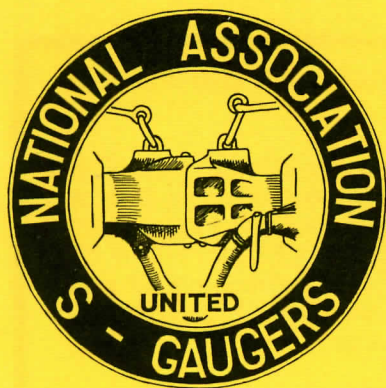
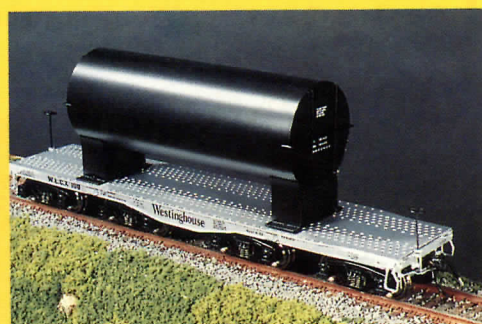
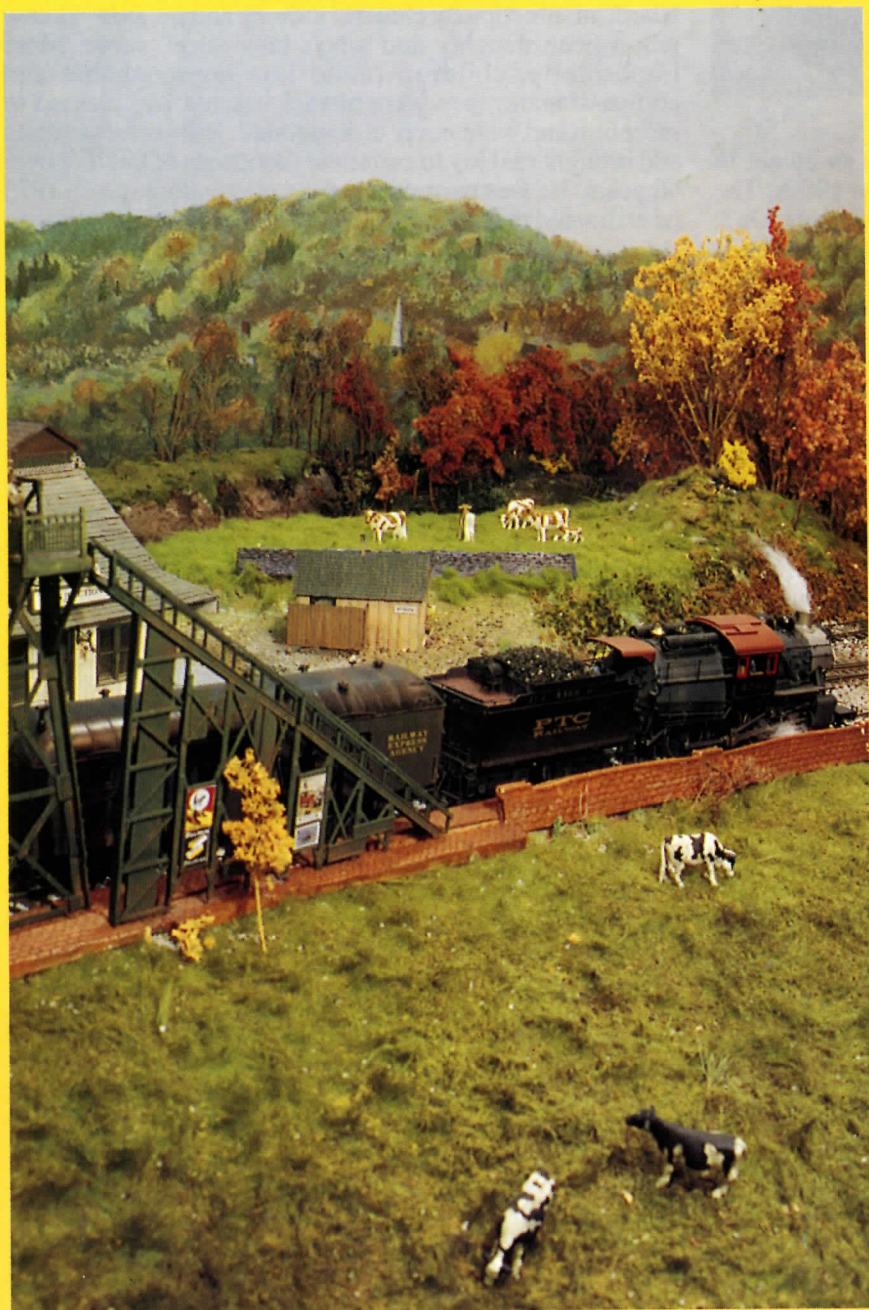
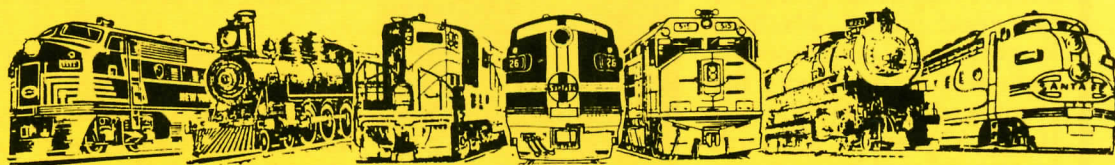




April 1999

Volume XXII Number 2

DISPATCH

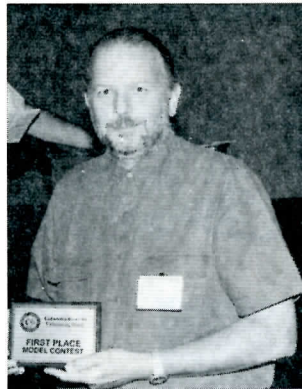


- New Flyer Column
- Flat Car Review
- Build a Chip Car

S Fine Scales • American Flyer • S Hi-Rail • S Narrow Gauge

THREE MEMBERS MAKE THEIR LAST RUNS: Mike Elkin, Norm Strain and Bill (Santa Claus) Wyatt. Mike's passing was untimely at age 52. Following are words from Randy Wilson. Bob Boring remembers Oregonion Norm Strain. Long-time S gauger Bill Wyatt, 72, is remembered in commentary by Moe Berk.

Mike Elkin: With great sadness I report the passing of my good friend, Michael Stephen Elkin, who lost his fight with brain cancer the evening of February 28, 1999. He was 52 years old. Mike will be remembered by everyone who knew him as an incredibly talented and personable individual who raised the standard for model building to new heights.



A native of Poughkeepsie, NY, Michael was an owner in Ace Model Trains of Pasadena, CA during the 1980s. The consummate rubber gauger, he tried HO several times, On3, Sn3 and finally S scale standard gauge. He won awards from the Railroad Prototype Modelers group during his HO days and was a member of the La Mesa HO club located in Balboa Park at San Diego, CA. Mike was also a member of the National Association of S Gaugers, Modern Prototype S'cale Modelers SIG and 1:64 Prototype Modelers.

Among his credits are Master Craftsman - Diesel and Most Popular Model at the NASG convention in Denver, CO in 1997 for his excellent Rio Grande SD50, which also won first place at the prestigious Western Prototype Modelers meet in Southern California the same year. At the NASG convention in Vancouver, WA in 1994 Mike won first place with his highly detailed Burlington Northern SD40-2.

An architect by trade, Mike's work for the firm of Greenberg & Farrell took him to Denver, CO nearly weekly for several years, where he befriended many area modelers. He will be missed and revered by all who knew him, and especially his friends in Colorado and Southern California. Condolences to his family.

- Randy Wilson

Bill (Santa Claus) Wyatt: Bill Wyatt (affectionately known as "Santa Claus") of North Canton, Ohio, died Friday, March 5, 1999. A long-time member of the NASG and a founder of the original Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers, Bill died in the Akron



General Medical Center where he had spent the last few weeks being treated for a heart condition. He was 72 and is survived by Florence Wyatt, his wife of 54 years; a son,

William; a daughter, Karen; eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Bill and Florence Wyatt were regular attendees at the NASG national conventions and the various regional trains shows. Those of us in the midwest fondly remember their cheerful and jolly presence at virtually every Fall S Fest. In 1992 and 1993 Bill suffered a heart attack and then a stroke which forced him into a wheelchair, but that didn't keep him from attending future midwest S events.

Bill's knowledge of American Flyer trains seemed limitless. For a number of years he offered repairs in his home workshop, and he could always be counted on to provide a helpful hint or the answer to a troublesome problem. But, there was no doubt that Bill Wyatt was Santa Claus! Bill had a small (but classically rotund) stature, a full white beard, an infectious cheerful attitude and a subtle "I know who's been naughty and who's been nice" smile. More importantly, children found him approachable and compassionate; they were always excited and pleased to meet him and were never disappointed. Bill served as Santa and brought real joy to countless thousands of kids for over 40 years. He was particularly fond of recalling that in 1973 he estimated that over 23,000 children climbed on his lap.

"Uncle Moe is a friend of Santa Claus!" announced an excited young Matthew Berk to the family at the 1987 NASG convention in Chicago. That occasion is one of the most cherished memories I personally hold from all my years of model railroading. The Berk family members (some 10 in number) were waiting in the trading room, while I took my nephew, Matthew (at that time 5 years old), to the restroom. As we were returning, I noticed Bill Wyatt in the movie room and paused at the door. He motioned us to come in, and I then introduced young Matt to him. For the next 5 minutes or so, Bill visited with Matt telling him that he was happy to see him and was certain he had been trying to "be a good boy." The always patient and gentle "Santa" also informed Matt that he loved American Flyer trains, was a friend of his Uncle Moe and was on vacation. Bill even produced a number of photographs of himself in his "work clothes" - the recognizable red suit. It was certainly a special moment for my 5 year old nephew, a cherished memory for me; but a common occurrence for our beloved Bill.

We have lost a dear friend, who will be greatly missed. We extend our sincere condolences and sympathy to Florence and all the family. It is our hope that they find some solace and comfort in remembering the many happy times.

- Moe Berk

Norm Strain: Norm was a member of the Northwest S Scalpers and was from Gresham, OR. He had just recently attended S-West III, but succumbed to the Big C after an operation. Many of us not from the Pacific Northwest may remember Norm and his excellent modeling while attending the Vancouver NASG convention in 1994.



Continued on page 31

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: 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:

William Moore
220 Swedesboro Rd.
Gibbstown, NJ 08027-1504
609-423-0198
wmoore@jnlk.com

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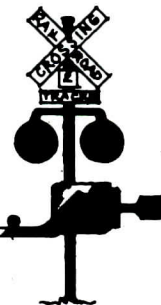
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THE DEADLINES for articles are the 1st of February, April, June, August, October and December for issues dated April, June, August, October, December, February, respectively.

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President's Message ...

Have you made plans to attend the NASG convention this summer in St. Paul? The Pines & Prairies S Scale Workshop is hosting *Lake Special 99*, coordinated to overlap the NMRA's *Northstar 99* convention. This is the first time in several years that we've had an overlap with the NMRA. The potential for the promotion of S is enormous, and the benefits you will enjoy as an attendee are unique.

Several S manufacturers will display at the NMRA trade show. It's a great opportunity to show S to thousands with the potential to attract and convert some of those attendees to our favorite gauge. While the actual NASG convention site will be separate, common access to clinics and the trade shows will be possible **at no additional charge**.

While we have many fine S manufacturers, I imagine there are other manufacturers who you wish would make S products. Why not take advantage of this opportunity to make personal contact with them to urge making products for the S market? See how good a salesperson you can be! Imagine being able to be a part of the expansion of S products with your powers of persuasion!

Many of the tours (NMRA and/or NASG) are an additional charge (a la carte). I was very impressed with the prototype tours offered at Valley Forge in '93 (this was a joint NMRA/NASG convention) and feel this is a notable strength of overlapping conventions.

Plan to enjoy the benefits of this combined convention this July. See you in St. Paul!

Paul Stevens, President
crafrtr@swbell.net

Please note that this is my correct e-mail address if you wish to send me a message. It is not correct in the directory.

NASG NEWS...

VOTE: A 2nd reminder... This is to remind you again that 1999 is an election year. The NASG is holding elections for the office of Executive Vice President, Secretary, and for the three Regional Vice Presidents. Moe Berk and John Foley are running for Executive VP, and Glenn Ritter is running for Secretary. Bill Fuhrman is running for Eastern Region VP, Tom Nimelli is running for Central Region VP, and Gil Hulin is running for Western VP. You will receive a ballot and information about the candidates by first class mail in early April. As a reminder, the ballots must be postmarked no later than May 15, and they must arrive no later than May 30.

DUES DUE!! Get those dues in early this year. It would be especially helpful this year to mail your renewal dues in early because of the transition of membership personnel.

This year mail your \$17.00, payable to the NASG, to Treasurer, Bill Moore, 220 Swedesboro Rd., Gibbstown, NJ 08027-1504.

RAIL MAIL

We Need a PS-1 Boxcar: From the net - Everybody on these lists are talking about how we need this and that, but am I the only person to notice there's not a 40-foot PS-1 boxcar in S scale? The tooling for a quality car could easily be amortized over hundreds of road names like it has been in HO. If engineered correctly, the ends and doors could also be used on 50-foot versions of the car as well.

Wouldn't it make sense for someone to produce a 40' PS-1 with 6 and 8 foot doors in S? I'd vote for an S scale PS-1 with my dollars. Come out with one with dimensional data only, and I'll stuff the ballot box.

- Keith Thompson, Seattle.

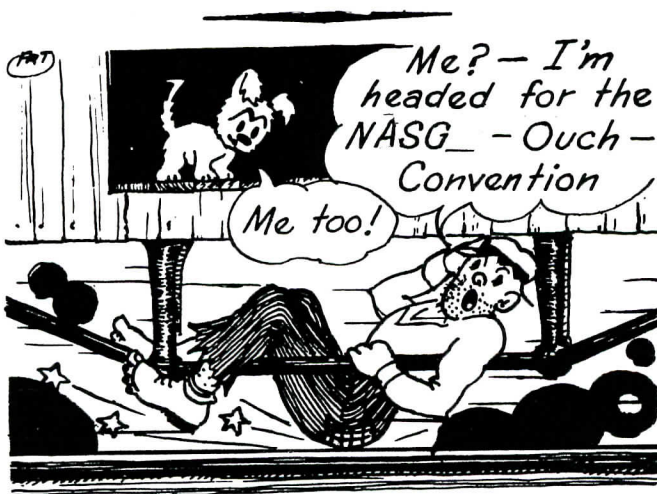
I'm not sure if this Keith T is a member, but if he sees the magazine, read my editorial. ed.

Minimum Radius: I'm finding this minimum radius discussion (S Trains Digest on the net) somewhat interesting. In my opinion, a factor to consider is WHAT LOOKS GOOD. In general the larger you can make a curve radius, the better off you will be. Another factor to consider is the amount of play on the drivers of a steam locomotive. Some have more than others. Many locos will actually take a tighter radius than rated - a fudge factor by the manufacturer.

I use 30" minimum radius on my Sn3 layout. This is about the minimum radius that can run anything and have it look decent. If I had to use a smaller radius, then I would use smaller locos.

- Dave Heine, Pennsylvania

Sunset Brass Pricing: A commentary from the net. The reality is that \$799.00 (2-8-2 price) will appeal to some and not to others; similarly it will fit the pocketbook of some and not of others. Two years ago when I modeled only in N scale, I put such offers in the unreasonable category. Having said



that, I had purchased 3 brass steam locos in N because they fit my road, and while more than plastic in terms of cost, I was pleased they were available. There were no plastic choices for these locos.

Having moved over to S a while back, two things have happened: my price bars have moved up - let's face it, S is generally more expensive than N for a number of reasons such as more detail, more materials, lower production volumes, etc. And I realize that S has even fewer plastic rolling stock/loco options than N, and as a result, especially for locos, if I want some of them I'll have to acquire them in brass.

As for the Zephyr - I'm really grateful to Sunset (3rd Rail) for offering it. I'm interested in the Maine Central and the BAR, and thus will have a model very close to the the Flying Yankee. As for the price (\$759.00) it is fair based on what it goes for in other scales. Thanks Scott and 3rd Rail.

- Michael Greene, Mass.

I think there will be a Flying Yankee Version - ed.

Jeff: I just read the February *Dispatch* and have a few 3/16 comments. 1. I read Terry Harrison's letter about the Return Address Labels request from the NASG. I too would like to have them. I accept and contribute to the NMRA for the ones I receive from them. I agree with you that they should be available through the Clearing House in order to re-order more, but I would also like to see them sent with the first *Dispatch* of the renewing subscription so that new members will know that they are available. Question? How would you have them at conventions, fests and and other places unless you had the NASG Clearing House Person carry all the labels to each and every place they go? Don't they have enough stuff to carry that is not variable? Would they be printed at these places? I would have a form at the conventions, fests, etc. that could be used to to accept an order for the labels, but I can't see the Clearing House Person carrying all the pre-printed Return Address Labels with them where ever they go. *Well, I guess I meant they would take orders at the events. - ed.*

2. Concerning DCC information besides www.tttrains.com

Railmail continued on page 30

Jeff's Junction



THE GREAT DICTATOR!

Let's assume I'm the **GDOASPFCP** (Great Dictator of Assigning S Plastic Freight Car Production). With this self-installed title I'll have some fun picking out likely plastic freight cars which might be produced by our major manufacturers.

First, we'll start with Lionel: I'm assigning them to re-introduce the work train cars - boom car caboose, drop center flat with light and generator, and crane car. These cars could be all or part plastic.

