



DISPATCH



- Jess Bennett's Layout
- 1920's Modeling
- Laying Code .148 Track
- New S-Helper Loco
- Rio Grande Motor Truck





Shown here is the 1998 NASG Freight Car from S Helper Service. This flat car, an exclusive run for the NASG, is a 53' 6" Union Pacific "Cushioned Load" with Ertl's John Deere excavator aboard. It is available only to NASG members and comes ready-to-run hi-rail, with optional scale wheelsets included (no scale couplers, however). Cost of this limited run car is \$50.00, and it can be purchased from Eastern Vice President John Foley. On the track behind this year's freight car are the 1997 cars (now sold out), a Tru-Sweet tanker and a Pennsy flat with road grader load.

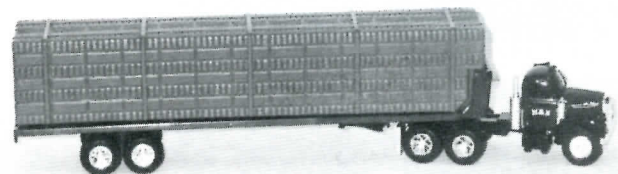
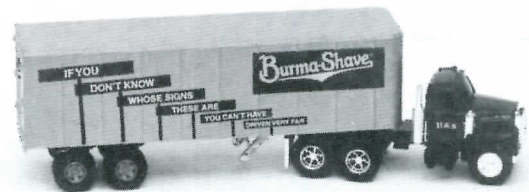
The NASG Freight Car Project was begun in 1997 to show support to manufacturers who are producing S gauge rolling stock. Members are invited to propose any current production ready-to-run car to be decorated for the Freight Car Project. Send your suggestions to: Alan Evans, NASG Freight Car Committee Chairman, P.O. Box 30345, Gahanna, OH 43230.

Lionel LLC



The NASG American Flyer commemorative freight car for 1998 is a white with black lettering Magnolia single dome tank car. As usual this will be a Lionel limited run car with American Flyer operating knuckle coupler talgo trucks. Available only to NASG members with a limit of two cars maximum. Cars are \$49.00 each.

An order form should have been included with a previous Dispatch. But if you lost yours, Send order to NASG 1998 Car Project, c/o Doug Peck, 6 Storeybrooke Drive, Newburyport, MA 01950-3408. Make check or money order out to NASG, Inc.



Here's an actual photograph of the new Ertl B Mack 1960 tractor and flatbed trailer. The bottom one is the basic toy line model which has a green molded plastic load. The cab is red with black fenders and chrome trim. It's nice and as you can see will work with a 35' Hartoy trailer. Should also be compatible with AM and S-Helper trailers. Price is about \$15-20 depending where you get it. Note also that this Mack design actually goes back to 1953 and was in production until 1965. Many are still seen today. Unlike autos, the life span of a truck is usually over 20 years.

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:

Jeff Madden
438 Bron Derw Ct.
Wales, WI 53183
414-968-3729
E-Mail: TLMADDEN@execpc.com
Or: nasgdispatch@hotmail.com

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 Chairmen
NASG, Inc.
c/o Dody Stevens
9619 NW 71st St.
Kansas City, MO 64152-2403
816-741-1505
E-Mail: Craft.RR@swbell.net

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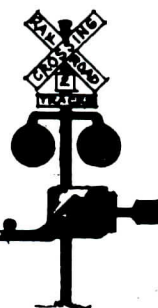
COVER:

Top - Wayne Hills' custom painted
Rio Grand Motor Truck
Bottom - Jess Bennett and a view of
the Great Northern Pacific with
leased Reading Loco

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NASG Web Site:
trainweb.com/NASG/

President's Message ...

The passing of several NASG members in recent months should make us reflect on the need for more younger members in our organization. A comment received on our web site guestbook by a non-member states the obvious.

"I just got back into 'real trains'. My children are fascinated by my old American Flyer equipment and have actually forsaken their beloved Super Nintendo, TV and computer games. My 14 year old says that if they made trains like these today, every kid would want to have them."

Many of our manufacturers have brought out great products and continue to develop new items. As we attract more new members, additional manufacturers will be attracted to S gauge. Finding and encouraging younger members will attract the attention of new manufacturers and suppliers, as they will provide a future market for their products and sustain the growth of S gauge.

I anticipate restarting the Manufacturer's Advisory Committee in the near future with the purpose of working with our manufacturers and suppliers. If you are interested in participating on this committee, please contact me.

S gauge will be represented at the NMRA National Convention in Kansas City (my home town) this summer by at least three manufacturers. The Kansas City S Gaugers will operate a 10' x 46' modular layout, running tinplate, hi-rail and scale equipment. Our Promotions Chairman will also be there with space adjacent to the modular layout and manufacturers' displays. These efforts should yield new members for the NASG, hopefully including some younger recruits.

-Paul Stevens, President NASG



The Kansas City S Gaugers' modular layout will be displayed at the NMRA national convention in Kansas City this summer.

Last Run: Father Thomas James Waterman died April 16 at his home in Easton, MO. Father Tom, as he was known, was a member of the NASG for the past eight years and a member of the Kansas City S Gaugers. One of my favorite recollections of him was when a BN crew assumed he was a company official as he stood beside the tracks in his BN hat and jacket. This often resulted in a cab ride to inspect the line. It was a stunt he like to pull, but will no more - goodbye, my friend.
- Paul Stevens

RAIL MAIL

NASG NEWS

Call For Nominations!

The following NASG officer positions need nominations soon. I must have the nomination and a 200 words or less dossier **post-marked no later than Oct. 15, 1998**. The dossiers will be posted in the February, 1999 *Dispatch* prior to the ballot mailing by April 15, 1999.

The offices open for election in 1999 are Executive Vice President, Secretary, Eastern Vice President, Central Vice President and Western Vice President.

Make this organization function; we need good people who are interested in serving. So please make sure your nominee is interested and is a paid-up member in good standing. Send nominations to me...Doug

Election Committee Chairman Douglas G. Miller
371 Castleman Rd., Vestal, NY 13850-6137
or e-mail: thunderber@aol.com

Missing Membership Numbers: My apologies to those of you whose membership numbers were omitted from the mailing labels on the last issue of the *Dispatch*. It was a choice between taking time to fix a computer glitch or delaying the issue, so many labels went "as is" minus membership numbers.

I realize this did create a problem on some renewal forms when members searched for their numbers on the address label. Quite a few renewal forms were received with no number or a ? on the membership number line. Even if you lost your card, your membership number appears in the annual Membership Directory as long as your dues were paid up in time.

A great deal of time and energy goes into both the directory issue and the zip code addendum - for you? Please keep these handy and use them. Kudos to the member in southeastern PA who did - he has formed a new S gauge club.

-Dody Stevens, NASG Membership Chairman.
e-mail: crafttr@swbell.net

RAILMAIL

Dear Jeff: Regarding last two editorials on "Standard S Gauge." As an ardent American Flyer fan, I surprised myself recently when I considered a similar question. I've been successful in convincing several friends to convert to S from the smaller scales, and this taught me something. These fellows owe no allegiance to American Flyer. They like and admire it, because the A.C. Gilbert Co., did a good job in its heyday. But they are looking to start modeling in S with readily available and affordable products, which can, but don't always, include Flyer. I found myself agreeing with them, and that's when my self-revelation occurred. I'm not particularly enamored of Lionel Flyer (I think it's a disservice for them to advertise as "Gilbert American Flyer" — poor old A.C. must be rolling over in his grave). My reaction to Lionel's anemic support of S gauging — who cares what they may or may not release anymore? (yawn) They had their chance.

The vast majority of my collection is Gilbert American Flyer, and I'll always love it. But for sheer beauty, craftsmanship, detail and price, I'll put my money on S-Helper and American Models for new products. I will continue to ardently pursue old Gilbert Flyer pieces when I can find a good deal, but the new products offered by so many different manufacturers excite me, and my friends. And that's the next step in the evolution of our scale.

We're still lacking in some affordable products, but I see that changing, and I think that the growth of S in the near future will be exponential as new products continue to hit the market. There's no doubt, we are attracting modelers from other scales, and they are the ones who are going to make the difference for us. Perhaps your thesis is correct about "Standard S" with KD couplers and DC power. It's well reasoned, and may come to pass. My dilemma is my gut allegiance to Gilbert American Flyer tinsplate, which, if for no other reason, deserves respect from everyone because it represents a slice of Americana, and therefore must be preserved and operated in its original state.

On the one hand, I want to continue to operate my Gilbert Flyer with its oversize couplers, track and AC power. On the other hand, I recognize the advantages of converting to DC and using more prototypical couplers. I have no problem with code .148 track, but total conversion to DC presents a problem. Perhaps I'll have to make a tough decision someday. But what I don't want to see is the atrophy of AF-compatible products, and I hope that the manufacturers can find that delicate economic balance in pleasing all camps. The only way for that to happen, in my mind, is for all of us to support them (and each other), regardless of our preferences.

Change is difficult. The "old" camp resists it, and the "new" camp gets impatient without it. But it's inevitable, and I agree with you that the standard will probably change. Whatever happens, it's exciting to be an S gauger these days.

P.S. Glad to hear the S-Fest abandoned the barbaric practice of stomping cabooses. It's about time someone put this juvenile wanton destruction where it belongs - in the aberrant behavior

Railmail continued on page 29

Jeff's Junction

EXPANDING THE NASG (Strictly an opinion from the editor - so far)

How can the NASG get more involvement, and hopefully, more membership out of our various "S pockets" throughout the nation and beyond?

Well - a first step might be to add some additional regions and corresponding vice presidents. This, of course, would mean realigning current regions and expanding the BOT. This could benefit S gauge (scale) and the NASG in several ways:

- 1) The added VPs would provide the NASG with increased manpower to help in re-railing members who didn't re-up, as they say in the military.
- 2) The additional VPs would provide the NASG with "additional bodies" who could provide the regional leadership in the areas of promotion, club development and national convention sponsorships.
- 3) New regions could allow members in some under-represented areas to feel more a part of the NASG and the S gauge community. Under-represented areas probably include the northwest, southeast, Rocky Mountain regions and maybe Canada.
- 4) Creating new geographical regions would then free current region VPs to concentrate on more compacted areas.
- 5) Overall goals for all regions (re-aligned or new) would be to increase club activities and NASG membership

New regions would have to come in increments of 2 so as to maintain an odd count on the BOT - necessary for a tie-breaking vote.

My thoughts on new regions boundaries - increasing the total by 2...

1-region: Southeast (9 states) - FL, GA, NC, SC, TN, Miss., AL, AR, LA.

2-region: Northeast (13 states and part of Canada) - All 6 New England states, eastern Canada, NY, NJ, PA, MD, WV, VA, DE.

3-region: Midwest (9 states) - MI, OH, IL, IN, WI, MN, IA, MO, KY.

4-region: Central (10 states and part of Canada) - NM, CO, MT, ND, SD, TX, NB, KS, WY, OK and Central Canada.

5-region: Pacific Coast (9 states and part of Canada) - CA, AZ, NV, OR, WA, ID, UT, Hawaii, Alaska and western Canada.

If there was expansion beyond this, Canada might become its own region and other regions could be subdivided. Also, there's always the idea of subdividing each region into divisions.

It's like adding franchises to the baseball leagues - since S has an ever increasing product base, we should be ready and willing to expand the influence of the NASG.

Along a similar vein, how about some incentives to clubs to become an NASG affiliate organization (not mandatory membership, just some) or offering a club membership. This could give the NASG a semi-official stake in clubs' activities, meets, fests, etc. For example, the midwest S Fests and the S Sprees could be official NASG functions, but under total local control similar to the the NMRA's regional meets.

What do you think folks? Let your current officers (or me via the *Dispatch*) know how you feel on this or any other creative ideas you might have.

- Jeff

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODELS (10087 Industrial Dr., South Lyon, MI 48178) has a couple of new items listed on their web pages. They list two and four-bay hopper coal loads for one. The Baldwin S-12 is now offered in C&NW paint and a CSX paint scheme is listed for the 4-bay coal hoppers.

BILLS TRAIN SHOP (P.O. Box 561, Seffner, FL 33583) has a new structure listed in the Cabin Creek Series. It is a typical backwoods cabin. It should be right at home in West Virginia hollers or the Colorado Rockies. It's a typical laser kit with wood parts and adhesive backed roofing material. The footprint is 16' x 18'. Cost for the S version is \$18.95.

DIGITRAX (450 S. Cemetery St., Suite #206, Norcross, GA 30071). Digitrax is releasing some radio control throttles (no tethered cables) called the DT100R to be used in conjunction with a receiver called the UR91. Each throttle has a range of about a 300 foot diameter and operates in the 900Mhz band. Throttles run on fully charged NiCad batteries with about a 6-8 hour life before recharging or on regular Alkaline batteries for about 10-20 hours. Each Digitrax radio equipped system can be assigned a system ID to allow multiple clubs to operate in close proximity at train shows. The new throttles can be used with existing LocoNet systems.

Each throttle looks and works like a DT100 throttle, but it has a shorter plug-in cord with a radio transmitter inside. The cord is used to select locomotives or as a fail-safe if the batteries die. Otherwise it's a cordless operation. Factory original DT100s can be converted into DT100Rs for \$50.00 each including S&H within the U.S. This must be done at our factory because of FCC rules. New throttles are \$199.95.

The UR91 is the radio/IR receiver unit. It looks similar to a UP-3 and is mounted in the fascia of the layout. The UR91 is simply an addition to your existng LocoNet so no additional wiring is needed. The antennas are concealed

under the layout. Each UR91 will support approximately 10 DT100R throttles. Most layouts will need just one UR91, but in some large layouts a second unit may be needed to compensate for dead spots. Each UR91 is \$149.99.

A starter kit is available for \$650.00 which includes a DCS100 Command Station/Booster, a DT100R throttle, a UR91 receiver, one Digitrax FX 1 amp decoder, one decoder test kit, and one Chief instructional video. Web site: www.digitrax.com. E-mail: sales@digitrax.com.

FREIGHT CAR GUIDE UPDATE (Rensselaer Railroad Shop, RPI Student Union, Troy, NY 12180-3590. Ph: 518-276-2971). This is an update reference book to the *Steam Era Freight Car Guide*. Now the original book is a 600 page guide to HO steam era freight car kits manufactured since WWII. It breaks down each kit by prototype and includes details about upgrades via kitbashing. The new update book is a 190 supplement details paint schemes, lettering, reporting marks, dimensional data, chalk marks, etc. Also covered are billboard reefers and gasoline companies.

