and Iowa Interstate as they look today. Even a freelancer builds credibility with his layout when viewers can recognize it as say a midwestern layout of the 1970s as opposed to a hodgepodge of anything goes.

But let's get back to my original premise which is to make a choice to limit your equipment accumulation to one time period and build a layout to represent one geographic area.

Advantages of sticking to one-era and one-area modeling:

- 1. Decisions simplified:** Impulse buying is drastically reduced or eliminated (a good selling point to the other half). Now you have a challenge. You can search the catalogs, hobby shops and train meets only for those items which suit. Those which don't...you can pass right on by without a "knee-jerk" reaction.

- 2. Economy:** Again, impulse buying is severely curtailed, with the resultant savings in the budget (Or at least that can be claimed).

- 3. Looks:** Your layout can be geographically matched to equipment much more easily. With forethought on your equipment purchases, the proper blend of scenery will almost suggest itself. Why do you think we drool over scenes of freelance layouts by John Allen, Frank Titman and Sam Powell? It's simply because everything looks as if it belongs -- almost as if a prototype really existed somewhere. Or why are we impressed with a layout where a specific prototype and era are modeled? Again, everything seems to fit.

Cohesiveness is easier, of course, for specific prototype modelers because everything can be researched. Freelancers need to take precautions to get that "family look" by the careful selection of motive power and rolling stock which are given common characteristics. Some techniques for this: Compatible paint schemes, only one or two caboose variations, similar matching details on locos (headlight placement, number boards, tenders, horn gaggles, etc.). Freelancers also must pay attention to structure characteristics which blend into the

proper geographic region and time. A common railroad structure paint scheme does wonders for that unified railroady look.

S gaugers probably have a high percentage of freelancers because of the lack of availability of a wide selection of locomotives and structures relating to their particular interest. This is often the case for those hi-railers who convert a lot of Flyer equipment. For example, how many of you hi-railers who convert AF locos limit your loco roster choice to say 3 Hudsons, 2 0-8-0s and 3 or 4 GP9s rather than having one of each AF loco ever made?

4. The Challenge: The overall theme of this article could be the catalyst for you to take up the challenge to limit your search for equipment which fits only a certain time frame or a particular railroad. It is often an enjoyable exercise to root through old magazines and books to discover that railroad X had a certain car during a certain period. Sometimes it's frustrating too -- I remember searching through numerous back issue magazines and quizzing fellow modelers just to find out the color scheme for a B&O wood caboose.

Personally, I find it more fun than not trying to discover such facts as whether or not I could use an SD24 in 1958 or whether or not I need a yellow stop sign on my highways.

5. Planning Ahead: Those with no present layout can be building up a purposeful roster of rolling stock and structures, all destined for that time in the future when a layout is actually built. In the meantime, built up equipment can be stored safely away or placed on display shelves.

6. Whittling Down: Most of us overbuy -- So if the one era, one region concept is adopted midstream, then all the surplus can be sold off or horse traded.

Application for Clubs (modular and permanent):

While the home layout owner can develop the self-discipline and control to follow the era-area theme without too much difficulty, what about a club whose membership desires as to time periods, geography and equipment are likely going to be diverse?

It is probably easiest for club members to formulate era-area (and possibly equipment) goals and objectives when forming a new club where everything is in the planning stages.

But even for a seasoned club, such goals, if decided upon, could act as a sparkplug to regenerate interest and/or to settle some ongoing arguments on this matter.

Some Club Options:

1. Vote to strictly operate in one time period and model one geographic area of the country. Here a club could decide to go with one prototype (rather limiting for most clubs, but it's been done), or try to combine as many interests of club members as would seem reasonable. If I belonged to a club in Southern California it might seem reasonable to model Santa Fe, UP and SP with western mountain and desert scenery even in combination with a freelance club name.

2. Vote to switch prototypes based on a percentage of membership desires. Scenic treatment here would have to be a happy medium unless the prototypes operated in the same type of terrain. Switching from eastern power to western power in a southwestern setting might be a bit awkward. One operating session could be Santa Fe night, while another could be Southern Pacific Night. Operators of modular layouts might schedule prototypes for specific hours of operation during a show.

