

February 2003

Volume XXVI Number 1



DISPATCH

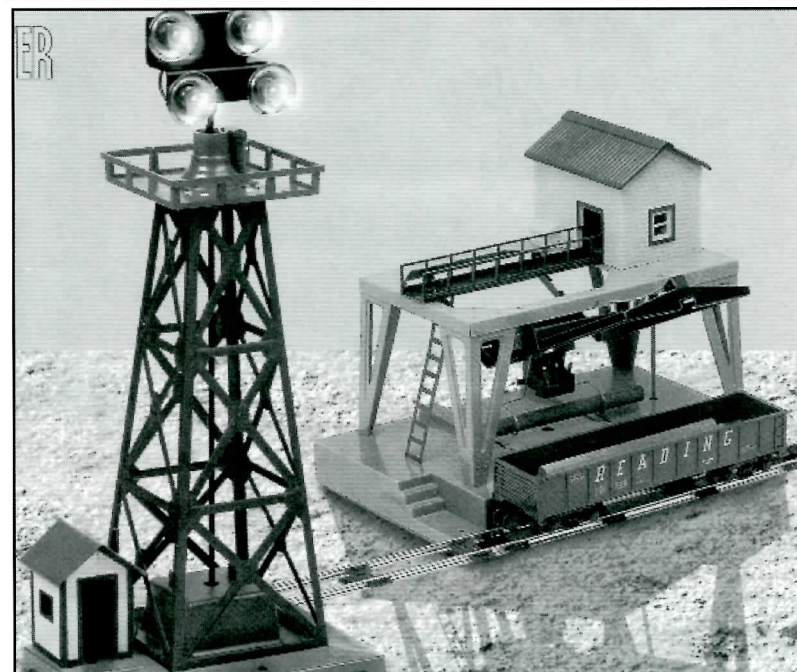
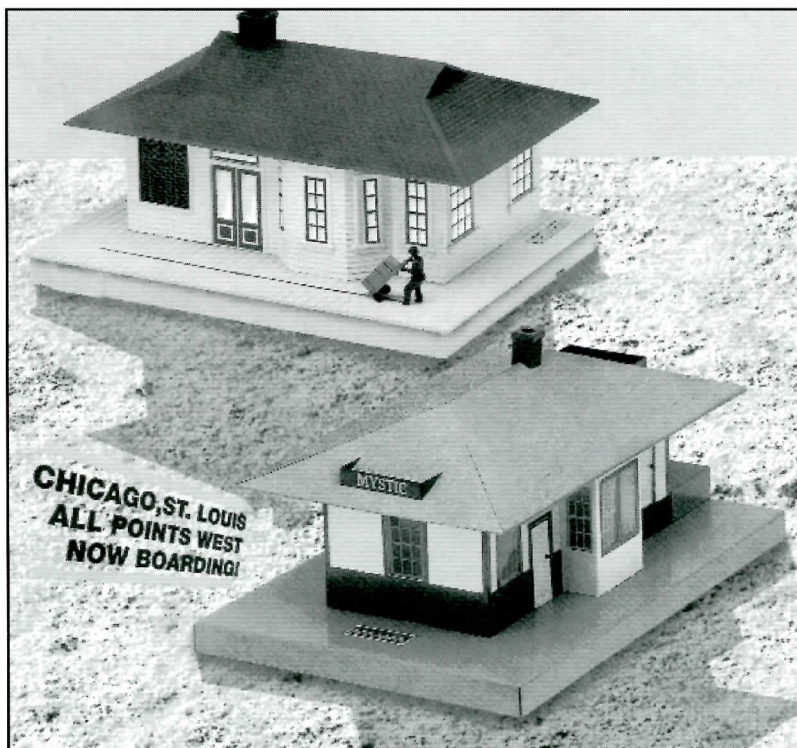
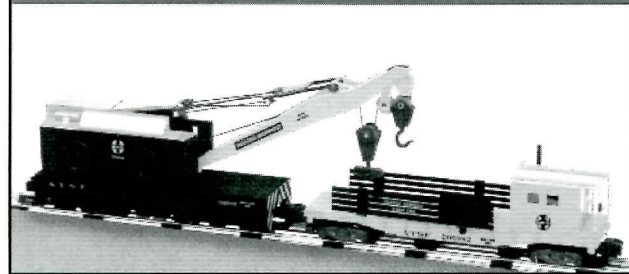


- ♥ 2003 Convention Update
- ♥ Dick Kloes' Root River & Southern
- ♥ Modern Gondolas

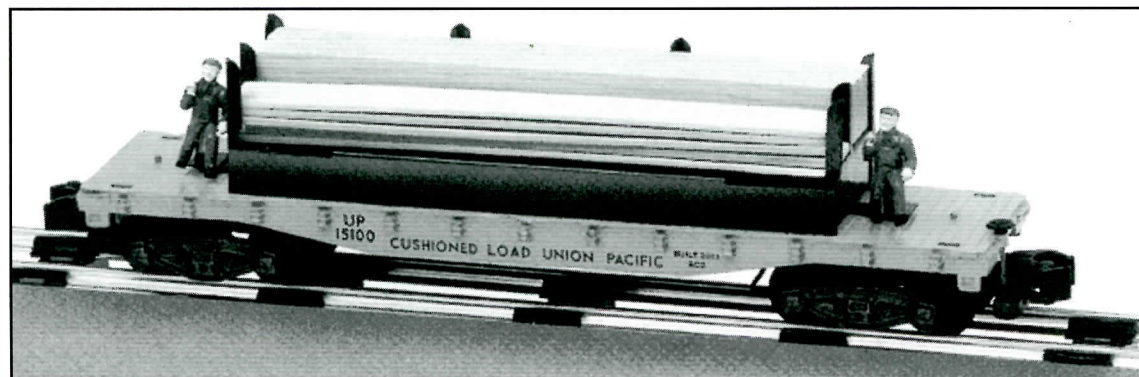


All Aspects of S: Scale • Narrow Gauge • American Flyer • Hi-rail

What 'S' New



Lionel promises big for 2003. Here are the real surprises in the Vol. 1 catalog.



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.

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

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COVER: Top photo shows a Rex Mogul crossing a spectacular trestle on Dick Kloes' layout. His layout will be open for the 2003 convention. Bottom photo is the annual Circus Train which heads to Milwaukee each year. Thus, the "Circus" convention theme this year. *Photos by Jeff Madden*

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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...

I believe that one of the more serious sides of Promoting S in the 2000s is how to grow the scale side of S. When I refer here to "scale" I mean what also could be called "finescale" in contrast to hi-rail and AF. I noticed the exciting new gas electric "doodlebug" by American Hi-Rail in the last *Dispatch*, but sadly noted that it was to be available in hi-rail-only. Also, when Pennsylvania Heritage Models came out with their own version of the FM Trainmaster, it was targeted for hi-rail. PHM was willing to produce a scale version if there was enough interest and apparently there was not. Another incident was when American Models brought out the Budd passenger cars in the "shorty" version. Several scalers asked if AM would produce scale length versions. Once again, AM agreed if there were enough people interested and once again we fell short. All these things seem to prove that there simply aren't enough scalers to support certain runs of equipment geared specifically for them. While scalers have benefited from the products being offered to both hi-rail and scale, the scalers can't really call the shots as to what gets manufactured. Scalers are notorious for their wide-ranging opinions and that sometimes is a factor, but it wouldn't be if the sheer numbers were greater.

In the area of magazines, once again the lack of numbers has hurt S scale. More than one magazine specializing in S finescale has bitten the dust. Currently, no such magazine exists. Just the mere existence of one would greatly enhance promoting S scale as we would have something to "wave" in front of those in the other scales. The sheer lack of numbers is further pointed out by the dearth of articles in the scale magazines like *Model Railroader*, *Railroad Model Craftsman* and others. There simply are not enough S scalers writing articles for these magazines. S articles would raise the awareness of the readers to the advantages of S by showing them what can be done and thereby fulfill S promotion.

Every so often someone asks why there aren't more S articles in the model railroad magazines and the usual debate ensues. After the discussion each time it usually comes down to the fact that few people are writing those S articles that we all want to see. As a suggestion, why not concentrate what resources we have in a few good areas rather than scattering them about. Part of the enduring argument is "which magazines are S friendly and which ones aren't". If I had to pick the best bet for us to funnel our articles to, it would be *RMC*. We are already running the joint ad on the inside front cover and have the reader's attention. S articles

continued on page 30

NASG NEWS:

BOT News: The Board continues to work with the Promotions Committee to maintain our presence in national model railroad magazines. We are also keeping the future warehouse project in line so it will become available as the Armco building sells out. Election ballots for officers will be in the mail soon. The convention survey postcards are continuing to come in and are being tabulated.

- Glenn Ritter, NASG Secretary

New S-MOD Standards Distributor: Dick Karnes (NASG Librarian) will be taking over distribution of the S-MOD standards from Ted Larson. Thanks for your many years of service in this area Ted.

Survey Results: (245 respondents as of 2/1/03)

1 Attended NASG Conventions Last 10 years...

0-64, 1-67, 2 to 5 - 82, more than 5 - 33.

2. Attend '93 Valley Forge or 2000 San Jose...

1 - 65, Both - 15, Neither - 165.

3. Future joint NASG/NMRA Conventions?

Yes - 134, No - 40, No opinion - 71

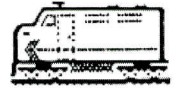
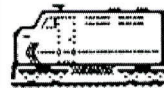
4. If Yes to #3, how often joint?

Always - 8, 2 yrs - 29, 2-3 yrs - 14, 3 yrs - 36

4 yrs - 22, 5 yrs - 17, 6-8 yrs - 4, 10 yrs - 2.

- Glenn Ritter, NASG Secretary

WANTED

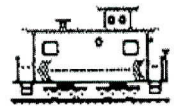
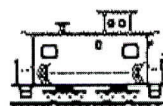


Circus theme models
for the NASG 2003 Convention in
Oconomowoc, Wisconsin:

Scale

Hi-rail

American Flyer



Enter
the
NASG Contest!

RAIL MAIL

On Structures: I really enjoyed the editorial on structures in the October *Dispatch*. I really wonder how to bring the idea of a "modified for S" kit to the various manufacturers who do not necessarily read the S gauge publications. Perhaps if some of the articles in the *Dispatch* and other S gauge publications in recent years were taken and sent to the manufacturer of the structure being modified, with the suggestion that they

package it with material similar to what the article describes as being added/modified that there could be a waiting market. Perhaps in a future edition, members could be asked to recommend kits that they have modified, or which they think have the basic dimensions that would make them appropriate for modification. If the manufacturers were approached with specific kits in their line that could be modified with a minimum of effort, it surely would be less of an investment to offer such a kit-with modification material than to re-engineer it completely in S gauge.

Continued on page 30

Jeff's Junction



Is the Transition Era still King?

Frequently there is a hue and cry from some of the S modelers about why manufacturers and the majority of S gaugers stick to making and modeling the steam-diesel transition era ('40s-'40s) and why that is so. My dad always told me that for questions like this - do a pro and con list and you'll have your answer, like it or not. So here goes:

Pro '40s-'50s transition era:

1. It was the glory age of railroading.
2. Toy trains often given as Christmas presents.
3. Baby boomers "population bulge" (those born in '40s and '50s) still biggest market.
4. Freight cars were shorter requiring less radius.
5. There were more railroads in business then.
6. Most railroads had their own passenger fleet.
7. Steam is exciting to see and watch. It was still around, in the music, and in the dialogue.
8. Colorful diesel schemes were around and they mixed with the steam.
9. Railroads were still viewed as a focal point of society.
10. Cabooses were on every freight train (an additional car to market).
11. It was ('40s-'50s) the glory age of the American automobile too - a miniature sub-hobby to many of us.
12. Railroad structures still were prevalent during this era - roundhouses, turntables, depots, towers, etc.
13. Small town main streets and smaller lineside industries still had some life left. These are much easier to market and model.
14. Because of the time element needed to evolve in the hobby and complete a layout, many featured lay-

outs in publications are of the transition era.

Now for the Pro modern era ('60s and up).

1. You can see it now.
2. Diesel model locomotives tend to be more reliable in operation.
3. Less railroad structures and lineside details to model
4. More relevant to non-modelers.
5. The transition era really is ancient history now - harder to be relevant to current young folks.

Without going into the negatives, you can see that the transition era still has a lot more positives which are attractive to both modelers and manufacturers. Admittedly, I am a bit biased, and you modern folks might get some more numbers for your list than I did.

And there might be another hidden factor here - that many younger modelers (under 40) might prefer the transition era even though they didn't live it. This could be for various reasons among which I suspect would be nostalgia, learning from older modelers, being more sophisticated in general. Remember too, that potential modelers can be influenced by models and model railroads that they visually see in person or in magazines which impress them yet predate their own youth. For example, let's say a teenager visits a model train show - he might just become intrigued with the model steam locos running on display layouts rather than being hooked on the real thing he could see outside. I myself was sort of like this. I only had vague memories of real steam, yet I was fascinated by models and model railroads that featured steam. As I was growing up I was constantly frustrated by not being able to see or ride the various fan trips with steam. My favorite Lionel O and Flyer S trains that I drooled over in the catalogs were usually the sets with a black steamer and red or green heavyweights, not the diesels and the streamlined stainless steel passenger cars. My wife says I was born 20 years too late.

Continued on page 30

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

BACHMANN (www.bachman-trains.com) Upcoming On30 items were spotted recently at the Milwaukee Trainfest including some really neat things that could be converted easily, or not so easily to S. A small two-truck Shay would be perfect for S, but reworking the mechanism would be a challenge. An 0-4-2T version of the Porter 0-4-0 was there as well. Two other items, being non-locomotives, would be easy to convert to S. Two truck log buggies meant to be hauled behind the Shay would be easily converted, perhaps just by adding S trucks. Also on display were some mine cars which could be converted to S, Sn3 or left alone to operate on HO track. If track was not connected, it wouldn't matter.

B.T.S. (P.O. box 561, Seffner, FL 33583) is always adding to their laser building line. The McCabe Lumber Co. Drying Kiln is another in the lumber mill series - \$99.95. As stated last issue a Planing Shed and Tramway and Storage Yard will be coming this year. Also for the lumber company is a McCabe company office for \$99.95. Other new structures: Cabin Creek Post Office, \$32.95; Willet's Supply Co., \$69.95; Laurel Brook Station (waiting shed), \$15.95; Rural Cabin Creek Church, \$59.95 and Branchline Water Tank, \$49.95.

CMA (Tichy). From Earl Tuson comes this tip that Don Tichy has S scale phosphor bronze wire drop grab irons. He thinks they are about \$4.95 for 100.

DIECAST (discount stores). A new line showed up called JADA which uses the dies from the Revell lowrider series of '40s-'60s cars and trucks. They are all hot rod in primer gray or black with

some flames or pinstripes, but at least they have normal size white-wall tires. They can be repainted or left as is. The list so far: '47 Chevy fastback, '53 Chevy, '53 Chevy pickup, '57 Chevy panel truck, '60 Chevy, '59 Chevy El Camino. The Corgi fire truck series has some new paint schemes, but unfortunately some are undersized.

KASLO SHOPS (2516 Quartz Place, Coquitlam, BC V3E 3K9) is producing a limited run of the PRR N5C porthole caboose in resin. They will be \$65 (U.S.) and have a one piece body shell with a separate detailed interior. The kit will include window glass, underframe brake detail, stainless steel etchings and the full interior. This is the same outfit that is doing the PS-1 boxcar kit that should be out by now.

K-LINE (www.k-linetrains.com). Most know about the 1/64 "O gauge" Big Boy that is being touted for conversion maybe even by K-Line themselves. Rough measurements on the cab, boiler and tender confirm that dimensions are at least close if not right on. Rumors also abound about some other S production by K-Line. We shall see.