Next, American Models: To fill out their steam era line - a RTR 40' steel 40s/50s steel reefer, a steel or wood cupola caboose (C&O, ATSF, UP), a 3-dome 10,000 gallon tank car, a 40' gondola, and a short ACF (with the cutout) ACF square hatch covered hopper. For the modern era they are assigned a 50' mechanical reefer.

S-Helper: I'm giving them the task of producing a steam era hopper (either a USRA 32 footer or a 36 footer), an all-wood reefer (the vertical brake staff type), an 8,000 gallon single dome tank car, a wood sheath 40' box (double sheath - no braces showing), and a '50s PS-1 steel 40' box. They will also be assigned a wood or steel cupola caboose (PRR wood cupola style, PRR N5, B&O wood or even a NE Reading style). Now hold your horses on this last one. Don't you think a NE caboose detailed to S-Helper's standards and provided in many paint schemes could work?

Pacific Rail Shops: The Great Dictator assigns the X29 40' boxcar (and B&O versions) to them. Also a 50' door and a half outside brace box and 40 and 50' round roof double door boxcars.

Downs gets to do a more detailed 40' flatcar and a modern cylindrical grain hopper.

Bill's Train Shop is assigned a plastic and metal log buggy.

Des Plaines gets to do chemical versions of their tank cars and any of the above that the others drag their feet on.

Now, while I'm on a roll, I'll also assume the role of **GDOASPPCP** (Great Dictator of Assigning S Plastic Passenger Car Production). Lionel is assigned to re-run the heavyweight and round roof New Haven AF cars to give them cars to use for passenger road names, circus cars and work train cars.

American Models is ordered to re-run their long heavyweight passenger cars with repeat and different road names - maybe some circus names too. They will be chosen to produce a long heavyweight diner and a long observation. See, then they will have both a short and a long heavyweight passenger series. And while I'm at it - a smoothside diner.

S-Helper: If they really do E units, will be assigned to do some fluted Budd cars. I think I'll let them do a couple of old-time wood cars too - like the old Kinsman.

BTS will of course be assigned plastic EBT Sn3 passenger cars. I might even assign them to produce these RTR and painted.

Yes, this is April-foolish tongue-in-cheek, but I think there might be a few pearls of wisdom here.

- Jeff

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODELS (10087 Colonial Dr., South Lyon, MI 48178 - www.americanmodels.com) now has the flats with the Army tanks in production. The entire AM flatcar series are based on the Bettendorf 1927-35 cars. Pressed Steel Car Co. made similar cars into the '40s.

The cars had wood planking and carried all kinds of loads including military and TOFC after the war. The AM flat features real spruce planking (70 planks per car), diecast underframe and heavy duty sprung trucks. Available in scale and hi-rail versions. Standard flat - \$37.95, TOFC w/trailer \$47.95, w/tank load \$47.95.

BK ENTERPRISES (12874 County Road 314B, Buena Vista, CO 81211-9102 - bktruscale@aol.com). BK has announced that they have acquired Classic Miniatures and Taurus Products. These latter are now wrapped into the Trout Creek Engineering line of Sn3 cars and structures. There are now 6 S buildings in the Classic line. Clifford Mestel plans on doing many more of the HO line in S. BK has an extensive line of S open frog turnout kits in various codes up to 148 in S or Sn3. BK also has S hi-speed (closed frog) turnout kits as mentioned in the last *Dispatch*. Price for a code 100 #6 turnout kit is \$19.20; Tru-scale #6 hi-speed code 148 is \$30.

Other products from BK include switch parts, switch machines, track laying materials, Tru-Scale wood roadbed and a track laying test car. BK also has its own screw drive turnout motor (formerly GB electronics). This is a motor driven small thread screw machine that has a prototypical action. The motor exerts up to 1/2 lb. of force, has low power requirements and has absolute locking. Write for information or inquire on the e-mail for list and prices.

KALMBACH PUBLISHING (21027 Crossroads Circle, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187 - e-mail: dss@kalmbach.com) has three new softcover books which should appeal

particularly to American Flyer fans. One is *Toy Train Collecting and Operating* by John Grams (112 pages b&w and color - \$16.95). The second is *Tracks Plans for Toy Trains* which is a 64 page book featuring O and S layout designs - \$9.95. A third softcover book, *Realistic Plastic Structures for Toy Train Layouts* by Art Curren, is about simple kitbashing projects dealing with various plastic buildings. Most appear to be geared toward O, but easy adjustments as to door size and platform height would make these ideas work for S too. Two of the reworked structures include the O/O27 Plasticville tower and the coaling tower - \$14.95.

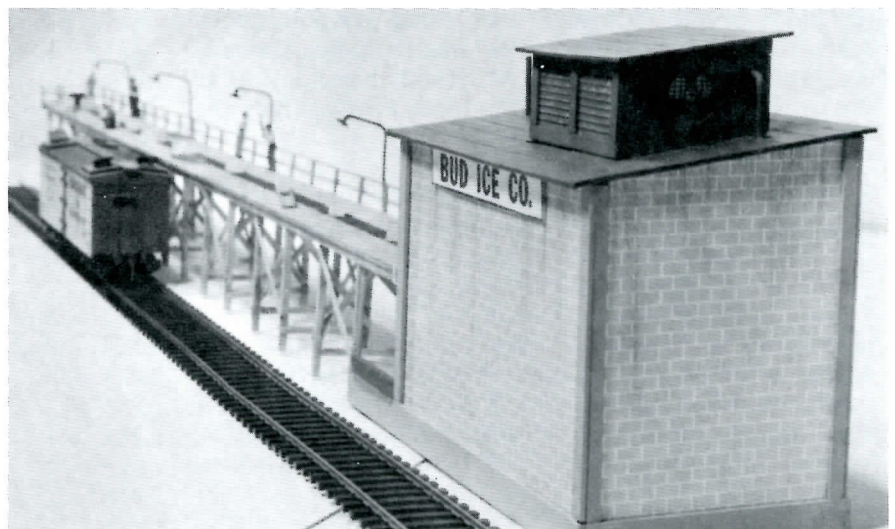
LEHIGH VALLEY MODELS (1225 N. Arch St., Allentown, PA 18104) has produced a new icing platform kit. It builds into a 3-1/2" x 39" long refrigerator icing platform. All parts are precut to size. Blocks of plastic ice and loading chutes included. Cost is \$40 plus \$3.50 S&H. \$2.00 for latest illustrated catalog.

LIONEL LLC (50625 Richard W. Blvd., Chesterfield, MI 48051) is importing some interesting painted RTR diecast working signals. All three types appear undersize a bit for O, but oversize for S. These should be workable for tinsplate layouts and appear to be adaptable to scale layouts. Take the semaphore first. It's a narrow profile

upper quadrant pointed blade style that scales out at 46 feet in S, but the blade only measures 4-1/2 feet. My thought would be to sink the base and some or all the height of the relay box into the benchwork (so as not to destroy the unit). This would shorten it 5 to 10 feet. The other two signals are crossing gates - one cantilever and one plain (no gates included). The crossbucks measure 5' and the targets appear about right, but overall, they are probably too high. The cantilever measures out to 28' and the single crossing signal about 19'. The height from the base to the bottom of the targets is 10' - should be more like 8'. Each is painted white and black, is painted and pre-wired. The semaphore and the single crossing signal retail for \$49.95 each. The cantilever grade crossing is \$59.95.

S SCALE LOCO AND SUPPLY (1279 Woodstock Ln., Kinterville, PA 18930). It seems that member Fred Rouse is going to revive this popular line of parts. Coming back will be parts, people, drivers, and later (we hope) locos. See page 30 for fax and e-mail. Stay tuned.

WESTPORT MODEL WORKS (24 Cob Dr., Westport, CT - 203-226-2798) has a line of cardstock backdrops useful to S gaugers. Owner Les Lewis has a 45-page catalog for \$5.00. - www.connix.com/~drawings.



LVM Ice house.

AMERICAN MODELS FLAT CAR

By Jeff English

A new S scale flat car has been introduced by American Models which should be warmly received by those looking for a handsome riveted flat car. The ready-to-run model is offered in several road names with crisp lettering. Cars are currently offered with side stakes (these must be cut and installed by the buyer even though the model is RTR) and optional military tank for a load, and there may be versions for trailer-on-flat-car later.

One of the features of these models which is proudly pointed out by the manufacturer is the real wood deck, which consists of individual spruce planks (The side stakes are also spruce). There is a definite positive impact of real wood, especially when compared with an unweathered plastic deck, but I found the color to be excessively reddish with too much contrast of shade from one plank to the next. Moreover, the spruce is fuzzy, which does not look good up close, and my sample had small globs of excess glue oozing out not only the sides but between boards on top of the deck as well. The glue is a soft rubber cement which is easily removed with a soft tool such as a toothpick.

The planks appear to be deliberately installed with some random stagger side-to-side, which is a good idea, if a bit overexaggerated.

The rest of the car consists of a cast metal underframe (center sill, bolsters and crossbearers, with brake rigging) covered by a one-piece injection-molded plastic "body" which provides the fishbelly side sills and stake pockets, end sills and steps and grabs. The spruce planks are glued to the sub-floor surface of the plastic shell. This is a smart design for a flat car, allowing crisper detail and easy re-detailing on the visible outer part of the car (plastic), while providing the necessary weight (metal). The detailing of the metal underframe is rather crude, but it isn't visible normally anyway, and allows the car to weigh in at 6 ounces, empty. This is close to the NASG standard, which calls for a car this long to weigh 6.25 ounces.

The model comes with American Models' standard cast-sideframe trucks, which are very free rolling.

The plastic subfloor has mounting holes which make it very easy to install Kadee 802 couplers. They end up just a tad high when measured against the NASG coupler height gauge, but well within acceptable limits.

My sample showed good quality-control overall, except one end grab iron was broken and some paint was chipped off the metal underframe. The paint and lettering on the sides have no visible flaws.

Prototype Fidelity

American Models is promoting this car as a "1930 USRA 46-foot flat car", which is a misnomer since the USRA flat car design was 42 feet long. I was informed by the manufacturer that the model is supposed to represent a Chicago & North Western design which is based on the USRA design stretched to 46 feet. The first of these 50-ton capacity cars were built in 1927, not 1930. Drawings and a photo of the C&NW car appear in the *Car Builders' Cyclopedia* editions of 1928, 1931 and 1937.

Overall dimensions of the model match the C&NW drawings fairly closely, although the depth of the fishbelly side sills is a bit shallow at 26" compared with the prototype's 30 inches. There are a few deliberate deviations to accommodate out-of-scale hi-rail operation, such as the large cut-out of each end sill (to provide room for large hi-rail couplers) and the shifting of underframe crossbearers to clear oversize flanges.

AM's trucks are a not very detailed rendition of a post-war ride-control

truck, but the C&NW cars should have an AAR spring-plank truck. This is easy to change by those who insist on the right trucks.

The above are small inaccuracies which most scale modelers can easily live with and/or compensate for, but inexplicably, the model has only twelve stake pockets instead of the correct thirteen. This renders the model incorrect for C&NW which is the stated prototype.

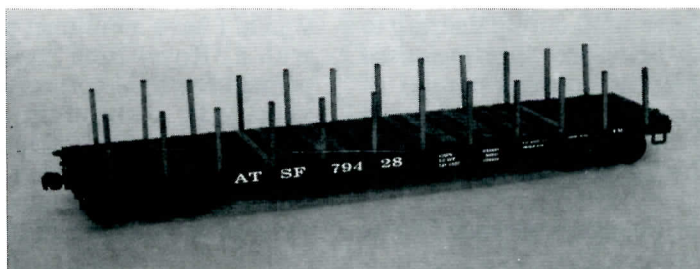
My example model, factory-lettered for C&NW, has the number 42604, but North Western's numbering scheme limited open-top cars to odd numbers only (even numbers were assigned to closed cars; 42604 was a box car). The style and location of lettering on the model does not conform to the photo of 42597 in the *Cyclopedias*.

C&NW's 46-foot flat cars were in the following number series:
42501-42699, blt' 27 Bettendorf Co.
43001-43999, blt' 28 American Car & Foundry
45001-45599, blt' 29 Pressed Steel Car Co.

AC&F also built ten seventy ton cars of very similar design and dimensions, also with Dalman two-level trucks, in 1930, numbered 48081- 48099 (odd nos.).

It has come to my attention that the Milwaukee Road had some flat cars with a length of 45 feet, with twelve pressed steel stake pockets. These cars were built in the 1920s with fishbelly side sills, and were numbered CMStP&P 600000-600349. The American Models car could be a suitable representation of these cars.

The AM flat car is a good looking, well-engineered model with some errors of prototype fidelity that make it problematic for prototype modelers. While its limited applicability will disappoint prototype modelers, it should be warmly received by others looking for a solid, good looking flat car with the rivets that say "steam era".



FIXIN' FLYER



With David Dewey

Welcome aboard! This is the first in a, hopefully, long series of columns, mostly about having fun with American Flyer. Sometimes it's just about playing with it, and sometimes it's about fixing it so you can play with it! First, I thought an introduction might be in order, then we'll talk about a typical problem or two.

I'm one of the unusual ones. I never really stopped playing with my trains, even if it was only running them under the tree at Christmas. I'm one of the younger "original" Flyer operators, as the company went bankrupt while I was in eighth grade. But let's start at the beginning.

When I was less than a year old, my brothers received a 307 powered freight set (Christmas 1953). My earliest memory is of this train running around under the tree, and me wanting it, and not being allowed near it. Over the next few Christmases they received a few more cars, more track and two pairs of RC switches (which I vaguely remember them opening). About 1956 (I think) my oldest brother bought the Baldwin diesel #355 set (for \$15.95-funny what sticks in the mind). He also acquired a bunch of "all black" track from a schoolmate.

When my brothers finally lost interest, I was allowed to play with the trains. But my dad "conveniently" forgot how to hook up the transformer, so all I could do was push the cars back and forth. We didn't have any passenger cars, so I used the two cabooses and pretended. One day I figured out the three posts and two wires (which was probably what my dad was waiting for anyway). Ever since, I've never stopped playing with them. In 1966 (seventh grade) I bought my cousin's set, the Scene-O-Rama with the pressed paper scenic panels. My cousin's also had a Silver Bullet engine only, no cars, so I convinced my mom during that trip to the city (San Francisco) to get me a used "set" (different colored bands) of streamline cars. I also had enough saved up (\$12, I think) to buy the Operating Sawmill that the store still had on hand.

Meanwhile, I bugged everyone I knew

for their "old" trains.

I remember one friend's older brother came by one day and said, "I'm on my way to the dump! If you want my trains, they're five bucks." I begged an advance on my allowance for that one. I also remember my parents being upset when I spent \$35 for Mike Fay's 336 powered train set with an 18B transformer. But my dad did spring one Christmas for the Hobby Surplus Sales' "12 pair RC Switches for \$100" deal, and I bought the #26756 Bumpers, 6/\$3.99! Boy, don't you wish those prices were still valid!

I was raised in a vacation resort, so after Halloween the "summer" cabins were closed until Easter. I conned my dad into letting me use one for my trains. We had a lot of used lumber around, so I built an 8' x 10' table (in 2' wide sections, so it could be disassembled). I think it was 4' high. The table would just fit in Cabin 14's front room, with barely enough space on the far wall to stand in and reach derailments, etc. Of course, there was enough room in the front for visitors to watch! Each fall I'd start planning (with my handy Pike Planner Kit) and build until about Christmas time. Then I could run trains until Easter week, when everything would come down in about three days. Couldn't use the cabin's heater (too expensive!), so I'd work until my hands were blue, go back to the house, warm up, and then back out through the snow to Cabin 14!

After high school, I wasn't around enough to do the big layout, but the Christmas tree always had one! It was usually three trains with a yard off to one side so the trains wouldn't sit under the tree and get sap dripped on them. During the 80's I used the old Cabin 14 tables three times to do public displays during Dunsmuir's Railroad Days. Once the local SP Brass dropped in to watch. I have a Pullman passenger set with a "Royal Blue" type engine all painted Daylight colors (junk pieces I salvaged), so brought it out from "hiding" in the tunnel thinking it would be a great PR gesture. As it rounded the front curve, the whole train derailed and went on its side! I heard one Brass say,

"This is too much like our real work, let's go!" (This was years before the Cantara Loop spill.) Oh, well. . . .

When I'm not working on Flyer, I can often be found working on full-sized trains, or restoring antique cars. Now, onto this month's tip.

Many AF car floors are held to the body with brass or brass plated 'push pins' that look like rivets. They sometimes have a mark on their heads from the factory assembly tooling. These are/were a press fit into a molded hole in the body. As such, they put a strain on the plastic. (Well, yeah, that's what keeps them in!) Note that these pins have straight flutes, and are not twisted, turned, or rotated into the body, unlike the boxcar door rivets that often have spiral flutes.

I've found the easiest, and least damaging (OK, WARNING! If you 'slip' during this procedure, it can be very damaging!), method of removal is to provide some separation tension between the body and the floor. This can be as simple as pushing on the coupler on a wheel truck while also holding the body, all in the same hand! Using only one hand is important, because with the other hand, you carefully place a soldering tip on the head of one rivet, and heat it. As soon as it is warm enough, the floor will lift the pin out a ways. Go to the other corner and repeat. Then do the other end of the body. The floor should just lift out now. The pins will now find their own difficult places to be retrieved from on their own!

The action caboose has the added problem of the figure and mechanism, which can be a real pain to get apart! You have to maneuver the metal man, or the metal base part, through the slot. I don't have a good suggestion here, except to hold your tongue right, usually curled up on one side of a lip! The rubber figured versions are easier to maneuver.

