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Neville Rossiter’s Bay Ridge Harbour RR

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Photos are of prototype hoppers. Original cars built by Virginia Bridge & Iron, and the N&W
Features

4  Neville Rossiter’s Bay Ridge Harbour RR
   A U.S. prototype model railroad down under.

11  Adding Weights to Cars
    Gary Woodward’s simple solution.

14  Working Windows, Hatches & Doors – Pt. 1
    Custom Builder Harry Heike shares his tricks of the trade.

27  Improving Weaver’s 53’ Flat Car
    Not bad out of the box, Ed Bommer makes it even better.

31  Constructing the Float Bridge on the BRHRR
    Build the most interesting feature of the Bay Ridge Harbour RR

36  Building a PRR B8a – Pt.1
    John Sauer shows how he builds in modules

Departments

10  Narrow Minded - Bobber Gibbs

12  O Scale Hall of Fame - Minton Cronkhite

13  Dealer’s Corner - Bruce B. Blackwood

17  The Modeler’s Shelf - Readers’ Photos

19  Advertiser Index

23  Events

34  Crapola From The Cupola - John C. Smith

40  Product News & Reviews

44  The Modeler’s Shelf - More Readers’ Photos

46  Observations
Neville Rossiter
Perth, Western Australia

My interest in model railroads started off when I was seven years old, funny enough with O gauge — that is, Hornby clockwork trains which were very popular in Australia after the Second World War. Hornby would be the equivalent in Australia to Lionel in America. As I got older I went to HO scale European Marklin trains and kept this scale for a number of years.

One day I picked up (yes its true!) a copy of Model Railroader and fell in love with American railroads. At that time Rivarossi/AHM was coming into the shops and I was fascinated by the large articulated locos that Rivarossi was producing.

Eventually all this was sold and it was a number of years between getting...
married, establishing a career and bringing up the family before I got back into trains seriously with American HO.

Then, again, one day at a local model railway show in Perth I saw some On3 locos and a bit of track. I was hooked on its size. This led to a trip to America and several purchases of On3 items. In 1990, after a couple of years of constant kit building and little train running, I decided to go into O scale standard gauge and have been happy with this decision ever since.

Planning the present railroad began with planning the space. In fact, I had a room built onto the house for this purpose. Here in Australia, we don’t have basements so building a layout means using a room in the house or going outside to a shed or separate building. I started to build my layout in 1988

(continued on page 7)
NAME: Bay Ridge Harbour Railroad.
SCALE: O (1:48), standard gauge
PROTOTYPE: Freelanced.
LOCALE: Brooklyn, New York.
PERIOD: 1960-70 (flexible)
STYLE: Around the wall. Walkaround.
BENCH HEIGHT: 50"
BENCHWORK: Butt joint framework, flat top, subroadbed 3/4" Chipboard and Homasote.
ROADBED: Cork and direct to Homasote.
TRACK: English, Peco, codes 124 & 143.
TURNOUTS: All # 6 Peco.
CURVE RADII: 42" Min.
GRADES: Nil.
SCENERY: Real dirt and Woodland Scenics materials.
BACKDROP: 1/8 Masonite, with painted sky, Pioneer Valley, and Walthers building backdrops.
CONTROL: Four cab controls using MRC Control Master 20 Power Centers.
using On3 with a standard O gauge feeder, but after 2 years I changed to all standard gauge as I found I was spending too much time building On3 rolling stock. Originally, the layout was an “around the room continuous track” plan, but I soon got tired of watching the trains going round and round. I then found that a switching layout was what I liked, so I worked out a layout that was virtually one big industrial park (Harbour) with interchanges at each end. It is a walk-in end to end no duck unders!! The room measures 25 x 25 feet and is fully air conditioned and heated although with the Perth climate the heating is not really necessary. The lights are fluorescent, 14 in all. Mains power is supplied direct to the layout through 10 power points.

The railroad eras can be changed from the 50’s to the 80’s and 90’s in about a day. The benchwork is fairly standard, virtually flat module boards using 1x4 pine and 3/4 chipboard and 1/2 Homasote on a cork roadbed. The track is all Peco because it is the only O gauge track available in Australia, the ballast is Woodland Scenic. What scenery I have is Woodland’s ground foam and real dirt from the hills that surround Perth. The backdrop is plywood painted blue. Structures are a mixture of well known O brands, mostly modified in some way. I use MRC controllers (hand held walkaround), and all the wiring I have done myself, along with virtually everything else! One of my sons, Mark, painted a huge number of figures for me.

Locomotives are Weaver, Red Caboose, and the new AtlasO. I also have two sets of Sunset, BB-3 “rats” that I hope to use for switching duties at the floatbridge, the same as the Bay Ridge float bridges in South Brooklyn were many years ago. Rolling stock is Intermountain, Red Caboose, Weaver and the new AtlasO, which I find are excellent for their price.

Operations are running trains to each end and switching in between. I use a simple card system. All uncoupling is done by hand. At one end of the layout I use 2 visible tracks for interchange. At the other end a float bridge with removable floats.

The loads on the freight cars are all removable so that cars are run one way loaded and return empty. (The loads are lifted off and returned by hand to shelves under the layout.) I have had up to 8 operators at a session but mostly I am by myself or with one of my sons.

My entire railroad apart from track,
A Trip Around The Layout

1: The “entrance” to the layout begins at the 2nd Street yards looking east. The long building along the wall is a power station. In front of the power station are team tracks.

2: Farther east up the 2nd Street yard is a LCL Freight house. Those are Sunset PRR/LIRR B-class electrics, aka Rats.

3: Turning north heading toward Bay Ridge we pass a small Lumber yard and more generic factory buildings in the background.

4: There are several industries here: meat plant, junk yard, and an icing platform at the far left.

5: Beginning to turn west we come across a cobble stone team track. You can see the icing platform in the background.

6: To the right we see the end of Pier 1 (where the float bridge is) and to the left the beginning of Pier 2 wharf.

7: Pier 2 wharf. Out of sight to the left (south) are the stock pens which is where that switcher is headed.

8: Turning due east leads us to the South Brooklyn 39th Street yard. Those elusive stock pens are to the far right.
comes directly from the states as there are no suppliers in Australia for American O gauge. Perth is at the far western end of Australia, it is known as the most isolated major city in the world!!

Lessons learned: I probably should have had some hidden staging at one end. No more than 2 foot reach at any point on the layout. Areas with lots of switching should be close to the front of layout.◆

9. Looking south across the 39th Street yards.

10. Looking due west up the 39th Street yards. Neville has employed the old John Allen trick of placing a mirror under the overpass to make the trackwork appear longer.
In the “Narrow Minded” column of each issue of O Scale Trains Magazine, we intend to present interesting articles about the narrow gauges, including On3, On30, On2, On18 and others. We won’t concern ourselves with the Ow5/Proto48 debate but we will remember all of the different gauges share one common scale of 1:48.

Even if you are only interested in standard gauge modeling, there are so many new products and developments in the narrow gauges that we might convince you to create a feeder line and an interchange in the future. The contrast between standard gauge equipment and tiny narrow gauge equipment is intriguing and can really emphasize the massive size of your larger cars and locomotives. You might eventually include a section of dual gauge for another operating feature or create an antique narrow gauge equipment display. Occasionally, I’ll describe my own standard gauge Sand City Railroad and its narrow gauge components.

For those of you who are already modeling in one of the narrow gauges, a short standard gauge spur in the background and a car or two for interchanging goods can illustrate how small and versatile your featured line is. It’s also a good place to build a ramp to a loading or unloading facility to transfer that ore, coal, ballast or whatever for off-layout shipping. That’s also a good location for a tiny station for your passengers who are transferring to other railroads.

If you are seriously modeling one of the popular three-footers, you might choose to include a tiny mining line for contrast and if you are modeling any of the Maine two-footers, you have undoubtedly learned that those neat Forneys and long passenger cars mostly operated on large, gentle curves and you have dealt with the resulting space problems.

Hopefully, you have already discovered the many features of On30 modeling, including the Bachmann Mogul, freight and passenger cars that operate on HO gauge track. We’ll discuss the pros and cons of Bachmann’s choice of railroads and equipment and how they opened up new fields and complicated some old ones in narrow gauge modeling. When Bachmann introduces the new On30 Shay they have promised in 2002, I predict that a huge wave of brand new O-scalers will start reading this magazine and this column.

Finally, when we get right down to the tiny, funky, full-of-character industrial narrow equipment that ran on 30”, 24”, 18” and even narrower track, we will get to my special interest, diminutive critters, unique cars and lots of O scale operation in a very limited space.

Personally, I moderate three O Scale mailing lists on the Internet. You may be surprised to learn that there are 474 members on the Otrains list, 119 on the On30 conspiracy. When Bachmann introduces the new On30 Shay they have promised in 2002, I predict that a huge wave of brand new O-scalers will start reading this magazine and this column.