LIONEL LLC (www.lionel.com). Here we go again. From Doug Peck comes a hint, actually more than a hint, that Flyer offerings in the Vol. 1 2003 catalog will be many and there might even be a steam engine in the mix. Here's the list straight from the catalog: Seaboard or ATSF (black & white) Baldwin diesel switchers, \$249.95 each; operating log loader, \$129.99; Mystic talking station with digital sound, \$199.99; operating baggage smasher (station with baggage loader) \$129.99;

floodlight tower, \$99.99; UP operating "Moe & Joe" lumber flatcar, \$69.99; Brownhoist Santa Fe crane car, \$69.99; matching work caboose, \$49.99; Seaboard caboose, \$49.99; FFEEX reefer with operating door, \$49.99; Burlington 3-bay hopper, \$49.99; SP flatcar with trailers, \$49.99; Chessie depressed center reel car, \$49.99; Diamond Chemical tankcar, \$49.99; and PRR boxcar, \$49.99. Are we delirious, or are they feeling the heat? A reported quote from CEO Bill Bracy: "All you AC Gilbert fans, prepare for explosive growth in the American Flyer category with new diesels, operating cars, and even 4 new operating accessories - and later this year, an all new die-cast steam locomotive equipped with TMCC and Railsounds."

MODEL TECH (7289 Westfield Rd., Medina, OH 44256 - www.model-tec.net) now has the smaller B&O station (Class C) laser kit available. It has a 13-1/2" x 5" footprint for \$125.00.

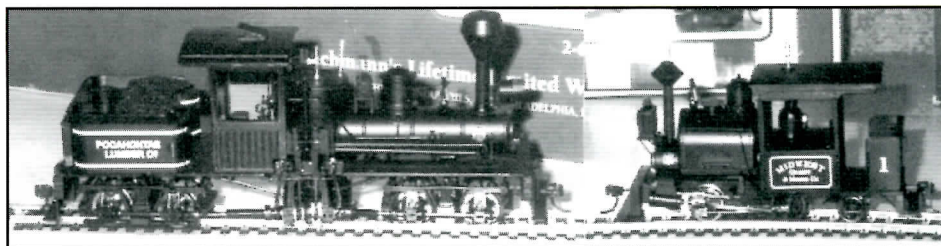
R.S.S.V.P. MODELS (P.O. Box 345, Tyngsboro, MA 01879) has announced a limited run of a Brach's Candies red, white and blue SHS PS-2 covered hopper for \$39.95 plus \$7.00 S&H for up to two cars. Two numbers available.

SHS (2 Roberts Rd., New Brunswick, NJ 08901) finally has the F7 A and B units available. These units are available with two numbers for each type. They feature operational red-white and green classification lights, Mars light (depending on road name), stainless steel Farr grills, illuminated numberboards and lost wax brass cast horns. First run roadnames include ATSF passenger, ATSF freight, B&M, D&RGW, GN, MP and PRR. They are avail-

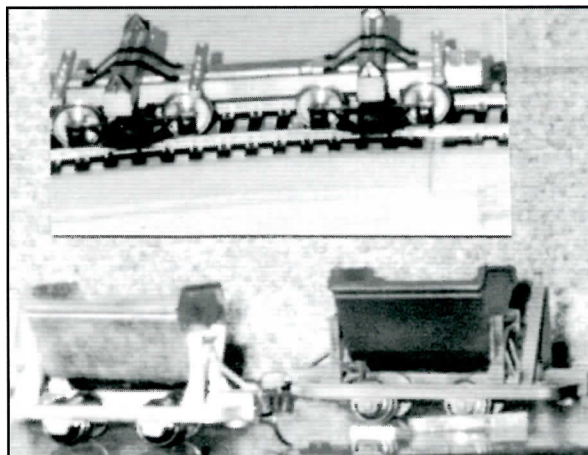
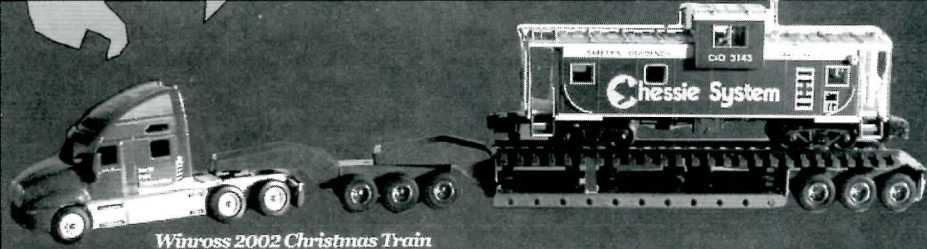
able from single A and B units to ABBA sets. Options include LocoMatic or Soundtrax DCC sound, DC operation without sound or AC operation with sound. All units are powered and have speakers installed for sound unit installation. Mike and Don recently reported on a China trip where they went over some new products. These include 90 and 30 degree crossings and a #5 turnout. They even revealed working with the builders for some new cars, locos and structures. They even ate in an Outback Steak House in Hong Kong.

SnS TRAINS (3239 Pepperwood Dr., Boise, ID 83704) will accept your AC Gilbert diesels for conversion. There will be no modifications to your locos. They will return all the original parts (reverse unit, armature, field) to you. Or they will give you a swap price for them. It is necessary to replace the reverse unit with a Dallee #400 electronic reverse unit. Single motor Geep or Alco - \$109.95, dual motor Alco - \$149.95, Chassis re-bushing - \$19.95, Directional LED headlights - \$14.95 pair, Replacement Pullmor wheels (tentative) - \$19.95 pair. Any axle gears that need replacing will be included in the re-bushing price but you will pay the cost of the gear. You pay the shipping. Contact: Boss31@aolcom or 208-376-1159.

WINROSS (P.O. Box 390, East Rochester, NY 14445 - www.winross.com). Did you know that Winross offered a 2002 tractor trailer (modern) with a lowboy trailer hauling and SHS Chessie Caboose? Maybe it's still available - \$225.00. This was the first in a series of truck-train combos which will include other cars and eventually a loco. Presumably the trains will be SHS products.

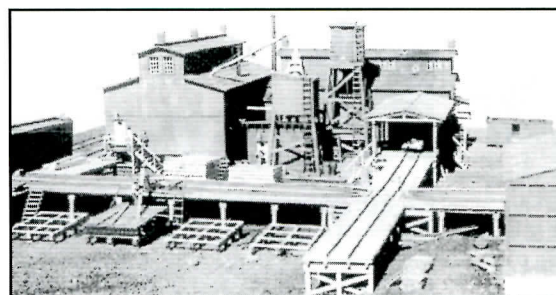


New Bachmann On30 logging and mining locos and rolling stock are getting close scrutiny by s gaugers for conversion. One S scaler believes that S scale trucks can be fitted right onto the log buggy at right. The Shay is a small Shay too, but would take some work to convert.

Winross 2002 Christmas Train
This is first in a series of train cars starting with the Caboose and ending with the Locomotive. The series will consist of box cars, tank cars, flat cars with loads and trailers all based on the Winross product line and supplies or suppliers we use to produce our product, the caboose and engine will be based on a actual train company. The train will be 1/64th in scale to fit your trucks you currently have, so climb aboard the
"Winross Christmas Train"
Cab and Caboose may vary \$225.00

B.T.S. is cranking out more rural structures. The church would fit right in a logging or mining town. The planing shed below will complement the Coon Creek Lumber Mill.



Planing Shed in the back.

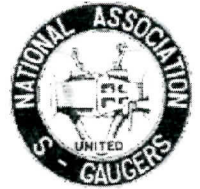
Tramway & Storage Yard in the front.

Both coming in 2003!



The Great "S" Show On Earth

Come One!!! July 9 to 13, 2003 Come All!!!



Oconomowoc, WI (Milwaukee area) 2003 NASG National Convention

Hosted by the Badgerland S Gaugers

As the carnival barker might yell, "Come one, come all to the Great S Show on Earth!" That would be to the NASG annual convention 2003 which is being held at the

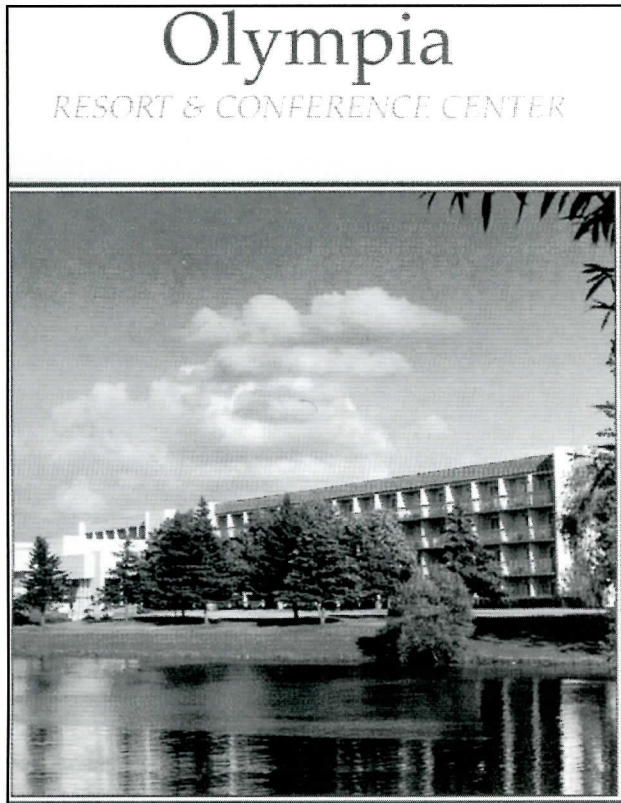
for display on the lakefront culminating in the Great Circus Parade on July 13, the final getaway convention day. A real Circus Train sponsored by area businesses such as Strong Funds will wind across central Wisconsin starting on about July 4th and ending up in Milwaukee on Monday July 7th. Diesels do most of the hauling duty, with steam likely to handle a final portion or two on the prior Sunday and Monday (July 6 and 7). This is a bit early in the week for most of you heading to the convention, but the rail cars and hand-carved circus wagons can be seen each day of the convention. Just run yourself down (a bus might be available if demand warrants) to the Milwaukee lakefront.

Circus Contest: We will be having a special contest category dedicated to S gauge circus items. We encourage you to bring S model circus items for the contest or display.

Hotel: The hotel is the Olympia Resort & Conference Center in (pronounce it) Oconomowoc, WI. It has 256 rooms, indoor and outdoor pools, a golf course, tennis courts, saunas, restaurants, etc. Reservations (mention the NASG 2003 Convention Rate) - 800-558-9573. For hotel information: www.Olympiaresort.com.

Dealer Trade Area: We'll have 10,000 square feet of exhibit and layout space in one room. Eight foot tables are available for sellers.

Model Tours: The "official" layout tours will be on Thursday, July 10th, one in the afternoon and one in the evening - 3 to 4 layouts each. The trading hall will be closed for the afternoon one, but not the evening one which is the closer tour to the hotel. Most of these layouts and several others will be open on the "getaway" Sunday, July 13. There will be a nice balance of scale, Flyer and Hi-rail layouts plus maybe a few other gauge ones open in the area on Sunday. Among those will be our BSG President's large hi-rail layout including an outdoor Garden railway and Craig Wright's spectacular (99% scenicked) Sn3 layout in nearby Madison. If you



Olympia Resort and Conference Center in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin (about 20 miles west of Milwaukee).

This will be the first time the NASG convention has been back in the Milwaukee area since 1980, 23 years ago. This year the dates are July 9-13.

A circus theme was chosen for the convention because it is being held the same week that the historic circus wagons from the Baraboo Circus World Museum make their annual trek by train to Milwaukee



head that way on Sunday, you can also swing down just south of Madison to Argyle, Wisconsin, to visit Buck Guthrie's Train Barn. This is a new area attraction with lots of inside trains (Flyer included) and an outside 12" gauge one too. Check out the web: www.whrc-wi.org/trainbarn.

Prototype Tours: On Friday afternoon our "official" prototype tour will be a chartered ride on the East Troy Electric Railroad, Wisconsin's premier preserved interurban line located in nearby East Troy. Again, the trading hall will be closed for the afternoon so all can enjoy this gem of a traction line. The web: www.eastroyrr.org.

During Saturday's dead time you can drive or bus to Little A-Merrick-A, in nearby Marshall to visit an old-time amusement park which has a large 16" gauge live steam road you can ride and some restored antique rides like a merry-go-round, small ferris wheel, Swiss Toboggan and a Wild Mouse. The Whiskey River Railway is Wisconsin's longest 1/3 scale live steam railroad with a ride of over 2 miles through scenic rolling hills and past several live animal areas. Conventioneers should be able to tour the roundhouse and shop areas to see the locomotive roster including an articulated. If not running, the stable even includes a small "Daylight" Pacific that used to be owned by Gene Autry. This is an ideal place to visit for the seasoned railfan or the younger crowd just wanting to enjoy the rides.

Family Tours: Besides the above tour, which is sort of family/railfan tour, you can visit the Milwaukee lakefront area (bus if demand warrants) to see the Circus World display of hand-carved antique circus wagons, live animals and live tent Circus side shows. You can drive yourself any day of the convention. Those craving antique stores can visit nearby Delafield, a recreated colonial town backed by the



The "Official" convention fan trip will be on the East Troy Electric Railroad where attendees can experience a real midwest Interurban ride of several miles between two towns in southern Wisconsin. *Photo Jeff Madden*

owner of the Lang Card Co.. The Milwaukee Zoo is a good one only 20 minutes away and, yes, it does have a train you can ride there too. For more shopping there's the Johnson Creek Outlet Mall about 20 minutes from the convention hotel.

Kalmbach Tour: Since the home of Kalmbach Publishing is just a few minutes away in Waukesha, there will be a drive yourself tour

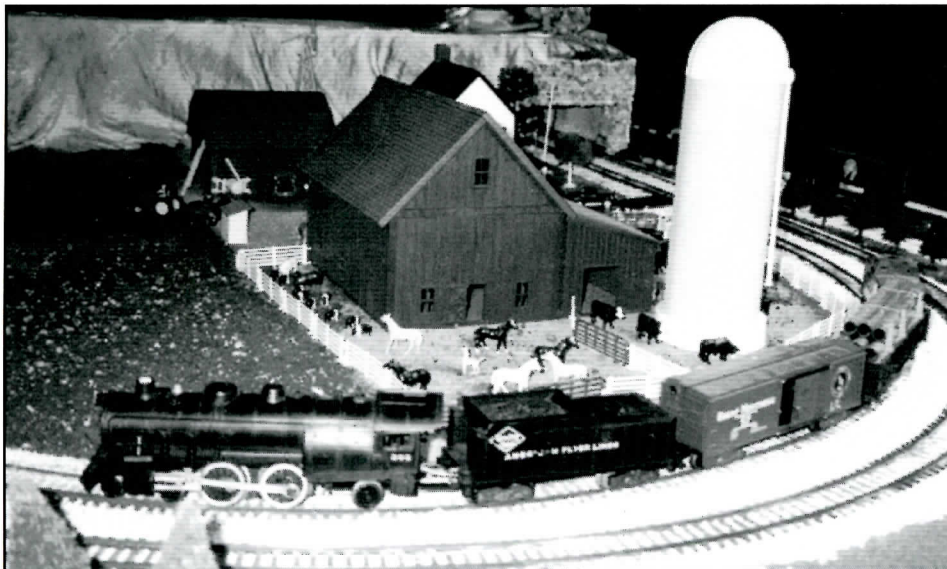
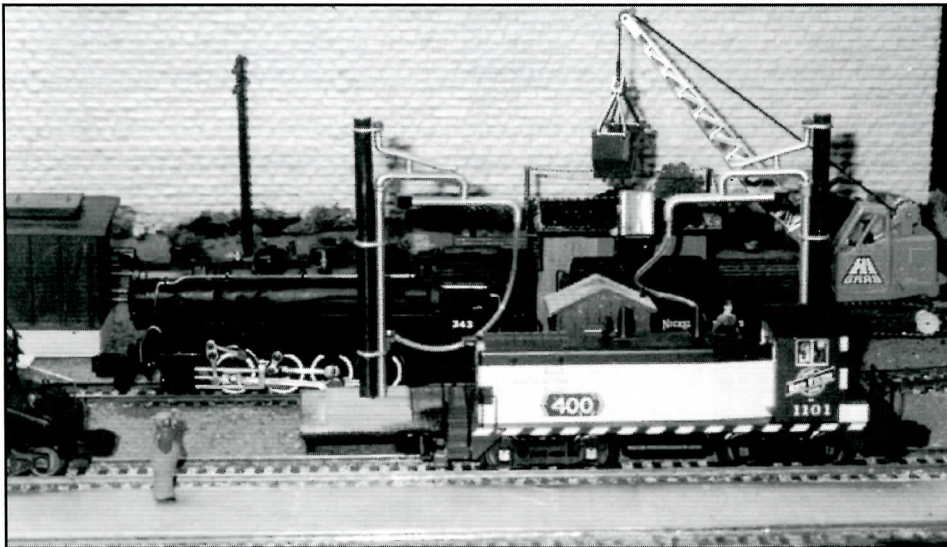
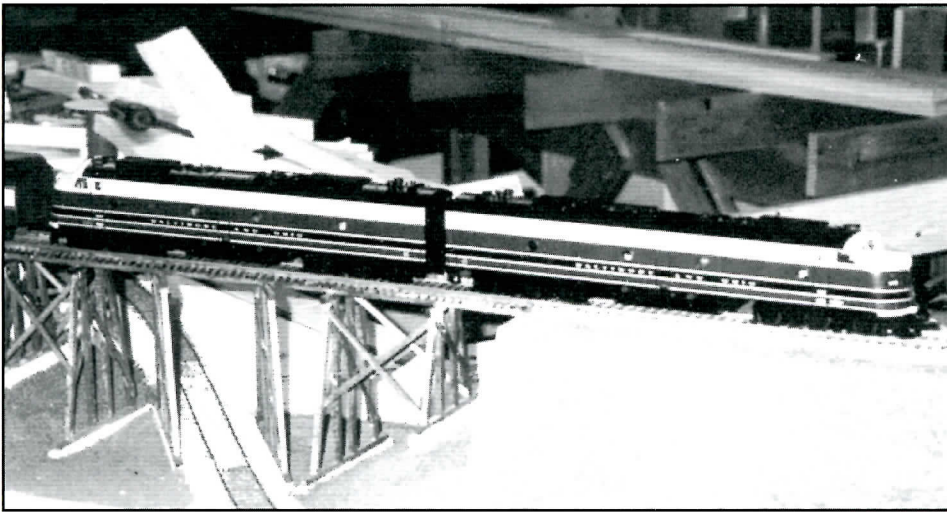
at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 9th. There you will be toured through the offices of *Classic Toy Trains*, *Trains* and *Model Railroader* and visit the large HO scale MR&T layout.