3. Clubs can also choose to switch time frames for different operating sessions. A certain time period could be in conjunction with prototype choices mentioned above or the choice could be a simple one to run modern trains one time and older trains the next. Again, this could be based on a percentage of membership interest.

A time era choice could be either loose i.e. 80s or 50s, or it could be specific i.e. 1950 or 1987. When time flipping, some clubs may want to make sure the layout remains authentic by swapping out non realistic scenic items which wouldn't fit with one era or the other -- coaling towers, billboards, vehicles, and other obvious details that would date a scene.

And too, for you strictly Flyer guys, I realize your layout goals are to recreate a colorful toylike atmosphere with lots of operating gizmos and bells and whistles. This is an excellent goal as worthy as those who seek more realism, but there is still some room for tinplaters to make some era-area choices.

Some American Flyer operators might choose to have a layout that only represented items in the 1957 catalog. Maybe you want to operate only locomotives lettered for eastern railroads. Perhaps you want to emulate the Gilbert showroom layout. See, there's room for you tinplaters to make some planning decisions too.

So for individual modelers and clubs alike, the idea of single era-area modeling can be a challenge worth looking into. In the long run your decisions should be easier, your layout realism should be enhanced, you might enjoy the challenge of the necessary research, and, finally, you can save some dough.

SHORT & EASY

By Kent L. Singer

A CABOOSE UNDERFRAME

It's always nice to hear from somebody new with a Short and Easy idea. This time, Mike Sulzbach wrote to describe a simple underframe addition for an American Models Bay Window Caboose. So, without further ado, here it is in Mike's own words and pictures.

After I had kitbashed the body of an American Models Bay Window Caboose into a Penn Central (ex-NYC) N-7 small bay caboose, it looked unfinished with the centersill and crossbearers missing. So, I decided to see if I could find an easy way to add them. This article will allow you to build a basic underframe in one evening.