According to a review by Don Spiro in the May, '98 RMC, the Update lacks some lettering diagrams thanks to the reluctance of some decal manufacturers, but he concludes the artwork and text which is included is very worthwhile.

Both of these books should be of interest to S gaugers and maybe S manufacturers. Prices ??

JOHN HALL DECALS (2711 Pecksniff Road, Wilmington, DE 19808-2177) has a new limited edition decal set in S scale. RIGHT OF WAY SIGNS, decal set #199, contains over a dozen different signs (a total of 12 different, but a total of 54) commonly found along the right-of-way. Examples are whistle signs, close clearance, no trespassing and so on. Included are templates and instructions for making sign backs and posts. These are based

on Reading prototypes, but most are generic enough for any railroad. Each set sells for \$4.00.

As a reminder I'll mention John's recent Reading freight car offerings: #101 hopper cars 30s-60s, gondolas 30s-60s, flatcars 30s-60s, steam locos, box cars 30s-'57. Each set is \$5.00 and will do 2 cars of locos. A list of other sets will be sent for an SSAE.

LIONEL LLC (50625 Richard W. Blvd., Chesterfield, MI 48051). The news out of Lionel is rather surprising. Straight from Lionel itself comes the fact that the debut of the new SD40-2 and re-tooled bay window caboose have been **POSTPONED** indefinitely or maybe worse. Dealers have already been notified of all order cancellations Why? Seems like not enough advance orders from dealers. I fear the bean counters are alive and well. Good news is that the B&LE hopper has added a 5th number beyond the set.

MAINSTREETER TRAINS (3895 Colony Oaks Dr., Eugene, OR 97405-6211). Gil has a new cast plaster pulpwood load designed to fit the 42' AF Gondola. This load in a GN red gondola will be the 1998 S-West III convention car. Individual loads and GN gondolas with loads will first be available at the NASG Minuteman Express convention in July. The second offering will be through S-West followed by general sales.

The pulpwood load is manufactured by Mr. Plaster exclusively for Mainstreeter Trains and weighs approximately 10 oz. The GN gondolas will be available in both scale and hi-rail versions with at least two road numbers, a slight change in the location of lettering and two-color herald, and will include open stirrup steps at each corner.

The load follows northern practice with six vertical logs at each end serving as makeshift bulkheads. In between are horizontal logs cut to eight-foot lengths. Pulpwood loading in the southeastern forests tended to see four-foot logs stacked on V-deck bulkhead flatcars.

PORT LINES HOBBY SUPPLIES

(6 Storeybrooke Dr., Newburyport, MA 01950) is releasing a new simple styrene and wood kit for small town wood ice house. These were quite common in the northern states. Wood and styrene pieces are pre-cut for easy identification and assembly. A cast resin jig is included to aid in assembly of the platform supports. The platform measures 2" x 12" and the ice house has a footprint of 4" x 6". The kit is \$59.95 plus \$4 S&H. Check out the website: <http://trainweb.com/crocon/portlines.html>.

RACING CHAMPIONS (Discount and hobby stores). They're still at it folks, supplying S scalers with appropriate vehicles. Newest ones I've found since last report - More police cars (various years and makes), '60 Plymouth 2d ht - app. 1/64, '55 Chevrolet 2d sedan - 1/64, '37 Ford convertible - 1/58, '48 Ford F series pickup - 1/58, '65 Ford pickup - 1/64. Coming is a '51 Studebaker - 1/60. There are other more modern cars out too like a 1978 Pontiac Trans Am T-top at 1/64, but I tend to report mostly on the 30s thru 60s models since they fit most modelers' schemes.

RAILMASTER EXPORTS (209 Royal Road, Royal Heights, Auckland 8, New Zealand) has some new pewter cast metal vehicle kits out: 1932-33 Ford fire truck (open or closed cab versions), '32-33 Ford stake, flatbed, grain truck and bus, BMW motorcycle, Harley motorcycle.

S-HELPER (2 Roberts Rd., New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1621). S-Helper has recently announced a new version of their wide-cab caboose even though not yet out, and that is a Christmas 1998 one. It will be decorated for Maine Central with appropriate "Pine Tree" herald and painted in yellow and green. Mr. and Mrs. Claus figures will be included waving from the back of the caboose. Rumor has it that these will be in the image of S gaugers John and Thelma Bortz. Price will be \$69.95 each for this limited edition caboose.

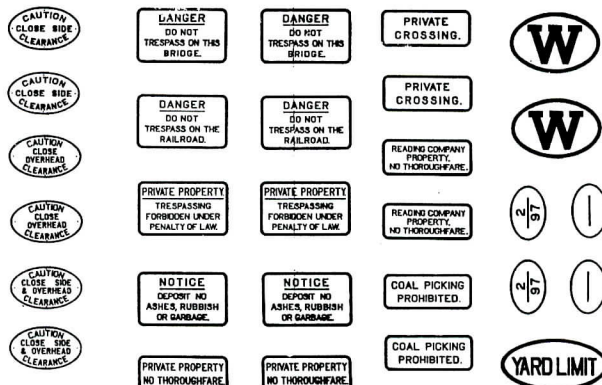
Now in stock are some of the '98 TOFC flat cars with trailers. Available now are the NH car with Yale trailer, TTX car with Carolina trailer, PRR car with aluminum PRR trailer and the WM flat with WM speed lettering trailer. Flat cars with trailers - \$59.95, trailers - \$15.95.



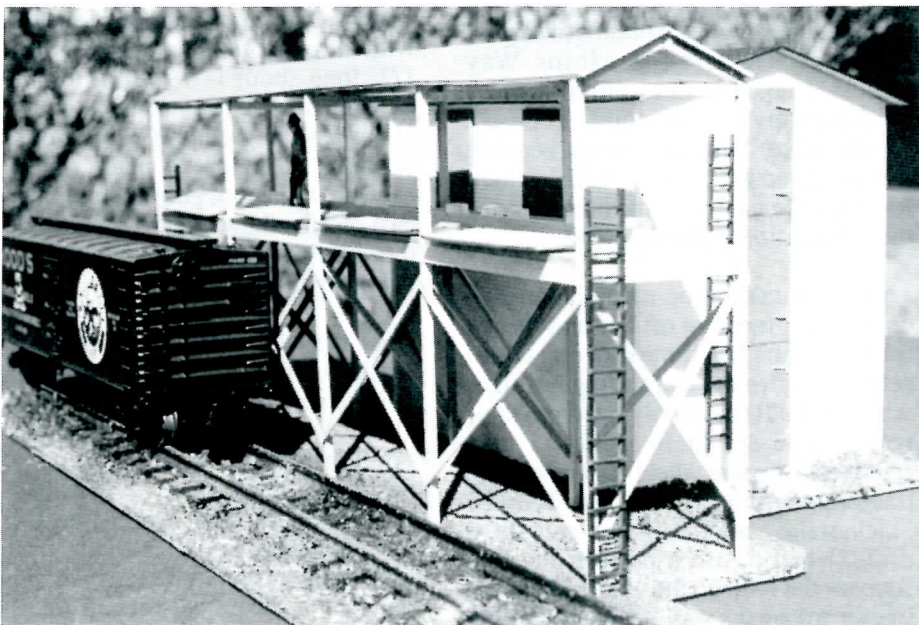
Top left - Digitrax UR91 receiver and DT100R radio controlled throttle. Dangling cord is only for battery failure plug in.

Top right - B.T.S. backwoods cabin.

Right - Right-of-way sign decal set offered by John Hall.



Mainstreeter Trains offers a pulpwood load and GN decorated gondola.



Twin Whistle plastic and wood ice house kit offered by Port Lines.

PAINING AND DETAILING A RIO GRANDE MOTOR WAY TRUCK

Article and Photos By Wayne D. Hills

Having been to Colorado many times from 1973 to the present, and modeling the Denver & Rio Grande Western, the introduction of the Hartoy line of trucks to S caught my eye and gave me the idea that perhaps I could repaint one of their trucks into the scheme used by the Denver & Rio Grande Western on their Rio Grande Motor Way trucks of the late 1940's and early 1950's.

The first thing to do was to gather as many photos of Rio Grande Motor Way trucks and trailers as possible. This was easier than it may seem for me, at least for photos of the trailers, as they appear in the background in photos published in several books. In addition, my father visited Colorado in 1947 and 1950, and the trailers appear in the background in several of his color slides. There are photos taken in Salida, Colorado on May 21, 1950 when the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club ran an excursion on the narrow gauge out of there that show three Rio Grande Motor Way trailers parked by the station in two different sizes!

While photos of the trailers are easy to come across, I have not found any photos that show the trailers being pulled by a tractor rig. Since I liked the looks of the MACK model BM tractor with the 22 foot trailer, and the 22 foot trailer seemed to match photos of several different Rio Grande Motor Way trailers, I decided to use one of these models as my starting point. I chose a "Stroh's Beer" truck to repaint because it had silver-gray wheel hubs, which looked more natural to me than some of the other colored plastic hubs.

I began by taking the model apart so I could strip the paint off the tractor and trailer. I started by removing one wheel set from each axle, and sliding the other wheel and axle assembly out from their frames and set them aside. I also removed the spare wheels from both the tractor and trailer. I took the chromed "kick stand" off the trailer and set it aside. I had to use a pair of pliers to squeeze the rivet on the underside of the tractor under the motor, then push the rivet through the bottom of the tractor



to remove the cab/motor from the frame. I removed the chromed bumper and radiator/grill assemblies and set them aside, and set the "bug eye" headlights aside. I removed the cab interior plastic casting and the window casting and set them aside. I then used regular paint stripper to strip the paint from the metal trailer, tractor chassis and tractor cab/motor assembly, then washed them in soapy water and set them out to dry.

Painting: When the metal parts were dry, I spray painted them with Scalecoat paint. I used black for the tractor, and bright caboose red with black underbody for the trailer. These pieces were then baked in the oven at 175 degrees for one hour. When they had cooled, I masked off the trailer and spray painted a white stripe on both sides wrapping around the front of the trailer, with the exception that I left an opening 1/2" long about 1-7/8" in from the rear on each side, with the stripe ending at about a 45 degree angle on both sides of these openings. I made the stripe extend 1/32" both above and below the cast on ribs that run horizontally down the middle of the trailer. The trailer was baked again.

Once the white paint stripe had dried, I masked off the trailer again, making a 1/32" wide "stripe" around the edges of all the white paint. I then painted the "inside" of the white stripe with Scalecoat black paint. I removed the masking and again baked the trailer. After the black paint had dried, I masked off a slanted rectangle on each side of the trailer, "leaning" toward the front of the trailer at about a 35 degree angle,

about 1/2" long and about 9/32" high, in the space left on each side of the trailer, and painted this rectangle white, then baked the trailer again. I also painted the doors on the rear of the trailer black, from the bottom up to a point even with the bottom of the stripe that I painted around the sides and front of the trailer.

After everything was dry, I then painted the plastic roof of the trailer and the cast on "wings" on the front of the trailer with Scalecoat II silver. I also used silver paint to dry brush the hinges and latch on the back of the trailer. The underbody and rear bumper of the trailer were painted black. When this was done, I used reefer orange to highlight the side running lights, and bright caboose red for the rear running lights and brake lights on the trailer was baked one final time.

Lettering and the Trailer: I used Rio Grande "speed lettering" from a couple of HOn3 lettering sets to letter the trailer. The lettering on the front and rear of the trailer is smaller than on the sides, and both sides "lean" forward, towards the front of the trailer as per the prototype photos. I made the small "Rio Grande Motor Way" heralds on the computer, using a program called Corel Draw, and printed them at 600 dpi onto blank decal paper using a laser printer.

I created my own lettering font for the Rio Grande speed lettering. I made a black rectangle slightly smaller than the ones I had painted on the trailer, and added white lettering on the rectangle, all in the computer. Since the computer

printer will not print the color white, the lettering will come out clear on the decal, which explains why I painted the white rectangles. When the decal was added to the white rectangle, I had my black rectangle with white lettering, just as on the prototype. The "MOTOR" and "FREIGHT" lettering in the black stripe on either side of the heralds was also made on the computer the same as I did for the heralds. I used white decal film cut into strips to make the white striping on the rear doors, creating black and white stripes out of the part I had painted black.

While I was making the heralds for the trailers, I also made some scale license plates. As I stated earlier, my father had visited Colorado in 1947 and 1950, and took some nice Kodachrome color slides, including some slides of the towns he visited. These slides show plenty of automobiles and trucks in them, and by using a magnifying loupe, I was able to determine that in 1950, the color of Colorado license plates was white with black lettering. Perfect!! I printed these at 600 dpi on regular white paper, and on decal paper. The ones I printed on paper actually came out a little better than the ones on the decal paper, so I just cut them out and pasted them on in the proper locations, making sure to use a different number for the trailer than the ones I used on the tractor.

I made mud flaps for the trailer out of .005" sheet styrene glued to a piece of .019" brass wire, and painted the whole thing flat black, then used ACC cement to glue the wire in place. I bent the flaps up just slightly, as I've seen them this way on some trailers. I sealed the lettering with a gloss coat, and reassembled the trailer.

The Tractor: Turning to the tractor, I brush painted the headlight assembly black (I couldn't get the headlight glass to pop out and didn't want to ruin them). I painted the plastic steering wheel black with silver spokes, and painted the dashboard black. The seat was cast in a nice tan, so I did not paint it. I added two stick shifts, one for regular gearing and one for low gear made from common pins. I painted the "shafts" black and left the tops chrome so they could be seen. I used an Arttista seated figure for a driver, though I had to file his butt down to get him to sit straight up - he had a very pronounced "list" to one side!



Photos by Wayne Hills



As it turned out, when I put the window glass back in, I couldn't add the cab interior because my driver (actually a member of the Artista engine crew) kept bumping his head on the roof! I did away with the window casting and used Detail Associates clear window material to make the windshield, side window and rear windows. I left the driver's side window out to simulate it being cranked down so the driver can breathe!

I made a lunch box from scrap styrene and painted it black (one of the old timers I used to work with had one that he bought in 1947 when he went to work for the railroad, and it retired on the same day he did!) and made a thermos from a piece of brass wire that I painted silver to represent a stainless steel thermos. I made a newspaper on the computer and reduced it to about S scale, and folded it and put the on the seat between the thermos and the lunch box beside the driver. If you look

closely, you can read the headlines of the *Rocky Mountain News*; they read "NATION-WIDE COAL STRIKE OVER; WAR IMMINENT IN KOREA" See photo, figure 4. The rest of the detailing I made following the two part article in the *S/Sn3 Buyer's Guide*, volume 1, no. 3 and volume 2, no. 1.