On Your Own: If you have time during, before or after the convention, you may want to visit Wisconsin Dells which is a family amusement area with lots of rides, waterparks, antique stores, and so



The Whiskey River Railway at nearby Little A-Merrick-A offers an impressive ride behind 16" gauge live steam. Saturday's tour will include a shop and roundhouse tour. Flyer fans should note the whitewall tires.

Photo by Jeff Madden



Above is a brief glimpse of 3 other S layouts which will be on tour for the convention. *Top* - Two AM E8s cross a low trestle on Roy Meissner's scale layout. *Middle* - Brad Nelson's layout is hi-rail, but there is no shortage of detail and scenery on this layout. *Bottom* - Current BSG President Dave Smukowski's hi-rail layout is plenty big with several levels and lots of scenery. Dave also has a nice collection to view plus an outdoor large scale railroad.

Photos Jeff Madden

on. You can ride the famous Ducks (WWII landing craft) or take a leisurly cruise boat on the Wisconsin River. Just thought I'd mention too that the Mid-Continent Railway Museum as well as another 16" gauge live steam road, the Riverside & Great Northern are also in the area.

Two other railroad museums are not too far away for those that can't resist - The Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois (20 miles south of the Wisconsin line) and the National Railroad museum in Green Bay, Wisconsin - hey you can visit the Green Bay Packer gift shop and museum too.

The Great Circus Parade: As mentioned before, the annual Great Circus Parade with live elephants and all will be on Sunday, July 13. If you are planning to see this spectacular event in person check with your convention hosts for tips on viewing and parking.

Amtrak and Railfan Spots: The convention hotel is about 2 miles from the CP mainline (Oconomowoc). Train traffic is sporadic, but Amtrak has 1 train each way in daylight (usually). Amtrak does not stop in Oconomowoc however, and the nearest stop is Milwaukee. There is a Hertz rental desk in the Milwaukee depot. From the west Amtrak usually gets in around mid-afternoon. From Chicago the Hiawatha service runs every couple hours.

About 10 miles from the hotel is a good railfan area called Duplainville. There is a level crossing there of the CP and the CN (formerly Wisconsin Central). There is usually something going on in this area. You can see all kinds of power - CSX, CN, CP, NS, WSOR, UP, Conrail, IC, etc. A scanner is helpful.

For those coming in from the southwest, say from KC or St. Louis, a don't miss spot is the Rochelle, Illinois, Railroad Park. The city

actually built a railfan pavilion in the east quadrant of the crossing of the BNSF and UP mainlines. A great place to stop for lunch on the way to or from the convention. The site is just north of I-80 and just west of I-39 just below Rockford.

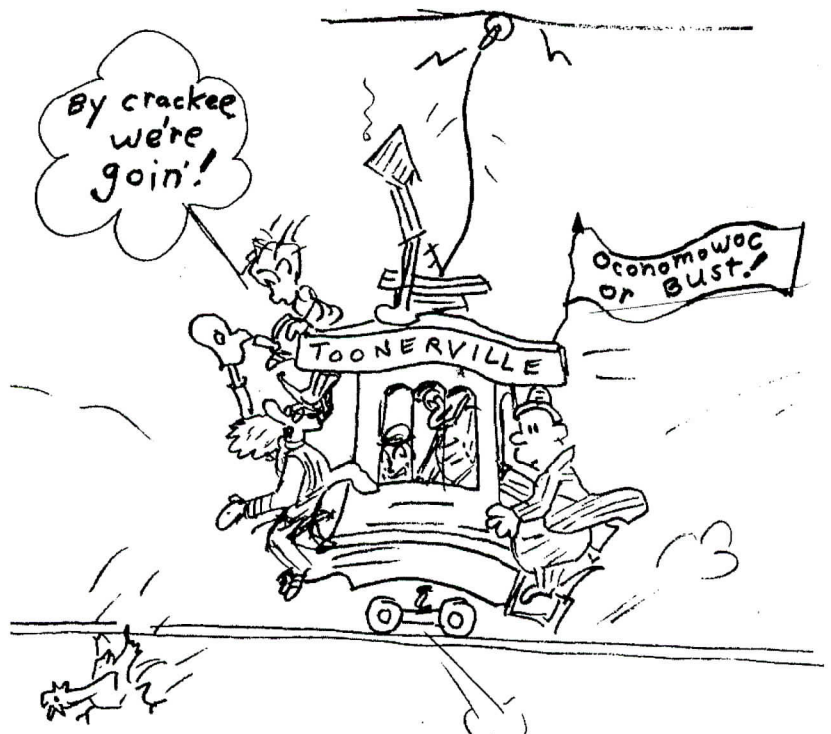
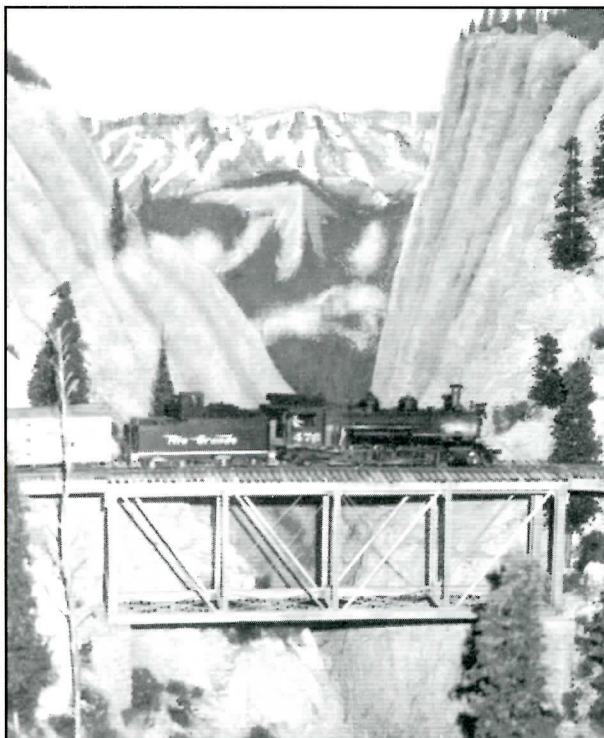
Clinics: We'll have plenty of those. Already committed are John Heck, Gary Children, Roy Meissner, Jeff Madden, Chuck Porter, Dayna Warner and Dick Karnes. Details next issue or two.

Check the web for updates: www.trainweb.org/bsg or the NASG site: www.nasg.org. For info contact Roy Meissner, P.O. box 1 Merton, WI 53056, 262-538-4325, rmeissner@wi.rr.com.



About 2 miles from the convention hotel is the Oconomowoc depot which is a former Milwaukee Road station converted to the Depot Restaurant. Track is now single track and is the CP Rail's mainline between Minneapolis and Milwaukee. The restaurant serves family style meals and is open for breakfast lunch and dinner. The city of Oconomowoc was founded in 1837 and incorporated in 1875 with a population of 2,121. In 1999 the population had moved up to 11,830. Oconomowoc is a Potowotomi Indian term meaning "River of Falling Waters" or "Where Waters Meet" or "River of Lakes" - take your pick. Most likely you will want to sample the fare at this railroad theme restaurant. A bonus restored passenger car is awaiting your inspection just to the right of the photo. Jamie Bothwell won't miss it I'm sure. To the left is Dave Smukowski's Garden Railway which you can see on Sunday along with his large S gauge layout inside. Bottom left is Craig Wright's Sn3 Cumbres & Toltec layout in the Madison area.

Photos Jeff Madden



MODERN GONDOLAS

By Alex Binkley

The scene is trackside in the mid 1990s. A mixed freight train is rolling by. The locomotives growl past towing a squeaking and squawking collection of freight cars. First you see boxcars, tank cars, hoppers, gondolas and flatcars. Then you notice that not all those boxcars are the same. Nor do they look like they just came from the paint shop. It's the same for the other types of freight cars. I like the appearance created by all the diversity among the cars. Can I emulate this scene on my own layout?

Yes, but not easily in S scale. For the modern modeler, there isn't much variety available for the various types of freight cars, although reports exist that several of the manufacturers will start rectifying that situation in the next few years.

As my Canada Southern layout will include a scrap steel mini mill, gondolas are an obvious priority to deliver all the junk that will feed the electric furnace. And I don't want those gons to look like carbon copies of each other.

There aren't any truly modern gons available in S so that means scratchbuilding would be in order. However, as a relatively recent convert to S scale and facing building cars from plastic or wood to get what I want, I decided to develop my skills by tackling some conversions first. Later I will explain my scratchbuilding efforts.

The easiest way to get a modern-looking gon is to update an American Models 52-foot, six inch car. I have also altered a Mike's Train House O-27 gon into a 1/64th car and sliced up some American Flyer 40 footers to make 52 foot contemporary gons. None of these cars match any prototype known to me and are only intend-

ed to look good enough. While I enjoy car building, which is one of the main reasons I switched to S scale, I also want to have operating sessions on my railway and this requires an adequate supply of cars.

The cutting up of cars described below is done mainly with a Zona saw although an adroit person could undoubtedly save time using a band saw to make these cuts. I haven't decided whether I want to keep the glad-hands that come with the KD couplers so for now I painted them with Testors rubber color that makes them considerably less noticeable.

Cosmetic surgery

The AM car, one of which I have lettered as Algoma Central 718, needs mostly cosmetic surgery and a steel floor to give it that late 20th Century look. I used the kit's side and end ladders and added grabs at the left end of the cars. There should be grabs on the ends but there really isn't a place to put them (probably because of the need for space for hi-rail couplers). I cut off the polling pockets on the ends of the cars, a dead give away for a much earlier car. I should have added coupler platforms on the ends as well. A new inside floor was cut from 15 thousands sheet styrene and glued in place. The styrene covers the wood floor of the AM car, another item that really dates. Once painted it looks like a steel floor. After the KD's are added, I put on grab irons and Grandt Line air hoses. I didn't bother with any underside piping but did run a chain from the brake wheel to the underside. - got to make the visual items look correct. The car was spray painted black, and the Algoma lettering was from a CDS transfer. The weathering was done with chalks. This was the easiest project by far.

Chopping posterity

Next came the AF cars. I got this idea from Joe Pereira of Edmonton. I think this is about the only way to make use of AF cars in modern scale modeling. You can take three AF cars and with careful cutting of sections alongside the ribs, get two standard sized gons. Try to make the most out of the A ends because it reduces the number of times you have to cut off the brake wheel and related details. Now before you glue the sections together, cut off the underframe chunks and all the ladders, grabs and brake wheel parts on the sides and ends. Also remove the inside wall supports -- a Dremel tool would probably be more successful than I was with an Xacto knife and file. Take my word that it is easier to do this cutting before the sections are glued together.

Once the surgery is complete, carefully sand the two sections straight and flat on sandpaper tacked onto plywood or a flat board. Test fit them as you go. Then glue them together. I used ACC but am told that epoxy would be stronger. Once the glue is good and dry, put a new floor underneath the car to give it more overall strength. I'm sure I used 40 thou. Then you use a thin sheet styrene to put a new floor inside the car.

Now you have to add bolsters (I had metal ones of uncertain origin) and an underframe made of strip styrene. Look at how SHS or PRS does it if you are uncertain. Cutting and shaping the underside ribs is a time consuming chore and if you can make parts from resin, this could save you time and aggravation. On my Canada Southern 3127, I put on the full brake rigging using a Grandt Line brake kit and air hoses along with Detail Associates stirrup steps and brass wire for the piping as I entered this car in a NMRA contest. I also used brake platforms from Des Plaines Hobbies and SHS trucks and cut levers made

from brass wire.

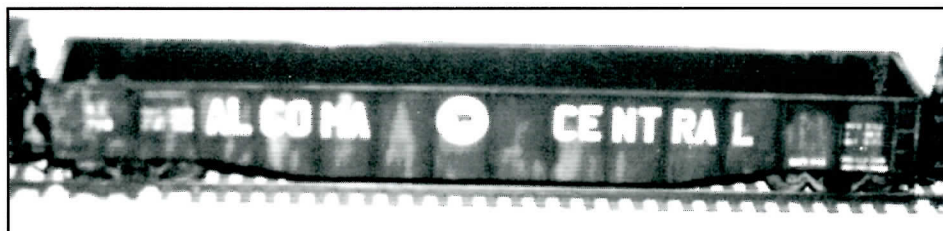
For the end ladders on the car, I cut down full size ladders from PRS boxcar kits. You could also use these on the right hand end of the car although I chose to put brass wire grabs at the ends of both sides as well as the bottom of both of the ends of the cars. While I hadn't found them when I did this car, CMA Associates makes excellent straight and drop style grab irons.

In part to hide the cut lines and also to get variety in my car fleet, I glued on the plastic waffle side panels that were released several years by Mainstreeter Trains for AM and AF cars. They go on every panel but the end ones because they aren't wide enough to accommodate the waffles and the grabs. On the prototype cars, the only flat sides are on the first panels in from the end panels. Again the car was spray painted black and lettered with Canada Southern transfers that I had made by CDS. I used a CDS CNR gondola transfer for the dimensional data and a lube plate decal. Weathering was done with chalks.

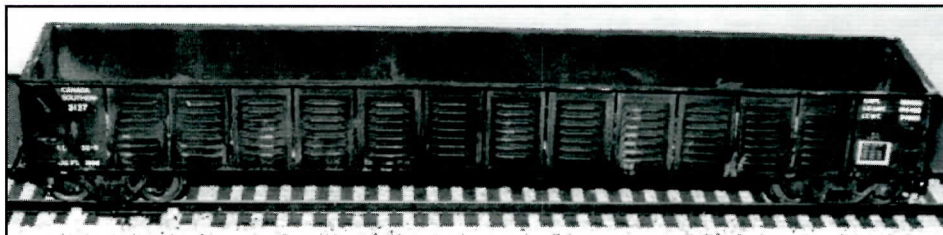
The big slice

The MTH car is a good-looking unit that scales out to just under 60 feet in S scale. However it was too wide. Down the centre of the underframe are two sills and by measuring I found that cutting out the plastic between the sills would bring the car's width down to very close to 10 feet in S. After some vigorous sanding, the car can be glued back together on the sills. It took a bit of filler to fix the ends up.