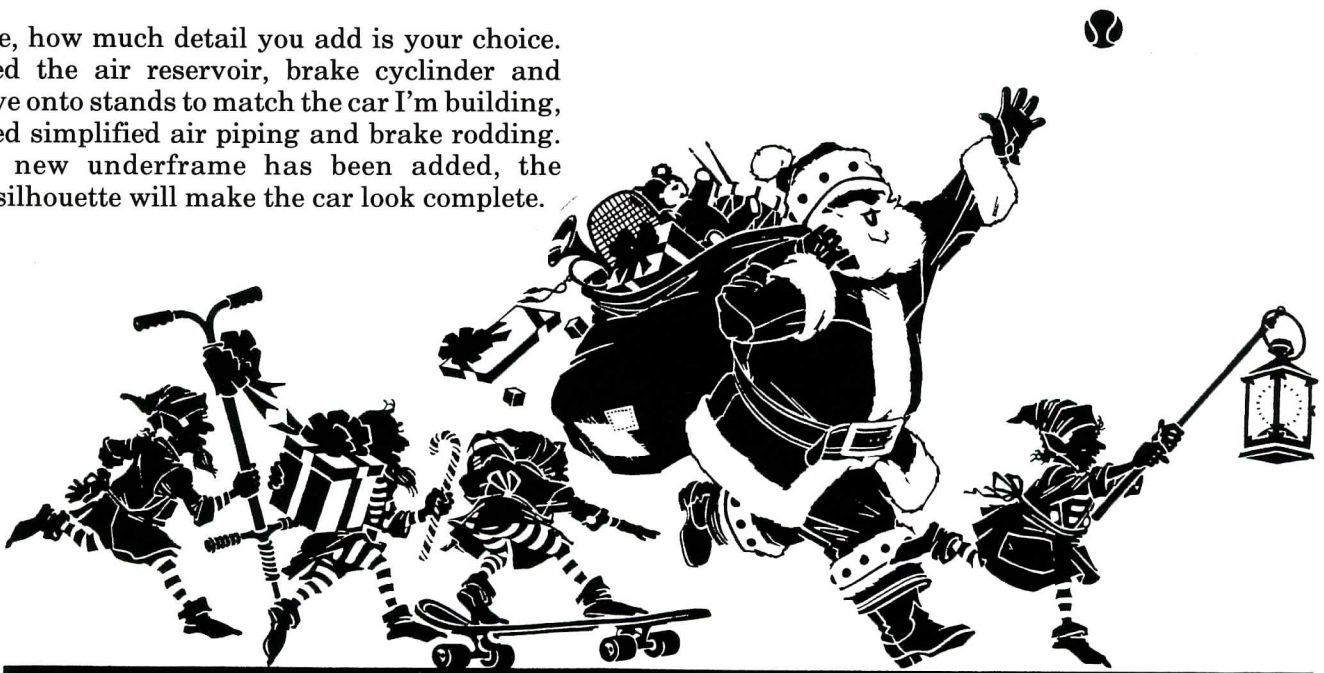
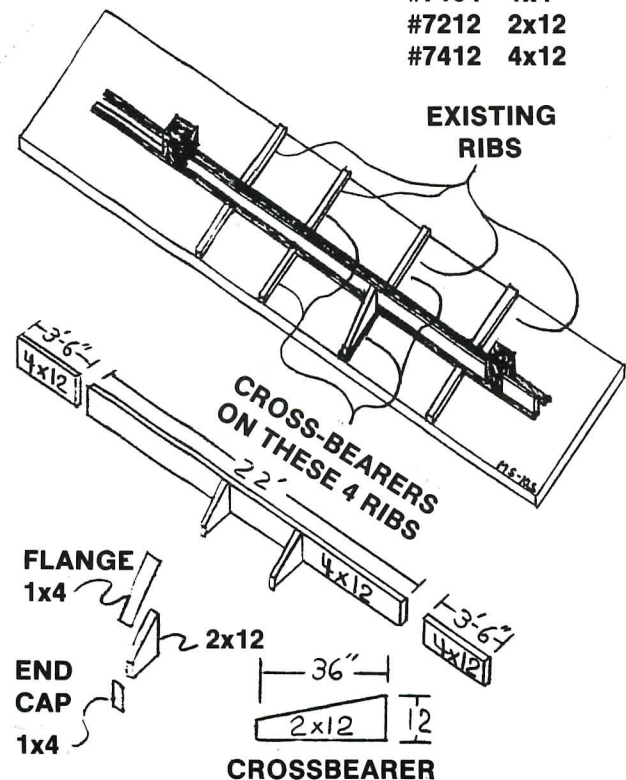
Using the drawing for reference, cut two pieces of 4x12 to 22' in length. These are glued between the bolsters right on top of the existing centersill, making sure the 4x12 is flush with the outer edge of the original sill. Next, cut four pieces of 4x12 to 3' 6" in length, and glue these from the bolster out towards the car end. Don't make them too long or they'll hit the coupler box.

I only added four crossbearers in the center of the car. These were cut from the 2x12. See the drawing for the dimensions. These are then glued to the center of the crossbearer ribs. Now, cut four flanges from the 1x4. Make them overlength, glue to the center of the crossbearer, and trim after drying. Cut four end caps, again overlength, add to the end of the crossbearer, and trim these after drying also.

From here, how much detail you add is your choice. I relocated the air reservoir, brake cylinder and triple valve onto stands to match the car I'm building, then added simplified air piping and brake rodding. Once the new underframe has been added, the different silhouette will make the car look complete.

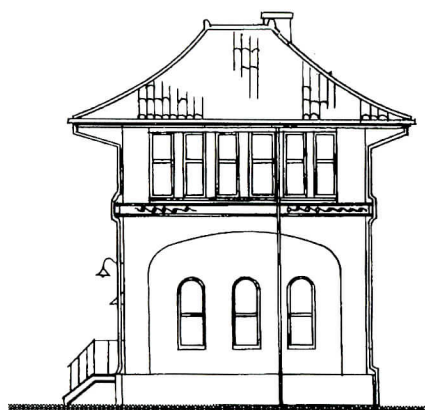
BILL OF MATERIALS: EVERGREEN S SCALE STYRENE, 1 EA.