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Adding Weights to Cars

Gary Woodard

For a number of years I modeled in N scale. Most of my rolling stock was made by Micro Trains, or Kadee. These excellent pieces are top notch when it comes to detail and accuracy, and they also came with the appropriate amount of weight to help the cars track properly. I got out of the hobby altogether for awhile. When I decided to get back in, I chose O scale.

I had been in O scale before, back in the '80s, and had built a number of the Atlas/Bev-Bel cars when they were still in production. I didn’t do much about the light weight of these cars, and figured no one else bothered either. When I switched back to O scale, I picked up a couple of the old Atlas/Bev-Bel boxcar kits off of Ebay.

Over the years, I came to realize that putting weight into my cars is important. I found that adding weight creates drag and gives more realistic slack action, as well as make the locomotive actually do more work. Extra weights cause the cars to track more realistically, and give you the characteristic clunk as the train rolls over a turnout.

My first thought at adding weights was to use tape weights, like the kind used to balance mag wheels on cars. Well, trying to find tape weights in central Florida is like pulling teeth. It’s kind of like trying to get 2 rail O scale at your local hobby shop. I figured I’d be able to get them at any auto parts store, not around here. I even went to tire shops, but they claim they can’t sell the weights because they aren’t a parts store. However they would be glad to put them on my tires... if I bought a set of tires. As for going to a hobby shop, well I don’t live near a hobby shop.

Walmart to the rescue. In their sporting goods department, I found all kinds of fishing weights. (You can also find these at any anglers shop. I might also add that you can pick up lead shot at any gun shop that carries supplies to reload shot gun shells, and probably at a pretty reasonable price.)

Back to the point, I found four ounce sinkers that are shaped like a tall pyramid. At four ounces each, four of them will put you right at one pound, which is about right for a 40’ boxcar in O scale.

The NMRA recommended practice is to add one ounce for every actual one inch of length. With the Atlas cars being so light, I’m not actually weighing the car before adding the weight, so I have no idea what the car really weighs. With the car being ten inches long, that’s ten ounces that need to be added to the car. I’m guessing the cars are about five ounces, making the total weight 15 ounces. I figured by adding one full pound, a couples ounces overweight isn’t going to gain me any significant violations with the NTSB or the DOT for that matter.

As you can see in the photos, I applied the weights by laying them on one side. I used five minute epoxy to fix them in place on the car floor. You can also see that I mounted them toward the ends, as close to centered over the bolster as possible. This distributes the weight over the trucks, just like what would be done on the prototype. It makes the car ride more stable.

I have several cars that need weight added. It will be a challenge with the flat cars. I know I can always add loads, but in the course of real railroad operations even flatcars run light once in a while. So, finding a solution to adding some weight is better than nothing. Same thing goes for open cars like gondolas and hoppers. You can always add a weighted load, but there are times when the car is going to roll empty, so adding a little weight in an inconspicuous area of the undercarriage is better than adding none at all.

I do have some experience with the Intermountain boxcars. They are fine kits and build into fine looking models. The problem with adding weight to these cars after they are built is obvious; the doors don’t open, and unless you leave the roof unglued you’re going to end up tearing the car apart to add weight. Unlike the old Atlas cars which just snap together, everything on the Intermountain cars is glued in place. Therefore, you must put the weight into these cars before they are fully assembled.

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The fishing weights from Walmart

The weights epoxied to the car floor.

The finished weighted car.

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O Scale Trains • 11
O Scale Hall of Fame

Minton Cronkhite

One of the pioneers of O scale, he is best known for the large exhibit layouts he constructed. He built the San Diego & Santa Fe for the exposition in 1935 in San Diego and built the Texas & Santa Fe layout for the Texas Centennial Exposition in 1936. And in the late 1930's he built the Museum &; Santa Fe Railroad at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, which was Q gauge, 1 and 3/16ths. He likely participated in several of the other large exhibitions of the late 1930s and early 1940s.

The earliest reference, in the June 1936 Model Railroader, says that Cronkhite, H. B. Vanderhoef, and Carl Otto Noack in 1924 developed “...the first O gauge scale models that could be called such by present day standards.” Cronkhite and Vanderhoef were in business together as Crovan Railway Models which seems to be a combination of their names, but note that the Model Railroader credits Carl as being the head of Crovan until he died in 1936.

And no, Minton was not Walter’s older brother.
Let me start this with an introduction, My name is Bruce B. Blackwood. I own and run Burrett Hobbies in College Park, Md., as my full time job and sole source of income. I am an O scaler that started out with Lionel and other high-rail trains as a kid. My father had HO in the basement, so I became hooked! I had N scale as a newlywed living in a mobile home, then did the G thing in the back yard when we got our first house with a basement to small for O.

All the time I was a closet O scaler, building a small collection of O. Moved into a larger house some years ago and gave up on the lesser scales. I am building a 24’ x 45’ basement layout. So I hope this background will keep me from sounding like a know-it-all who knows nothing. My main goal in writing this is to help promote O scale 2 rail. I hope this becomes interactive.

Your assignment this month is in two parts. First, visit your local hobby shop and introduce yourself as a 2 rail O scaler. This will allow you to find out if the shop has any clue what that means, and, you might find the shop has a brass Big Boy under some pile in the back room ‘cause it won’t run on the 3 rail track! (Had a 3-railer come into the basement and ask how the trains picked up electricity) Get to know the owner’s name and what he models. Plan on taking an hour or so on this visit. Look at everything in the store, no matter what scale or even if it’s not in the train department. I call these types of people real modelers. They always find 2 or 3 items they can use even if not as intended to be. This also helps the shop owner know that you want to spend money in his store.

Now for a few DO NOT’s
• DO NOT be a “looker” only. As a shop owner I really appreciate the customer who refuses to walk out empty handed, even if it is just a pack of couplers or a magazine.
• DO NOT tell him about all the great things you bought at the last train show or at another hobby shop.
• DO NOT tell him his prices are bigger than O scale.
• DO tell him what projects you are working on and what special things you might be looking for.

You “want” to make this shop owner think that you are going to become his most loyal customer ever. He will soon catch on and want you to “think” he is your hobby shop. It is a “game” I play all the time. I know no shop can be everything to each customer, but here we are working on building your shop.

One of my pet peeves can be illustrated with the guy that came in just before the TCA York meet. After asking several questions to find out what he was into model wise, I found that he had heard of the new Atlas O hoppers and wanted to check one out. I spent thirty minutes with him, showing him the hoppers up close and personal, out of the box and everything. Now, I run a “discount” shop, but still need to make a profit. AtlasO is a “short discount” line and my price is more than fair. Still, after all this he tells me “Thanks, but I’ll pick them up at the York meet cause somebody will be having a blow out on them.” Forty-five minutes in the store sucking up the A/C and no money in the till. Yes, I might be a bit bitter, as I think of myself a better salesman, but Gang, your local shop owner should be able to make a fair profit on you. As O scalers we must get away from our reputation of grumpy old tight wads that beat on bronze with ball peen hammers. Remember that we are building a relationship.

OK, second, pick a project. What I want you to do is to build or modify something that is 2 rail O. Ask the shop owner if you can have a small place to display this project when it is done. Tell him you want to show others what 2 rail O is about. Look around and find something you can build or change over to scale 2 rail. Maybe an InterMountain kit or an AtlasO building or MTH car. If the shop has nothing in stock, ask to order something. Make it something that the shop will have little trouble getting, and that might work with the high rail crews.

Buy it from this shop. (remember we are building a relationship and it is OK to spend money and let the shop make a profit) Take it home, make a list of detail parts and extras, i.e. paint, glue, etc. Go back and buy those items from the shop. Almost all shops can order O scale parts from Walthers. Another DO NOT – DO NOT order items and never come back. It’s like kissing your spouse’s sister! The relationship will be over.

Now, build that project! Might be nice to make up a small section of track / diorama to display it on. Taking a short break from your other projects and building a small diorama will do wonders for your soul, as will going to church on Sunday instead of the train show. Take the display to the shop owner and let him display it for 6-8 weeks. Offer the display track for a longer time. See if he might have another customer who would like to display a car on it.

Help the shop owner see that others want O 2 rail or that at least they can make some money with carry-over on the high rail guys.

You now have a shop owner who knows you and what you’re about. He may also call you when that 3 rail lot with that one brass 2 rail car gets traded in. He also knows you will spend money in his shop. He knows that when you order something, you will pick it up, and he can make money by special ordering stuff for you. And he may have found a few more good men, err... O scalers.

Plus in a few weeks you will have something built up to add to your layout.

OK, That’s it for this time.

Next we’ll expand our shop with brass and more!

Comments welcome:
burrett@erols.com or
Bruce B. Blackwood
C/O BURRETT HOBBIES,
9920 Rhode Island Ave.
College Park, MD 20740

Dealer’s Corner

Build yourself a hobby shop and promote O scale 2 rail.
Needless to say, I was absolutely delighted when Joe Giannovario asked me to do a series of articles for this magazine. There are only two things that I would rather do than talk; one of them is build trains and the other one is probably inappropriate for this magazine.