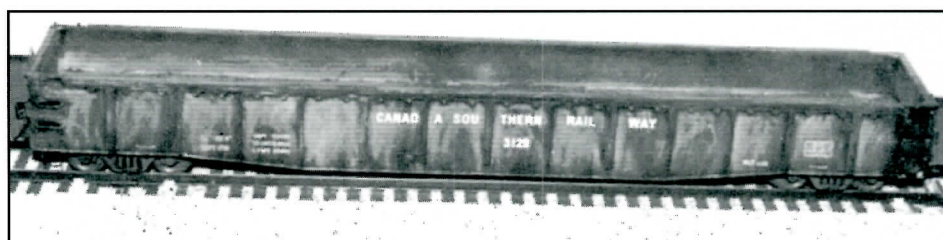
When the glue was dry, I put a new floor in this car. Because it cannot be seen and I have no intention of entering this car in a contest, I just left the underside that way it came. On the topside, finishing this car was much like the AF one described above. I cut off all the cast on grabs, ladders and brake gears and replaced them with PRS



American Models 52' gondola modernized.



American Flyer 40' gons were the basis for this kitbash.



This MTH O-27 gondola was narrowed.

Photos by Alex Binkley

parts, Grandt Line brake wheel and airhoses and DPH brake platforms. Once again I glued on a metal bolster. The car rides on SHS trucks. I spray painted the car black and used a variety of CDS transfers. One nice cast on feature on this car is tie down clips. It is a feature I should put on my other cars.

My model won second place in the freight car category in an appearance contest at an NMRA Niagara Frontier Region convention a couple of years ago.

The Future

I have a few more AF cars to cut up to augment my waffle side car fleet. If you were doing several of these at the same time, the project is OK. As for the MTH car, I'm told that MTH won't just sell shells. So I don't think it is worth buying the car and then have to dispose of the wheels and couplers. If you get the shells, it isn't a bad project.

Thanks to Tom Lennon, I have one of the Winter Railgon kits that were issued some years ago. He also sent me several articles on the

car that show that the ends and other parts of the Winter car aren't correct for a Thrall built gon. So far I have assembled a couple of test gons based on some of the parts from the Winter and information from the articles. These cars are be a mix of plastic and resin parts. Hopefully in time, I will get all the parts correct and come up with a car good enough to enter in an NMRA contest. However, some of the test cars will make it into the Canada Southern fleet hauling scrap and other products.

Once I'm done with building gons, I want to do some flat cars and bulkhead flats and eventually some of the center beam flats used in the lumber and drywall trade.



Meet an S Gauger

Dick Kloes

and The Story of the Root River & Southern

Since Dick has had his basic story told in this column before, some of you might want to look back at the April, 1997 *Dispatch*. This article will update readers on his activities and mainly tell the story of his freelance hi-rail, semi scale S model railroad, the Root River & Southern. Here's Dick's update.

structures are kits offered by Lehigh Valley Models and others.

Track is mostly American Models code 148 with many of the turnouts being scratchbuilt, including one on a curve.

Locomotives are mostly American Models and SHS diesels with

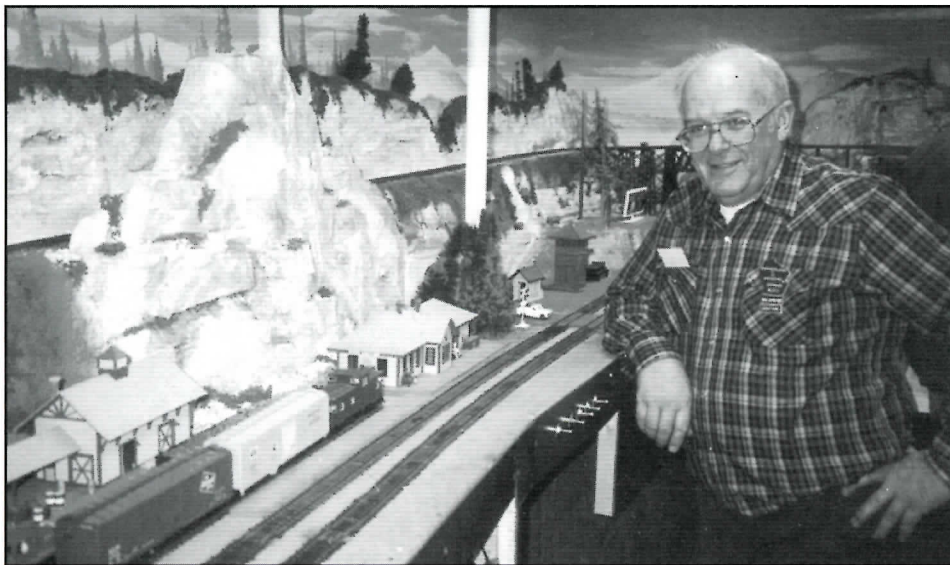
part of the basement. There is one duckunder necessary to get into the main part of the layout.

The name Root River & Southern comes from a real river which is near my home in southwest Milwaukee. Basically, it's a fictional branch of the Milwaukee Road that features logging, mining and rural industries.

My first introduction to the S gauge world was back in 1949 when my brother and I received our only train set - an American Flyer 300AC Atlantic set. The Flyer setup mentioned earlier was started around 1971. Then the scale bug bit about 10 years after that.

Over the past 25 or so years I have been president, secretary, director and module planner for the Badgerland S Gaugers. Since retiring in 1994 I have been active in the club and have been able to work more on my own layout.

Dick's layout will be featured on one of the layout tours for the upcoming NASG 2003 convention this July. This is another don't miss layout featuring scratchbuilt structures, spectacular bridges and mountain scenery.



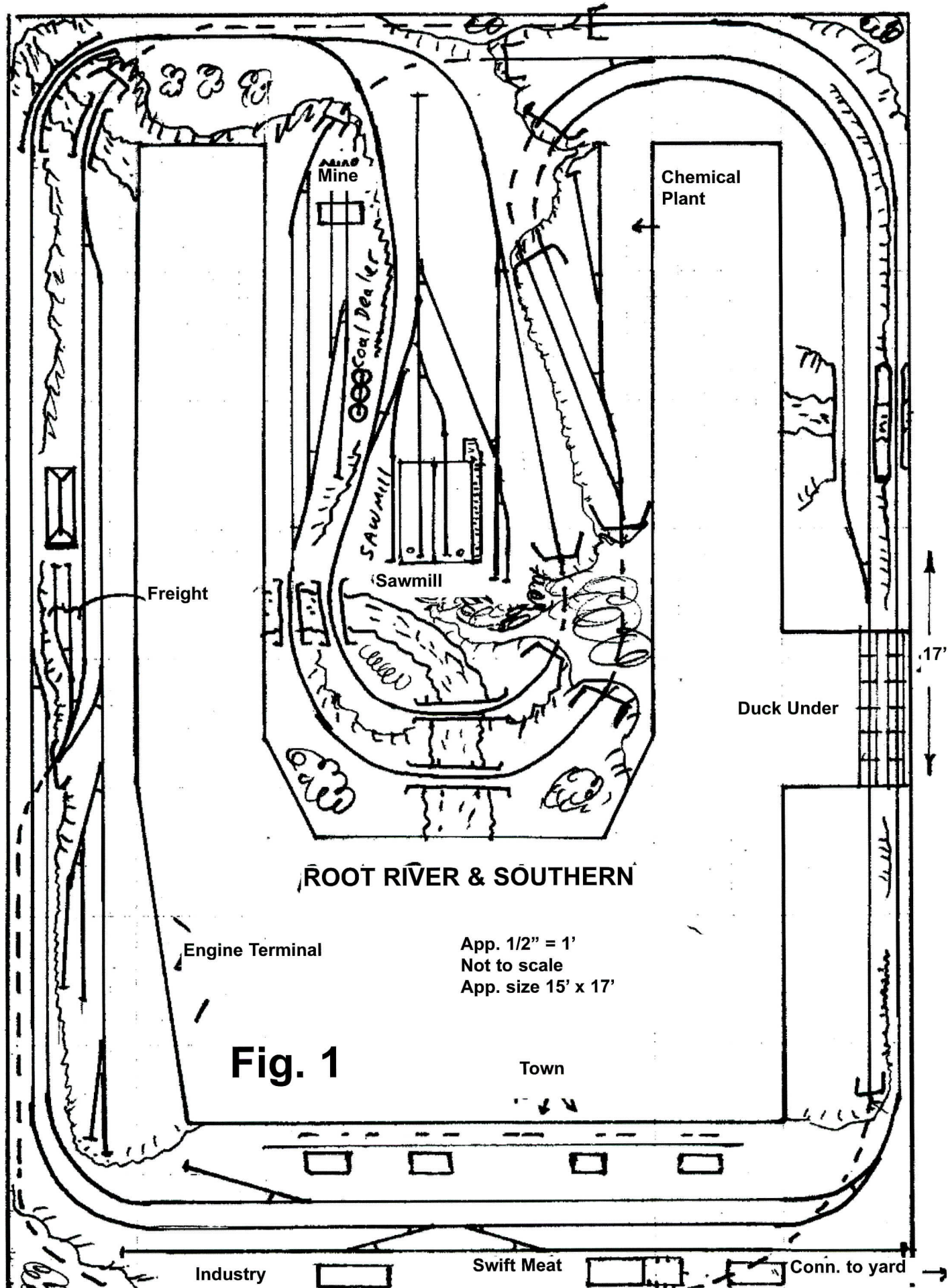
The Root River & Southern came about after I had visited a local model railroad club about 23 years ago. Prior to that I had a 10' x 17' Flyer layout that was featured several years ago in the *S Gaugian*.

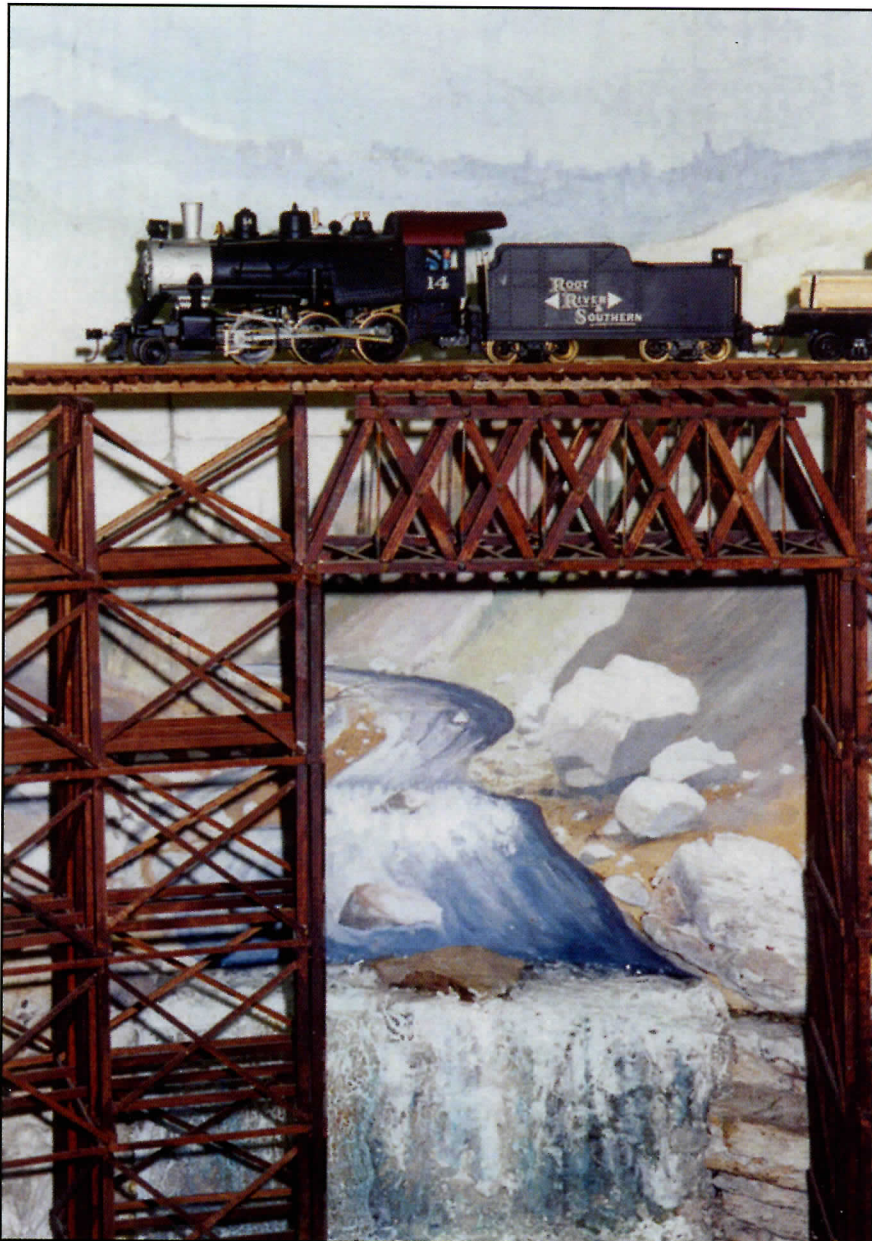
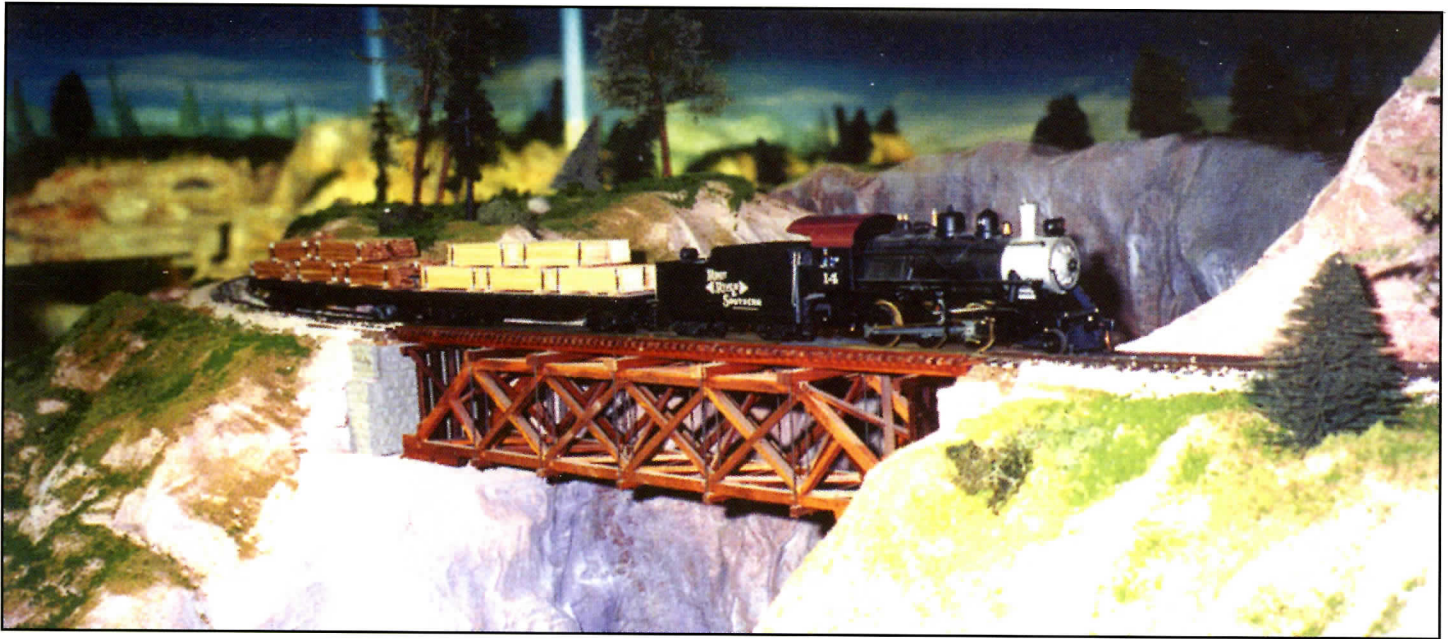
After being inspired by the local model club, I came back home and tore up my Flyer layout and started over on the present Root River & Southern. I like the concept of having mostly around-the-wall benchwork with everything in easy reach, 3' or less. The track plan (see fig. 1) of the RR&S is patterned somewhat after Bruce Chubb's Sunset Valley HO model railroad. Most of the bridges and trestles are scratchbuilt, and some of the structures are as well. Other

some older Rex steam locos and even some Flyer steamers converted to DC.

