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62 Observations – Joe Giannovario
The Tall Pine Timber Company layout was started in 1976. At that time, it had one loop of O Scale standard gauge track. A year later the narrow gauge portion of the layout was started which is a point-to-point operation. After a period of time, it was decided that we needed a double-track main line. This was added which gave far more realism to our operation. Originally, the railroad had a traction line, actually overhead wire over part of the standard gauge line. However, we only had one individual in the group who was interested in traction operation. When he moved away, the overhead line went into disrepair and sat unused for several years. It was finally taken out. I was sorry to see it go as it did make for interesting operation. The main concentration has been on the standard gauge.

The Tall Pine Timber Company has had many individuals who have belonged to the informal group over the years. The “membership” has changed several times as people have left the San Francisco Bay area and others have passed away. The main people, who have been with the railroad from the beginning, are still very active in the operation and the open houses that we hold for the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), NMRA-Pacific Coast Region, NMRA-Coast Division and O Scale West. It has been a pleasure to operate for these groups as they are always very enthusiastic and enjoy the open houses.

The members who are still with the group and have contributed a great deal to its operation and history are Dexter Day, Dick Bettinger, Bob Roach, Bob Plageman, and Bill Bunch. Bob Roach now has his own beautiful Union Pacific and Great Northern model railroad that has been featured in various railroad publications. Bob has remained the chief electrical engineer for the Tall Pine Timber Company. Without his expertise, the railroad would have become a static display. Dexter Day, who is a conductor on Cal Train and now lives in Gilroy, California, actually laid out the design for the railroad which, to this day, remains very much the same. Dexter is a most talented overall model railroader who has expertise in scenery, backdrops, and track work. Bob Plageman is now in the process of building his own O Scale layout in his garage. Bill Bunch does not have a home layout, so he naturally operates his trains on the other...
Tall Pine
Timber Company

Not to scale
Overall size: 17'-0"x19'-0"

Devil Mountain yard
Bunch Feed & Grain

Coal dock interchange

Hartley Mound
Dianes Pass
Roach Gap
Gilmore Bridge

Yard house

Station

SHAWS CROSSING

Snow shed

31" 30"

38"

142"

14"

17'

124" 72"

50"

61"

Mount Index

Warehouse

Station

CRystal Bay

members’ layouts. Bill has an extensive collection of Santa Fe equipment. Bill’s vast collection includes steam and Diesel locomotives. There are very few questions about Santa Fe that he is unable to answer. Dick Bettinger also does not have a home layout and operates his trains on the other members’ layouts. Dick also has a fine collection of Southern Pacific and Rio Grande locomotives. Both he and Bob Plageman belong to the West Bay Railroad Club in Menlo Park, California, where Dick is able to operate his HO collection as well as his O Scale collection.

The Tall Pine layout is 17’ x 19’ occupying a two-car garage. The most interesting part of the layout is the fact that there is a lift-out allowing one car to be parked in the middle. Several people have brought their wives back so they can see that they can have a reasonably small O Scale railroad in the garage and still allow the family car to be parked inside the garage.

The radius on the standard gauge railroad is 64” for the outer loop and 60” for the inner loop. This allows for the operation of most large steam locomotives. The standard gauge line represents “Class 1” mainline operation, more or less following Southern Pacific prototype.

The modeling is representative of the 1940’s and 1950’s. I especially like maintenance of way equipment and I have lots of it in both standard and narrow gauge. In fact, Whit Towers, past NMRA President and NMRA Bulletin Editor, once commented that the Tall Pine Timber Railroad had more MoW equipment than revenue equipment. This is not really true, but at first appearances it may look that way.

We built the railroad to have fun and that is exactly
what we do. If somebody shows up at the layout and has an Eastern or Midwestern locomotive, they are perfectly welcome to run on the layout as we are not very strict, all that we ask is that they have clean wheels. Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, Union Pacific, Great Northern, and Northern Pacific are always part of the regular operation.

This year will it will be my pleasure to be operating the Tall Pine Timber Company Railroad for the Narrow Gauge National Convention which is being held in the San Francisco Bay area. It is my understanding that this is the first time that this convention has been held in California. The dates for the convention will be September 1 – 4, 2004 and it will be the 24th National Narrow Gauge Convention.

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Installing Kadee Couplers on a Weaver Wartime Gondola

Photos and Text by Ron Gribler

Editor’s Note: Even though Jace Kahn discussed in some detail adding Kadee couplers to the Weaver Wartime gondola is last issue’s review (OST#14), we felt that Ron’s pictorial would help clarify the process.

My PRR Weaver wartime gondola arrived with scale diecast trucks installed and Kadee couplers in a bag. As received, the car sat about six scale inches too high [Photo 1].

This excess height is due to the cast spacer lug between each truck and bolster. At each end of the car there are two molded lugs, or pads, for mounting the couplers. These are about 3/8” high [Photo 2].

If the Kadee couplers were installed on the pads, they would be at the correct height with the bolster spacer installed. However, overall appearance of the completed car is compromised by this extra floor height.

I removed the truck spacers, reinstalled the trucks and checked the floor height to a Kadee coupler height gage. The height was right-on. The coupler mounting pads had to be cut down. The distance between their holes was correct for the Kadee box, but their location was about 1/32” too far toward the center of the car. The vertical end of the Kadee box cover would interfere with the end sill using these holes. Also the cutout of the end sill required widening slightly for the coupler box [Photo 3].

The coupler mounting pads were cut down using a cut-off disc in a motor tool. The disc was held vertically with fore-aft and left-right movements to keep the top surface of the pads flat. Final height and flatness were achieved using a small file. The final height of the mounting pads was equal to the floor ribs and the top of the draft gear opening in the end sill. Then, the width of the end sill opening was increased by shaving each side with a new X-Acto blade, to accommodate the coupler box [Photo 4].

The Kadee box and cover were used as a drilling jig for the holes. The holes were drilled with a #51 drill (0.67”) mounted in a pin vise. Since the mounting lugs are 3/32” high and the floor is 3/16” thick, the holes were drilled only about 3/32” deep to insure that they would not go through the floor [Photo 5].

The furnished 2-56 x 3/32” screws were installed in the Kadee box and lid with 2-56 nuts. The screws were cut off flush with the nuts using the cut-off disc. When the nuts were removed, the exposed thread length of the screws was 1/16”. The screw in the center of the box was about 1/32” longer, so I was careful not to interchange them [Photo 6].

The cut locations on the end-sills were touched up with matching paint. The couplers were installed into the boxes. The screws were carefully threaded into the drilled holes.

The trucks were installed (without the spacers, of course) to complete the car [Photos 7 & 8].
Important notice regarding First Class Mail subscription availability.

Many of you have asked us to provide a First Class Mail subscription. Well, your pleas have been heard. Starting with the July issue, we will offer First Class Mail service for $40 a year. We will also upgrade those of you with current subscriptions at $1.65 per issue, but you will have to call the office to find out the exact cost since that will depend on how many issues you have left. So, if you’ve had bad postal service in your area, you may want to upgrade your subscription.
This month’s picture [below] shows a typical sub-station of the Pacific Electric Railway located on their Los Angeles to Pasadena line on Fair Oaks Avenue in South Pasadena. This building probably held several rotary converters to produce the trolley power of 600 volts DC. The building is located next to the Southern California Edison plant that is still in use. The street in front once carried the P.E.’s track. The building is currently used for storage by the electric company. (Coincidently, behind this building runs the new METRO GOLD LINE light rail which uses the old Santa Fe right of way that runs from Pasadena to Los Angeles.)

The other photo [below right] shows another typical pole line with the 3 wire high tension system used by most trolley operations. This is on the Brownsville Junction to Uniontown line of the West Penn Traction Ry. The dirt road is the former right of way. The West Penn Power Co., the owner of West Penn Traction, used the poles to transmit its own power as well. The plus and minus wires were run in pairs on one side and the ground wire was on the other side of the pole. I checked several photos and there seemed to be no set rule as to where the track was in relation to these wires. Sometimes the paired wires were on the same side as the track, and other times they were on the opposite side from the track. You would have to check the prototype you are modeling to tell what was the most common situation for that line.

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Although there are some fine kits out there, I needed a certain style of building to fit in a particular spot on my layout. The building also had to accommodate two 50-foot rail cars inside. This meant scratch-building a structure to fit the area. I looked around the industrial areas in my neighborhood and found several that used metal siding on a steel frame; this is the style I decided to go with, so I measured up the area on my layout and started building.

Now, when I build a structure from scratch there are no plans, it is all done in my head. The measurements are roughed out on a piece of paper and then transferred to the sheet of styrene, which is the medium I like to use. For all my fellow O Scale modelers out there, however, I have made up some drawings with dimensions that you can use. You will notice a difference between the drawings and the photos of my Acme Steel plant. The drawings are for a full building while Acme Steel was designed and built to go against the backdrop. You can modify the building to suit your needs and space if you like.

Getting started:
A bill of materials is on page 15, with sources. Once you have gathered up the materials, you can start construction of Acme Steel.

Walls
Lay out the wall material and measure off sections 8 inches high. You should get three 8" x 12" pieces from each sheet. You'll need eight of these sections for the building. On three of the walls you will have to splice sections together (B, E and F). Re-enforce the splices with strips of .040" thick styrene, one inch wide, glued to the back of the joint. On wall sections A and C, cut out the door openings as per the diagrams. Once all the sections are cut and ready to go, glue on the inside wall bracing using .125" x .250" strips, with the narrow side being glued to the back of the wall (see diagram). Also, put a frame around the door opening and leave the bottom open. Once all the walls are made, I like to paint them at this point as it is easier to handle them (I painted mine with Polly Scale B&M Blue). When they are painted, start gluing them together to form the building. Once this is done, glue .125" angle styrene on both the inside and outside corners of the building, as per the drawing and Photo # 3. Once these are in place, you can paint them (I used Polly Scale Reefer Grey).

Roof
The roof is made from a 12" x 24" x .060" styrene sheet. Cut out the roof as per the drawing. From the leftover material, cut out a 6" x 12" piece and splice this to the larger piece to give you the full length of the roof. Now glue the roof in place, (you may have to trim it to fit). Once it is in place, paint it with Polly Scale Grimy Black.

Wall Caps and Fascia
The wall caps are made from .125" angle styrene. Glue these along the top of the wall as per the diagram. Cut the caps with a 45-degree angle at the corners. The fascia is made of .125" x .020" thick styrene strip. These are glued along the face of the wall just under the roof cap, as per the diagram and Photo # 3. Once these are in place, you can paint them (I used Polly Scale Reefer Grey).
Door Rollers

The door roller housing is made from styrene tube. Make the end pieces per the diagram and glue them to the roller housings. Next, glue the back plate on, followed by the top plate. This housing is painted with Reefer Grey, as well. Once painted, it can be glued on to the face of the wall just above the doorway, as shown in the diagram and Photo # 4.

Doors and Tracks

The doors are made from .125" scribed .040" styrene sheet. Make two doors as per the drawing. Paint these Reefer Grey. The door tracks are made from .100" styrene channel. You will need two pieces, one piece glued on the inside of the door frame on either side, as shown in the drawing. Paint these Grimy Black. The doors are then slid up into the tracks and glued. The door for the rail entrance is made short to represent an open door. This allows rail cars to be spotted in the building. The door appears closed.

Finishing Touches

The roof vents are made from Rix HO Scale vents, which to me seem too large for HO, but work well for O Scale. Paint these silver, then glue them to the roof (Photo # 5). The building is now complete, other than signage and weathering.

This style of building is used for many types of industries, so you can choose the type and name you want to put on it. I made the signs for mine on the computer, then glued them to a piece of .040" thick styrene sheet, which I then glued to the building. I weathered my building using washes and chalk powders. I also painted any of the inside walls that can be seen with Grimy Black.

The Foundation

With the building all finished, it's time to put it in place on your layout. This means track has to be laid and a foundation has to be made.