When it's time to re-assemble a car, first inspect the mounting pegs for cracks. If they're in good shape, I like to try the pin in the hole first, hoping to get the pin's grooves lined up with the grooves the pin set in the plastic before. This takes a little "feel." Then I use the heat again and gently push down with the tip. Not too much heat or you'll make your own, new, in-the-wrong-place, hole! The only reason for heating while replacing

is to reduce the pressure on the plastic body; it's old and getting brittle!

If you do have split mounting areas, I've found that a drop of super-glue can help fill them and keep things together. If the cracks have opened up, I will use a wooden clothespin as a clamp. The super glue takes hold quickly. After super-gluing, you must use the same heat method to put the pin in, or you'll just crack the plastic again.

I use the glue and heat method for cracked screw holes too. The glue method is the same, and can sometimes save a hole that is only stripped. This is a little trickier, as you have the screwdriver on the screw, and the heating tip too. I apply some rotational tension to the screwdriver. As soon as it begins to turn easily, remove the heat and gently screw in. If you encounter resistance again before you get the screw home, you may have to re-apply heat, but be careful to not strip out the plastic!! I do this procedure quite often with tender shells; they seem to have lots of cracked or broken mounts.

The most important thing I've learned is: Be gentle with the AF fasteners. If it isn't going together easily, something has changed. The plastic is becoming too brittle to be forgiving anymore. The wrong screw, or cross-threaded, or misaligned, or glue in the hole, can lead to a bad "Ooops, Dang!" Stop and look it over again before going on (which, for me, means to put on the magnifiers and look around!).

Hope you're having fun with your trains. Your comments, suggestions, and questions are always welcome. If we don't know the answer, we can make up a good whopper! My email is:

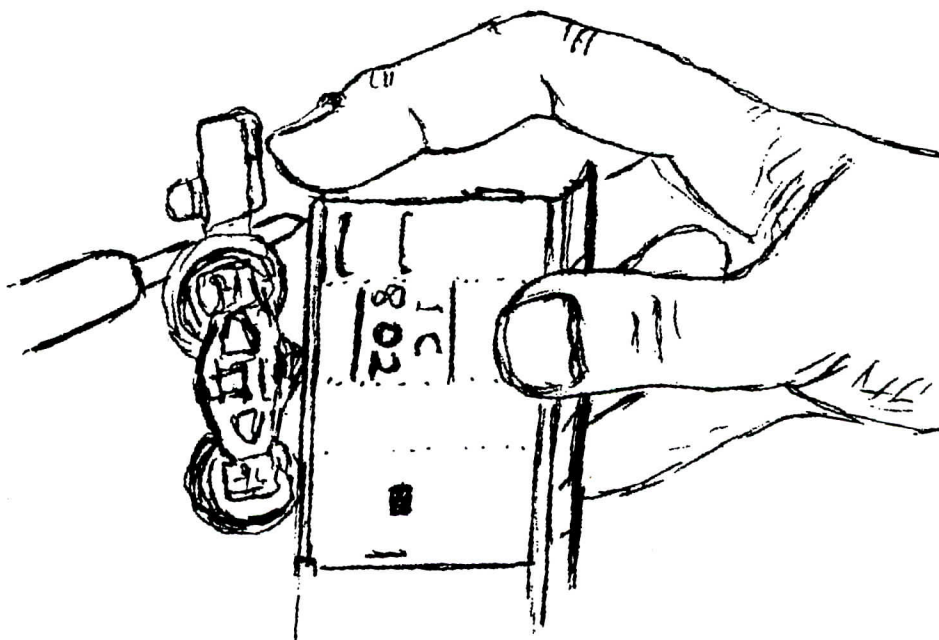
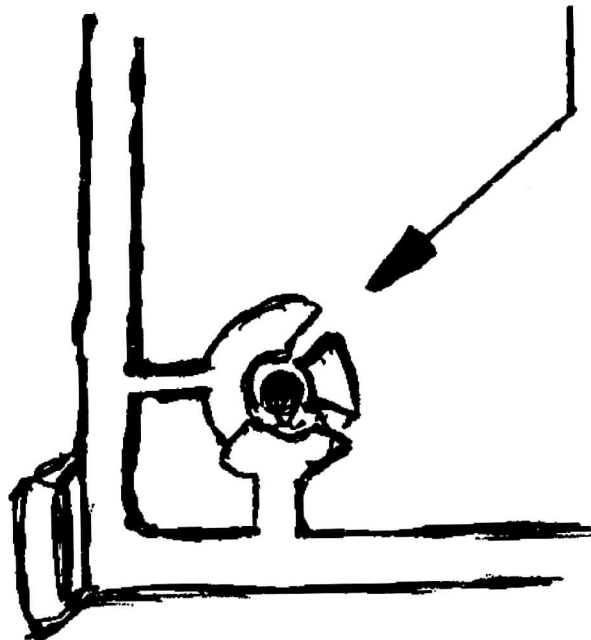
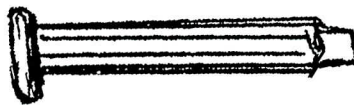
djdewey@cncnet.com

You can always post questions on Paul Yorke's S-trains at:

S-Trains@onelist.com

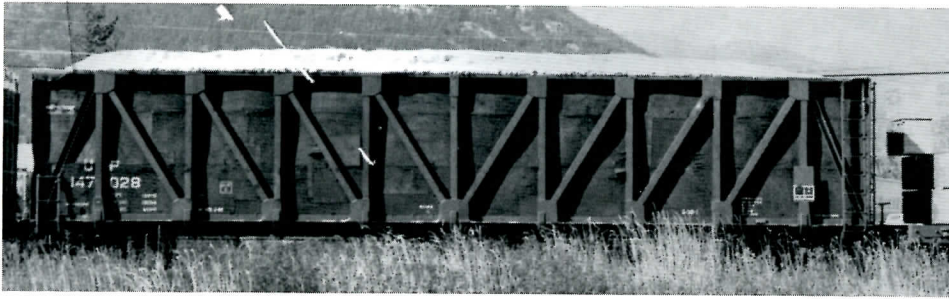
As my hoghead friend always told me, "Keep yer flues sanded!"

S'incerely,
David Dewey



Let's Build a - STEEL BRACED PLYWOOD CHIP CAR

By Ernie Horr



While accompanying Rod Cornwall of Seattle on a railfanning jaunt to Sandpoint, Idaho, we spotted some cars on a Union Pacific siding. An outside braced wood chip car with large bracing and plywood sheet sides looked like a good modeling prospect - so plans and instructions follow:

Bill of Materials:

- 3/32" basswood sheet
- 1/8" U channel shapes
- 1/8" column or H beam shapes
- 3/16" U channel or I beam shapes
- Ace ladders or equivalent
- Northeastern drop grab irons
- 1/16 x 1/8" stripwood
- 1/32 x 3/16" stripwood
- 1/32" plywood or basswood sheet
- 1/8" angle shapes
- 3/32" angle shapes
- 1/8 x 1/8" stripwood
- 1/16 x 1/4" stripwood
- Stewart or Grandt Line AB brake components
- cardstock
- #20 brass wire
- #24 brass wire
- #10 brass shim stock
- scrap piece of Blau Knox roof walk
- Northeastern wood bolsters or Ace/Downs ones.
- Ordinary paper.

Start With the Floor: To begin we cut our floor from 3/32" sheet - 9' x 60'. Fasten 1/8" angle to the sides of this piece making them the same length as the floor. The angle faces up with the 1/8" side flush with the bottom. See sketch #4. As the sides of this car are plywood, cut the 1/32" plywood (or basswood) 4 feet wide and 3/16" shorter than our floor/bottom. Fasten to floor inside the angle piece centering lengthwise. See sketch #2. Make sure this is perpendicular and square with floor.

We now cut our vertical 1/8" H beam braces 11 scale feet and fasten to the just installed 4 foot side notching one side of H flange to go over angle flange. Install as per side plan making sure everything is square. Now fasten another 4 foot section on top of the first one and to upright bracing. Complete sides by adding the remaining siding to the H beam bracing. Adjust the width of this piece so that it is even with the tops of the H beam bracing. If a crack shows between side panels - fine; it does on the prototype.

The Ends: We are now ready to make the ends. Cut 4 pieces of 1/8" angle 11 feet long. Notch one side of angle to fit over angle piece on bottom. The angles should all face toward the center of the car. Install to bottom angle and to car sides making sure again that everything is square. On door end cut and fasten a 1/16 x 1/4" piece of stripwood the same length as floor width and fasten at top to flat side of our vertical angles. Check for squareness.

Cut 1/16 x 1/32" stripwood to length of floor width and fasten to floor between upright angles with the 3/32" to the floor. To our 1/16 x 1/4" piece at top cut a 3/32 x 1/8" piece and fasten to top 1/4" piece with 1/8" side showing. See sketch #1. Cut two 1/16 x 3/32" stripwood to fit between horizontal pieces on top and bottom and fasten to 1/8 angle with 3/32 side to the angle.

From cardstock cut, fit and fasten on the inside of this just completed door frame. Cut 6 pieces of 1/8" U channel to fit between top and bottom of door frame. Cut off one leg of U to form an L shape. Fasten these to outside of the cardstock with angles to the center - three on each side. See sketch #2 and door end plan. To top horizontal piece fasten 4 1/8" square pieces shaped as

shown on sketch #1. Fasten to top piece and to top of door frame. These represent hinges. At bottom of door fasten 2 small pieces of cardstock as shown on plan. These represent door stops.

On the brake end cut 6 pieces of 3/32" angle. Fasten these to upright 1/8" angles as shown on plan. All angles are fastened with angles down. See sketch #3. Again we make sure everything is square. Now cut, fit and install cardstock to inside leg of angles.

Back to the Sides: Now we go back to the sides. Cut and fit 1/8" U channel from bottom angle to top of sides as shown on plan. Do this on all 4 ends of sides. Now cut and fit the angled H beam braces as per plan.

At this point I cut and fitted 1/16 x 1/4" stripwood the length of the inside of the car. Fasten with 1/4" to inside of car, 3/16" down from top of car. Do both sides. Cut 2 cross braces from same material and fasten between these. I put in 2 braces dividing the length of the car in three. This not only gives the car rigidity, but gives something for the load to rest on.

We now add a 1/32 x 3/32" flange to the top of both ends. Cut 2 pieces of 1/32 x 3/16" stripwood for flange for the car sides. Cut to length of car and notch for just installed end flanges.

Finishing the Bottom: We are now ready to finish the bottom of our car. Install Northeastern or Ace/Downs bolsters 5 feet from car end to center of the bolsters. Notch for the train pipe if you are going to detail the underbody of the car. Cut 2 pieces of 3/16" channel or 3/16" I beam and fit between bolsters. If you are going to detail bottom install #20 wire for train pipe as per bottom plan. Notch the U channel or I beams to fit over the wire. Install the channel or I beams for center sill as per plan. Cut 1/16 x 1/8" stripwood for cross braces, notch to go over flange on center sill and notch appropriate ones for train pipe. Length of braces should come to edge of car floor with angle. Chamfer outside end as per sketch #4. These bottom cross braces have to meet side of car at exact place as the center of the

vertical H beam side braces meet the bottom.

To the cross braces add 1/8" cardstock flange. You have to decide at this point if you want to go further with detailing the bottom. If you do, follow the plan. Levers are cut from #10 shim stock and fastened to the center sill in slots. Use #24 wire for piping and brake rods. you can use plan for placing of AB brake components. One thing to remember - brake cylinder points to end with brake wheel and train pipe goes on opposite side of center sill from brake wheel.

Couplers: If you are going to use AF compatible couplers disregard next step. If using scale couplers add a 1/16 x 1/4" piece. Cut as shown on end plans. Cut notch for KD couplers you are using as shown on plan.

Details: All we have left now are details. From cardstock cut the top and bottom gussets - see plan. These meet the bottom cross braces. One thing that doesn't show on plan but on sketch #5 is a strip of ordinary paper 1/16" wide, and fastened halfway up bottom gussets and to center of bottom cross brace flange, almost to champher.

Ace ladders are not long enough so we have to lengthen them. I soldered on extra length using a piece of #24 wire on inside of ladder for extra strength. I also filed the sides of the ladders so they aren't so wide. This is your call. Install ladders as per plan. Short ladders are from cut off pieces used to lengthen ladders. Make sure ladder on door end is fastened to door only. Install Northeastern grab irons as per plan.

Brake wheel and housing are fastened to a piece of U channel and fastened to end as per plan. The brake platform is fashioned from #10 shim stock and a scrap piece of Blau Knox walk fastened to braces after notching for chain and rod. #20 wire rod ends at 1/16" square stock. Stirrups are made from #10 shim stock and fastened at corners. Another thing not shown on plan, but in sketch #5, is a piece of cardstock fastened to next to last H brace from car owner and number. Cut this about the same size as the black decal giving maintenance information.

One other thing you might want to add are some 1/8" strips of cardstock punched to show bolts and fastened at places on car sides to represent metal

braces to patch cracks, etc., in plywood sides.

Painting: I sprayed the car lightly with boxcar red to make the plywood look weathered. Paint braces and ends with a heavier coating since they represent metal. I painted the bottom Grimy black.

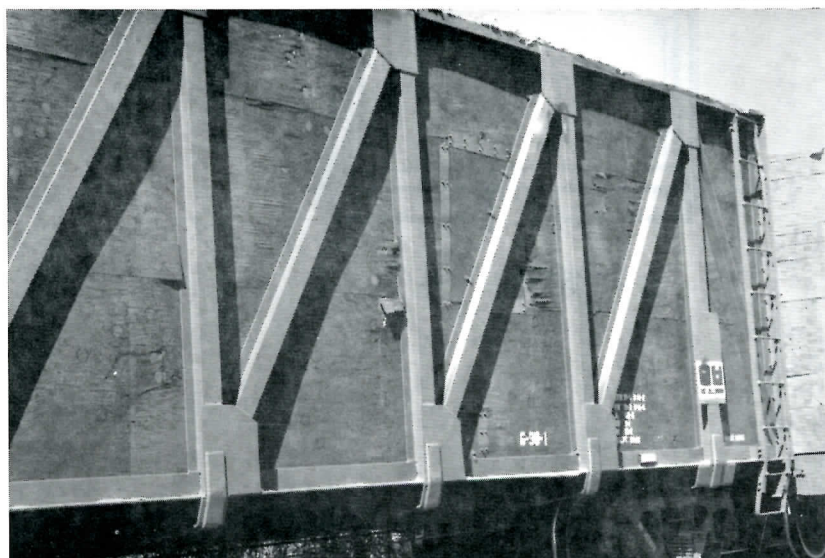
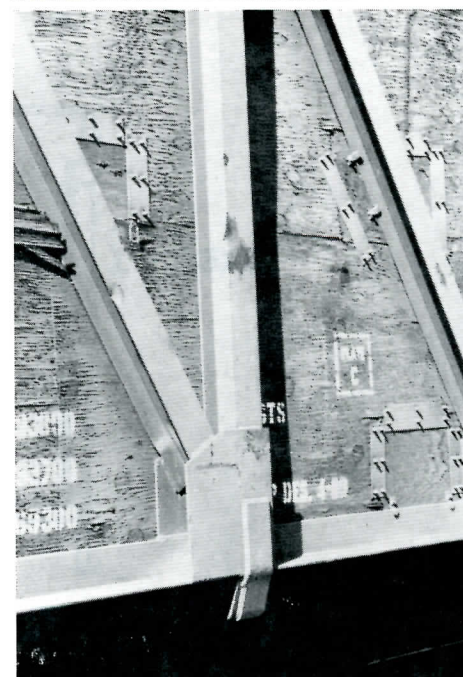
Decals: There are no decals as such, but I found some HO UP engine decals that look about right. I scrounged some S gauge decals for dimensional data that are close. Length 60-3, Ex W 10-8 and H 14. Capacity 140,000, Ld Lmt 146, 900 and Lt Wt 63,100 are also close.

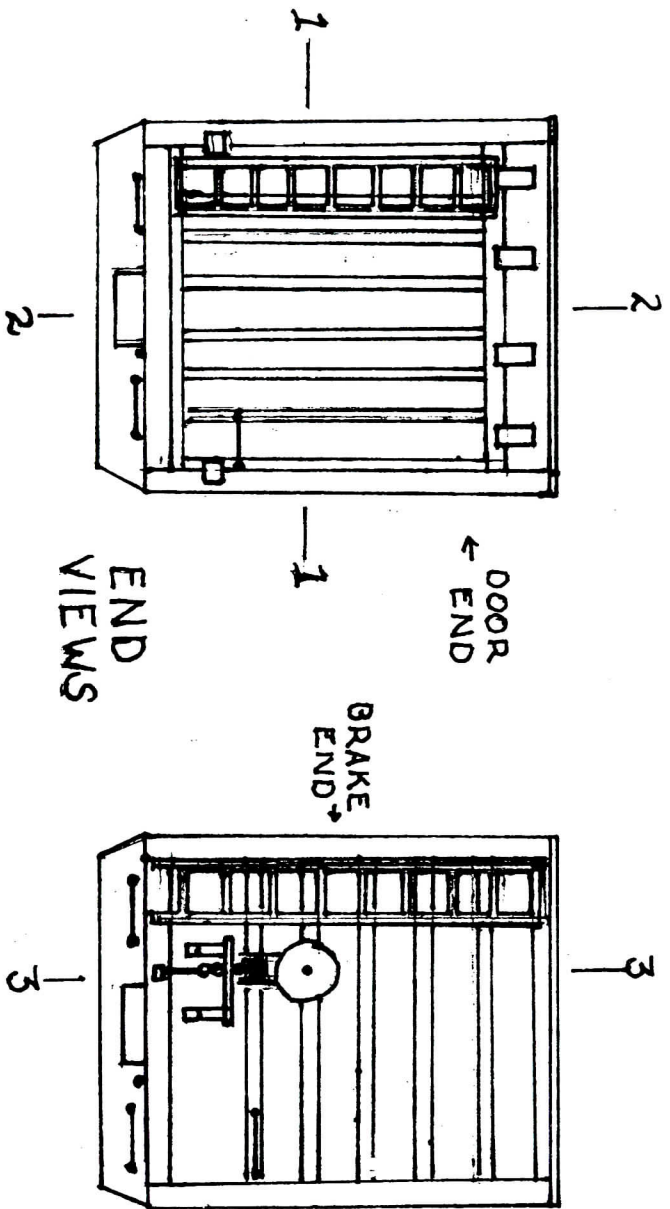
Loads: I loaded my car with a load shaped from 1/2" styrofoam to look like a load of wood chips. I painted it flesh color with a little yellow added. Use water base paint only on the Styrofoam.