I used Testor's chrome paint for the mirrors, horn and hand railings. I used Bare Metal chrome adhesive backed foil on the face of the mirrors to make them as shiny as possible. In addition, I made mud flaps for the tractor the same as I made for the trailer, except I made them in two pieces, and drilled holes in the metal casting to glue them in place with ACC.

Just for Fun: For a final touch, I made decals for the cab doors the same as I did for the trailer using the computer. My best friend Al is a Rio Grande fan, and also likes trucks. Since his mother came from Salida, Colorado, and since

I couldn't find a photo of a Rio Grande Motor Way tractor, I thought it only fitting that my best friend should have his own trucking company, based in Salida, so I made up a couple of decals for "Al's Trucking", "Salida, Colorado" on a black rectangle with 'white' (clear) lettering. I soaked the decals in water, then slid them off the backing paper and turned them over on a metal ruler with the 'wrong' side up. After letting them dry for about a minute, I soaked up any excess water with a paper towel, then painted the back sides of them with white paint, and after the paint had dried for a couple of minutes I applied them to the cab sides, using a decal setting solution. When the decals had dried, I masked off the windows and sealed the decals with a clear gloss coat.

I had a lot of fun painting and detailing this truck, and it will occupy a prominent spot on my layout!



Left - Without tractor lettering to go by Wayne lettered the black cab unit for his friend, Al. Note the added details, electrical and air brake cables, horn, wing mirrors and stack. The photo on the **right** shows the cab interior with all the details added. The driver is reaching for the low gear shift lever with his right hand, with his left on the steering wheel. The two gear shift levers were made from common pins. The driver's lunch box was made from a piece of scrap styrene with a piece of brass wire for a handle. The newspaper was printed on the computer and folded up to fit on the seat. The thermos is a piece of brass wire with one end filed round and painted silver. The driver is an Artista engine crew figure with his "butt" shaved a bit to fit.

Photos by Wayne Hills



AN OPERATING TOUR OF THE GREAT NORTHERN PACIFIC

By Bob Jackson with Lee Johnson
Photos by Lee Johnson

How long have you been an S gauger? ____ years. Really? That long. Do you remember in which issue of the *S Gauge Herald* began using the slogan "S Gauge is Steadily Growing" at the top of the front page? If you do, join me in a toast to the good old days (which weren't all that good, but then they weren't too bad either) 'cause you're 'bout as long in the tooth as I am. But, if you don't, draw up a stool and let me tell you about a thing or two.

You see that phrase was first used by Frank R. Titman, editor of the SGH, way back in the Fall 1965 issue, more than 32 years ago. The *Herald* ceased publication in 1978, but we old timers remember it with reverence and respect—for Frank too. The *Herald* was published in an era when S gaugers had few ready built models to work with; often only the crudest materials lay at hand. Yet, these modelers produced some of the highest quality railroad models and model railroads of any scale, bar none. I will not attempt to list the high achievers for fear of offending one of them by forgetting to include his name. A fair number of them have crossed the river and are operating their S scale railroads on a cloud somewhere, or maybe in front of a roaring fire! Who can say?

It is necessary, though, to name one of the survivors, since he is central to the subject of this article. Jess Bennett has been around in S gauge about as long as S gauge has been around. His accomplishments have set the scene for the dreams and aspirations of many of the rest of us. His railroad, the Great Northern Pacific, was featured in the February, 1985, issue of *Model Railroader*. The GNP has appeared in several S gauge publications as well. The photo essay that follows describes an operating visit by Lee Johnson and

Arden Goehring to the layout. Though the visit occurred more than eight years ago, an account of it has never been published. It is presented here to show what wonderment awaits your travel to the west this fall to S-West III (see sidebar).

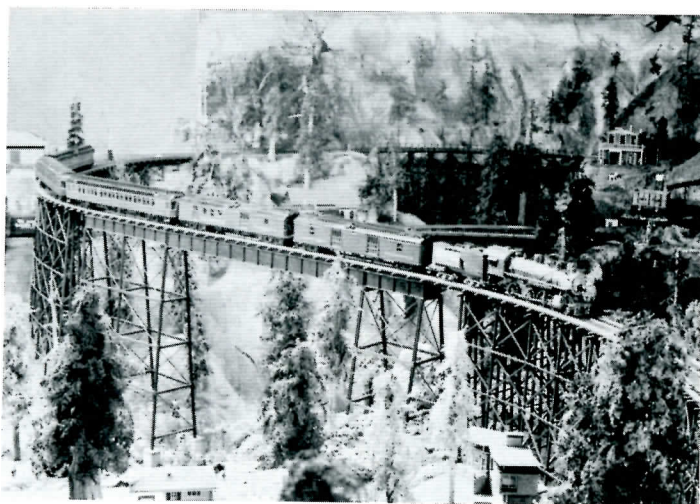
Lee and Arden motored from the San Francisco Bay area to Careywood in northern Idaho. The two Bay Area S Scalers (BASS), were met by Jess and his wife, Marion (since deceased), who

Text continued on page 14

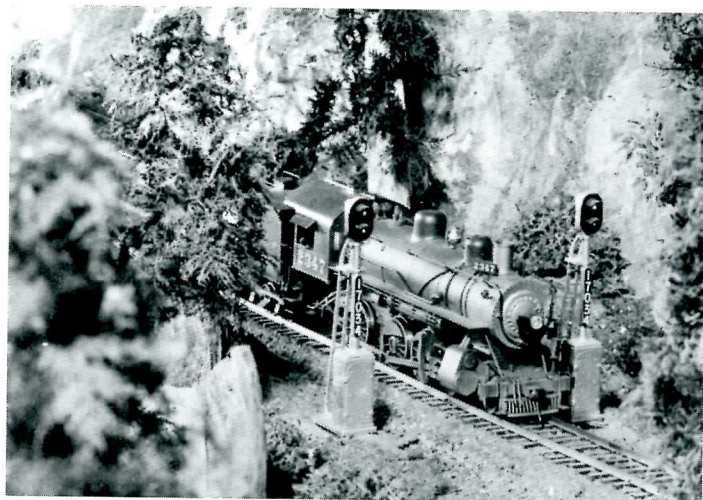


Top - SP 2347 leads the Kettle Creek Flyer over the scale 1000 foot trestle over Bear Creek Gorge. **Bottom** - The T-28 ten-wheeler crosses the headwaters of Bear River on a steel arch bridge. Locomotive is Lee Johnson's, scratchbuilt by Bill Pirie.

Photos by Lee Johnson

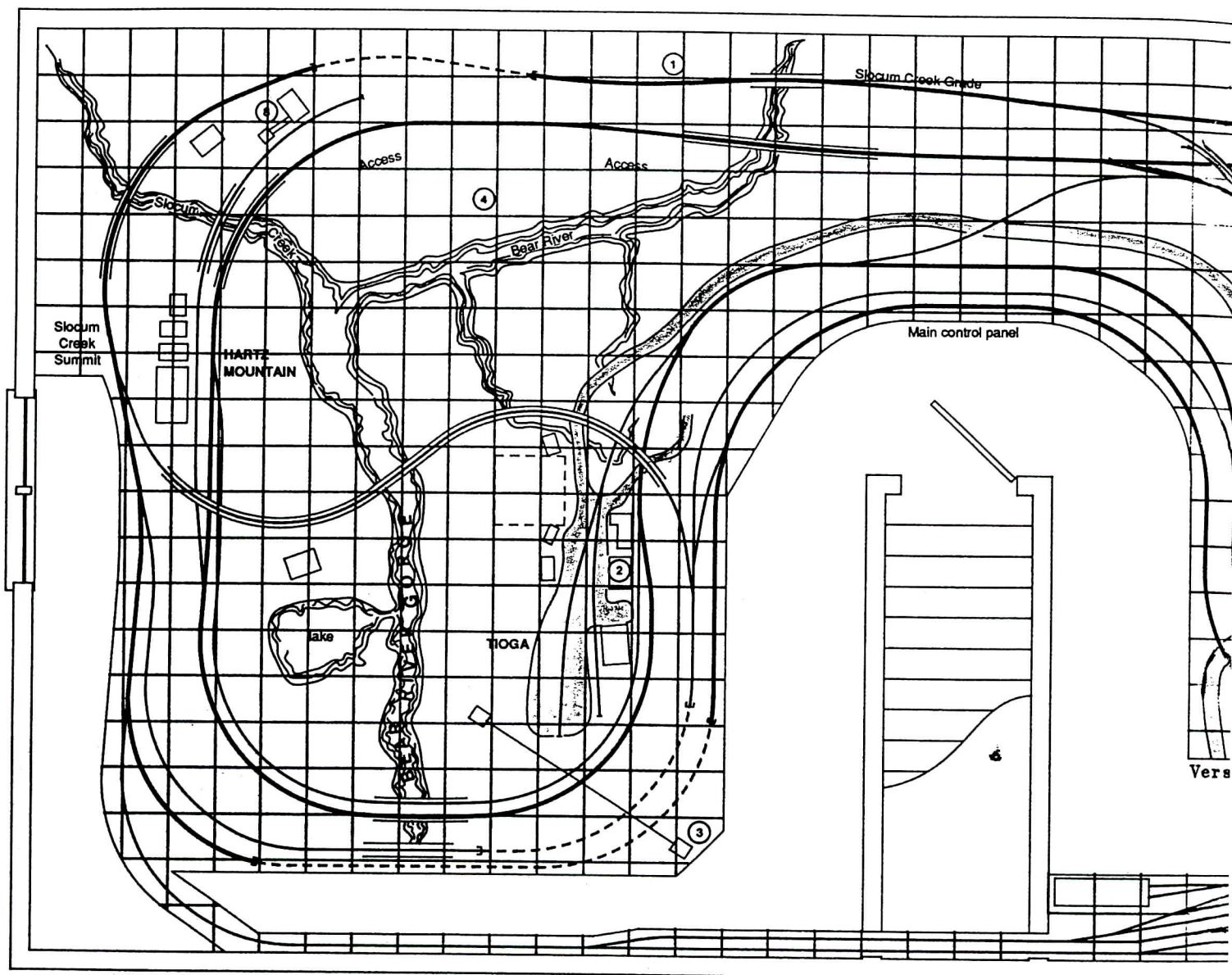


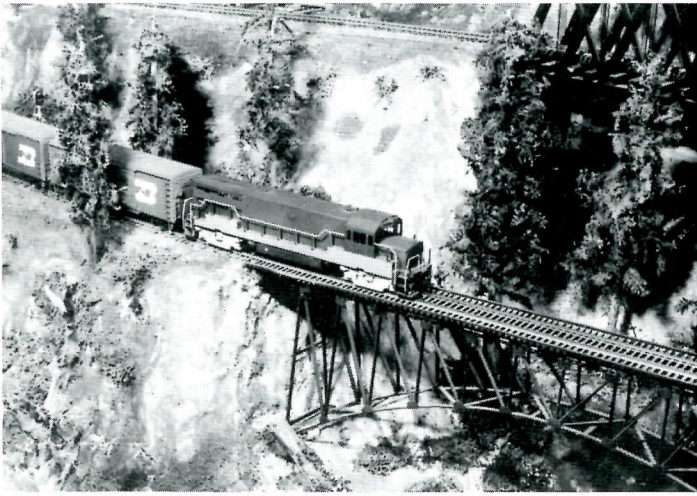
Almost 400 scale feet above Bear River Gorge, the Passengers on the Kettle Valley Flyer have a spectacular view.



The 63" drivers on the T-28 4-6-0 are moving rapidly past signals protecting GNP operation in the canyon on the way to Careywood. *Lee Johnson photos*

Track Diagram courtesy of *3/16" Scale Railroading* magazine.

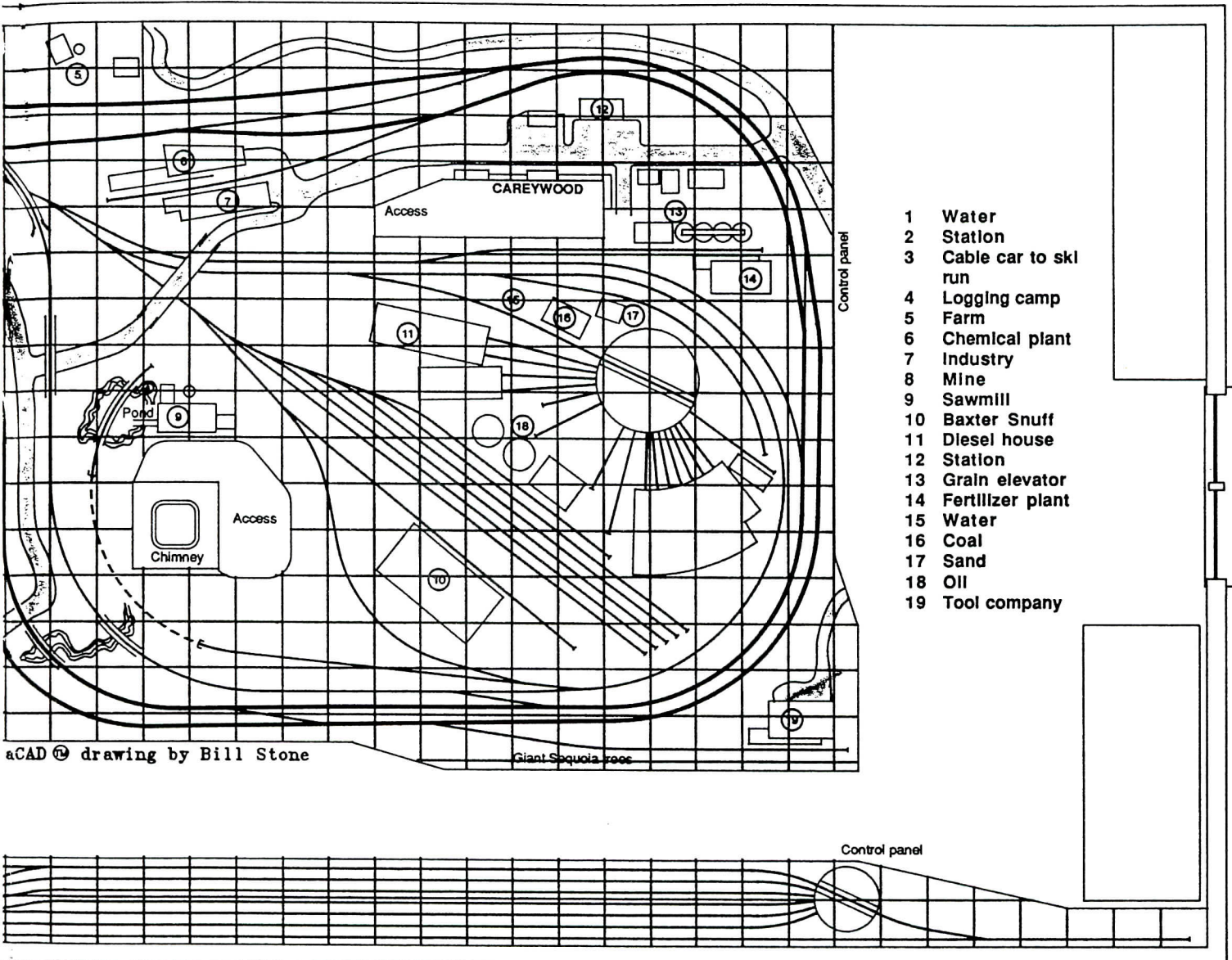




An occasional diesel finds its way onto the GNP. Here GNP U25B 2501 leads the Fast Freight Forwarder over the Bear River to meet its time sensitive connection in Careywood. The diesel was scratchbuilt by Jess utilizing engravings and castings once produced by G&W Models.



