



DISPATCH

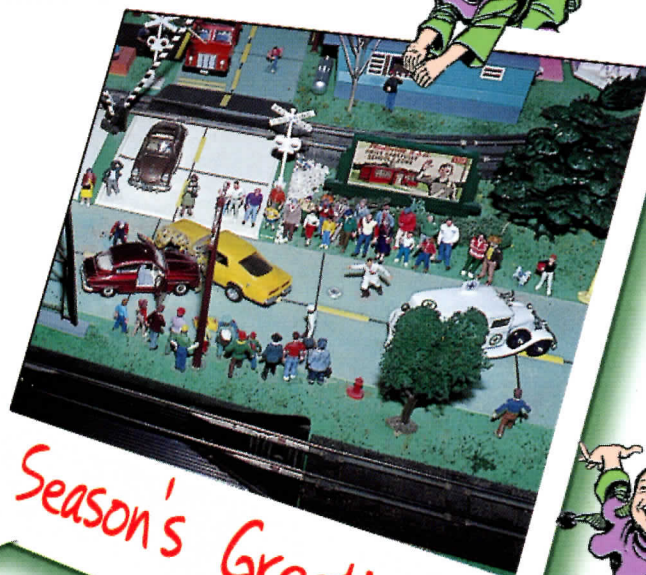
Serving the NASG for 25 years



Ron Schlicht's American Flyer and "People" layout.

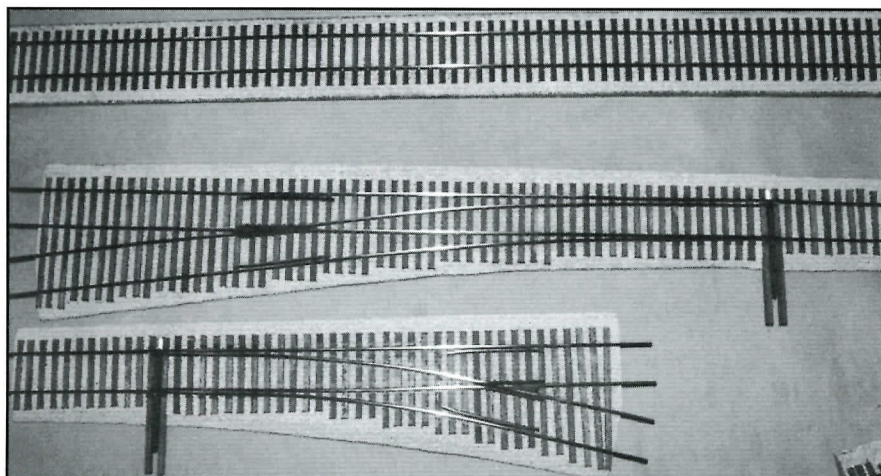


inside this issue:
Rex Dockside Upgrade

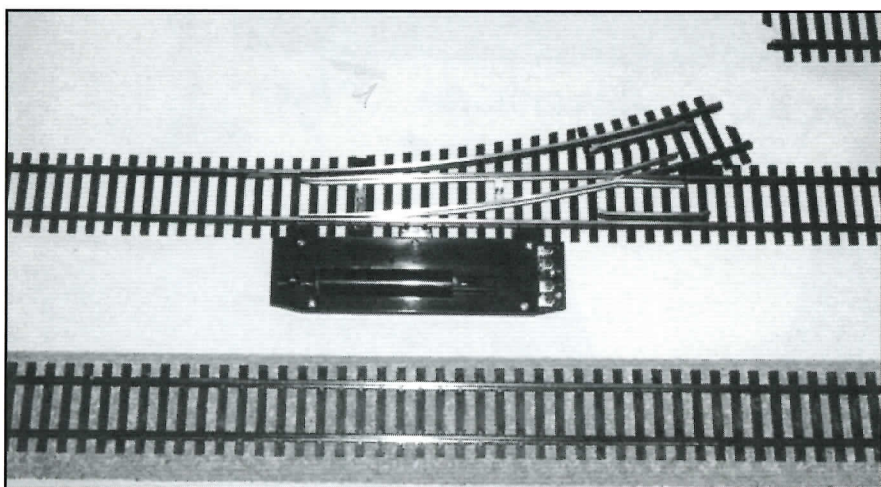


Season's Greetings!

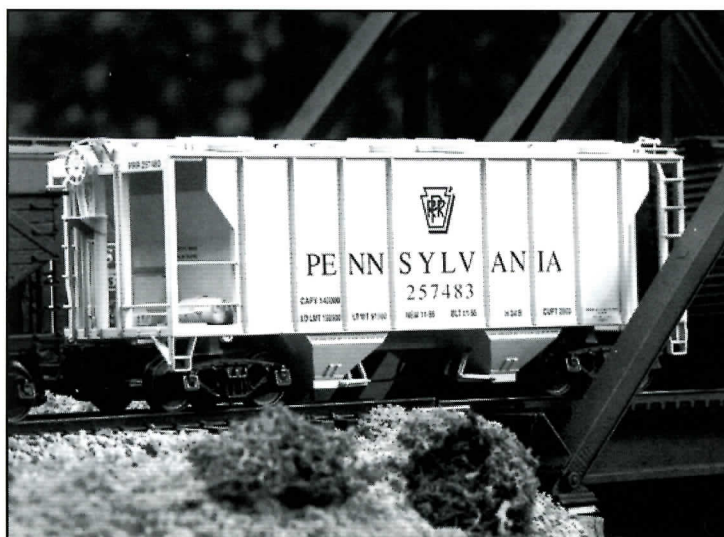
What 'S' New



Seen first at the Fall S Fest was Tom Hodgson's American Hi-Rail resin body powered gas electric. They come in Hi-rail only - \$200 plus depending on paint or undec. The two photos at the left show new track components which were on display at the Fall S Fest. The top one is Custom Trax scale ready-built turnouts and flextrack. Below that is the code .172 hi-rail track and turnout from Classic Trains. See New Products for more details on these. Bottom photos show new paint schemes for SHS PS-2s and the new Composite hopper



Dear Santa,
All I want for
Christmas is...



NASG DISPATCH
Official Publication of the
National Association of S Gaugers

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

Jeff Madden
438 Bron Derw Ct.
Wales, WI 53183
262-968-3729
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:

Michael Paschall
PMB 410
2300 Bethelview Rd., Suite 110
Cumming, GA 30040-9475
770-205-4880
michael@bakerstreet.com

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EMAIL: T. Chuck Garman, tcgmip@epix.net

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COVER: Three scenes on Ron Schliet's American Flyer layout which features neatly modeled scenes with plastic structures, vehicles and lots and lots of hand-painted figures. His layout will be on tour for the NASG convention in 2003.

Photos by Jeff Madden

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December, 2002



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NASG Website: <http://www.nasg.org>

NASG Website Director Michael Greene: mgreene@cedarlane.com

STAFF

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

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President's Message...

When talking about promoting S in the 2000s, it's hard to ignore the impact that the internet has had on model railroading. We buy and sell our trains on EBAY, go to dealer or manufacturer websites and place our orders electronically, belong to chat lists and spend lots of time surfing around railroad and model railroad sites. I'm retired now, but I was a computer software consultant, and as such I realized that if S scale had a large presence out there in cyberspace, it would help immensely in promotions. Many model railroaders in other scales surf around looking for train-related sites and access some of ours regularly.

Last time I mentioned the S Friendly Hobby Shop campaign. To help me kick it off, I rounded up a bunch of dealers mostly from the S-Helper Service and American Models lists of dealers from their own websites and put them into the S scale site that I've maintained for several years now called www.s-scaletrains.com. It's available at any time, of course, to the membership. I invite any member to let me know about any additions or corrections to the S-Friendly Hobby Shop web page.

The NASG is heavily involved with the internet. We have an official website maintained by Michael Greene. It's at www.nasg.org. On this site you can keep up with the latest news about conventions, car or structure projects and happenings in the NASG and the world of S. There's lots of other items of interest like NASG history (more fascinating than you think), and the names and addresses of all the NASG BOT and committee members. There is also a comprehensive links page and listing of our clubs. Check this great facility out. Many of our manufacturers have their own websites and most of them can be found on the www.nasg.org links page as well as the private sites I just mentioned.

We have two NASG chat lists of interest. The BOT maintains a BOT-member-only website where we can propose, discuss and vote on the various measures that come up. We also can deal with problems quickly. There is a chat list that Michael Greene created for you, the general membership. You can easily join by having Michael validate your NASG membership status. Then you can express anything that is on your mind to your fellow members. There is a chat list for S scale at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/S-Scale/>, a chat list for AF and highrail enthusiasts at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/S-Trains/>, and a chat list for SN3 at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/S-Trains/>.

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NASG NEWS

Convention Survey: We'll try it again this issue. A post card with questions on different types of NASG conventions should be included in this issue. Please take the time to fill it out and return it. Reread the NASG NEWS in the October *Dispatch* for a detailed explanation of the convention types.

- Glenn Ritter, NASG Secretary

The NASG thanks... the following manufacturers and dealers for contributions to the scale NASG "Timesaver" layout. The layout has already traveled to the NASG convention and the Fall S Fest in 2002. American Model Builders provided a switch tower. BTS donated 4 Old Pullman turnouts and track details. Custom Trax donated track and turnouts and some tablework. Scenery Unlimited gave some Shinohara flex track and a #8 turnout. Wangrow System One provided a DCC system. Soundtrax donated sound decoders and speakers. PHM gave a flagstop structure. Port Lines donated an old time Twin Whistle gas station. American Models gave some freight cars. SHS donated locos and freight cars. Michigan Models gave some 802 couplers. Tomar donated some bumpers. Great Northern Sand and Gravel gave what else but some gravel and ballast. Mt. Albert donated some ties. California Roadbed gave some roadbed. W.A. Drake donated a brass Mobil tank car. Don Munsey donated an AMB kit, Sonny's Shack, which is being built by Keith Thompson. SSL&S gave a shipping crate.



Look for your NASG Survey Card in this issue! Take a moment to fill it out now and put it in the mail! Thanks for feedback!

NASG CONVENTION SURVEY

1. How many NASG conventions have you attended in the last 10 years (starting with the 1993 Valley Forge, PA convention)?
☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two to Five ☐ More than Five
2. Did you attend either or both the 1993 Valley Forge, PA or 2000 San Jose, CA joint NASG/NMRA conventions?
☐ One ☐ Both ☐ Neither
3. Would you like to see NASG have future joint NASG/NMRA conventions?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion
4. If you answered "Yes" to #3, how often should joint conventions be scheduled?
Every _____ Years

This survey is being conducted to determine if there has been a shift of the NASG membership feelings toward joint conventions since the 1990 survey.

RAIL MAIL

Cover Congrats: Let me add my congratulations to Bob Werre for the outstanding photo on the cover of the Directory issue. There is always something to learn from Bob's sense of composition and lighting, and the care with which he paints his locomotives. ... but close examination will reveal that the cab ladder is upside down. For those of you who might not have painted your FTs yet (brass), you might want to con-

sider whether it matters to you or not. It is an easily corrected detail. Aside from that, the FTs are easily among the very best locomotives ever imported.

- Bob Jackson

About the Cover Shot: The diesels are River Raisin FTs that I painted in one of the older Milwaukee designs. I used some of the newer Badger/Testors type paints; they seem to work ok. The engines are DCC controlled and have sound. The cover was done for the upcoming NASG convention - notice the circus

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Jeff's Junction



IDEALISM AND HUMOR IN TRAINS

Do idealism and whimsy creep into your modeling? I'd say most model railroaders do try to create an ideal above reality and do add at least some humor to their creations.

Why do modelers do this? Because they are in control, because they can.

The Ideal: Modelers often conjure up their miniature empires and landscapes from some hazy, nostalgic childhood memory. It's human nature to recall things as being ideal and to push the negative aside.

Humor: A model railroad offers the perfect medium for visual humor and fantasy. Mini-scenes, signs, place names and animation are the usual avenues chosen for this. When not overdone, humor and fantasy are appreciated and enjoyed by most visitors. And because many model railroaders began with toy trains around the Christmas Tree, Santa Claus and other Christmastime caricatures are easily added to train scenes. Or as some do, they put up temporary Christmas S layouts with all kinds of snow scenes and holiday mini-scenes.

Let's discuss "idealism" first. Our model railroad empires give each of us the "grand opportunity" to be Rail Tycoon, Mother Nature, Creator and Civil Engineer all at once. We have the power to mold our miniature empires into the idealistic images we may have gathered in our youth - conceived from actual experiences or from books, magazines and movies.

Some modelers will say that they model what they see today, but usually this is not really the case. To wit, most modelers building their first layout have

already had a decade or so of seeing real trains, reading about them, visiting layouts, etc. And being an art form - we modelers naturally gravitate to building a model through our own prejudiced eyes. Details like weathering, neatness, era, vehicles, scenic vistas, architectural preferences, and so on are all a blend of personal memories. Our idealistic visions allow us to create a quaint gold rush mining town, small town picket fence America or industrial big city. Almost by necessity we S gaugers (scalers) are more open to freelancing and creating our own ideal fiction.

Here's where idealism mixes with artistry. We don't want things too spic and span (railroads and related industries are grimy by nature), but we don't desire things to appear really grungy either. Most of us go with mild weathering on rolling stock and structures and add some detail clutter, yet still maintain some overall neatness, especially regarding track, ballast and commercial structures. That's one reason the real weedy, rusty, run down railroad of '70s isn't popular (no offense Penn Central fans).

Look at photos of the many popular S layouts to prove my point - Jess Bennett's, Frank Titman's, Brooks Stover's, Richard Arsenault's. Even the Sn3 crowd keep their rolling stock and structures looking pretty tip top.

Now to humor: Besides creating a bit of idealism and nostalgia with their modeling, modelers often want to add a bit of humor or fantasy. Frank Titman's Spiral Hill is a perfect example, and most of you are familiar with the tale about "Old Man McDonald", the chubby fictional rail baron. Frank's model railroad has evolved from straight freelance to more of a Reading theme, yet the fiction and the humor is still rampant. Fact and fancy intermingle. There's the realistic Red Dot Mine with several hoppers being spotted by a Reading camelback steam loco, yet there's Ma Hoolihan's Boarding House to provide some comic relief. Bill Fraley strives for realism on

Continued on page 31

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODEL BUILDERS (1420 Hanley Indust. Ct., St. Louis, MO 63144 - www.laserkit.com) lists two new S buildings. One is a two-story house with a footprint of 6" x 5-1/2" x 5" high. It is typical for a farm house or section house, \$44.95. Another is the Gandy Dancer's Shack, typical of a small section house. Footprint is 5" x 2" x 2" high, \$18.95.

B.T.S. (P.O. Box 561, Seffner, FL 33583 - www.btsrr.com) is now offering the PRR P54 "Owl" passenger coach for \$89.95. The overall length of the prototype was only 64 feet. Other roads that used them in later years were the N&W, Erie, PRSL, etc. The model is a flat urethane body kit. Individual laser-cut wood window sashes can be positioned open or closed. Coming will be brass PRR trucks, a PB54 combine and a BM54 baggage-mail. A planing mill is next for the log series. Check the website. ---

BOOKS (various publishers - many offered by Heimburger House Publishing, 7236 W. Madison, Forest Park, IL 60130). First is *American Flyer Classic Toy Trains* by Gerry and Janet Souter. This is primarily a coffee table book (great photos). It includes a brief history of pre-Gilbert American Flyer standard and O gauge as well as the S days. The book spans the era from William Coleman and Hafner windup train days thru the Great Depression era and into the S production. It is hardbound, all color and 160 pages. Another new book is *The Man Who Changed How Toys and Boys Were Made*, by Bruce Watson, who was the guest speaker at the recent Fall S Fest. It is a biography of A. C. Gilbert. Part of the book has been fash-

ioned into a made-for-TV movie entitled *The Man Who Saved Christmas* starring Jason Alexander, which should have aired on Dec. 15. Erector Set development is covered extensively in this book. A third new title that will interest Flyer fans is *Toy Train Memories*, Kalmbach, by John Grams. This is a 160 page b&w and color coffee table book that primarily focuses on nostalgic toy train layouts during the Christmas season. There are 100 full color photos, dozens of vintage black and white ones and several prints by renowned toy train artist Angela Trotta Thomas. Not so vintage, but spectacular are 4 color pages of Mark Edward's current floor level American Flyer modular Christmas layout featured recently in *Classic Toy Trains*. All three books are in the \$25-\$35 price range.