These types of buildings usually have a concrete floor. You can model this by making a wood form in the shape of the footprint of the building, then pouring a plaster floor. Paint it a concrete color. You can also make it out of styrene like I did. Don't forget to leave flangeways along the track. With this all done, your new building can be put into place and the ground covering finished around it.

Congratulations. You have now scratchbuilt a building (and you thought it was going to be hard!).

Bill of Materials

Evergreen Scale Models,
18620-F 141st Ave. NE,
Woodinville, WA 98072,
(425) 402-4918, www.evergreenscalemodels.com

Styrene:
Part # 14530, Metal Siding .125 width, and three sheets
12 x 24 inches.
Part # 19060, Plain sheet .060 thick one sheet
12 x 24 inch.
Part # 389, .125 x .250 strips 24 inch long, two packages.
Part # 126, .020 x .125 strip 12 inch long, three packages.
Part # 236, Tube .500, 12 inch long, and one package.
Part # 263, Channel .100 wide, 12 inch long, one package.
Part # 294, Angle .125, 12-inch length, and four packages.

Rix Products,
3747 Hogue Rd.
Evansville In. 47712,
(812) 426-1749, www.rixproducts.com

Part # 611, Vents

Liquid plastic cement, paint and modeling tools.
ACME STEEL FABRICATING COMPANY

Wall sections and their dimensions

All dimensions are in inches

Cut and splice two sections together

16 • O Scale Trains - July/Aug '04
ACME STEEL FABRICATING COMPANY

Construction of walls

Inside wall bracing

WALLS A, C AND E SHOULD BE BUILT THIS WAY

WALLS B, D AND F SHOULD BE BUILT THIS WAY

A SPACE OF .250 SHOULD BE LEFT ON BOTH SIDES OF WALL SO ADJOINING WALLS CAN BE ATTACHED
ACME STEEL FABRICATING COMPANY

Making the doors

DOOR FOR RAILWAY ENTRY ON WALL A
MAKE FROM .125 X .040 THICK SCRIBED STYRENE SIDING

All dimensions are in inches

DOOR FOR TRUCK ENTRY ON WALL C
MAKE FROM .125 X .040 THICK SCRIBED STYRENE SIDING

Making the door roller housing

MAKE FOUR OF THESE SIDES OUT OF .030 THICK STYRENE

MAKE TWO TOP PLATES
- ONE 3 1/2 INCHES LONG
- ONE 3 INCHES LONG
OUT OF .010 THICK STYRENE

MAKE TWO BACK PLATES
- ONE 3 1/2 INCHES LONG
- ONE 3 INCHES LONG
OUT OF .030 THICK STYRENE

.500 DIAMETER STYRENE TUBE
MAKE TWO TUBES
- ONE 3 1/2 INCHES LONG
- ONE 3 INCHES LONG
Door assembly

On wall A the door should be open so rail cars can enter the building, but on wall C the door should be closed.

1. Door roller
2. Framing around door
3. Door mounted in channel
4. Wall
5. Channel on both inside surfaces of door frame

Channel

Door
For the first time, here is a guide to O Scale two rail. This book was written by O Scale modelers with years of experience in the hobby and they share that experience with wit and wisdom. We’ll show you how to get started in 2-rail O Scale, what you need and where to get it.

Of particular use is the list of Resources at the end of each chapter.

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Here’s a peek at the Table of Contents:
1. Welcome, and a little History
2. Concept of Operation
3. Locomotives
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6. Track and Track Plans with Joe Giannovario
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15. Glossary of Terms
Let's look at a nuance that, if a little attention is paid, can give your railroad real believability at no (OK, maybe a little) additional expense. Most railroads in the real world pay great attention to common designs and practices, as a cost-savings measure. If we emulate that practice on our railroads, whether freelanced or prototype, we greatly enhance the visual believability of our empires. We'll call this "commonality", for the purposes of this issue's little tirade.

Most of you are already used to the idea of a common paint scheme for locomotives and rolling stock. Many also go to great pains to make sure all of your Diesels have the same spark arrestors on the stacks, or some other common detail feature as a tool to achieve a family resemblance. By the way, since many of our newcomers are interested in the Diesel era, let's carry that thought a little further. Give some thought to what locomotive types you buy. If your railroad is freelanced (modeling a fictitious company rather than one that exists or existed) you will do well to pay some homage to this concept. Most smaller companies, in the post WWII era, tried to narrow their rosters to one builder's product. The obvious reason was, and still is, that the shop forces only had to be proficient in one builder's locomotives, and the spare parts inventory could be much smaller with many common assemblies for all locomotive types on the roster. An easy way for a freelance modeler to enhance the credibility of his or her railroad is to pick a builder, be it Alco, EMD, Baldwin, or whomever, and limit model purchases to that particular builder.

Even larger companies rostering units from many builders, such as New York Central, learned to assign different builder’s locomotives to different regions. Thus, in NYC's case, Alcos and (later) GE's predominated on the East end, while EMDs were based on the West end. Even NYC's minority builders, like Fairbanks-Morse, Lima, and Baldwin, were eventually grouped together in discrete locations with shop forces trained in the nuances of each builder and parts inventories concentrated. It was a hard lesson to learn, and some large roads never learned it at all. What this means is, if you model one of the larger roads, just buying anything painted for your favorite road may be fine for you now. Later, you may want to choose one of the regions of that road and focus your roster accordingly.

Getting back to more general commonality concepts for a minute, take a look at your structures. All of those towers, stations, watchman shanties, yard offices, and other company structures represent an opportunity for commonality. Most railroads paint their structures in a common paint scheme, just like they do with locomotives and rolling stock. You will be surprised at the improvement in appearance and credibility if you follow that example. You prototype modelers will be able to find the right color scheme in photos and other research material. For the freelancers among us, you get to pick one. Avoid the circus colors, though, as most expense conscious railroads would make color choices that weather well. Common schemes include grays with green trim, ochre with red or brown trim, and the like. Pick one and take the time to paint all those company buildings. Even if the architecture doesn't match, the common paint treatments will add another thread of commonality to the overall appearance of the railroad, just as it does with locomotives and rolling stock.

Speaking of architecture, though, consider this. Many railroads used a common signature in their architecture and engineering practices. Santa Fe was famous for it’s “mission-architecture” stations. In New England, the Boston and Albany was widely lauded in the architecture world for the Richardson styled stone stations and grounds along its mainline, while New Haven was known for the (strange choice!) pagoda-type towers on its property. Pennsy used cut block stone for retaining walls, bridge abutments, and tunnel portals. Of course, you prototype modelers will want to be aware of these practices and incorporate them on your layouts, while the freelancers can choose such a practice to follow, just to re-enforce the plausibility of their railroad building efforts.

Bridges, signals, relay boxes, switch motors, and the like are often painted in the same color, usually silver or black. If you don’t have, say, relay boxes yet, go buy a bunch of identical ones, paint them all the same color, and install them. Do the same for other things like switch motor castings or switch stands, battery vaults, and that sort of stuff. Get some signals, even dummy ones, and plant ‘em. Then go around the railroad with your silver or black paint and cover all the metal structures and mechanisms that the maintenance department would have to paint. In a couple evenings, you’ve woven another commonality thread.

Now go and get a bunch of company vehicles. Pickup trucks, maintenance trucks, crew busses and vans (what, you think we walked to the Y?), track speeders and track equipment, bulldozers and tractors, and anything else your railroad would use in real life. Pick (or research) a paint scheme and paint them all up in company colors.

The lesson here is that commonality, or family resemblance, is not limited to paint on locomotives and rolling stock, but found throughout a railroad's purchasing and maintenance practices. You prototype guys can find them out with a little research, and you freelancers just have a few choices to make. By applying a few of the more visual of these, we can improve the visual believability of our railroads at very little expense, and without a whole lot of effort.

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AC-2 Covered Hoppers
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Do you have a stable of steam locomotives and no place for your maintenance people to perform any kind of work on them? Well, that was my situation. I had a turntable and a couple of storage tracks radiating from it, but no enclosure to provide for repairs. I needed and wanted a roundhouse.

There have been a few commercial roundhouse kits available over the years, but none of them fit the array of tracks stemming from my turntable. Also, I wanted a stone roundhouse and the only recent kit of this style was for On3. So, I designed and built my own. If you have a similar situation, you can build one as well. Since I wanted a stone roundhouse, I chose plaster and made my own molds. To make molds, I needed masters and to make masters I needed dimensions.

**Getting Started**

As mentioned, the turntable and radiating tracks were already in place. I took all of the pertinent measurements and, using a computer aided drafting (CAD) program, I made a drawing of the area. Using this drawing, the floor plan dimensions of the roundhouse were determined. Here are a few design considerations. The minimum opening for each entry track should be 16'0" wide, and if you add front doors, it will need to be larger. The width of the door support columns will add to this width. How your tracks “fan” from the turntable determines where the front wall will go to allow for this 16'+ dimension. Once the front wall is located, the size of rest of the roundhouse can be determined. Do you want to be able to enclose your largest locomotive? This and other considerations will determine the length of the side walls. The rear walls should be perpendicular to the storage tracks. In my case, due to the edge of the layout, I opted for one short stall. Figure 1 shows my completed floor plan drawing.

Using the floor plan, I decided to make each side in three sections, each section being 31'6" in length. The height of the side at the position of the clerestory windows was determined to be 24'0". The slope of the side walls was cut into each section when they were assembled as a unit. The back walls worked out to be 32'6" in length and 18'0" high [see Figures 2 and 3].

The decision as to what window I would use came next. Most of you are familiar with Grandt Line products, and Window #3740 was just what I wanted. Two groups of these windows, each consisting of two windows with a 9" styrene column between them provided plenty of light to view the interior of the roundhouse. Some provision for the rear wall of the short stall was made, but more on this later.

After completing the drawings, I printed them out, pasted them to foamcore board and sat them in the proper place on the layout. This allowed me to study the structure and make any changes before, rather than after construction had started. I try to do this...
and one end wall. The stone sheet was backed up with sheet basswood so the weight of the rubber molding compound would not distort the siding. A styrene “sill” was provided on all sides for the window assemblies. This window opening was made a little smaller than required, so that plaster could be removed in order to give the windows a good fit. A 9” flat was put on each end of the wall sections for a pilaster. The master was made so that two finished plaster castings could be glued back to back to provide a stone finish on both sides of each wall section. The pilaster master was an 18” wide by 12” deep piece of styrene with 18” wide individual stones cut from the Plastikard glued to it and short stone pieces glued on the sides. A dam of styrene was built around each master to contain the RTV rubber mold compound. The outside bottom edges of these walls were filled with clay to prevent any RTV leaks. [Editor’s note: RTV stands for Room Temperature Vulcanizing.]

I used RTV from Micro-Mark sold as their One-To-One/Rapid. This RTV cures in 4 hours, however, at the time I made these molds the RTV cured in 24 hours. I have used other RTV’s that required precise mixing and I prefer the Micro-Mark brand because it uses a 50-50 mixing ratio, by weight or volume. I don’t own any stock in Micro-Mark, but recommend that you purchase the Starter Set. You will find use for all of the items included.

Be sure to coat your master with a mold release agent (which comes in the Starter Kit). Cover the master with a thin coat of RTV. Check for any bubbles, and continue to pour the RTV slowly until the form is filled. I have a commercial PC board assembly vibrator with all of the structures I scratchbuild.

Making Masters

I used plastic sheet embossed with a stone pattern for my wall masters. The sheet is Slater’s Embossed Plastikard, part# 0415 “Dressed Stone”. This is a British product that I purchased from Railway Models. I liked the embossing and pattern of this product. Using Plastikard plus strip styrene and sheet basswood, two masters were made (see Photos 1, 2), one side wall and one end wall.
that works well for removing any trapped air bubbles. (Editor’s note: You can also pull a vacuum to reduce air bubbles using a vacuum cleaner or a vacuum hand pump). Allow the mold to cure for the prescribed time. After removing the mold from the master, let the mold sit another 24 hours before using it (see Photo 3).

