Modeling for the O Scale Craftsman

Sept/Oct 2004 • Issue #16 • $5.95

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Rising passenger volume for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe’s 922 miles of main line service between La Junta, Colorado and Chicago created the demand for a new class of 4-6-4 Hudson locomotive from the Baldwin Locomotive Works. Six of these Class 3460 oil burning locomotives were delivered in 1938. The 3460 class were the largest 4-6-4 types yet produced and utilized a fuel oil tank built into the water tank inside the tender for easy conversion of the locomotive to a coal-burning version.

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Cover: Ted’s Signs is just one of many scratchbuilt structures on Gary Patterson’s 3-Rail Cherel Valley RR.

Centerspread: New Englanders will long remember the winter of 1948-49. Here, a Boston and Maine R1d Mountain makes a stop to load mail and milk on the Fitchburg Line. The snow won’t ease off for long! The locomotive was built by Tom Harley, using a Westside RF&P Governor and a KTM UP tender as starting points. Photo by K. Jeb Kriigel, Get Real Productions.

OST is a proud Member of the Model Railroad Industry Association
These yard structures are built from Thomas Yorke kits. Notice the standard railroad paint scheme on all five buildings, giving a common appearance to Cherel Valley's structures.

In 1991, Gary Patterson’s Cherel Valley got its start in a rather normal fashion, as a 4x8 loop-type railroad. As a result of his wife’s urging, Gary dug out a Lionel train set, packed away after they married in 1962, and soon trains were running on that circle of track. So far, it sounds like a pretty standard story. What developed is anything but standard, normal or run-of-the-mill!

Gary tells us, “Why did I choose to use 3 Rail? Well, I had used Gar-graves trackage on my first layout. I was familiar with the ease of AC wiring and trackwork ‘in its simplest form’ and not living too far (50 miles) from the Gargraves factory were deciding factors. Another major factor in going with the scale (Hi-rail) scenario was that a good friend of mine, Westbrook Evans, had a large O Scale layout with many well done ‘kit’ buildings. He encouraged me to try a kit. I did, I was able to build it, and I was hooked.”

Now there are, at last count, 71 kits or scratchbuilt structures on the layout. No two kits are alike, and many of them bear almost no resemblance to what the original manufacturer intended. Structures and their usage range from those that “just happened’ to discrete scenes such as Main Street in Cherel Valley, built from drawings in Harry Brunk’s book, Up Clear Creek on the Narrow Gauge. The overall flavor ranges from rural to the concrete jungles of Central City.

The scenery on the Cherel Valley is mostly built using the...
Cherel Valley Railroad

3: The Root Beer Factory is scratchbuilt using a drawing by Gary’s web designer and fellow modeler, Ted Williams.

CVRR Details
- **Track:** Gargraves, 3-Rail
- **Switches:** Gargraves, Ross & Curtiss with Del Aire pneumatic switch machines
- **Max Grade:** 4 percent
- **Control System:** Lionel TMCC® with block control signaling
- **Scenery:** Screen & plaster with ground foam
- **Structures:** 71 total, either kit or scratchbuilt
time honored screen wire and plaster method. After the basic forms are created, paper towels are dipped in plaster and stretched over the screening to create the terrain. Ground foam and other texturing bring it to life, followed by lots of trees, bushes, figures, vehicles, and hundreds of detail castings. As you can see from the photographs, the scenery has a decidedly Western flavor, although Gary likes to run some Eastern prototype locomotives along with his UP, ATSF, and SP power.

This is not just a display or diorama, the railroad runs as good as it looks. There are industries to switch, loads-in/loads-out scenarios (such as a mine-to-tidewater coal operation), and lots of operating potential here. Gary describes the track plan, saying it “just seemed to materialize as I built the layout, a 4x8 section to a time. I had to change track once in a while but overall it is a very useable layout. There are several places to turn an entire train around, lots of sidings, 1 large yard, 1 interchange yard, 2 mind-bender switching areas. There never was an overall track plan during construction.”

Continuous running is also an option on the Cherel Valley. There are two main lines, each has a passing siding. The tracks can be configured to allow continuous runs for three trains. The ruling grades on the mainlines are 3 to 4%. “This sure shows off Lionel’s Odyssey System (cruise control), set speed and forget it. When running three trains at scale speeds (all engines with Odyssey) it makes for some very interesting video shots or just sittin’ and watchin’.”