C&D MODELS (P. O. Box 538, Maple Lake, MN 55358 - www.cdmodels.com/truck) has lots of 1/64 toy truck parts such as a reefer unit for a trailer, tires, mirrors, horns, hitches, ladders, etc. Most of these are die-cast parts. You truck detailers, check it out!

CLASSIC TRAINS (18927 E. Colima Rd., Rowland Hts., CA 917748, www.classictrains.com). Classic Trains is coming along with their "realistic" hi rail code .172 track line. This is premium track designed for the discriminating hi-railer. It features solid nickel-silver rail, pre-weathered rail, ABS wood grained plastic ties, detailed joiners, and a snap-lock system. Turnouts, not yet in production, will feature closed frog construction and will include several radii. Some pricing examples: box of 48 10" straight, \$191.52; 19" curved (box of 48) - \$199.52. Single sections are \$3.99 to \$4.99.

Flex track is currently available in 5-foot sections.

CUSTOM TRAX (P.O. Box 581, Indianola, IA 50125 www.custm-trax.com) has some pricing for their code 100 scale custom turnouts (ballasted with roadbed). No. 4s are \$36.50 each; #6s \$38; #8s \$39.50. Prices are substantially less for orders of 5 or more. Three foot flex track is \$18; a box of 10 \$144.00. U. S. S&H is \$5.00 on orders under \$60; over no charge.

Custom Trax also makes some lightweight module kits which are pre-cut and then easily assembled. They include Baltic birch plywood and top foam sheets. For example a 30" x 36" corner module is \$85 and a 30" x 48" straight module is \$86. These partially assembled modules include 2 fitted foam sheets, 2 legs, 1 valance, 1 cross leg gusset and 4 assembly bolts. The NASG "Timesaver" layout uses these.

DG PRODUCTIONS (www.toysbydg.com/setup.asp) has some newer 1/64 "bucket trucks". One new offering has a Terex 55' lift mounted on an International 4400 cab and chassis. These and other trucks are lettered for various current power companies.

JOE'S TRAIN REPAIR (404 Shetland road, Rougemont, NC 27572) has some new items including a reproduction Track Gang accessory. The third circus car is also available. It is a flat with tent, poles, stakes and ropes. Joe also has some Flyer reproduction buttons for action cars and accessories - single button, double, rotary and 3 button.

RIVER RAISIN (6160 Upper Straits Blvd., W. Bloomfield, MI

48324 - the website: - www.river-raisinmodels.com) has been showing off production models of the troop sleepers. The actual troop sleepers were used in WWII to haul soldiers across the continent to various ports. Pullman in 1943 managed to construct 1200 of these and 440 troop kitchen cars. These 50' cars mixed with conventional passenger trains or ran in solid blocks. Two recent magazines featured articles on these - Dec., 2001 *MR* and *Classic Trains*. After the war most were converted to baggage cars, express cars and MOW cars. The troop sleeper version with interior lists for \$349 painted, and \$319 unpainted. Kitchen car is \$289 painted, \$269 unpainted. The Express box version is priced the same as the Kitchen car except you can get a painted version lettered for the NYC. Allied brass trucks with 33" wheelsets are available separately for \$39.95 if you need extras. Of course, the cars come with trucks.

SHS (77 Cliffwood Ave., Suite 7C, Cliffwood, NJ 07721 - www.show-caseline.com) has some new schemes for the PS-2-bay covered hoppers. Now available are two #s of PRR (gray with black letters), and CNJ (red with white lettering).

New in the long 3-bay covered hoppers are Wabash (black), Genesee & Wyoming (orange) and Jack Frost (red, white and blue Christmas car). Each is \$39.95. The composite hoppers have finally been delivered. The E-27 2-8-0 project should be underway - look for it next fall.

SnS TRAINS (3239 Pepperwood Dr., Boise, ID 83704) is accepting orders for Volume VI in the S-gauge series. This one has coverage of the 2002 NASG convention courtesy of Glenn Ritter and Paul Yorke plus some of the ongoing layout construction tips. Price is \$14 ppd. You can also get the first 5 volumes for a sale price of \$60. Also from SnS are some actual layout details. These are a 1 rung power telephone pole and a single target signal. I don't know too much of the details of these yet, but a printout from the net looks good.

SOUTHWIND (813-752-1636) has announced the scheduled production of long Harriman coaches for SP, UP and IC. Versions will include: air-conditioned, non-air, 72-C-1, 2, 3 and 4. These cars will come painted, lettered, with KDs, interior details in the seatng areas.

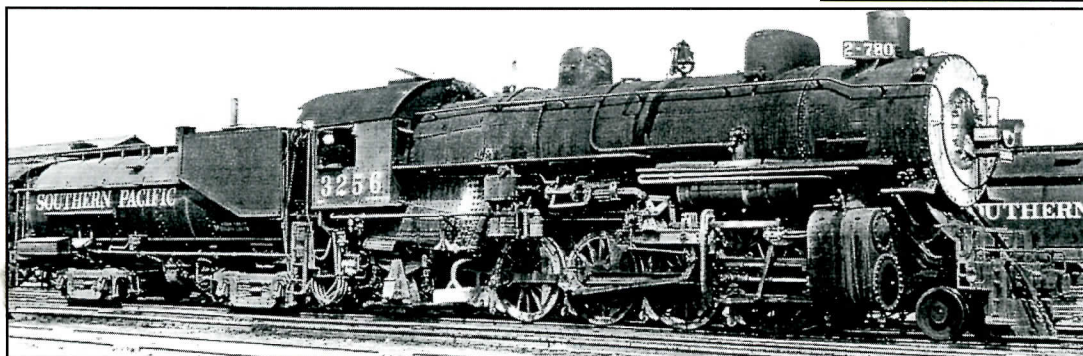
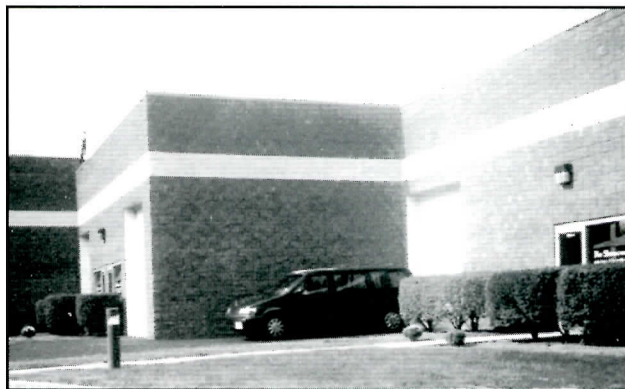
Paint colors will exactly match the short Harriman cars done a few years ago. Prices are \$450 each pre-delivery and \$500 after. At the S-West IV Jettie hinted that the SP Mk-5 and 6 and UP MK-6 2-8-2 locos are seriously being considered. These would tentatively be priced at \$1450 pre-delivery and \$1695 after.

TIMKO'S REPAIR DEPOT (349 Grange Rd., Beavercreek, OH 45430) has DC can motors with flywheels to retrofit you American Flyer steam engines. Price is \$27.95 each. The motor is DC so you'll have to put a bridge rectifier in. Instructions show how to add the rectifier and a solid state reverse unit (not included).

TRAINSTUFF (www.trainstuffllc.com). Dayna Warner has been adding some more S resin structures to her S line. Shown on the website is an Art Deco 4 story apartment building (Arthur Arms), \$24.95; the Siegel Building, a four story brick building, \$21.95; John's Feed & Grain, \$29.95, a general store type; and the covered railroad bridge, \$39.95.

S Helper Service's warehouse in New Jersey was open to attendees of the Fall Jersey Get-Together. They are expanding, and that sounds like good news to S gaugers.

Photo by John Foley



SouthWind will be doing many versions of the SP and UP MK-5 and MK-6 2-8-2s in brass. This is an MK-6 with Worthington feedwater heater and Vanderbilt style tender.

REX DOCKSIDE UPGRADE

FROM PUTT TRAINS KITS

By Tom Hartrum

Photos by the author

Getting Started: I have wanted to upgrade my Rex Dockside for some time now. I bought my little 0-4-0 tank engine in 1968 from John Sudimak himself for \$30.00.

Recently, I had been looking through catalogs trying to figure out an appropriate can motor to use when I ran into Terry Putt at the Spring S Spree where he was demonstrating his re-release of the Dockside (John's son, Jack, had sold Rex to Terry several years ago). I asked if he had upgrade kits for an original one - he replied that he had three - one for the motor, one for the directional headlights and a smoke unit. Terry said he would take care of replacing the gear on the driver axle, and mentioned he'd like to see a review. I decided on using all 3 upgrades. The gear replacement cost me an extra 5 bucks.

Diving In: I decided to take a piecemeal approach in order to review each, yet if you are doing all three, there are some steps that should be integrated. A tip - when disassembling any item, carefully lay all removed parts in a quiet place on a sheet of blank paper and write down where they came from.

If you have an original shell remove any screw inside the smokestack and then drill a 13/64" hole down through the stack and down through the boiler if you are going to install the smoke unit.

You can also do this after remov-

Replacing the motor: Next remove the geared driver so it can be sent to Terry for remounting. Unsolder the wire from the motor, then remove the two motor screws from the bottom. Put these with the motor for salvage use, since the kit includes two new screws, a new washer for the front screw and a new rubber grommet in addition to the new motor and gears. (Photo 1)

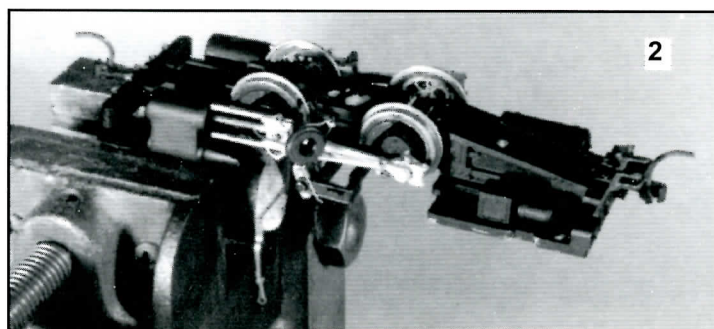
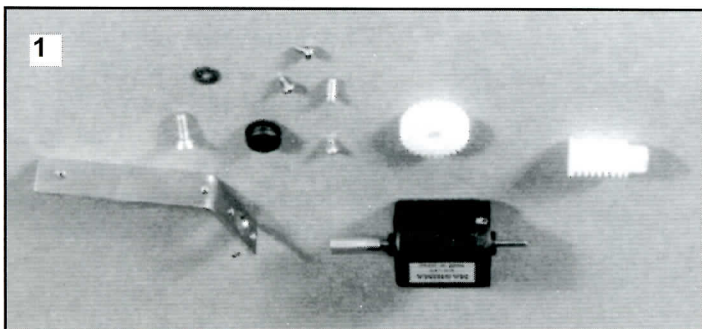
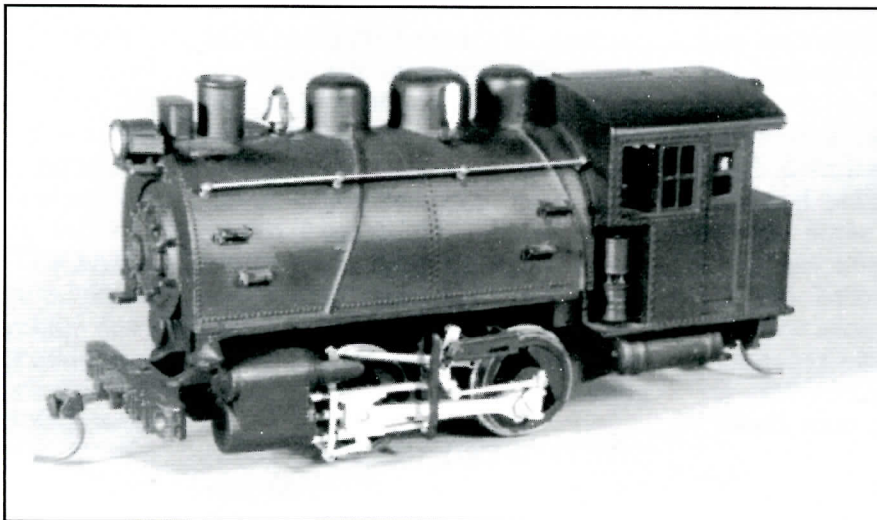
If your Dockside has the optional Walschaerts valve gear, I would

r e c o m m e n d removing the riveted combination lever assembly by removing the #00-90 shoulder screw that secures the crosshead link to the crosshead and the shoulder screw securing the radius rod to the link. (If you are not adding the smoke unit you can get by with removing the

ing the boiler.

To take the boiler off remove the two 2-56 screws from below the corners of the cab. Then lift the rear of the cab and carefully slide the mechanism forward off the boiler. Set aside. Again, if installing the smoke unit, this is a good time to redrill the hole through the boiler top (not through the smokestack) with a 1/4" drill as per instructions. If your boiler is filled (more on this later), drill almost to the bottom of the boiler itself, but not through the bottom into the cylinder block.

screw from the crosshead and letting the combination lever dangle. Be careful it doesn't get bent! Next, remove the screws holding the side rod to the front (geared) driver. You may have to loosen the cylinder and boiler front assembly in order to clear the driver screws. If you are adding the smoke unit, you might as well remove the cylinder and boiler front assembly at this time, allowing the crosshead and piston rod to slip out of the cylinder assembly. However, if you are not installing the smoke unit, just loosen the underneath screw enough to provide the nec-



essary clearance. Now, turn the mechanism upside down. If the cylinder and boiler front are still attached, the best approach is to use a vise as shown in photo 2. Remove the screw holding the pickup wire. Remove the two screws and the access plate. Finally, remove the geared wheelset.

At this point you can replace the gear yourself or send it to Putt trains for \$5.00.

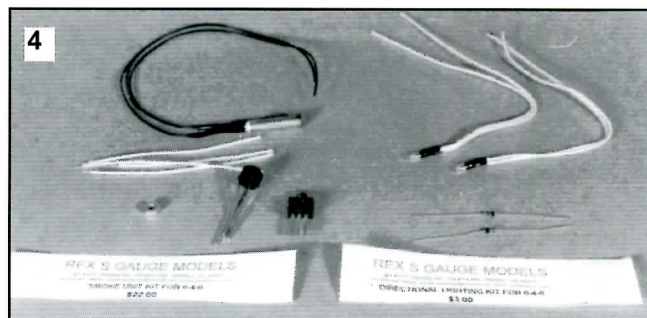
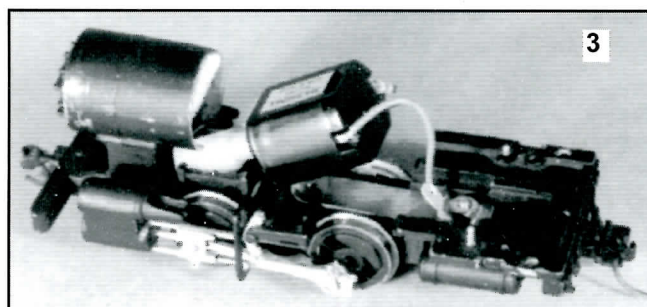
While waiting for the gear to come back, I assembled the motor to the bracket as per instructions. In order to press the worm gear on the motor shaft I slipped a couple of 5/16" nuts over the other end of the shaft to protect it and pressed the gear on in my vise, using a piece of 0.60 x 0.125 styrene to get the proper 1/8" spacing. This waiting time can also be used to work on the lights and the smoke unit.

The wheelset arrived six days after I mailed it. The old gear was returned, which I added to the salvaged motor pile. The new wheelset dropped right into place. Make sure that the insulated wheel is on the same side as the other driver. Replace the cover with its two screws, and the pickup wire, making sure it makes proper contact with both wheels. Re-attach the side rod to the front driver. If you are not adding the smoke unit, tighten the cylinder and boiler front assembly screw. Mount the motor bracket to the frame with the screws provided and adjust as per instructions. I had to press the rear of the motor down to get a proper mesh. Solder the existing feed wire to the minus terminal of the motor. Run a wire from the plus terminal to the frame. I put a solder lug from my parts bin over the rear mounting screw and secured it with nut (photo 3). If you purchased the smoke unit, a nut is provided with it; if not, any old 4-40 nut will do. Test run the locomotive to make sure the gear mesh is properly adjusted. If you are only

replacing the motor, you are done. Reassemble the engine and you are ready to go.