I added KD couplers and Ace roller bearing trucks. Because the car is quite light, I added some weight above the center of the trucks on the inside of the car.

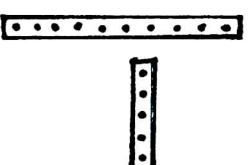
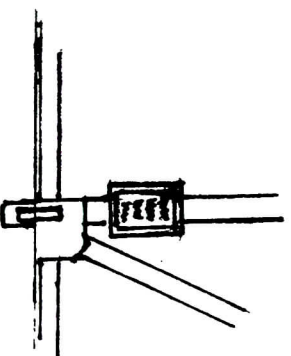
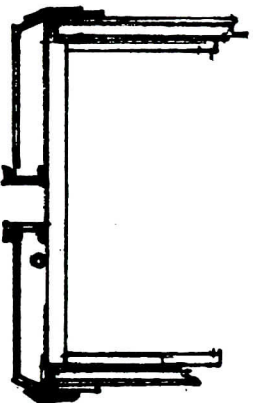
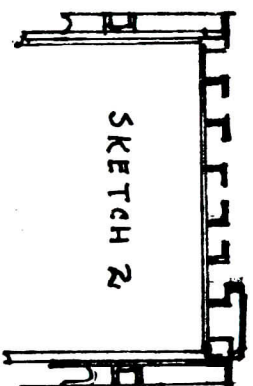
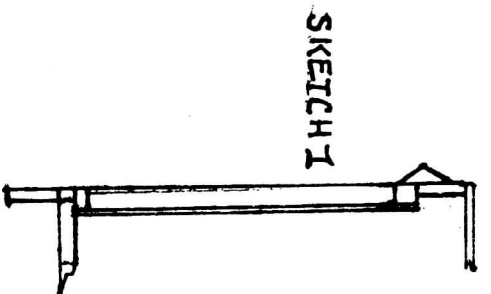
I hope you build one of these. It will make a nice addition to your modern fleet. For additional details contact me: Ernie Horr, 1307 W. Dalke, Spokane, WA 99205. ##

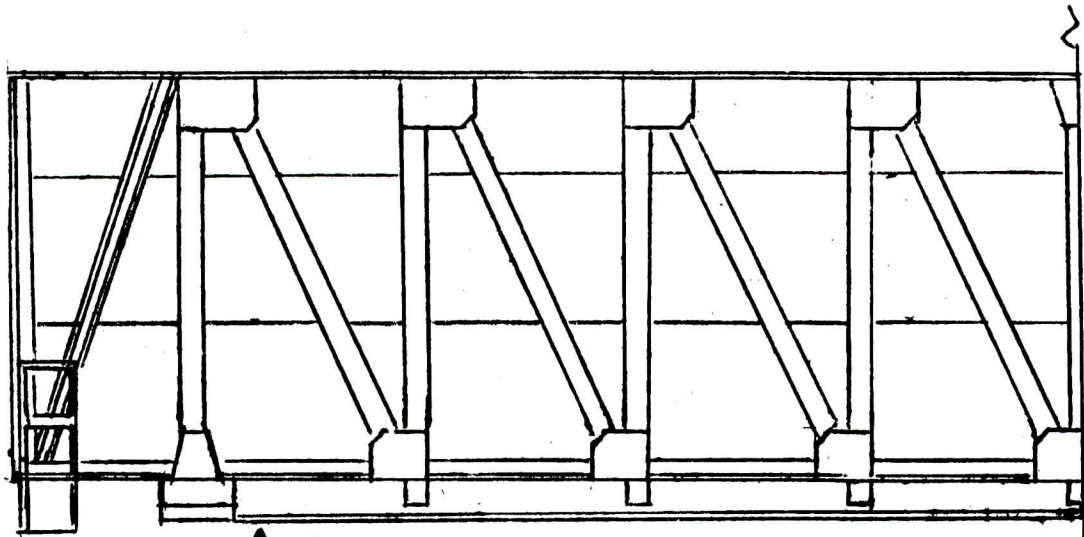
Photos by Ernie Horr show details of side bracing and brake end detail. Note that for a modern car the ladders are full length, yet the brake wheel is lower.



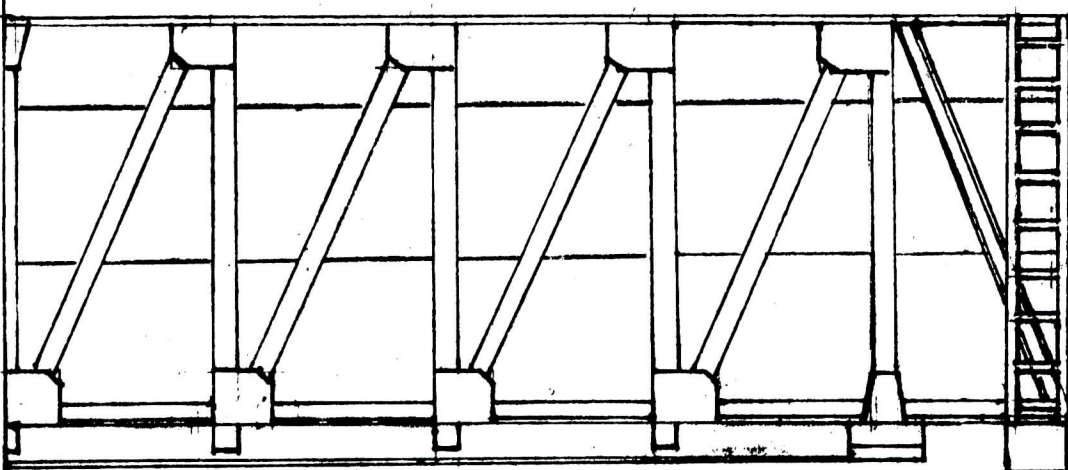


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VIEWS

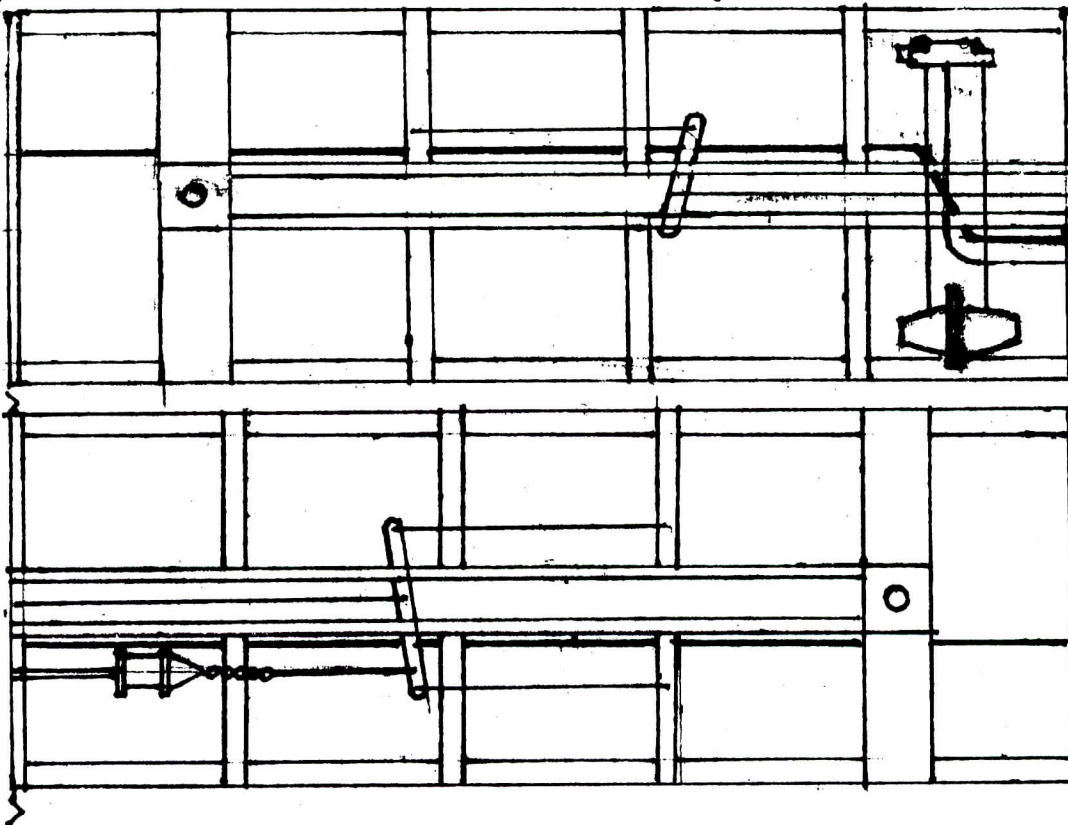




↑ 1/2 SIDE VIEWS ↓



BOTTOM VIEWS ↓



BRAKE
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1999 NASG CONVENTION UPDATE

Come to the Pines in 99!

Dates:

The NASG Convention will be held concurrent with the final four days of the NMRA's Northstar '99 National Convention also in Saint Paul at the nearby Convention Center and Radisson Hotel. The NASG convention will start on Thursday the 22nd of July. Both Conventions will conclude on Sunday the 25th with the Train Show.



*Plan Your Trip To Saint Paul Early &
Save*

Great rail fanning in the Twin Cities, with over two dozen choice viewing and filming sites.

www.trainweb.com/nasg1999

Sunday- Wednesday:

NMRA national convention with clinics, layout tours, prototype tours, Spouse activities, and much more! Highly recommended. While NMRA activities are available to NASG registrants on Thursday through Sunday, you can register for the entire week of rail fun! If you sign up for the NMRA all NASG activities are included FREE.

Thursday: NASG National Convention begins with welcome reception, and registration. S layouts will be on two bus tours, one all scale the other all high rail. Sign up now as space is limited. All day prototype tour to Fairmont. . . historic tours daily. Mall of America everyday.

Friday: More prototype tours. . . historic tours. . . Manufacturer's set-up, contest entry. S manufacturer's and exhibits open after 10 AM, NMRA trade show opens after noon. In the evening S clinics begin.

Saturday: Manufacturer's and S exhibits open until 4PM. All day long S clinics, contest judging and viewing, NMRA train show. Evening banquet and auction. Featured banquet speaker Mr. Barry Karlberg is famous for his entertaining and informative stories of his 'working' experiences on the Wisconsin Central, SOO, IC, and Minnesota commercial. Like many of us Barry started with American Flyer as a boy but differed when he switched to full size railroading to pay for his N scale basement pike.

Sunday: NASG members meeting in the AM. NMRA train show continues all afternoon.

Cover photos:

A returning mail express is seen pulling out of Vos Junction, headed for Greenbrier Junction on Dave Jasper's layout. The PTC Ry. is a subsidiary of the New England Central. The footbridge overpass was bashed together out of two HO kits, an O-S signal bridge, and some plastic material. Some clues to what Dave is modeling are: the Fall colors which represent a scene in the first week of October 1927; the typical New England church steeple which is only a white triangle painted on Dave's backdrop; and the pasture of dairy cows in the foreground

indicating farm country. Read the article on the next page of how the grass was created. Dave will be on the layout tour for the 1999 NASG Convention in Saint Paul MN.

The locomotive was created by Tom Lennon starting with an Overland Reading Camelback. He replaced the mechanism with an Omnicon ten-wheeler to create a dead ringer for the Central New Jersey ten-wheeled camelback. He then painted it in Dave's PTC Ry livery. Dave used forced perspective to create this scene with HO models in the background.

Cover Insets:

The two M&St L hoppers and the SOO Line blue door potato box in the background are convention cars for the 1999 NASG Convention in St. Paul. They are all available in several car numbers and scale or Hi-Rail trucks and couplers. See the details on the next page. The other two freight car photos on the cover show Ernie Horr's plywood chip car and SouthWind's new brass 4-truck 200 ton flat car. These will be offered in 4 different paint schemes (painted only) for \$240 each. Loads are more. Roadnames are PRR, NYC, C&NW and Westinghouse. Details in June.

1999 NASG CONVENTION LAKE SPECIAL 99 CONVENTION CARS

The Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop is pleased to announce that there will be three different convention cars available for the "Lake Special 99" NASG National Convention for 1999.

Two of these are covered hoppers lettered in the Minneapolis and Saint Louis scheme.

The first is the **M&StL 2 bay PS-2 covered cement hopper**. This hopper is the S Helper Service PS-2 painted in the M&StL grey scheme with black lettering and white background for the "Minneapolis & St. Louis" lettering. The M&StL ordered 80 of these in 1955 (numbered 70201-70279), and 200 more in 1956 and 1957 (numbered 70301-70599). Car number 70525 had the distinction of being the 10,000th 2 bay PS-2 built by Pullman Standard. M&StL 3 bay PS-2 Hopper (prototype model - errors in lettering will be corrected in final version)

The second hopper is the **3 bay PS-2**. The M&StL purchased 20 of these for

grain service in 1958. They were numbered 71001-710039 using only the odd numbers. This hopper will have the same paint scheme as the two bay and will use the new S Helper Service 3 bay hopper. This car is not the same as the PS-2CD supplied by American Models. The 3 bay hopper supplied by SHS has the same dimensions as the two bay except for being longer. It looks fantastic in a string of 40 foot boxcars and 2 bay hoppers and is right at home in a late 50's, early 60's scene. Both the 2 bay and 3 bay hoppers will be supplied ready to run in hirail with the code 110 wheelsets included for scale layouts. Both cars will be available in two different numbers.

The third car that will be available is the **SOO Line 40 foot reefer** designed for potato service. This car is white with black lettering, black ends, silver roof and brightly painted blue doors. The blue doors were unique for the potato service cars. These unusual and colorful Soo Line potato cars were purchased and rebuilt in the 1960's for service transporting potatoes to market from the

Red River Valley of North Dakota and Minnesota. There were a total of 25 of these hinged door reefers which were numbered 1100-11048 using only the even numbers. They were originally built just after World War II and the Soo Line purchased them from Pacific Fruit Express. This car will be available in kit form only as a Pacific Rail Shops 40 foot reefer. There will be four different numbers produced.

Prices:

SHS M&StL 2 Bay PS-2 Hopper
\$39.95 each

SHS M&StL 3 bay PS-2 Hopper
\$39.95 each

PRS Soo Line Potato Reefer
\$39.95 each

These prices are for delivery of the cars at the Convention site. If you wish to have the cars shipped to your address, please add \$5.00 per ORDER (NOT per car) for shipping and handling.

PASTURE GRASS ON THE NEW ENGLAND CENTRAL By Sylas Kayle

I cannot recommend this method for grass cover if you are looking for something quick and simple. I sure would appreciate any suggestions on how to simplify the process.

I first created a sub base using plaster over black garden fabric, intended for mulching, in some areas and in other areas I used shaped foam. I found a fake fur fabric that was colored a really loud kelly green. I cut it into shape for the area I am covering with the fur **FACE DOWN**. I painted the base some neutral earthy color from my stock of mismatch paints I pick up in the paint department of local handyman stores. I often pay less than \$2.00 for a gallon of flat interior latex. I select natural colors and often mix these together. As any artist will tell you, if you are not careful mixing colors they get real muddy - this is what you are looking for - just mix dissimilar colors and it

will usually go towards some shade of brown.

I then applied a coating of wood glue directly to the surface. I then laid the fur face down pressing it into the glue and let it dry for 24 hours. I then laboriously cut as close to the base as I could with a very sharp knife, razor blade, and scissors being careful not to pull the grass up as I went. Sometimes there will be some patches where the grass doesn't stick. For these bare spots, I either sprinkle on a soil-mix for variation or cut some tufts of grass and glue them down. Most of the fur remains on the backing so I can get another application or two if I cut the grass close to the base surface. Shorter looks better. Tease it up if it lies too flat.