To make the short stall back wall I took the back master and added additional rows of stone at the top to get the required height. A new mold was made from this modified master. For some reason the reduced width of this wall didn’t even cross my mind at the time, though I had it right there on the floor plan drawing. The best plans of mice and men!

Making And Assembling The Parts

So now we are finally ready to start producing the roundhouse pieces. Densite brand plaster was used to make the wall and plaster sections. Cast as many sections as required (two per wall section) and then make half as many again. When pouring the plaster, take care to avoid air bubbles and try to get the back of the casting as flat as possible. I pre-colored my plaster with tempera powder paint. The backs of the wall sections may require some sanding before gluing them together with white glue.

Each wall section was given a coat of Floquil Driftwood stain. This is no longer available but a quick trip to a paint store will reveal a myriad of alternatives. The coloring method I used is from Tom Yorke’s plaster kit instructions. Don’t shake the bottle on the first coat, shake it a little on the next coat and continue with this method until you reach the overall finish you desire. I then painted individual stones with other stains and acrylic paints (see Photo 4).

The windows openings had to be enlarged slightly to take the two Grandt windows and spacer. The “sills” were painted with Polly Scale Concrete color. The windows and spacer were painted with Scalecoat D&H Blue (D&H Blue & D&H Gray are my RR colors) before inserting them into the wall. The “glass” in the windows is exposed x-ray film. The more “exposed” the darker the glass. It makes good smoky glass.

Both of the three piece wall sections were laid together. The roof slope of the back two sections and the slope of the front section were then laid out. The top of each section was cut. Wetting the plaster before cutting made it much easier to cut. I decided to add a pedestrian door in the last section of each side. An appropriate Grandt Line door was chosen and the required plaster area between the two window groups was removed. Some filling with plaster between the back-to-back plaster sides was necessary to get a solid door opening and also when I cut the slope on the top of the side walls. The side walls were then glued to each other with white glue along their edges. The pilaster pieces were then glued in place. This is where I found out that the stone shaping on the sides of the pilaster had to be changed. The sides were sanded down flat and new mortar grooves were carved in with a dental pick. The pilaster at the rear of the roundhouse was done in the same manner. Since the rear wall sections sit at a slight angle to one another, the area that the pilaster fits over required some sanding.

Now we have: one side, three sections long; a back, four sections wide; and the other side consisting of a one-section piece and a two-section piece. I sat the back wall in position with the long side wall. At this time, I realized that my pilaster wasn’t wide enough for the corners where two walls join. This is why I recommend you make extra wall pieces. By cutting strips from an extra wall casting, I was able to make a pilaster wide enough for the ends. These pilasters were glued to the long side wall, the short side wall and both ends of the back wall. The gap between the wall and the pilaster was filled with plaster and then this area was sanded to a 45 degree angle. Any gap left after gluing these 45 degree corners together was filled with plaster, shaped and painted. The regular pilasters worked okay on the front end of the side walls. Two pilasters were sanded so as to join at a 45 degree angle and the side stone work was left on the front door edge.

In setting up the roundhouse walls, I realized the rear wall of the short stall had to be narrower than the other back wall sections. When I had removed enough wall width so that this back wall section would fit, I didn’t like it. The windows came too close to the ends of the wall. I decided to extend the short stall track out the back as far as I could which worked out to be another 10 inches. Using extra wall pieces, I made a wall section with four doors in it. The doors were built up using styrene sheet and strips and painted D&H Blue (see photo 5). I placed brass wire in the outer door so that it could pivot and used Grandt Line roundhouse door hinges for the inner door. I did not put any pilasters on the inside corner of the foreshortened rear wall and the side wall. The two-section side wall was glued to the foreshortened rear wall and the walls of the roundhouse were complete.

Interior Details

The structural interior of the roundhouse was made from Evergreen Scale Models #287 H-columns. Three long front-to-back frameworks and one partial section were made on a fixture. These were then painted Floquil Weathered Black along with some extra H-columns and some Evergreen #254 square ¼" tubing. This square tubing was used across the front under the clerestory windows and for all three sides of the front door openings. This framework was then assembled (See Photo 6). The sloping framework to support the rear roof was added using the extra painted H-columns. The clerestory sections were made up from scribed styrene and two Grandt Line #3738 windows. These assemblies were painted D&H Blue and glued in place (See Photo 7).
Roofing

The only remaining items were the two roofs. Cardboard templates were made to assure the accuracy of the roof shapes. When fitting the front template, I found that the 1/4" square tubing under the clerestory windows wasn’t wide enough to support the back edge of this roof. I added another row of 1/4" square tubing in front of the existing tubing to provide this support. After being satisfied with the templates, each was transferred to .030" sheet styrene. I found out that I didn’t have enough sheet styrene for all of the roofs. Check your local Yellow Pages for plastic dealers. I got a 2’x4’ piece of .030” styrene for $3.00.

Using my rear roof template, I located the position of the holes for Grandt Line #3512 smokejacks on my 4 long stalls. Laying the roof sheets in place, I marked the location of the roof support H-columns with a pencil on the underside. Laying the roofs on a table upside down, I used Evergreen strips, #158, to provide bracing to the roof (See Photo 8). Evergreen 1x4 styrene strips were placed on the top of the roof to represent seam joints in the roof. The Grandt Line smokejacks were added. I am going to use Berkshire Junction EZ Line for the smokejack guy wires. This is the only item left to be done to the roundhouse. The roofs were painted with Floquil Weathered Black. Normally you would also paint the inside of the roofs black, but I decided against this. I painted the inside of the roofs with Floquil light gray primer to allow more light when looking through the windows.

You may want to add track pits and other items to your roundhouse, but I decided not to do this from the beginning. With the addition of ballast all round the roundhouse and some details, I now have a place to perform repairs on my motive power. It was a fun project that was spread over a year or two from the initial design to the completed structure. Maybe your attempt at making masters and molds won’t be for as large a building, but at least when faced with wanting a structure that doesn’t exist in kit or built form, you might try these methods.

Resources:
Grandt Line, 1040 B Shary Court, Concord, CA 94518, 925-671-0143, www.grandtline.com
Slater’s Embossed Plastikard from Railway Models, PO Box 871, Edgewood, MD 21040, railwaymodels@mailcity.com
Floquil and Polly Scale paints: The Testor Corporation, 440 Blackhawk Ave, Rockford, IL 61104, 800-962-6654, www.testors.com
Scalecoat paint: Weaver Models, PO Box 231, Northumberland, PA 17857, 570-473-9434, www.weavermodels.com
Berkshire Junction, PO Box 205, Adams, MA 01220, 413-743-3960, www.berkshirejunction.com
A Brief Conversation With M.T.H.’s Andy Edleman
An exclusive for OST by K. Jeb Kriigel

In the new M.T.H. Electric Trains 2004 Volume 2 catalog, it was announced that several Premier Line locomotives will be available in scale 2-rail. I recently had the opportunity to discuss this news with Andy Edleman, V.P. for Sales & Marketing at M.T.H. Electric Trains. It really is terrific news in itself for a major 3-rail manufacturer to offer some of their products in 2-rail. You may remember that M.T.H. released 2-rail versions of many of its Premier Line Diesel and steam engines in the 1990s until sales were no longer sufficient to support the separate manufacture of 2-rail equipment. That was then; this is now, and it’s a whole new ballpark.

According to Mr. Edleman, you will once again have the option of ordering a new Premier Line steam locomotive in either HiRail or 2-rail scale. These scale locomotives will be vast improvements over the earlier versions. The market demand for scale realism and details has led to major improvements in design and new operating features.

For example, imagine opening the box and finding that your new scale loco has a switch that will allow you to run it on two rail or three rail track. Imagine opening a 2-rail scale locomotive and finding a pair of center-rail pickup rollers in the box. The instructions say you can attach the rollers, throw the switch and run on HiRail t-section track. All of this is now possible, says Edelman, and there’s more.

You will be able to operate your 2-rail scale locomotive with the features that have made Proto-Sound 2.0® and M.T.H.’s Digital Command System (DCS), famous in the 3-Rail market. Features like operating smoke synchronized to chuff sounds and driver revolutions, whistle, bell and many other sounds will now be available in 2-rail scale locomotives. Many of these functions will work right out of the box regardless of which power system you use. If your power system is DC, other features will necessitate the purchase of a special conversion/interface box which will be available for sale later this year. “For the ultimate enjoyment of M.T.H.’s features though,” Edleman says, “Users who opt for M.T.H.’s DCS Digital Command System will have hundreds of sounds and features accessible through the system’s innovative and easy-to-use remote control.”

While having more choices for 2-rail scale locomotives is great for traditional 2-railers, the people who will benefit the most from these new locomotives are the HiRailers, especially those who already own DCS systems. HiRailers can now make a smooth transition from 3 to 2-Rails. They can now operate in pure scale. Traditional 2-Railers will also have features that were only available in 3-rail or at high cost.

So, which version should you order? According to Edleman, it is best to order the locomotive that is most closely designed for your interests. The 3-Rail locos will come with deeper flanged wheels and HiRail couplers. The 2-Rail counterparts will be scale in all aspects, but that switch allows for flexibility and conversion. We here at O Scale Trains Magazine recommend that HiRailers with t-section track and broad curves order the 2-rail scale versions and take advantage of that switch feature. When you’re ready to go all 2-rail, it’ll be a snap to convert.

How is all this possible? As Andy states, “The engineering and marketing people at M.T.H. planned for the future with the development of their DCS operating system. It is a system that can function on AC or DC power and features virtually unlimited growth potential thanks to its software deliverable operating system.” Such flexibility allows for the operation of DC scale locomotives as outlined above. More interestingly, as new M.T.H. features or sounds are developed they can be delivered right into the user’s locomotive or DCS system in just a few minutes. All that’s required is a personal computer and an Internet connection.

M.T.H. certainly has exhibited innovative and creative engineering with this new line of locomotives. Mr. Edelman says more information will be forthcoming about features and options. The first locomotive available in the new line is the venerable N&W Class J, 4-8-4 (see the M.T.H. ad in this issue).
A previous article (OST #14) described the linear yard at the west end of the Buckeye Railroad. This second article on yards for O Gauge layouts discusses how the Buckeye Railroad maximizes operating possibilities at a small loop yard. The Pittsburgh terminal at the east end of the layout occupies a space that is twenty-two feet long and eight feet wide, acquired when an extension was added to the house. It depicts an urban terminal that might have been found in Pittsburgh’s downtown area in the mid-1950s. As shown in Figure 1, the passenger yard is built in just over sixteen feet of the room with the loop utilizing the workshop area at one end. The two legs of the loop turn into the main train room where they join to become a single track mainline leading to the railroad’s main classification yard to the west.

The yard at Pittsburgh is actually two yards, a passenger yard and a freight yard. These two smaller yards are bisected by a center aisle for easy access to both sets of tracks. Primary access to the aisle is via a lift bridge at Monongahela Junction where the two yard leads join in the main train room.

Pittsburgh’s Union Station features through operation with five platform tracks. Behind the platform tracks are two tracks serving a power plant, bakery and wholesale produce market. At the right end of the passenger terminal are two additional sidings. One serves the wholesale produce market; the other serves a tool and die factory and a grain elevator. At the left end of the passenger yard are three stub tracks that dead end inside an A&P cold storage facility.

Across the aisle in “North Pitt” is the Buckeye’s “Ohio” freight yard. This yard has a short lead and four spurs that access the railroad’s regional freight house. With urban space at a premium, the railroad performs downtown track repairs from a small, “remoted” maintenance-of-way facility at North Pitt. It also maintains a small water tank at North Pitt to top off steam locomotives for the short trip out to the main engine facility in the suburban yard to the west, where coaling and major engine servicing is performed. This continues the first article’s theme of using smaller yards along the railroad that compliment each other instead of trying to squeeze all yard functions into a single location.