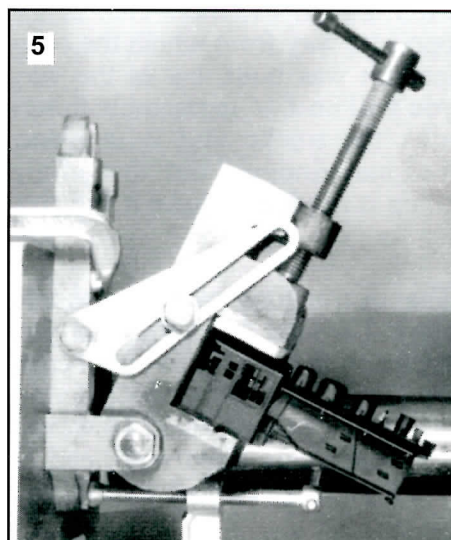
Headlights: Now for the lighting kit (photo 4). This involves drilling new holes in the body along with some wiring. Drill 9/64" holes for the bulbs. I recommend using a drill press and progressively drilling larger holes. I drilled 5/64", 1/8", and then 9/64". The rear hole goes straight through the light and the rear of the cab. I recommend you brace the light by putting a piece of wood between it and the cab to prevent the pressure of the drill from deflecting and possibly bending the mounting bracket. The instructions say to drill the front hole at *(a 25 degree downward angle.)* This is easier said than done, but I was able to use an adjustable machine vise, set protractor (photo 5). Use a center drill, or choke up on the drill bit to avoid the bit deflecting. Clean out the flashing with an Xacto knife.

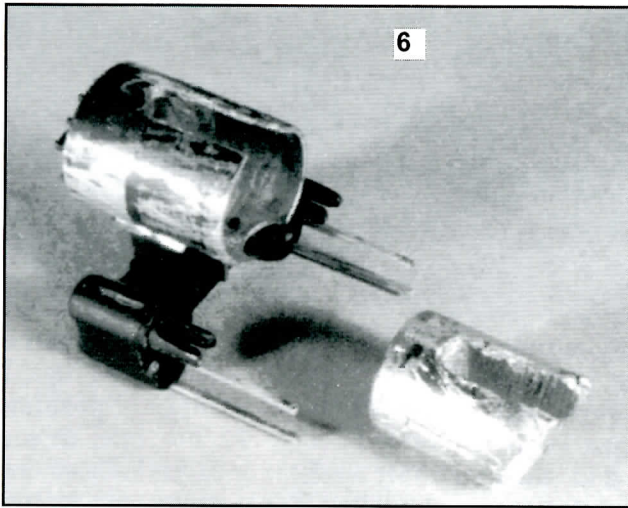
Before installing the lights, paint the yellow leads black so that they won't be so visible through the windows. If you are installing the smoke unit, insert it through the 13/64" hole in the smokestack at this point. Insert the headlight and route the wires around both sides of the smoke unit. Route the wires along the top of the body and glue in place (I used Walther's Goo for this step). If you are installing the smoke unit, slip the boiler and cylinder assembly into the body at this point (more later). Similarly, insert the tail light and route the wires along the roof of the cab, keeping them from crossing the window openings. If you are not installing the smoke unit, wire the lights and diodes to the motor as per the instructions. Since this



requires three wires to be attached to the relatively small motor lugs, I recommend attaching a 2 position terminal strip to the rear motor screw using a 4-40 nut (These are available from many electronic supply houses, or you can cut one from Radio Shack's 5-position strip - part # 274-688). If you are installing the smoke unit, this terminal strip is almost a must. If not, reassemble the loco and you are finished.

The Smoke Unit: See Photo 4 again - left side. Again, refer back to the beginning of this article. Drill the 13/64" hole before any disassembly, and the 1/4" hole after removing the body. At some point you need to remove the boiler and cylinder assembly, which



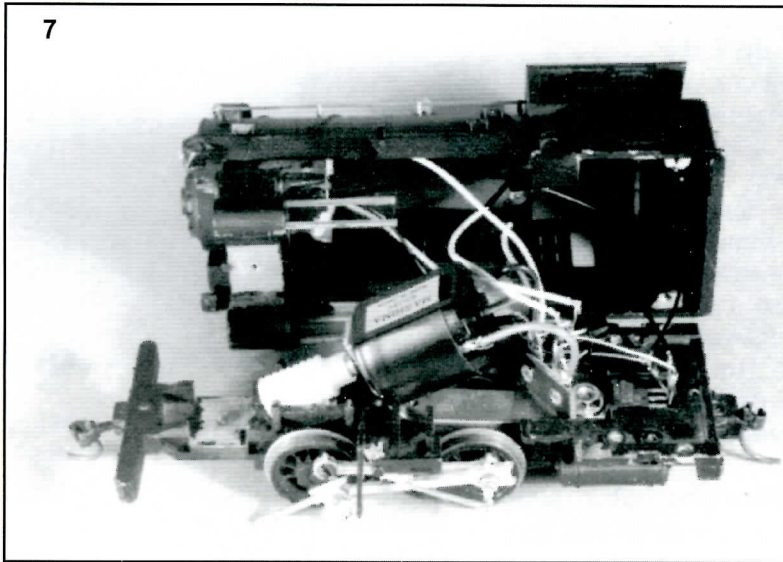


The slot needs to be cut through this to nearly the bottom of the casting in order to clear the smoke unit. At first I tried milling this on my Unimat, but at the slowest speed (310 rpm) the weight kept melting and resetting behind the cut. When the weight was originally poured, the edge of the boiler was slightly bent over at one point to keep the weight in place. With a

you might as well do as soon as the hole has been drilled to make removal of the side rods easier. Be careful not to bend the crosshead guides when handling this assem-

screwdriver and pliers I carefully straightened this bend enough that I could slide the weight out of the boiler casting. I then redrilled the

1/4" hole all the way through the weight. Finally, using a standard hacksaw, I cut through the weight on both sides of the hole to form the needed slot (photos 6). Slide the weight back into



bly. Before proceeding, test fit sliding the boiler into the body FROM THE FRONT. This is the opposite way from which the original kit was built, but is the way you will need to reassemble things after the smoke unit is in place. You may find, as I did, that a little filing is needed to make it slip easily on.

The instructions say you should cut a 1/4" slot from the hole you drilled to the rear of the boiler casting. This can easily be done if your boiler is a hollow shell. However, my boiler was filled with lead or some other soft metal for weight.

the boiler, keeping the slots aligned and glue in place.

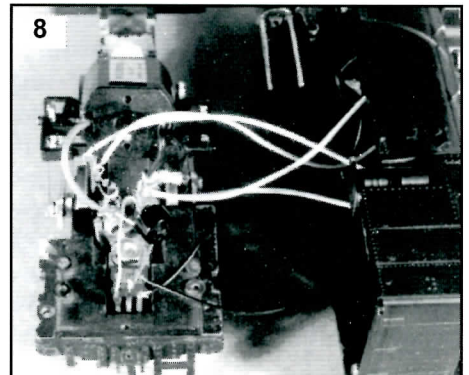
Slip the smoke unit into the smokestack and hold in place with a spot of GOO. Install the headlight and taillight bulbs as described in the previous section, but don't attach the wires or diodes yet. Carefully slide the boiler and cylinder assembly into the body from the front, making sure the slot is deep enough to clear the smoke unit and its wires. Set aside.

Next we'll attack the electronics: Whenever soldering to the leads of the diodes, voltage regulator or

rectifier you should use a heat sink between the soldering iron and the component. If you don't have an official heat sink, a small metal-clamp such as Xacto makes, will do (Photos 7,8).

Now bend the 3 leads of the voltage regulator upward (away from the flat metal back) at their halfway point. Position the hole in the regulator over the rear motor mounting screw, add a 2-terminal strip as described in the previous section, and secure with the provided 4-40 nut. Solder a short wire to the motor (+) terminal, and connect (don't solder yet) the other end to the terminal lug that is grounded to the frame. Cut all of the diode leads to about 1/2" and connect one end of each to the same lug (be sure one diode's stripe is towards the lug and the other is away from it). Finally, cut the leads of the rectifier to about 3/4", bend the two AC leads to point opposite the DC leads, and connect the AC leads to the two terminal lugs. Now, the frame-grounded lug containing the motor (+) lead, both diodes, and one AC rectifier lead can be soldered. To complete this step, solder the (+) DC lead of the rectifier directly to the leftmost lead of the regulator, and the remaining DC rectifier lead to the center regulator lead. Solder a short wire to the motor (-) terminal and connect (don't solder yet) the other end to the unsoldered terminal lug, the one NOT grounded to the frame.

Set the frame upright on its wheels, and lay the boiler next to it (photo 7) and cut the wires to the



proper length. You want to minimize the length to reduce the amount of wire that has to be squashed into the limited space when assembled, but keep them long enough to allow maneuvering when assembling or disassembling. Connect the end of one wire from each light to the unsoldered terminal lug. Now this lug containing the motor (-) lead, two lamp wires, and one rectifier AC lead can be soldered. With needle nose pliers, form a small loop in each of the free diode leads. Following the lighting kit directions, test the engine to determine which light should go to which diode and solder the wires accordingly. Finally, solder the smoke unit leads to the right and center regulator leads. The wiring is done! I had no problem here, but if you do, a judiciously placed bit of electrician tape can help.

Now for the hard part, putting it all back together. The real problem is that because of the smoke unit, the boiler and cylinder assembly must be attached to the main body shell before attaching either to the frame. (In the original kit the boiler and cylinder assembly was first attached, and the body slipped on from the front in the final step) I found that aligning both piston rods and crossheads is very difficult, although it can be done. A simpler approach is to first remove the main rods from the rear drivers, temporarily replacing the screws to keep the remaining running gear in place. Then assemble the piston rods and crossheads into the cylinders. Then pass the main rods through the holes in the guide hanger and slide everything into place. Be careful with the crosshead guides, they must fit into the correct opening in the hanger. Route the wires as you go. Take your time - patience is needed here. Replace the main rods on the rear drivers and the side rods on the front drivers, then insert the three screws from the bottom to hold the cylinders and cab in place. Finally, replace the valve gear and watch her go.

Summary:

I found these three component kits a nice way of upgrading an older dockside. The Putt Train kits relieved me of a lot of design and parts searching to remotor and add lights and smoke. The motor kit itself is straightforward and fairly easy to install. It's a simple screw-driver assembly that even a beginner should be able to handle.

The directional lighting is only a bit more difficult, in that it requires drilling holes in your locomotive along with a little soldering. A drill press is better, but carefully using a hand drill should work too.

The smoke unit is the hardest of three kits. Cutting the slot in the boiler and the weight is best handled if you've had experience working with metals. Soldering this kit is a bit tricky. Fitting everything back together was the most trying part.

The only real complaint I would have is that the instructions could be a little more detailed, especially for the less-experienced builder. Several times I had to do a bit of engineering to determine how to proceed, however this can be part of the fun if you like the challenge.

The 3 kits are available from Putt Trains Inc., P.O. Box 463, Orwell, OH 44076-0463. The motor replacement kit is \$42.00 (plus \$5.00 for gear replacement), the directional lighting kit is \$4.00, and the smoke unit kit is \$22. There is a \$7.00 S&H charge for each order.

Final Thoughts: Looking at the photo on page 8 you can see that the REX Dockside still needs some work. Since I model a freelance railroad, the Ohio Valley Railroad, I need to have some road name decals made and applied. Over the years 3 steps have broken off, and I would like to add some more details.

Some references:

- *Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in the Potomac Valley*, Kalmbach, 2001, has a right side photo of No. 98.

- *Model Railroader*, January 1939, has a left side photo of No. 97, plus drawings.

- *Model Railroader*, March 1947, article "Dolling up Your Dockside" includes right side drawing of No. 98 and left side and rear photos of No. 97.

- *Model Railroader*, Feb. 1981, pages 70-71, "Upgrading a Varney Dockside" has left side photo of No. 98.

- *S Gaugian*, Sept. 1981, page 24, has right side photos of Nos. 897, 898, and 99. and page 43 has right, front and rear drawings of No. 98.

- check the website:
www.northeast.railfan.net/bo_steam1.html, scroll to 96-99 where there are 8 photos.

Besides the upgrade kits mentioned here, a complete list of parts is available from Putt. Not all Dockside parts are available at this time, but many are such as the frame (\$22), crosshead rod and piston (\$2.25 each), and so on. Many parts for the REX Pennsy and plain 2-6-0 and 0-6-0 kits are also available, but not complete kits yet.

Here's a testimonial: My brand new Putt 0-4-0 arrived today, and it was a happy moment. After I got it out of the packing, and my grandson and I put it on the track it was an even happier moment. It works very well. It will see long service loading and unloading my car ferry. Finally, when we loaded up the smoke tube and started it puffing, we had a real S moment. If you haven't got one of these beauties, you might want to consider it.
- Bill Porter (unsolicited).

AMERICAN FLYER MEMORIES ON MY SCALE LAYOUT

By Roy Hoffman

In my journey from American Flyer to hi-rail to scale, I've never quite relinquished my love for AF, and I've found two interesting ways to keep my AF memories alive on my Penn Western scale layout. I thought I'd share them with you. The first is found on page 48 of the AF 1956 catalog. On that page are seven colorful box cars and reefers. I once had all of them except for the orange NH car. However, for various reasons I sold them all. I knew that they were too valuable to convert to scale, but once I didn't have them any more, I started missing them. I realized that having the originals wouldn't work because converting cars that were worth so much to scale wouldn't be very wise economically. So I've done the next best thing. Whenever one of them became available in scale, I bought it. The seven cars became complete when I bought the Central of Georgia car at the 2002 NASG convention. It was a special run of the S Helper Service's (SHS) steel rebuild's for John Huster.

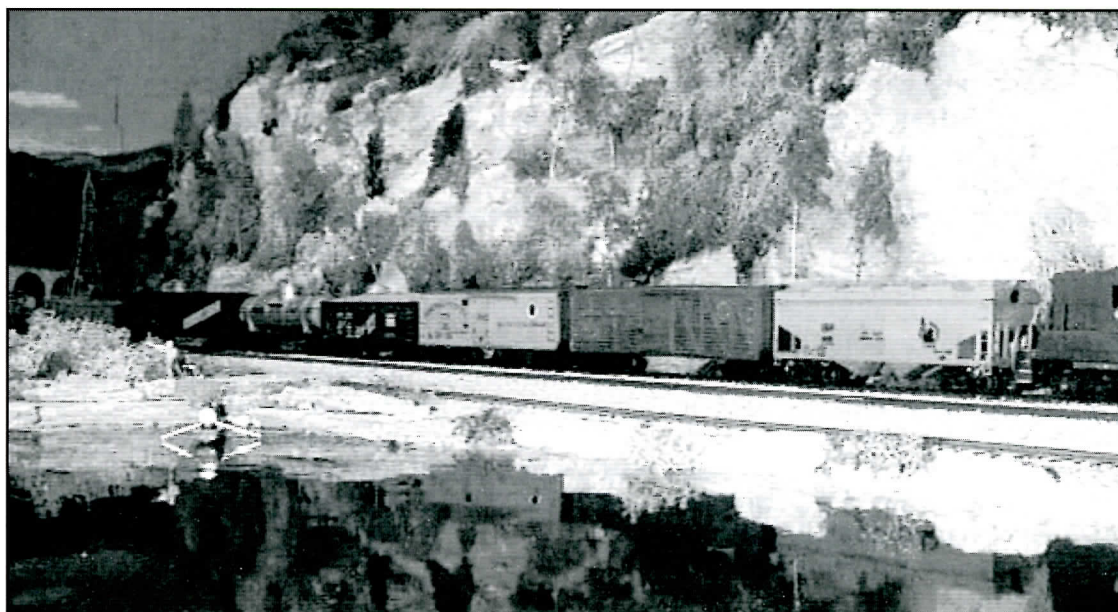
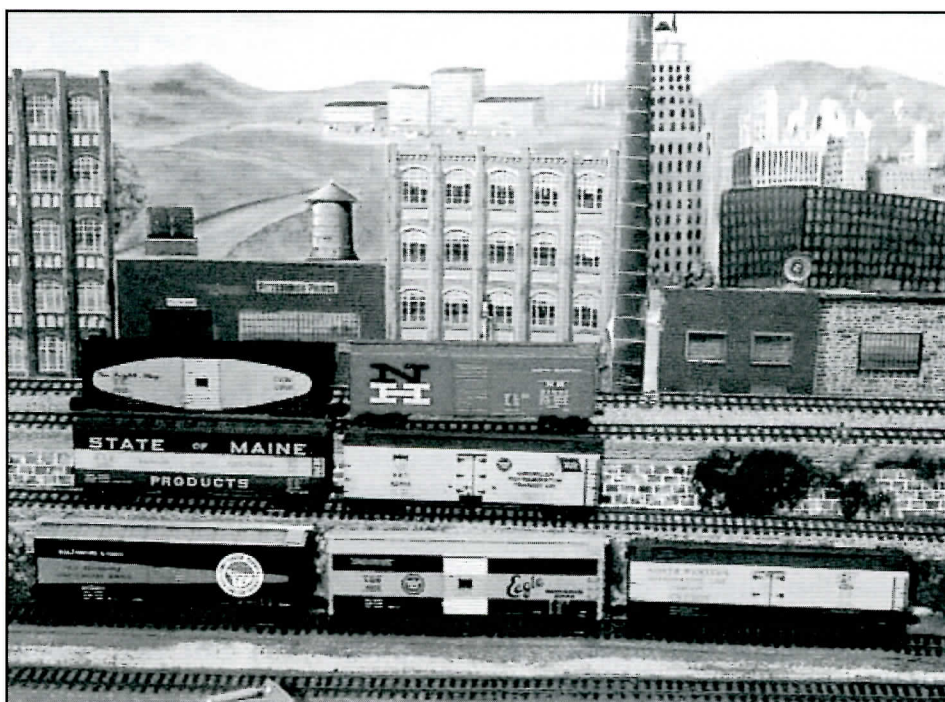
Here's a list of how I acquired the others. The NH orange car was a special run by S-Designs of the American Models (AM) box car. I think AM has run the car, too. The State of Maine is a production AM offering. The American Refrigerator Transport is an SHS reefer. The B&O Timesaver car was a special run for Chick's Hobbies of Gibbstown, NJ by Pacific Rail Shops (PRS). The MP Eagle is an SHS steel rebuild and the CNW reefer is an SHS reefer. I took a picture of the cars on my layout the way they

appear in the catalog. It's neat to have them all again.