My intent and purpose here is to instruct the average or beginner model O scale builder in various techniques to improve the quality of his models, to improve his own abilities as a craftsman, and finally to put craftsmanship back into the hobby of O Scale. Not only will I try to give the techniques that I have developed, but also tips on how to get out of trouble should a problem arise.

A brief history of the details in question goes back to the earliest brass models which were imported in the 50’s, 60’s and early 70’s. These models were a quantum leap in terms of quality and quantity of detail over what had been available domestically, mainly All Nation, Central Locomotive Works, Lobaugh, Scale Craft, and a few other manufacturers available at the time. One outstanding exception, Kemtron models, of that period was far ahead of their time. In particular their Wabash Mogul and Westside, and others, while each improved in detail upon the others, did not match the fascinating working details of the later brass models imported from Korea like those of Precision Scale, Overland and others. These newer models had working doors, hatches, sandbox covers, smokebox fronts, and more, which were done in a very prototypical and scale fashion.

Let’s take an average steam locomotive; it could have as many as 20 doors, and/or hatches. Going from front to rear there could be, a hinged man hole cover on the smoke box, sniffer valves which rotated on each cylinder (PRR engines), two sandbox covers, at least one cab front door with a working vent window on either side and usually a sliding or hinged screen window. The cab itself had 2 sliding cab windows on either side, a hinged vent window usually attached to one of the main windows, a sliding roof cab hatch, and 2 sliding windows in the cab rear. Going a step further the head light usually had a working hinged lens frame, 2 hinged number board frames, there was usually a working door on the train control box. The trailing truck had hinged journal box covers. On top of the boiler there were usually hinged turret covers and below there were opening ash pan doors. Inside the cab itself, the fire box doors opened. Going to the tender now, there were usually 2 hinged doors on the forward wall of the water-legs. The coal doors were hinged and there were usually 4 of these with a triangular shaped pair of hinged guillotine type doors on the bottom of the bottom coal compartment door. Inside the coal compartment itself, if the engine had a stoker, there were usually sliding doors, several of which sat on top of the auger-channel. Some engines had hinged doors on the rear slope-sheets of the coal compartment to provide access to stoker motor components or coal-pusher components. The tender rear deck, of course, housed the cistern-hatches. Cisterns were arranged in either parallel or perpendicular fashion. There could be between one and four individual working hinged doors. Some tenders had 2 sets of parallel type doors with 3 hatches each. Some tenders had streamlined shrouds that had their own hinged doors to allow access to the cistern doors. Some tenders were oil fired and had oil hatches in the oil compartment. Some tenders had opening hatches in the space on top of the tender rear deck and behind the rear coal compartment slope sheet. Some tenders had opening doors or panels on the sides, to allow access to the stoker motors and/or train control equipment. Beneath the tender were tool boxes that had opening doors. Tender trucks, of course, had working journal covers, which could number as many as 16 in a large tender. Some tenders on C&O and N&W had as many as 6 coal doors, four facing forward and two on top. Camelback engines could have as many as four cab doors. Cab roofs could have as many as three hatch openings, these were either sliding or hinged, and the C&O actually had a screen covering on top of all of their hatches.

 Needless to say that’s a lot of working stuff, yet all of this has been modeled in O Scale and, hopefully with the skills gained from this article, should be achievable by an average skilled O scale modeler.

The first working parts to be addressed in this article will be sliding cab windows. However, before getting into the actual construction itself, I would like to make a brief note on the tools and supplies necessary to accomplish this.

Figure 1 shows an array of tools which I use on a daily basis, and which I feel are the minimum necessary to accomplish construction. I would like to emphasize that these are
the tools that I have found most useful by trial and error over a long period of time. However I am sure that there are many other tools that are equally useful, or better, in the hands of other modelers.

Going clockwise from the bottom left of the photograph, the first is a set of torches, which includes a micro-torch, a mini-torch, and a regular propane torch. The micro-torch is about $7 and the mini-torch about $25 at most building supply stores like Lowes or Home Depot. The micro and mini-torches are fueled with butane. The best brand fuel for this is Bernzomatic which comes in small canisters under pressure for about 2 dollars each. These canisters are also available in the smoking department at most pharmacies, discount stores, etc., and are sold under the Ronson trade-mark for about the same price. I choose the mini-torch because it is very durable and has about a 3-5 hour useful life. I have purchased other torches from Micro-Mark, RadioShack, and other tool supply outlets which were not of the same durability or which cost much more. The main drawback of this particular torch (and the micro-torch) is that it does not have a piezoelectric igniter. You can work around this by either having a lighted candle or a larger propane torch with the flame turned down as far as it can possibly go without being extinguished. These serve as ignition sources for the micro and mini-torches and allows a free hand to work. It is very important to plan any brass work with the primary thought in mind of having as many...

NEW Numbered Limited Edition

Two-Stall Enginehouse Kit in HO & O Scales

The pilot model wasn’t quite ready to be photographed for this issue but when finished, we feel this will be our finest release to date. It features all new castings loaded with great looking old brick and stone detail, modular construction (so you can make it deeper or shorter as needed), beautiful laser cut wood parts and simple, yet comprehensive, step by step assembly and painting instructions.

Approximate HO footprint 12” x 6”, O footprint 12” x 24”. Limited to 500 HO scale kits and just 200 O scale kits. Late December shipping. Reservations now being taken, no deposit required. The HO kit will retail for around $100.00, the O version around $150.00. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

DOWNTOWN DECO
4319 Rainbow Drive  Missoula, MT 59803
406/251-8005  downtowndeco@montana.com  www.downtowndeco.com
hands free and available as possible. It is important to be able to both light the torch and reach for tools without taking your eyes off your brass work. The reason is if you have a hand-held part against another part, ready to solder, and you turn your head for a brief instant, your hand will slip and ruin the positioning of the two parts. This could be time consuming and frustrating, causing work to be repeated several times.

This brings me to the next tool which is a hand held forceps (tweezers). These should be stainless steel (to resist corrosion from acid type flux) and of the locking and non-locking variety. The next articles are alligator clips and clamps of various sizes, these are readily available from Radio Shack. The next two articles are a plastic cup of water for quenching small joints, and a hand held spray bottle for quenching other joints and washing off acid flux. The next item is the solder itself. I like to use simple garden variety Radio Shack rosin free, silver solder, the smaller the diameter the better. I use this because of its low melting temperature, high tensile strength, and ready availability.

The next items are various brushes. The larger brushes can be purchased in bulk from a hardware store for about 10 to 15 cents per brush. The bristles can be trimmed with a pair of scissors to particular shapes necessary for individual jobs. These nylon bristle brushes are used for applying acid flux. There are also some smaller brushes and these must be non-natural bristles, too, as a camel hair brush will melt from the acid flux within a short period of time. The white plastic bottle shown next is the flux which I have found to be most useful. This is readily available in most hardware stores for a dollar or two a bottle. There are also several sets of needle nose pliers, the tips of these can be renewed or modify with a cut off wheel in a Dremel tool for particular and unique shaping jobs. More on this later.

One of the most commonly asked questions by any modeler first starting brass work is, when I use a torch how do I keep the rest of the stuff from falling off the model when I solder the stuff that I want.? The answer to this is two fold, first, exactly the correct amount of heat must be used, and secondly, the heat must be used for the correct amount of time, and if these are not possible for some reason in a particular situation then a careful use of jigs and supports must be accomplished. This brings me to Figure 2, which is jigs and fixtures.

Going clockwise from the upper right see the alligator clamps which are readily available from Radio Shack. Next is a large plate with four arms which is a very useful jiggging device available from Pat Mitchell at Clifton Backshop Services*. This is possibly the most useful jig I have ever used. The beauty of this is that the arms are infinitely adjustable, the clamps are very powerful, and there is absolutely zero slippage. Once two parts are jigged in position there will be no creep during the time the actual soldering takes place. This is not the case in the simple alligator clip type jig available through MicroMark or other tool supply houses which does not permit the fine degree of work that is necessary, in my opinion. The large block-like fixture at 12 o’clock is a truck assembly jig available from the House of Duddy** which can be used for many other purposes. This jig will keep two objects parallel during the course of soldering. There are other tools and jigs which are useful and these will be covered during the actual text of the instruction itself.

We’ll start the actual working details in the next issue.