#7104 1x4
#7212 2x12
#7412 4x12



NEW PRODUCTS

River Raisin Models (6160 Upper Straits Blvd. , West Bloomfield , MI , 48324) The 44 tonner diesel is Now in stock. A limited number of black factory painted units are available.



River Raisin Models is sponsoring a contest based on their first structure kit - JD interlocking tower. JD tower is concrete railroad interlocking tower modeled after a northeastern prototype. towers of this design were used by the NYC, NH, and B&O exactly as modeled in the kit. Several other railroads also used similarly designed interlocking towers. The contest will award a grand prize of \$200.00 in cash or River Raisin Models' credit (winners choice) for the best stock construction or most novel kit bash of a JD tower kit. The judging will take place at the 1994 NASG National Convention and all models must be entered in the model contest to be eligible. Judging will be by Jim and Dan, separate from the actual contest

judging. Kit based entries must use the JD tower kit as a basis for construction. Additional prizes may be awarded based on the number of models entered. You do not need to be present to win, but your model does.

A pair of new models have been announced. They are the EMD SD-7 and SD-9. Details will follow next issue.

River Raisin will now supply Kadee Couplers on all future models.

NMRA Inc., Dept. HC-3, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, Tn, 37421 Has announced a boxcar commemorating Frank Ellison's Delta Lines model railroad. The Delta Lines was featured in over fifty articles. The Pacific Rail Shops 40 foot single door boxcar is available with either scale or hi-rail wheels. a maximum of two cars may be ordered. The cost is \$24.00 each plus \$4.00 shipping. This is limited to members of the NMRA. Orders will be accepted when accompanied by a membership application and appropriate dues. Orders must be received by January, 31, 1994

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PRR-3 Pre-War Lightweight Pullman Cars \$6.00

PRR-4 "Fleet of Modernism" Passenger Cars \$6.00

PRR-5 Cabin Cars "Circle Keystone" \$6.00

PRR-6 Cabin Cars "Shadow Keystone" \$6.00

PRR-7 Box cars "Circle Keystone" X37/37B/43A/43C/46 \$6.00

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PRR-11 Pullman Sleepers Assorted Names \$6.00

THE CLUB SANDWICH

"Where We Make Tasty Sandwiches of Your Club News"

By Al Schoenberg

To start off I'd like to say goodbye to Mike Palmiter as editor of the *Dispatch*. Second, I'd like to welcome Jeff Madden aboard as the new editor.

Model railroading should now be in full swing as we move into the chillier months of the year.

The **Stateline S Gaugers** just hosted the 18th annual fall S Fest in Beloit, Wisconsin. More on this event in the next issue.

Fred Schlegel of the **Nebraska-Iowa Railroad Club** sent a photo of the Milford Valley Railroad where power pulled a new club "record" of one hundred eleven cars. Now we've probably opened Pandora's Box, and all the other clubs will be sending me the records they have achieved. Maybe some enterprising member will establish some ground rules for these types of contests.

At any rate this new club is located near UP country where big power still roams. This is evidenced by John Tilt's scratchbuilt UP DD40 which was on the big pull mentioned above.

Next up is the **Lehigh Valley S Gaugers**. This is the first newsletter I've received from them, although I have received several "Switchback" newsletters from them. This means they have two newsletters. Does any other organization have 2 newsletters??

At the urging of Bill Fraley, the Lehigh Valley Club was well represented in the model contest at the recent convention in Valley Forge NMRA convention. He says that S gauge was allotted 3 tables, but they needed 7. I hope we'll need even more tables next year. Bill was pleased to see entries from as far as California and other numerous entries from Vic Roseman, Randy Sappo and others. While the convention is on my mind, I'd like to praise the **Cuyahoga Valley, Ohio club** for

their great job of running their layout with the capable crew led by Josh Seltzer and Dick Cataldi. Ohio is a beehive state in S gauge lately, and even our new president, Alan Evans, resides there.