The other thing I did was to duplicate the consist of the 1953 AF Chief freight which was set #K5374W. I used the standard scale conversion parts and trucks by ACE and KD #5 couplers. The collector value is hurt, but the cars are pretty common and cost about the same as new S cars so convert-

ing them was not a hard choice since they maintain a link to AF that I treasure more than the collector value. The cars include the 924 CNJ cement car, 929 MP stock car, 947 NP reefer (my favorite), 921 CB&Q hopper, 925 Gulf tank car, 922 GAEX box car and the 930 caboose. I took a picture of the cars on my layout in the order they appear in the 1953 catalog.

These little diversions keep me close to my American Flyer roots and I'm sure others have done similar things. It keeps the innocent childhood fun in the hobby as I get older.



ARMCO STEEL BUILDING

A Review

By Tom Robinson

I recently received the Armco Steel Building kit marketed by the NASG. The goal was to finish it by the NMRA National Train Show in Fort Lauderdale last summer where I was taking my *This is S* portable layout for display.

The kit consists of two roof pieces and four side pieces of a light gray styrene packaged in a plastic bag. Basic window and door details are cast into the plastic as well as the corrugated panels. No window material is included. A fairly detailed instruction sheet comes with the kit.

I prepared each of the plastic pieces by filing the bottoms smooth. If you intend to install window material or other interior detail you must shave off the small puller rings on the inside of the walls. As stated in the instructions, shrinking of the styrene occurs during the cooling process after being molded which causes each piece to be bowed outward. I straightened each piece by holding it with my fingers and reverse curling the piece until it remained straight.

After I was satisfied that each piece was smooth and straight, I was ready to proceed. I first glued a long side and short side together using Testors liquid plastic cement. I used a square block of wood to square the corners. I then glued the other long and short side together. After the two assemblies had set (about 10 minutes) I glued both assemblies together making sure that each corner was square. After the wall assembly was dry I carefully glued each roof section in place. Make sure the overhang of each piece is on the correct side. After the glue has set, assembly is essentially complete.

To paint the building I took it out-

side and placed it on a small drop cloth on our picnic table. I spray painted the roof with two coats of Testors flat white. After that had dried I turned the building upside down and sprayed the underside of the eaves with the same flat white. I let the roof dry overnight and then carefully masked the underside of the eaves with masking tape and turned the model upside down on the table. I sprayed the four side walls with Floquil Earth, again using two coats about thirty minutes apart. After that was thoroughly dry I trimmed the two windows and the door using Pily S Roof Brown and a very small brush.

At this point the building is complete with the parts supplied. I found some clear window material in my scrap box. I cut it slightly oversize for the windows and the door window. The instructions suggest you use clear enamel to apply the windows, but I could not get it to stick. I attached them using Testors liquid plastic cement. I suppose it depends on the window material you use. As the building still looked a little bare, I found some Danger, Employees Only signs in my scrap

box and glued them to the front siding and door of the building. The instructions mention that you might like to construct styrene or brass gutters, but after experimenting briefly I decided that such a small building probably wouldn't have gutters anyway. Although I do not weather the structures on my portable layout because I am trying to demonstrate basic products as they are marketed, this building would lend itself to such an effort.

I place the building on an inside spur siding with a piece of sheet of Vinylbed under it to simulate a gravel base and made it part of my Lehigh Valley Models - J. Harry Jones Coal Company scene.

This is a short one or two night project that takes about two hours, not counting the time for each coat of paint to dry. It results in a nice lineside structure which provides increased interest for your S gauge layout. I encourage everyone to support the NASG in this endeavor or to provide true S scale structure kits at a reasonable price. It's 20 bucks.



Tom Robinson built the NASG Armco steel building and placed it on his portable layout where it was seen at the NMRA convention in Fort Lauderdale, Florida,, last summer. Photo by Tom Robinson

Meet an S Gauger

Ron Schlicht

And His American Flyer Electric Locomotives

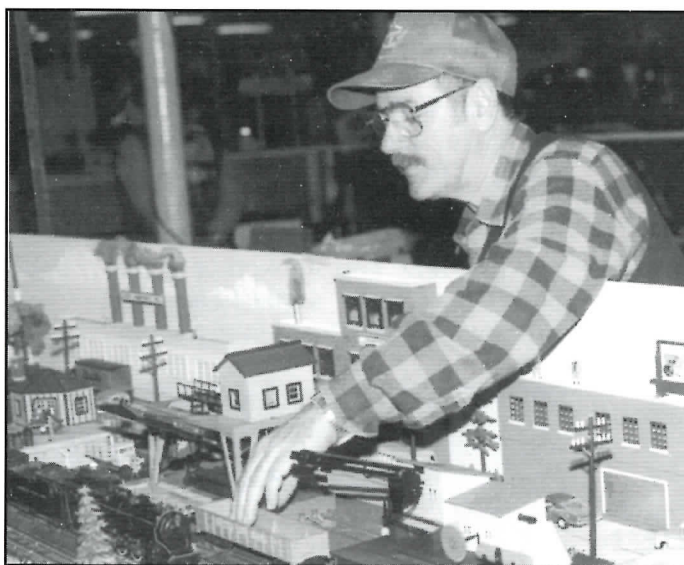
No, he's not Tom Swift, but his AF layout, detailed plastic buildings and lots of staged figures are a wonder to behold. His layout will be on tour at the 2003 NASG convention.

General Facts:

The overall size of the layout is approximately 185 square feet, consisting of five 5 ft. X 6 ft. tables, with two connecting pieces. There are over 30 American Flyer accessories, of which 20-plus are operating. Not included are the 5 operating uncouplers and 22 remote control switch tracks. The entire layout is powered by one American Flyer 30B, 300 watt transformer and runs on A.C. Gilbert American Flyer track with rubber roadbed. The lighting is powered by separate 250 and 75-watt transformers. The two crossover tracks are modified AF switches with the operating mechanisms mounted under the table. They were custom built by a friend and are undoubtedly, the only switches of their kind in the world. In general, an attempt has been made to cover most of the American Flyer switch boxes. The camouflage varies from lichen, Plasticville switch towers, to scratch built structures.

The majority of the structures featured, are the "Plasticville" classics, along with some K-Line buildings, and a few kit-bashed buildings. There are over 50 Plasticville structures with an innumerable amount of the small Plasticville accessories. If you

look in the Plasticville Price Guide you will find that there are items from every page. (Excluded are the Marx, Litteltown, etc. items listed in the book. Some of those are on the display shelves). Many of the structures, were items that I received as Christmas gifts over my childhood, which is still an ongoing endeavor. Most of the others were picked up over the last few years at swap meets. All of the structures have been painted, some just a little, to enhance their



Ron Schlicht also has 20 feet of AF modules used in the Badgerland layout.

appearance, and some completely, because they were such gosh-awful, ugly, colors. Prior to the expansion of the layout, many people felt that the trains appeared to be secondary to the Plasticville. All of the structures, scenery, roads, and what ever, are removable. Nothing is permanently affixed to the base layout; everything picks up and has been rearranged on various occasions.

The Little People:

There are "over 2,000" people on the layout. These represent various manufacturers, from Plasticville, K-Line, Preiser, Merton, Artista, Marx, Litteltown, Model Power, etc. etc. etc. Many of the figures are from manufacturers unknown. About 2 dozen of the suppliers, are known. Some were free, some were bought as gifts and some were scavenged out of scrap boxes at hobby shops. The cost has ranged from less than three cents apiece to over \$3.50 each. The scale of the people varies slightly, ranging from true S Gauge to 1/43. Some HO figures have been used as children. Approximately 10% of the figures were given to me by friends, because they know of my interest in figurines. The amount of time spent modifying, painting and placing the "little people" represents "more time", than has been spent on the rest of the entire layout. From interchanging torsos, decapitations, the trading of external limbs, bending, twisting, filing and carving, anything to make identical figurines look considerably different, I've spent more than two or three nights on one person. When people ask my wife what I do for a living, I've told her to tell them that I'm a plastic surgeon. (It's not true, but it sounds impressive.) The placing of a completed figure may take a half hour or more. I look at them from every angle pos-



This sign is dated. Ron says he now has a population of 2001.

sible and sometimes only a 1/8-inch movement, in one direction or another, will make the difference in the final, "satisfactory" placement.

You might say I'm overly picky. I've purchased figures knowing at the time of purchase, where they were going to be placed on the layout, to within one half inch of their final placement. I've also had some figures for years before they found a home on the layout. Some of the figures on the layout actually have names, for one reason or another. There are also some small dioramas built inside some of the buildings, like the ballet school in the five-story apartment building. There are other rooms with a little more "adult theme". Many of the groupings tell a story in one-way or another.

I hardly ever run the trains, the little people have consumed most of my time. In the future I plan on running some of the shelf engines and stock that have "never" been placed on the tracks.

Vehicles:

Another point of interest is the amount of vehicles that are on the layout, there are over 160 vehicles

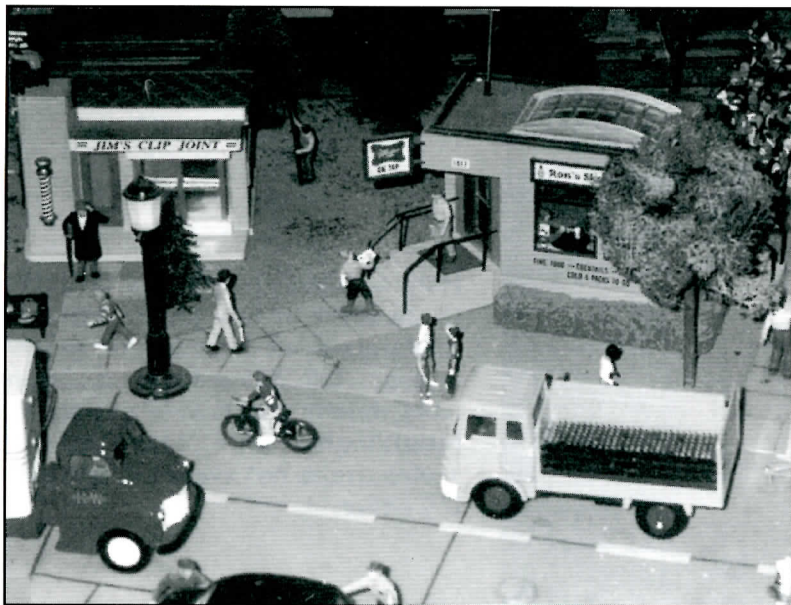
ranging from cars to trucks, buses, tractors and motorcycles, but not including airplanes, boats or bicycles, which are in addition to that amount. I've seen many layouts with various means of transportation on the highways and byways. Most of these vehicles were driven by either ghosts, goblins or the invisible man. Even though some cars had to have the chassis drilled out, there are over 200 people (drivers or passengers), in the vehicles on my roads. Fitting a figure into a car can take up to an entire evening or two.

Highlights:

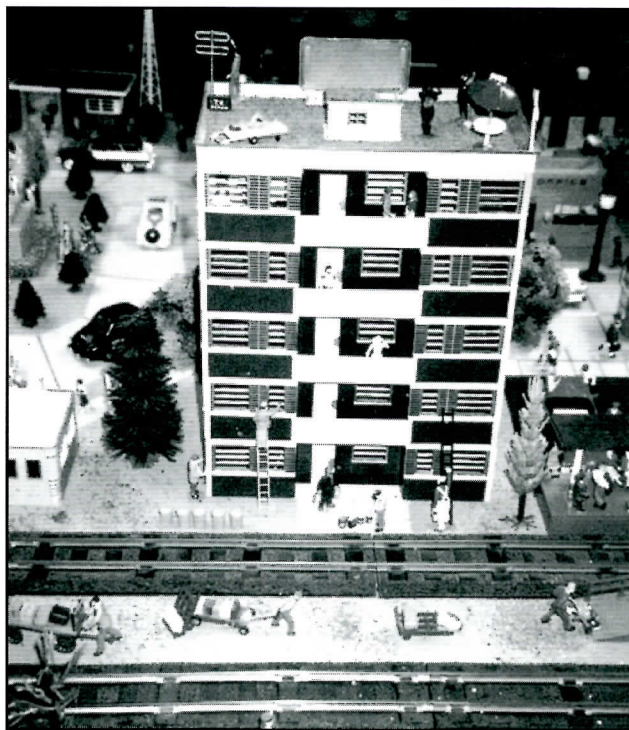
On almost everyone's layout, the modeler has their own favorite areas, some may be large, and some may seem insignificant to the observers. The following are areas are those that I feel are particular, unique points of interest, at least to me:

- 1) The bandstand concert in the municipal circle with spectators. Note, members of armed forces and folding chairs. The Kennedy Limo fit well in this setting.
- 2) The baseball game and spectators. Scratch built bleachers.

- 3) The Union Station loading platforms with passengers.
- 4) The automobile accident.
- 5) The hobo village.
- 6) The Frosty Bar park & greenhouse nursery.
- 7) The wedding.
- 8) The cemetery. (Gravestones made from plastic knives, forks, spoons, Popsicle sticks, wire nuts, pieces of wood and miscellaneous junk.)
- 9) The Plasticville School. (Front door and playground)
- 10) The park next to the bank.
- 11) The big checker game at the sand tower.
- 12) The war memorial.
- 13) McDonalds billboard painters.
- 14) The "1,000th" person placed on the layout is the roofer. The "1,500th" person placed on the layout is the Superman. The "2,000th" person placed on the layout is "me".
- 15) The backdrop. All of the structures (12) were constructed from broken Plasticville parts, miscellaneous scrap materials and junk that I had lying around the basement. The total Cost of the structures was less than \$10.00. Believe it.



Reconfiguring plastic structures is a Schlicht hallmark. The Barbarshop is a piece of a Plasticville (large) gas station. The tavern is a modified Plasticville corner store.



Ron created this hi-rise apartment building by stacking Plasticville apartments. Even the interior is lit and detailed.

Photos by Jeff Madden



Ron Schlict's layout features American Flyer, Plasticville and lots of little people and vehicles. *Top* - a Northern blasts by a Plasticville signal tower on Ron's neat multi-track mainline. Note how building flats are propped against the backdrop.