---

* Clifton Back Shop Services, 8122 Valley Run Dr. Clifton, VA 20124
** House of Duddy, 5B Tealwood Dr. Creve Coeur, MO 63141

A few words of caution here about acid flux. This stuff will turn your fingers black if it comes in contact with your skin. The flux must be washed with the spray bottle from any soldered surface immediately after the joint has been made. Needless to say, even a small diluted drop of flux in your eye is very dangerous. Therefore, you should always wear safety glasses when soldering. Your work surface should also be expendable. Place a sheet of 1⁄2 inch plywood over your work table so that none of the water or water/flux residue attacks any surface of any value. If even diluted flux gets on your clothing it will damage it and discolor it. I actually go to the dollar store and purchase cheap clothes with the full knowledge that they will be ruined by the end of the month. – Harry
The SOUTHERN is the name of Stuart Ramsey’s pike in Florida. It is a fictitious connecting road for a number of his eastern favorites: SCL, C&O, Southern, ACL and, of course, the N&W. The 2-8-0 above is a Sunset Santa Fe loco that has been converted to coal for this eastern railroad. It is next to the roundhouse in the main yard. Below, the N&W A (on the upper track) is on a coal run ('cause the SOUTHERN can't afford a Y-6b!). The C&O T-1 is on a freight drag westbound. The A is a Williams and the T-1 is a
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NORFOLK SOUTHERN “SD70” Nos. 2559 and 2573. Factory painted black with white sill stripes, completely lettered, and equipped with operating head and ditch lights — OMI #0627.2

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Made by Cheyenne Industries of China
This N&W K2 started its life as a Sunkit USRA Heavy Mountain. The engine was built and detailed by OST publisher Joe Giannovario in 1980. The locomotive was turned over to Harry Heike in 1999 who added even more details (like opening hatches, windows, and doors) and cut down a USHobbies L&N Berk tender to more closely resemble the correct N&W tender.
A repainted Weaver Northeastern caboose becomes a PennCentral hack on Pete Trunk’s Philadelphia & Erie RR.

More of Harry Heike’s work. This N&W Y6a started life as a Max Gray Y6b. Harry made over 1000 changes to the model owned by Joe Giannovario.
Another view of Neville Rossiter’s Float Bridge. Construction article begins on page 27.

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Above & right: The Central Jersey O-scalers modular layout was on display at the Eastern O Scale meet in Wind Gap, Pa., last November.

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See the website for details!
Another view of the Central Jersey O-scalers modular layout.

Events

May 2002

Minnesota, St. Paul


New Jersey, Pleasantville

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"O" SCALE TRAINS

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Celebrating over 20 Years of Service since 1979
Improving Weaver’s 53’ Flat Car

With a few alterations, Weaver’s 53’ flat can look like a 1950’s Commonwealth Steel Castings prototype. This shows the left side of the finished UP car.

Edward F. Bommer

Starting with the base Weaver flat car, we can capture the low-slung heft of a Union Pacific class F-70-1 car, built in 1956. We will add wood decking, Athearn sprung Bettendorf trucks with NWSL wheelsets, a new brake wheel, grab irons, stirrups, poling pockets and uncoupling rods to complete the details.

Let’s get started. Disassemble the car. Cut off the corner stirrups and mounting details. Trim away the side and end grab irons. I use single-edge razor blades from a hardware store for this task. Score along the bottom of the grab iron where the mounting detail is located. From the top, make light cuts and gradually cut off the grab iron. Use care to save the mounting details. Smooth the area by scraping it with the blade.

Scrape off the bead along the lower edge of both sides. Work slowly. Try not to dig into or score the sides. Hold the blade perpendicular to the surface, slide it back and forth allowing it to lean slightly to the direction of movement. Do a few inches at a time and finish smoothing the area with long strokes.

The Weaver car is a scale 11’ wide. Prototypes are 10’ 6” wide. A mini-plane was used to shave off the deck overhang on both sides even with the stake pockets, giving the model a 10’ 6” width. When near the stake pockets, 120grit sandpaper around a block of wood is used. Finish with 600 grit paper and steel wool to smooth the edges. Trim off the slight overhang on the car ends and the projections in front of the end stake pocket holes. Leave the center projections in place. They represent coupler striking plates.

To make the car sides deeper, cut two .606” x .125” styrene strips 63/16” long. Cement each along the straight bottom edge of the car side. They should exactly fit between to the points where the car sides angle upward to the deck. Tenax or Plastruct-Weld works fine. Be sure the pieces are flush to the outer surface. Cut two more pieces of the same strip 11/4” long. With a straight edge and blade, score a diagonal line from one corner to the other on each piece. Carefully cut them apart to make four triangular shaped pieces. Fit and cement one of these to each angled area of the car side. The dotted lines in Diagram A shows the location. They must be flush to the outer car side and marks just made. The layout of the car side angles should be like Diagram A.

Remove material up to the scribed line with a mill file to form the compound angle along the bottom edge. Repeat this at the remaining locations. Fill any cracks or gaps with Squadron Green putty. Sand with 120, then 600grit paper, finishing with steel wool for a smooth, flat surface. Fill the end stake pocket holes and brake wheel recess with pieces of .060” styrene cemented into place. Trim these pieces flush with the top and sides. Cut four pieces of .030” styrene to fill the small recesses in the deck edges at each corner next to the first stake pocket. Trim off the thin deck overhang in that area back to the bolster brace.

Make two “H” shaped pieces of .030” sheet styrene following dimensions in Diagram B and cement them to the deck at each end. Make certain that the wide leg edge lines up evenly with the stake pocket holes on both (continued on page 28)
sides. Because liquid plastic cement dries rapidly, coat the center of the strip and the car floor first then immediately place the part. Flow some cement along the edges. Lift each leg of the “H” slightly and run some cement under it. When dry, trim it to match the car deck. Fill any seams and sand the edges smooth.

With a sharp blade, score a line across each stake pocket following the lower edge of the deck on both sides of the car. Work a corner of the blade down on both sides of the pocket from the top to bottom of the deck. Do not cut beyond the score line. Push the cut area into the pocket hole to break it off. Smooth the deck sides and top edge in each stake pocket.

Cut the staff from the Weaver brake detail and mounting boss. Drill the top of the boss #70 about 3/32” deep. Drill a matching hole in the new brake wheel. Cut a piece of .028” brass rod 5/8” long for the brake staff. Cement the wheel to the staff with super-glue. Insert it into the mounting boss and secure with glue. Test fit this assembly. The brake wheel top should be 1/2” above the deck.

Eight grab irons are made using .022” brass rod. To make them the same size, I use a jig on a pair of pliers where I cut shallow grooves across a jaw for the widths needed. Note that the length of the grab irons may differ slightly between sides and ends if using the original mounting details. Drill #74 at locations matching those details.

Press the grab irons into place and secure with a touch of super-glue. Use a piece of 1/32” thick strip wood under the grab irons as a spacer, so they stand off evenly from the car side. In case you accidentally spoiled some grab iron mounting details as I did, scrape them off. For replacements, impress rivet marks about 1/8” apart on a 1/16” x .010” styrene strip with a brad. Cut matching mounts from the strip one at a time and cement into place.

Four stirrups are made from .015” x .060” brass strip. You may use All Nation or Old Pullman parts, modifying them to fit. Follow the pattern in Diagram C. Twist an end 90 degrees to the right on one side and to around around the end of a needle file handle, the left on the other. Mark with a punch and drill a #72 hole in the top ends of each. Drill #74 mounting holes to match in the car sides where the original stirrups were located I use a Dremel tool for drilling metal. For plastic, I use a pin vise. Mount the stirrups with #28 x 3/8” escutcheon pins. Secure with super-glue and snip off the excess under the car.

The poling pockets were made with a 3/16” drill bit. They are located 3/16” in from each corner and 3/16” up from the bottom edge. Turn the bit with your fingers until it makes a dent the diameter of the bit. Smooth the indentation with some steel wool wrapped
I replaced the Weaver trucks with Athearn sprung Bettendorfs and NWSL steel wheels. Before installing them they were cleaned and given a coat of Mineral Brown paint. The wheel treads and axle ends were polished with steel wool. The under frame bolsters were reduced to the level of the center sill. A razor saw was used to cut away the bolster as shown in Diagram D. Remove the thin piece remaining over the kingpin boss. File the area smooth and parallel so the car rides level on its trucks.

Install the couplers and frame, using four 2-56 x 5/16” screws. Mount the trucks. A number 2 brass washer is used with the kingpin screw in each truck bolster. The original screws will be too long. Shorten or replace them with 2-56 x 1/2” screws. When assembled, the car deck should stand 3 1/32” above the rail, with the centerline of the couplers at 23/32” above the rail. Make two uncoupling rods from .022” brass wire, following the pattern in Diagram E. One end hooks around the coupler box. The other fastens to the car end with a small staple. Bend and adjust the rods until they fit properly. Drill two #74 holes about .024” vertically apart to the lower left of the left poling pocket on each end. Bend a short piece of .022” wire as a clip and insert into the holes. Slip in the uncoupling rod and push the clip home. Fit the other end snugly around the coupler box. Secure the clip and rod with super glue but do not glue the coupler box end.

The car is ready for paint. Remove the trucks and the couplers. Re-attach the coupler box to the car frame. Stuff some steel wool in the opening to keep paint out. Clean the car to keep paint out. Clean the car to remove dust, scrapings, steel wool particles and oil from your fingers. My car was airbrushed with three coats of Polly Scale 404079 Oxide Red.

The decking is made from 1/32” x 1/8” strip wood. Smooth the wood strips with a small piece of steel wool wrapped around them. Hold one end of the strip and pull the steel wool along the length of the strip with your other hand. Cut 81 strips 2 5/8” long to fill the center area. Be sure the pieces are flush to both sides of the car and each other.