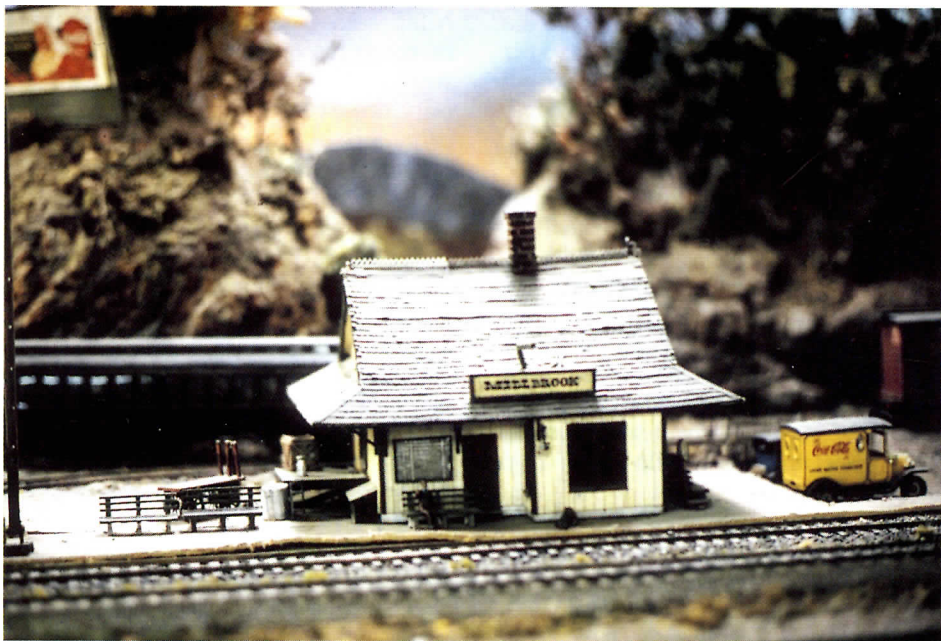
I then lightly stain it with dyes to get it toned down and to create some variation. A dilute red dye works very well since red is the complement of green it darkens it to a richer green. Browns or black dye/stain can also be used, just don't use a paint. I spray more on the

depressed areas to darken for variation and create a moist look. After it's dry I spray it with hair spray and blow on some electrostatic mixed color grass from Noch. In close up examination this does not look all that much like grass but the resulting textures and colors are quite convincing overall. I also vary the amounts of dye and the amount of electrostatic texturing in the different fields to make them appear to be different vegetation and more distinct.

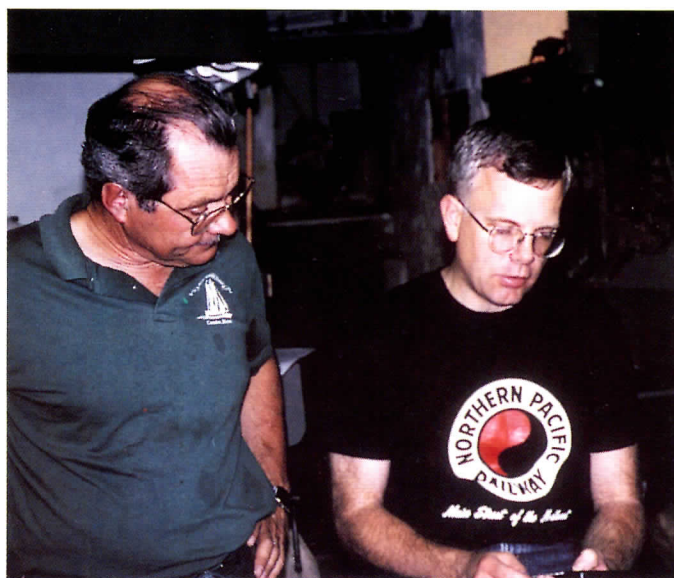
Finally I glue down just a few tufts of green twine or Woodland Scenics fibers in the foreground areas to create a weed variation. Don't overdo this part. I hit it all again with the hair spray to lock it all down and then stand back to appraise the effect.

In case you haven't figured it out, Sylas Kayle is not a southern vegetable grower - it's really Dave Jasper. Cover photo shows his techniques explained in this short article.

S-Pikes Convention Layout Preview



Millbank on Dave Jasper's New England Central Ry. Structure appears to be modified Lehigh Valley Models kit.



Left is a scene along the Rumansota River on Ken Zieska's Minnesota Heartland Ry. Above Dave (left) and Ken confer.

Dave's layout is one of six layouts that will be on tour at The NASG Lake Special '99 convention in July. Dave Jasper's layout was featured in the June, 1998, issue of the *Dispatch* Photos of Ken Zieska's layout were shown in the Dec., 1998, issue. Walt Jopke is featured on the next page. A bus tour to the layouts is included as part of the registration fee. For more information on the Convention check the web site at www.trainweb.com/nasg19999 or contact:

CCS Associates, 6611 Countryside Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55436 Fax (612) 934-6741 e-mail: sgaugemn@aol.com

On this page are two views of Walt Jopke's 1960s Northern Pacific layout. Walt likes to recreate actual Minnesota landmarks such as the Mississippi Street Shops shown in these photos.



Walt Jopke's Northern Pacific: It is a very busy late summer day in the late 1960s at the Northern Pacific's Mississippi Street Shops in St. Paul, MN. This "scenic design element" is one of many planned on Walt Jopke's S scale standard gauge layout. The track layout was designed by Sylas Kayle as a modified two-level mushroom. The idea of "scenic design elements" was created by Walt to depict many familiar scenes of Twin City railroading at the time of the NP-GN merger which resulted in the Burlington Northern Ry. Thanks to the efforts of the Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop, many of these scenes are coming to fruition. Included besides the shops shown here: a Pillsbury flour mill, an NP truss bridge over the Mississippi River, the University of Minnesota steam power plant, the SOO Line 7th St. freight depot, the NP Commissary and portions of the St. Paul Union and GN depots. Walt's layout will be on the tour. *Photos by Sylas Kayle (I think)*



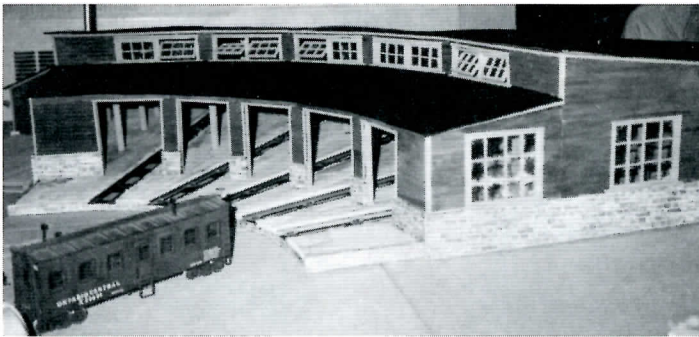
NASG 1999 CONVENTION MODEL AND PHOTO CONTEST By Steve Monson, Contest Chairman

The contest is open to all members of the NASG. All models must be in 1/64th scale and may not have already won a first place award at a previous NASG national contest.

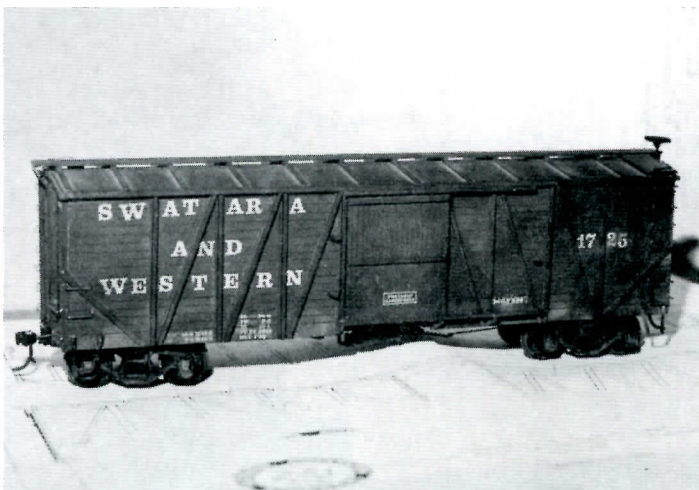
Modelers are divided into 3 classifications: **Amateur, Craftsman and Master Craftsman**. This is so because if you are a newcomer to the contest, you do not have to compete against those who have entered many contests over the years.

Models are divided into Hi-rail, Kit and Converted and Scratchbuilt. These classifications are further divided into categories such as Steam Locomotives, Diesel and Electric, Freight and M of W, Passenger, Structures and Dioramas.

There are two special events open to everyone: **Restoration** of an American Flyer car, loco or accessory (a photo showing the original condition of the piece before restoration must be included for this category). The second is **Imagination** - What if A.C. Gilbert was alive and still designing today? What accessory, car or locomotive would he design and put into production in 2000? These two events were initiated at the 1998 convention in Worcester.



Here is an example of a scratchbuilt roundhouse built for an American Flyer layout which could be entered in the contest. It could stand a good chance of an award. Model by Terry Dyer of the Stateline S Gaugers.



Here's an example of freight car contest entry from a previous convention by the late John Long.

The **Photo Contest** is also open to everyone. Photos must be at least 5 x 7 and not larger than 8 x 10 and be mounted on a rigid mount for easy display. There are two categories: S Scale - where at least 50% of the picture is in 1/64th scale, and Prototype - which must be a railroad related subject.

All entries must be received by the Friday evening of the convention - July 23, 1999. Judging will be done on Saturday. We suggest you fill out your entry forms in advance. It is important that you describe your models carefully so that the judges do not have to guess if something is made from scratch, etc.

Please e-mail, write or call for forms! This will also help us to have an idea of how many models might be expected.

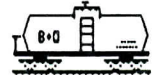
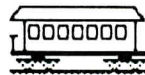
Steve Monson, Contest Chairman
4000 Willow Road
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

E-mail: Monson@waves.space.umn.edu (read several times daily)

Phone: Work - 612-624-5591 (8-4:30 weekdays and 24 hr voice mail). Home - 612-421-1908 most eves 7pm-10pm CST.

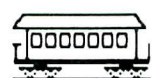
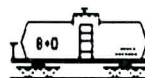
You can also check the convention website at www.trainweb.com/nasg1999 for updates.

WANTED



Craftsman type kit builders.

You can shake the box,
but that just don't get it!



Enter
the
NASG Contest!

NASG 1999 CONVENTION CLINICS

CLINIC NUMBER ONE

Friday 10:00-11:50 AM

Detailing Freight Cars.

Join Jeff English, for a "hands on" tour of a SOO Line Railroad 40 foot boxcar. This boxcar has been restored by the SOO Line and placed on display at the Minnesota History Center. It is part of a display that chronicles the role of grain, its production, transportation and milling in Minnesota and the mid-west. You will be able to clearly see important construction features inside and outside of the car. The 40-foot boxcar is one of the most widely produced freight cars; it was the mainstay of North American Railroads for many years.

Jeff is known for his attention to detail and the application of this detail to his models. You will enjoy learning about this important piece of rolling stock and have an opportunity to listen to one of the finest modelers in S share modeling ideas. The Minnesota History Center will be open for self guided tours following the clinic, the more agile of our group may find it interesting to climb through the large model of a grain elevator and simulate a bushel of corn.

CLINIC NUMBER TWO

Friday 7:00-7:55 PM, Saturday 10:00-10:55 AM

Kelvin White presents S Scale Modeling from across the pond. Small houses = small layouts, British and American S scale exhibition layouts and a bit of kit bashing.

Kelvin White is a Senior Architect. He has spent the last 25 years+ designing/building schools and model railways in equal measure. Kelvin got into S scale and American Railroads-particularly shortlines about 6 years ago. His first book was Stan Mailer's GB&W and first railroad video was Iron Ore and More. Kelvin models the Escanaba and Lake Superior circa 1995 in S scale. He set up White Oak Models in January 1999 to import American S scale into UK. He also edits an occasional newsletter for an informal group- *American S Scale Circle*.

CLINIC NUMBER THREE

Friday 4:00-4:55PM, Saturday 11:00-11:55 AM

Origin of AF Products

Bob Bubeck will lead an interesting and informative clinic on the origin of American Flyer S Scale products. This will be a two track approach (so to speak!) drawing on both prototype roots as well as the influence of Gilbert's pre-war 3/16 inch scale O gauge model railroad products. While A.C. Gilbert included some modeler's license in their product offerings you will see that, in general, American Flyer set new standards for bringing prototype realism to toy trains in the 1940s. Bob strongly encourages everyone to bring their information on AF origins to share so we can all increase our knowledge. A



slide projector and opaque projector for photos and line drawings will be on hand for everyone to use.

CLINIC NUMBER FOUR

Friday 3:00-3:55 PM, Saturday 1:00-1:55 PM

Proto:64

(P:64) is an S scale movement of modelers who have adopted the proposed NMRA/NASG fine scale wheel and track standards. These modelers believe S scale is the best scale for an "holistic" approach to fine scale modeling since the equipment is large enough to allow some of the finest fidelity to prototype, yet small enough to allow something more than a switching layout. Keith Thompson will show what's available for the discerning S modeler, some work of P:64 modelers and where the Proto:64 "philosophy" is headed.

CLINIC NUMBER FIVE

Friday 8:00-8:55 PM, Saturday 2:00-2:55 PM

Digital Command Control

Digital Command Control is one of the most exciting new frontiers in model railroading today. Michael Greene has been at the forefront of this technology since its development within the NMRA and is now providing leadership in applying the technology into S. This will be a clinic that will excite you about the possibilities of DCC and comfort you that it can be applied by folks without a EE degree.

CLINIC NUMBER SIX

Sunday 12:00- 8:00 PM

Sunday Picnic

Just when you thought that you have had enough of the great Minnesota weather and S model railroading, you are invited to attend a picnic celebrating the completion of the 1999 NASG Convention. This picnic will feature more operations on the Minnesota Heartland Railway and a chance to railfan the SOO Line (Canadian Pacific) Railroad. The picnic will be held in Plymouth, just 20 minutes west of the Convention Hotel. Food and Soft Drinks will be served, the SOO will do photo run-bys, S will be running in the basement, hard core croquet and badmitten games will be arranged. What more could you ask? Shuttles and car pools will run to the Airport as needed. A shuttle to Amtrak will also be arranged if there is interest. This is a family event.

The 'S'traight & Narrow

From David L. Heine

News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

Equipment Mix on Narrow Gauge Railroads

If your railroad is like mine, and that of most of the modelers I know, you have too many locomotives, not enough cars, and the wrong mix of cars for the size and type of your empires. This is even true for those of us who are trying to recreate an accurate version of the past.

Robert Sloan wrote an article in the January/February 1980 *Narrow Gauge & Short Line Gazette* that addressed the problem of equipment mix. Yes, this is the same Bob Sloan who wrote the narrow gauge column in the *S Gaugian* in the early 1980's. Bob analyzed twenty narrow gauge railroads for which he had equipment lists available. Here is a summary of some of his conclusions, with some of my comments. These are for typical narrow gauge railroads with a mix of traffic.

* There was one locomotive per five to ten miles of track. Extra steep railroads, and those with helper districts had fewer miles per locomotive. This is one area where we definitely cannot follow the prototype, or most of our locomotives would belong on the rip track.

* If a road had more than two locomotives, it generally had separate passenger and freight locomotives in the ratio of about one passenger to three freight locomotives. Dedicated switching locomotives are rare, and only appear on the largest railroads, such as the Denver & Rio Grande, or in special cases, such as the East Broad Top.

* On the average, there was one passenger car per locomotive. The passenger car mix was generally three coaches to one combine to one baggage (or baggage-mail, etc.). The first passenger car obtained was always a coach or combine.

* There was one caboose for each two to four locomotives. This is less than one to one since passenger trains and helpers did not need cabooses. Also

some railroads operated mixed trains with a combine or coach instead of a caboose.

* The number of freight cars per locomotive depends on the grade severity and the power of the locomotive. This ran from a low of seven per locomotive to a high around fifty for the D&RGW at the end of narrow gauge operations when they only used their big outside-framed 2-8-2's. Most narrow gauge railroads had between twenty and thirty freight cars per locomotive. About two thirds would be parked on sidings for loading and unloading, and the rest would be in trains.

One of the real problems is what the mix of cars should be for a model of a prototype road, or what it should be to suit the type of industries that are on our own empires. There can be some variations of this depending on what you are modeling. An example of this is coal cars. Some railroads used gondolas, others used hoppers, and some used both depending on the era or where the load was heading.

For a general merchandise road, with variation in industries, Bob came up with the following. For ten cars, the average mix would be four boxcars, three gondolas, two flats, and one stock car. If your railroad uses hoppers, you could substitute them for at least some of the gondolas.

The above mix is not true for all railroads, especially if it obtains most of its revenue from hauling one thing. One railroad that Bob did not look at was the coal hauling East Broad Top. Using some equipment data from Rainey and Kyper's East Broad Top, I came up with the following mixes of 1929 and 1943. In 1929, for ten cars, there should be seven hoppers, two boxcars, and one flat car. In 1943, for ten cars, nine of them should be hoppers, with the other

alternating between a boxcar and a flat car. Obviously, an EBT modeler needs lots of hopper cars.

Logging railroads are another favorite of narrow gauge modelers. On average, for twenty-five cars, twenty-three should be some type of logging car (flats, skeleton flats, disconnects, etc. depending on the railroad), with one boxcar, and one of anything else. Many logging railroads did not use cabooses on log trains.

Mining and ore hauling railroads could also have a lopsided car mix. For example, the Gilpin Tram in Colorado had 150 freight cars for its all time total. 138 of them were ore cars, eight were gondolas, and four were flat cars. They did not have any boxcars at all! They had one caboose and no passenger cars. For motive power they had five Shays.

Another thing that affected the required number of cars is a problem that narrow gauge railroads had that their standard gauge brethren did not. They generally did not interchange with other narrow gauge railroads. Consequently, they had to have enough cars to handle their peak traffic. They could not use cars from a national pool like the standard gauge railroads. This results in either car shortages or sidings full of them, and most likely both at different times. There were some exceptions to this, for example the Rio Grande Southern and the three Silverton railroads could interchange with the Denver & Rio Grande (Western), but the general case is that the narrow gauge railroad could only depend on itself for cars.