Left - Ron combines a Seaboard coaler with two Plasticville ones to create this active and interesting industrial scene. Flats are really effective in this straight on view. Lots of details here - signs, lights, staged figures.

Photos by Jeff Madden

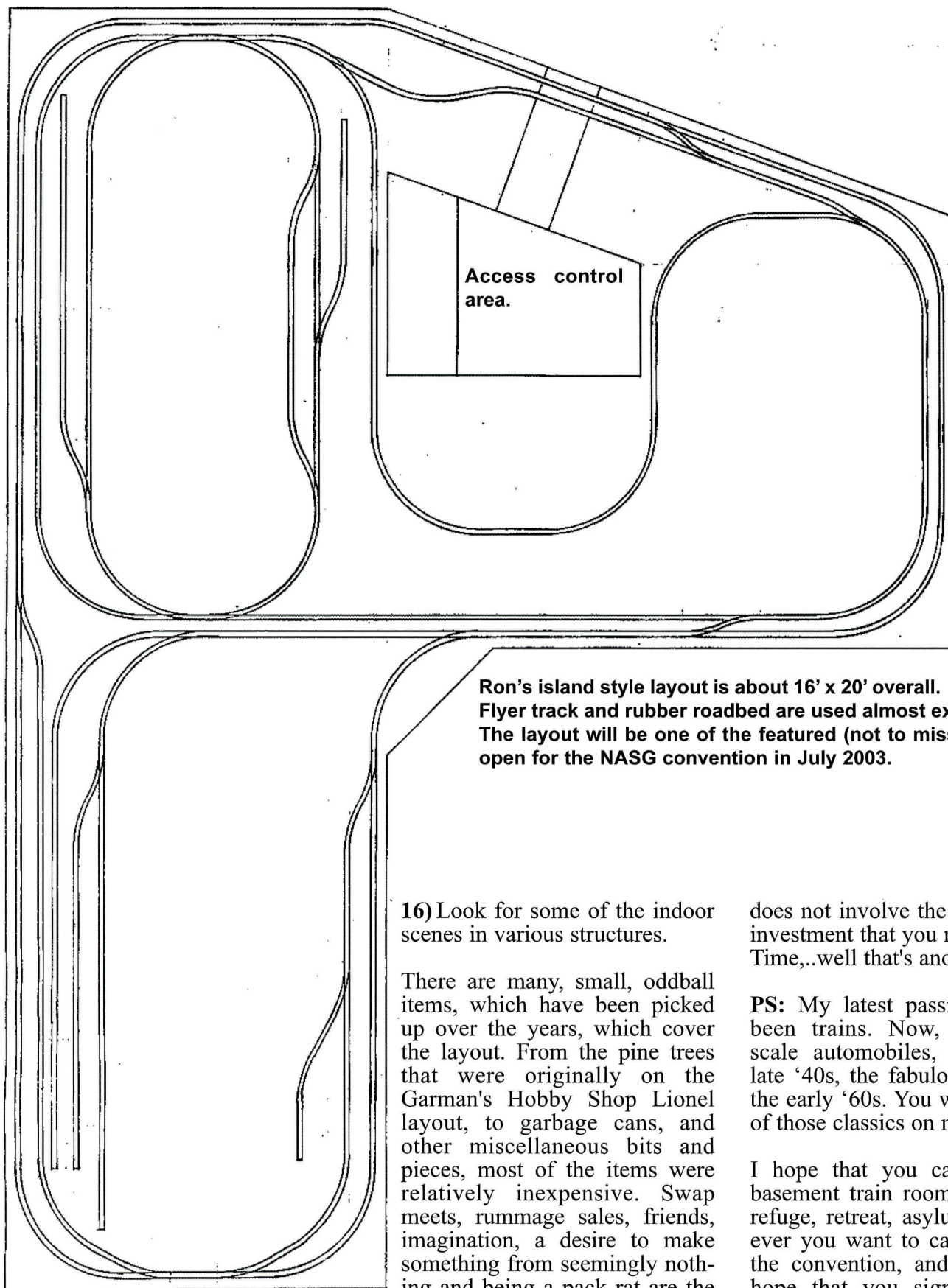


Holy smokes, there's lots of detail to discover in this photo: rooftop, playground, oil drum loader, greenhouse, tall office building. Ron uses mostly Plasticville structures intermingled with Flyer accessories. He is not averse to kitbashing either.



Top - an American Models Milwaukee Road American Models Pacific makes a guest appearance on Ron's Flyer layout and is coming up to a weathered up Plasticville Hobo Camp. *Below* is Ron's All-American town square complete with war memorial and band - it must be Memorial Day or July 4th. A little confession here. Ron uses 1/43rd vehicles and figures because he likes them, and because when he started there wasn't much available in 1/64. Regardless, nobody really notices. Viewers are always in awe at the detail. *Photos - Jeff Madden*





Ron's island style layout is about 16' x 20' overall. American Flyer track and rubber roadbed are used almost exclusively. The layout will be one of the featured (not to miss) layouts open for the NASG convention in July 2003.

16) Look for some of the indoor scenes in various structures.

There are many, small, oddball items, which have been picked up over the years, which cover the layout. From the pine trees that were originally on the Garman's Hobby Shop Lionel layout, to garbage cans, and other miscellaneous bits and pieces, most of the items were relatively inexpensive. Swap meets, rummage sales, friends, imagination, a desire to make something from seemingly nothing and being a pack rat are the things that build a layout. A layout does "not" have to cost a fortune to build; at least it didn't when I started. What you see,

does not involve the huge dollar investment that you might think. Time,..well that's another story.

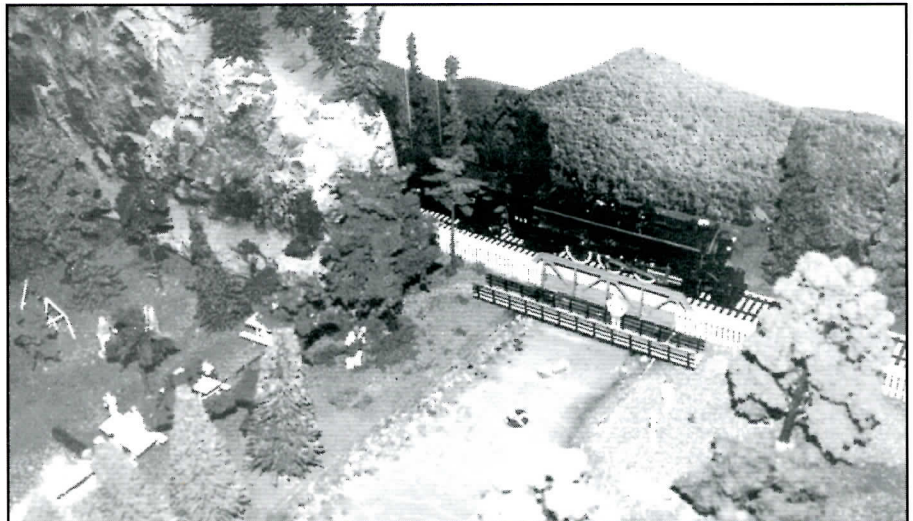
PS: My latest passion has not been trains. Now, it's 1/43rd scale automobiles, particularly late '40s, the fabulous '50s and the early '60s. You will see a lot of those classics on my layout.

I hope that you can visit my basement train room, sanctuary, refuge, retreat, asylum or whatever you want to call it, during the convention, and I certainly hope that you sign the guest ledger.

2002 Fall S Fest Roundup



A Fall S Fest roundup. Above are two S trains running around the Holiday Inn fountain - talk about getting your attention. *Right above-* is Tom Hodgson of American Hi-Rail demonstrating gravity defying PA - it really works. Center is a scene on Dave Lull's layout (DSL Buildings). These are his, of course, but the layout is really neat. Below is Bob Pardington of the Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers next to a photo of his detailed hi-rail layout which was on display at the Fall S Fest. *Photos by Jeff Madden*



Interiors for your American Models Heavyweights

By Jerry Poniatowski, photos by the author.

I just had to get this into print. I had been talking about doing this myself. I even got the extra interiors (Budd car ones) from American Models but haven't tackled the project yet. When I was at the NASG convention this past summer, I noticed that Jerry did a coach. He agreed to share his techniques, and here it is. We'll both try to provide

updates as this project goes to other cars or we come up with other ideas. - Jeff

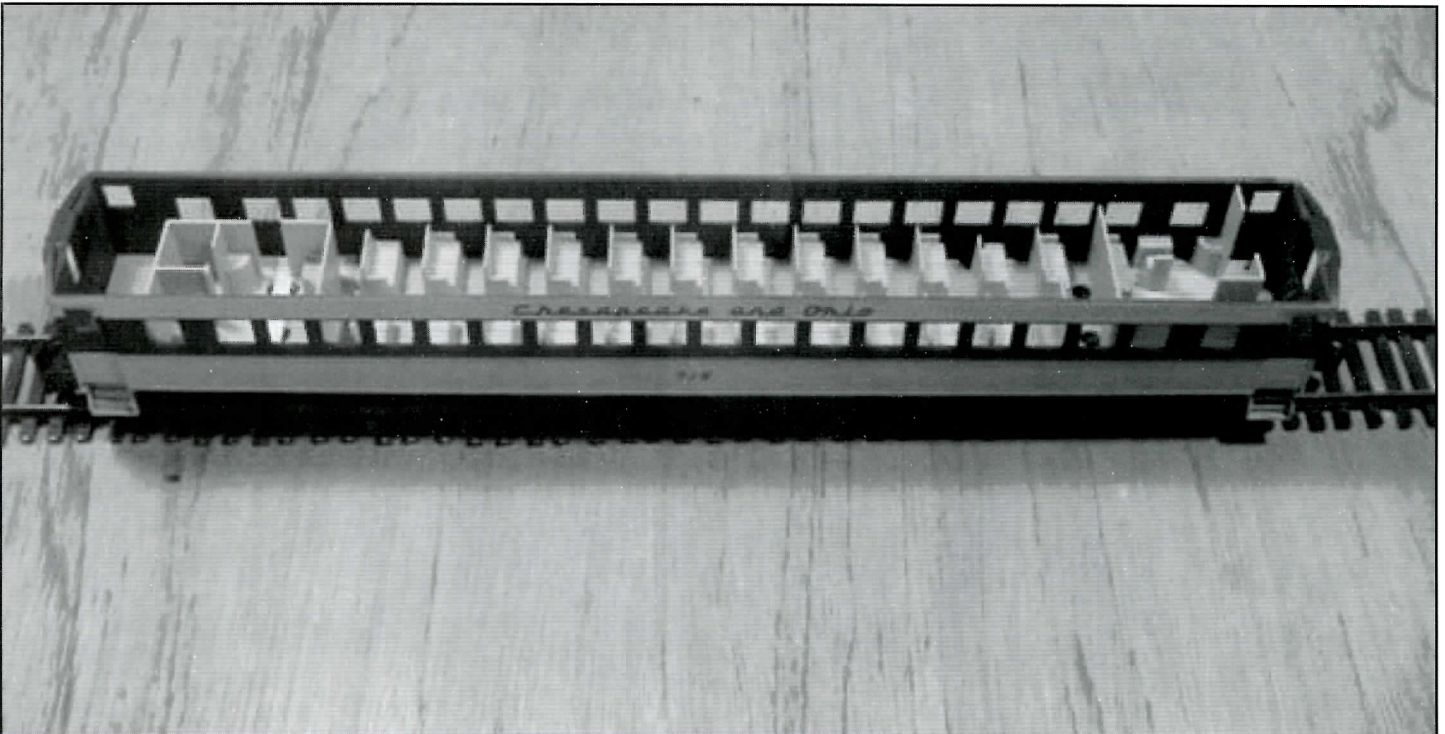
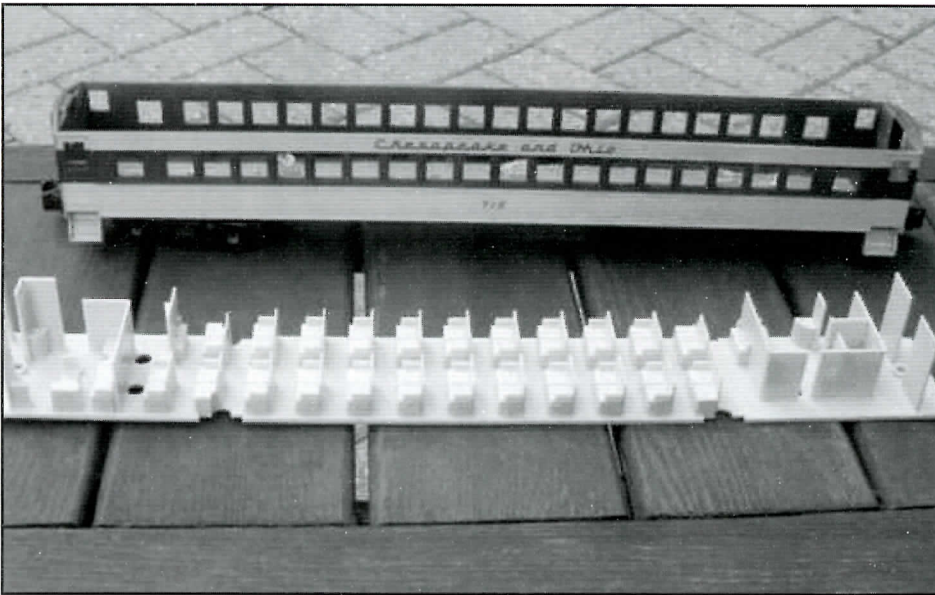
In Jerry's words: I trimmed about .030" from each edge of the molded interior casting. It was just enough to fit the heavyweight body. I used my table saw with a carbide blade. It ended up just skinning plastic from the outside