Glue each board in place with a thin bead of GOO applied with a Micro-tip. Start with the end planks, cutting (continued on page 30)
both to fit between the stake pockets on each side. Then fill in the middle area. Notch or cut any boards going around or over the stake pocket holes. Other indentations and slots in the deck are covered up.

When finishing the deck, you may find the last piece to be either too narrow or too wide. Take out the last installed plank and measure the width of the gap. If the space was too narrow for one plank, divide this gap by 2 and make two planks of equal width to fit. If the space was too wide, divide the gap by 3 and cut three planks of equal width to fit. This was how prototype decks were laid due to slight variations in plank widths.

Deck the open areas near the ends the same way. Each space takes nine planks. Four longer ones are near the bolster and five shorter boards fit from the stake pocket to the end sill. Trim away any excess deck overhang with a sharp blade. Lightly notch the plastic edges with a razor blade, matching the deck board joints. I stained the deck with tan and brown chalks rubbed in to bring out the grain and give the appearance of new pressure treated lumber.

Brace the car on its side between two blocks of wood for applying decals. A Champ UP flat car set was used. One sheet does a car. To get the correct data and car numbers for this 53’6”, 70-ton capacity car, I used other numbers found on the sheet to get what I needed. But it lacked enough data size ‘5’s’ for this car. So I made two more from the bottom of a ‘6’ and the top of an ‘F’. The set cannot make a BLT-4-56 date, so I had to leave it off.

The “Road of the Streamliners” slogan appears on right side. The right side of the car faces you when the brake wheel is to the left. That is also the “B END” of the car. The “A END” designation goes on the left end of the opposite (“Serves All the West”) side.

Decal set was applied to the lettering after it was in place and all excess water blotted up. After the decals dried, any air pockets found were fixed by applying Decal-Set and jabbing the area lightly with a pin. Excess decal glue was then wiped off with a damp tissue. Since I model to the mid-1950’s this will be a ‘new’ car for me. You can go on to weather it more if you like. To hide decal shine, I brushed on some Dull Cote sprayed into a jar lid. To blend everything together, the car was given an overall spray of Dull Cote.

Install the couplers and mount the trucks. Make one truck snug, yet turn freely. Let the other be loose, to rock a bit from side to side and you are ready to roll!

**CAR DATA:**

**MATERIALS & TOOLS:**
1 Weaver 53’ flat car, any road name, 2 or 3 rail.
1 pair Athearn Bettendorf trucks.
1 set NWSL #8287-4 33” wheels x .145” tread.
1 pair Kadee 805 couplers.
4 All Nation #3060 copper or Old Pullman #7160 steel reefer door steps.
1 pk Evergreen Styrene strip #156, .060” x .125”.
1 sheet Evergreen Styrene #9030 .030” (1/32”) thick.
Scrap styrene, .010” and .060” thick.
1 each, Detail Assoc. brass rod: .022” and .028” dia.
10 Northeastern or equal 1/32” x 1/8” x 24” strip wood.
6 2-56x1/2” brass round head machine screws (cut four to 5/16”).
2 Walthers 1273 #2 brass washers.
8 All Nation #680 No. 28x3/8” escutcheon pins.

Squadron Green or White putty.
Tenax 7-R plastic weld or equal.
Walthers GOO.
Microtips for Walthers GOO.
Any rapid setting ‘super glue’ (alpha-cyano-acrylate).

1 Champ CN-98 UP flat car set, yellow lettering.
Champ or equal decal set.
Poly Scale #404070 Light Oxide Red or similar color.
Floquil Mineral Brown or similar color.
Testors Dull Cote spray.
Dremel Motor tool.
Steel straight-edge ruler.
Pencil.
Industrial single-edge razor blades.
120 grit wet/dry sandpaper.
600 grit wet/dry sandpaper.
0000 steel wool.
Miniature plane.
Single cut medium mill file.
Flat and square needle files.
Pin vise.
Drill bits: 3/16”, # 70, # 72, #74.
 Needle nose pliers.
Small screw driver.
Tweezers.
No. 0 or 1 artist’s brush.
Straight pin.
Tissues.
Mustard jar lid or equal.
Constructing the Float Bridge on the Bay Ridge Harbour RR

Neville Rossiter

The Bridges
1. Cut piece of 1/8" styrene sheet to 14" x 9 3/4". This is the bridge base.
2. Using three pair of Lionel girder bridge sides. Cut them up to make four new sides 14" long. Scrape off the Lionel name.
3. Sand base of bridge sides flat and glue to styrene base from Step 1, starting on one edge. Then moving 4 1/8" to the centre glue two sides side by side. Then glue final side to the other edge.

4. Track: decide how many tracks you will have on the float (barge), two tracks or three like I did. Use a #6 turnout cut in half like the NYC harbor floats. Use any flex track that’s available. I use Peco because I can buy it in Australia.

The Towers.
5. Cut 8 pieces of 5/16" H-shape 9" long, 20 pieces 2 1/8" long, and 18 pieces 1 1/2" long. Square off the ends. Make a jig wide enough to take one tower side at least 2 1/2" wide. Glue crosspieces. Make four above items.

6. Join each upright using the 1 1/2" pieces check for squareness and clamp in as many places as possible.
7. Brace all sides with 1/16" angle iron and if you want, add two pieces of flat styrene to the top of the towers.
8. Cut 1/16" styrene sheet 15" x 2 3/4"
9. Cut up 3 more Lionel girder bridges to make the sides (15" long) and glue to a styrene base.

Machinery House Bridge.
10. Make a box using 1/16" styrene sheet 13 1/4" long and wide enough to fit snugly between the bridge sides approx 2" wide, but check this.
11. Cut out three window openings on each side. I used grandt line window frames in the openings.
12. Before gluing together check fit between the girder sides.
13. Make up the peaked roof from more styrene 14" long and 1 1/2" wide.
14. Drill holes in roof for the screw housings, 1/4" styrene pipe. They look like chimneys but are actually weather proof pipes that the lifting screws rotate in.
15. Clad the entire bridge house with galvanized sheeting. I used Builders in Scale #712, but any tin foil could be used. If you want, don’t clad the lower part of the housing as it will be hidden by the sides, but do the ends.
16. You should have the following five items: one Float Bridge, two Towers, one Machinery Bridge, and one Machinery House.

(continued on page 33)
Additional Views of the Float Bridge

The clutter around the assembly adds to the feeling of realism at the site. You get a good view of the staircase from this side and the view below right.

This view shows the operator house and the rest of the staircase. There's nothing fancy or very difficult about this model. It is all very straightforward assembly of modules.

A view from the barge side of the bridge. Next issue Neville will tell us how he built the barge.
17. Test fit all these items, but don’t glue together.

**Stairways and Operator House.**

18. Make up the stairs using the Evergreen O scale stair kit and scratch-build the railings.

19. The operator house was made using a Railway Designs shed kit but it could be scratchbuilt.

**Lifting device.**

20. Using .040" thick styrene cut out eight pieces 41/2" long and make to shape as in Drawing 1, Part A.

21. Cut eight shapes 2" long x 1/2" wide as in Drawing 1, Part B.

22. Make a sandwich using two of Part A spaced apart with 1/8" styrene, drill 1/8" holes in each end. Make four of these.

23. Make another sandwich using two of Part B and space apart using 1/4" square styrene. Drill a 1/8" hole in one end. Make four of these.

24. One end of a Part A sandwich is secured to the bridge side after the side is notched. The other end has a 1" diameter pulley from the Western Scale Models #M-49 assortment installed. The assembly, complete with pulley goes in between Part B (see Drawing 2) and a piece of 1/8" solid styrene rod goes through both holes and is glued securely. Assemble four of these.

25. Make a sturdy cross beam out of a 10" long piece of 5/8" H-beam with a 10" long piece of 1/4" solid square glued to the top. Glue pieces of hollow round styrene rod 3/16" in diameter to the crossbeam as shown. Then glue inside these a long piece of 1/8" solid rod. These represent the “screws” that control the raising and lowering of the bridge to match up to the Float Barge. (In the model they are dummies as the bridge and the float stay at one level all the time).

26. Glue the four lifting devices under the crossbeam. The bridge sides dictate the spacing on the beam.

27. When the lifting device is glued to the bridge sides and the beam, it should be self supporting. Next drill holes in the machinery house floor and guide the “screws” through the floor and glue securely. *Don’t do this until you are sure that everything is level, square, and at the right height, e.g., towers, bridge, position on layout, etc.*

28. Use a good quality twine to represent cables and super glue them around the pulleys and secure them through the machinery house floor.

29. I airbrushed the completed model outside, with grey primer, followed by Grimy Black using Polyscale paint.

Notes:

A very good close up photo of these massive lifting pieces are in the Morning Sun book, “Lehigh Valley 2 In Color” page 9. Also in the pictures are the locking device for the float to the bridge (I did not model this). Try to borrow the book if you think it’s too expensive for six photos. Personally, I enjoyed reading the rest of the book !!