What can one do about determining the correct car mix? The easiest is to use the general car mix guidelines above. You may need to add some other cars such as reefers or tank cars if you have reason to use them. If you model a prototype railroad, a big help would be a car roster for the era you are modeling. Some books contain roster information, but a historical society is another option, if your favorite railroad has one. There are also some Internet websites, and railroad specific mails lists that can be used to gather some of this information. I have found out some rather obscure information from these sources.

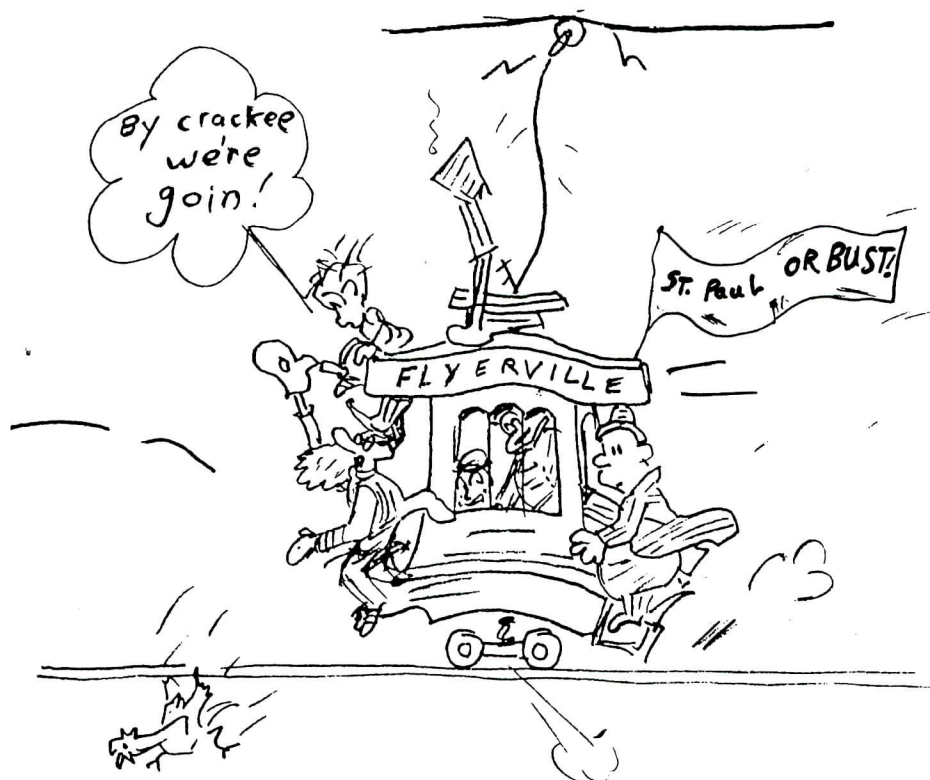
If you have your own empire, you can look at the number of typical carloads you can expect from the industries you are modeling or planning to model. Do

not forget things such as an occasional carload of new machinery or mine props for the mine, loads that need to go to the team track, coal for the coaling tower, sand for the sandhouse, etc. Look at your list and you can set the priorities of your car shops.

All of this does not mean that you should not feel bad about building that unusual special car, or acquiring or building another locomotive. Remember this is a hobby and it is supposed to be fun. How did my railroad fare in this analysis? Actually, I can use any type of car I feel like building; I do not have enough of any type. Now, when can I get started on building that new Shay? As always, feel free to write or e-mail me, if the mood strikes.

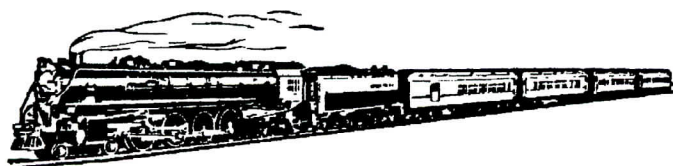
Contributions or comments:

David L. Heine
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Latest kit releases:

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Structures also available in built-up form.

Latest R-T-R Wood-sided Refrigerator cars:

West India Fruit & Steamship,

PFEX UP/SP, and URTX "Banana" reefers.

\$36.95 each, plus \$4 shipping per order.

(8 other roadnames still available.)

Coming in May: Schlitz Beer

AMERICAN FLYER PARTS

New parts now available include:

8B and 12B metal cover plates; \$16.95

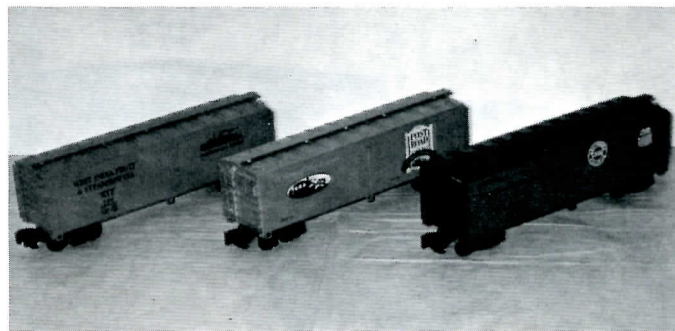
Gabe plastic drum; \$20

D&H/LCL canister loads; 5/ \$10

KC action pickup truck; \$15 complete

24574 USAF flatcar load; \$25 complete

971 SP flatcar body; \$21.95



NEW ITEMS !!!

730 Black Bumper with yellow "Warning" stripes on bumper-bar; \$17

Two nice companions to 971 Moe & Joe car!

968 SP flatcar; bulkheads & pipeload; KC; \$34.95

972 SP flatcar with bulkheads, sidefences, & lumber load; KC; \$38.95

TIRED WHEELS

A report on vintage vehicles for your S layout.
Compiled by Ted Larson

"TIRED WHEELS" is a column that will occasionally appear in place of "The Module Corner". I am running low on topics for "The Module Corner", and have collected a bit to share on another topic, vehicles.

Almost any model railroad layout has highway vehicles on it, and a variety of vehicles of the proper vintage does wonders for setting a realistic stage for our trains. We in S scale are fortunate to have many sources for good highway vehicles. For many years we have populated our layouts with Tootsietoy®, Matchbox®, and Hotwheels® cars, Ertl® tractors, cars and trucks, and Winross® trucks. More recently our layouts have been graced by Hartoy® trucks, and cars by Racing Champions® (Mint Editions) and Johnny Lightning®. Many of these have been reported on in the new products column of *The Dispatch*. Many sold out ones are still easily found.

There are other S scale vehicles though that are not nearly as well known; vehicles that were available in the '60's, vehicles that will add variety to your layout if you can find them. These include offerings from Matchbox®, Winross®, Ertl®, Ralstoy®, and others.

Until recently, your only chance at seeing these was during a visit to the layout of a long-time S modeler, and your best chance at buying them was getting lucky at a swap meet or flea market. With the advent of on-line auctions on the web though, it is far easier to find these elusive older vehicles. One little trick though, you have to know which vehicles really are S (1:64th) scale. If you see something in person, your eyeball or pocket ruler can help you. NOT so with on-line auctions. To help you out, one topic of this column will be "vintage" S scale vehicles.

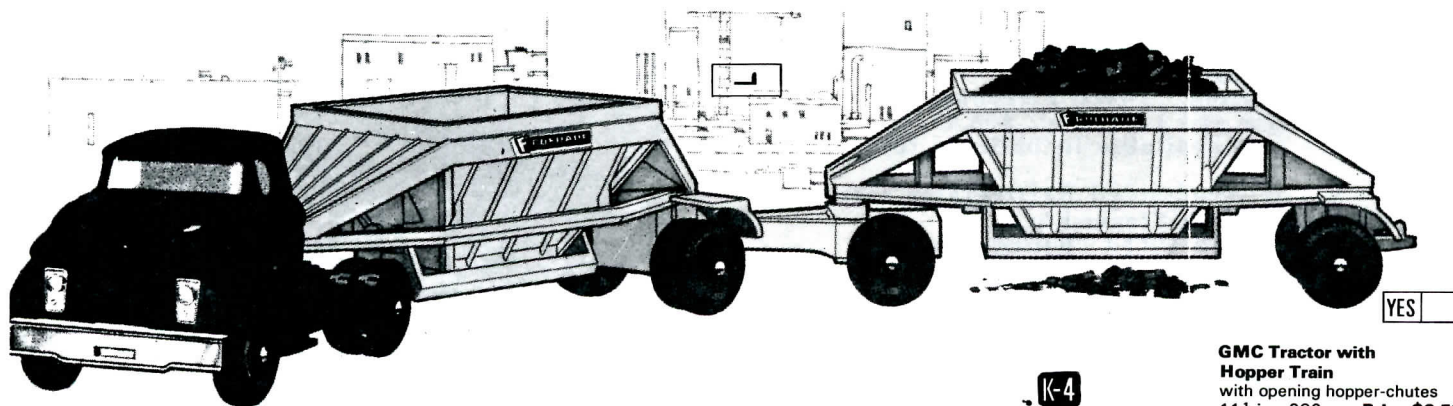
With that introduction, this month we feature the 1962-1969(?) GMC Double Bottom semi. On the bottom of the cab, this truck is labeled "Matchbox King Size No. K4 Fruehauf Hopper, Made in England by Lesney." This truck is exactly 1:64th scale. The trailers were used for hauling gravel, hence their small size. I first saw this truck on Stan Stokrocki's gorgeous switching layout. It is stationed under an overhead bulk hopper next to the tracks, waiting to be loaded. The tractor can also be used without the original trailers. Add a trailer from S Helper or American Models, or construct a body for it such as a van, dump body, or grain box.

The other change that will make the K4

toy look more like a model is to replace the Matchbox wheels with newer ones from ERTL or Hartoy. Ertl's modern semi wheels are available from Ever's Toy Store, 204 1st Ave. East, Dyersville, IA 52040, toll free phone: 800-962-9481, fax: 319-875-2673, e-mail: evers@mwci.net and web: www.marketplaza.com/evers/evers.shtml. These wheels are great for a vintage rig on a 1980s or later layout, but the more correct wheels for this truck in the '60s would be those from the recently released Ertl Mack B series semi.

You can really go all out and add MV lenses for the headlights and fashion side-view mirrors out of brass. The results are worth the extra time you spend since you'll want to put this prize near the front of your layout.

The catalog photo shows this truck. Different conditions are available on auction. Prices typically exceed \$100 for NIB. My well-worn, missing one trailer, purchase was under \$20. Repainting is easy, and the truck adds welcome variety. If you find one at "the right" price, do not hesitate to buy it. Use the keywords GMC, K4, Matchbox, and King Size when seeking this truck on your favorite auction site.



GMC Tractor with
Hopper Train
with opening hopper-chutes
11½ ins. 286mm. Price \$2.50

Original artwork shot from a 1969 Matchbox catalog. This 1/64 GMC tractor and gravel trailers was listed as a King Size series, No. K4. The cab and wheel rims are red and the operating hopper type trailers are silver. The original price was \$2.50. The Matchbox King Size series of the mid to late '60s are a good prospect for S vehicles.

Keith Thompson of Kent, WA, sent this photo of Matchbox K4 cab which was refurbished. It is shown here with an S Helper Seaboard 35' corrugated trailer. Looks pretty good, so cab has got to be 1:64. Photo by Keith Thompson



THE NASG OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

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	Promotions	Joel Lebovitz 1340 W. Greenleaf Ave., Apt. 1-N, Chicago, IL 60626 773-262-5668
Executive Vice—President	Moe Berk 39 Graeler Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146 314-432-3417	Engineering	Bob Sherwood 2837 Olive Drive, Cheyenne, WY 82001 307-638-2918 E-Mail: Softmoods@TCD.Net
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Eastern Vice President	John Foley 164 W. Railroad St., Pottsville, PA 17901 717-622-3413 Phone & FAX e-mail: foley164@ptd.net	S-Mod Info.	Ted Larson 5 Kenicott Circle, Fairport, NY 14450 \$5.00 per packet (stamps OK)
Central Vice President	Tom Nimelli 7867 Bellevue St., Grosse Ile, MI 48138-1812 313-675-1955	NASG Clearinghouse	William Mark, Jr. Rossway Road, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569 914-635-8553 NASG track gauges, coupler height gauges, patches and pins
Western Vice President	Lee M. Johnson 2472 Lariat Lane, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 925-943-1590 e-mail: Leemax@jps.net	Contest Chairman -	Jim Whipple 1719 Middle Rd., Glenshaw, PA 15116 412-487-3364

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Dispatch Editor	Jeff Madden 438 Bron Derw Ct., Wales, WI 53183 414-968-3729 Phone & Fax e-mail: nasgdispatch@hotmail.com	Election Committee Chairman	Doug Miller 371 Castleman Rd., Vestal, NY 13850 607-754-8260
Membership	Send to Treasurer (See Above)	Convention Committee Chairman	Dave Held 6154 Lanake Lane, Imlay City, MI 48444 810-724-5499

NASG Web Site: <http://trainweb.com/nasg/>

NASG Web Site Director: Craig O'Connell crocon@connix.com

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The Bristol S Gauge Railroaders (BSGR): On March 28 the group held their Tracks & Trains VII show at the Masconomet Regional HS Fieldhouse, Topsfield, MA. Their layout was set up to showcase S gauge, and 200 dealer tables were available for dealers. It was billed as the BSGR "Seventh Annual All-Gauge Train Show".

The BSGR is planning their annual cook out in June at an as-yet unannounced location. The BSGR brought their layout to the 1999 Big E Railroad Hobby Show held at the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds on Jan. 30 & 31. The layout was operated by members attending and was set up near the NASG booth operated by John Foley and other volunteers including Bill Fuhrman of the CSG. There was a confluence of S gauge dealers, products, and the operating display layout of the BSGR all in the same area of the Young building, one of two used to house the enormous show. S Helper Service, and Port Lines Hobby Supplies were present with a good display of S gauge products.

The Conn. S Gaugers (CSG) were hosted by president Bill Fuhrman in Bethlemem, CT. Bill has a layout that at one time belonged to CSG founder, Bill Krause. In addition to the layout, Bill Fuhrman also has a very fine and complete collection of AF trains, displayed in a creative and easy-to-enjoy manner. The group brought their modular S layout to the Cheshire HS show in early March. Steve Kutash, module coordinator and V.P. brought modules that he uses in a home layout, and can transport to the shows and use them in the CSG club layout as he chooses. Member Pete Prizzi and Craig O'Connell, VP, and editor of the club's newsletter also brought modules to the show. Ron Stringer brought his articulated S steam loco with a long string of hopper cars that was operated for the visitors.

The CSG displayed their modular layout at the Tomlinson Middle School Train Show, Fairfield, CT. in late

March. Club member Bruce Carter is also a member of the club sponsoring the show and oftentimes helps coordinate the attendance and location of set-up at the show. Pete Prizzi will host the group in April, and Larry Hally in May. The May meeting of the group is planned to include a combination meeting and field trip at the Branford Shoreline Trolley Museum (scale 1:1). Member Stan Stockrocki is planning to host the group in June. Stan moved to new housing last year and now has his layout in a basement where it is convenient to work on and operate.

The Canadian S Scale Quarterly (CSSQ) recently distributed an issue published/edited by Manfred Lesser. Manfred and his wife Sharon moved last year to the village of Parkhill, Ontario (near London, Ontario) and have a house with a basement. Actually it was described in the newsletter as a basement for a layout with a dwelling over it. The 1935 era layout will be called the Heron Bay Railway and Navigation Company. This is a fictitious shortline that operates from Heron Bay (Lake Superior) running North and East to meet the CN mainline. The main traffic will be wood products such as rough lumber and timber, mine diggings along with some local industry service.

The CSSQ includes articles describing various new S gauge products and those that can be used with S gauge trains. One item announced is a Hayes sliding derail that might be made on special order by Alder Models. Neil Froese of that firm will coordinate the orders, and a form was enclosed with the newsletter for members to order their products. The March issue of the CSSQ was to be edited by Oliver and David Clubine. Dennis Fortier has offered to assist any of the members with the newsletter format as the group is trying to encourage the participation of various members to take over the reins as an editor for an issue. Dave Mahew and Ron Scott brought portable modules to the Kawartha Train Show in Peterborough, Ontario last September. Paul Raham brought an S layout to the same show that came in two pieces and sets up very quickly. How many short circuits and

electrical "bugs" could one have in two sections? Sounds like the perfect way to insure very quick set up and reliable operation. Both layouts promoted S Scale Canada and the CSSQ.

The Central Jersey S Scalers (CJSS) were hosted by member Roger Webster in February, and Mike Cunningham in March. Mike Anderson hosted the CJSS group in April, and Bill Daiker hopes to have the group for their monthly meeting and get-together in June, in Stockholm, N.J. Bill has a custom built steam loco that he constructed, brought, and proudly displayed at one of the past NASG conventions (some years ago). The loco was stolen and lost, but miraculously found and returned to Bill.

The South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSJG) meets at the Bellmawr, N.J. Fire House on a monthly basis. They have committees including: Hospitality/Newsletter, Constitution/Incorporation, Projects, History, Trips and the Layout Committee. Member Chick Viggiano runs Chick's Hobbies, a hobby shop that apparently specializes in S gauge equipment and trains. Chick recently shaved off a long-standing mustache. The group was discussing plans for possible projects that could mark their tenth year anniversary. A club tank car was suggested along with a kit for an oil refinery model. The oil refinery would be made from computer generated prints and other parts that could be mass-produced by the membership. A group project that could stimulate fellowship and comradie in the interest of S gauge. Samples of what could be made were presented by members Dan DeSantis and Wayne Schneyer.

The SJSJG steam fans are dreaming about a fan trip behind the No. 614 from Hoboken, N.J. to Port Jervis, N.Y., in an open window coach. It sounds like a great trip for steam lovers. On April 11 the group held their train show at the Bellmawr Fire & Rescue Building, Bellmawr, N.J. Their portable S layout was set up and operated for the attendees. In early March the group brought their layout to the Greenberg Show, S. Jersey Expo Center, Pennsauken, N.J.