Another first time club mentioned here is the **Baltimore Area American Flyer Club (BAAFC)**. Following is some info on this new organization as explained by Monte Heppe. Welcome to the S fraternity and this column.

The Baltimore Area American Flyer Club is an informal group with no dues and no officers. Monthly meetings are held September thru May at the homes of members. The club was established about a year ago. Membership varies between 5 and 6.

While the interest and experiences of our members vary, most are involved with the club's modular layout. Basic modules are 2 x 4 feet in size and ideal for those with limited room for a layout. Some members are getting dual use out of the modules by making them a part of their home layouts.

Modules are built to standards provided by the club. Each has two mainline tracks to connect with other modules. Beyond that, any variation is permitted that falls within general parameters. We have four corner modules and 8 straight modules. Four more are under construction.

The BAAFC operates its modules at various train shows including the TTOS meets in Northern Virginia and Annapolis, Maryland and TCA meets in Timonium, Maryland. We're getting good exposure in that part of the country.

Moving on to the **Badgerland S Gaugers**, John Wickland reports that the Hiawatha passenger cars being produced by Tom Hodgson should be ready in time for S Fest and be out by the time you read

this. These, of course, are to complement the Hiawatha Atlantic.

Badgerland is beginning its 19th year. Congrats to you all.

Next year marks 1/5 of a century -- that's 20 years for you non-mathematicians.

The Badgerland club complains a bit that some members don't want to host meetings because they don't feel their layout is up to par. But let me relate my own experience when I hosted my first meeting in February 1991 when my layout was under construction. At first I felt intimidated by piles of junk on my layout, and some of them are still there, but prior to this first meeting, I cleaned up the cellar as best I could and had the meeting anyway. Well, let me tell you, after that first meeting was over, I felt an emotional letdown, and I actually was inspired to improve my layout for future meetings -- even if I just did a general cleanup. Don't be afraid to host a meeting no matter what shape your layout is in.

The **American Flyer Club of St. Louis** is up to their usual annual task of preparing the Famous Barr Department Store layout for the holiday season. Many members spend countless hours working on this layout which is a rarity in today's shopping areas in most parts of the country. At the October meeting at Chris Lenhardt's home, Charley Taylor reports that there were 24 attendees. Hey, that's pretty good, and that was with a few members missing.

Finally, our club, the **Central Jersey S Gaugers**, is still recovering from the Phillie convention. I'd personally like to thank Chuck Leonard on behalf of the club for coordinating much of our club's obligations to the NASG and the NMRA and to those who assisted him. Special thanks too to Bill Moore who put in a lot of time at the convention.

Now it's time for my convention observations.

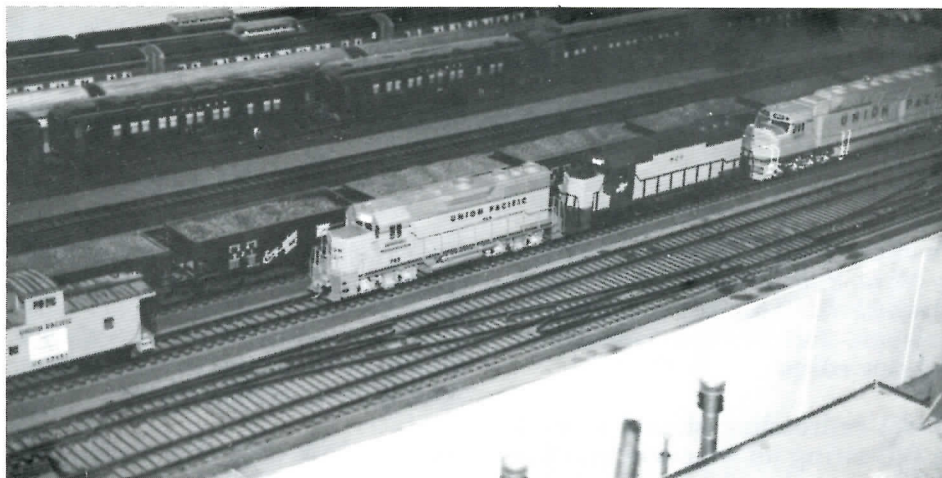
At the time, I asked Jim Kindraka if he had any new items on the drawing board following the B&O wagontop covered hopper -- he said no.