Jess Bennett's scratchbuilt SP Cab Forward pops out of a tunnel in charge of one of the GNP's hottest trains, the Salad Bowl Express. *Photos by Lee Johnson*



graciously hosted their visit. Jess's talents are not limited to model railroading. The Great Northern Pacific is located on the second floor of the Bennett house, which was itself "scratchbuilt" by Jess with lumber from logs which he felled on his own land, no less!

The operating session that followed featured the GNP's locomotives which were scratchbuilt by Jess who has built more than 40 steam locomotives, many of them articulated. Only a few of these actually operate on the GNP; most belong to fellow S gaugers around the country. The session also featured a visiting Class T-28 ten-wheeler from the Southern Pacific supplied by the visiting Lee Johnson. The 4-6-0 was originally scratchbuilt by Bill Pirie.

The Great Northern Pacific occupies an

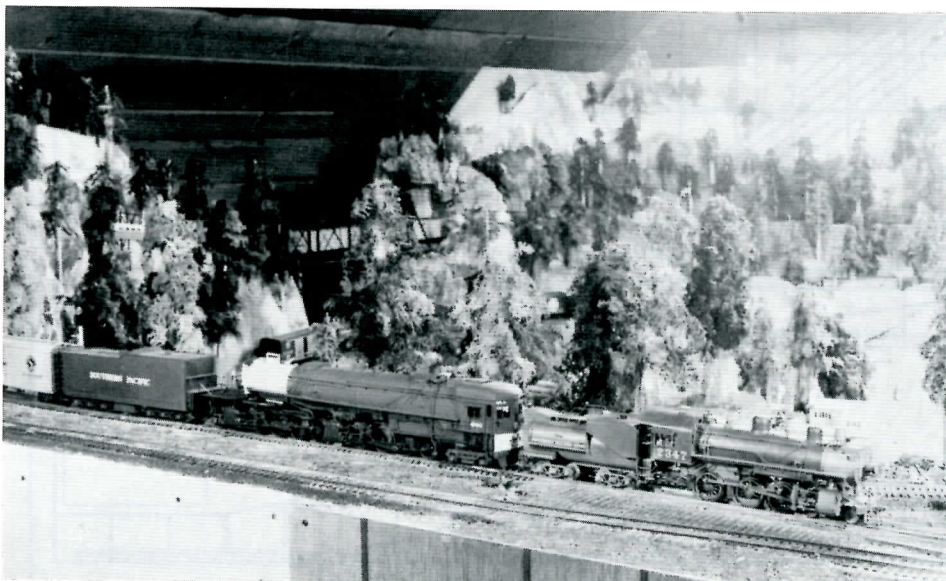
area 20' by 44' in a room that is 20' by 50'. The room is near perfect for a model railroad with none of the usual posts, furnaces, washers or stairwells with which most of us have to contend. Virtually every aspect of the railroad was built from scratch by Jess, even down to the rail ties which he cut from white pine lumber left over from building the house. It took two years from the time of driving the first spike to get the railroad ready for reliable train running. Another two years were devoted to creating the scenery. Hence, during the mid-70s, after more than four years, the Great Northern Pacific became a complete model railroad. Of course, no railroad is ever truly complete and finished, not even the 12-inch-to-the-foot ones. A visitor today would find much that has changed and developed over the ensuing 20 years. (I hope there is no merger contemplated).

The scenery on the GNP is nothing less than spectacular. Its center of attraction is Bear River Gorge which is crossed by a wooden trestle that is an actual 16 feet long. Naturally, even the scale lumber that was used to build the trestle was made by Jess.

Jess, now in his eighties, created one of the truly great model railroads. We shouldn't miss the opportunity to visit it in combination with attendance at the S-West III in nearby Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, in September. We shouldn't miss meeting Jess, either. He is a man of great character and strong humor. I am sure that he and his present wife will meet you with the same graciousness that Lee and Arden encountered several years ago. With a little luck, maybe I will see you there.

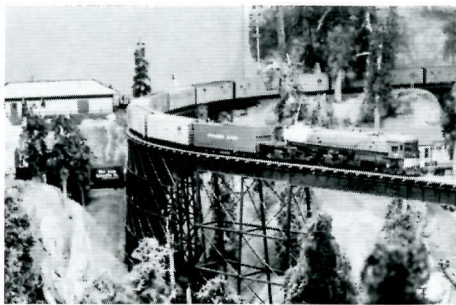


As SP ten-wheeler #2347 and Cab Forward 4211 drift downgrade with a tonnage train toward Sequoia Junction, A Union Pacific Big Boy hammers past on the adjacent track with a full train of empties on its way to Slocum Creek Summit and eventually Careywood.



Doubleheader with SP ten-wheeler and Cab Forward have just battled a heavy GNP tonnage freight up to Slocum Creek Summit.

Photos by Lee Johnson



Leaving Slocum Creek Summit, scratchbuilt Cab Forward 4-8-8-2 #4211 eases the Salad Bowl Express a scale 380 feet above Bear River Gorge. Photo by Lee Johnson



The "scratchbuilt" Bennett house in Idaho. Photo by Ed Loizeaux

Jess emigrated to California via freight train from somewhere "back east" as a young man. He owned orchard land in Southern California and moved away when it became "too crowded" many years ago. I moved to California in 1963 and Jess was already well established in Idaho. I didn't think of California being crowded in 1963, but Jess did! Keep in mind that his name is spelled "Jesse," but pronounced Jess by all his family and friends.

When he moved to Idaho, he purchased many acres (600, I think) and did some cattle ranching, lumbering and some wheat growing. He cut down numerous trees, loaded them onto his truck, drove to the local sawmill, had them cut up, drove them back to his land and built his own house. He has his own well, never signed up for a telephone until about the early 1980s or so, burned his own tree wood for heat and thus had a very small electric bill. Very self sufficient, to say the least.

The severe winters gave him the time to spend indoors working on the GNP and building models.- Ed Loizeau

GREAT NORTHERN PACIFIC TOUR

PART OF SEPTEMBER'S S-WEST III

By Gil Hulin, S West III chairman.

Jess Bennett's Great Northern Pacific will be one of three home layouts visited by S-West III convention registrants in September. The group will also view Ernie Horr's Tinsplate Road and Ron Tilton's scale layout, both in Spokane.

S-West III is the third in the series of S gauge western regional meets begun in 1995. The first two were sponsored by California's Bay Area S Scalpers, but this year's event is the work of several individuals, with the support of three states' clubs: greater Spokane's Inland Empire S Gaugers Association of the Pacific Northwest, southern Idaho's Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers and Oregon's Northwest S Scalpers.

No club has yet extended an invitation to sponsor S-West in 1999, but any group or energetic individual from the Rockies to the Pacific is eligible. Proposals may be routed through NASG Western Vice President Lee Johnson.

S-West III will be held September 17-19, 1998, based at the Kootenai County Fairgrounds in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Advance registration is highly encouraged, as registration will be cut off at approximately 70 when the capacity of the two layout tour buses (and practical limit of the homes being visited) is reached. S-West is less commercial than some regional S meets in that the sales room will be closed and secured during all tours.

Thursday's schedule includes afternoon set-up and opening of manufacturer and dealer displays and portable layouts with an optional evening open house at an excellent local HO scale home layout.

The three supporting clubs have been invited to display their portable hi-rail and scale layouts, but space is available for any other groups or

individuals willing to transport layouts to northern Idaho.

Layout operation and dealer/manufacturer sales continue Friday, along with a half dozen daytime clinic presentations coordinated by Jess Bennett. Friday evening buses will take the group to Spokane for S gauge layout visits following an inspection of the Inland Empire Railway Historical Society's prototype equipment collection. The display at Spokane's Interstate Fairgrounds includes steam, diesel and electric locomotives plus rolling stock of every railroad that served the city.

Two buses will head north from Coeur d'Alene Saturday morning, one going directly to Jess Bennett's rural, mountaintop home outside of Careywood, and the other following BNSF's "funnel" main line to the resort town of Sandpoint. There that group will visit the local historical museum with its HO scale layout depicting the area's railroads. The local HO club will also provide a picnic lunch at a beachfront city park on Lake Pend Oreille and in view of BNSF's causeway across the lake. Up to 50 BNSF, Montana Rail Link and Amtrak trains a day use this trackage.

After lunch the busloads will trade destinations, before both will return to Coeur d'Alene in late afternoon. Saturday evening S-West III concludes with a 6:30 to 9 p.m. public show to introduce Spokane and Coeur d'Alene area train fans to S scale. Sunday is a free day to head home or further explore the area.

S-West III registration is \$39.00 and a packet including lodging and transportation. Information and a mail order option for the convention's souvenir car (GN gondola with pulpwood load) is available from Chairman Gil Hulin, 3895 Colony Oaks Drive, Eugene, OR 97405.



Imagine 1927. A reefer is set out at Danville while overhead a PTC camelback clanks over a deck girder bridge.

Photos by Syllas Kayle



Here is the ornate trainshed at Cameron Junction which is the last modeled commuter stop on Dave Jasper's period railroad. A steam commuter operation is a key feature of his layout.

"IN THE MOOD" PERIOD MODEL RAILROADING by Syllas Kayle

A preview of Dave Jasper's S scale layout at the 1999 NASG convention in Minneapolis/ST. Paul.

Dave Jasper's layout will be on tour at the 1999 NASG National Convention in St. Paul. Set in New England during the first week of October, 1927, it represents a backbone, double track class A railroad with two branch lines and a small piece of narrow gauge. This period and location was chosen because railroads in the northeast U.S. were the most developed and dense, and overall in the U. S. total rail mileage peaked in that year. In fact, the truck and automobile competition were just beginning to gain momentum, and it was still the roaring twenties when spirits were high and commerce boomed.

Back then most sources of energy came from coal; and ice was the way things were cooled. Coal heated homes and

factories, coal powered the mills, coal fired the locomotives, coal powered electric generators...etc. Dave Jasper's modeling attempts to capture delivering coal (no mines), milk delivery, mail and express operations and commuter trains in the year 1927.

With these themes Dave has tried to weave his modeling efforts into a miniature slice of history with his S scale model railroad. He believes that to replicate history the surroundings have to be as good as the model trains themselves. That's why he isn't so specific as to a prototype scene, but rather attempts to faithfully recreate a representative piece of history, which actually is much harder to do. "I have to know what materials existed, what

technologies were available, what activities people performed and the proportions of each in order to create an accurate and believable scene. On the other hand, it does create a secondary hobby researching how things were in that time and place."

His reasons for this approach are based on his observation that even in his 750 square foot basement, he could only model a modest station area precisely. So instead of compressing beyond recognition, he goes with the 'feel' of the era. Period photos, books and visits to locations for landscape and vegetation provide the modeling inspirations. These images along with knowledge of how society worked then is woven into a series of mini-scenes and operation schemes that can be rationally tied together in such a way as to fit into his basement and still have the appearance of the real thing.

"It's really tough to be so picky in a



A mixed freight with Camelback power waits on the interchange track at Vos Junction while a mainline freight passes by - the brakie is resting a spell on the back platform of the caboose. The whole scene reflects another time and place.



Wooden freight cars with arch-bar trucks and old-time truss rod underframes were typical cars for the time.



Doubleheaded Mikados lead a coal drag through the fall New England countryside. Then coal was king for most heating and energy uses.

scale with so limited a supply," says Dave. But somehow he has managed to create most of his railroad and say 'this could have been' without violating history. Part of this philosophy can be traced back to a time in the early '70s when he would take a 9 foot module to public mall shows. On the valence of the module were snapshots in black and white taken of the module at a slightly earlier stage of development, so there was not a perfect match. Several observers commented on how faithfully he had captured the "prototype" photos

in his modeling. The idea of creating his own prototype was born. Why not create a representation of a time and place in history that *no one* could tell from the real thing.

Come visit this "time and place" during the 1999 NASG convention, Lake Special #99, to be held concurrent with the closing three days of the NMRA Northstar '99 convention. Photos were taken with a pinhole lens camera by Syllas Kayle.

Preview of 1999 NASG Convention - Lake Special #99.

- Special emphasis on 1/64 model railroading - all phases.
- Coordinated to overlap the 1999 NMRA Convention, Northstar '99 from Thurs-Sun.
- Shuttle bus service between both conventions' activities including free access to clinics, model contests, trade show. Layout tours, prototype tours and spouse tours available with a la carte pricing.
- Fully independent NASG Convention in a separate facility.
- S manufacturer's will have a display at the NMRA trade show with an invitation to all paid attendees to visit additional S manufacturers and displays at the NASG convention site.
- Traditional NASG convention activities at their own site.

Location: St. Paul, one half of the famous Minnesota Twin Cities. The Twin Cities are nationally recognized as a major center of railroad activity. They are easily accessed by train, plane and Interstate. Minneapolis International Airport is the national hub for Northwest Airlines, and St. Paul is still served daily by Amtrak's Empire Builder from Chicago and points west.

The Best Western Kelly Inn has been selected as the site for the NASG convention. It is conveniently located 10 minutes from the Amtrak station. Besides the shuttle bus arrangement to the NMRA convention site, it's walkable.