The yards at Pittsburgh and North Pitt use angled table top benchwork for a more realistic appearance. The front edge of both yards is a bulkhead with water at the base, suggesting that the aisle is the Monongahela River. With downtown space at a premium, the viewer can accept the fact that virtually all the tabletop
space that is slightly wider than twice your minimum track radius. With its minimum radius of 48", the Buckeye needed about nine feet of width for the loop connecting the two yards. To achieve this, part of the loop had to tunnel into the main train room. Needless to say, our home builder was quite surprised when he got the call to punch a hole through that wall.

Since the Buckeye is a point to point operation, the original plans for Pittsburgh called for a stub-end terminal. However, early operation of the layout showed that the time taken to reverse or change locomotives seriously detracted from operating efficiency as did the extra switching moves that stub-end tracks require. On the other hand, the loop yard could be designed with double-end sidings to expedite flow. In two-rail operations, the drawback is that a loop yard requires an isolated track block where polarity can be reversed. At Pittsburgh, the block is on the loop in the workroom. This inconvenience was accepted in order to get added operational flexibility, including the ability to route arriving trains left or right at Monongahela Junction.

The functions of the yard complex at Pittsburgh include debarking and boarding passengers at the main passenger terminal, as well as loading and unloading baggage, express and milk. Passenger operations include express services offered by the Buckeye, New York Central, Baltimore & Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroads as well as Buckeye commuter and
“clocker” services. Express reefers from the West are switched onto Tracks 6 and 7, which serve the wholesale produce market. A daily NYC Pacemaker express freight to Cleveland originates at the freight house in North Pitt.

The Ohio Yard at North Pitt also receives a local freight from the Buckeye’s suburban yard to the west of the city. About half of the cars in this freight are spotted at the freight house by the Pittsburg yard drill. The drill takes the remaining cars across the river to Pittsburgh where they are spotted at the A&P cold storage warehouse, the power plant, the bakery, the millers and the tool-and-die factory. A total of 18 trains serve the Pittsburgh yards during an operating session. Perhaps there’s some space adjoining your layout that could be converted to a loop yard. If not, maybe it’s time to call your builder!
Master Creations’ O kit #18105 contains the tipple, headhouse, power house, storage shed, retaining walls, and a ton of character for $549.95! The tipple is approximately 45 x 90 scale feet with the overall diorama shown being about 24” x 48”. Not all details are shown in the photo!

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The track diagram was drawn out on a computer, printed, then coated with laminated plastic. The diagram was then applied to the panel top with thin double-sided tape.

The panel slides on a universal drawer kit available at any large hardware store.
OVERLAND MODELS is proud to announce the General Electric “AC4400CW” and “C60AC” locomotives to ‘O’ scale modelers and collectors! Featured railroads for this release are: BNSF, CP, CSX, SP and UP. These powerful locomotives are beautifully finished and fully detailed. Not only are they perfect on your model railroad but also serve as great mantle pieces or office decoration. In stock soon.

Due in late 2004 or early 2005 will be a group of “SD40T-2” and “SD45T-2” models in ‘O’ scale as well. This production will feature: D&RGW, SP, Cotton Belt and UP Tunnel Motors as well as AT&SF and Milwaukee Road “FP45”s.

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the effort to build the cases to protect the investment in time spent building a model. Cardboard boxes just didn’t last. Bob’s son, Rick, needed a project for an industrial arts class he was taking at the University of Missouri in 1977. He decided to copy his dad’s box. The result is the dimensioned drawing shown on page 41.

The top and bottom of the box are made from 1” x 6” material cut to the proper width as shown in the drawing. The sides are ¼” plywood. Photo 2 shows the sliding drawer and the way the top and sides are glued and nailed together.

The tricky part is getting the glide strips to line up with the slots in the drawer sides [Photo 3]. After the parts for the box have been cut, take the bottom and place the drawer on top. Hold the sides up in each of the mitered slots and mark the position for the 7/32” strips on the sides.

The door is nothing more than a piece of leftover plywood that has been cut about ¼” smaller than the outside dimensions of the end of the box. Then take ¼” strips of clear pine to make a “picture frame” around the outside. Glue and tack with wire nails and sand to fit.

Rubberized bands and cup hooks hold the locomotive or car firmly in place during transport [Photo 4]. The cup hooks should be placed in locations to support your particular engine or car. Bob found that crossing the bands over the boiler helped prevent movement just in case you had to “hit the brakes” while transporting the locomotive. The strips of terry cloth towels minimize abrasions.

To locate the carrying handle put the engine or car in the box and slide the whole thing over a dowel to find the balance point [See photo 5]. This is the centerline for the handle.

The box hardware is from Stanley Works and all material can be bought at any local hardware store. One thing to remember, when storing an engine for any length of time remove the elastic bands to keep the driver springs in the suspension system from compressing. I’ve been guilty of forgetting to do that and the engine can wobble around for many laps before it gets back in shape, if you have good enough springs with memory.

If anybody has any questions my email is [rjorrbuff@sbcglobal.net].
CARRYING CASE

NOTES:
1. ALL JOINTS GLUED
2. TOP & BOTTOM PIECES ARE SAME DIMENSIONS
3. SUIT CASE HANDLE (NOT SHOWN) IS MOUNTED TO TOP OF CASE AT BALANCE WITH MODEL ENCLOSED
4. DIMENSIONS
   A = E - A
   B = E - B
   C = E - C
   D = E - D
   E = LENGTH OF MODEL + E
5. MODEL RETAINED WITH CUBSHOCKS (NOT SHOWN) MOUNTED IN TRAY AND RUBBER BANDS. MODEL SHOWS LOCATION

PLATE 141  12 DEC 77

RICHARD WHELOVE
Brake wheels and the latest news on Proto48

Slipping an Issue

I had promised a second part to the rivet making discussion started in Issue #14. This will have to be delayed due to my non-hobby obligations. It will appear in the near future.

An Overlooked Detail?

All rolling stock has some sort of brake wheel or lever to permit train crews to manually apply the brakes. Did you ever notice that there are real differences in the design of prototype brake wheels? The most common vertical wheel installation is the Ajax brake wheel and gearbox. This design first appeared in the late 1920’s and continued to dominate as the principal design into the early 1950’s. There are other common types such as the Klasing, Miner, Universal, Equipco, Superior, and Champion-Peacock, to name a few of the more common designs.

I was prompted to do a quick survey of O Scale to see how many different prototype designs could be accounted for. I used the latest issue of the Railway Prototype Cyclopedia (#10) as my reference source, along with the 1940 Car Builder Cyclopaedia. You can purchase the Railway Prototype Cyclopedia at many hobby shops or directly from RPC (You can get more information at their website http://www.geocities.com/rpcyc/). The results were surprising to me.

We found a photo of the new San Juan Car Company gondola kit, modeled as it appeared in the late 1950’s. The Southern Pacific added wood side extensions to the car to increase its cubic capacity. This permitted shippers to load more sugar beets or wood chips. This was true of the composite car (G-50-23). The steel version, G-50-20, did not get extended sides, but some other roads that owned similar cars did extend the sides for wood chip hauling.

Pat Mitchell, of Clifton Backshop Services, 8122 Valley Run Drive, Clifton, Va. 20124, has started a new service for those who want to build a new Proto48 layout. The service entails the fabrication of a sub-roadbed made from 1/4” birch plywood, California Roadbed homasote strips, flexible urethane tie strips and all standard turnouts. All you need to provide is the original drawing, rail, spikes and ballast. Pat has been building a new large layout and has cut the construction time by two-thirds. The tie strips are made from urethane and have tie plates and wood grain. The material can easily be spiked, much like sugar pine. The tie plates are set up to take Code 125 and Code 138 Right O’ Way rail. The picture illustrates the detail found on the strips. Pat suggests that you contact him for pricing and production time. He is also interested in finding out if enough people want to buy the tie strips separately. The turnouts are available in #4, 5 & 6 frogs with #7, 8 & 10 coming this summer.

We received some samples of cast frogs from American Switch and Signal.

Wheel Type | Source | Part Number
---|---|---
Ajax 14377 | Grandt Line | #160
Ajax 14377 | Precision Scale | PSH-4328/4329 (plastic)
Champion 1148 | Atlas/Roco freight cars | N/A
Equipco 3160 | Precision Scale | provided with kit
Equipco 3160 | Intermountain Reefer | PSH-40299
Klasing D-959 | Precision Scale | PSH-40551
Miner D-3290 | Intermountain Boxcar | on parts sprue
Superior 566 | Intermountain Boxcar | on parts sprue

From left to right, plastic PSC Ajax wheel, an old Clouser Ajax wheel, Atlas/Roco Champion 1148 wheel, Intermountain reefer kit Equipco 3160, PSC Klasing D-959, Intermountain Miner D-3290, and the Intermountain boxcar kit Superior 566.
Company. The castings are made from nickel silver and are very sharp. The patterns were made from Right O'Way rail in Code 138 and Code 125. They are available in several frog angles and styles. The included picture shows both rail-bound and manganese insert styles in Code 125.

RL Design (14123 206th St. S.E., Snohomish, WA 98296-3947) is preparing lettering sets for Southern Pacific automobile cars starting with the A-50-9 thru A-50-11 steel single sheathed cars and on to the AAR standard steel cars. I have included a photo of an SP A-50-9 to give you an idea of the type of car lettering that is in the works. He will follow this with lettering for AAR double-door 50' cars later in the year. RL Design decal sets range from $10 to $11 per set with a $4 shipping charge.

Reader Feedback

First Time At Big Meet
Just got back from the Midwest O Scale Meet for 2004 last week. This was the first time I've been able to attend a big O Scale meet and this year's Midwest O Scale Meet was much more than even I had imagined. Mike Hill and all his volunteers really deserve a lot of credit as they really made this a great show.

It was mind boggling to see so much O Scale model railroad equipment for sale under one roof. One of the highlights for me was to be able to finally meet so many of the vendors that I have been doing business with over the years. In no particular order I really enjoyed meeting Tim LaGue (OLD PULLMAN), Scott Mann (SUNSET MODELS), Rich Yoder (RICH YODER MODELS), Danny Pope (ALL NATION), John & Martha Keil (KEIL LINE PRODUCTS), Pat Mucci (P&D HOBBY SHOP), Ted Schnepf (RAILS LINE PRODUCTS), Pat Mucci (P&D HOBBY SHOP), Ted Schnepf (RAILS LINE PRODUCTS), Lenny & Rita Leer (R&L HOBBY SHOP), Ted Schnepf (RAILS LINE PRODUCTS), and of course Brian Scace (O SCALE TRAINS).

I would really like to extend my thanks to Ted Schnepf who opened up his home layout which was a real joy for me to visit. You need to do a photo spread on this layout as the last one done a few years ago really doesn't do it justice. This is one impressive layout both in size, track plan, almost unlimited operations potential, and some pretty well done scenery to boot. Thanks again Ted, I really enjoyed the visit.

As far as OST goes, it's as good as ever and I'm glad to see you are starting to pick up even more advertisers which is a good sign you're doing something right.

Pete Klick, Sequim, Washington

More Internet Brouhaha
When I first read the letter from Phil Shuster in issue #12, my first reaction was negative, but I waited to respond expecting someone else like John Smith to defend his position. No one came forward, so it seems I must. (It also took this much time to cool down).

First, Mr. Shuster, you don't need a computer to get access to the Internet. Microsoft has been advertising Internet television boxes for $99 for the past few months. You get a keyboard and an interconnecting box that hooks to your TV. Now you can go to all those sites that don't issue catalogs and see what you've have been missing. You can even view the Walther's catalog and order direct, if you want. You don't have to drive to the hobby shop and spend money on gas. Dell Computer has been advertising a computer for $499, and I had the impression it came with a monitor. Another $50-$100 and you can have a printer. Call it $600; not $1200 as you say. And in the case of the latter, it's not just you who has to pay; we all get to contribute to the cost of “your catalog”.

Do you buy Microscale decals? Have you purchased one of their catalogs? How quickly did it get out of date, or did you update your copy each time one of the model magazines printed a list of new decals that were not listed in “your catalog”? You could go out on the Internet and see what is available. And, of course, everything listed in a catalog is available, right? No one would ever print a catalog with items that weren't available. Also, the prices printed in “your catalog” never change, so when you order something, that's what you send the manufacturer. Of course, if they have had a price increase you won't know until they send your order back with a note to that effect. If you had Internet access, you could go to their web site and check the current prices, and send the correct amount the first time. You might even be able to order the item right then.