Gary uses Gargraves, Ross and Curtiss switches. He started out using NJI electric switch machines but changed to pneumatic equipment after seeing Del-Aire’s product line at a York T.C.A.
remote couplers has now given 2-Rail all that 3-Rail had or has. But, with the changes in this industry occurring so rapidly, who knows what the next few years will bring. This hobby is what you make of it. I certainly have met many great people and many new friends through this hobby."

Here at OST, we think his current railroad is a beautiful example of what is possible in Hi-rail. Not only that, his structures and scenery would more than do justice to any scale. Trains roll through the scenes, moving about their work with a clear purpose. That is, after all, what model railroading is all about.

For questions, comments, or complaints Gary can be reached through his website:- www.cherelvalleyrailroad.com.

A Lionel TMCC control system is used, although the entire layout is blocked between switches. Double-pole switches are used for block control and power distribution, allowing operators to use either side of Gary’s ZW power supplies in each block. Insulated rail sections with relays are used for signaling.

Steam power shares the rails with Diesels on the Cherel Valley. Currently, the steamers have such pedigrees as Lionel, Weaver, Williams, Kline, and MTH. Diesels represent the efforts of Weaver, AtlasO, Lionel, MTH, and Red Caboose. Rolling stock comes from Weaver, MTH, Atlas, and AHM. There are lots of kit-built freight cars, too, ranging from Quality Craft “stick kits” to the latest from Intermountain. Gary has especially enjoyed building and collecting Quality Craft N&W hoppers, though now he has a 23-car train to decal.

When asked what he’d do if he was to start a new railroad, Gary says, “I probably would go to a 2-Rail layout because I know a lot more about DC than I did. The advent of DCC, onboard sound and remote couplers has now given 2-Rail all that 3-Rail had or has. But, with the changes in this industry occurring so rapidly, who knows what the next few years will bring. This hobby is what you make of it. I certainly have met many great people and many new friends through this(318,689),(416,996)

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PRR Q1 4-6-4-4
Pennsylvania Railroad produced the opposed cylinder duplex Q1 in 1942. With 300 PSI and over 93,000 lbs. tractive effort, it was one of the most powerful non-articulated locomotives ever built. Only a few of the as-built (skirted) version remain. Call Today!

CB&Q O-5 4-8-4
The highest level of detail... Opening cab doors, operating vestibule, convertible tender (oil to coal). Operating MARS light. Fully detailed cab interior with figures. The list goes on. Only a few 2R models remain. Call Today!

NYC L-3b Mohawk
A one-of-a-kind production of the L-3b with elesco feedwater heater. Every rivet has been scrutinized by the members of the NYC Historical Society. It is an accurate and highly detailed scale model. What are you waiting for? Call Today.

B&O S1a “Big Six”
B&O had over 120 of these freight monsters. Choose from either the Baldwin or Lima versions. Accurate down to the builder’s plates. Others have treated themselves to this excellent model, why haven’t you? Call Today.
Many two rail scale Engines - U.S. Hobbies 3rd Rail, Williams, Weaver, Gem Models, Max Gray, Lobaugh, All Nations, MTH, Atlas (some in OB) Rolling Stock - Atlas, Kris, Pola, CMP, Kusan, KMT, All Nation, U.S. Hobbies, Westbrook, Lionel, Weaver, Rivarossi, K-Line, Thomas, Mainline, Walthers, BC, LaBelle, Others! Many Kit-Bash/ Scratchbuilt buildings and trains, lay-out toys, accessories and more! Auction planned for the general Cleveland, Ohio area on Saturday, November 27th, 2004. (Thanksgiving weekend)

Auction ad with exact specifics to appear in next issue of "O Scale Trains" or send S.A.S.E. for earlier info to:

Jim Eastwood Train/Toy Auctions
P.O.Box 27
Sunbury, OH 43074
Working in a train store, I have had the chance to talk to customers about building O Scale layouts. The most common complaint I hear is that many people don’t have the space to build a layout; they only have part of the basement or no basement space at all. I thought about this and took a look at the problem as if I was in their shoes, trying to plan a layout with only a limited space in which to do it.

First, I had a look at the basement in my two-bedroom late-40s period bungalow. I mentally divided it into 3 equal sized areas, a family room, an area for laundry/utility room, and a train room. This gave me an area of 11 feet by 19 feet across the end of the basement in which to build my layout.