Benefits: Attendees from either convention will have shared access to clinics, contest rooms and trade shows at no added cost. NMRA based layout tours, prototype tours, and non rail activities (like the Mall of America) are available at added cost. Special theme tours will feature S scale, hi-rail, and American Flyer collections. Participants will register for one of the conventions and enjoy the benefits of both. However this only works for the last 4 days of the NMRA convention for NASG members.

Dates: July 22-25, 1999 (NASG Portion). The NMRA starts earlier and also goes through the 25th. The Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop will be the host.

S-HELPER SERVICE TO DO F3 A&B

Straight off the Internet S-Helper Service boldly announced an EMD F3 (Phase II) A&B diesel set. Dangit Don and Mike, now I'll have to scratch off another item on my want list since you list one of the roadnames as early B&O. Ironically this announcement comes on the heels of the SD40-2 cancellation from Lionel. But on the other hand, I hear the SW9 from S-Helper sales are going great guns.

Here's the skinny right off the net:

"S Helper Service is working on a series of F and E units starting with an F3 phase 2 "chicken wire" A&B unit set. This is one of our favorites, and we think S gaugers will agree that these are beautiful engines.

EMD announced production of the F3 in October 1946. The key feature of this unit was a generator that provided both direct current to power traction motors and alternating current to power accessories like fans and blowers. This arrangement reduced the mechanics required for these accessories thereby reducing maintenance. The F3 was a versatile engine designed to accomodate changes in speed and tractive effort by a change in gear ratios. A shop could re-gear the engine within a day's time making the F3 popular for use in all types of service (freight and passenger).

In 1947 the Phase 2 F3 was introduced with modifications to the side openings and screening. The Phase 2 featured a "chicken wire" mesh screen installed between the two side portholes and over the four side vents. When F3 production began in 1946, GM had advance orders from 30 railroads for a total of 746 units. When production ceased in '49 a total of 1,111 F3 cab units and 696 F3 booster "B" units had been manufactured for 57 railroads!

Standard features will include: diesel sound in the A unit (horn, bell, prime mover, compressors, etc.), both A and B units powered, a full interior with hand painted 2-man crew, formed wire grab irons and lift rings, die-cast zamac frame and gear

boxes, operating headlight and illuminated number boards, turned brass horns, see-through high fan shrouds with movable fan, AF compatible steel wheels, 5 pole armature with two flywheels and eight wheel pick-up, rear mounted AF compatible coupler (both trucks on B unit). Models will be equipped for AC operation (providing sequencing to forward, neutral, then to reverse) and parts for conversion to either DC or DCC (digital command control) operations. In addition, each engine will come with 4 code 110 NMRA RP-25 metal wheelsets and the mounting holes and screws for the Kadee #802.

The proposed first run roadnames will include: B&O (blue, black & gray with imit. gold lettering and stripes), CB&Q (gray with red stripes and black lettering), C&NW (yellow and green body with red, black and white logo), D&LW (gray and maroon body with yellow lettering and stripes), Maine Central (MEC green and yellow), NYC (gray and black zebra stripe with aluminum lettering), Southern (green, black and imit. alum. body with imit. gold stripes and lettering, Southern Pacific (Black Widow scheme with black and silver body with scarlet and orange stripes), Union Pacific (Armour yellow body with gray trim, red lettering and stripes), Western Pacific (SS body with orange stripes and black lettering) and undec painted gray.

The retail price for our RTR F3 A&B sets reserved before December 1, 1998 is \$449.95. Price on this set will increase to \$499.95 after December 31, 1998. We are now accepting advance reservations with a \$150 deposit. Advance orders will receive for free any in-stock bulkhead flatcar (retail value \$49.95) with each deposit we receive. Customers who pay in full in advance will receive an additional sound unit installed in the B unit."

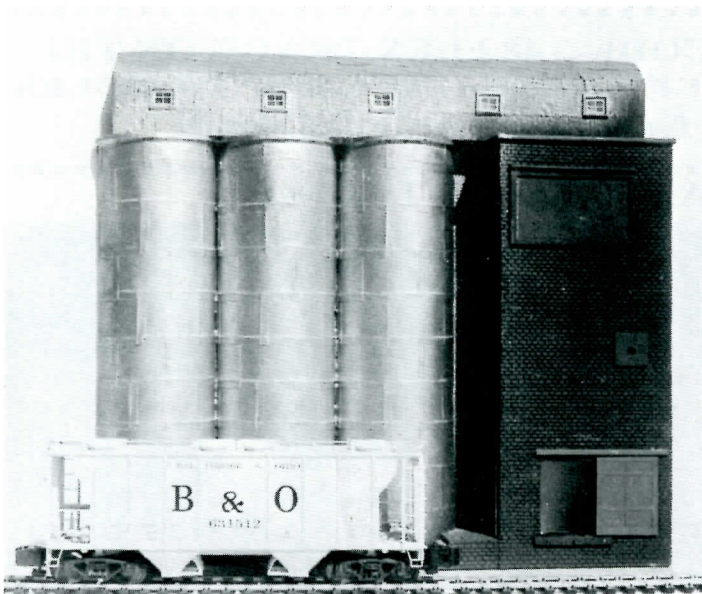
I'm sure S-Helper's newsletter will be forthcoming and you can keep updated on the website: www.showcaseline.com.

And beyond S-Helper's announcement is a report that Walthers is quizzing dealers about doing some Cornerstone Series buildings in S. Wouldn't that be nice.-Jeff

WORCESTER BANQUET COMMITTEE



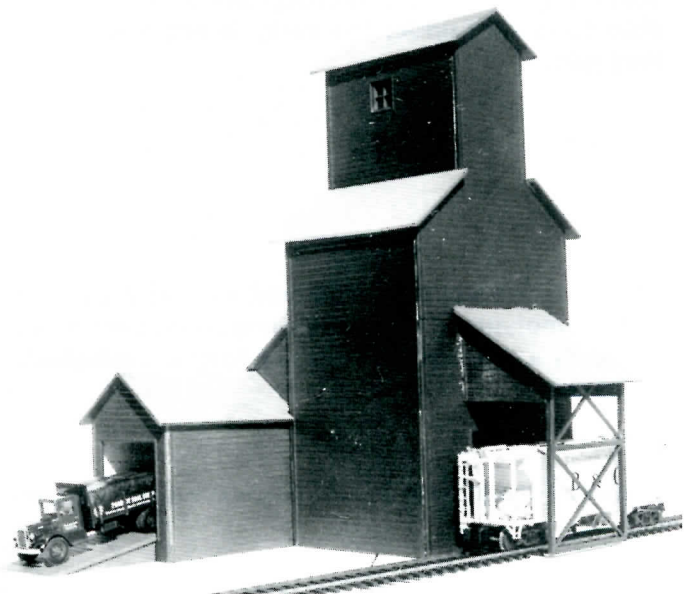
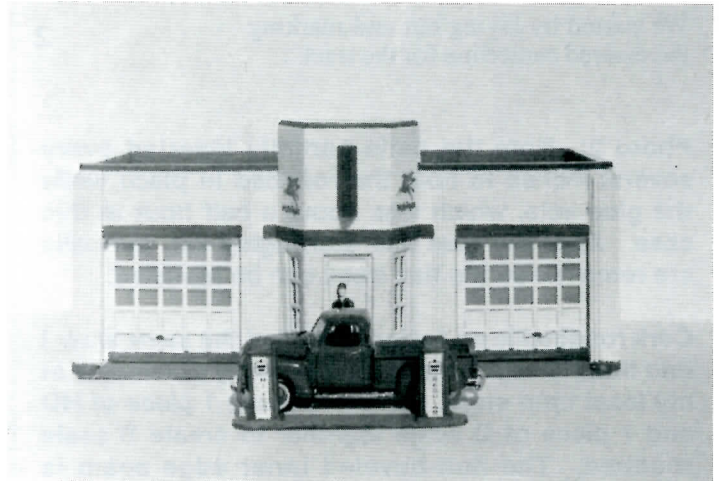
The fine cartoonist for this cartoon and the one on page 2 is Alvin Vega. He is currently a student at the Milwaukee School of Art & Design and also works at the newspaper where I work. - Jeff



FOUR EASY KITBASHES FROM OTHER GAUGES

By Jeff Madden

Going clockwise starting with the top left, this photo essay depicts 4 kitbashes. Two of these structures are considered O gauge and two HO. The 3 cylinder grain storage silo structure is a foam core HO structure from Mountains in Minutes. I simply redid two doors to S and raised the structure on a 1/4" base. Next is an HO plastic transfer crane from Life Like. It's kind of oversize for HO, so by re-doing the door and the ladder it's done. The gas station is from K-Line. Each garage door was narrowed one panel and the two long sides and roof shortened correspondingly. Pumps are Plasticville. The bottom two photos concern the Lionel grain elevator. The smaller photo shows the cut lines and the original O gauge size. Basically, the height is shortened in the middle a couple of inches. The canopy over the car is cut down a bit. An S gauge door is spliced into the main building.



The Chemung Valley Lines needed a little over six feet of 2 track mainline installed to connect the old layout with new corner modules built for the Rochester Area S Gauge club. The corner modules belong to the CVL and are used on the home CVL layout when not at module set-ups. We realized that laying American Models flex track presented an opportunity to describe for others how this was done, so with the help of several members of the RASG we photographed the process while we laid the track. The following describes how it was done:

We started by laying out and marking the desired centerline for the track...

Photo 2: Note the nails partially inserted every several inches to hold the roadbed in place while the glue sets, which was about a half hour in this case. After the glue has thoroughly set, the nails are removed so the flex track can be installed.

Cork roadbed is an option, installed the same way. I find that HO and O scale cork is easily obtainable at my local train store. For S scale use 1 piece of HO and 1 piece of O scale together to create S scale roadbed. The non-beveled inner edge seam is therefore not the centerline and you need to allow for this in laying out the path. Also, cork is slightly thinner than homasote, so if you mix the two types some slight vertical shimming, about two plies of shirt cardboard under the cork, is required where they join.

Photo 3: We paint the roadbed so that it will not absorb moisture. This will be important later when we apply a very wet glue mixture to hold the ballast.

Photos by Chuck Smith and the Rochester Area S Gaugers

LAYING CODE .148 FLEX TRACK ON THE ROCHESTER AREA S GAUGERS' MODULES

By Guest Author Chuck Smith

PART 1: LAYING THE TRACK



Photo 1: We glued down the Homasote S gauge roadbed as shown. The Homasote non-beveled edge is laid exactly on the track centerline that we marked. The roadbed in this case was laid over a foam sheet, and Elmer's Carpenter's Wood Glue was used to attach the roadbed to the foam.



4

Photo 4: We pre-formed the flex track before we tried to glue it down so it would conform to the roadbed curvature. We adjusted the ties (so all were perpendicular to the rails after bending the track) because this helped stabilize the curvature. This step makes it much easier to lift the track, without losing the pre-set curvature, to apply glue in the next step. It also means we need much less pressure to hold the track in place while the glue sets.



5



Photo 5: Now that we are satisfied that the track is bent very close to the final configuration, we temporarily remove the track and apply twin beads of Elmer's Carpenter's Wood Glue to the roadbed to hold the track in place. The track is reapplied over this glue.

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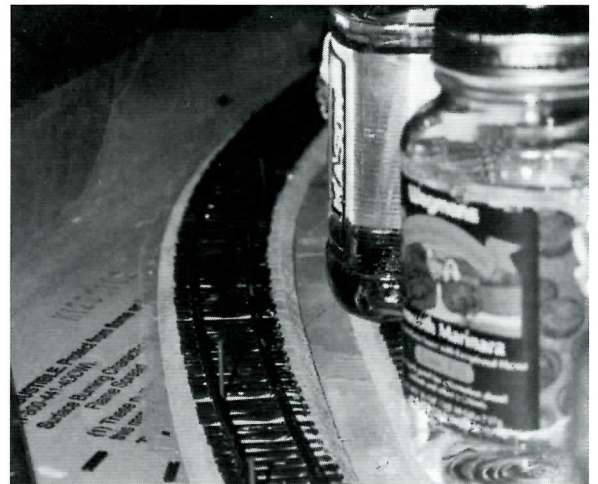
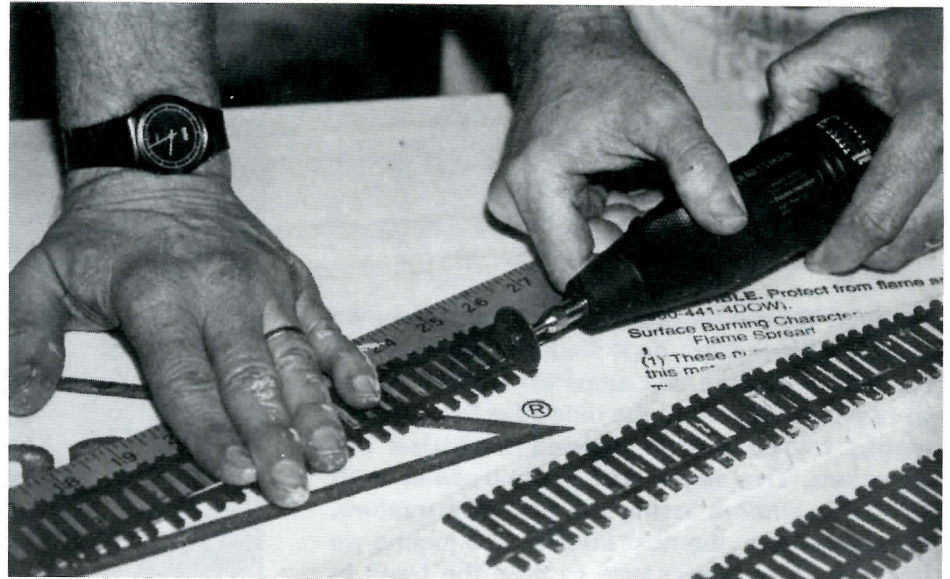


Photo 6: Now the pre-bent track is "tweaked" into its final alignment by using partially inserted nails to hold the curvature.

Photo 7: We then cut rails to match and insert rail joiners. The feeder wires for power can be inserted at this point by soldering them to the underside of the rail joiners before installing the joiners.

(Note: In a later installation we found that soldering rail joiners to rails ahead of time makes it easier to create a smooth, non-kinking transition between sections. The downside is it's more difficult to handle the longer piece of flex track that this creates.