Gaylord Gill straightened me out on the Mystery Model Contest. He told me that entrants put blueprints or photos of what they plan to enter ahead of time, and then the model is judged against the items in the envelope.

I was impressed by the mammoth S gauge modular layout. All the yards on my own layout, including a 13 tracker, would be lost on this setup.

I perceived a general consensus among S gaugers that the joint convention with the NMRA was OK, but not every year.

I would suggest that the host club for this convention write a report on the convention and pass it along to the next convention



Big power pulls 111 cars on the Milford Valley Railroad of the Nebraska-Iowa Club, a new record for them. Two AM GP35s plus John Tilt's scratched DD40 are almost up to their own caboose. Gee, couldn't they get one more short ore hopper in there.

chairman -- Gil Hulin in Oregon in this case. Let the next sponsors know what worked, what didn't, what could be improved, space needed, costs, etc.

My brainstorm: How about a portable light cart to help the judges when judging the contest entries.

If you want hi-lites of your club newsletter mentioned in the *Dispatch* pu-leeze put me on your mailing list.

A.K. Schoenberg
204 Moldoff Rd.
Glassboro, NJ 08028

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from Page 4

is an appropriate way to continue the S gauge tradition.

Another means or promoting our gauge is building and operating (or maintaining) an S layout in a hobby store or department store window. Case in point would be the American Flyer S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area's window display at the Famous-Barr Department Store in downtown St. Louis. (This set-up has been featured in previous *Dispatch* articles). My club, the Central Ohio S gaugers, built a permanent layout inside the Blue Caboose hobby store in Columbus, and from Thanksgiving to Christmas we provide operators for the display. We find this is a good way to keep our engines and cars from gathering dust plus we have the opportunity to clarify the comment "Is this HO?" to inquiring visitors! I've heard of other S gaugers setting up small displays in

store windows when the owner wants to depict a traditional Christmas scene or just to run his childhood train in his window! Here's an opportunity we S gaugers need to jump on should some ask!

So the Christmas holidays are a good time for trains to come out of the woodwork, and certainly an opportune time for us to help promote S gauge! If you didn't have an opportunity to promote this year, put it on your list of 1994 New Year's Resolutions.

Keep promoting S gauge!

-- Alan Evans



- MAIL TRACK -

Attention Fellow Modern Era Modelers:

I am interested in forming a Special Interest Group (SIG) within the NASG. I would appreciate hearing from those of you which either would be interested or are already modeling "modern" prototypes in S gauge.

If you would like to be included in the Modern Prototype Scale Modelers (MPSM) SIG of the NASG, then please don't hesitate to write or phone me. Include name, address, zip, and phone if you write. Also mention your favorite prototype.

Dave Bailey (SIG)
7571 Foxglove Pl.
Macungie, PA 18062-9341
215-395-0773

In Reply:

Our president, Alan Evans, gave me an article clipped from the "Columbus Dispatch" in reply to last month's Mail Box query by Roger Weiss who is seeking help for any visually impaired S gauger who would like to receive voice tape recordings of the *Dispatch's* content.

The article mentions a reading service in the Columbus area which is funded by the United Way. This service is not only for the visually impaired, but also for others who are unable to turn pages or hold up a magazine or newspaper.

So the obvious starting point for anyone who knows someone who needs this kind of service is to inquire with your local United Way for such a service in your particular area.

Members:

For those who enjoy reading a series of articles on how an S gauge layout was constructed from start to finish, you might want to delve into some old "Model Railroaders" and read the series entitled "From Pillar to Post" by Richard Houghton. Some of us will remember this series well, and it might be fun to curl up in the easy chair and re-read it.

Those younger members or those who never read the early MRs might enjoy digging the issues up at a flea market or borrowing some. Oh sure, some of the scenic and construction ideas might be out-of-date, but there are always ideas and tips which are timeless no matter how old the article. Remember this is when S was in its infancy.