The North Penn. S Gaugers (NPSG) have recently started a web page. Glenn Ritter, Dave Heine, and Curt

Johnson all helped with the set up and format of the site. The group now has 12 straight modules plus four corners. Two mainlines of track are now laid on cork roadbed. At a February meeting The NPSG were planning to bring their portable layout to the Train & Toy Show in Harleysville, PA. in late April. The show is sponsored by the Soudertown Area Drug & Alcohol Resistance Team.

The Potomac Valley S Gauge Assoc.(PVSGA) were hosted by Dick Cataldi in April. Dan Vandermause will host the group in May., Ellicott City, MD. The group has plans to have an operating module layout by mid-1999. They use sketches of the modules to plan the trackwork on them and the possible scenery that can be added as the module is built. Member Bill Oertly made drawings to plan the modules and present some scenery ideas. Some of Bill's planning ideas are included in a recent newsletter of the group.

Roy Hoffman edited a newsletter for the **Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (LVSG)** and it made the announcement that "we're back". He states that the LVSG as a club needs a newsletter to communicate among the members, and the S gauge world at large. Your column editor appreciates the receipt of the new premier issue and will do all possible to describe the activities and meetings of the group.

James R. Ingram of Williamsport, PA. is organizing new S gauge group to be known as the **Susquehanna S Scalpers (SSS)**. He is in an area where there are no organized S clubs, with Altoona (AATCC) about 2 hours to the West, and Allentown (LVSG) 3.5 hours to the Southeast. A recent newsletter of the group included their statement: "the SSS is being formed to promote the hobby of S scale model railroading in Lycoming County, PA, and nearby regions."

The group will welcome all phases of S gauge including scale, AF collectors, hi-rail operators, and Sn3 narrow gaugers. The newsletter includes several photos one which shows Mrs. Santa Claus operating S gauge trains at the Lycoming County Historical Society Museum's Annual Toy Train Expo in Williamsport, PA. Our favorite gauge was displayed and operated to spread the word. In the photo Mrs. Claus

appears to have on a wig, but she looks very well. Best wishes to Mr. Ingram in his endeavor, and all S gaugers or potential S gaugers in his area would do well to get together with him for the SSS.

The Altoona Area Train Collectors Club (AATCC) hold their meetings at the Railroaders Memorial Museum, Altoona, PA. on a regular basis. They met in March to plan for the Train Meet at the Frankstown Armory, March 21. They displayed their S gauge portable layout at the train meet. They have members in several gauges, and were at last measure working on a portable O gauge layout for display and operation at shows and other places. Gregg Miller is president of the group.

The AATCC took a bus trip to the Allentown, PA. area in late February to attend the Spring Thaw Train Meet. This is one of the best independent train shows in the State of PA, with over 500 display tables. The group is planning a bus trip to Marietta, OH. in July for a river ride during Railroad Days there. Ray Sollenberger, owner of the On The Right Track hobby shop, Altoona, PA. died in late February. The club newsletter extended sympathy to Ray's wife, Kathy. He was buried in Carson Valley Cemetery. Gregg Miller has an E-mail address that can promote the activities and events of the AATCC.

The AATCC held elections in January and new officers include Gregg Miller, Pres.; Harley Burket, V.P.; Eugene Bettwy, Treasurer; and Candie Anderson, Secretary. More than 65 members attended the election banquet with guest speaker Peter Barton, director of the Altoona Railroader's Museum. Helene Gundel was presented a "member of the year award" for her efforts arranging and coordinating bus trips and other club activities, including handling admissions at the club's train meets.

The Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC) brought their portable layout to the Greenberg Train & Toy Show, Timonium, MD. in March. The BAAFC recently had a club S gauge tank car produced, and the order was sold out. They are planning to have a re-run of the car if demand exists. Plans for a club license plate have been foiled by the State of Maryland because the State rejected the Club's application.

Funds collected for the license plates will be returned.

David Avedesian hosted the group in March, in Rockville, MD. Member Lloyd Lippert hosted the group in February with his new L-shaped layout. The layout has two operating loops and a number of sidings. AF accessories on the layout include a log loader, coal loader and barrel loader. Rod Charlton is coordinating the ordering of BAAFC shirts.

Member Bill Russini reported on the **Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE)** from Sarasota, FL. The group has undergone growing pains and re-structuring but is still supporting our favorite gauge. They have new officers including: Larry Heffelfinger, President; John Phipps, V.P.; Bob Brown, Treasurer; and Anna Spinella, Secretary. The group built and displayed their 8x20 ft. portable layout at their annual Christmas show. The layout uses NASG Standards as a guide and has Gargraves trackage with three main lines. Barry Laderer built a section with a scratchbuilt wooden trestle. SAFE members Bill Corder, Bill Russini, Rick Moock, John Phipps and Louis Blithe all worked on the layout construction. The group held their annual meeting with train races recently, hosted by Mark Briggs.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (MSG) were hosted by Gaylord Gill in Troy, MI. in March. Dave Held hosted the group in April, in Imlay City, MI. They are planning a web site and Dave Held is organizing that effort. The group is planning to have nametags made that could be used at meetings and shows. They are planning to take a steam trip with the Bluewater Chapter of the NRHS, from Durant to Claire, to Mt. Pleasant. Member Don Gates built a small module to demonstrate the use of fiber optics for car detection. Sig Fleischmann is concerned about and considering methods that could make the storage, transportation, and set-up of the MSG modular layout easier, and lead to more frequent display of the layout.

The use of a water proof trailer for the storage of the modular layout is being considered, rather than the present method of having several members each store one or more modules. The group has new 14 foot corners which they

could use with several to-be-built straight modules to form a complete sectional layout made up of bolt-together modules that would include an inside loop of code 148 rail to accommodate Hi-rail trains. Some members of the group are planning to attend the Spring S Spree in Dayton, OH. on April 30-May 1, 1999.

The Chicagoland Assoc. of S Gaugers(CASG) hold monthly meetings at the Walter Lutheran High School, Melrose Park, IL. on the third Friday of the month. Because of parking problems, the group is considering an alternate location for the meetings when other major events are being held at the school. They met one time at Dora's Pizza, and this could be an alternate location. They have over 45 paid members, according to a recent newsletter listing.

Member Dave Sengenberger is Secretary of the **CASG** and a recent newsletter included a very interesting article describing the trials and tribulations of an S gauger, along with an analysis of what AF trains might be produced under that name by Lionel. The article concludes that there is a bleak outlook for much production by Lionel.

Northern Ohio S Scalers (NOSS) is a new group that were hosted by Jack and Sharon Sudimack in Medina, OH. in January. Gary Ippolito edits the newsletter and Kim Koschki was elected to be the coordinator of the group. Luanne Merner was "railroaded" into being the treasurer since she is a budget analyst by profession. Members attending the first session of the group chose the last Sunday of each month for the meeting date and meetings will begin at approx. 2:00 P.M. Gary Ippolito and Luanne Merner hosted the group in February and Gary gave a clinic on airbrushing for weathering, and painting. Member Wally Schmunk hosted the group in March, in Novelty, OH. This group is no novelty, and they seem dedicated and well organized with a good mix of members and friends to plan and develop a useful program for S gaugers.

The State Line S Gaugers (SLSG) held train races at their February meeting. George Sorensen hosted the group in Belvidere, IL. The group had an informal gathering at Copperfield's

Restaurant in Freeport, IL., following the Lena Train Show where the club recently displayed their layout. Member Jim Larson hosted the group in April. Dave Oberholtzer is organizing the scenery on the modular layout. The **SLSG** sent their sympathies to Earl and Joyce Beegle on the recent death of Earl's mother who lived in Pennsylvania.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG) had a field trip to the Western Star Rail Company, Newark, OH, in February. Member Dennis Lavender has operated the Company for the past 12 years, and prior to that time worked for the George Silcott Railway Equipment Company, Worthington, OH. The Western Star Rail Co. rebuilds locomotive engine water, fuel and oil pumps; refurbishes relays and motors for diesel locos and other railroad components. Dennis has an S gauge AF layout at the Company shop, so the tour included some S gauge train operation as well as how to rebuild components of the real thing.

The **COSG** recently welcomed several new members. These include: Mike Boyd, Mark Gould, Jeff Link, and John McGough. New member Mike Boyd has an AF layout. Club officers elected for the 1998-1999 year include: Dan Wisniewski, President; Wally Ryan, V.P.; Larry Robertson, Secretary; and Jack McLaughlin, Treasurer.

COSG members are planning to bring their club layout to the Springfield, OH, Train Show in April, along with the Spring S Spree, Dayton, OH, on April 30-May 1. The club brought their layout to the GATS Show in February. In March, the group was hosted by Wally Ryan, in Lexington, OH. The **COSG** is organizing the sale of a club car, which is a 50 ft. box car lettered for the Toledo, Peoria, & Western RR, with vermilion red sides, silver roof, and black lettering. The car was supplied by American Models with either scale or AF-compatible couplers and appropriate wheel flanges.

The AF S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area(AFSGSLA) were hosted by Chris Rathert in Chesterfield, MO, in February. David and Jim Stevens hosted the group in March, in Florissant, MO. Member Scott Pilarski hosted the group in early April, and they were hoping to have their layout on display at the

Trainfair 99 Show, sponsored by the St. Charles Model RR Club in St Peters, MO. in late April. The club is busy organizing for the Fall S Fest, to be held in October of this year. Their newsletter has listed no less than 26 committees or responsibilities for the event, each with a responsible member to carry out the effort or supervise that it is done or will be done. What a way to get members involved in the **AFSGSLA**-sponsored fest. The Fest will include a special S gauge car which is being planned by the Fall S Fest (FSF) Steering/Planning Committee. Gary Mueller edits the club newsletter, and Moe Berk co-ordinates the group's activities. David Stevens coordinates the location of the club's meetings at the various members homes and other locations.

The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG) held a meeting at the Train Depot Hobby Shop, Peewaukee, WI. in February. Member Dave Koehler was the host. Ron Schlicht hosted the group in March. Member Ron Schlicht edits the newsletter and recently it included a definition of "active participant". This includes: a club officer, committee member, meeting host, participant at train shows (with or without a module), worker at swap meets, contributor to the newsletter, helper with S-Fest, etc. An interesting question raised by editor Schlicht is the fact that members seem to "float in and out" of the **BSG** club membership and activities. This is an interesting and important question for any group.

The **BSG** displayed their modular layout at the Madison, WI Train Show, in March. President Dick Kloes has given up the coordination of the club modular layout, and Ron Schlicht is the new coordinator of the modules. Plans for the modules include replacing the existing old-style corners with newer folding corner modules. The old modules will be sold to members who wish to purchase them. A recent newsletter included an article on how to work with resin models.

The S-Train Rail newsletter is published by the **Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN)** and edited by Ernie Horr and distributed by Dale Weiler. The newsletter is printed on color paper and makes an eye catching item in the mail. Ernie Horr hosted the group in March for a ride on his Tinplate

Road. The group brought a portable S layout to the Great Inland Northwest Train Show at the Spokane Community College. Member Tom Bangs cleaned the track and ballasted it for improved appearance, and Ernie Horr helped move the layout to the show site. The 3.5 ft. x 7 ft. layout was built in the late 1960's by a deceased member. A recent issue of the newsletter included plans in S scale for Bell's Bar, a small building included on Ernie Horr's layout. Member Brad Chadbourne is still recuperating from a shoulder injury some time ago. Member Howard Jurgenson had several photos of his S motive power published in a recent issue of the *S Gaugian*.

The *S Say*, newsletter of the **Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers (RMHR)** reports on that group's activities and plans. John Eichmann coordinates the group from Boise, ID. The **RMHR** is fortunate to have one of the Pacific Northwest's premier video production firms that has donated part of their huge studio for the storage and a place to work on the portable S gauge layout that the group has built. The firm is North by Northwest, and the **RMHR** are very appreciative of the generosity that the firm extends to them to support the construction, maintenance, and storage of the portable layout. The **RMHR** met in February to tear apart the old portable layout, salvage six table frames, construct seven new 7 ft. frames with legs, build a new corner piece, and some drop in sections for the upper levels of the new layout. Member Tom LaPointe donated two No. 720A remote controlled AF turnouts, complete with controller to be used on the new layout. Tom lives in Moscow, IA., about a day's trip from Boise, but he enthusiastically supports the efforts and projects of the group.

In March the **RMHR** met again at the North by Northwest studio to continue construction of their portable layout. Member Shane Jibben served supper at the February meeting when work was begun on the construction of a new Lookout Junction layout. Karen Blackburn will coordinate the construction of skirting for the portable layout. The group plans to meet again at North by Northwest on April 17 to lay track, and wire the layout as required. Another work session is planned for May 8 to finalize the work on the layout. The plan is to display

the layout at the Sixth Annual Treasure Valley Train Show on June 12 & 13. The **RMHR** celebrated March 16 as National S Gauging Day (3/16). A recent issue of the *S Say* newsletter had an article on the task of removing AF car body pins and re-installing them without causing major damages to the car. Several methods were presented along with tips to prevent damage to the plastic car body. Another article in a recent newsletter of the group described the Carolina Western S gauge RR of member Al Babbitt. The layout was moved from the unheated garage to a spare bedroom.

The **Bay Area S Scalpers (BASS)** were hosted by Lee Johnson in March, in Walnut Creek, CA. Lee had his layout up and running and light refreshments were served. Michael and Christine Eldridge hosted the group in January at their church's meeting hall. The meeting was held at the Lincoln Glen Church. This afforded plenty of room to set up the **BASS** modules and plan for displays that will occur in the future. New modules could be tried and tested at the get-together with the room that was available. Member James Rustermier won first place in the steam locomotive category and "Best in Show" with his scratch built D&RGW 4-6-0 steam loco at the NMRA Pacific Coast Division's December, 1998 meet. Member Ken Reiter's son & daughter won first and second place in the

Timesaver Switching Contest at the same meet.

The **BASS** welcomed new member Arthur Armstrong, from Los Osos, CA. Member Bob Hogan has re-built an American Models pacific loco into a highly detailed Espee P-10. The project involved taking the boiler shell down to the basic form and adding back piping, castings, running boards, domes, stack, a new cab and a Vanderbuilt Tender. Lee Johnson, coordinator of the group took photos along the way and hopefully the project will be written up in one of the S gauge magazines. Member Jim Sweeney built a "Cold Water Canyon" bridge in S scale for his layout. It has snow and ice on the approaches. Member Bill Roberts coordinates the modules of the group, and Barney Daehler ably edits, publishes and distributes the newsletter, the *Bass Waybill*. The newsletter includes information of interest regarding new S gauge products that have come on the market or might be offered if interest exists.

Your column editor wishes to thank all who send information on the activities of their group.

Forward your club news to:
Dave Pool
11 Bittersweet Trail
Wilton, CT 06897-3902



Eastern VP John Foley was Johnny-On-The Spot to record the South Jersey S Gaugers posing behind their layout at a Greenberg Show in March. L to R are Michael McConnell, Larry Gawlinski, Ed Claypool, Dave Pierce, Bob Foster and Walt Mumie. John signed up 7 new NASG members at the show.

EXTRA BOARD

NEW OHIO CLUB

A new Cleveland area club was formed on December 26, 1998, to address the needs of the S scale model railroaders in northern Ohio. The philosophy of the Northern Ohio S Scalers is: 1. Have fun with model railroading. 2. Promote all aspects of model railroading with emphasis on 1:64 scale. 3. Improve the model railroading skills of members.

The new club's intent is to form a working relationship with local and national model railroad clubs of all scales to showcase S scale at both club and public functions. NOSS members are also looking forward to group functions (operating sessions); visiting museums, conventions and layouts; participating in model clinics; watching videos and railfanning.

Membership is open to all people wishing to model in S scale regardless of gauge, era or prototype modeled. Narrow gauge steam modelers will find a common connection with the modern diesel modelers - the desire to show S as the perfect scale. The only requirements are a wish to have fun, participate in modeling, share knowledge and skills, learn new modeling techniques and improve existing modeling techniques. Please consider becoming a Northern Ohio S Scaler. We hope that you'll join us. Contact Kim Koschki at 440-635-0222 or Gary Ippolito at 440-934-9349 for additional info.

NASG 40TH

It appears that 2001 will be the 40th Anniversary of the NASG as an organization. I'd like to begin compiling items for a future issue in that year that would contain opinions and commentary about the past, present and future of the NASG through the eyes of the members, and in particular, that of any past officers, editors, long time members, etc. It might be a good idea for our leaders to plan ahead for some special commemorative items which might be produced.- Jeff

SWEET MAGNOLIA

A member inquired on the net about the prototype background of the Magnolia

tank car (1998 NASG AF car). A non-member replied... Magnolia Petroleum was a sizeable oil company with headquarters in Dallas and a fleet of about 700 tank cars. Magnolia's activities were centered in Texas and the Gulf Coast states where they had refineries and retail service stations. Tank cars wandered further afield. I have photos of them in California in the late '40s. Prior to WWII they had a billboard lettering scheme with giant "Magnolia" stenciling in black on white tanks. The black on white color scheme was continued after the war, but the billboard stenciling was dropped and only reporting marks, numbers and data were applied. In the 1960s, Magnolia and its tank car fleet were acquired by the Mobil Oil Corp.