References:

Lehigh Valley-2, New York Harbor railroads.

Morning Sun


Chapter I

This is my story about the model train import business (or “bidness” as we say in Texas.) In this column, I intend to tell the story as it happened to me. This is perhaps not how it happened to the others in the business, nor do I intend to preach or tell others how to do it. I just want to tell you how I did it, and relate some of the stories of things that happened to me. Doing business in international trade, especially on the Pacific rim is, to say the least, an adventure. I am not being racist here, just pointing out that things are different in other countries, and we tend to either fear the unknown, or look down upon it. Neither should be the case. It’s just different in Asia, than it is in America.

I am a “baby boomer” born in Cresco, Iowa, and raised in Decorah, Iowa, up in the Northeast corner where the Wisconsin glacier came down and kissed across the Mississippi, giving Iowa limestone bluffs and trout streams. I had a normal small town childhood in the heartland, and a great Iowa education. I had parents that were blessed with music and I grew up loving music, knowing at an early age that I wanted to be a band director. But I had that “model railroad gene” in my system and like many of you, got my first train before I was 5, and have been nuts about trains ever since. I had Marx (couldn’t afford Lionel) and when I saw my first Athearn set in HO, I had to move to HO. I think I just liked the 2 rail track better. My first set was Santa Fe, and every set after that was Santa Fe. I thought all trains had a warbonnet on them.

I went to college to pursue my career as a band director and in 1967 achieved my goal. I taught public school in Iowa for a year before the war directed me into an Air Force Band for four years. Got out of the service and went back to graduate school where I got a University job teaching jazz. All this time, I was still a model railroader. I belonged to clubs in Omaha, Shreveport, Waterloo, Duluth and Lewisville, Texas. Academia got to be a real strain on me and I went to work for Bobbye Hall of Hallmark Models in her hobby shop. This is how I started in the model railroad business.

You have to really like people to be in the retail store business. You meet all kinds. You see all kinds of people, like the guy that comes in, opens every kit in your store, and then buys a magazine to mail order the product from another source. Then there is the guy that skipped all of his lunches so he could come to the store every day at noon and spend his $5 on an N Scale freight car. There is probably a good lesson in that for many of us. There is the guy who gave me a $10 on my first day, and insisted it was a $20. We counted the cash register and proved me write. Just a little scam he tries on lots of stores.

I soon decided I liked working for Hallmark Models (in the back room) more than I liked working for Bobbye Hall’s Hobby House, dealing with the “public.” I enjoyed my year and a half working for Ms. Hall, but I decided that I needed a new career. I was unemployed for about 8 months before I decided to start my own hobby shop. I knew all the time that what I wanted to do was produce models, not sell somebody else’s trains. The hobby shop was the first step.

To produce models, took money and contacts, and I needed a direction. I had to decide what I wanted to do. I wasn’t interested in producing another Big Boy, and try to correct all the mistakes that others had made on the model, only to generate all new mistakes of my own. (If you haven’t guessed, it’s impossible to produce a perfect model.) I didn’t want to produce anything that already had been done. However, I knew that perhaps the reason it had not been done, was because nobody wanted to buy it. I did a lot of market research, model research, and soul searching.

In future chapters of Crapola, I’ll tell you, step by step, how I proceeded. I’ll tell you about the triumphs and the failures. Yes, there were both. I can tell you that it is easier to get to the top of the Rock ’n Roll charts than it is to stay there. The people that want to see you there the most are the ones that want to knock you off when you make it.

As I have seen and even helped new importers come along in the last 20 years, I have often smiled at watching their achievements, and smiled even more at their failures. There is nothing sinister here, just observing when they fall into the pit that I have crawled out of many times myself.

I’ll mention some names where it is historically important to do so, but in many cases, will keep the names of those involved in confidence. As I have stated, I’m not trying to tell anyone else how to do
this, nor condemn others for taking a different road. We all do things differently, and there is more than one right way to do anything. Someone starting to import today would find that some of the things that worked for me, would not work for them because the players are not the same today. New Zealand is not producing, and China is. However, I’ll bet that some of the stories that happened to me in Korea 20 years ago, are happening today in China. Reminds me of the war stories my father-in-law told me that I repeated 20 years later during another conflict. Same stories, same military, different war.

Someone throws a switch and your train takes a different track. I was going to be an Iowa band director my whole life. What happened? What changed my interests from folk music to classical to jazz? What got me into the train business from a hobby? What changed me from 3 rail to HO to O Scale 2 rail as a modeler? You can’t see it coming, but one day, you meet someone, or see something, or go somewhere and your life switches tracks. It’s impossible to go back and take the other route. I never thought growing up that I would someday make the toys that I played with, or that I would be doing international trade, or that I would have friends all over the world with similar interests.

As I am preparing to end my career as a manufacturer of model trains, and go back to my love of jazz music, I find myself still searching for a way to make some real money. As my long time friend and helper, Phil Camp tells me, “Smith, it’s your lot in life to be good at TWO things nobody wants.”

Not all of these experiences will be about O Scale trains specifically, but all will be about the business of model trains, shared in attempt to educate many of you about the unknown. The unknown is, of course, the people you have never met, that build your toys for you. Yes, they are toys. They are not food, nor shelter, but luxury items that many of us lust after. Be it a $3000 brass model or $40 plastic model, whether it’s a very accurate representation of a prototype or a loose reproduction of something that looks like a train, it’s not a necessity of life. But it is art, and it’s what defines our culture and makes us who we are.

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Building a PRR B8a 0-6-0

John Sauer

(Editor’s note: This is not your typical “how to” but more of a “How I did it.” John’s approach to model building is quite interesting and when you see how he breaks down the whole project into parts, you’ll realize that you could build a model like this, too. To be sure, John started with some ready made parts. If you wanted to build this specific engine, you could use a GEM or Williams B6sb as the starting point.)

Prototype Info

A total of 247 PRR Class B8, 0-6-0 engines with slope back tenders were built between 1903 and 1917. Twenty-four were converted to roundhouse goats in the ’20s. The frames were extended, saddle tanks and a coal bunker added. The tenders were discarded. The engines were reclassified as B8a.

Over the years B8a engines received changes so I had to decide which engine I was going to build. Engine #2796 is the one I decided to build. It is pictured on page 20 in the book Pennsy A to T by P D Carleton. This happened to be the last engine of this class on the Pennsy. My reasons for modeling this particular engine are the steel cab, and the piping to the air pump.

I don’t build the entire engine in my mind. I only concern myself with the section I’m working on and before you know it I have the complete engine built. If you worry about how to solve all the challenges of building an engine like this you will get discouraged and never start. Don’t put yourself on a schedule, just devote time on a regular basis.

First Things First

The first item was to acquire plans. Mine were obtained from John Dill’s PRR plan book (which is out of print). The drawings were rescaled to O and the details I wanted to model were drawn in. From this I was able to fabricate my patterns. The major changes are the cab and coal bunker.

Saddle Tank, Figure 1

Let’s tackle the tank. From the plans, develop a flat layout for the tank, Part A. Cut it out of .020 brass and emboss the rivets. I use a converted sewing machine to emboss rivets. Depending upon which B8a you decide to build, the brackets used to attach the tank to the boiler may be different. Part B is the bracket used on #2796. Part C is for all others.

Make a front for the tank and solder it in place. Make a back for the tank in two parts and solder them to the rear of the tank. Add the top piece that goes around the steam dome. When this engine was converted to a B8a the sand dome was removed, sectioned and mounted on top of the new tank. The steam dome was not changed. The tank was constructed to fit around it. On my engine, I used extra domes from a GEM Models A5, 0-4-0. Add the mounting brackets to the bottom of the tank, six on each side of the tank, and one each side front and back.

Frame, Figure 2

The frame, drivers, motor, and gear-box are from Locomotive Workshop*.

(continued on page 38)
Left: B8a original drawing by John Dills
Right B8a as redrawn by John Sauer

Drawings are O scale
I had them mount the worm gear on the center driver. I told them I was building a B8a and they allowed extra frame at the rear.

Clamp the two frame halves together and cut the top portion of the frame off, then remove unneeded portions of the frame at the rear. Mill out or drill and file out the frame sections between the drivers. I did not remove any brass from between the #2 and #3 drivers, only between #1 and #2 drivers.

Assemble the frame. Place the drivers into the frame. If the journals are tight carefully file the sides of the journal slots until the journals fit without binding. Siderods can be purchased with the frame, but I had some from a Williams B6. Add side rods and work mechanism until smooth. Make sure the rods do not bind as they rotate. A bind may indicate a misaligned hole in a siderod or a set of drivers is out of quarter. Check the drivers and rods when you first get them.

I constructed the motor mounts by making two brackets using .020" brass. I used brass tubing to form bearing supports for the motor shaft and the gearbox shaft. The Delrin chain drive works great. Add the Northwest Shortline gearbox that came with the drivers. Check for proper operation. The motor I used is large but adds to the weight. Electrical pickup contacts will be added later.