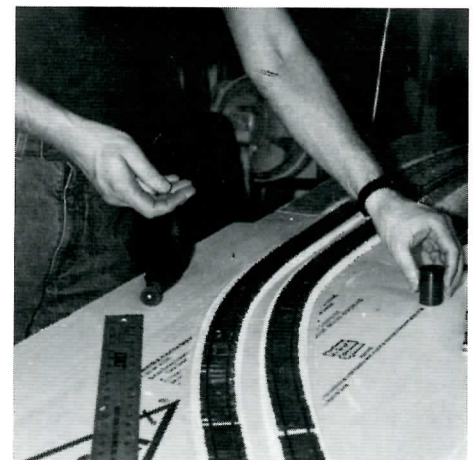
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Photo 8: We also can insert any extra ties needed at the rail joints. The need for extra ties can occur at rail joints, particularly if the joints are not directly across from each other. The track should set for at least an hour without moving. We weighted the track down with jars of water to hold the track, as shown in this photo, while the glue set.



8

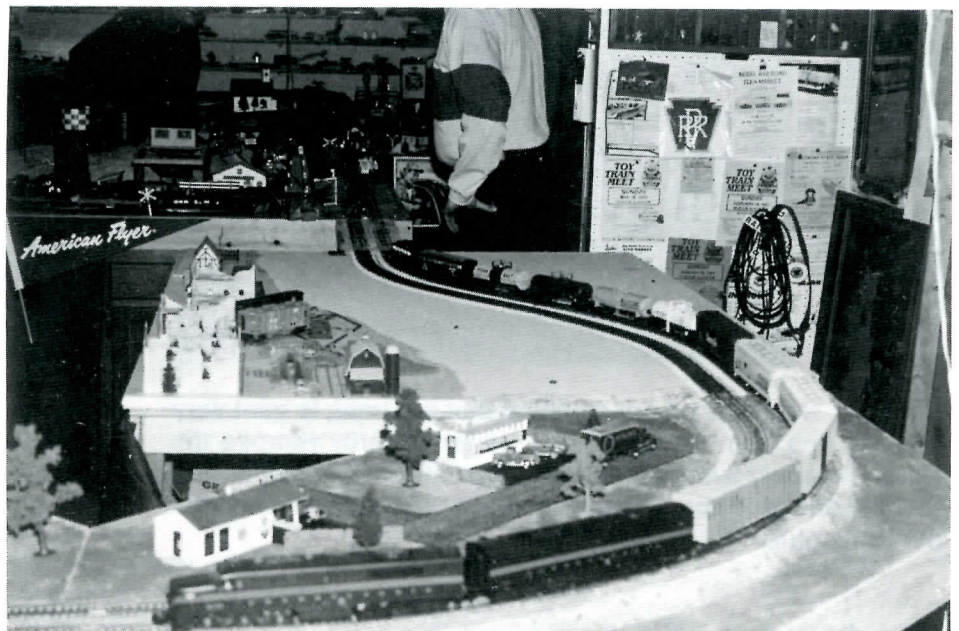
Photo 9: The track is in place, the glue has set, so nails and water bottle weights can be removed.



9

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Photo 10: Trains are running.



In our next installment we ballast the track.

Note- for building portable modules only. When laying track on modules, the flex track ends 2 inches from the end of the module. It is advisable to:

- (1) replace the final tie of the flex track with a wooden tie carved to clear rail joiners and...
- (2) install wood ties in this last 2 inches to facilitate adjusting rail height for bridge rails and allow for spiking of bridge rails if/when required.

Meet an S gauger

Mike Fyten

By Dick Wholf

If you've seen the April, 1998, *Railmodel Journal*, you undoubtedly read about the S scale Kaw Valley Railroad being built by Mike Fyten (not Fyton as spelled in the article), of Shawnee, Kansas, a suburb of Kansas City, Missouri. Who is Mike Fyten you ask? Well, if you were in Denver last July you may have met Mike visiting with Jettie Padgett of SouthWind, Billy Wade of BTS or hanging around the Houston S scale modular group. And if you come to the NMRA National Convention in KCMO in late July, you will see Mike running not only his own layout, but also being in charge of all the NMRA layout tours.

Mike has been married for 27 years to his lovely and very supportive wife Lee Ann. They have one son, David, who's not a modeler but enjoys and appreciates what his dad does. Mike was born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota, moved to Kansas City in 1960, and graduated from high school in 1962. He attended Finley Engineering College where he studied mechanical and architectural engineering.

He specialized in petro-chemical design. He is also a self-taught professional model builder. Today he uses his architectural training to do residential designs as a second career.

Mike has long been involved in model railroading in the Greater Kansas City area having spent his apprenticeship in both O and HO scales. He's been active in S scale for the last 12 but didn't start building his current Kaw Valley layout until five years ago. If you haven't seen the article, his scale layout is a 21' x 31' model representing a former Kansas City area shortline, the Kansas City, Kaw Valley and Western, which he operates prototypically with card order operation.

He explains that, "Although the Kaw Valley is patterned after the prototype, which was a traction railroad, this layout should be considered free-lanced because I model both steam and diesel with no traction at all. I have merely taken the prototype theme of the original KC,KV&WRR to create this layout." Mike answers as to why the emphasis on prototypical operation: "Once you build a layout, what do you do with it?



Too often, once a layout is built, the fun is gone because it wasn't planned with a concept. This layout was designed from the ground up for prototypical operation. This doesn't mean that we didn't make changes to improve the operation. Sometimes it's very difficult to make these decisions; but it's more important to make these changes at an

early stage in design so you don't have to tear down scenery and trackwork at a later date.'

'A number of truly great model railroaders have influenced my participation in the wonderful hobby of model railroading. If I were to name them all, the magazine would not be big enough to hold them.'

Another important influence on Mike's prototypical slant on operating trains was when he was 13 and 14 years old he spent a lot of summer vacation days in Minneapolis at the Soo Line railroad yard. He fondly remembers getting many cab rides in switch engines working the various downtown industries. When asked about not having

any traction operation on the Kaw Valley, Mike jokes that he "might have to add some CAT-enary operation" to discourage his layout cat, Maggie, who loves to attack and eat the miniature conifer trees.

When asked about his likes and dislikes in the hobby, Mike answered, "I've never met a model railroader I didn't like." His positive attitude extends to willingly helping other local modelers get their train rooms built as well as assisting them with the construction of their layouts. Local S modelers joke that Mike manages to get more done on his layout than everyone else in his modeling circle of friends

do together.

He is a member of the Kansas City S Railers, a round-robin S group that meets every second and fourth Fridays of the month; the Turkey Creek Division of the NMRA and the NASG. Mike reminds us that visitors are always welcome at the Kaw Valley.

It's always nice to read this column and to read about a fellow S gauger. I like to have a stockpile of them, so if you'd like to write up a friend, go ahead. Or write one on yourself. The basics: Tell how the person got started in the hobby and, in particular, S gauge. Then follow up with some personal background like career, other interests, family, and so on. A mug shot is necessary, of course, but a model shot or two can be included too. And if you get carried away then we'll have a long *Meet An S Gauger* or a full-blown article. Either way I won't complain. - Jeff

The 'S'traight & Narrow

From David L. Heine

News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

A Tale of Two Diesels

Before I continue with my diesel story, I have some Internet news that may be of interest to some of you. An Sn2 mail list has been started. For those of you who may not be familiar with this type of list, it is essentially an e-mail sent to everyone on the list. As this is written, it is a manual list; that is the sender must maintain a list of everyone, which sounds like more work than it really is. Note that this is separate from the Sn3 list, which has been in existence for several years. If anyone is interested in the Sn2 or Sn3 list, send me an e-mail at dheine@enter.net. **Please note that this is a new e-mail address for myself.**

Now, to get back to my story. I have a friend who had an American Models GP-35 shell he wanted to sell since he just needed the mechanism for his project. So I acquired it with the idea of mating it with a regauged HO six-axle diesel mechanism. While I knew that this would be a large diesel, I knew that the meter gauge Vitoria a Minas mining railroad had larger ones.

Now I needed a suitable mechanism. If any of you have been following HO recently, the Atlas, Kato, and Proto 2000 diesels have been getting rave reviews; they just run well. This has not gone unnoticed by those of us who realize that the real truth is that HO was created so that modelers in S and O narrow gauge can use the mechanisms and other pieces as we see fit. I, for one, have always said, that until recently, my best running piece of motive power was a model of East Broad Top's M-1, built from a Railmaster kit, with a regauged and stretched Atlas HO RS-3 mechanism in it. I knew I wanted a similar drive mechanism.

I went looking for a six-axle mechanism, and I settled on an Atlas HO U36C. Kato had not yet released their HO SD-45 when I did this, which may be more suitable for this project. The U36C has a wheelbase that is about thirteen inches too short for the S scale GP-35 shell,

but I decided that it was not worth the effort to stretch the frame. After all, this is a free-lance project.

Regauging one of these Kato type mechanisms is relatively easy, especially compared to a steam locomotive. These locomotives usually come with an instruction sheet that has an exploded view that will help with taking it apart. First you need to remove the body, so that you can get to the mechanism and frame.

The first step in modifying the mechanism is to remove the truck sideframes, and the axle retainer on the bottom of the trucks. The axle retainer is held on with some lugs that need to be pried away from the gearcase. Remove the geared wheelsets.

These wheelsets consist of two wheels on axle stubs that fit into a plastic gear/axle socket. Cut approximately 3/64" off the end of each axle socket. The exact amount is not critical. Then push each wheel on its axle stub about 3/64" in the direction away from the truck sideframes. Again this is not super critical. Reassemble the wheel/axle stubs onto the gear/axle socket and adjust as necessary until they are in gauge for Sn3.

Reassemble the trucks, and you are ready to give your new mechanism a test run. As you can see this is a relatively simple conversion. Having done several of these, I can do one in less than an hour. Not bad, especially when you see how well they run.

Since the superstructure for this project was the GP-35 shell, all I had to do was to find a way to fasten the shell to the regauged frame and mount the Kadee couplers. I used some styrene strips to form a platform to hold the body on the frame. I used some styrene to make a clamp to hold the body on the frame. I used some 2-56 screws to hold the clamps together. I also used some styrene to build up a base on the body for the couplers. Note that the couplers sit lower on the body since it is now

narrow gauge. I used some styrene to fill in the pilots above and below the couplers.

The other things I did to this model were replace the air horn assembly with a brass one, install a Digitrax DCC decoder, and paint and letter it for my Lehigh & Western Railroad.

When it made its inaugural run, I realized how large this engine is. Comparing it to a D&RGW K-37, it is about the same width, a little higher, and shorter than the K-37 and its tender. On my layout, the height difference was enough to require modifications to one bridge for additional clearance. If nothing else, I had a new clearance test locomotive.

Well, I had a new locomotive than runs great and it certainly was fun to build, but in reality is a little too modern for my layout. I came to the conclusion that what I wanted was a chunky little boxcab diesel that had that narrow gauge homemade look to it. This time I went for the mechanism first and selected a Stewart Hobbies HO F7, which I regauged in the same manner as the Atlas one.

Keeping with my low cost theme, I built a new body out of styrene. I used Evergreen scribed siding for the basic body, which I made a scale 8' wide by as long as the HO mechanism. I also made the sides a scale 8' high. I made the roof out of a lamination of 0.040" styrene that I shaped after the glue had dried for a day.

In keeping with the homemade low cost theme, I looked for parts that I had in my personal supply. I used Grandt Line parts for the windows, and the bell. The doors are from an old Tomalco coach/combine kit. The headlight is a Cal-Scale HO part, and the exhaust stack and horn are from B.T.S. I cut the radiator grills from an Atlas HO RS-3 shell, and sanded them thinner before I glued them to the boxcab body. I used some 0.012" brass wire for the grabirons at the doors. I added some styrene strips to the inside of the body so that is a slip fit on Stewart mechanism. The only problem with this is that I have to remember to grab it by the fuel tank if I pick it up.

I installed Kadee 450 couplers on the frame, which includes some conversion parts made for the F7. I also installed a

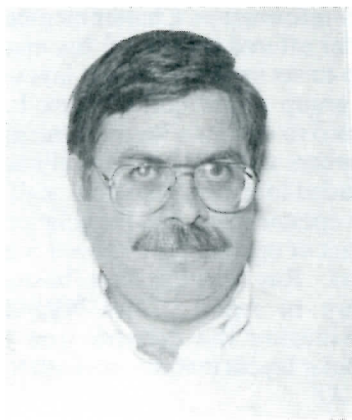
Digitrax DCC decoder. Then it was time for the paint shop.

Now I have two good running diesels for my railroad, thanks to their former HO mechanisms. Both were relatively low cost projects. A homemade railcar could be made in the same manner. While these particular projects may not fit in with your railroad, I am hoping that someone will be inspired to try something similar on their own, whether it's a locomotive, or a railcar. If you do, send the *Dispatch* a picture so we all can see it.

Contributions or Comments:

David L. Heine
5758 Bel Air Dr.
Coopersburg, PA 18036
NEW e-mail: dheine@enter.net

P.S. On the April *Jeff's Junction*: Those of us in Sn3 also have a code 55 system available to us from Tomalco (B&S). Flex track and stub switches are available. As far as I know these are the only stub switches that are RTR, or close to it. - Dave.



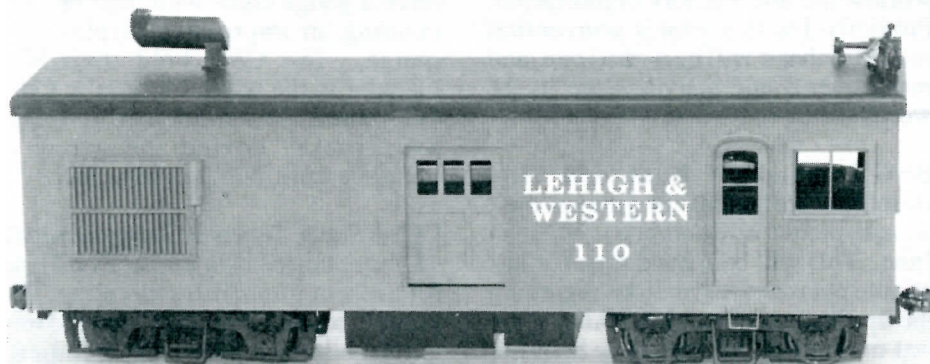
Dave Heine



Sn3 Critter



An American Models GP35 is turned into an Sn3 diesel by regauging an HO Atlas U36C mechanism. A Kato SD45 mechanism also should work. The body looks big, but there are prototypes.