- Richard Hendrickson

ROADBED PRODUCT

Member Marty Wik markets a roadbed product which some may be interested in. In his words... the product is a ground cork adhesive tape. You don't need nails, and it allows the track to expand and contract. It also provides adjustment for super elevation. It's like the "instant roadbed", but is industrial grade and more adhesive. I have used it in 120 degrees to freezing with success for over 3 years. It also sound proofs the track, so you can hear the rail sounds. I sell it for \$17.95 for 30 feet. SSAE for free sample to: Marty Wik, 31029 N. Rancho Caliente Dr., Cave Creek, AZ 85331.

MORE ON DELWYN (JACK) AMERINE...

Besides the brief obit last issue, I discovered a *Personal Glimpse* in an old *Herald*. Here's some more background. He graduated from Southern Methodist University in Texas with degrees in economics and journalism. He followed a writing and radio career path for a while, and at the time of the *Herald* articles was enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania taking economic planning. While in Texas he promoted rail rapid transit in the Houston area.

An old Cleveland catalog converted Del to S in 1954. His two Texas railroads were called the Flatbush Railroad and the Canfield & Northern. These were weedy shortline types with handlaid code 70 track. Like any early S scaler his power consisted of Enhorning, AF, Cleveland, Rex and Nord locomotives. Several of his scratchbuilt cars were prize winners published in *MR*, *RMC*

and the *Herald*.

As stated in the last article, Del was a joiner and an organizer. Besides those already mentioned, he was a founder of three different Houston-based organizations: The Gulf Coast Railroad Club (now an NRHS chapter), the Southwest Transit Research Assn., and the Hostellers (S gauge club).

- Jeff

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

March '99 *RMC* - Five page color layout feature on Joe Herrick's Sn3 layout which will be on tour for the NASG and NMRA conventions in Minnesota this summer.

Model Railroad Planning 1999 (Kalmbach). - Track planning annual with layouts adaptable to most scales. Feb. '99 *NMRA Bulletin* - Detailed article with color photos on PFE express reefers.

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS

In *Too Fee or Not to Fee* in December Mike Ramsey, Secretary of the Neshaminy Valley AF Club, writes that the \$200 to \$250 was an early "tongue-in-cheek" proposal never really voted on. Their by-laws do stipulate a fee of \$50.00 per day.

A typo crept in to the e-mail address on page 7 of the Feb. *Dispatch* under Western Car Shops. The e-mail should be softmoods@vcn.com.

Again, in the Feb. *Dispatch* on page 19 Mac McGrath's name was missing a letter. He's a member of several midwestern S gauge clubs.

"S" WITCHING CONTEST

The Northstar '99 NMRA convention in St. Paul this summer is using a "larger" S scale layout for the official switching contest. It will be built by our own Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop with equipment donated by various manufacturers. Of note too, is that 4 S layouts will be on the NMRA layout tours.

- Way to think guys - Jeff

SHORT AND EASY HELP

Kent Singer can always use your ideas and tips for Short and Easy projects. Notice we didn't have one last month. He depends on you. Flyer, scale, vehicles, structures, electronics, etc. He'll do the fine drawings, etc. Send to: Kent Singer, 912 N. Rogers Ave., Endicott, NY 13760.

TOMALCO FLEXTRACK

I received a few pieces of the new Tomalco track. They curve very nicely, solving an old issue that this brand of track had. The ties are an interesting brown, light enough so I believe that they can be weathered to suit. Dimensionally, here is how the track compared with the SOO Line main here in Plymouth, Minnesota.

SOO	Tomalco
Gauge, Inside	
.881	.890
Gauge, Outside	
.967	.968
Rail Height	
.101	.100
Rail Web	
.078	.081
Rail Head	
.0468	.045
Ties, SOO: 1.591 X .140 X .109	
Ties, Tomalco: 1.585 X .135 X .105	

The weathered rail matches up nicely with the color of the rail here in Minnesota on a nice sunny February afternoon, I have yet to try to solder to it. Banta Modelworks no handles it.
- Ken Zieska

WELCOME ABOARD

We are going to try and list new NASG members regularly in the *Dispatch*:

Bill Alexander, Cherry Hill, NJ
David Angeli, Halifax, PA
John Barry, Philadelphia
Sherrill Burgess, Decatur, IL
William Coomes, Archer, FL
William Cox, military
John Cureton, Moreland, GA
Granville P. Derr, Montoursville, PA
Daniel Doncoes, Peru, IL
E. Trumann Garrett, Salem, WI
Robert Hegadorn, Columbus, MO
James Heinke, Elburn, IL
Hank Herrmann, Elizabethtown, PA
Richard Hill, Harrisburg, PA
John Himmelberger, Landisville, PA
Griffith Hugh, Colorado Springs, CO
Willis Kessler, Spring Grove, PA
Harold Minkwitz, Millville, NJ
Vernon Minkwitz, Hockessin, DE
Ray Naylor, Beavercreek, OH
Jim Patterson, Silver Spring, MD
David Pusey, Lititz, PA
David Risser, Sinking Spring, PA
R. Bruce Tibbetts, Culpeper, VA
Edwin L. Walters, Cranbury, NJ
Paul Wedzielewski, Warrington, PA
Brent Whitig, Springfield, PA

Let's Head for the NASG Convention

MORE ON VEHICLES

Racing Champions latest releases in the Motor Trend series include a 1941 Lincoln Continental, an AMC Pacer, a 1980 Ford Bronco, a 1969 Cougar, a '60 Corvair, '57 Buick hardtop. There also are new police car issues and a new fire and rescue series. There are several new Hot Rod versions too like a '58 Chevy convertible and a '49 Ford convertible. Hope these show up in the Motor Trend series.

There's a Schwan's (frozen food folks) 1946 Dodge panel truck (Lledo) available from their catalog. Another Lledo truck, a 1/64 Bedford, is available for \$10.95 plus shipping from Moonpie (the Southern chocolate marshmallow pie snacks). You can order thru website: www.moonpie.com/collectablesbody.com. I gotta have one. Lledos are hard to find, but many of the trucks are 1/64 or close. Here's a Lledo website for you to check out - www.daysgone.com/dg79.html.
- Jeff

RAILFAN VACATIONS

Found on the internet were these diehard railfan vacation retreats. No addresses or phone numbers were given, but you should be able to track them down, get it, "track" them down. One is the Station Inn in Cresson, PA, right on the mainline west of Altoona. Another is the more noted Izaak Walton Inn right on an Amtrak route in Essex, MT. A third listed was the Knox Station Bed & Breakfast in Knoxville, IL. That's near Galesburg. Finally, there is the Fallston Flagstop in Fallston, PA, where the owner swears you can see 125 trains a day on two railroads. Fallston is near Beaver Falls, PA, which is just northwest of Pittsburgh.
- Jeff

TROLLEY MODELERS?

By the way, where are you S trolley modelers hiding? Not much has come my way since I've been editor.
- Jeff



S-CALENDAR

April 30-May 1, 1999: Spring S-Spree, Holiday Inn-Dayton Mall, Ohio, SR725 at I-75 (exit 44) sponsored by the Miami Valley S Gaugers. Info: Bob Guckian, 227 W. Spring St., Eaton, OH 45320 - (937) 456-1226. Holiday Inn direct phone (937) 434-8030.

May 28-30, 1999: NE NMRA Spring convention hosted by Central NY Division. Radisson Inn, Utica Centre, 200 Genesee St., Utica. Reservations (315) 797-8010. Info John Campbell, Jr., (860) 568-5075.

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. Hotel: Best Western Kelly Inn, St. Paul - Res: 800-528-1234. Convention info: CCS Assoc., 6611 Countryside Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55346 - e-mail: mhrr@skypoint.com or Fax: 612-934-6741. Note: For those interested in the entire NMRA convention, it starts on July 17

August 22, 1999: 4th Annual Train Collector's all gauge Train Show. 9-3 at Southern Connecticut State University, James Moore Field House, 125 Wintergreen Ave., New Haven, CT. \$5 admission. Info: John or Robin Vanacore (203) 239-1346.

Oct. 29-31, 1999: 24th annual Fall S Fest, Holiday Inn Westport, Missouri (St. Louis Area). Moe Berk, 39 Graeler, St. Louis, MO 63146, (314) 432-3417 or www.angelfire.com/mo/fallsfest.

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

as suggested by Daniel Neumayer as stated in the *Extra Board*, another great site is www.ttx-dcc.com. This is the home page of Tony's Train Xchange, located in Essex Jct, VT. This shop claims to be DCC Professionals. They have an online catalog and carry a lot of different makes. They give you a really great breakdown of the major brands and they have a comparison section. I got my NorthCoast Engineering system from Tony's. The man was very helpful and seemed very knowledgeable when I asked my questions. He did not attempt to 'push' one system over another. He also has pre wired power transformers that to me are at a reasonable price. Mine came with 2 on-off switches. I obtained his XFR8 Transformer. A diagram is offered with the description. This really looks like a great site for people to do comparison work. For those of us that do not have the proper skills to install a decoder into a non plug ready engine, Tony offers installation work. In the book, *Digital Command Control* by Stan Ames, Rutger Friberg and Ed Loizeaux, some of the pictures showing decoder installation are provided by Tony's Train Xchange. Check it out.

- Michael Scivoletti

Hello Jeff: My name is Bill Tugend, NASG #95R0177E. In the latest *Dispatch*, I read the query in *Extra Board* about the colors of Bell Telephone vehicles. I was employed for 30 years by the Bell System. I started in N. Y. Tel. in 1956. In the Long Island area, at least prior to 1954, the trucks were approximately the same color as the Post Office. The fenders and running boards were black. The body color was, I believe, about one or two shades lighter than the Post Office.

After 1954, the black was dropped. N.Y. Tel. experimented with safety orange fenders for a year or two. This was dropped, because it was a hideous combination. After that little experiment, The colors became uniform "Bell Tel Green". The current white coloration did not come into being until the 1980s.

After 1960, I was in Florida with Southern Bell. I don't recall seeing any black fenders on Telephone Co. trucks there. They both, (N.Y. & Fla), had Emblems in black and gold on the doors, and on the truck sides with the district name. I would suggest, however, that a period modeler check with a former employee of the Telephone Company in the area which he is modeling, as different Bell Companies had there own variations on the theme. I hope this is a help to prototype modelers, particularly in "S" scale. There is a possibility that I may be at the N.M.R.A. convention in Minneapolis this July.

- Bill Tugend n4vmc@alltel.net

Foley's Follies: SSL&S Returns... Well the name of the fellow who now owns Scale Loco & Supply is Fred Rouse. Fred is working very hard to organize the stock, set prices and do all that must be done to get up and running. Fred will be too busy to take phone calls or answer letters just yet. But he would be very happy if you would Fax or e-mail any ideas, opinions, wants and any thing else that you think can help. I already forwarded all of the appropriate e-mails to him. Yes Fred is planning on being at the NASG 99 convention, and that is going to be the first place SSL&S will do business. There will be detail parts at the convention. Drivers and loco kits are planned for the future. So please do send e-mails and fax's to Fred at: testingspecialties@nni.com

Fax 610 346-9178

- John Foley, Eastern VP NASG

The MPSA Cyber/SIG group mentioned last issue has some thinking about a separate scale-only organization. Following are some comments by some NASG members and non-members:

Ed Loizeaux: A few years ago the NASG was literally dominated by folks of scale persuasion and many benefits flowed to scale modelers and to tinplate enthusiasts. Today, the NASG is dominated by tinplate enthusiasts who have done nothing for the scale folks. Fair? Nope. Can more be achieved by working outside of the NASG? It sure won't be less since it cannot go negative.

Kelvin White: (responding to above and some others) - You've confirmed my thoughts as to the way the NASG committee has drifted. I would willingly stand for an NASG committee post, but I'm too far removed to be effective...There is little doubt from all the posts that I've been reading that the scale element needs to be made stronger within the NASG rather than splintering off. In 1996 the NASG promoted a pink token giving money off various products. As a result, I bought my first brass engine, a 44-tonner. Since then I've bought over 10 brass engines. Had it not been for that NASG initiative, I expect I would still be using AM alone...or drifted off into another scale. Anybody want to join in a Revolution in July?

Gale Hall: The thing that bothers me the most here is we wind up with another set of standards (referring to proto fine scale standards - ed.). Now, this is fine for the new guys coming in, but there are a lot of layouts that are built and already gauged to the current or the pre-1991 standard gauge. Now ya start messing with this and suddenly a lot of stuff won't run. It is already pretty much a guessing game if you want to run something on someone else's pike. I can appreciate the new rolling stock... but if carried to the nth degree the price will go up folks...we're already adjusted to the \$40.00 freight car, so where is the next stopping point? I can live without prototype contoured axles and maybe spinner hubs. We waited 20 years to get a roller bearing truck in S. If everything is to become a foreground model, we won't be able to afford this hobby. Thirty years ago superdetailed meant a freight car had the three air brake castings hung under the car. Now we are ready to have hollow train lines and working brakes?

The MPSM SIG was formed outside the NASG, but wait a sec folks, it was under the NMRA banner...da, that isn't exactly a split - more like an outreach!

And now form another group....mmm, numbers are a bit deceiving here...kinda like the statistician who drowned in a lake that had an average depth of 3 feet. When manufacturers look at us for numbers, they often get totals that overlap 3 groups or more. You could be in the NMRA, NASG, Proto 64, Slim Gauge Guild and Friends of the East Broad Top, and that is one person. How about somebody in the NASG, TTOS, TCA? Suddenly several potential buyers are really only ONE person. You've got to think back to what it says under the NASG Coupler Logo - it says UNITED, not UNTIED.

Winross doesn't care who buys a truck, Racing Champs doesn't care who buys a car, and Grandt Line doesn't care who buys a five-panel door.

You used to be able to say if it wasn't for AF, you wouldn't have any scale modelers because that was the basis for 80%

of the scale items. It is much different now with a bigger product base.

Us scale folks have seen the tide turn. Look at S Helper having a car with both hi-rail and scale wheelsets. That is good for both sides. So this scale/AF rift really is counter-productive and needs to stop! It always seems the NASG is - mmmm - scale, or is it AF oriented? Well, they do have elections, so perhaps things can balance out.

Skip Mersereau: I think a new (scale) organization is a noble idea. However, the difficulty lies in the actual organizing of real, rather than cyber events. I would expect that the geographic diversity of the Proto 64 list is probably bound to make any 3-D reality for this difficult. Accordingly, the best hope for this would be to meet under the aegis of the NASG or NMRA as a SIG.

As an alternative, and not necessarily less work, but without a

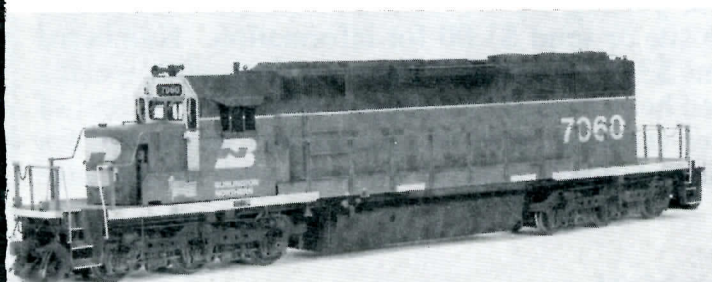
meeting, one might put up a cyber space meeting with photos of models instead of the models themselves. I don't think this would be as satisfying myself, but it beats nothing. This may indeed be more effective than a meeting in terms of publicity.

My volunteer time is pretty much full. I imagine a number of others are in the same boat. This may sound like a stereotype view, but I guess the downside of scale modeling is it takes more time. This leaves less available for organization work. Tinplaters should have comparatively less to do, and therefore, more time. Guess who is going to fill the demand for off-the-shelf product and volunteer time slots? You guessed it. O scale has much of the same problem, but they have a bigger base.

For the time being it seems to me we need the tinplaters more than they need us. A new (SIG) group would make more sense to me than splintering off.

Last Runs - cont. from page 2

Norm was instrumental in forming the Oregon S Scalpers which is now known as the Northwest S Scalpers. Norm wanted to build a scale layout and recruited several other Portland area S scalpers to begin the club. The club built and displayed a quality S scale portable layout and displayed it for several years including the '94 NASG convention in Vancouver. Norm was previously a machinist for Wagner Mining and Construction Equipment.

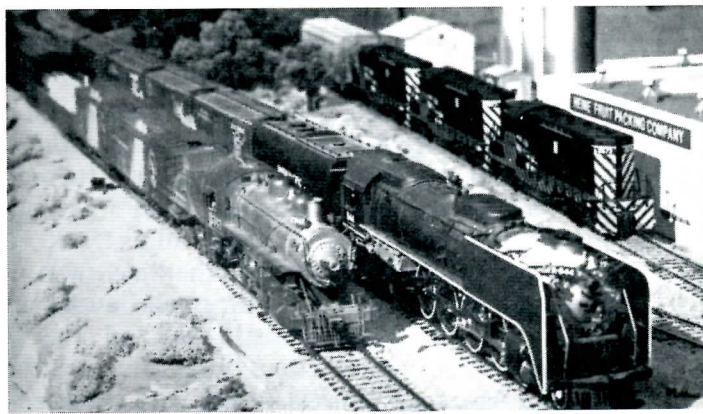


Above are two of Mike's prize winning brass diesels. Top is a 1st place winner SD40-2 at the '94 convention, and below is 2nd place SD50 from the Denver convention.

3 photos by Bob Werre



Santa Claus (Bill Wyatt) and Mrs Santa Claus (Florence Wyatt) celebrate a birthday. Photo by Moe Berk



A scene on the Oregon S Scale portable layout at the 1994 NASG convention in Vancouver, WA. Norm Strain's big UP 4-8-4 leads the pack. This layout was the featured layout at the convention.

"S" gauge • Pacific 4-6-2 Steam Locomotive • 1/64 Scale



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