I remembered that some of my store customers have no basement space at all. What if I lived in a part of the country that did not have houses with basements in which to build a layout? I pondered on this and came up with the option of building it in, say, a single car garage that measures 11 feet by 19 feet (the same area as in the basement). As a second option, I could build a shed of the same size in my yard to house my layout.

With this amount of area in mind, I started working on a plan for my layout, keeping in mind that I like industrial switching and small engines. A while back, I had read an article on the Modesto and Empire Railroad in California. I liked the idea of a five-mile long industrial railroad, using GE 70-ton engines. It was a perfect candidate for a concept for my layout. Although I would not model the MET, per se, a plan started to take shape.

What would I want in a Smaller Layout?
I thought about what I would like to see on a layout of this size and made the following list.
- A balance between track, buildings and scenery.
- Good aisle space for operators.
- Minimum radius curves of 48 inch
  #5 or #6 turnouts
- DCC with sound
- An interchange yard with a Class 1 railroad plus a classification yard.
- Two areas for operations so that two crews could work the layout.
- Lots of industries to switch.
- Point-to-point operation
- It had to be O Scale

The Basement Version
With this list of requirements, I started to work on the drawing for Plan A (the layout in the basement). The entrance to the train room is via the family room area, so a lounge for the crews is not necessary. They can sit in the family room.

As soon as you come into the layout room the interchange yard is on your left with the classification yard in front of you. You then enter the main layout area and find the engine shops and several industries on your left. The line then curves around the end of the room and into another switching area. The run-around tracks are long enough for four cars only, which adds a little more interest and challenge when switching. A two-man crew can work the side of the layout with the yard while another two-man crew can deal with the other side.

If you would like to have a continuous-run loop, a curved lift-out section could be built between the interchange yard and the end of the main line. The layout is designed to be built forty inches off the floor and have a reaching depth of no more than two feet. With the layout this far off the floor, there is room for storage cupboards underneath.

Track
Track can be either hand laid or you could use the new line of Atlas turnouts and flex track. I myself would hand lay the track using Right-O-Way turnout components, as I like the look.

Engines and Rolling Stock
As previously mentioned, the layout is loosely based on the MET in California, so GE 70-ton engines rule. The models made by Rich Yoder Models fit the bill nicely.

Three of these engines would be enough to handle the operations on this layout. Now, if you wanted to use GM diesels, the SW switchers would work as well, and Atlas makes a nice selection of these.

For freight cars, you’ll need a selection from boxcars to gondolas. Manufacturers such as Atlas, Lionel and Weaver produce a wide variety of scale cars these days, which can fill out the roster nicely. Fifty-foot cars should be the longest cars used on a layout of this size.

Structures
Kits, pre-built buildings, modular wall sections, and scratch-built structures all have a place on this layout. There are many manufacturers to choose from, such as Walthers, DPM, Pecos River Brass and MTH, or you can scratchbuild some with Evergreen Styrene. You certainly should have no problem acquiring materials or buildings.

The Garage Version
This plan is designed for the same area, but built in either a single car garage or garden shed. You will notice that Plan B is identical to Plan A as far as the layout and track design, except for the changes in the entrance area. In this version, the combination of the interchange with the classification yard allows for the addition of a lounge area for the crew. A TV and VCR could be built into the wall across from the couch and bookshelves would fit under the yard area.

Conclusion
These plans can address your need for a good operating layout that fits in a small area. The resulting layout can be run by one person or a crew of four, give you space to store things, and keep the rest of the family happily in their own space. Sounds like a perfect win-win situation all round. In addition, it would probably cost less to build this layout than the price of two large O Scale brass locos, and would be a lot more fun.

Well, it’s off to the Home Depot to get some lumber and soon this layout will start to become a reality.

Mike Culham
MIN. RAD. 48 INCHES
RAIL-CODE 125 NS
#6 TURNOUTS
40 INCHES ABOVE FLOOR

1 FOOT GRID

MARSHALLING YARD
SCALE HOUSE
ENGINE HOUSE
KILKENNY WIDGET CO.
TERMITE LUMBER CO.

INTERCHANGE YARD
ACME STEEL
BO-WEAVEL BAKERY

SCALE HOUSE
ENGINE HOUSE
KILKENNY WIDGET CO.
TERMITE LUMBER CO.