Make the casting that goes on the frame between the #1 and #2 drivers (Part D). File from sheet brass. Add nut, bolt, washer castings. The springs inside the frame and those that go over the drivers are from Precision Scale. The air tanks under the cab are made from 1/2" brass tube, which will also be used for the cylinders. Rivet strips are soldered to the top and bottom of the tanks. Make the tank tops with two pieces and round them off. You need two pieces to get the right depth. Mount tanks to the frame.

Now is a good time to “run in” the
chassis. Set it up and let it go.

Belpaire Firebox, Figure 3

Take measurements from the drawings, make a pattern for the firebox, and layout on sheet brass. From the reverse side emboss the rivets. (Actually, they are staybolts and small screws would be more appropriate, but small rivets will do.) The line of rivets would lay along a line just below where the belpaire joins the boiler. Make a wooden form to bend the belpaire over. Shape the belpaire over the form. Make a front for the firebox, Part F, from heavier brass stock. Solder it to the front of the firebox and then carefully round over the corners of the firebox with a file.

Make two exposed firebox sides and fronts (Parts G & H) from sheet brass. Emboss the rivets again. Solder these to the lower edge of the firebox.

Add the boiler bands to the firebox.

Next: Cab, Coal Bunker, and Boiler.

Important Notice:

Starting with issue #3 we would like to print Letters to the Editor and carry Classified Ads. Send your letters to O Scale Trains Magazine, PO Box 238, Lionville, PA 19353, or email your comments to <publisher@oscalemag.com>.

Subscribers are permitted one free classified per subscription cycle. Classifieds are $5 for the first 30 words (not including address) and $0.25 per word after that. Free ads are limited to 30 words, plus your address. Send ads to the address above.
REVIEW: Gumbuster Centennial

F. Skidmore Products, 41 S Hickory St
Palatine IL 6067 • 847-934-9685
www.fskidmoreproducts.com

The “Gumbuster” is a clever device for cleaning the wheels of powered locomotives. It consists of a board (in this case a 36 inch long board), to which metal contacts have been added at each end and foam pads lie between the contacts. A groove through the center of the board carries a brass bar insulated from the metal contacts. The metal contacts wrap over the ends of the board and are grooved to sit atop track. The brass rod also has what appears to be a phosphor bronze spring attached to make contact with a center rail if necessary.

This model Gumbuster will clean O scale 2 rail and 3 rail, S gauge, and #1 gauge (G).

To clean a locomotive, the instructions say to place the Gumbuster centered over powered track. Since I don’t currently have a layout, I powered the device directly from a power pack. A cleaning fluid is liberally applied to the foam pads and the metal end contacts (two kinds of cleaner are supplied with the device). Enough fluid must be applied to lower the coefficient of friction so the wheels will spin on the pads.

With power OFF, I placed my Sunset USRA Heavy 4-8-2 on the cleaning pads. I clipped leads to the metal contacts, placed my hand over the locomotive for safety and gradually applied power. This didn’t work at all, so I clipped the leads directly to the drawbar and the trailing truck. That got things moving.

As I powered up the throttle, with my hand in front of the locomotive, the wheels began to spin and I could immediately see dirt appear on the pads. I ran the loco forward and backwards several times. The photo above shows the cleaning pads after use. The drivers were noticeably cleaner, too.

As delivered, the Centennial is set up to clean O gauge locomotives. The instructions tell you how to modify the device for use with S and G equipment. There is even a special foam pad for cleaning the backs of G drivers. Car and tender wheels are cleaned by simply running them over the pads by hand with slight downward pressure. The Gumbuster itself is cleaned by rubbing the foam pads under running water.

The Centennial Gumbuster comes with: an 8 oz. bottle of Aero-Locomotive Works ACT-6006 Track Cleaner, a 1 oz. bottle of Goo Gone, a 15” jumper wire, extra foam pad for cleaning the backs of wheels, instruction sheet, and order form. The Centennial retails for $149, plus $8 s&h. The 20 inch GLS model sells for $84.95.

Cleaning wheels and drivers is a drudge job and one I don’t relish. Usually, I use a pencil or fiberglass eraser to scrub off dirt but these abrasives, though mild, will wear off the finish on wheels and drivers eventually. The Gumbuster is a more sensible way to clean wheels and doesn’t mar the finish.

Reviewed by Joe Giannovario

(continued on page 42)
SOUTHERN PACIFIC
CABOOSE #652
CLASS C-30-1
Builder: Charlie Morrill
Charlie built this caboose from urethane castings he made himself. The model also contains real glass, wood, home-made hydrocal castings, brass, copper, styrene, paper & card stock.
We’re twisting Charlie’s arm to write an article about the caboose. Write in and let us know if you’d like to see it in O Scale Trains

Share Your Work With Us!
Send Your Photos.
**REVIEW: N&W K3, 4-8-2**
3rd Rail division of Sunset Models, 37 South Fourth St., Campbell, CA 95008
1-800-3RD-RAIL • www.3rdrail.com

**The Prototype:** In 1926 and 1927, the N&W built ten heavy Mountain type freight engines to be put into Time Freight service. These 4-8-2’s were unusual in that the main rod was connected to the third driver pair rather than the second. This made them difficult to counterbalance and they were restricted to a top speed between 30 and 35 mph. The K3 class proved an ideal slow speed locomotive whose tonnage rating was the same as the Z1, 2-6-6-2.

The K3 class was numbered 200 to 209 and had 28" x 30" cylinders, 63-inch drivers, and exerted 68,800 lbs. tractive effort with 225 lbs. steam pressure. They were equipped with the Baker valve gear that was standard on all N&W Ry Mountain type locomotives. Most noticeable was the extremely large boiler of 104 inches maximum diameter, with the large eighty-four square feet grate carried by the Delta trailer truck. Two cross-compound air pumps were mounted on the right side to offset the new Worthington number 4 BL feedwater heater, which made these the first N&W locomotives to be built new with a feedwater heater. The cab was a slant-front “sports” style, and the tender was a newly N&W-designed twenty three ton, 16,000 gallon type with two three-axle trucks. The total engine weight was 401,900 pounds with 275,400 pounds on drivers, making this class of power one of the heaviest mountain types ever built.

With the construction of six Class J 4-8-4s and twenty-five Class A 2-6-6-4s in World War II, the K3s were surplus power. The RF&P bought six of the K3s, numbers 206 through 209, in May 1945. All of the former K3s were eventually purchased by the Wheeling and Lake Erie, which later merged with the Nickel Plate Road, where the K3s served until retired.

**The Model:** 3rd Rail has imported brass models of the N&W K3 4-8-2 in both two and three rail. The models follow typical brass construction that we’ve come to expect from Korea. I examined a two rail version painted and lettered for the N&W.

Using a surface plate, surface gauge, and calipers, I measure the model at various points and compared the measurements to the diagram of the K3 found in Rosenberg and Archer’s *Norfolk & Western Steam, The Last 25 Years*. I couldn’t find any significant deviation in the major dimensions. The model seems to be dead on.

I hooked up an ammeter between my throttle and the track and measured the start up current at 0.8 amps. With the loco stalled and drivers spinning, the motor drew 1.6 amps. The mechanism was very quiet and very smooth. The promotional info that comes with the engine says it has a flywheel. I was not able to test if the loco would coast. The engine also has directional lighting.

I compared the 3rd Rail tender to the tender that came with my Precision Scale, N&W Z1b, 2-6-6-2, which is essentially the same tender on the prototypes. Except for truck chains and opening coal doors on the PSC model, they were identical in all dimensions. The 3rd Rail tender has a coal load; the Z1b does not.

These models are available painted and lettered for N&W, RF&P, W&LE, D&RGW, and NKP. Both the two and three rail versions have smoke units. The three rail engines also have sound. The two rail engines require a 60” radius curve, while the three rail engines have been compromised to fit around 054 (27” radius) curves.

**My Impressions:** I don’t think you can beat these 3rd Rail engines for the value per dollar. At $999.95, these are some of the least expensive brass models available, yet they offer a level of quality not always found in models costing two or three times the price.

Two things did stand out: paint and lettering. The “Norfolk & Western” lettering on the 3rd Rail and PSC tenders were slightly different in length, height and coloring. Without an N&W lettering diagram I can’t say which is correct. The paint on the 3rd Rail K3 is a satin black. I prefer this type of finish to a glossy paint.

The only real negative I found was the tiny micro connector between loco and tender. It did not close properly and will most likely need to be replaced. However, 3rd Rail engines come with a 3 month warranty for parts, labor and shipping and 1 year for parts.

Reviewed by Joe Giannovario
NEWS: B&M, RF&P Decal Sets
Great Decals, PO Box 994, Herndon, VA 20172
www.greatdecals.com  wsm@greatdecals.com

O scale decal sets for Boston & Maine box cars and cabooses with the “Minuteman” herald set (#80), and for Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac box cars (set# 40), both in white, are available from Bill Moesteller at Great Decals. The sets cost $10.99 and $4.75 respectively. Each B&M set provides 12 canned road numbers, half for single sheathed box cars and half for N-5a cabooses. The RF&P sets include road name, canned road number, heralds, and dimensional and capacity data specific to the cars. Champ Decals provided valuable assistance in producing the B&M set which is based on their HN-44 artwork. Robert Wingo designed the RF&P set.