The layout itself takes up 15' x 17' space plus a sixteen foot section of modular yard that I added along a basement wall. So basically, the layout is an around-the-wall style with a peninsula in the middle and a narrow yard along a back wall in another





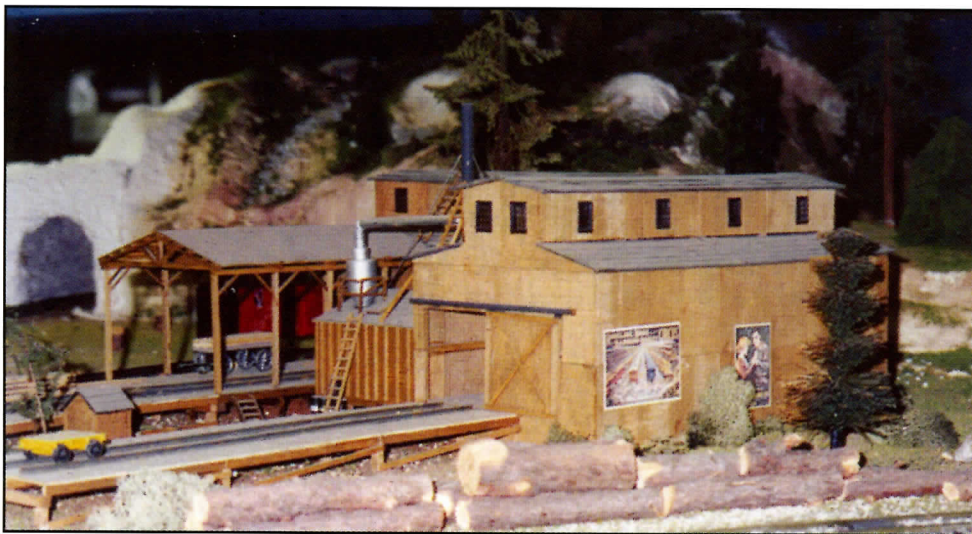


These spectacular scenes on Dick Kloes' Root River & Southern await your stop during the 2003 convention. The bridges are all scratchbuilt by Dick. The detailed Rex Mogul is hauling finished lumber from the mill shown on the right hand page. The mill was also scratchbuilt by Dick and is similar in style to the BTS one shown on page 7.

Photos by Jeff Madden

ALL ABOARD!





The RR&S is basically scale, but Dick uses code 148 rail so a few cherished Flyer locos can run on it too as shown above.



A SIMPLE, CHEAP SWITCH MACHINE

By Dick Karnes

Tired of those twelve-dollar slow-motion switch machines? Hate those old-fashioned twin solenoids that burn up their coils? Do you long for a simple way to route power to your frogs and beyond? Fear not! The answer is easy and inexpensive - simple dpdt slide switches.

Electrical supply houses usually have assortments of slide switches. Although the trend is toward miniature slide switches, what you want are the full-size models with about a 3/16" slide motion.

The drawing shows the essence of what we are doing. When I lay my ties on my roadbed, I omit the two 15' switch ties. Then I drill a 5/8" hole all the way through the roadbed and its sub base, centered between the rails and between the ties adjacent to the switch-tie location. If you are using a prefab turnout, place it on the roadbed, mark the location of the center of the throwbar on the roadbed, remove the turnout, and drill the 5/8" hole where marked.

Now prepare a slide switch as shown in the drawing. Drill a #72 hole vertically into the toggle, and drill a #56 hole longitudinally through the main body of the switch. (Don't worry; there is nothing mechanical or electrical within this plastic body.) Force a length of .025 spring steel wire ("piano wire" or "music wire"), available at your hobby shop) into the hole in the toggle. This wire, the throw rod, needs to be long enough to reach through the 5/8" hole from beneath the turnout such that it projects approximately to railhead height or longer - We will trim it later.

Now measure the distance from the center of the 5/8" hole to the edge of your layout, add two inch-

es to this dimension, and cut that length of .047" steel rod (more piano wire from the hobby shop). This will be your actuating rod. Round one end of the rod so that it is free of sharpness. If your rod length is less than about seven inches, drive the rounded end of the rod into the #56 hole. The best way to do this is to place the edge of the toggle on the edge of a flat surface and tap the rod into the switch body with a tack hammer. (If your rod must be longer, wait until later to attach it.)

Apply a bit of cyanoacrylate (ACC) glue to where both the wire and the rod enter the slide switch, just as insurance against slipping out.

Now glue down your switch ties and install your turnout. Drill a #60 hole in the center of your turnout's throw rod.

Now for the hard part: Position the switch's slide such that it is midway in its throw. Now, one way or another, hold the switch beneath the benchwork and work the wire up through the roadbed hole into the hole in the throwbar. I look down from above, hold the switch in one hand and a flashlight in the other, and do it that way. When I have the wire in the throwbar, I clamp it temporarily with a hemostat (although any kind of clip will do just as well).

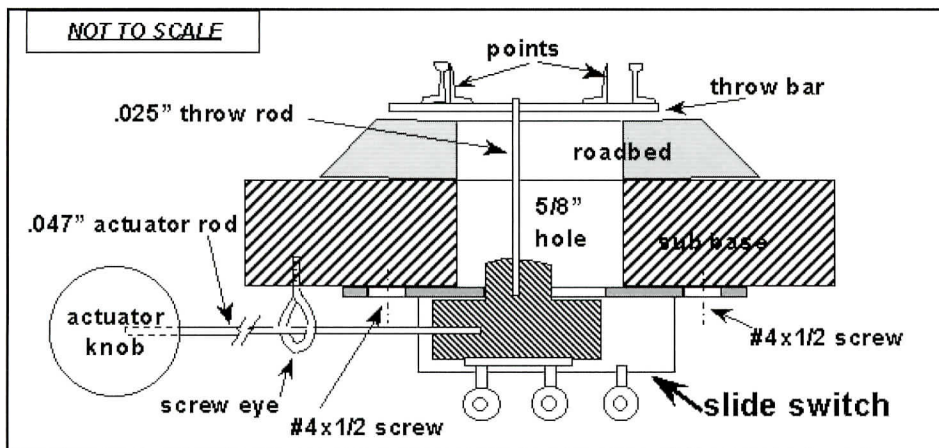
Position the throwbar such that the turnout points are midway between the stock rails. Now get beneath your benchwork and, with a sharp pointed object like a scribe, mark the locations of the two mounting holes for the slide switch. Also mark locations for two small screw eyes through which the actuating rod will pass. One of these should be about midway along the actuating rod, and the other should be near the edge

of the benchwork. If you have already installed your layout's fascia board, make a hole in it for the rod to pass through. This hole can take the place of the second screw eye. Also drill the two # 54 mounting holes for the slide switch.

If your throw rod must be longer than seven inches, you will need to support it in more than two places to prevent it from buckling when you push on it. As a general rule of thumb, support it with a screw eye every four inches or so. Locate and install all the screw eyes you will need. I use the smallest screw eyes I can find, about 3/16" diameter. Smaller would be better.

Remove the slide switch, install the two screw eyes, maneuver the slide switch back into position such that its actuating rod passes through the two screw eyes, and repeat the process of inserting the throw wire into the throwbar. If you have a long actuating rod, maneuver the slide switch into position without the actuating rod. This time, however, you need not center either the points or the toggle. Just get the wire into the hole! And clamp it again. Now attach the slide switch beneath the turnout with two #4 x fi" round-head wood screws. Then, with side-cutters or a Dremel cut-off disc, trim the throw rod to within 1/32" of the top of the throw bar.

Now is the time to attach your long actuating rod. Slide it through all your screw eyes and slightly into the hole in the body of your slide switch. Now rap the end of the actuating rod sharply with your tack hammer until the rod penetrates the slide switch at least 1/2", or until there is too much resistance for it to go in farther. If your rod buckles, thus preventing significant penetration into the slide switch, you need to add more



screw eyes between those you have already installed. You are nearly done. Install your fascia if you have not already done so. Now trim the end of your actuating rod so it projects about 1" beyond the fascia and file the jagged end smooth. Purchase a package of 1" round wooden balls from your local craft store. Drill a

#56 hole about two-thirds of the way through a ball, put a drop of gap-filling ACC on the end of your throw rod, and force the rod end into the wood ball. Actuate the turnout by pulling or pushing the ball.

Using red, yellow, or white, I color-code my actuators to the tar-

gets on my dummy switch stands so visitors can tell which knob (ball) controls which turnout.

You can now use the contacts on the slide switch for power routing. I use one set for powering the frog, so I don't have to depend on point contact with the stock rails for current flow. The second set can be used for signaling, route control, automatic stopping sections, or whatever else you may want to do.

Note: The turnout throw mechanism in this article is intended for scale turnouts only, and only for those whose points are hinged to the closure rails. Throw travel is insufficient for hi-rail, and strength is insufficient for points that are integral with (not separate from) the closure rails.



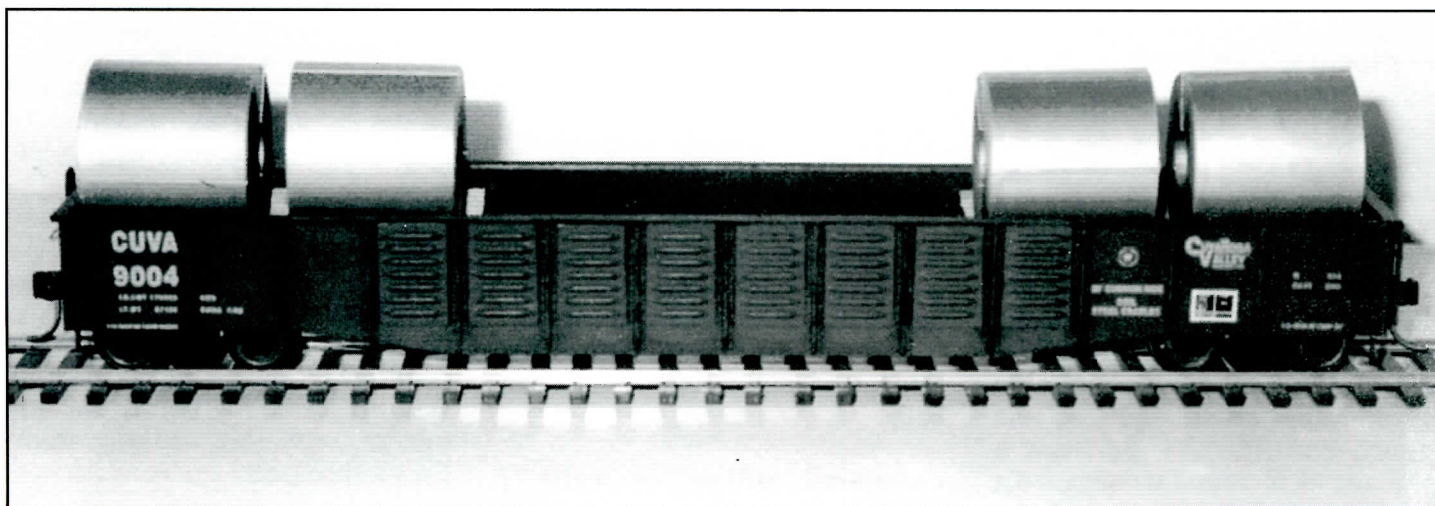
S Helper Service F7s are starting to arrive. Here are views of the B&M and D&RGW units. Other paint schemes available are GN, PRR (single stripe), Missouri Pacific and ATSF freight. You will want to take a detailed look at the catalog with color photos enclosed with this issue of the *Dispatch*.



CUYAHOGA VALLEY 9004 COIL GONDOLA

(More on modern gondolas)

By Mike Sulzbach



While I was at the 2002 NASG Convention I found sets of corrugated panels for American Models gondolas offered by Mainstreeter Trains. These simple add-on panels provide a much different visual look to a stock gon and will stand out in a string of look-alike gondolas. The Cuyahoga Valley gon (put out by the CVSG club) has no lettering in any of the center 8 panels, making the conversion easy to do without having to repaint the car.

The Mainstreeter directions are quite simple; remove the top and middle rows of rivets from each panel on the car, file any flash from each new corrugated panel, remove any paint where the panel is going (if you are working on a decorated model), and use liquid cement to glue the panels on. I used Testor's liquid cement. I removed the rivets with an Xacto #17 chisel blade, then carefully scraped the paint off the panels with a single edge razor blade. Then I used 220 and 400 grit sandpaper to smooth out any scrape marks, being careful not to damage the bottom row of rivets along each panel. The new panels do not sit flush with the rest of the car, but I did not want to sand the new pan-

els thinner, but you could if you wanted.

New panels on the car were hand painted to match the existing paint. I found Pactra Sherwood Green #MG-54 was a perfect match. It took two coats. Allow a day between each coat. I then added 8 Huff and Puff grabirons, 2 at each end and corner where the AM kit does not provide any. I used a #78 drill bit and CA to attach these. Trim excess wire from inside the body. Paint grabs the same color green.

COIL STEEL LOADS

To add more interest I added coil cradles and a wood floor. The Cradles are from Downs Model Railroad (now MM&T), part #PM-1001S. This is a black plastic drop in for scale gondolas with 5 sections for holding coils. I wanted cradles only over the trucks so I cut the center section out leaving 2 sections, each with two ribs. I then cut the center ribs out of the new sections with a razor saw. I filed and sanded all the details off the cradles as I would be adding real wood to the cradles. After clean up I brush painted them with Floquil Boxcar Red to represent cradles

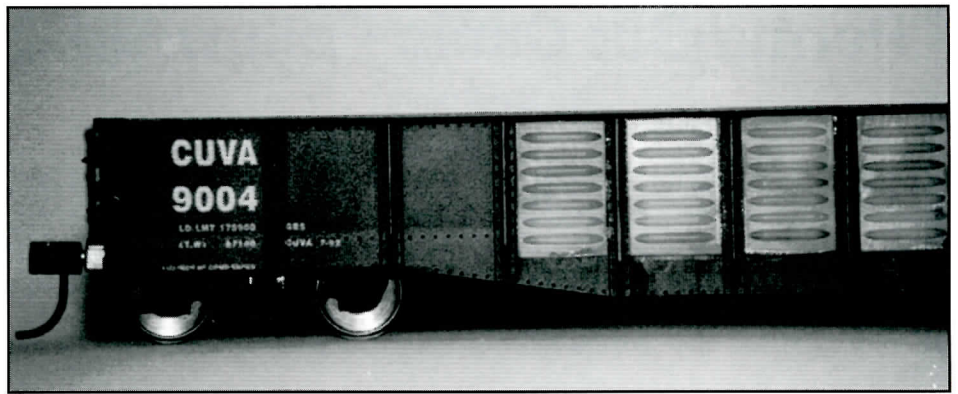
purchased from an outside railroad supplier.

I used Northeastern Scale Models #18SCR116P 1/8" x 1/16" scribed wood. The gon floor was first - I cut sections 9' wide out of the sheet. Trim the cut edges so they are a drop fit. I only made this section 30' long since the cradles would cover the areas over the trucks. I did cut two small squares directly over the two trucks to keep the cradles level. To impress bolt detail in the wood, I used the end of a round needle file and a straightedge to keep the row straight. These are 1 foot in from each side. I used Walther's Goo to attach the wood to the gondola. I used a very thin wash of Floquil Roof Brown to stain the wood, thus the bolt detail stands out nicely.