Richard's American Flyer hi-rail railroad was called the Belmont Lines, and the 17 part series covered many topics including scenery, benchwork, hand-laid track and switches, and the construction of a turntable and roundhouse. The series ran consecutively from February 1948 to June 1949. Does anyone know if Richard is still around?

Your editor.



November and December 1993: The 1993 Christmas Train Window which is an S gauge layout in a display window at the Famous Barr Department Store in St. Louis. Corner of 7th and Locust with viewing hours of 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Built and operated by the American Flyer S Gaugers of St. Louis.

April 29-May 1, 1994: Spring S Spree, Quality Inn North, I-71 and Rt. 161, Columbus, Ohio. For more info contact: Central Ohio S Gaugers, c/o Art Lofton, Jr., 415 Granville Square, Worthington, OH 43085. (614) 888-1042.

August 21-24, 1994: NASG Columbia River '94 Convention, Red Lion Inn at the Quay, Vancouver, Washington. For more information contact: Dave Kleger, 2154 Golden Garden St., Eugene, OR 97402. Note: This convention follows the national NMRA convention in the same area. Ideal area for a family vacation, and NMRA members can kill 2 birds with one stone.

Your editor still needs articles, especially on home layouts. Even individual photos showing your layout progress or your modeling. And I'd love some pictures, preferably black and white, which show members in the photos — operating their layouts, holding up a favorite locomotive. Look back at some early 1950's "Model Railroaders" for ideas. — Jeff

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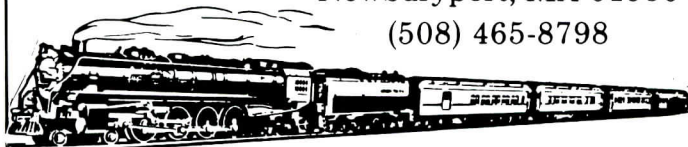
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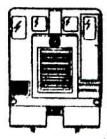
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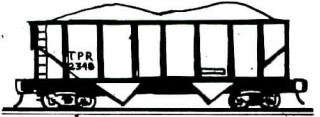
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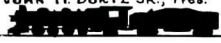


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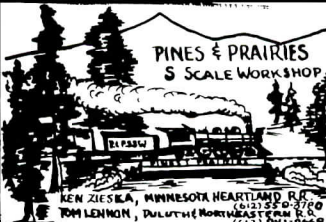
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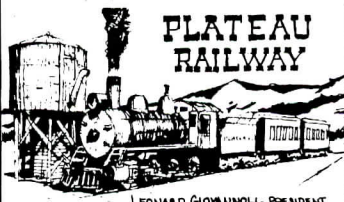