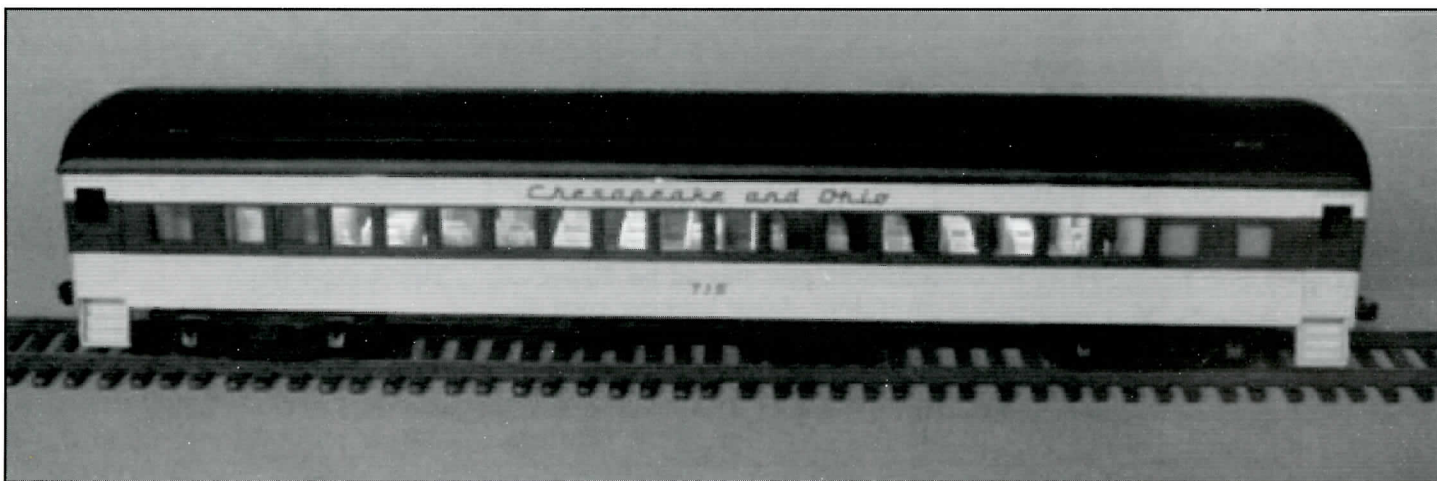
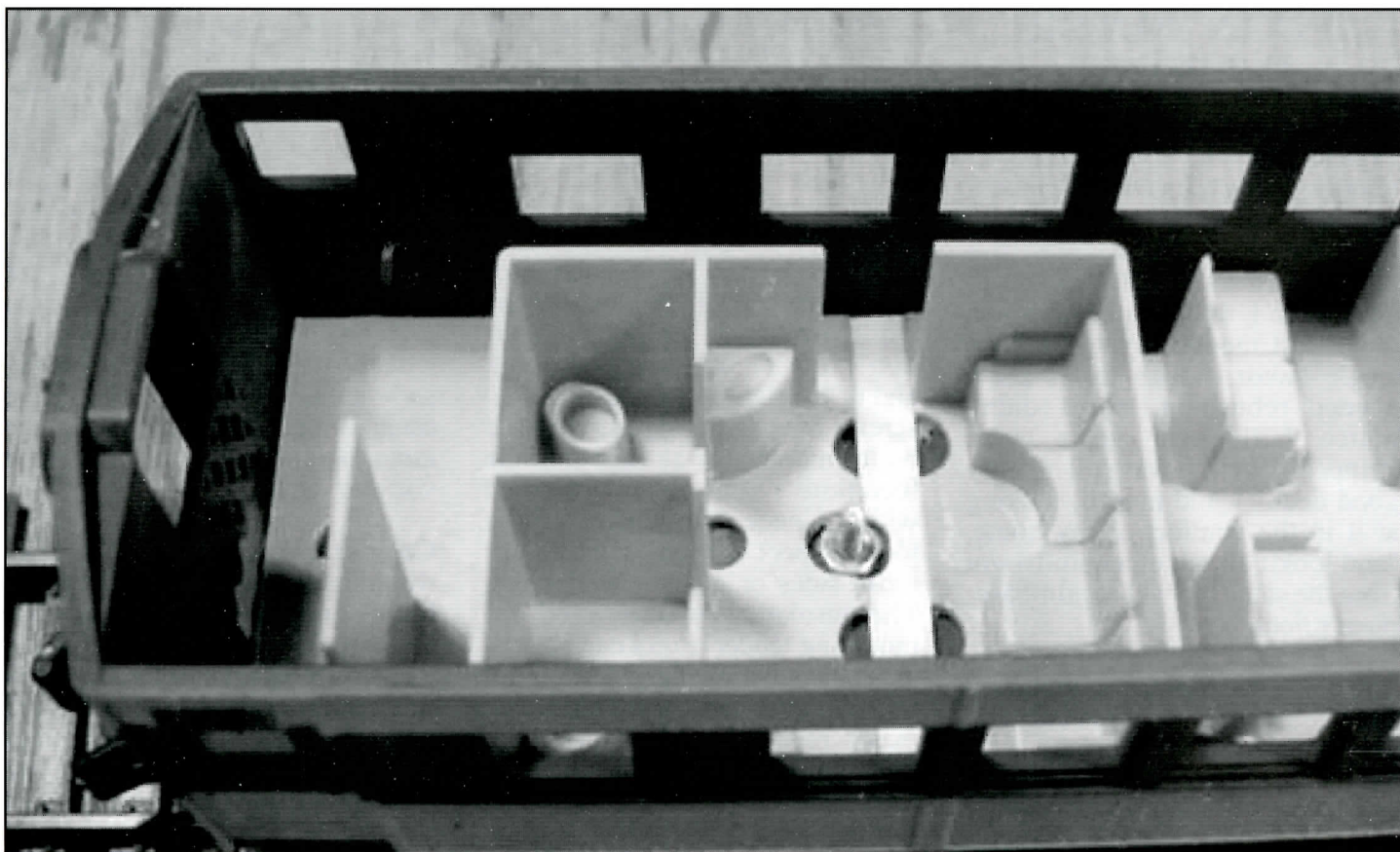
armrests of the seats. Since they are against the wall, you can't see it when installed.

Look at the photo taken outside (remember that it's reversed from the other two). On the right, I removed the two bulkheads for use later plus about a half inch of floor. You have to line up the bulkheads with the windows so you don't get a bulkhead at a window opening, but that's not hard.

Now look at the interior installed full length. I made a cut at the door in the left bathroom to make the interior longer and the door opening bigger (white plastic, but it could have been a section of floor cut from the other side). Another cut was made just to the right of the left hand bathroom bulkhead to shorten the floor. These cuts were made to align the right hand lounge bulkhead with the windows.

Now look at the detail picture. I placed one of the removed bulkheads to give an equipment place





just inside the left vestibule. You can see the hole for clearance for the truck mounting screws. A brass tube extended the lighting module included with the car to just inside the clerestory of the roof.

There were other small things done like blackening of the circuit board to block light and mounting the window/roof assembly different.

Use long screws in the four corners of the floor into styrene blocks hid-

den by sides. Glue blocks to the roof casting.

I think Jerry trimmed off the clear plastic part of much of the window glass and installed separate pieces as the original configuration fit down into the floor. Further work would include pre-painting the interior a solid color to match the prototype. I would recommend a coach green, medium blue, gray or whatever. Figures could be added, of course. The unpainted packet of unpainted figures (many

sitting) offered by MTH would fit the bill - after painting, naturally. The figures are O-27 in the Rail King line. There are 120 of them for about \$20-30. - Jeff

Many of you saw Jerry's car running around on the COSG layout, and in the contest room next to his BL2. Refer back to my article on adding diaphragms and 6 wheel trucks to an AM coach in a previous Dispatch. - Jeff

FIXIN' FLYER

by David Dewey

It was the train show lighting "Yeah, that's it; it was the bad lighting at the train show," you tell yourself (or your buddies) when you find that the "Great Deal" you bought wasn't after all. Yep, we all do it, even I, the Train Doctor--just did it last month buying an Alco single motor chassis that I knew needed rebushing, but I didn't notice both axle gears were stripped! "Well, it was still a pretty good deal," I told myself, looking at it in the comfort of my home, "and lookit all the other stuff I got from the same guy at bargain-basement prices."

Since it is the Holidays, and train show "season," I reasoned this would make an interesting short article that might save you some grief (Part 3 of track switch repairs is too long--next time!).

So, here you are at the show, and you have found a treasure! OK, deep breaths, relax, think clearly. "I have to inspect this to make certain it is what I want," you SHOULD be saying to yourself (I know the other voice in your head is saying, "Quick! Get it before someone else sees it, or the guy changes his price--it's a STEAL!"--ignore this voice!). You want to avoid that post-meet feeling when you are safely at home, relaxed, looking at your latest treasure, only to find a number of flaws you didn't see at the show.

Since this column is primarily about operating our AF, my criteria will be concentrated on that part, although I will note things to look at cosmetically.

Steam engines are fairly straightforward but still need inspection. That 286 that caught your eye looks great, both pilot steps are there, bell and safety valve plating looks good, and the lettering is crisp, so now you need to turn it over. What wear shows on the

driver tires? You can even spot the locomotive that is run under a tree clockwise every year; the left front tire will have wear in its flange surface! (Elementary, my dear Watson!) Do the wheels rock much, showing wear in the chassis (yep, even steamers can need rebushing). Are any of the tires loose from the wheels, and are the white insulators in good condition? Are all the screws present, and of the right kind? Odd-colored screws could be a sign of cracked boiler mounts, or at least that the locomotive has been "fiddled with." Check the tender screws too. Inspect the tender trucks for loose sides or other irregularities. The insulating washer used for mounting tender trucks can be separating, and allow the trucks to fall out of the tender floor. This isn't a major repair, but it is one more thing you'll have to do the locomotive. Rock the drivers back and forth and see how much play there is in the motor; there should be some, but not a lot. I don't have a dimension to give you for that, but you will get a feel for how much is "about right" by looking at some good-running engines.

Diesels have similar things to watch for. Cracked screw holes and worn chassis bushings are common, and should be inspected carefully. After looking over the locomotive for damage signs, I then turn it over and check the motor areas by rocking the wheels, checking for slop in the bearings. Then (and this is what I forgot to do on that single-motor chassis!) see if the wheels turn. You should get a small amount, which is the armature shaft endplay. I once bought a GP fairly cheaply at a show because the wheels spun, so we both assumed it needed some major surgery. After I got home, I discovered the armature bearing straps were missing, and that was all that was really wrong with it (I guess that makes up for that Alco chassis?). Check the slider shoes for excessive wear; they are often a good gauge of how much the loco-

motive has been run.

Corrosion is sometimes found when inspecting locomotives. While it is a sign of humid storage, it is not always related to the operating condition of the loco. Light surface corrosion can be cleaned and the part refinished. Heavy corrosion may require more work, and can destroy the operating parts. This one is hard to write about, as it really does require the "hands-on" approach. Generally, if the usual drive wheel test shows the motor is still not bound up, then you can repair it.

Cosmetic inspections for cars would include looking for any broken or missing parts, such as steps on a tank or hopper car. Brake wheels are often missing on box-cars/reefers. Check roof walks for munched corners, as they stick out the farthest on a car, so often are damaged. High spots on any piece are where you often find paint rubbed through. Don't forget to check the couplers for damage too.

Hopefully this article will help you avoid that "post-meet melancholy." Don't forget, you can always claim, "It was the bad lighting in the trading hall, yep, that's it, the bad lighting!" Now, where did I put my glasses??
Tip-O-the-Month

Don't like tinsel wound around your train truck axles? Suggest that the tree looks better without it, and it prevents the, "You're not doing it right!" arguments from the kids. Who knows, it might work! (if it isn't obvious; I need some more tips--send 'em in!)

As always, your thoughts, suggestions, or questions are welcomed. You can contact me at djdewey@cncnet.com or at 3435 Myers St., Oroville, CA 95966. Happy Holidays!

Pres. Message from page 4

Another way to promote S is by exchanging rail passes with other modelers. This is an old tradition that has been updated by the use of "electronic rail passes". This is done by having the railpass for your pike on a computer and then emailing the pass to the recipient. I have been doing this for years now and have exchanged rail passes with modelers in Germany, UK, Canada, Belgium, Sweden, Australia, Switzerland, South Africa and The Philippines. You can check them out at <http://s-scalettrains.com/pwrr/webdoc8.htm>. As far as I know, I'm the only S scaler doing it so why not find out how you can take part in this exciting new way to communicate with other model railroaders, and let them know about S in the process. The NMRA takes an active part in the electronic rail pass program and you can find out more by emailing the person in charge, W. Robert Stobbe the NMRA Pass Exchange Chairman at rstob@hilconet.com. Someone on the promotions committee could design or get someone to design an electronic railpass for the NASG.

There are many private websites that actively promote S. I mentioned www.s-scalettrains.com, but there's some other websites for you to visit: Craig O'Connell maintains a great site at <http://www.trainweb.org/crocon/sscale.html>. Paul Yorke won the 2002 Bernie Thomas award for the work he's put in on creating chat lists like I

mentioned above and his own great site at <http://www.trainweb.org/s-trains/>.

I also maintain two websites for my own model railroad at www.innernet.net/rhoffman and www.s-scalettrains.com/pwrr.

If anyone knows of another S or SN3 layout featured on its own web site, let me know so I can help make it known to others.

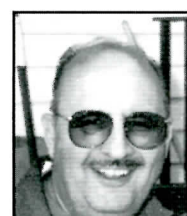
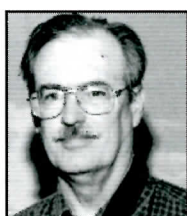
As you can see, we can do a lot to take advantage of space-age technology to advance S. I hope you can help us spread the word over the internet about the best scale.

"S"UNDRY ITEMS

From time to time the debate rages over whether or not to have joint conventions with the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). One big problem in having joint conventions is that the AF segment of our membership, along with many hi-railers, feels sort of left out and don't want to attend a convention that they feel is too "scale" oriented. I want to assure them that within our own convention, nothing is really any different. It would be a shame to miss out on all the good stuff because of a distrust of so much scale being present due to the NMRA part. Sometimes, though, perceptions like these can be erroneous. When I was in the New Jersey Division of the NMRA, we actually had AF and hi-rail layouts as part of the annual layout tour for Camden

County. Lionel was included, too. The visitors were there to see trains and there was a mix of HO scale, ON3 scale, O scale, O tinplate, S scale and S hi-rail. The NMRA is more like the NASG than you think when you realize how many HO'ers use code 100 snap track and so on. Also, being able to attend the National Train Show is another huge reason to have a joint convention. We like to schedule joint conventions every 4-5 years or so and I would encourage all our members to attend just like it was any other year. I promise that you won't be disappointed.

Since I once raised the issue of a special hi-rail coupler, some folks have mentioned the Kadee #805 O scale coupler. They claim that the coupler looks good proportionately compared to the ACG knuckle coupler and actually mates with the Kadee scale couplers we use like the #802 S-scale coupler and the #5 HO coupler and the AF AF/compatible coupler. I had a few of the #805 couplers on hand and soon proved that they were correct by testing them out. The lines are getting blurred between scale and hi-rail because of the quality of the hi-rail being made. Maybe someday we can celebrate what S has in common instead of the old "Scale" vs. "Hi-rail" stuff. Putting the AF compatible coupler on a diet would help to advance that day.



Seasons Greetings from your Dispatch Staff

From left to right: Bob Werre, David Dewey, David Heine, Jeff Madden, Terry Madden, David Pool, Bill Fraley, Ted Larson and Chuck Garman (on behalf of the Staff of MI Printing). Not pictured is Kent Singer. Check out page 3 to see who contributes what. The NASG thanks all for their efforts.

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

Our Club Sandwich will be a snack of a different sort this month in order to feature the Badgerland S Gaugers - sponsors of next summer's NASG convention, the recent Fall S Fest, the recent Spring Spree, S-West IV and a few minor items.

The **Badgerland S Gaugers** is a group of model railroading enthusiasts, primarily from the greater Milwaukee and Waukesha, WI areas. We also have a number of members from the Northern Illinois area, many of whom also belong to other S gauge clubs. Many of our members belong to the NASG and the NMRA. Our most distant member joins us from the U.K.

The Badgerland S Gaugers' purpose is to meet as often as possible in order to share interests in all facets of S gauge including American Flyer, S scale, hi-rail and S narrow gauge. The promotion of S gauge is pursued by all of its members. This is done via setting up displays, operating a modular train layout and distributing S literature at several yearly events including Trainfest in November and the Mad City (Madison) NMRA train show in February. The **BSG** organization is recognized and chartered by the State of Wisconsin as a non-profit organization.

During the model railroading season the **BSG** club holds monthly meetings at members' homes. The club also sponsors a monthly Train Trade Show (swap meet) at the Waukesha County Expo Center. The club Secretary/Editor (Ron Schlicht) sends out a regular newsletter which is also posted on the website, check it out - www.trainweb.org/bsg.

Most members support the annual Fall S Fest which is rotated among four Midwest cities including the Milwaukee area. The **BSG** hosted the 25th Anniversary Fall S Fest back in 2000 which also marked the 25th anniversary of the club itself. The other cities in the rotation are St. Louis, Chicago and Rockford/Beloit.

The **BSG** Model Railroad Club was established and founded by Chuck Porter, an avid S gauge enthusiast. The first mailing was sent out on October 8, 1975 to 32 individuals. Proposed was a meeting to get acquainted and see if there was any interest in forming a club. The first official meeting of the **Badgerland S Gaugers** was held on November 20, 1975. It was decided to meet again, and the rest is history.

The club welcomes new members. You can check the website or contact the **BSG** Secretary, 5274 South 49th, Greenfield, WI 5220 - 414-421-8512. The club hopes many of you can visit next summer for the Great S Show on Earth, July 9-13, 2003.

S-WEST IV

Howdy..."S"ince I enjoy reading about S events elsewhere in the country, I figure others might like to know what's going on out in this part of the world. I just got back from dropping Jettie Padgett off at the airport and have a few spare minutes to catch up on backlogged e-mails.

First of all, I'd like to state that NOT ONCE did John Foley leave the NASG display table at S-WEST IV. Of course, John lives back East and wasn't even here, but that is merely a minor detail. Gil Hulin manned the NASG table

complete with a pile of those corrugated metal structure kits as well as two built up models -- one of which was lettered for UP complete with logo. These really looked neat.