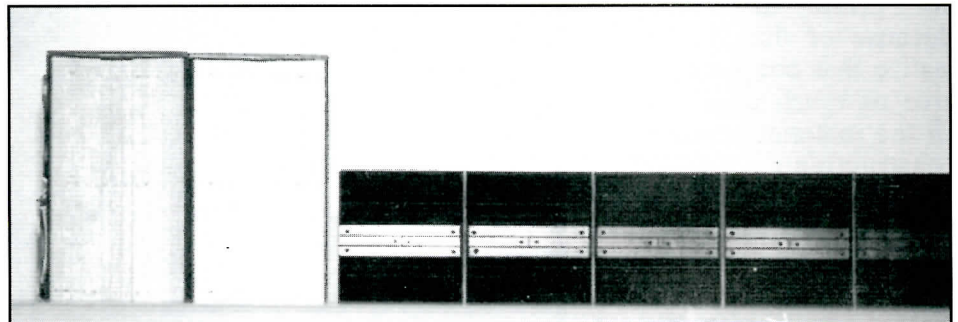
For the cradles, I cut sections of wood to match the length of each cradle. Luckily, the scribed boards were perfect for the angles of the cradle - 3 boards at the bottom and 5 each for the angled area. Again, I impressed recessed bolt detail with a needle file - one foot from each end and one row in the center of each board. Again, these were

Goo-ed in place and given the wash stain. Next, the cradles themselves were also Goo-ed in place with the open end butting up to the end wall of the gondola. The cradle wood runs perpendicular to the flooring and is eye-catching even without a load of coils. I do not know how the coils are secured, by load restraints or by their own weight. If you like, add simple underframe details such as air lines and brake rodding.

I will weather mine soon and add a coat of Dullcote to take away the shine of the new panels. Thanks to Mainstreeter Trains (Gil Hulin) and Downs (MM&T) an interesting car in S has resulted.



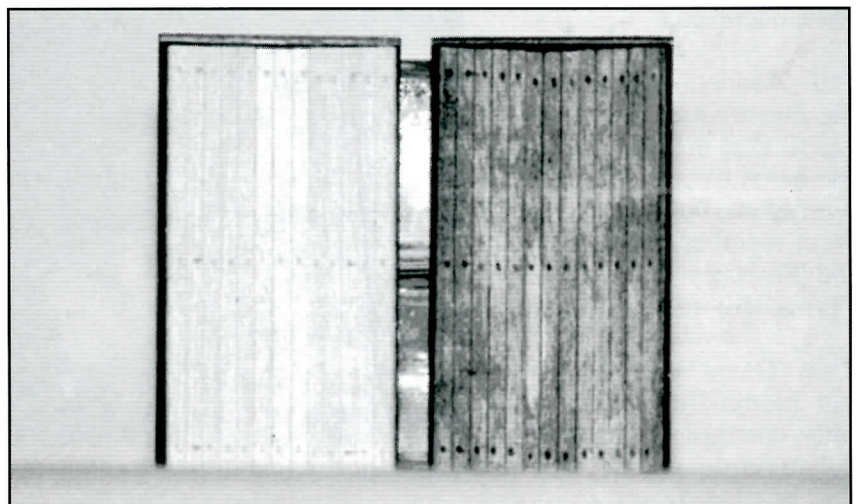
Closeup - new side panels



Cradles before and after

Bill of Materials

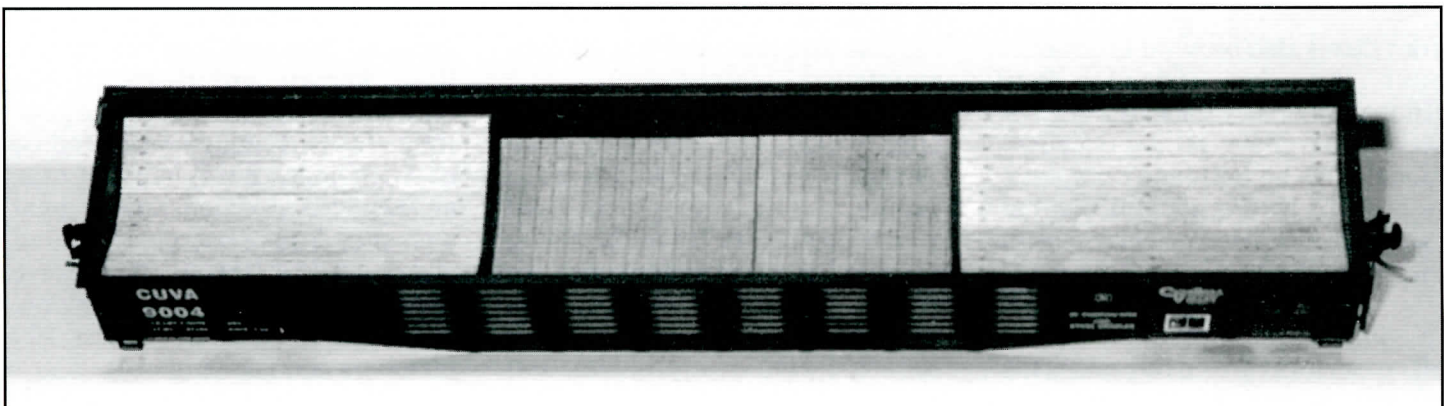
- AM Gondola kit
- Mainstreeter Trains: 16 corrugated panels
- Northeastern Scale Models: - - -
- 18SCR116P scribed wood sheets.
- Pactra: Sherwood Green enamel #MG-54
- Walther's GOO, Testor's Liquid cement
- Huff n' Puff: Grab Irons
- Kadee S scale 802 couplers
- Downs (MM&T) parts: #PM-1001S
- Misc. - brass wire.



Above: Unstained and stained new cradle wood flooring

Below: Completed interior flooring base.

Photos by Mike Sulzbach



Perma-Bilt Clinic Follow Up

By Bill Fraley

In following through on my PERMA-BILT article published in last year's NASG *Dispatch*, I must say that I was pleasantly pleased with the enthusiasm presented by the modelers of the Perma-Bilt clinics.

We were allotted one hour for our clinic at Cleveland. Because of that, I came to realize that one hour did not give us much time to cover all the material needed for a constructive meeting. Keeping that in mind and that our clinic ran in competition with two other very popular clinics, it was then decided to review the construction of our Perma-Bilt kits and discuss any problems that might have occurred.

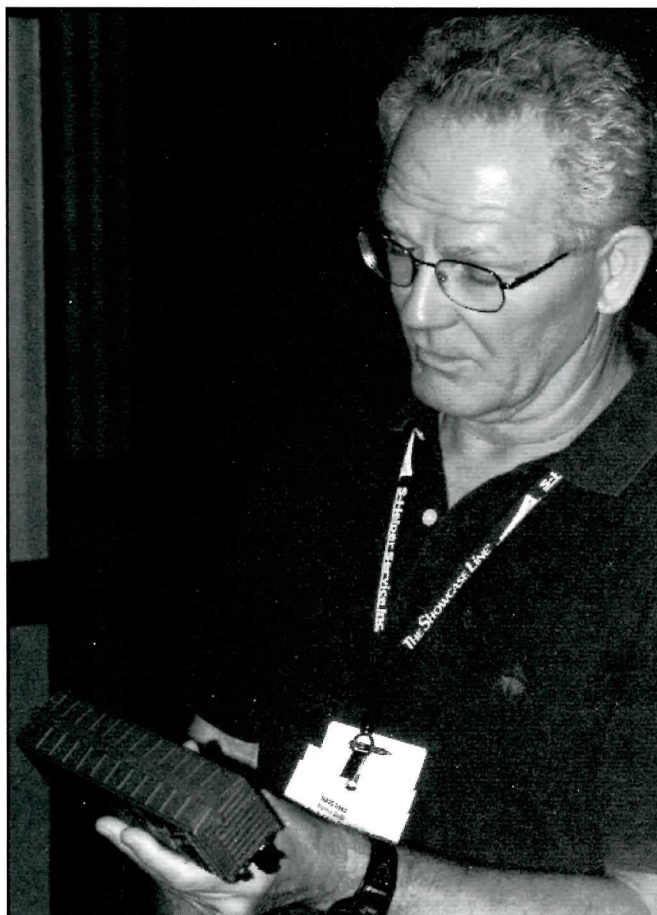
Jeff Madden gave a talk on the construction of his kit. It seems that in 50-year-old kits the metal truck castings cause a problem, but overall, his kit went together as suggested in the February 2002 *Dispatch* Perma-Bilt article.

Tom Davis also completed his Perma-Bilt model. The only changes he made to his constructing of the kit was that he used American Model trucks with SHS hi-wheel sets and the SHS American Flyer compatible couplers. Recently, he reversed his couplers to KD 802s.

Tom Davis also brought in a model built by his friend, Pete Hildenbrand of Charlotte, N.C. It seems that Pete is an excellent modeler, as he built and completely detailed his Perma Bilt box car using all the material provided in the original kit.

In addition, the interior as well as all exteriors are detailed. This

model was also entered in the Model Contest and it did win an award, but we can't get the details from the contest committee, so, you'll just have to take it from me, this is one heck of a model. I per-



Tom Davis explains how he built his car.

sonally feel that it should have been rated with the Best of the Show. I'm not taking away from the model that did win that award; it is just that this model is so darn impressive.

After writing the above, I have connected with Pete, who lives in North Carolina, through the land lines. I decided to leave the above statement in because I would like to also make a point. It seems that our NASG contest in Cleveland had some kind of a problem. Jeff

Madden, Roy Hoffman and myself, have been trying to get the results and papers on the contest since July, and have been shut out.

This makes it very difficult to write and publicize when we do not have pertinent information on the subject. In my case, I'm very busy writing and getting details, facts, releases and images so that you modelers out there, can have something to look up to. It is not easy when someone fails to cooperate. Only because I'm a "Bird Dog" was I able to come up with Tom and Pete's addresses. The two of them helped me tremendously in finishing this writing.

OK! Back to what I want to say.....This beautiful piece of modeling won an Amateur Second Place in Freight & M.O.W. Kit-Conversion category. I know that this is going to cause me grief, but Second place? I've given much thought to this, and have come to the conclusion that the model was judged on all the fineries of a modern model of a prototype [Hmmmnnn, sounds like Gilbert and Sullivan to me!] and not on what it really was, an excellent model built with all the parts from a 1950s kit. I guess you could call it a "Loop Hole" in our judging of models. Come on folks, we take ourselves too

seriously.

After talking to Pete I was introduced to a marvelous group of S gaugers. Pete and Tom belong to a little known group called the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers. (<http://www.sgauge.homestead.com/ACSGindex.html>) Wow! Little, no way! Six divisions and a great web-site. You must go there, all clubs should be this good and have as much fun as they are having, and I believe they have over 100 members and growing.

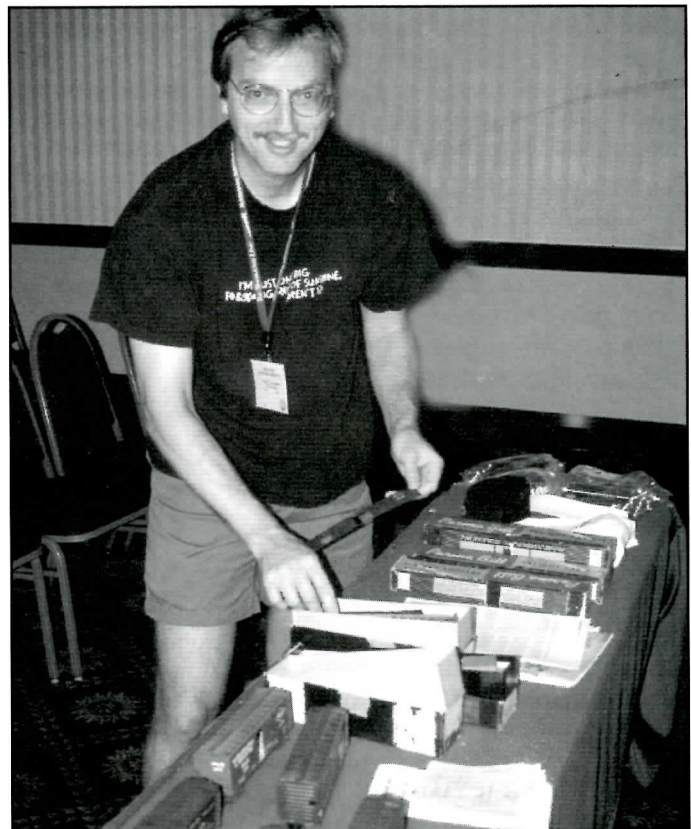
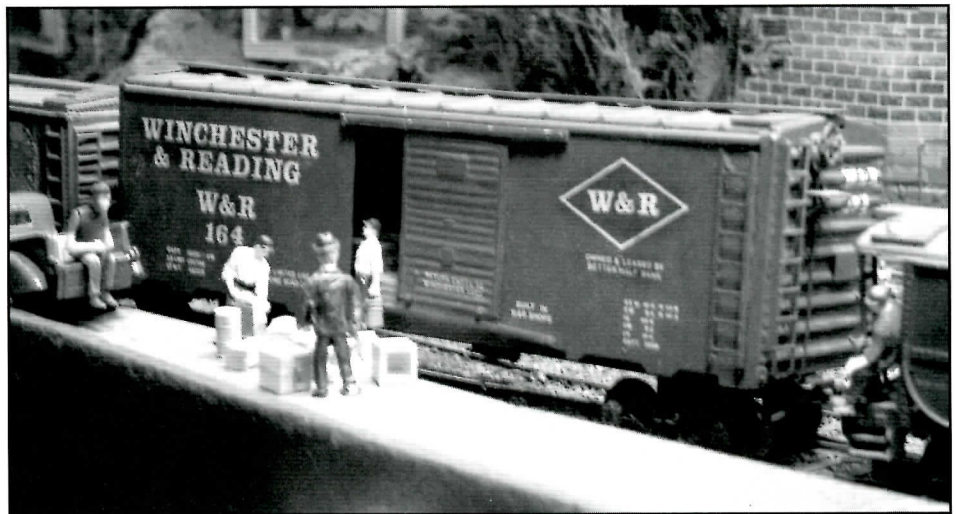
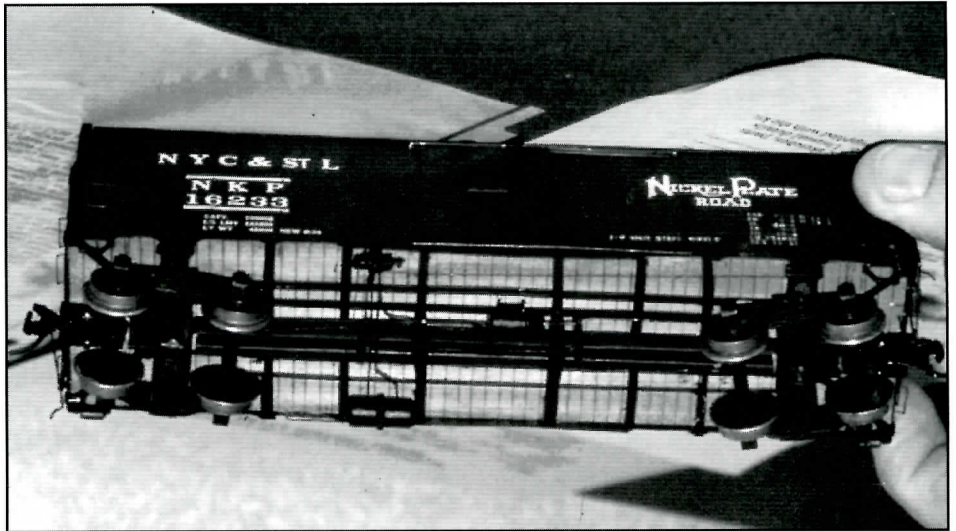
I want to take a moment at this time, to thank all the modelers who attended the Perma-Bilt clinics and I hope that they have, or eventually will build their kits; they will really look good on your layout. There are still Perma-Bilt kits available, just inquire or look around at our NASG sales tables. Some were being offered at Cleveland, but at \$35.00 per, were too pricey.

I would like to offer several suggestions not mentioned in the last article.

- (1) After the model is completed, spray it with dull coat or Matte Medium, it really gives your model a lift.

- (2) If your model's metal sides were peeled, some modelers cleaned them down and built their car from scratch, painting and adding decals of their choice. Several of mine were peeling, but I liked that and made them look weathered. For those of you currently building your cars, if you have any questions, please contact me, I'll try to help you.

All in all, thanks to the generosity of Wally Collins, your association gave out 47 kits, not including four of mine that I donated at Cleveland. For me, it was a great pleasure conducting the clinics and dealing with all of you, who are really nice guys. It was also a lot of fun and a learning experience. I sure hope you shared those candy bars with the Mrs. and if you ever get to Hershey, Pa., give Mary and me a call, we would love to have you visit the Jefferson Central.