Just because “the hobby shop operators” you have talked to “complain that the Internet is bad. It just means they can’t compete. Maybe if they dropped their prices a little, had a better stock (you can't sell from an empty
Looking For Helpful Info

I am a new subscriber looking forward to my first issue (May), although I purchased several back issues and enjoyed them very much. I was a Lionel 3-Railer as a young boy and now many years later working in building an O Scale (in the very early stage). The magazine is very informative, helpful, enlightening and enjoyable.

At this stage of my planning the following is very helpful: layout design (would like to mix in a short line of On3 with O Scale the primary), comparison of track (suitable radius) and track bed (advantages of each type), types of ballast to be used (including size, color, etc.), more info on DCC (TMCC) with sound, power supplies recommended, (names), turnouts recommended, scenery is always enjoyable (especially water), a specific article on new O Scale trains available (include picture if available, companies web site and possibly a review - its difficult to hunt for all companies with O Scale), wiring under the table, web sites handling O Scale vehicles-trucks-people.

One thing I would really like to see is a continuation of your article on the building of your layout. It would be nice to track a layout from beginning to end. Please give us more detail about how you are doing something, advantages and disadvantages of your selections, track and bed selection, frame design and materials, wiring, power supplies, etc. Actually, an additional more detailed article (for subscription members only) on your web site would be a great encouragement to purchase the magazine. I haven’t seen anybody tell the life cycle of their layout in detail. It would be very helpful and meaningful to be able to follow all that happens. You could expand upon this with others advice, why you chose this over that, etc.

Thanks again for a wonderful magazine.

Ed Piccoli
enpiccoli@msn.com

Joe G responds: Ed, some of what you are looking for is included in our book “A Guide To Modern O Scale”, some will be in future articles. The rest depends on our readers contributing the material. As for my layout, I do intend to include as much of the development and construction process as I can. The truth is I have the benchwork up and that’s all I’ve accomplished since January. I have, however, been laying in supplies. I’m going to use AtlasO code 148 track on California Roadbed’s Homabed. Switches will be a mix of AtlasO and hand-built. I hope to have a twice-around loop completed before the summer is over. Keep watching the magazine for news.

Geep Upgrade

There are a lot of Red Caboose GPs out there and maybe a lot are unfinished. Mine is at least 8 or 9 years old when Karl Geffchen made a special run painted for the Erie. Now I see the unpwowered kits offered at quite reasonable prices. For those who are not aware, Clifton Backshop makes a brass replacement floor/frame that is milled out of heavy brass. I bought mine from Des Plains Hobbies. It’s almost a straight forward replacement for the plastic frame.

I also replaced the drive with a P&D set of trucks which are absolutely gorgeous. They look like they came from a jewelry store.

The Clifton Backshop floor is milled and drilled to take the original motor mount and truck mountings. It’s not that different for the P&D drive. The biggest item is the coupler mount that needs to be cut from the original floor and thinned until a 2-56 screw fits through the coupler box. The piece cut from the old frame holds the whole mess together.

It ends up ready to take the superstructure as a very substantial assembly and adds the weight of the brass to the finished locomotive.
Bob Garrelts, Tarpon Springs, Florida

Update on Lionel O Scale milk car

I have had a few derailments of the Lionel Milk Reefer cars after converting them for 2-Rail operation per the article I co-authored in O Scale Trains #7. I found that the buffer springs were too stiff. I replaced them with Kadee coupler springs, the small ones. Presto... no more derailments.

The best way to get to these buffer springs is with the roof removed. Straighten out the two round tangs on the buffer plate with a long thin pair of needle nose pliers or similar tool so the buffer can be removed to replace the springs.

After replacing the springs, insert buffer and bend the end of each tang slightly to retain the buffer plate in it’s mount.

Dick Bregler (via email)

50 Mile Trek

I modeled in HO Scale for a little over 30 years and then turned 50 years old. My eyesight went and I had to switch to the bi-focal gauge. I attended a train show and obtained a copy of your book “A Guide to Modern O Scale” and read it twice the same night. I wish I’d had it in the very beginning; it would have saved me quite a bit of work on my present layout. I didn’t allow enough room for curves and ended up moving a wall in my basement four feet and tearing out a bunch of track. Live and learn.

I read in the back of the book that M & S Trains in Columbus, Ohio, carried O Scale Trains Magazine, a publication devoted entirely to O Scale. I drove over 50 miles to obtain the March/April issue. It was terrific and I’ve enclosed a check for a subscription!

Please keep up the great work and keep showing the proper way to model in O Scale.

Phillip Rowe, Marysville, Ohio

Weaver Gon Addendum

Since I wrote my review of the Weaver gondola in OST#14, I managed to buy another one, red this time. I thought I might mention that the underframes (including the brake gear) for all cars should be black. Particular modelers may want to unscrew the cast underframe and repaint it to match a non-black car. It is not difficult, but one does need to pry the brake gear carefully from the underside after unscrewing the center sill and cross-member casting, paying attention to the airline that leads from the back of the cylinder to the AB valve (where it is lightly glued).

Jace Kahn (mostly Fairbanks, Alaska) by email

What in the World?

Dear Sir,

Enclosed is a photo of some sort of M.O.W. unit. The back end folds down and trails 10 yards in the back of it. Can you tell me, please, what this M.O.W. unit is?

I enjoy your magazine

Marvin G. Weber
754 Winn Road
Mooresboro, NC 28114-8228

Anybody know what this is? Write Marv. 

Phillip Rowe, Marysville, Ohio
**NEWS: Des Plaines Hobbies**
1468 Lee Street
Des Plaines, IL 60018
847-297-2118, www.desplainedeshobbies.com

Des Plaines Hobbies is pleased to announce, effective April 11, 2004, the purchase of Bob Rsaza's Custom Finishing O Scale parts line. Bob will be keeping his HO line and name, and the O Scale line will now be sold under Des Plaines Hobbies' new O Scale America line. Part numbers will not be changed, only the name and location. Because of the move from Massachusetts to Des Plaines, it will be a couple of months before parts supplies are replenished.

Time permitting, parts formerly sold under the Des Plaines Hobbies O Scale label will be added to the newly launched O Scale America line.

**REVIEW: Precision Products Vacuformed Styrene Sheet**
Applied Imagination International, Inc.
763 Cayuga Street, Unit #2
Lewiston, NY, 14092
716-754-2997, www.appliedimaginationinc.com
reviewed by Brian Scace

While attending a Large Scale meet, I ran into a gent by the name of John Hutt. John, under the name of Precision Products, has been making vacuum formed styrene sheets of important things like brick, wood flooring, stone block, and the like, in six different scales. For all of us who have been scrambling about every time someone wants to peddle a couple sheets of old H&R brick, this is great news. Here’s what John has:

For $8 a sheet, you get 15" x 15" (usable) of .025" styrene crisply vacuum formed into such useful things as 6" lap siding, 9" wood flooring, brick, or that stone block that the PRR used for just about every retaining wall and bridge abutment they ever built. John is working on masters for other things in ¾ scale, such as corrugated metal roofing, and expresses the desire to expand the O Scale line with such things as Spanish tile roofing, and clear vacuum formed window assemblies and trim details.

Also in his line is a foam core material, used to make the basic building shape. This stuff is a little different, too. Instead of paper skins, such as the artist’s stuff we use now, this material has a white styrene skin over a high-density expanded polystyrene core. The foam core material is 5mm thick, and you get six sheets of 16" square material for $15. While you’re at it, John has the proper glue to laminate the vacuum formed sheet to your foam core shell.

I would suggest that you get his master catalogue (for $2) first, because there are many other sheets made for other scales that would be useful in O, with a little care and imagination. Looks like Scace is back in the structure building mode. How about you?

**REVIEW: MagnaForce MF615 AC Power Supply**
DCC Specialties.com
210 E Front St
Traverse City MI 49384
800-671-0641, www.dccspecialties.com
reviewed by Ted Byrne

The companies that sell DCC systems typically note that their products require an input of 12-18 volts AC. Sometimes, in the fine print, they offer to sell a transformer to provide this power. Modelers often cobble together a power source using a transformer from an electronics supplier plus other odds and ends. It is fastened to a scrap of plywood with only a few layers of electrician’s tape between 110 volts and the unwar. It’s a safety hazard, a fire hazard and a discredit to the model layout.

Now DCC Specialties has provided another solution. Their MagnaForce MF615 is a 15 volt, 6 ampere AC transformer in a durable and sate, ventilated box with an illuminated on/off switch, a grounded power cord and plug, and a heavy duty output cable to connect to the DCC controller. A thermal overload cutout protects the output. This is the best type of protection as it allows a brief overload but protects from a short circuit or prolonged overload. Six amperes is sufficient for many smaller O-scale layouts, or for each power district of larger layouts.

The unit sells for $44.95, which compares favorably with the cost and aggravation of doing it yourself. The included instructions tell how to connect to Digitrax, Lenz and NCE but other DCC connections should also be simple.

More information on the MF615 and several other DCC support products can be found on their website, or contact them by phone, fax at 231-947-1411, or by e-mail.
REVIEW: MRC’s “Power-G” Controller
Model Rectifier Corporation
80 Newfield Ave Edison NJ 08837
www.modelrectifier.com
$224.98 MSRP
reviewed by Brian Scace

As most of you loyal readers may have gathered by now, Scace is a proponent of the idea that the “Large Scale” folks have certain products useful for us, especially some pretty high-horsepower throttles. Several letters written to our august journal have voiced a desire for a simple high-capacity power supply that is ready to hook up and use. MRC has recently brought such a power supply to market, under the name of “Power-G”, and we’ll have a look at it.

The Power-G is a hefty 10 amp capacity critter, attractively cased featuring a fist sized handle, making it strangely reminiscent of the old Lionel KW of my youth. It features two DC outputs, one variable and one fixed. The obvious thing to do was to carry the poor critter off to the nether regions to suffer the tender mercies of the Scace Boys (Your’s truly and his father, Robert) in the Dungeon of Electrical Testing Gear. Using a Fluke true RMS digital multimeter and a Tektronix oscilloscope, here’s what we found:

- With no load, the fixed output was 23 volts DC, with a 9.0 V rms ripple (about 25V peak-to-peak).
- With no load, the variable output was 0.3-22 V DC, 8.7 V rms ripple (also about 25V peak-to-peak).
- With a 2.0 Ohm load, the variable output was 0.3-16 V, with a 7.3 V rms ripple.

We didn’t have any low-value high-power resistors to test the overloading circuitry, but the supply happily went about its thing at 8 amps with what we did have.

What this all means is that this is a simple, maybe even delightfully archaic, gutsy power supply. It also means this is an unfiltered supply, using full wave rectifiers (one each on the fixed and variable circuits). You should be aware of this, if you intend to use any add-on control components. As an example, many of the Radio Control systems out there, such as Locolink, have a requirement for filtered DC, which this supply does not provide. You’ll want to check the instructions that come with any add-on control systems before hooking them up to this unit. Also, for you DCC guys and gals, there is no AC output available, which limits the utility of this unit as a power supply for DCC equipped railroads. Perhaps the good folks at MRC would consider a “Power-O” version, whose only difference would be the substitution of an AC fixed output for the DC one, to permit use as a potent DCC power supply. Those who want fixed DC to drive switch motors could pick the “Power-G”, and those using DCC would pick the version with a fixed AC output.

My only real beef with this thing is the handle. It is a slip fit, not nearly the solid bomb-shelter feel of the rest of the unit, with the irritating tendency to lift off during my probably over-enthusiastic throttling. MRC says to slip a piece of tape around the shaft; a better solution is to make a new handle or replace the current one with a big ol’ knob, either one having a set screw to lock it in place on the shaft. Perhaps MRC will re-engineer the current one with something more in line with the robustness of the rest of the unit.