Visit the website to see images of the decal artwork: www.greatdecals.com

NEWS: Bachmann On30 Locomotive & Trucks

Bachmann Industries, Inc. is pleased to announce the release of their new On30 0-4-2 Porter into its premium Spectrum® line. Able to maneuver deftly through tight turns, Porters performed a variety of tasks on branch lines and industrial railroads. The Spectrum® On30 0-4-2 Porter offers a great deal of detailing in a small package. It has a precision skew wound motor with a completely hidden drive train. It features a die cast boiler and separate metal detail parts, including: bell, whistle, pop valves, and handrails. Additionally, the Porter has separately applied sanding lines and piping, and a removable smokestack (with prototypically accurate styles). The 0-4-2 is also equipped with rounded siderods, and die cast drivers and spokes.

The 0-4-2 Porter is available in five roadnames: Tioga Lumber Co. (Item No. 25559), Pocahontas Lumber Co (Item No. 25560), Midwest Quarry & Mining Co. (Item No. 25561), Colorado Mining Co. (Item No. 25562) and Painted Unlettered (Item No. 25599). The Spectrum® On30 0-4-2 Porter has a MSRP of $85.00.

Bachmann also announces the release of new separate truck assemblies for On30 rolling stock. These carded accessories are available in two varieties: Arch Bar Freight Trucks (Item No. 29901) and Die Cast Passenger Trucks (Item No. 29902). These new truck assemblies easily transform existing S or O scale rolling stock into On30 models. Each of the truck sets is designed for easy installation and includes metal screws. Both versions have free rolling metal wheels and finescale detailed truck frames. The Arch Bar Freight Trucks are plastic and are the same trucks included on Bachmann’s On30 freight cars. The diecast Passenger Trucks are equipped with electrical pickups and wiring for interior lighting. The On30 Arch Bar Trucks and diecast Passenger Trucks are now available at hobby retailers. The freight trucks have a MSRP of $13.00. The passenger trucks have an MSRP of $15.00.
The models on these two pages were built by Ed Bommer of Cooperstown, NY. Above: The B&O M53 boxcar was built back in 1956 from an HO “Dollar Car” article in Model Railroader. The car was rebuilt in 1985 when the underbody was detailed and the car repainted. Below: The Erie AAR box car was made in 1984 from Walthers parts. It has embossed aluminum sides made from old offset press masters. It, too, has a completely detailed underbody.
More of Ed Bommer’s work:

Above: The B&O K1 class caboose is scratchbuilt. The prototype was used on Staten Island from 1890 to 1954. The model has a fully detailed interior, underframe, brake rigging and piping.

Center & below: Staten Island Railroad Terminal (SIRT) class D camelback built from an extensively reworked Locomotive Workshop kit. It is all brass. The model has directional/constant lighting and on-board sound synchronized with the drivers.
Welcome to the Premier issue of O Scale Trains Magazine. My name is Joe Giannovario and I’m the editor/publisher of this rag. My staff and I believe that O scale is on the verge of a new revival. There are many O scale 3 rail modelers who want to get rid of the toy-like track and move over to 2 rail. And, there are many HO and N scale modelers whose eyesight isn’t what it used to be and they’re considering moving up to O scale. So, we feel the time is perfect for a new magazine to focus on the craftsmanship of 2 rail O scale.

We will run the gamut of possible subjects. The name says it all. If it’s O scale (i.e., 1:48) then it’s fair game regardless of what the track width is. I plan on doing crossover articles that will show how select 3-rail, hi-rail equipment can be converted and used on 2-rail track. You will notice that we’ve got an importer and a hobby shop dealer writing for us. I believe they bring a balanced perspective to the magazine. We, as modelers, want what we want, but it’s not always feasible or even reasonable to provide those items. John and Bruce will help us to understand what it’s like to be on the other side of the transaction.

The history of O Scale is fascinating to me, personally, and I hope to find an historian that will bring that it alive for us. One tiny step in that direction is the O Scale Hall of Fame. Each issue I will try to have at least a paragraph about an O scaler who has been elected to the O Scale Hall of Fame during the past several years at the O Scale National.

One thing that you, the reader, can do to help the magazine is send photos of your work. We want to showcase the skill and craftsmanship of O scale modeling so we need lots of photos of cars, structures, locomotives, and whatever. We also need articles. How-to’s (check out Harry Heike’s article in this issue), construction, conversions, and especially layouts. Check our website for details on submissions or call me at the office during regular East Coast business hours. You do not have to be a New York Times best-selling author to write an article. Believe me, I’ve seen the raw writings of a NY Times best-selling author and I now know why editors are so important. So, if you have an urge to share something with the rest of the O scale world, let us help you do it.

I would like to feature a layout in every issue, complete with a scale trackplan. We’re looking for layouts of all sizes. I’ll have features on layouts from as small as a 4 x 10 switching layout to a specially excavated site under a house. So, if you’d like to see your layout on the cover, drop me a line. One of the layout features will be the development of my own Norfolk & Western Railway. My wife and I have just moved into a new home and I have a pristine basement all to myself. From time to time I will share with you the progress I am making on this layout.

Another feature I’m developing are interviews with the vendors who make O scale equipment, and I’m not just talking about the big importers. I want to get exposure for the smaller, less familiar providers. So watch for those.

What’s not here yet are the letters to the editor and classified ads. Those will arrive with issue #3.

Let me move on to a subject that is near and dear to me: quality of service. If there is one thing that drives me crazy it’s people in business who don’t care about their job or their customers. So I am fanatical about quality of service. I am not saying that we’re perfect here at O Scale Trains, but that is the goal we strive for. I personally guarantee that you will receive the highest possible level of service from our office and that goes if you’re an advertiser spending a thousand dollars or a subscriber spending $36. If there is a problem, we will make it right. Our job is to make it easy for you to enjoy the magazine. We make it easy to contact us. We have a phone which is answered during regular eastern coast business hours (610-640-9449), a 24hr fax (610-648-0257), and email <publisher@oscalemag.com>. We make it easy for you to subscribe to the magazine, too. We can take VISA and Mastercard by phone, over the net at our website, or by fax. Of course, we also take checks and money orders. We normally process orders within 48 hours of receipt. We make it easy for you to renew when your subscription is up because we mail out renewal notices by first class mail.

From time to time I will mention a service “hero” in this slot. For this issue, the service hero is Scott Mann at 3rd Rail Models. I had ordered one of the 3rd Rail N&W K3 Mountains in 2 rail. Somehow my order got changed from two rail to three rail and I didn’t notice this when I sent in my final payment. My wife picked up the discrepancy as I was opening the box. I shot off an email to Scott asking if I could swap the loco for a 2 rail version (I was afraid they might all have been spoken for). Within a few hours Scott answered and said to ship the engine back and email him the tracking number. I did that the following day. The next morning I receive an email from UPS alerting me that my engine had been shipped from 3rd Rail and I could expect it on such and such a date. Now, that’s service! The return engine was still on route and 3rd Rail shipped the replacement before it arrived at their office. Now that’s service!

Finally, I am open to suggestion. Call, email, or write me with your suggestions for the magazine. I won’t guarantee we will follow every suggestion, but we will listen.

◆
Precisely handcrafted brass models.

O Scale S.P. 2-10-2 F-3, F-4 and F-5

P.S.C. Photo of Pilot Model #15741.

#15739  SP F-3, one sand dome, spark arrestor, steel pilot, 120-C-7 tender with 4-wheel trucks, no paint.
#15739-1 Same, painted black and graphite #3666.
#15741  SP F-4 w/extended cab, one sand dome, pressed steel pilot, 160-C-3 tender with 6-wheel trucks, no paint.
#15741-1 Same, painted black and graphite #3706.
#16915  SP F-4, one sand dome, tube type pilot, 120-C-7 tender with 4-wheel trucks, no paint.
#16915-1 Same, painted black and graphite #3679.
#15743  SP F-5, one sand dome, tube type pilot, 120-C-7 tender with 4-wheel trucks, no paint.
#15743-1 Same, painted black and graphite #3753.
#16917  SP F-5, two sand domes, tube type pilot, 160-C-2 tender with 6-wheel trucks, no paint.
#16917-1 Same, painted black and graphite #3759.
#16919  SP F-5, one sand dome, pressed steel pilot, 160-C-1 tender with 6-wheel trucks, no paint.
#16919-1 Same, painted black and graphite #3765.

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O Scale NYC Baggage-Mail Cars

P.S.C Photo of Pilot Model #16975.

#16975  NYC 60' 6" Baggage-Mail car, no paint.
#16975-1 Same, painted green #3923, #3945, #3950 and #3959.
#16975-2 Same, painted two-tone gray #5159, #5160, #5178 and #5190.
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