Top - Detailed view of bottom of Pete Hildenbrand's 2nd place winner. **Middle** - A view of a Perma-Bilt car being unloaded on the Jefferson Central. Tom O'Connor built the car for his private road. **Bottom** - Keith Thompson examines the completed models brought to Bill's follow-up clinic at the Cleveland NASG convention last summer. Kits were donated by Wally Collins at the Scranton convention in 2001, and those that paid a small fee got to keep them and build them. In Cleveland many showed up including your editor's and others.

Photos by Bill Fraley

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The **Bristol S Gaugers (BSG)** met at the home of Pat and John Ciarleglio in Wayland, MA. on Dec. 15, 2002 for their holiday party. Skip Readio held the January club meeting at his home, in Ayer, MA. The club brought their layout to the West Springfield, MA. show at the Big E Fairgrounds. This is probably the largest and most attended train show in the New England area. Tom Robichaud is Pres. of the club, Helen Lenart, V.P.; Chet Brown, Treas.; and Dick Connors Secretary. Doug Peck ably edits the newsletters and information bulletins for the group.

The **Conn. S Gaugers (CSG)** met at the home of Dave Plourde, in Longmeadow, MA. for their October meeting. Dave's S layout was a crowd pleaser, with scenery and fine operating trains. Dave recently added a staging yard and train station over the tracks using a Walthers Cornerstone Power Co. kit. The layout has printed paper factory buildings mounted on foam core, used as a back drop for the staging yard. Windows and doors were cut out and pictures of people and machinery installed to detail the factory backdrop. The factory building prints were purchased from Westport Model Works, a local firm that offers printed scenery in a variety of modeling scales, including S.

The club met at the home of member Larry Hally in Branford, CT. on Jan. 18. Larry demonstrated the use of the brakeman's riveter which can be used on AF couplers and trucks, etc. Larry is an AF enthusiast and has restored several accessories and AF locos and rolling stock. Member Charlie Bettinger held the February meeting at his home in Vernon, C., in

February. Charlie has an extensive and well-scenicked layout. It includes a mirror for a backdrop which makes the layout scene appear larger than it actually is. The **CSG** is planning to operate their layout at the March Cheshire Train Show on March 2, as sponsored by the high school Ram Band. The layout will also be displayed at the Housatonic Railway Club Show, on March 9, in Fairfield, CT. Bill Fuhrman is Pres. of the Club; Steve Kutash, V.P.; and Craig O'Connell, Sect'y./Newsletter Editor.

The **Western N.Y. S Scale Assoc. (WNYSSA)** met in December at the home of Ron Kemp. Member Don Webb brought an AF 302AC steam loco and a Baldwin switcher to get repair tips on. An AF 283 Pacific loco re-motored with a can motor was operated for the club members attending. Member Torby Barker cut down an O-27 Madison passenger car to make an S car. Gregg Mummert coordinates the club activities, and he hosted the group on Jan. 19, at his home in Cowlesville, N.Y. Bud Rindfleisch may host the club for their February meeting. The Club is working with John Whitmore of the Kaslo Shops Distributing to supply a Penn. prototype N5-C caboose in S scale.

The **Southern Tier S Gaugers (STSG)** operated the yard of Doug Miller's Erie layout at the annual Railfair of the Susquehanna Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society in October, in Endicott, N.Y. Doug hails from Vestal, N.Y. the home of one of the early Roebling suspension bridges, forerunner of the Brooklyn, N.Y. bridge. The NASG banner was displayed from the layout operated at the show.

The **Rochester Area S Gaugers (RASG)** is hoping to have two new members, Mark Klemens and Jerry Faust. Member Dick Senges hosted the club for a meeting in early December, in Victor, N.Y. The **RASG** is planning to set up and operate a layout in early March at the Fingerlakes Train Show and in April at the Batavia Train Show.

The **Canadian S Scale Quarterly (CSSQ)** is published and distributed to members of the **S Scale Canada** community approx. six times per year. Each issue has a different editor. Letters, product reviews, prototype info, layout plans, coming events, and construction projects are gathered by the coordinator to form the consist of the newsletter. Manfred Lesser coordinates the newsletter material. Ken Garber of Windsor, Canada is selling off his HO equipment to change over to S scale operation. The Canadian modelers have most interest in the Canadian National Railways and are seeking rolling stock and locomotives that can be used to replicate the CNR prototype, among others. Bill Quait of Marvins Island, Nova Scotia is a new member of the **CSSQ** and works with a group of volunteers at the Halifax & South Western Railway Museum, Bridgewater, N.S. The museum is in the Bridgewater Mall and occupies space donated by the Mall. RR artifacts and a model RR of 500 square feet in S scale (sounds like a dream !) are included in the display. In addition there is an S scale and AF layout that runs around the museum near ceiling height, and into the mall area as well. There is also an AF switching layout for "hands on " operation by visitors. A recent issue of the *Quarterly* included a One Hour Project to make model "tin" signs for use on model buildings. The article was presented by Manfred Lesser.

Eugene Fletcher of Brunswick, ME, reported on the **Downeast**

S Gauge Railroaders (DSGR). A small group of dedicated model railroaders who support operations in S gauge. Gene was at one time active in the Bristol S Gaugers.

Bill Fraley publishes the *Roundtable*, newsletter for the **Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (LVSG)**. In October, the Club members helped to move Dave Heine's S narrow gauge layout to a new location. In November the club met at the home of Roy Hoffman and operated the Penn Western RR. Fred Rouse is Corresponding Sect'y.; Jamie Bothwell, Sect'y.; Dave Heine, Treasurer; and Bill Fraley edits the Club newsletter.

In late January the **North Penn S Gaugers (NPSG)** set up and operated their layout at the Family Heritage Train Show. Alex Larkin had a meeting of the **NPSG** in January to plan and work out wiring problems with the modular layout. A recent issue of the Club's newsletter included laser color prints of the portable layout and operations where it was displayed. In mid-February the club is scheduled to set up and operate their layout at the Fort Washington Expo Center Train Show as managed by Greenberg.

The **South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSJG)** raffled an S-Helper Service five car uncataloged starter set at a meeting in early December. Dan Mastrobuono stores the club modular layout at his home, and members can meet on Sundays to work on the layout. The Club is planning to set up and operate their layout at the South Jersey Expo Center, Pennsauken, N.J. on March 8/9 for the Greenberg Train Show. Hank Worrell is Pres.; Mike McConnell, V.P.; Joe Sullivan, Sect'y./Waybill Editor; Joe Balcer, Treasurer; and Jim Oliver, Ass't. Treas..

The **Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC)** held their club's tenth anniversary party on Sept.

14, 2002 by riding the Western Maryland Scenic RR. Fifty one members, friends and family attended. The Railroad travels between Cumberland and Frostburg, MD. The ride was provided courtesy of a full scale 2-8-0 steam locomotive. Those attending got to enjoy a special anniversary cake made for the event. York, PA. The club displayed their modular layout several times during the fall.

The **BAAFC** held their December annual holiday party at Bullock's Family Restaurant, Westminster, MD. The Club provided dinner for each member attending. In late December the Club members took a field trip to the Strasburg, PA. area to visit the TCA Museum, Bob Board's AF layout, and other attractions in the area. Member Ken Schnepf hosted the club meeting for January, 2003. Monte Heppe is scheduled to host the Club in February, and Gill Lott in March. The Club has designed a Club car, which was advertised in the February, 2003 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. The S gauge car is advertised as a "boxcar with cheese on rye" because it has the Saval Food Co. name and advertising on it.

The **Atlantic Coast S Gaugers (ACSG)** met at the Spencer Shops, North Carolina Transportation Museum in mid December. The Museum is located at the one-time site of the Southern Railway Company's largest steam locomotive repair facility. The shops were named for Samuel Spencer, first president of the Southern. The site includes an authentic train depot, antique automobiles, and a 37-stall round house that houses 25 steam locomotives on display. Train rides, guided tours, and special events are scheduled at the Museum. While **ACSG** members were attending a meeting, friends, spouses, and children shopped or rode the Santa Train in operation. The Club is considering the pur-

chase of a trailer to store and transport modules to display sites. It was planned to attend and set up the layout at the GATS Train Show, in Atlanta, GA. on March 15/16. This was to help build membership in that area. The Club also plans to display a layout at Railfan Days, in Spencer on April 26/27. Joe Haenn of Rougemont, NC edits news releases and information on the Club activities.

The Carolinas Div. of the ACSG participated in the Neuse River Model RR Show, in November, at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, N.C.. It was a two day show, and the layout set up was 18 ft. x 42 ft. with two tee modules and a center yard pass through. Three trains were running at all times, to keep up the interest of the visitors. Rhett George coordinated the show and layout set up. Five new members were obtained including: Sean Deutsch, of Hope Mills, NC.; Ed Hannen, of Raleigh, NC.; Donald Martin, of Knightdale, NC.; Lindsey and Natalie Morse, of Raleigh, NC.; and Marshall Ladd, of Columbia, SC.

The **ACSG** began in August, 1998 with six members in the Richmond, VA. area. Today the club has five active divisions, and over 140 members, and hope to get another division started in Atlanta in the forth coming year. There are four operating layouts that can be set up and operated by the members of the divisions as desired. Wayne Beachy has a 5 ft. x 9 ft. layout that he takes to various sites including the Midlothian Fire House and various hospitals where S trains can be operated and displayed. Wayne painted and lettered a caboose in the Norfolk and Western color scheme, which was described in an article in the January/February '03 issue of the *S Gaugian Magazine*.

The **Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE)**: Lynn Keiter has been working with other dedicated vol-

unteers to restore one of Tampa, FL original trolleys, and new trolley service has recently been begun with the restored the Birney trolley. The line connects downtown Tampa with the old harbor city. Member Frank Jackson of Frank's Toys & Hobbies held a meeting of the Club at his store. The meeting was well attended, and new train items were examined and tested. Frank and Ellen have been operating the store for the past 16 years, and this year were awarded the "Hobby Store of the Year-2002" award by the National Retail Stores Assoc. and the *Model Retailer*, the hobby industry's leading trade magazine. The Club set up their layout at several shows in December and Jan.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG) set up their modular layout at the Saline Rails on Wheels Show, at the Washtenaw Co. Fairgrounds on December 1, 2002. Member Earl Carlsen of Oxford, MI held a meeting of the Club at his home in December. Tom Hess held the January meeting at his home, in Northville, MI. Jerry Poniatowski was scheduled to host the club for the February meeting. Jerry scratch-built a wonderful model of the Amtrak AEM-7 electric locomotive and wrote a very informative article on the project which appeared in the Jan./Feb.'03 issue of the *S Gaugian Magazine*. Gaylord Gill is President of the Club which has approx. 50 members. Member Bob Stelmach converted an On30 loco to S gauge by changing some details and re-gauging the wheels. Elections for the Club President and (2) Members at Large were held in January but the results were not available at press time.

The Northern Ohio S Scalors (NOSS): A recent issue of the Club newsletter included an article entitled "From a Wife's Perspective" written by Patricia Henning. In the article Patricia described she and her husband's

participation in the Chesapeake & Ohio Historical Society's annual conference. John gave a talk to the group on LCL freight service, and a special freight car used on the C & O. George and Steffi Ricketts held the annual holiday meeting of the club at their home, in Westlake, OH. The program for the meeting was a repeat of the last year's program, the Holiday Gift Exchange Game. Each person attending was to bring a gift wrapped in festive paper, and placed in a large paper bag.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG) met at the Marion Union Station for their meeting in October. Jerry Ritchie coordinated the visit with a meeting of the Club scheduled for the station's conference room. The control tower and an operating HO layout were also available for the members attending to enjoy. John and Sue Gafney held the January meeting at their home in Dublin, OH. Alan Evans and Mark Link were scheduled to host the February meeting of the club in Gahanna, OH. Bill Bicking from Gahanna and Ken Mauck from Pataskala were welcomed to the ranks of the Club. In a recent issue of the Club newsletter, Art Lofton described a trip to the Toledo Stanley Yard. The tour was sponsored by the **COSG** Northern Div.

The **COSG** held elections recently and the following were elected: Larry Robertson, Pres.; Dave Stilp, V.P.; Jeff Link, Sect'y.; and John Gafney, Treas. Trustees are John Frazier, Tom Brinker, and Rob Berridge. The Club is updating their layout and considering installation of accessories that can be operated by visitors. A three camera video system was purchased to be used at club display. of their layout. The **COSG** set up and displayed their layout at no less than three shows during the month of December. These included the Marion Model Train Show (Marion County Fairgrounds), the Springfield Model Train Show

(Clark County Fairgrounds), and the Buckeye Railroad & Model Train Show (State Fairgrounds). Alan Evans edits the Club newsletter.

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers (CVSG) Holiday Christmas party was held in mid-Dec. at the Station Restaurant, Berea, OH. The week prior to the party, the Club set up and displayed their tinsplate and Hi-rail layouts at the Bob Frieden Train Show, Parma High School, Parma, OH. The **CVSG** set up and operated their layouts at the Greenberg Train Show, in January. This show was sponsored by the Model Railroader Magazine and World's Greatest Hobby National promotion. Member Jim Zborowski held the January club meeting at his home, and President Lee McCarty is scheduled to have the February meeting at his home in Broadview Heights, OH. Josh Seltzer wrote an article that was printed in a recent issue of the Club newsletter describing the history of the club and it's purpose to promote S gauge modeling and trains.

The Chicago Assoc. of S Gaugers (CASG) hold their regular monthly meetings at the St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School, Melrose Park, IL. on the third Friday of the month. The Club supported and attended the Fall S Fest held this year at the Tinley Park Convention Center. Club President Norm Schreiner thanked all Club members that help make the show a success. Banquet speaker Bruce Watson told about his new book *The Man Who Changed How Boys and Toys Were Made*. The book along with another recent release *American Flyer: Classic Toy Trains* by Gerry and Janet Souter are available from Heimberger House Publishing. Don Heimberger edits the **CASG** newsletter the Chicago Flyer.

The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG) were featured in the last

issue of the *Dispatch* Magazine because they are sponsoring the upcoming NASG convention. President Dave Smukowski, Jeff Madden and an active committee are coordinating the **BSG** planning and operation of the up-coming NASG Convention. Member Gary Children held the January meeting at his home. Brad Nelson is scheduled to host the February meeting, and Art Pratt the March meeting. The **BSG** made charitable contributions to several local groups, including Toys for Tots, and the Salvation Army. This is a worthwhile action for the Club to do.

The AF S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area (AFSGSLA) In January Norm and Ione Pilarski hosted the annual party for the Club members, spouses and close friends. Throughout the year the Club members contribute time to maintain and repair the layout that is displayed at the Famous-Barr Department Store window during the holiday season. This is a major responsibility and the Store provides a work place to set up and check out the layout.

Member Mark Brabb is scheduled to host the **AFSGSLA** club meeting in February, in Florissant, MO. Mark has a layout to be enjoyed by the members attending. Member David Stevens helped a group of Boy Scouts construct a display layout that will be featured at the Jamestown Mall on Feb. 1. The Club is planning to exhibit their layout at the Boeing Train Show in March at Queeny Park. The 2003 Fall S Fest is to be sponsored by the **AFSGSLA** to be held at the Holiday Inn in Westport (St. Louis), MO. Member Charles Albeitz is coordinating the home layout tours, and participants are needed.

The Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN) are celebrating their 35 th anniversary and met at the home of Pam and Pat

Spino for their December meeting. The Club held their annual banquet at the Cour d'Alene Casino in the Aripa Room, Worley, ID. on Jan. 18, 2003. Bud Chadbourne coordinated this event for the Club. Jon Kettner will host the Club for their meeting in March. The **IESGAPN** members are looking ahead to July, 2004 when they might set up their layout at an NASG Convention in Tacoma, WA.

The Rocky Mountain High Railers (RMHR): plans to set up their layout at the Boise Depot Celebration, to be held on the weekend of April 19/20, 2003. The impressive layout is depicted in photos included in recent news letter issues, and includes a turntable, more than one level of track, and a multitude of trackage upon which AF trains can be operated. Member Sam Rapp built the round house and it has at least eight stalls with a turntable serving it.