On the plus side, you asked for it, and MRC has offered a fine high-horsepower piece of gear for the conventionally wired layout. The reversing switch is not some lightweight slide switch, but a good beefy toggle. All of the indicator lights are big “in-your-face” bulbs that will light up the room. The overall design goal can be characterized as robustness rather than finesse, though it smoothly made light work of two old USH Hudsons, with open-frame motors, and a string of lighted Joe Fischer passenger cars, which is, of course, where the value really is. This is one of the few modern-made power supplies for those of us who revel in the sound of our headlamp streams. In any case, you’ll want to backdate the model into the much more common older gear on our traditional cab-control railroads. It’s a Checker, not a Cadillac.

By the way, here’s an important footnote. Not too long ago, I found my oldest MRC Controlmaster 20 supply (another MRC product worth considering for O Scale) not performing up to the same level as the other, albeit newer, versions I own. I gave them a shout and (without saying that I work at OST) sent it back for their kind attentions. Now, realize that this thing is probably ten years old and has been in use for that period of time horsing brass around. They gave it a good look-see, and determined that it was performing up to standards (the newer ones are just a little stronger) and returned it at no charge. This tells me several things. They could have found “something wrong” or just arbitrarily changed out all the guts and charged accordingly, but they didn’t. They could have said it was too old and not their responsibility, but they didn’t. Instead, they cheerfully looked at it, tested it, shot me a straight line, and returned it (even covering the return shipping) promptly. Consider this when considering price vs. value.

Review: New York Central L3b Mohawk
Sunset Models
37 S Fourth St
Campbell CA 95008
408-866-1727, www.3rdrail.com
reviewed by Brian Scace

Sunset has just added a new Mohawk to their New York Central stable. For those of you who may not know, the NYC rostered the Lima-built L3b as the prototype of this model. The L3b came in a couple of varieties, and this is the version with an inset Elesco feedwater heater, rather than the Alco-built Worthington heater. After unpacking the model, here’s what I saw.

The fit and finish continues to improve on Sunset’s latest offerings, and this engine is no exception. The paint is smoothly applied, lettering straight, and assembly appears tight. There is a nicely detailed backdrop present, enough sliding roof vents and opening turret covers to satisfy the lid-flippers among us, and the detail castings are up to today’s standards. Purists may quibble with the gold lettering, rather than silver or white, on the number plate. That minor detail can be easily dealt with, if it bugs you. Rather than worrying about that, there is much more here to like as the locomotive and tender lettering is crisp and (finally!) in the correct font.

Also vastly improved are the tender drawbar and electrical connections. The plate between the tender and locomotive flops down nicely between the two, right where it should be. The connections plug together easily and tuck up into the tender very unobtrusively, a great improvement over my B&M Berk, for example.

The drivers and valve gear are well executed. Even the oiler linkage is there and functional. The Lima engines in this subclass were delivered with either Boxpok or Union web-spoke drivers. On the model, the main driver is a Union, while the other three axles are Boxpok, an interesting variation. I would suggest that future offerings with mixed drivers include a replacement main, for those who would want to backdate the model into the much more common appearance of matched driver sets.

(continued on page 48)
If I have any gripes with the visual impact of this model, it’s the trailing truck. The relief is shallow, certainly not up to the detail level of the rest of the model. I would guess that this really is a manufacturability issue, however. A lost wax casting of a Delta trailer would have better relief, but a coined trailer is much easier to assemble and more robust. Although coining has its limitations, it is a good choice if “running-out-of-the-box” and affordability are your product hallmarks.

The model captures the “whippet” look of the late Mohawks, something that is very difficult to do. These were not large locomotives compared to, say, the B&M R1. I really do like the overall proportions of Sunset’s model. Appearance-wise, I believe this to be the best Mohawk out there.

Elephant ears are included, with the appropriate mounting screws. Also included is a bag of spare metric screws and other hardware, a useful stash in our non-metric world here in the States.

Meanwhile, I submitted the L3b to my rigorous and totally subjective tests. My railroad has 54” minimum radii on the main, and two percent grades. Placing the locomotive at the head of a rather heavy mail train (15 heavyweight cars), I cracked the throttle. Off she marched elegantly through my less than ideal trackwork, looking for the all the world like a locomotive I just spent a couple weeks of evenings tuning. The running characteristics of my L3b, out of the box, were flawless. How far we’ve come!

The result is a very nice model. It runs straight out of the box, has plenty of eye candy, good proportions, all for less than $1100 retail.

Notes for the Neurotic

Most of you can stop reading this review at this point, and make your choices with confidence. I’ve included a couple of notes about dates and configurations for the NYC neurotics among us, mostly because Sunset chose (laudably, too, I might add) to model this locomotive in a “in-service” configuration rather than as-built from Lima. If dates concern you, here are some notes.

After WWII, NYC made several modifications to existing late Mohawks and Hudsons. The most obvious and famous was the application of smoke deflectors on the L3 and L4s. Part of that exercise was to replace the individual air pump shields (as built) with a one-piece shield across the pilot deck. Because this L3b has that modification, the neurotic will be bound to put the removable smoke deflectors on.

Less well known was the change in feedwater piping. As built, the heated feedwater was injected into the fireman’s side of the boiler. As modified, on Hudsons as well as Mohawks, the feedwater was injected into the top of the boiler. This change also ended up in major visual surgery, because the sand-dome had to be shoved back to make room for the top mounted feedwater supply. Again, our L3b has this modification correctly modeled.

Mixed drivers on the L3b are a hallmark of the mid-50’s, late in the life of these engines. In the mid-40’s and early 50’s, mixing drivers was extremely uncommon on the Central. In the mid-50’s, however, the now-Diesel minded NYC was not about to buy new driver sets, when a serviceable axle could be snapped from another Mohawk in the dead-line.

Also in the mid-50’s, boosters were considered expendable, and were usually not maintained. Our L3b is modeled without booster piping, although the booster engine is along for the ride.

All of this leads those of us who care to the conclusion that Sunset’s L3b dates firmly in the 1954-56 transition era, comfortably co-existing with all those lightening-striped Diesels that most Central types dearly love.

WEaver has also announced seven new liveries for their Pullman-Bradley Deluxe Coaches: Grand Trunk Western, Canadian National, Kansas City Southern, New Haven (Original McGinnis), Union Pacific (gray), Chesapeake & Ohio, as well as St. Louis Southwestern. These coaches will be offered in 2-Rail and 3-Rail. A two coach set retails for $229 and a four coach set retails for $449. Again, an early summer ’04 arrival is anticipated.

NEWS: Weaver Models
PO Box 231
Northumberland, PA 17857
570-473-9434, www.weavermodels.com

Weaver has announced an AC-2 covered hopper. It will be offered in eight different paint schemes: Chesapeake & Ohio, Western Maryland, Boston & Maine, Lackawanna, Pennsylvania Railroad, Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, and Norfolk & Western, plus undecorated. The hopper will be offered in 2-Rail and 3-Rail with plastic trucks & couplers ($35.95), as well as 2-Rail and 3-Rail with die cast trucks and couplers ($45.95). By the way, this car is made in the USA. An early summer ’04 arrival is anticipated.

Weaver has also announced seven new liveries for their Pullman-Bradley Deluxe Coaches: Grand Trunk Western, Canadian National, Kansas City Southern, New Haven (Original McGinnis), Union Pacific (gray), Chesapeake & Ohio, as well as St. Louis Southwestern. These coaches will be offered in 2-Rail and 3-Rail. A two coach set retails for $229 and a four coach set retails for $449. Again, an early summer ’04 arrival is anticipated.

Additional details and pictures may be found at: [http://www.weavermodels.com/page22.html]

And last, but not least, Weaver has released its Fall 2004 catalog. You can obtain your own copy by sending US$3.00 for U.S., US$5.00 for Canada, and US$7.00 for overseas to the Weaver address above.
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Layaway Available
From there it only gets worse. The rails, bumping along on the same ties. The wheels on the other side are between ing along on the outside of the ties, while one side are off of the rail and bump- comes off of the rails. Typically the wheels when one wheel or one set of wheels are a topic for another time.

This relates to Digital Control (sort of) because derailed wheels often cause sparks that interfere with the digital signals, or can cause short circuits that trip circuit breakers or blow fuses. Nobody wants a derailment, and besides, a re-railer makes it so easy to put cars on the track, just by rolling them back and forth, that you will kick yourself for not always having them.

When I modeled in HO, I always had several re-rollers on my layout and they were easy to purchase. But I don’t see them very often on O Scale layouts and they are not readily available in O Scale. Atlas Model Railroad Co. shows several in their HO/N track catalog, and, in fact, includes one in their starter kit. But Atlas-O, which shares the same front door as the “other” Atlas, does not offer one for either O gauge or O Scale. That provoked me into building my own, since it is so simple.

Flaws in the rolling stock, such as tight or out-of-tolerance trucks, or tight or wrong-height couplers, often cause model railroad derailments. Derailments can also be caused by the trackage, such things as too-sharp turns, out-of-gauge rails, uneven roadbed, or picked turnout points. These defects need to be considered, but they are a topic for another time.

A derailment happens, or at least starts, when one wheel or one set of wheels comes off of the rails. Typically the wheels on one side are off of the rail and bump- ing along on the outside of the ties, while the wheels on the other side are between the rails, bumping along on the same ties. From there it only gets worse.

The drawing shows the top and side view of the design of the re-railer. There are two essential parts. As a car goes through the re-railer, a sloping hard surface outside the rails causes the inside wheel to rise up so that its flange is level with the top of the rail. This ramp must butt up tightly against the outside of the rail so that the wheel flange cannot slip down between them.

Simultaneously a pointed platform between the rails catches the inside wheel and moves it over, guiding it onto the railhead, while the outside wheel is sliding over its rail and dropping onto it. This inner surface must be spaced from the rails enough to allow flanges to run normally through the gaps.

Of course, the outside ramps need to be on both sides of the track since the wheels could be off on either side, and the entire re-railer needs to work in either direction since the car could be moving in either direction.

The lengths are shown in the figure and might be considered minimums. It is critical that the total inner platform length is no longer than the level part of the outer ramps (the length without the end ramps). That way, the inner platform doesn't start moving the inner wheel over until the outer wheel flange is high enough to roll over its rail. A longer outer platform also raises the car before the coupler gladhand can bump into the inner platform.

The heights are critical, but I can't tell you what they are. The outer ramps must be just as high as the rail top, whatever rail height you use. Also, you can't just fasten them to the ties without making allowances for the foot of the rail, the spikes, and possibly rail joiners that may be in the way.

The inner platform must be high enough to catch the wheel but not so high that it catches coupler gladhands or whatever else may be hanging low. I made mine about 3/8" thick. It must be narrower than the rail spacing to allow wheel flanges to pass through smoothly. I left a 1/8" gap on each side of the platform for this purpose. Strictly speaking, some material should be put into this gap to raise the wheel flange up to where the wheel tread is level with the rail, but I found this was not necessary. The pointed edge should be smooth to encourage the wheel to move over rather than climbing onto it.

I made both inner platforms and outer ramps out of basswood, but a styrene surface would make them smoother and more durable. Another option for the center is to use two short sections of rail. They just go a flange-width inside of the main rails, like guard rails, with their ends bent toward the center so they will pick up the errant wheel.

There are some obvious ways to disguise a re-railer: as a grade crossing, as a bridge, or as a station platform. A grade crossing has a surface that comes up to the top of the rail both outside the rails and between them, so the re-railer can just be extended onto a roadway. A bridge has guard rails between the main rails and often has a walkway outside the rails. A pair of bridge sides makes the re-railer look like a bridge. A re-railer, perhaps somewhat lengthened, makes a perfect station platform.

Remember Murphy's law: The derailment will happen at the most inconvenient place on the layout, so put the first re-railer there.
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I was very pleased when our first O Scale Trains Narrow Minded Digital Photo Contest attracted 26 entries from four countries and I am pleased to announce that the winners are:


Photo judging is a subjective thing but my criteria were: compliance with contest rules, composition and story, focus and depth of field, lighting & shadow, background, color and glare. Less important was modeling, detailing and weathering.