Or build your own body out of styrene and mount it on an HO Stewart F7 mechanism, regauged of course. This is more to the author's liking since it can represent an earlier diesel compatible with steam power.



This view of the boxcab diesel shows the front end. The low-cost kitbash makes use of styrene sheets and parts from Atlas HO, Tomalco, Cal Scale and Grandt Line.

Photos by Dave Heine

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The **Bristol S Gauge Railroaders (BSGR)** are busy planning and making reservations for the forthcoming NASG annual convention. The first national convention attended by your column editor was sponsored by the **BSGR**, held in 1983. It was a very uplifting event to a then-new member, and an S gauge box car model fashioned from HO plastic box car sides was entered in the model contest. The model was acclaimed for its entry in the beginner's category, and yours truly was hooked on the NASG as a very worthwhile and friendly organization. Publicity for this year's convention indicates that it will be a good one, and many events and activities are in the works.

BSGR members Ruth and Don Hasenzahl are hosting the group at their annual picnic in Southboro, MA., in June. This will be a good time for last minute plans and discussions regarding the upcoming convention. Also some last minute rest for the many hours of service that the **BSGR** members will put in to insure a successful and memorable convention. Don is scheduled to present a clinic at the convention on building Gargraves crossovers. His layout will be featured on the layout tours of the convention.

The **Conn. S Gaugers (CSG)** set up their modules at the Tomlinson Middle School, Fairfield, CT., in April, and after a mix-up as to where they were to set up, the layout was displayed to showcase our favorite scale. Member Pete Prizzi brought his scale-converted S Helper Service diesel decorated by himself in New Haven RR. colors. Pres. Bill Fuhrman brought his module with the AF barrel drum loader which is always a hit with the youthful spectators. A recent newsletter edited by Sec'ty. Craig O'Connell included an article on the AF home layout of member Paul Brantner.

The **CSG** held a meeting this spring hosted by Charlie Bettinger, in Vernon, CT. Charlie's layout is the Charlestown & Pattville RR., named after he and his deceased wife, Patti. He runs a model railroad hobby shop in his spare

time, the J & E Train Depot. Charlie will be presenting clinics on painting backdrops and using HO model buildings in S gauge at the convention. His home layout has a track that disappears into the scenery, creating the effect that there is more trackage than actually exists. The **CSG** is planning on participating in the 3rd Annual Train Collector's Train Show to be held on August 23 at the James Moore Field House, of Southern CT., State University, New Haven, CT. Last year this event was attended by no less than three S gauge clubs with their layouts, creating an impressive display of S gauge. The **CSG** held their May meeting at the home of Sect'y. Craig O'Connell, in Hamden, CT. Stan Stockrocki hosted the group in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., on June 20.

The **South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSG)** were hosted by member Bob Foster for a recent *Play Trains* meeting. The group's regular meetings are held now at the Bellmawr Fire Hall, Bellmawr, N.J. Member Ed Claypoole edits the **SJSG** newsletter, which always has interesting model RR news and information.

The **SJSG** attended the Gilbertsville Train Show, at the Gilbertsville Fire House in June. The group plans on attending the 27th Annual Dutch Train Meet, at the Hamburg Fire Co. Field House in late July, and the Greenberg Train & Dollhouse Show August 15-16, at the South Jersey Expo Center, Pennsauken, N.J. They plan to attend the Train Collector's Show with their portable layout in New Haven, CT. on August 23. Their own sponsored show will be held in October at the Bellmawr Fire House. The **SJSG** held a meet at this (their usual meeting) site in April of this year.

The **Neshaminy Valley AF Club (NVAFC)** had their 93rd meeting hosted by Joe and Nancy Fisher where they discussed the draft of by-laws that could be used to govern the operations of the group. Mike Ramsey edits the newsletter for the group. Member Mike Hudek hosted the group in May. Curt Johnson is reviewing possible

improvements and changes that could be made to their portable layout. Member Paul Fenn will host the **NVAFC** in August.

The **North Penn S Gaugers (NPSG)** were officially formed at the meeting held at the home of Glenn Ritter in March. "North Penn" does not mean Northern Pennsylvania, but was derived from the Reading RR passenger corridor from Philadelphia to Bethlehem, PA. The Philadelphia & Reading RR Co. named this main line the North Penn. Railroad.. Somewhere over the years the period was dropped and the term "North Penn" resulted. Eleven interested persons attended the initial formative meeting, and NASG Eastern V.P. John Foley and his wife Mary were present to witness the event along with guests Sylvia and Tom Boussum.

The **NPSG** chose the third Thursday of the month to meet at members' homes. Meeting times will be from 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM, and the group elected Glenn Ritter as the corresponding secretary. It was agreed that they did not need any other officers. Dues were decided to be \$ 5.00 per year to cover the costs of mailing and copying/printing of newsletter information. Charter member Joe Bolsar offered the use of his machine shop to set up any modular layout that the group might build. Alex Larkin offered to design a logo for the group. Members attending the initial meeting included four who operate S scale, one who operates Sn3, and the balance who collect or operate AF or newer S gauge trains. Ray and Pat Nase hosted the group in April. The **NPSG** is considering the construction of a modular layout that can run both S scale and AF.

The **Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC)** was hosted by member Bob Davison in April. On May 2, the group hosted the **SJSG** group on a layout tour, and Ron Kolb hosted a regular meeting later in the month. Ron is the coordinator and writes the newsletter for the group. The visit from the **SJSG** included a tour of five layouts of **BAAFC**- members. David Avedesian, Monte Heppe, Ed Slicher, Bob Davison, and Joe Schmidt operated their layouts for the visiting S gauge group. About a year ago the **BAAFC** was hosted by the **SJSG** group. This is a wonderful way to spread the news of S gauge and get more modelers to see each others ideas at work. Both clubs

should be commended on their ability to meet with each other and learn from one another.

BAAFC member George Glover hosted the group in June. The group decided to participate with their layout at the Greenberg Show, Chantilly, VA., on July 18 and 19. They will not participate in the Train Collector's Show, New Haven, CT. to be held on August 23, as they did last year.

The Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE) held their "Nationals" hosted by Mark Briggs on April 2, 1998. A variety of AF powered and locomotive units were entered in the hard-fought contest. Member Ed Bittman entered with an AF rocket sled, which was bested by the AF Baldwin loco of Chris Lucibello. The Baldwin was in turn beaten by the GP-7 of Bill Greene. The GP-7 was eliminated by the overall winner, John Phipps, with his AF docksider loco. Member Ed Bittman hosted the **SAFE** group in May.

The Altoona Area Train Collectors Club (AATCC) is coordinated by Gregg Miller President, and displayed their portable layout at the Frankstown Armory Train Show recently. The layout frame construction was described in the last issue of the *Dispatch*. It consists of corner modules, and straight modules to form an overall layout 20 ft. x 12 ft. The width of the tables are two feet, and track curves are 3 ft. radius. The framework appears to be very sturdy.

The American S Scale Circle (ASSC), coordinated by Kelvin White, is a newsletter that goes out to some 30 persons in England, a couple of modelers in Europe, and several friends in the U.S.A. In a recent issue Kelvin writes about a small private line, the Middletown & New Jersey, to be used as a prototype for S. The RR connects Middletown, N.Y., and Slate Hill, N.Y. Presently the line uses G.E. 44 ton locos to handle freight to the two major customers on the line. Kelvin explains the operation of the small prototype RR which could be a good model for a small S gauge pike. In his newsletter, Kelvin presents a possible track scheme for the S model of the prototype short line. *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazine published articles on the prototype in 1989.

A recent issue of the **Canadian S Scale Quarterly (CSSQ)** explained that the Stonetown Model RR Assoc., St. Mary's, Ontario, has 300 feet of S gauge track down in operation and welcomes visitors every Monday evening from 7-9 P.M. The assoc. is having an open house on Sunday, Sept. 20, 1998. Paul Raham coordinates the **CSSQ** using input from various members to write the issues. Member Simon Parent will edit the June issue of the *Quarterly*.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG) were hosted by Don Gates in April. An annual swap meet was held, where members could bring their "extra stuff" and sell it or trade it to other members and guests. The **SMSG** held their May meeting at member Gaylord Gill's in Troy, MI. Sig Fleishman hosted the group in June, in Howell, MI. Plans for attendance at the NASG convention in July will be discussed. Sig reported at a recent meeting that there was not enough interest in setting up a layout at the Novi show, so the group will not do that until further interest is shown.

The **SMSG** newsletter reported that the prototype Buffalo Creek & Gauley RR is running again. Operations ceased in 1965. The original 18 miles of track between Dundon and Widen were purchased along with 62 miles of B & O trackage, and the RR is now operating as the Elk River RR. Brooks Stover, a member of the **SMSG**, models the Buffalo Creek & Gauley is S gauge. His layout has been featured in several national magazines. Dave Held suggested that the group establish a website. Discussion will be held with the consideration of initial set-up and maintenance afterward.

Stateline S Gaugers (SLSG) were hosted by president Jim Larson, Roscoe, IL., recently. Earl Beegle provided use of his trailer to move the club modular layout to the Lena and Rockford shows. Dave Pippitt was the Rockford Show chairman and Art Doty the Lena chairman. The group's newsletter reported that the club modular layout was well received at the shows. Mac McGrath is making arrangements for club baseball hats. Orders for the hats will be coordinated through Mac.

The **SLSG** extended their sympathies to Gladys Brown and family on the

death of long time member Myrl Brown. Myrl will be missed by the club members and S gauge enthusiasts who knew him. Andy Geerts is V.P. of the group, Gary Cychosz, treasurer, and Mac McGrath, secretary. The group additionally has three heavy hitters who serve as Directors, including Dave Pippitt who edits the newsletter, Dave Oberholtzer, and George Sorenson.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG) are recovering from the 11th annual S Spree, held in early May in Columbus, OH., - a "not-to-be-missed" three day event that was billed as an all-S gauge gathering for scale, hi-rail, AF, and Sn3 enthusiasts. Recent meetings of the group were hosted by members Wally Ryan, in Ashland, OH., and John and Sue Gafney, in Dublin, OH.

Art Lofton hosted in April and Monty Kaufman in May. Monty has a new layout, and the meeting he hosted included a visit to the Mad River & NKP R.R. Museum, Bellvue, OH. Member Larry Robertson is secretary of the group and keeps minutes of the meetings. Art Lofton is president of the group. The **COSG** is considering setting up their portable layout at the National TTOS Convention in Sharonville, OH., in August. This is a very good way to showcase S to the TTOS members. The **Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG)** will be hosting the S-Spree in 1999, in Dayton, OH., for the first time ever. Plans are for a special S gauge flat car with a crate labelled for the nearby "Wright Patterson Air Force Base".

The **COSG** will be hosted by Dan and Sharon Wisniewski for their June meeting. This will be the last meeting until September, when regular meetings will resume. The Wisniewski's have a layout that is under expansion, and members are always glad to see the new additions. Alan Evans coordinated the group's trip to the Mad River RR Museum over the Memorial Day weekend.

The Pines & Prairies S Scale Workshop (PPSSW) held almost weekly meetings in April and May at various members homes. Joe Herrick, Bloomington, Ken Zieska, Plymouth, and Walt Jopke, Eden Prairie, MN., all hosted. Members Ken Zieska and Walt

EXTRA BOARD

MINUTEMAN MEMORIES

The Minuteman convention this year is commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Bristol S Gaugers which was formed in 1948, but it's also been 24 years since the last convention in that city in 1974. This was also the 14th convention since conventions started in 1961 under the auspices of the NESGA (Northeast S Gauge Association). It was also the 3rd official NASG convention. Don Heimburger was the Bernie Thomas winner that year.

AN S GAUGE COINCIDENCE

Even a blind squirrel can find an acorn once in a while. Well, your editor sort of did that on a gray spring day in April in southwestern Wisconsin. Having dropped my wife and daughter at the Janesville (Wis.) Mall on Saturday, April 25, I drove 20 miles to the small town of Brodhead where the Wisconsin Southern (WSOR) was operating some shuttle trips on the ex-Milwaukee line west to Juda. This was a push-pull operation with WSOR E9, 3 matching red and gray passenger cars and newly repainted SD20. The SD20 is ex IC and was freshly painted with special emblems to commemorate Wisconsin's Sequicentennial. I suspected that this loco would be here for the special Greene County Depot Days trips, and I liked the \$10 price for a short ride.

I got there a bit early, and the train was already out with a load of mostly daisypickers, so I paid 2 bucks to tour the restored Brodhead depot which was converted nicely into a museum complete with adjacent Milwaukee Road FM switcher and caboose. I bought my ticket, and when the train returned I trotted to the end of the slowly moving boarding line after running around photographing the two locomotives with my trusty Minolta 101. Since I was dead last and didn't relish being stuffed into a crowded passenger car filled with families, strollers and kids, my mind began to click. Hey, maybe if I mumble to the car hosts that I'm a magazine editor and would it be possible to ride in the cab... I did, and a friendly car host talked to one of the engineers. I hung out by the coaches, but soon he motioned me up to the cab

end of the E9, facing west.

I introduced myself to the engineer and asked him his name as he looked vaguely familiar. Lo and behold it was Buck Guthrie, a member of the Stateline S Gaugers who also displays a top notch all-American Flyer layout at many local train shows. The Branford Diner shot in the last *Dispatch* was taken on his layout. Buck is an "extra board" engineer for the WSOR and works carving monuments as his other career. He used to be full time, but said that the 70 and 80 hour weeks got to be a bit much.

Needless to say the shuttle trip out and back was a lot more relaxing than I anticipated. The local WSOR crews term these back and forth excursions "ding dongs." A friend of Buck's, Jim Faith, was the other cab guest. Since there was an engineer on the other unit at the other end of the train, we were the only other occupants of the cab. The E9 is one of two flagship units for the WSOR passenger train (they pulled the Circus train the last two years) so no spartan setup in the cab; there were two staggered captains' chairs on the fireman's side for us to sit in.

The 45 minute round trip was slow because of the branchline trackage, but since this was my first ride in an E9 and only my fourth cab ride, I didn't mind a bit. Buck regaled us with railroad stories and we talked S gauge, especially on the way back when the operation was handed over the other engineer in the east facing unit. On the return leg Buck even toured us through the E's spotless engine compartment stuffed with two EMD 567s. We even wandered back into the passenger cars where he pointed out tv screens mounted on each bulkhead which showed live video from a camera aimed out of the E9's nose.

I marveled all the way back to Janesville at my dumb luck and the "S Gauge Coincidence."
-Jeff

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

March 1998 *MR*- An article on building a swinging gate bridge with track and roadbed on it should be of interest to S gaugers needing access to an interior layout aisle.