In the new product's department, I have been the "Acting Shill" for SouthWind in earlier e-mails and so will not repeat any of that information. See *New Products Report* this issue - Jeff

Ron Sebastian of Des Plaines Hobbies was there and let it be known that he is planning to release new S kits and re-release most of his older and existing S scale kits over the next 4-6 months. This includes the various more modern cars such as the FMC boxcar in both single door and double door versions. The test shot for the double door body was on display and looked very nice. The coal porter hopper car is also (I think) planned for release as well. Ron had the Budd trucks on sale and mentioned he has sold over 300 pair of them already. I seem to recall that Bill Wade of BTS also told me he had sold over 300 pair of Budd trucks several years ago. These trucks are made from the now infamous Budd Buddies tooling and are very nice indeed. While the kits come with plastic wheels, the sideframes are designed to accept NWSL metal wheelsets for those who prefer metal. Now if someone would step up to the plate with some full-length Budd cars, I could be a happy man. Also, the double-stack cars will be re-released soon. I felt that Ron was ready to address the S scale market once again and is taking positive action in that direction. Words of encouragement to Ron would probably be very helpful.

I looked at the American Hi-Rail S doodlebug and felt it represented a good starting point for a superdetailing project for a serious S scale model. It ran very slowly and smoothly and quietly and had an

acceptable basic body. Some of the details were oversize but could easily be replaced. Missing details could be added without difficulty. Also, the AF compatible wheels would have to be replaced with scale wheels.

The S-WEST IV convention ran smoothly without apparent problems. The dealer sales/exhibit area shut down so dealers could attend the layout visit tours. Everyone had smiles on their faces. I received many compliments regarding the large comfortable seats on the Greyhound-style buses. Numerous folks commented that the S FEST used school buses that were not much fun. Everyone felt the comfy and air conditioned buses was worth some extra cost.

Like S FEST, the S-WEST IV gathering did suffer from poor food service in the hotel coffee shop. The first morning, they ran out of oatmeal, bananas, grapefruit, and probably a few other things. Also, when I ordered my waffles, the waitress informed me they didn't have a waffle iron. Waffles had been crossed out on all the menus except for mine. Service was slow. The place was closed for lunch on Saturday without advance warning. And so forth....So if you are thinking of becoming involved in organizing an S event, it would be prudent to NOT assume that food service will magically take care of itself. Fortunately for S-WEST-IV, several other restaurants were in the local area within walking distance. That saved the day. Whew!!

The modular layouts ran fine, the layout visits were interesting and informative, and the clinics were well attended. This S-WEST IV event was the classical "S-family reunion" type of assemblage -- low key, no stress, pleasant, and very enjoyable. Sort of like rural countryside compared to downtown Manhattan. Hope to see you all at the next one. - "S"incerely...Ed L.

MILWAUKEE TRAINFEST REPORT

I have been trying to get caught up and have not had a chance to give a Milwaukee Trainfest report from Nov. 8-10. The new convention facility at the Wisconsin State Fairgrounds in West Allis, Wisconsin, is very nice and it was easy to load and unload for set up. I was very happy to see that we were set up next door to the Badgerland's club layout. This is a big plus if you are an S scale manufacturer. We had two 10 x 10 booths.

We set up three concentric loops of S Trax and ran our new passenger warbonnet Santa Fe F-7 pulling a string of our latest cars on the outer loop. The inside loop featured one of our starter sets showing all of the components. S was also represented by Des Plaines Hobbies and Scenery Unlimited. Both had large booths and seemed to be doing a good business. Ron Sebastian had a new kit for sale, a 20' Bulktaimer (DPS-358 UP & DPS-359 Alaska West Express) these include decals and sell for \$9.98 each (to order by phone call 800-264-1956).

I also saw some neat graffiti decals from "Scale Rail Graphics" Bill said he would make these in S scale for \$6 per set and he has several types.

You can check these out at: www.scalerailgraphics.com/graffiti1.htm and www.scalerailgraphics.com/31047a.htm

We also saw the world's nicest trees. We had reported on these in September after seeing them at the International Hobby and Model show in Chicago. At that time they were expecting a November delivery. Well, they are now on there way in a container. If you have not visited their site, you should take a look at some really great deciduous trees at: <http://www.scale-trees.com/scaletrees.html>

One last note. I did not realize how different this show is compared to other shows until I had a chance to walk around. There are no used trains for sale. At first I thought it was due to the policy of only allowing hobby shops and manufacturers to have tables or booths. Later, I was told that it is the show policy that the hobby shops not sell used trains. I guess the best thing about this show is the 18,000 visitors to which we were able to promote S scale. We are planning on returning next year, except we will bring more literature (we ran out after a few hours on Saturday morning), more starter sets (we did not have enough of these to sell either), and I am hoping to have the 2004 catalog by then too.

PS I would like to thank the Badgerland club for coming a day early and being next to our display (don't forget to register for the NASG 2003 convention that they are hosting) and the regular crew of volunteers who are so kind to help Mike and I - Will Holt, Bill Bateman, Sam McCoy and Joel Lebovitz (also Ron and Susan Sebastian for helping with those ever so important logistics).
- Don Thompson

FALL S FEST RECAP

Dear S Folk, Another club member (Larry) and I headed off early on Friday morning via Southwest Air and arrived in Chicago about 10 a.m. without any delay. We picked up our luggage and a rental car and proceeded to the event hotel, again without much trouble. We briefly poked around in the convention area and quickly decided we were merely in the way of vendors getting set up in time for the 2 p.m. start. So, we headed off to the hotel restaurant to grab some lunch. We didn't encounter the problems that others have described on Friday evening. We managed to get a decent dinner in a timely fashion at the local Cracker Barrel, though it was diffi-

cult to find, despite being directly across the road from the hotel (Tinley Park has ridiculous sign restrictions). We wandered back to the show room. Brief news descriptions for some selected vendors follow.

American HiRail - Tom Hodgson is alive and well. I have read and heard about this vendor, but have never seen his product until now. Some very nice stuff. He had the AeroTrain, PAs, Hiawatha (Atlantic) conversion kits with passenger cars, and a neat little "doodlebug" painted up for several different road names (RTR). I picked up a Dash-8 shell and Larry acquired a very nice Dreyfus Hudson shell with tender. **American Models** - Supposed to be there, but I never could find them. Not to worry. There was plenty of AM product available at other vendors. **Cryer Gray Foundry** - They had O scale models of the hoppers they plan to offer in S. Simply gorgeous. Incredible detail. **Des Plaines Hobbies/S Scale America** - Ron Sebastian had his tank cars and hoppers, as well as an excellent selection of s decals available. I picked a UP set for my Dash-8.

John Huster - He had the new selection of SHS-produced cars on display. They were very tempting. **Model Tech** - A new manufacturer for me. They propose to produce some very nice-looking wooden structure kits. **NASG** - John Foley had the new NASG building (modern shed), as well as a mock up of the next modular offering. Looks like a product S modelers will be interested in. **Old Motor Trucks** - I had read about this guy in the *Dispatch* from the NASG convention this summer (I think). He had some gorgeous models and very unique. These are custom-built and pricey. But you won't find them in the local WalMart. I sprang for a tank truck. **Port Lines Hobbies** - Doug Peck had his usual complete line of parts and other goodies on display. I picked up the

retrofit gear for the MTH coal loader.

Putt Trains - It was great to finally meet Terry Putt. The new Dockside (0-4-0) looked and ran great. I picked up a Rex tender that I have been wanting for some time. **R.S.S.V.P. Models** - Jerry Rivet was one of the high points of the '98 NASG convention in Worcester, MA for me, so it was great to see him again. He had a whole bunch of gorgeous Downs (MMT) tank cars with him. Since I am partial to tank cars, I had to pick some more up. I am convinced that if S modelers could see these cars one-on-one, they would fly off the shelves. **River Raisin Models** - Dan and Jim had the new steam engines. Very nice. Also, they were running the Turbine on SHS S trax (29" radius). Simply stunning. I am mainly partial to MoPac, but it got me to thinking.

S Helper Service - Always great to visit with Robin and Don Thompson. I scored some catalogs and newsletters for show distribution. Now that Don is "retired", he will get back to work on the steam engine (2-8-0). I also saw the new composite hopper and steel-roofed reefers. They are as beautiful in person as they appear in the photos. Due to the recent dock unloading problems on the West Coast, the F-7s will be delayed (hopefully not too long). The 2003 catalog should be out soon. **Scenery Unlimited (HH Pub.)** - I picked up a copy of the new book, *American Flyer: Classic Toy Trains* and had it signed by a co-author. Very nice book if you are interested in the history of AF. It is not a guide book.

Some general observations on the vendor/trading room activities. My interest in AF began to wane several years ago, but if AF is your thing, this was Valhalla. I have never seen so much AF product sitting on tables. In Louisiana, we are lucky to see maybe one table of this kind of stuff at a local show.

The prices for most seemed somewhat high to me, but, admittedly, I am not an active collector and have never been to York. There were some deals to be had, but you had to search them out. Larry scored a good deal on some structure kits. John Heck seemed to be doing decent business. As usual, the LTI AF product did not seem to move.

Show Layouts - The lobby displays were very interesting, especially the All Aboard panel layout. I have seen a few examples of these, but this was a spectacular display of the last gasp of Gilbert's creative forces. I also greatly enjoyed the Sn3 and SMSG layouts. **Train Races** - I have read about this activity, but never witnessed it. The modular layout was turned into a drag strip. All that was missing was the countdown light sequence. Seemed to me that folks were having fun with their toy trains, which is what they were built for.

Clinics - The high point here for me was the presentation by Charlie Wickhorst. After his regular act, he proceeded to give a hands-on tutorial on modeling car loads. Some very creative modeling here that gave me a lot of ideas to improve my own modeling efforts. He is an NMRA guy and gives this presentation mostly for their functions. IMHO, NASG should be more closely allied with NMRA (I realize this statement will be controversial for some).

Layout Tours - We had limited time, but managed to have a great time with the ones we saw. The premier layout that I saw was Bernie Levine's Sn3 work. Excellent modeling in a relatively small space. Attendees who passed it up missed a good one. Jeff Madden (editor of *NASG Dispatch*) was there as well, shooting some photos, so maybe we will see a feature on this fabulous layout in a future *Dispatch*. The Illinois Live Steamers setup was a real hoot. The rides were a blast

and some of the models were very impressive (especially a Hudson). We finished up with Chuck West's layout in Des Plaines. He had an amazing array of brass engines on display and in immaculate working order, including the infamous Sunset Big Boy. And guess who else was there? Jim Kindraka (River Raisin) with that stunning Turbine. We got some more shots of it (hope they turn out). All too soon, it was time to blast back to the airport and head back home.

Was this year's S Fest a perfect S doux (event)? No. But you have to ask yourself the following questions. Did I have a good time? Would I come back? For me, the answer to both questions is a resounding YES. I am aware of how much planning and work it takes to pull something like this off. My hat is off to the CASG and all who helped them with running the Fest. It was my first, but, hopefully, not the last. Thanks for a great time.

- Jay Mellon

Crescent City S Gaugers
New Orleans, LA

SECOND DAYTON SPRING SPREE

Last May 10 and 11, the Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG) hosted the 2002 Spring S Spree, their second, in Middletown, OH. It was held at the Manchester Inn, a delightful older hotel which drew many favorable comments from attendees. The Spree was well attended, with nearly 300 attendees, including 42 dealers.

Friday Morning Tour: To Cincinnati Union Terminal for a tour of the Cincinnati in Motion, S scale model railroad. The tour group got to see the layout as regular museum visitors, along with lots of kids, but then were taken behind the scenes and under the layout to see how it is all controlled and maintained. This delayed the trading room opening until 2 p.m., but many felt this was the highlight of the Spree.

Over 100 tables were available with the latest S gauge items plus lots of AF items. Action was brisk, and most dealers reported good sales. Later, 64 folks attended the buffet banquet followed by the speaker, Sam Ashworth, a member of the Middletown Historical Society, who discussed "Middletown Historic Transportation." After that, Bob Bernard, a cousin to Maury Romer (Gilbert Engineering) spoke on Gilbert history and artifacts. Bob also brought several display items including the famous "cocktail shaker" used as the definitive red color for the Erector sets. Bob really entertained the crowd with his tales of Maury Romer and A.C. Gilbert.

Layouts: Three S layouts were available for viewing at the hotel included the COSG hi-rail, 2-level layout; Bob Pardington's narrow and well-scenicked Hi-rail layout. Chris Burger's Christmas layout was also on display at the Middletown Historical Society's location just down the street. Bob Guckian and Norm Hass of the Miami Valley S Gaugers also had their home layouts open Saturday afternoon.

Clinics: There was a Saturday morning Manufacturer's Forum plus clinics by Frank Timko (Installing can motors in AF steamers); Roger Carp, CTT assoc. editor, ("Which Came First - Lionel or AF"); and Alan Evans with "Repairing American Models Locomotives."

Contest Winners: Diesel engines - Jack Kramer of Freemont, OH; Freight/Caboose - Toney Garza of Sidney, OH; Passenger - Gary Graff of Bethlehem, PA; Best of Show - Ladd Houda of Brandon, FL.

Train Races: The train races were conducted by Rob Berridge of the COSG and were held outside. Winners were Jack

McLaughlin, Dublin, OH, AF stock steam; Ditto for AF stock diesel; Steve McKnight, Murfreesboro, TN, AF steam modified; Alan Evans, Columbus, OH, unlimited category.

In addition, there were some great bargains available at the silent auction. Jim Spikowski won the grand prize of a pair of American Models E8s. Thanks go to the wives and girlfriends of the MVSG who hosted the hospitality room.

- Thomas Hartum

NEW CLUB:

Downeast S Gauge Railroaders, Eugene Fletcher, 59 Adams Rd., Brunswick, ME 04011-3925.

VISITORS WELCOME:

H.W. Duivenbode of Canada welcomes visitors (call ahead) to his layout mentioned in the first paragraph of the Club Sandwich in the June, 2002, *Dispatch*. The S layout is currently 27 by 15 feet and features real water in a model canal and lake. Hank lives in Innerkip in Ontario, Canada and can be reached at 219-469-3695. I'm not sure how far away he is from Toronto where next year's NMRA convention will be held in July.

21st FALL GET-TOGETHER

The recent Fall S Get-Together was held at the Christ Episcopal Church Hall in South Amboy, NJ. As usual the NASG table was set up. The Central Jersey club had their layout running with lots of new items running on it. In attendance also were River Raisin, Pennnsy S Models, Portlines, RSSVP, Hoquat, S-Designs, SSL&S, SHS, Banta and others. We all were able to take a trip over to SHS's headquarters. They have expanded again. Many goodies were for sale. As usual Howie Waelder bent our ears about his career as a Long Island Railroad Engineer. If you've never attended the Get-Together, consider it.

- John Foley

EXTRA BOARD

B&O RR HISTORICAL

The B&ORHS had a report in their recent newsletter by Paul Schilling (S scaler??) which listed most of the recent and upcoming B&O models offered by S manufacturers, such as the EM-1 and products from SHS and AM. The B&ORHS has long supported HO with special runs of cars and even selling HO models through their company store. Hey, that's a neat name; why don't we rename our nondescript Clearing House the NASG Company Store?

SLIDES NEEDED

We need slides of S and Sn3 locos, freight and passenger cars, layouts, track, structures, etc., (currently available stuff) for a clinic at the Toronto NMRA Convention in 2003 that will be presented by Ed Loizeaux on the state of S scale today. We are hoping for 120 slides which afterwards will be donated to the NASG Russ Mobley Library.

- Alex Binkley, 152 Ivy Crescent, Ottawa, Canada, K1M 1X6.

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

- Oct. 2002 *NMRA Bulletin*: Land Sakes Alive - Bill Fraley has his first S Scale Rails column covering S Scale which ended up to be almost 2 pages including color photos. Goodee for Bill and S. Also in the issue was a mention that the Scale and Proto Scale standards have been approved by the NMRA BOT with publication to come. Tom Troughton also had a narrow gauge column - he's an Sn3er.

- Recent *RMCS* - We continue to have our full page color S ad in current issues.

- Oct. 2002 *CTT* - A little blurb and photo on the Flyer layout at the National Toy Train Museum in Strasburg, Pa. Also, a nice photo of SHS reefers.

- Dec. 2002 *CTT* (15th

Anniversary issue): - A look back photo of Brad Nelson's old AF layout. Don Heimburger of the *S Gaugian* Magazine was interviewed in a "future of the hobby" article. The revival of S gauge was also noted as a trendsetter event of the toy train hobby in the last 15 years.

- Oct. 2002 *MR* - An eight page layout story on Ken Ehlers' spectacular Sn3 Pandora and San Miguel model railroad. The NASG even got a mention in a sidebar. A photo of an S scale meter-gauge Brazilian Mogul by Marcelo Lordeiro of Rio De Janeiro was with the NMRA contest winners. It took first place in the steam loco category. It was scratchbuilt.