In future issues, I will feature second, third, fourth and fifth place photos in successive columns.

Many thanks to Rich Yoder, Bachmann Trains, Broadway Limited, Harold Storm and Schomberg Scale Models for their significant donations.

Next year, I hope the contest will be expanded to include standard gauge and traction along with narrow gauge.

Happy Trains to you until we meet again.

Check out the following O Scale mailing lists on the internet:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Otrains/
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Proto48/
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/On30conspiracy/
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Omule/
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/On3/

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Track: the Final Frontier

All model railroads have it, but it is often the single most neglected part of the layout. Whether Hirail or scale, railroaders often spend lots of time with planning and design. Then, they spend lots of money on locomotives and rolling stock. Their next focus is on the operational aspects and scenic details. That leaves the track for last. If a model train layout can be compared to a musical masterpiece, underdetailed track will stick out like a sour note in a symphony. If you are reading this article, chances are you have already graduated from Carpet Central (operating on the floor) and Yuletide Junction (seasonal running around the tree). This column is meant for those who operate a permanent layout with attached track.

With a little advanced planning, detailing track can add significantly to the layout's realistic appeal. At your next opportunity observe some real railroad track. Rail sides are not clean and shiny. They may start out that way, but don’t stay that way for long. The elements and natural wear and tear take their toll.

Start with the outside rails—they are the ones that are most important (Most Hirailers don’t seem to notice that middle rail anyway!). Try painting them a rusty rail brown. You will be amazed at how much more realistic the rails look. After you are satisfied with the painting, clean the top of the rails. A good track eraser works best. This ensures good electrical contact. After all, track must not only look good, it has to serve its main purpose, to carry the trains in a smooth and safe manner.

Next are the ties. I like to paint them a flat black to represent creosote. Be careful not to get this paint on the rails. Try dribbling oily black over some of the ties to give some variation. Again, try to observe some real railroad track. Some blotches of rust, brown, and grey will help. Be creative.

One of the most important parts of the process is spreading the ballast. Choose the materials carefully. Avoid ground foam and kitty litter (Cats are naturally curious about the trains. You don’t need the litter acting as a cat magnet.). Acquire some coarse sand or make your own ballast from roofing granules available from specialty hardware stores. Commercial ballast is also available from your local hobby shop and will work fine. Whatever you do, don’t skimp! The end result will be worth your expense many times over. Spread the ballast out carefully. Let the tops of the ties show. Don’t make things too uniform. Give it some variation: some places can be thicker or wider—just like on a real railroad track. Make final adjustments with a small brush.

Apply “wet” water (water with a drop of dish detergent) by dripping it on the ballast. Then dribble a 50/50 mix of white glue and water to hold everything in place. There are many ways to do this last part. I suggest the easiest, but experiment until you find something that works best for you. Remember, there is no right or wrong in model railroading. Work with a small section at a time. Step back as you work. Look at what you have done. Evaluate. Proceed.

An advanced look can be achieved by ballasting the roadbed and roadbed sides first. Then re-ballast just the tracks to give the freshly ballasted look. Prototype railroads frequently apply ballast to maintain their tracks. You can even use a slightly contrasting color, but it is best to stay away from white. It tends to draw the eye and will stick out and spoil the effect.

Once everything is applied, step back and take a good look. Does it look real? Get a second opinion. If your railroad doesn’t have a Harvey Girl handy, ask the lady of the house. Ask some friends. You have been working too close to the project. They will give an honest unbiased opinion. Listen to their suggestions.

One of the great things about track detailing is that everyone can work on ballast and track. Most layouts can use some “sprucing up” when it comes to these very noticeable parts of the overall scene. Remember to work small sections at a time. As you complete areas, you will realize what a difference it makes.

Congratulations! You have just made your HiRail layout a little more detailed. It looks great and somehow the trains seem to run better on that realistic looking track. Details do make the difference. This added detail allows you to move a little closer to scale!

Stay on track, more exciting information is just ahead.
A Weaver GP38 repainted by Pete using Champ Penn Central decals. The geep is in Northumberland, drilling the yard. The Diesel is equipped with DCC decoders with EMD sound.
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In my first column I mentioned the importance of paper items in trying to sort out what our scale's past has been, particularly the periodicals expressly aimed at it. This time I'd like to start a discussion of them, as OST itself stands in a long and interesting tradition; our publisher has written a bit about how he came to start it, and I will [mostly] leave it to him to fill any details. Unlike previous attempts to start an exclusively O Scale magazine from scratch, Joe's idea has been to use state-of-the-art technology to meet the specialized needs of a relatively small market without losing his shirt in the process. I have been on the Yahoo O Scale list long enough to have observed its gestation, from his realization that there was still an unmet need for sharing of ideas and information and his recruiting contributors largely from that list, and that by using desktop publishing, digital images and other wonders of computerization, he could provide a quality product at an affordable price.

Many of you are probably familiar with the relatively-recent phenomenon of highly-specialized publications for a limited audience. It was only a matter of time until someone recognized that true O Scalers were dissatisfied with the very limited treatment of minority scales by the general-interest hobby press and craved more, but Joe got there first.

What about OST's predecessors? Before Model Railroader (MR) appeared in the middle of the Depression, scattered model railroaders had to find inspiration and ideas from British publications or the occasional railroad construction article in general craft journals, such as Popular Mechanics. I am still trying to sort out the beginnings of the Modelmaker in 1924, a slightly more specialized magazine which covered various kinds of modeling across the board (airplanes, boats, race cars, and working steam engines, for instance, as well as trains of all scales).

The Modelmaker is often claimed as Charles Penn's basis for what has become known as Railroad Model Craftsman (RMC), but it was started by Spon and Chamberlain in New York City who apparently did the first ten volumes. It seems that Al Kalmbach acquired it around that time, after which it was published in Milwaukee until 1940 with the same editorial staff as MR. I am not clear on what happened next, although it seems likely Kalmbach then sold it to Penn.

Penn published a similar periodical named Model Craftsman (which featured different kinds of modeling) dating from March 1933. Penn also started a bimonthly magazine called Miniature Railroading with a first issue in March 1938, published in East Stroudsburg Pa., with Harold Loose and Louis Hertz as editors. Miniature Railroading had a precarious existence up to the early war years, when it was folded into Model Craftsman (probably a casualty of wartime paper shortages), which itself briefly became Model Railroad Craftsman (April-June) in 1949, and then our now familiar Railroad Model Craftsman (RMC).

The majority of the railroad articles during this time were O Scale with larger-scale live steam the next most common. One of the main reasons for collecting back issues of MR and RMC (and their antecedents), especially before 1950, is that O Scale was a much more significant part of the hobby back then. Al Kalmbach (MR) was an O Scale modeler, as was John Page, his editor for some years (and although it has been a long time, even Hal Carstens of RMC was originally in O Scale).

It is no coincidence that O Scale articles by Frank Ellison and Mel Thornburgh, to name just two titans, appeared with regularity. By 1950, however, the move to smaller houses and the costs of model railroading for many younger hobbyists with families to support had led to the dominance of HO which has continued into the present, and the press reflected this.

A notable exception was the Model Builder, a marketing brainstorm of that 1000-pound gorilla of model trains, Lionel, to encourage year-round model railroading with permanent layouts and to publicize its new products. With the first issue in January 1937, it may seem counterintuitive that Lionel would try to broaden its customer base when the economy was so tight and discretionary income didn't exist for many folk, but, just as today, dedicated hobbyists will find a bit for something that takes their minds off of their troubles in daily life. Although converting three-rail equipment to more closely resemble the prototype goes back to the dawn of model railroading, it really took off during the 1930's, partly because the true scale equipment was so expensive.

This is the same time period in which Lionel introduced its still much sought after full-scale items: the NYC Hudson, the PRR 0-6-0, and the freight cars. Until well after WWII, the line between true scale modeling and using three-rail commercial products (with varying degrees of modification) was imprecise. Unlike some later publications directed primarily toward the three-rail, toy or collector market, the Model Builder seems to have made a real effort to provide content for serious modelers as well, with Frank Ellison a frequent contributor.

Most of the factors that led to a division between scale modeling in HO and ill-proportioned O Scale toys by 1950 also spelled the end for the Model Builder, although I have not been able to determine the date of the last issue. The content was quite varied, from sectional track layouts for beginners to construction articles assuming all the scratch-building skills short of machining. In the early years, ads included not only Lionel and other O Scale suppliers but also offerings from other scales, and toys and games. The biggest difficulty in completing a file of Model Builder is that tinplate collectors are also looking for issues.

As I warned you all in my first column, I think of this as a forum, as I don't have all the answers (mostly what I hope are interesting questions), so I invite you to fill in the gaps in my knowledge, care of OST. Next column I plan on discussing a fascinating publication out of Cincinnati, The Whistle-Stop/junction/O Gauge Modeler, and the Vane and Corey Jones O Scale Railroading.
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- **$4950.00** — SP #12 Cab Forward 4-8-8-2, PSC, New, Crown Model, Samhongsa, No. 4290, Factory Paint
- **$2795.00** — UP #2 4-8-4, Key, New, Coal Version - Rare - 1 of 10, Unpainted
- **$2750.00** — UP Early Challenger 4-6-6-4, Sunset, Like New, Cockermham Drive Two Motors, Custom Paint
- **$830.00** — USRA Light 2-10-2, Sunset, Like New, Samhongsa, Unpainted

### Diesel Locomotives

- **$2495.00** — NYC #2 A-B-A, Key, New, Lightning Stripe - Samhongsa, Factory Paint
- **$3895.00** — PRR #1 A-B-A 5 Stripe, Key, New, Brunswick Green - Last Run, Factory Paint
- **$2595.00** — PRR #2 A-B 5 Stripe, Key, New, Tuscan - Samhongsa - 1st Run, Factory Paint
- **$2295.00** — UP #4 A-B, Key, New, Tuscan - Samhongsa - 1st Run, Factory Paint
- **$2395.00** — UP #5 A-B, Key, New, Samhongsa - 1st Run, Factory Paint

### Rolling Stock

- **$375.00** — MDT Composite Reefer, Pacific Limited, New, PL-250, Unpainted
- **$450.00** — SP #2 3-0-1 Wood Caboose, Pacific Limited, New, Straight Side Cupola, Rare, Unpainted

Call **— UP Streamline Passenger Cars, Wasatch, New, Nine Car Set, Unpainted**

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**Allegheny Scale Models**  
**O Scale Locomotives And Rolling Stock**  
Website: www.alleghenyscale.com • Email: oscale@alleghenyscale.com  
470 Schooley’s Mountain Road, Suite 8-117, Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840  
Voice - (908) 684-2070 • Fax - (908) 684-8911

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**Steam Locomotives** cont’d.

- **$295.00** — AT&SF #3 A-B, Key, New, Ph 2 - Warbonnet - Samhongsa, Factory Paint
- **$2695.00** — NYC ALCO PA - PB, Key, New, Lightning Stripe - Samhongsa, Factory Paint
A current list of events is now available at our website [http://www.oscalemag.com]. If you have an event you’d like listed, we have a submission form at the website (the preferred method), or you can mail the info to our office address given on page 3.