May 1998 *Railmodel Journal*- Detailing a NYC Alco PA. Lists HO parts, but lets you know what parts you need.

May 1998 *CTT*- Article by Jeff Faust about Frank Lignocki's Rochester, NY, area American Flyer department store layout which he purchased in original condition from the store itself. Reference also in this issue about Mike's Train House producing S locomotives if sound units can be compacted from O.

June 98 *RMC*- Article by Ed Loizeaux on "Visiting the S Scale National Convention." This is a solid three page article with color photos about S scale. Ed talks about converting an HO modeler to S at the Denver convention and about the convention itself.

June '98 *MR*- A timely review by *MR* Associate Editor Jeff Wilson on the S-Helper SW9. This ought to turn some HO heads.

July/Aug. '98 *Vintage Rails*- 2 page article by Allan Miller on the Gilbert TV series.

July 1998 *CTT* - S-Helper SW9 new product photo, Gabe the Lamplighter article and product review of AM's Pacific (AC hi-rail version).

I'LL BE STAMPED

The U.S. Postal service has a commemorative stamp series entitled "Celebrate the Century," and included are two heritage toy stamps you might want to use on your snail mail. One honors A.C. Gilbert and Erector and the other Lionel 1920s electric trains.

FOLEY'S FOLLIES RETURN

New Club in Pa.: On March 28, 1998, I was a guest at the first meeting of the North Penn S Gaugers at the home of Glenn Ritter. Glenn has a large flyer layout which was enjoyable to watch. We ran original Flyer trains and some new American Models and S-Helper locos and cars. The new S-Helper SW9 ran great.

Later that evening the new club voted that they officially be called the North Penn S Gaugers About 11 officially joined. In the heat of enthusiasm one member offered to design a logo, and another volunteered the use of his tools and garage to build a club layout. The general geographic area of the club is north of Philadelphia around Lansdale.

1998 Spring S Spree: (a note to your editor who missed the shindig) We had a great time. Two large rooms were used, one for sales and the other for 4 layouts. All layouts ran smoothly. Two were code .148 hi-rail, one had Gargraves track and one was Sn3.

New products on display were American Models flatcar, S-Helper's SW9, Des Plaines coal porter hopper, BTS test shots of some EBT items and trolleys and replacement drives of Heritage Models. Heritage was also taking orders for RDCs. River Raisin and SouthWind were also there. Jettie had a pilot model of the new SP Atlantic.

Bill Mark and family (Clearinghouse) and myself were manning the NASG table. Thanks to the Central Ohio S Gaugers for a great time.

-John Foley, NASG Eastern Vice President

EVERYDAY USES OF AMERICAN FLYER

If you need another excuse to convince your significant other that there's more to S gauging than just playing trains, consider my recent justification. One of my lawn sprinkler lines wasn't working. I could open the valve manually, but not electrically. To determine if the electrical connection was okay, I hooked up an American Flyer No. 1-1/2 transformer to the valve leads. I carefully turned the handle, and my sprinkler heads popped up with plenty of water.

With that possibility eliminated, I eventually tracked down the problem to a wire which had been cut when the "Cable Guy" installed new TV cable. Now, you see, if I hadn't had that transformer...

From the S-Say newsletter

John Eichmann, Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers

Railmail Cont. from page 5

chapter of the mental health handbook. No, the 630 isn't extinct, but neither was the passenger pigeon before the good ole boys had their fun.

John Eichmann, Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers, Boise ID
jeichmann@pobox.ci.boise.id.us

Some Ideas: Jim Sleeth of Tennessee writes a potpourri of ideas.

The Matchbox Police station can be made to produce a store front building by using the second story as a base and making a new second story front.

I'm looking for a prototype to model a McDonald's restaurant using parts of the Hot Wheels McDonalds. Hey,

maybe we could promote building train layouts for Ronald McDonald children's hospital wings.? Doctors have the money to buy S and help fund these projects with our labor.

I think we should network with collectors of Hot Wheels and Matchbox cars. They might be able to give us ideas on used car lots, drive-in theaters, truck stops, etc.

We could use a data base for ideas for using parts from Lionel, Marx, etc. on Flyer or current S products. I would be interested in doing this.

Jim is looking for ideas for parts to kitbash (I assume from his letter) changes on Flyer steam locomotives. He mentions adapting valve gear parts, adding detail parts, and reworking piping, etc. He thinks there should be some articles forthcoming in the S press on these ideas. I agree, I think all the S Gauge editors would like to see some of these. Some of these ideas were probably printed in the old S Gauge Herald. - Jeff.

I have four people interested in forming an S gauge club in Tennessee. I hope to have a first meeting in May. Contact me if interested.

James F. Sleeth, P.O. Box 972, Gallatin, TN 37066. Ph: 615-325-0702.

Dept. of Corrections: Due to a computer printer malfunction the top line of each column on page 5 of Railmail in the April Dispatch was cut off. Please photocopy them, cut them out and paste them above the proper columns of the last issue. - Jeff
Left column... have a future. Let's not pull ourselves back into the past,...
Right column... **What Makes S Great?**
As a veteran of S, I am really enjoying...

Unfortunately two pictures by Wayne Hills on page 9 of the last issue didn't reproduce the way they should have. These were sharp slides, but there was a problem on the printing end.



S-CALENDAR

July 8-12, 1998: NASG National Convention in Worcester, Mass., Lincoln St. Holiday Inn. Contact Chet Brown, 14 Lindsey Ave., Beverly, MA 01915 - (978) 927-3918.

E-mail: ctrains707@aol.com. Or website: <http://trainweb.com/crocon/NASG1998.html>.

July 20-26, 1998: NMRA National Convention - Kansas City, MO. Hotel is KC Marriott, downtown. Info: (913) 894-1255

Aug. 23, 1998: Sunday - All gauge Train Show, SCSU James Moore Field House, 125 Wintergreen Ave., New Haven, CT. Info: John or Robin Vanacore (203) 239-1346.

Sept. 17-19, 1998: S-West III in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Will include a trip to Jess Bennett's S scale Great Northern Pacific. Final arrangements are not definite at this point, but you can contact Gil Hulin at 3895 Colony Oaks Dr., Eugene, OR 97405-6211 for an update. Phone: (503) 344-6858.

Oct. 31 & Nov. 1, 1998: National Model and Hobby Show, Rosemont, IL (Chicago area). Info. (847) 526-1222.

Nov. 6-8, 1998: Chicagoland Fall S-Fest, Holiday Inn, Matteson, IL. Andy Jugle, (630) 833-5394.

July 22-25, 1999: NASG National Convention, in conjunction with the NMRA, will be in St. Paul, Minnesota. In conjunction means at separate facilities with the option of attending the National (NMRA) trade show. Other NMRA functions will require separate registration.

Bids Open for NASG National Conventions -- 2000 and beyond. Contact Dave Held, Convention Chairman, 6154 Lanake Ln., Imlay City, MI 48444. (810) 724-5499.

left - Your editor's view from an E9 piloted by S gauger Buck Guthrie, a member of the Stateline S Gaugers.

AMERICAN MODELS STEAM SET

By John Eichmann

Reprinted with permission from the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railer's newsletter the *S-Say* (Boise, Idaho).

After a wait of two years, eight months, and nine days, my new American Models Southern Crescent Limited set arrived. It's a beaut! It consists of a USRA heavy Pacific 4-6-2, a baggage car, RPO, combine, coach and observation car in the striking green of the Southern Railway. My limited edition set box is numbered #257.

The die-cast locomotive, with gray boiler front and red cab roof, is nicely detailed, although American Models' initial advertising photo led me to believe it would be much more detailed than it turned out to be. All in all, though, I'm pleased. However I immediately noticed that the green-jeweled marker lamps on the front of the smokebox are extremely fragile. Only a small plastic sprue holds the markers in the holes provided. One of mine, bent in shipping, broke off just a few hours after unpacking. AM is apparently aware of this and included a warning to be gentle with them and offering replacement pairs at \$3.98.

The passenger cars and the RPO are silouetted and lighted. I was upset to discover a scratch on my RPO, and I'll be requesting some free touch-up paint.

The locomotive comes with electronic steam whistle and bell (hi-rail version) which I haven't installed yet. The can motor and large flywheel provide a smooth start. I can inch the locomotive at just a few scale miles per hour. The mechanical chug (two per revolution) takes a little getting used to, as it's slightly different from the American Flyer choo-choo sound we're so familiar with. We're advised to not allow the smoke element to ever run dry, as damage could result. And it's a smoker, all right! On this hi-rail version, only the front and rear driver sets are flanged, but all drivers have see-through spokes. The valve gear linkage is different from AF and is quite interesting.

The major problem I'm having so far is with the 72' cars - they won't negotiate a

standard 19-1/2" radius AF curve. Again, this is upsetting, as the advertisement specifically indicated that the Crescent hi-rail set would have no problem with these curves. Technically though, AM is correct, since the locomotive and tender take the curves just fine, but I'd assumed that this spoke for the entire set. *S Gaugian* had an article a few issues back about this problem, which results from the coupler tongue hitting the steps of the passenger cars before it reaches maximum arc on the curve. The trucks are simply forced off the track with derailling the result. The *S Gaugian* article recommends shaving small notches on either side of the tongue to enable a few more degrees of swing.

Obviously, the use of wider radius track solves this problem, and AM includes about 20' of its Universal code 148 weathered track in the set box. This is the first time I've seen the snap track, and it's very nice. It makes about a 54" diameter circle (27" radius), which is much closer to prototype, but also means that you'll need some real space in your train room to fit the curves.

I coupled some average freight cars to my Crescent Pacific to test its pulling power on a test oval. I started with 16, and eventually reduced the consist to 13 (including caboose), which is probably the max I should run without long straight stretches and sweeping curves.

Yes, there are some minor flaws, but I want to emphasize that this is a good set. It's the first affordable (non-brass) S steam locomotive offered since the Gilbert days, and with a few small improvements should be a winner for those that have them. -John

Refer also to my article in the December, 1997 *Dispatch* - *B&O President Pacific* and to the January/February *S Gaugian* product review on the 4-6-2. - Jeff

Club Sandwich from page 27

Jopke hosted the group in May.

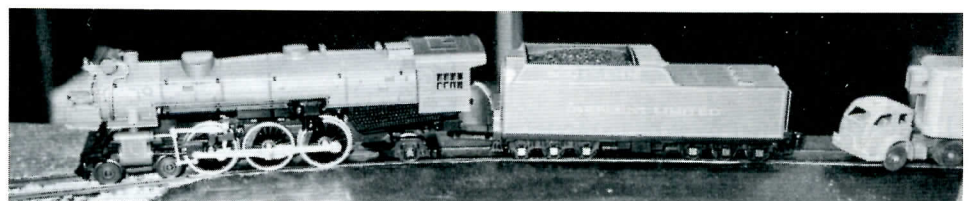
Walt Jopke edits the *PPSSW Newsletter* and solicits material of interest to the S scale community including AF, hi-rail, and scale which can be incorporated. In a recent newsletter, Walt wrote a very good article/editorial, outlining the various aspects of S scale, and how different persons can enjoy their hobby. Ken Zieska is planning a field trip for the group in the Minneapolis area where various railroad prototypes can be observed and photographed. The group hoped to do this in June.

Ernie Horr hosted the **Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN)** in April, and The Tinplate Road was ridden by the members attending. The group displayed their layout at the Great American Train Show, in early June at the Spokane Fairgrounds. It was a two day event, and members set up the layout and operated it for the public to showcase S scale.

The **Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers (RMHR)** brought their layout to the Treasure Valley Train Show in May. The two day show was held at the Boise Center on the Grove, Boise, ID. The group assembled their layout prior to the show on Friday and then transported it to the show to get it set up on the night before the show opened.

John Eichmann edits the *S-Say* newsletter of the **RMHR** and included a plug for joining the NASG in one of the recent issues. John includes tips on repair and maintenance of S gauge and AF trains that are helpful to the members.

Your column editor wishes to thank those groups who make their newsletters and event information available for this column. Send your newsletters to me at the following address: 11 Bittersweet Trail, Wilton, CT., 06897-3902



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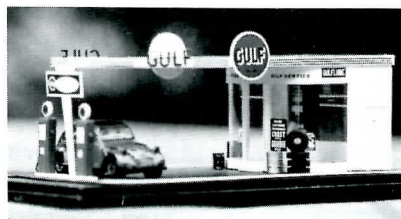
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Who and where they are.

OFFICERS:

President	Paul Stevens 9619 NW 71st St. Kansas City, MO 64152 816-741-1505 e-mail: crafttr@swbell.net
Executive Vice-President	Moe Berk 39 Graeler Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146 314-432-3417
Secretary	Jamie Bothwell 805 Hayes St., Bethlehem, PA 18015-3613 610-868-7180
Treasurer	William Moore 220 Swedesboro Rd., Gibbstown, NJ 08027-1504 609-423-0198
Eastern Vice President	John Foley 164 W. Railroad St., Pottsville, PA 17901 717-622-3413 Phone & FAX e-mail: foley164@ptd.net
Central Vice President	Tom Nimelli 7867 Bellevue St., Grosse Ile, MI 48138-1812 313-675-1955
Western Vice President	Lee M. Johnson 2472 Lariat Lane, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 510-943-1590

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Dispatch Editor	Jeff Madden 438 Bron Derw Ct., Wales, WI 53183 414-968-3729 Phone & Fax e-mail: nasgdispatch@hotmail.com
Membership	Dody Stevens 9619 NW 71st St., Kansas City, MO 64152 816-741-1505 e-mail: crafttr@swbell.net
Promotions	Joel Lebovitz 1340 W. Greenleaf Ave., Apt. 1-N, Chicago, IL 60626 773-262-5668
Standards	Bob Sherwood 410 E. 24th St., Cheyenne, WY 82001 307-638-2918 E-Mail: Softmoods@TCD.Net
Lionel/NASG Car Project	Doug Peck 6 Storeybrooke, Dr., Newburyport, MA 01950 978-465-8798
NASG Freight Car	Alan Evans P.O. Box 30345 Grahamana, OH 43230 614-471-7277 Fax: 614-471-3337 e-mail: tockfork@worldnet.att.net
S-Mod Info.	Ted Larson 5 Kenicott Circle, Fairport, NY 14450 \$5.00 per packet (stamps OK)
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Contest Chairman	Jim Whipple 1719 Middle Rd., Glenshaw, PA 15116 412-487-3364
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