- Dec. 2002 *MR* - An AF model GP7 was noted in an article on EMD Geeps as the FIRST plastic GP7 model in 1957. The center-spread features two color S photos - an Sn3 one and one of our president's (Roy Hoffman) standard gauge Penn Western.

Sn3 MODELER - ALIVE AND WELL

In the minutes of the NASG BOT meeting last July a mis-statement that the *Sn3 Modeler* magazine was not being published slipped into the *Dispatch*. Naturally, what was meant was *S/Sn3 Modeling Guide* which was Billy Wade's publication, ceased several years ago. The *Sn3 Modeler*, published by Heimburger House Publishing Co., and edited by Don Heimburger since 1984, is still much in business with a circulation of around 2000 and is distributed by Kalmbach Publishing Co., to more than 200 hobby shops in the U.S. and foreign lands.

The *Sn3 Modeler* magazine is published semi-annually, and to my knowledge is the only commercial magazine dedicated solely to fine scale S. The NASG congratulates this quality magazine for reaching its 20th year. Perhaps someday it will expand the number of issues

and maybe even add standard gauge. Who knows?

- Jeff

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS

Mike Sulzbach thanks the *Dispatch* for his nice article on the BL2, but he added that his model in the contest won 2nd place, not 1st place. He said he didn't know who won 1st place. Gee, I don't know either, Jeff.

KITBASHING ARMCO BLDG.

After I took two NASG Armco Steel buildings and combined them to make a double length structure. I then had two extra ends. I discovered a product that would go hand-in-hand with the extra ends to make another building - the Micro Engineering Company 8-051 Roof Panels. This is a \$4.15 package that comes with 4 sections of 9-3/4" x 2-1/2" with "/" seams. The "/" seams are perfect for S and the Armco Building. The 2-1/8" width is perfect. I used one of the four sections for roof and another for the sides to make a 3" x 3-1/2" small shed. The full length could be used to make a longer building or anything shorter than the roof panels.

- Roy Hoffman

LIONEL AMERICAN FLYER CHRISTMAS CARS

Here is a list of the Christmas cars released to date. Most of these are box cars, and those that are not are noted. Wish I'd gotten them all.

6-48309, 1990

6-48311, 1991

6-48314, 1992

6-48319, 1993

6-48321, 1994

6-48016, 1995 GP20

6-48717, 1995 Bay caboose

6-48343, 1995

6-48325, 1996

6-48327, 1997

6-48335, 1998 Gon with trees

6-48341, 1999 (900)

6-48340, 2000 (2000)

6-48342, 2001

- Thorin Marty

RUMOR MILL

I too spoke with Maury Klein of K-Line at length. He told me to check out the Toy Fair in the spring. Apparently, K-Line will be entering the S gauge field at that time.

- Chris Zizzo

DIESEL KIT?

I recently returned from a joint CN/CPR/PNR Division meet in Burnaby, B.C. There was a new HO kit of a CN/NAR GMD-1 (A1A truck). The kit includes 1 piece body, precision can motor, nickel silver wheels, lots of details - price \$300. In talking with Point1Models, they would be prepared to produce an S scale version for approximately \$500, Canadian, plus shipping. Although a uniquely Canadian locomotive, many went to U.S. short lines.

- Bob Hadlow, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

BACK TO THE '50S

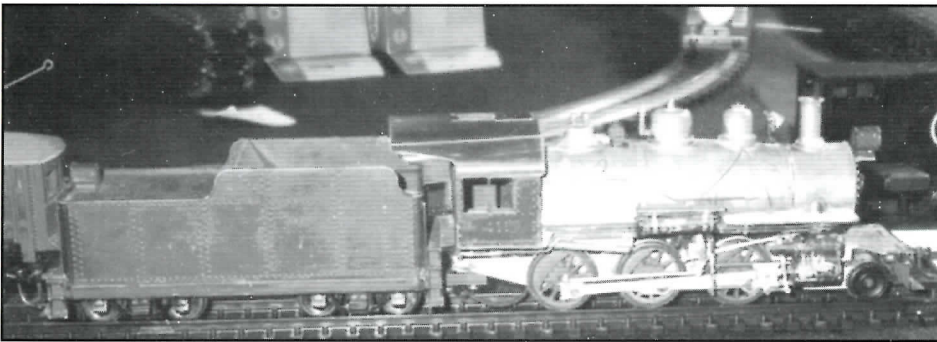
I'd like to recommend a new book with over 300 color photos for all those guys modeling the transition era in the eastern part of the USA. Those folks doing the NYC will be particularly pleased to see passen-

ger stations - both large and small - as well as freight stations, Railway Express freight houses, signals, bridges, towers, yards, shops, engine facilities, grade crossings, etc. Lotsa neat pictures of overall scenes for helping to detail the layout accurately. Lotsa neat smallish wooden passenger stations of eastern and/or NYC design that would make great laser-cut kits. Some are barely bigger than an outhouse, some are hexagonal, some are octagonal, some are square, some have roofs resembling dunce caps, and so on. Hours and hours of reading and dreaming pleasure. Have a magnifying glass handy to look at the world as it existed in 1950 or thereabouts. The title is *New York Central Facilities* (in color) by Geoffrey H. Doughty; published by Morning Sun.

- Ed Loizeaux

Switch List

For Sale: 1st through 15th Fall S Fest cars. These are specially decorated American Flyer cars - some complete, some bodies only. Call for prices. 262-375-3775.



NASG COPY SERVICE

Note that the Copy Service is now in the hands of Dick Karnes who is in charge of the Russell M. Mobley Memorial Library. Copies of articles from back issues of the NASG *Dispatch* and other publications we have permission to copy are available from Dick per his instructions in the Library ad. We want to thank Kent Singer for handling the Copy Service for many years.

Kent still is available to work up any Short & Easy articles you want to send his way.

Kent can be reached at 6516 Georgian Way, Columbus, GA 31909.

S-CALENDAR

Feb. 14-16, 2003: 18th Annual Sn3 Symposium, Holiday Inn Westport, Craigshire Rd., St. Louis, MO. Pete Smith, 618-277-5518 or psmith@apci.net or logon <http://2003sn3.tripod.com>.

May 15-18, 2003: Spring S Spree, Strongsville, OH, Holiday Inn Select (Cleveland/Akron area), www.cvsga.org. NASG convention deja vu, especially if you missed it.

July 9-12, 2003: NASG Annual Convention - Olympia Resort, Oconomowoc, WI. 800-558-9573 for hotel reservations. Roy Meissner 262-538-4325 - www.trainweb.org/bsg.

Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2003: Fall S Fest, St. Louis area, Holiday Inn Westport, Craigshire Rd., 314-432-3417 or Moe Berk, 39 Graeler, St. Louis, MO 63146.

Bids Open for NASG Annual Conventions -- 2004 and beyond. Contact Lee Johnson, 2472 Lariat Ln., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-6635 - 925-943-1590 - e-mail: leemax@jps.net

Bob Nicholson had this modified Rex 2-6-0 at the Fall S Fest. Terry Putt of Putt Trains (former Rex lines) was only too happy to run it. Bob lowered the boiler on the frame and modified the running boards. *Photo Jeff Madden*

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Railmail from page 5

poster. Somebody mentioned that the engine might be on the ground, indeed a Milwaukee Road habit, but no - the units are on a 3-way turnout. The photo was shot with my Fuji S-1 digital camera connected to a Mac laptop. This way I can view the final image on a screen roughly the same size as the final 8x11. The lighting is from some old quartz lights that I brought back into service - the digital camera balances well to tungsten temperature lights.

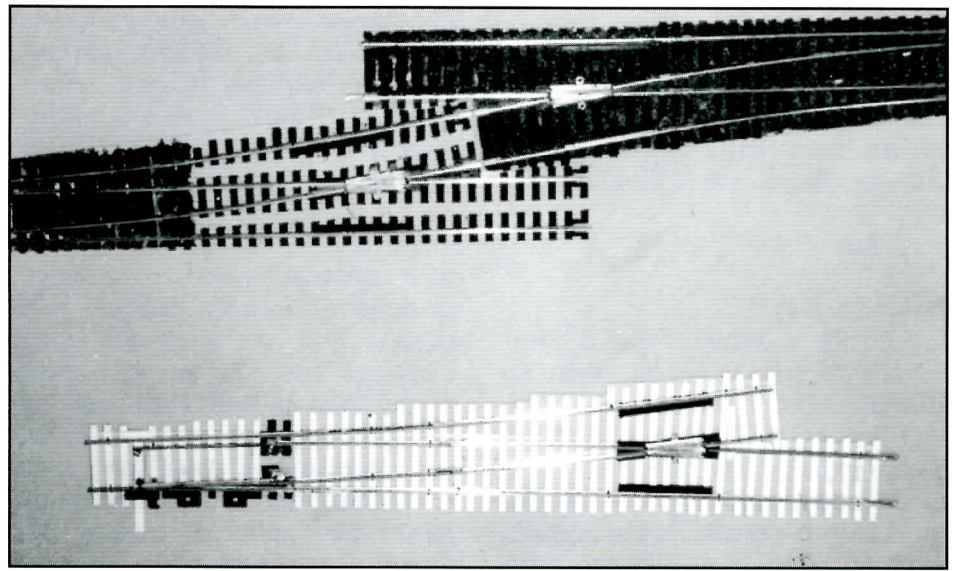
- Bob Werre

On the NASG Ad in RMC:

Personally, I think the ad is pretty good as is. I've had a couple HO folks ask me about some of the things on the ad. I believe that shows it's effective. If non-S scalers are looking at it and asking questions, I believe it was money well spent. Isn't that the point of the ad? I applaud the effort on the part of the NASG to reach out. I was an S scaler for several years around 1989-1996, and one of the things that bothered me about the NASG and most S folks was that they kept "preaching to the choir". Now I'm back in S (thank you) and am very pleased to see so many nice new products and a different attitude from most S people about who we need to direct our attention to.

- Roger Huber *There have been several scale S ads in RMC and some hi-rail ones in Classic Toy Trains in recent months.* - ed.

More on the Ad: I'm looking at this ad from a different perspective. I don't model in S scale. The ad tells me that there is an organization I can join that will send me a magazine so I can know what is going on in the S scale world. It also lists a website where, hopefully, I can find links and get any of my questions answered. So far so good. It also lets me know that there are products available for me to start a layout - roadbed and track. Gee, they even have a beer car in S scale, and trolleys, and



nice looking diesels.

- Dayna Warner, Trainstuff LLC.

Dues just fine: Twenty dollars is about right, perhaps a little low. Dues for the NASG are generally somewhat below what the various railroad historical groups are charging for membership. Now, some may offer memberships for less, but it probably takes most of the budget just to produce a journal. I believe, by the way, that the *Dispatch* is improving with each issue. The officers are doing a good job, and undoubtedly devote much of their free time to the organization. Occasionally, an organization needs to update a computer, add new software, reimburse expenses, and the like. The days of the ten dollar membership are long gone. Be glad we only pay twenty. That really is quite reasonable.

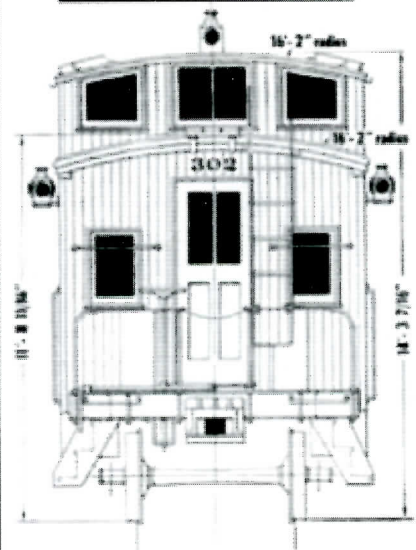
- Tom Baker

A Life Member Surfaces: I guess there were some hard feelings from some original "life" members of the NASG. They all should have, at least, been sent a letter of explanation with an offer to join the "new" NASG, Inc., when this happened way back when. But what's done is done - let it rest.

- John Wickland, NASG Life Member No. 177, 17 Jan., 1968; Now NASG, Inc. member No. 76-00115R, 23, Oct., 1976.

How about this for an S turnout. Bob Nicholson took an Atlas HO turnout and re-tied it with styrene ties and moved the rails out to the proper gauge for S. Previously Bob had notched out ties and filled in with ballast to hide gaps.

189 Different S Scale Plans from Model Railroader!!



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Thanks to donors: Steve Blackburn, Lee Johnson, Jeff Silvera, John Thompson

Jeff's Jct. from page 5

his Jefferson Central, yet he has a Petticoat Junction depot and open water tank with swimmers.

With a freelance or semi-freelance scenario, modelers are free to create humorous or anecdotal scenes that add character to a layout - perhaps an extension of the host's personality. Realism should always be paramount and usually is, but just the right touch of humor allows the creator to add a lot of interest to a layout, and this impresses non-modelers perhaps even more than modelers.

Humorous mini-scenes, signs, and animation may be even more desirable on portable display layouts because of the entertainment value and the fact that much of the audiences may have less sophisticated knowledge of our specific modeling. If folks are straining to

check out a humorous sign or an outhouse on fire, they are paying more attention to a layout. And S needs lots of attention.

Items that are typically humorized: figures, billboards, industry names, commercial building scenes (like drive in restaurants), rolling stock (cattle car with dinosaurs), a "TV" drive in movie with a cartoon running, etc.

You can even draw attention to humorous scenes by handing out "find it" lists to onlookers, especially the younger ones.

The real challenge here is to use idealism to draw out memories by recreating an era and to use humor to create interest and excitement.

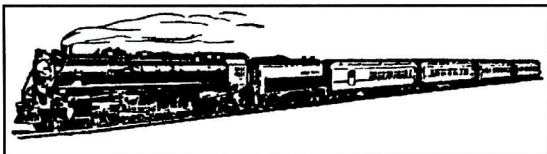
The builder of a Flyer layout probably has more latitude for using gimics and animation to attract

attention and create humor due to the toy orientation. Flashy accessories will certainly draw attention, as will a smoking hobo camp or an outhouse tipping scene. Scale and hi-rail modelers have to be a bit more subtle by using such techniques as giving factories or stores humorous names, staging a bather in a lake or creating a scene with a wrecked livestock truck with pigs running loose on a highway. A note of caution here - "adult" themes should not be overdone due to the fact that we all want younger viewers to enjoy our trains too.

Yes, we should indulge in idealism and humor when constructing our model railroads, but like anything, should do so in moderation and with common sense.

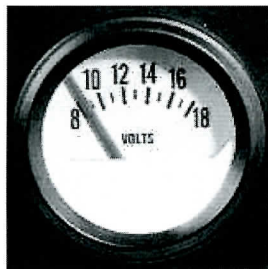
Happy Holidays All - Jeff

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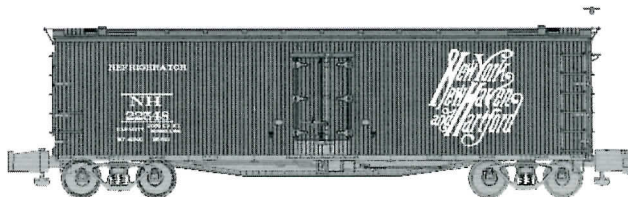
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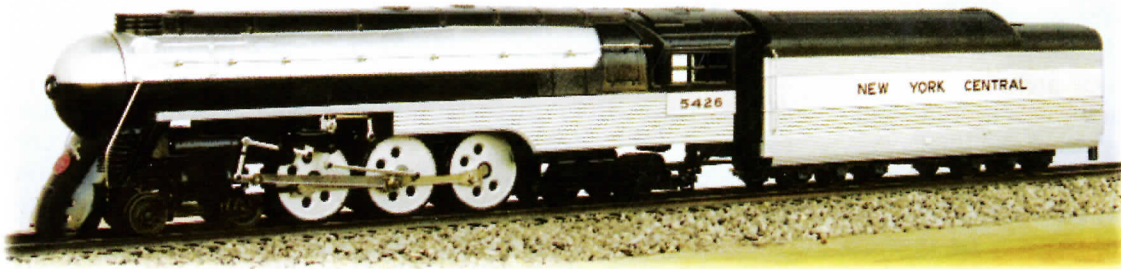


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