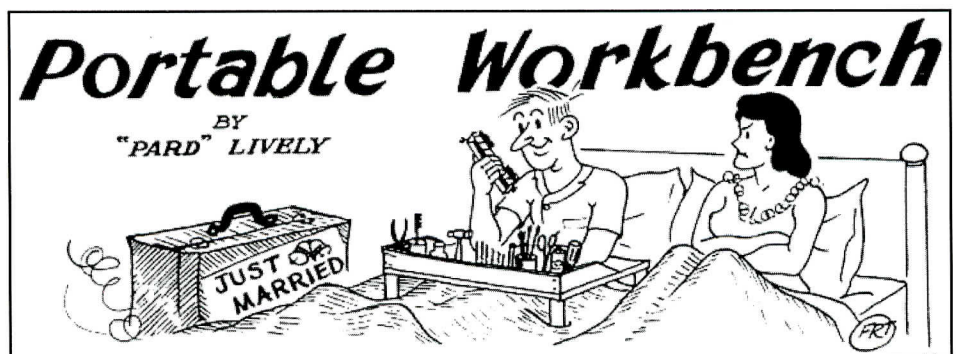
The **RMHR** met at Sam Rapp's shop in mid-January and plan to again meet in February and March at the same place to work on their layout in preparation for the Boise Depot Celebration. The Club is big on the celebration of **National S Gauge Day (3/16)** coming up in March. The group is considering displaying their layout at the GATS Train Show in June at the Western Idaho Fairgrounds. The idea of an S gauge Club car was under consideration to mark the tenth anniversary of the **RMHR**.

The Golden Spike AF Club (GSAFC) annual holiday party

was held at the S & S Shortline Train Park in West Farmington, UT. On Jan. 18/19 the **GSAFC** set up and operated their layout at the GATS Train Show, Salt Lake City, UT. The Club was given an area 28 ft. x 36 ft. in which to set up and operate the layout, and they offered to do four workshops for the show attendees. These included "Collecting Erector Sets", "Servicing AF Engines", "Building S-Gauge Scenery", and "Track/Switch Maintenance". The workshops were given on Saturday and Sunday when the show was in operation.

The Bay Area S Scalpers (BASS) met at the Santa Clara CalTrains station on Jan. 25, 2003. Hosts were Ed Peterman and Keith White. Jos Visintine brought the Club's modules for set up and operation. Refreshments were served to those attending. Arden Goehring has 1000 feet of main line laid on his home layout, with trains running thereon. Member Don Seeburger is building a layout in his garage which has no specific prototype. There will be two levels with Standard S gauge on the lower level and narrow gauge on the upper level.

Your column editor wishes to thank those clubs and individuals who submit information on the activities and events that you attend and organize. Please send newsletters and information for the column to: David Pool, 11 Bittersweet Trail, Wilton, CT., 06897-3902 or e-mail at: ndpool@juno.com.



EXTRA BOARD

MOVING VEHICLES

Here's one method of moving vehicles. One of our Central Ohio S Gauge members has set up a Formica highway supported on the sides. Directly beneath the highway is (sorry) HO track with just enough clearance for a powered diesel chassis without shell to pass under the highway without touching. A magnet is used under various vehicles like Hartoy trucks, Hotwheels, etc., not quite touching the roadway. Some experimenting is needed to get the right size magnet to work. The HO track follows the highway (like a subway). Set the vehicle directly above the engine chassis, turn on the power to the HO engine, and down the highway goes the vehicle with the hidden engine supplying the power. (The metal motor attracts the magnet I presume). Really neat, but crossing a railroad track with the highway hasn't been worked out.

- Alan Evans, Gahanna, OH.

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

Ted Hamler made me aware that my last S in Non-S blurb in the December issue mentioned S articles in the Dec. 2002 *CTT*. These really were in the November, 2002 *CTT*.

- Dec. 2002 *CTT* - (really) An article called "Ring in the Holidays" featured some photos of Mark Edwards' modular Christmas floor layout. Also on page 84 the article "Let There Be A Loader" dealt with the 779 AF Barrel Loader. Again thanks to Ted Hamler.

- Feb. 2003 *CTT* - S articles on pages 50 and 85.

- Mar. 2003 *CTT* - An interview of Ron Bashista of American Models and a feature on an all-gauge layout which includes Flyer.

- Feb. 2003 *MRN* - Two articles by Roy Hoffman, *S Curves* and On30 trolley conversion.

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS

Besides the wrong month in the above paragraph it seems we have a miscaptioned photo in the October convention issue. It seems that Wayne Beachy is the proud owner of the American Flyer Fire Train shown on page 14.

NEW CLUB FORMING

A few of our members are open to forming a new S club in the central Pennsylvania/western Maryland area. It's kind of a revival of the old Central Pennsylvania S Gaugers. Those in and around Harrisburg, Chambersburg, Pa., or Hagerstown, Md., might want to contact our NASG President, Roy Hoffman at 13544 Cumberland Hwy., Orrstown, PA 17244 - 717-530-7977 or via e-mail - rhoffman@innernet.net or John Foley at: foley164@ptd.net

CONVERT THE O SCALERS

An S gauger mentioned on the internet that the O scale crowd who can't fit an O layout in their homes might be convert targets for S. Here's a response from Ed Loizeaux: ... Lotsa other guys already in O are becoming aware that O is so large that a simple loop is all that you can do in a typical two-car garage unless you like narrow gauge. In particular, O scale structures are really huge and take up so much real estate that nothing is left over for anything else.

Out here in California, the O Scale West convention has invited the S scale crowd to join in with joint conventions at no financial risk to the S scale group. This offer included an S scale convention car, modular layout space, clinics, exhibit booths, a separate contest area, etc. But the local club in it's infinite wisdom, decided not to participate. This particular convention is true scale only so the 3-rail and AF crowds would be excluded. It would take only a half dozen true S scale vendors and a modular layout or two to really make an impact. While it might be consid-

ered a long shot by some, it is worth thinking about. Sometimes long shots pay off.

DINER ARTICLE

I just learned an article I wrote will not only be featured in the June issue of the *Plastic Village Gazette*, but a photo of the project will be on the cover. The project was converting a Bachmann On30 coach to a roadside diner. If you are not familiar with the *Plastic Village Gazette*, it is a quarterly magazine which features articles on Plasticville and the like. You can check out Mike Cedro at mce-dro@cin.net.

- Wayne Beachy

TRACK GAUGE

A possible alternative for a good 3-point code 100 gauge, since BTS is out of stock, are the Ribbonrail alignment gauges sold by Walthers or... Their 5" and 10" straights (item #170-805/170-810) are very handy and with a little practice work almost as well. They can be used with a 3-point gauge also, if you have one. They are also relatively inexpensive, \$4.00 or less for each.

- Al Coughlin, Bristol S Gaugers

S-TIPS

PRS Reefer Roof walks: Some seem to have problems with attaching roofwalks on the PRS reefer. All one has to do is remove the long plastic pins entirely from the roofwalk. The walk has a tang that runs almost its entire length. This tang fits snugly into the slots in each roof rib. The tang ends where the end roof ribs are, thus positively seating the walk with no longitudinal slop. Put it in position, zap it with your favorite liquid plastic cement (hypo or tiny paintbrush) at each rib, and you're done.

- Dick Karnes

Slow Cure Hydrocal: I called U.S. Gypsum's Technical Support line at 1-800-487-4431 to ask

about slow curing Hydrocal. The answer, my friends, is to not use the run-of-the-mill Hydrocal which is available in the various hobby shops and referenced in the magazine articles. Instead, use Hydrocal FGR-95. This product is not quite so easily available, and you might have to go to a major supplier of building and construction materials in order to find it. Anyway, FGR-95 is a slow curing Hydrocal. It takes about 45 minutes for a batch to cure which provides plenty of time to use it all up (no waste), plenty of time to sculpt the terrain (easy while mushy), plenty of time to wash your hands, and plenty of time to wash the various buckets/brushes/etc. The regular stuff might be better for rock castings - it cures quicker.

Foam Scenery: What you want to get is called Extruded Polystyrene Foam Insulation. It comes as Blue Board by Dow or Pink by Owens Corning. The last time I bought some I got it in green by Pactiv. The supply in my Home Depot was all beaten up, so I went to a roofing supply house. They have it in 2' x 8' panels that are a lot easier to handle than 4' x 8' and fit in my Outback with no sweat. They have it in 1" and 2" thickness and I think 1/2" too. Woodland Scenics has a bunch of hot wire hand tools that I use, but better yet, Scenic Express has a Hot Wire Foam Factory with several hand tools but also a Scroll Table that has a perpendicular hot wire and a span of about 9-1/2" so it can cut (rip) any size slice up to that width. It is the

neatest method, with NO mess. The hack saw method isn't bad, but the hot wire is even neater. Roy Meissner (Registrar for next summer's annual NASG convention) introduced me to Blue board, and he cuts it with a serrated steak knife. I have to admit that sometimes if I am in a hurry I even cut it on my radial arm saw with vacuum attached. It makes some mess but the shop vac cleans it up.
- Wally Collins

Geodesic Foam: Have any of you tried that Geodesic foam that has been the subject of NMRA clinics recently. It comes from a CA firm. It goes over fiberglass mesh which is available at Lowe's and Home Depot... It is supposed to be stronger and more chip-resistant than most plasters. It is a 2-part mix that sets up in about 45 minutes, so you do have some tool time with it.

This is a product of Bragdon Ent. We are using it on our portable railroad. In my opinion it makes some of the best model railroad scenery there is. Plus it is light weight and tough - just what we need on a portable layout. I think you could hit it with a hammer and not do serious damage. The cost is about half way between the old plaster method and the all-foam board method (I have used both). I highly recommend it.

- Bob Boring NWSS. *The first paragraph was an e-mail query and the second is Bob's response.*

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

April 5-6, 2003: Great Scale Model Train Show plus All American Hi-Rail & Collectors Train Show. Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD. (www.gsmts.com).

May 3, 2003: 4th Annual Flyer Fest West hosted by the Sacramento Valley American Flyer Club (SVAFC), Chabolla Community Center, Galt, CA. Don Rosa, (916) 682-6961, P.O. Box 1914, Elk Grove, CA 95759 - email: af2rail@att.net

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 9-13, 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

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Pres. Message from page 4

would have a great impact after they see the ad. *RMC* has a good track record in purchasing S articles and then actually printing them within a reasonable time frame.

MRN has the best magazine coverage we have right now. They are mostly news and reviews and don't use model railroading layout or how-to articles. However the *S Curves* column is in its third year and AM, SHS and PHM consistently run color ads. There are also occasional S reviews. I use them as an example that if we can concentrate our efforts in one good area, we have a much better chance of reaching the model railroad community with our "S"tory.

Some of our members with considerable writing and editorial experience have offered to help budding authors with their model railroad articles. Our best known photographer, Bob Werre, has offered to travel to layouts, etc., to provide photographs for articles. If anyone is interested, the NASG can find ways to help out, too. If we can get enough articles, we won't have to worry about concentrating on one or two magazines; we can blanket the entire hobby. It's up to us.

Jeff's Jct. from page 5

Which might have more of an effect on a youngster's modeling choice - seeing the prototype and some models of SD 90 Macs pulling a stack train or the quaint Sn3 2-8-0 with DCC and sound operating on a modular layout at a train show? My guess is that the older era models will win out as often as not.

Yes, have heart and patience you modern modelers in S. Modern models you desire will come in time. Manufacturers, once satisfied that the popular transition era is becoming saturated with product, will move on to "more modern" items.

Because of many converging factors, I feel the "golden transition era" will influence for many years to come. At the same time "old" and "new" modern models are a wide open market in S.

- Jeff

To achieve an even balance among S model railroaders, we have to find ways to buoy the finescale side. The promotions committee is seeking ways to accomplish this and is always receptive to suggestions on how to grow finescale. Recruiting new modelers strictly from the ranks of our own hi-railers would only "rob Peter to pay Paul" and not help S out overall. I would not discourage it, but we're talking about increasing the overall numbers in S. The answer is to continue to woo modelers from the other scales.

One way to do this is to actively participate in the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). There are many national and regional conventions and layout tours that S finescale layouts can participate in. There is no substitute for folks seeing what S has to offer up close and personal. Volunteering to run clinics at the NMRA conventions will help a lot. I noticed that our own Alex Binkley will conduct a clinic entitled *S Scale Today* at the 2003 NMRA convention in Toronto.

Another way is to maintain a healthy presence at NMRA sponsored train shows like the National Train Show (NTS) that they run concurrent with their national con-

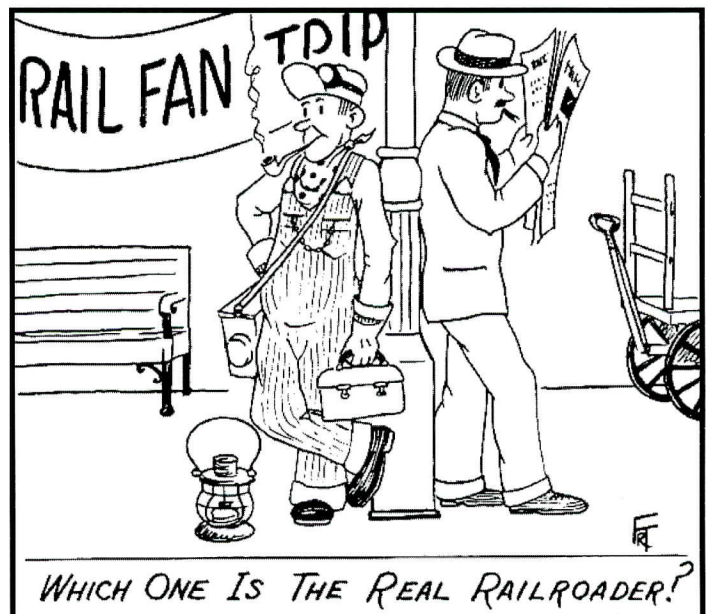
vention. The NASG and our manufacturers can help, once again by putting S out there for folks to see.

Some members are operations oriented and have invited modelers in other scales to their homes for operating sessions. That's where the others can see exactly what we know: That S is the perfect size for scale model railroading.

I'm sure we can think of other ways to promote S scale and build up our numbers.

On another subject, I hope that you are all thinking of the NASG Russ Mobley Library whenever you want some S related information on a variety of things. Many times the Librarian, Dick Karnes, has noticed questions put out to chat groups that could be answered by consulting him and seeing what the library might have in the particular area of interest. Dick's been doing a good job of trying to raise everyone's awareness of this valuable resource that we now have in place. The Mobley Library is now doing the NASG copy service that will soon include the S-Mod standards. The cost of the library has been minimal and the benefits are great. Why not give it a try?

- Roy Hoffman, NASG President



Suppose there was considerable interest in the Bachmann Bus Station modification (recently in the *Dispatch*), would there be any feasibility in the NASG or one of the S clubs buying up a number of the original kits, obtaining the necessary modifying materials, and offering the completed package to NASG members? This might be a way to raise a small amount of money for the NASG or a club.

- Maurice Wooden, Roswell, GA

On S-MOD specs: I don't understand why the S-MOD specs can't be put on the web? Why does it cost \$11.00 (last time I looked) to buy from the NASG? An HO modular group I was in printed its full specs on both 8-1/2 x 11 sheets. They were also put on the

web and the printed copies distributed freely at every opportunity. Why can't the NASG more freely promote modular building? Building a module is an excellent way for space-limited modelers to enjoy the fun of running trains with a layout of significant size. One way to increase the number of people doing this is to widely distribute the specs so more people can see and understand the opportunities.

- Art Armstrong, Los Osos, CA (See NASG News) *I think the web-site idea will happen, but the total physical package of the S-MOD specs is pretty thick with lots of pages so there needs to be some cost for the expenses of copying. Your thoughts are in the right place though.* - ed.

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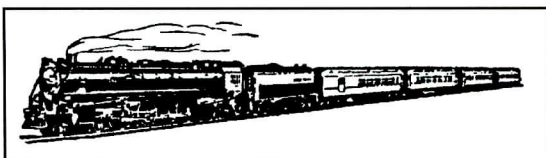
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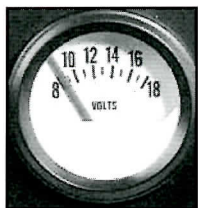
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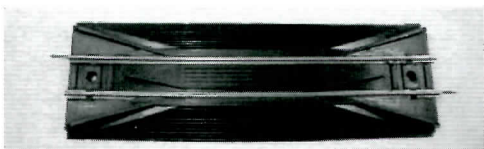


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