**July 2004**

4-11: Seattle, Washington
Puget Sound Express 2004 NMRA National Convention - all scales; Mt. Ranier Club $1,000; Mt. Baker Club $500; Mt. St. Helens Club $250; $125; spouse $30, youth $20. Info: Dave Kreitler, Registrar (425) 831-5131 Contact registrar@nmra2004.org

17: St. Paul, Minnesota
Twin City Model Railroad Museum Hobby Sale - 1021 Bandana Blvd. East, Ste 222 in St. Paul, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, Sale admission free, Museum $2, under 5yo free. Contact TCMRM, 651-647-9628

22-25: Washington, D.C.
2004 Scale O National Convention - at the Hyatt Regency, Crystal City, Virginia at Reagan National Airport. Convention and Dealer. Complete information including registration is available on the web at [http://www.2004onational.com/]. Registration info is available by mail from the Capital Area O Scalers, 2004 O National Convention, P.O. Box 42563, Washington D.C. 20015. Contact sonc2004@hotmail.com

**August 2004**

7: Denver, Pennsylvania
Eastern O Scalers Swap Meet – Denver Fire Hall, 4th & Locust Streets, Denver, Pa., 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Adm. $5; (spouses & children under 14 are free), $16.00 for the first table (includes one admission) and $12.00 for each additional table. Information SASE EOS, PO Box 1781, Bensalem PA 19020; (215) 639-3864, eostrains@att.net Bring an index card with your name, address etc., for a $1.00 off your admission. Contact eostrains@att.net

18-19: Dothan, Alabama
Wiregrass Annual Model RR Show & Sale Sponsored by the Wiregrass Heritage Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society at the National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds, 5622 US Hwy 231 South. Sat. 9 - 5; Sun. 10-4. Admission $4 adults, under 12-free. Contact dannywos@yahoo.com

**September 2004**

17-18: Indianapolis, Indiana
Indianapolis Midwest “O” Scale Fall Meet - Four Points by Sheraton, 701 South 42nd St (hotel phone 317/897-4000) - 2-Rail O Scale. Floor plan. On3. $6. Trolley/Traction displays are Sat. & Sun. Friday registration opens 2 to 9 pm, Saturday registration 8 am to 5 pm, layout tour 4:30 to 7 pm, layout tour Sat. & Sun., layout tour 9 am to 2 pm (9 layouts open); advanced registration starts Aug. 1st $10 for one or both days; 30’x72’ table $35 each until August 1st, or $45 after that date. Info: Jim Canter, 1203 Rotherham Ln, Beech Grove, IN 46107-3323; (317) 782-3322. Contact jcanternkp@aol.com

18-19: Dothan, Alabama
Wiregrass Annual Model RR Show & Sale Sponsored by the Wiregrass Heritage Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society at the National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds, 5622 US Hwy 231 South. Sat. 9 - 5; Sun. 10-4. Admission $4 adults, under 12-free. Contact dannywos@yahoo.com

20: North Haledon, New Jersey
First Presbyterian Church of North Haledon,201 S Quay/Brick Rd., North Haledon, New Jersey Model Engineers Railroad Club of North Jersey - Annual Swap Meet 9:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.; $4.00; Dealer Contact: Karl Gefichen 39 Rugby Rd. Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 (973)857-2825 before 10:00pm. Contact pharboed@optonline.net

9-10: Timonium, Maryland
Great Scale Model Train Show Double Show: The Great Scale Model Train Show & The All-American High-Rail & Collectors Show - Maryland State Fairgrounds - separated into sections, Scale (by gauge) and HIRail, Fri; dealer setup 5 pm to 11 pm; Sat; setup 7 am to 9 am, sales & exhibits 9 am to 4 pm; Sun; setup 8:30 am to 10 am, sales & exhibits 10 am to 4 pm; Admission: $6; kids under 12 free, family max $12; 8’ tables $55 (includes 2 worker’s passes for the first table and 1 for each add’l table). Contact Howard Zane, (410) 730-1036. Contact hzanel1@comcast.net

10: Orange, Connecticut
New Haven & Derby RR Club 12th Annual Show - High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Rd (Rte 152), 10 am - 4 pm. Donation: Adults $4, children 6-12, $1 with adult; under 6 free, family $6. Handicap accessible. Contact Don Robillard, 74 Colonial Blvd., West Haven, CT, 06516; 203-932-0185. Contact donbetnessrobi@att.net

23: Stamford, Ct.
Stamford Model RR Club Swap Meet and Open House The Stamford Model Railroad Club has scheduled Sat. Oct 23, 2004 for its O Scale Swap Meet and Open House. Show opens at 9:00am. Layout opens at 10:00am. Located at St. John’s Episcopal Church, Main and Grove Sts, Stamford, Ct. (Exit 8 CT Tpke). Dealers may contact Mike Crandall, (718) 829 1764. Email: (Jim Mardiguian) dlwh2466@hotmail.com

30: Strongsville, Ohio
Western Reserve O Scale Meet Cleveland area-Western Reserve O Scale Meet (2-Rail O Scale Only) - Holiday Inn Select Strongsville (1 exit south of turnpike at I-71 and OH Rte 82) – 9 am to 3 pm; $5; tables $20. Info: Bob Boeddener, 32165 Hickory Ln, Avon Lake, OH 44012; (440) 933-7169.

**November 2004**

6: Wind Gap, Pennsylvania
Eastern O Scalers Swap Meet – Plaintiff Fire Hall, 6480 Sullivan Trail – 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Adm. $5; (spouses & children under 14 are free), $16.00 for the first table (includes one admission) and $12.00 for each additional table. Information SASE EOS, PO Box 1781, Bensalem PA 19020; (215) 639-3864. Bring an index card with your name, address etc., for a $1.00 off your admission. Contact eostrains@att.net

6-7: Syracuse, New York
CNY-NRHS 30th Annual Train Fair Planning is already underway. We already have requests for applications from some new vendors and manufacturers including K-Line, Charles Ro and several others. Applications for next years show should be available in the spring of 2004.Write to P. O. Box 229, Marcellus, NY 13108-0229. Contact CNY-NRHS@aol.com

26-Dec 12: North Haledon, New Jersey
569 High Mountain Road. North Haleden, New Jersey 07508 Model Engineers Railroad Club of North Jersey - Annual Open House November 26 - 28, December 3 - 5 & 10 - 12; Fridays 7:00 - 10:00 P.M., Saturdays & Sundays 2:00 - 5:00 P.M; $4.00, children free with adult Contact pharboed@optonline.net

Modelers’ Shelf

Here’s a Weaver brass PRR K4 that Harry Hieke of Eagle’s Nest Miniatures redetailed for Herm Botzow. It has a new lead and trailing trucks and a new pilot as well as a mass of extra detailing on the boiler. Harry also built the bridge the K4 is sitting on from styrene.
Last issue (OST#14) we mentioned Robin Arkinstall’s 2 Doors Down model kits. Here is a photo of his white metal and brass GE 70 tonner. The road is a fictitious North Carolina shortline. The engineer reads O Scale Trains magazine. Robin scanned a front cover, scaled it down, and stuck it on his control panel in the cab.

Pete Trunk’s Philadelphia & Erie
An Atlas SW8 repainted by Andrew Brusgard, Jr.
Pete also added a spark arrestor to the exhaust stack. The loco sits at Shamokin on the Philadelphia & Erie, awaiting its next assignment.
Mmphff... (hang on a sec). Pahtooey! (damn feathers). Well, I didn’t know crow could taste so good. No sooner had the ink dried on the page of my editorial last issue (OST#14) than Mike’s Train House announced at the York TCA meet that they were getting back into O Scale 2-Rail. Check out their ad on the inside front cover of this issue. Also, take the time to read Jeb Kriigel’s conversation with M.T.H’s Andy Edelman on page 31. The inclusion of a switch that allows a locomotive to be run on either 2 or 3-Rail track is quite innovative. Here’s our recommendation for the HiRailers among you vacillating about going 2-Rail: buy the 2-Rail scale version of the M.T.H. locomotives you want with scale flanges. Set them up to run on your 3-Rail T-section track (add rollers and throw the switch to 3-Rail pickup). When you’re ready to make that final leap, dump the rollers and throw the switch over to 2-Rail pickup. It couldn’t be easier.

One thing we’ve been saying for some time is that 2-Rail needs starter sets. We believe if people had a choice in hobby shops between 2-Rail starter sets and 3-Rail sets, a lot would go 2-Rail. Maybe M.T.H. will offer 2-Rail starter sets.

M.T.H. brings another innovation to the 2-Rail party, Proto-Sound® 2.0 and DCS. The M.T.H. 2-Rail offerings will have all the bells and whistles, literally, that the 3-Rail gang enjoy. If you don’t have a DCS control system, there will be a separate control box to activate most, but not all, the features. The DCS system will operate on AC or DC, so no problem there, and I’ve been told by a reliable source that DCS boards will be available to convert non-M.T.H. locomotives over to DCS. Yes, this adds yet another choice of control system to the mix but who can complain about too many choices? Not me.

It remains to be seen how the other O Scale manufacturers respond to M.T.H. re-entering the 2-Rail market. We know they’re planning something but they’re being very tight-lipped about it and won’t comment officially.

The Internet & Computers

I’m calling a moratorium to the braying about the Internet and how the widespread use of computers is a sign of the Fall of Western Civilization. The fact is you would not be holding this magazine in your hands were it not for fast, efficient and relatively cheap personal computers, and the Internet.

(Lemme hitch up my suspenders here.) Back in the early 80’s when I started working on magazines, I used pasteboards and waxed down copy. (I still have a waxer here somewhere.) Photos were screened and we used lots and lots of blue pens-cils. Apple Computer and Adobe changed all that in 1984 with the Macintosh and Postscript.

In the early 90’s, I worked on a bimonthly publication that featured regular columns from England, France, South Africa, Australia, Canada and the U.S., all sent by postal mail. What a pain in the neck coordinating that was!

Email and the Internet have been around a long time, going way back to ARPANET, but it wasn’t until the mid-90’s that the Internet and email came to be as ubiquitous as the telephone. A lot of what you read in OST comes over the Internet. You would not be seeing Neville Rossiter’s great work, nor that of Roland Marx or Paul Templar without computers and the Internet. Our regular columnists send their work by email.

Both computers and the Internet are tools. Sure, I could still wax down copy and paste up screened photos but the cost of producing a magazine that way would be much too expensive. You wouldn’t pay for it. Look, Mel Thornburgh built gorgeous O Scale locos in the 30’s, 40’s, and 50’s using a handbrace and a file. You could do the same today but wouldn’t you rather have an Emco or Sherline lathe to work with?

Here’s an example of the Internet as a learning tool. When I was reading Hobo D. HiRailer’s column for this issue I saw the reference to the Harvey Girls. I consider myself well-read about prototype railroads and, yet, I had no idea who or what a Harvey Girl was. Since I was on the computer, I fired up my Internet browser and went to Google® where I typed in “Harvey Girl”. The first link led me to the Harvey Girls Historical Society at the Orange Empire Railway Museums. (I’ll let you find the link yourself. It’s good exercise.)

Anyway, a man named Fred Harvey decided to offer food service along the route of the AT&SF. He recruited young women to serve the food. According to the Internet, the Harvey Girls would agree to a six month contract, agree not to marry and abide by all company rules during the term of employment. If hired, they were given a rail pass to get to their company chosen destination.”

There’s more, but my point is I learned something new using the Internet and my computer, and I thanked Hobo for it.

What have you learned new lately?

Keep high ballin’!
Hey O Scalers! Bulk up your fleet with the New Atlas O 70 Covered Hoppers. These handsomely crafted cars feature great details such as open triangular or closed side panels as appropriate per road name, a die-cast chassis, operating hatch locking mechanism, all metal grab irons and stirrups, and more! Head down to your local hobby store and pick up yours today.

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Four road numbers are available per road name except for Boraxo, which has two.

For the NEW Spring/Summer 2004 Locomotive & Freight Car Catalog, please send $3 ($1 shipping) to the address shown below.
Built by LIMA and Baldwin, over 120 “Big Sixes” hauled coal and freight for the B&O. They were so successful they kept articulateds off the Pittsburgh Division. Often seen double headed with the EM-1 elsewhere on the B&O, the Big Six is a must for any collector or operator.

Sunset is bringing the Big Six to you in stunning Brass detail and in very limited quantities (only 75 in 2 rail). The B&O S-1a comes with all of the features that have made Sunset’s models so desirable!

Sprung Drivers, trailing truck and tender wheels. Complete valve gear with working oiler linkage. Crew figures installed, Pittman Powered with Lighted Class, Marker, Cab Interior, Head and Backup Lights. 2R Models have Kadee scale couplers installed. 56” 2 Rail Track Ready to Run.