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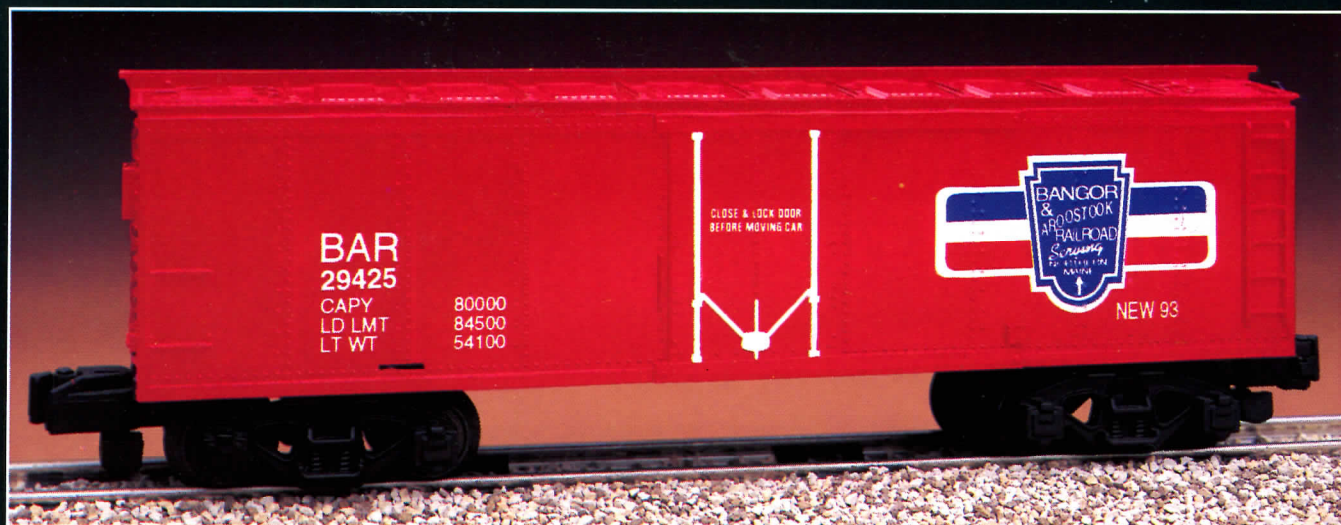
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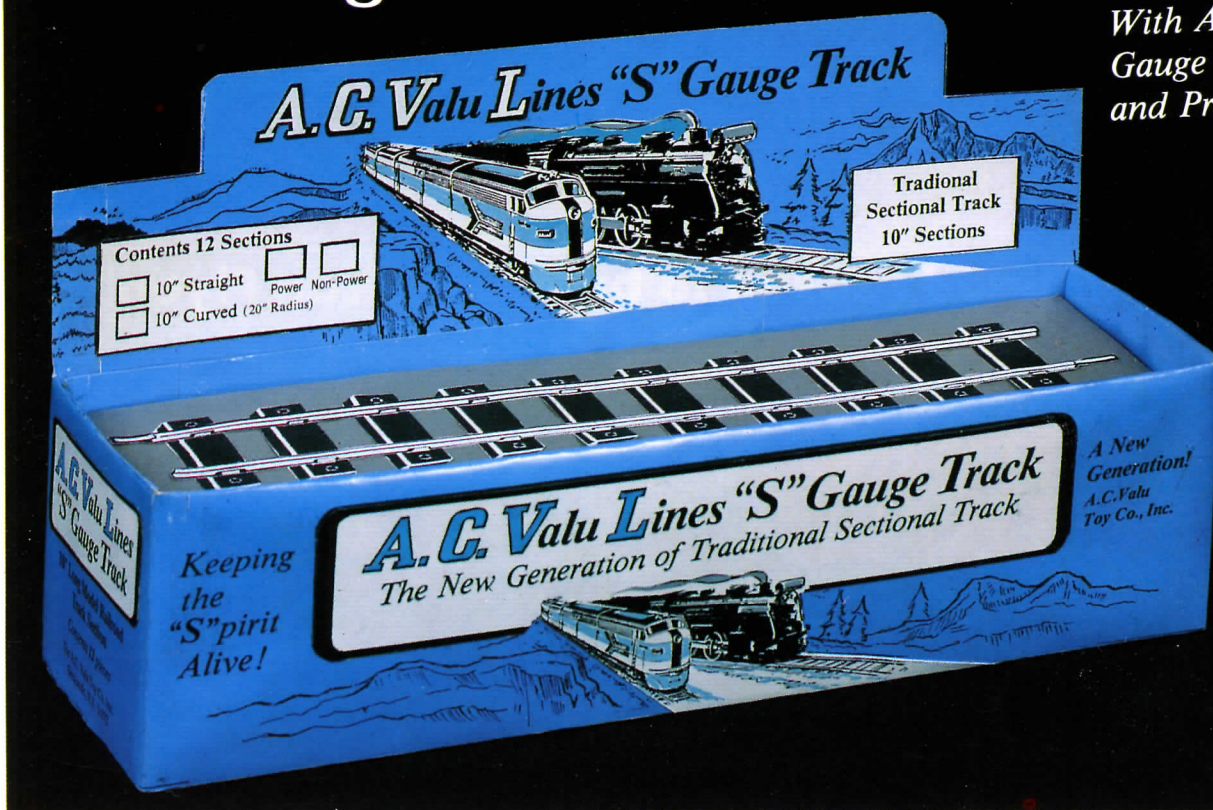
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