INTERCHANGE YARD
ACME STEEL
BO-WEAVEL BAKERY

PULP AND PAPER MILL
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FAMILY ROOM
LAUNDRY / UTILITY ROOM

PULP AND PAPER MILL
DELMONTE CANNING CO.
TC FOOD PRODUCTS

Plan A - Built in a 11 ft. By 19 ft. basement room

Plan B - Built in a 11 ft. By 19 ft. single car garage

Layout Information
MIN. RAD. 48 INCHES
RAIL-CODE 125 NS
#6 TURNOUTS
40 INCHES ABOVE FLOOR
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.

Get your copy today from your local O Scale hobby shop or direct from O Scale Trains, just $14.95 plus $3 s&h. VISA & Mastercard Accepted.

O Scale Trains
PO Box 238
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610-363-7117

Here’s a peek at the Table of Contents:
1. Welcome, and a little History
2. Concept of Operation
3. Locomotives
4. Rolling Stock and Couplers
5. Space Prep and Benchwork
6. Track and Track Plans
7. Structures and Scenery
8. Wiring and Control Systems
9. Narrow Gauge
10. Consider Traction
11. Proto 48
12. Tools
13. Useful Tables, Tips, and Short Notes
14. Sources, Conventions, and Meets
15. Glossary of Terms
This “Russian Decapod” was scratchbuilt by Gil Stovicek - see Model Railroader, Jan ’63, p. 35. I purchased the engine a year ago at an O Scale meet. I repainted and lettered the cab and tender side but made no other changes.

Joe Ranker, Cooperstown, NY
This is the last of three articles describing the design and functions of relatively modest yards for O Gauge layouts. Both the linear yard and the loop yard, discussed previously, served specific terminal functions. In this article, we examine a multifunctional division point yard on the Buckeye Railroad. Included are four ladder tracks for classifying freight cars, a freight main that bypasses the yard, and tail tracks at each end of the freight yard so two switchers may work the yard simultaneously. Also, this yard features four tracks for through operations at an adjoining passenger terminal, interchange connections with three railroads (the B&O, Erie and Pennsylvania), a steam locomotive facility, and a Diesel repair shop.

Located near the east end of the Buckeye Railroad, the yard at Sue City marks the division between mainline operations westward to the Ashtabula yard and urban operations eastward to Pittsburgh. The yard stretches 57 feet from the B&O and Pennsy interchanges at Jey Junction at the west end to the switch where the main line and east tail track merge at the east end. As shown in the drawing, it accomplishes this in a relatively small space by placing the main portion of the yard on a very gentle curve in the corner of the train room.

Two B&O interchange tracks join the BRR single track mainline at Jey Junction's JJ Tower. The BRR
mainline then merges immediately with the two-track PRR mainline at a double crossover at J Tower. The Buckeye then shares trackage with the Pennsy to the east end of the yard. Here, at SC tower, Pennsy’s Sue City branch line ends and there is a short interchange connection to the Erie Railroad. The Pennsy operates the steam engine facility and caboose track at the west end of the yard, and the Buckeye operates the Diesel shop at the east end. The elevated Buckeye passenger station handles Buckeye, B&O and New York Central passenger trains. In its inimitable fashion, the Pennsy operates a separate passenger station for its trains on the valley floor just west of their roundhouse. The yard will handle some 36 trains during a typical operating session.

Scenically, Sue City sits on a narrow flood plain in the fictitious Buckeye River Valley. Pine covered bluffs rise above the yard and a tunnel connects the elevated Buckeye passenger station and adjoining buildings with the imaginary downtown on the other side of the bluff. The tracks cross the Sue River at the east end of the yard where it joins the Buckeye River. At the west end, the tracks cross a small drainage ditch. These watercourses and the resulting bridges add scenic interest to a layout that is literally covered with yard tracks. The passenger tracks are placed at the back of the benchwork because most of the switching operations at the yard involve freight cars. The passenger tracks are slightly elevated to further break up the visual impact of all those tracks. Various ballast colors, tie spacing, and rail sizes are used to identify the four railroads and to distinguish mainline and yard tracks.

Sue City is a way station for the stream-
4: Beginning at the left of the photo, the passenger yard throat is visible as the passenger main divides into four tracks. To the right of that is the double slip switch that marks the west entrance to the 4-track freight classification yard (track exiting the double slip switch to lower left). The freight main enters the switch at the top left, the west freight lead from the top right. The freight main exits the double slip on the lower right and runs around the freight classification yard. The switch at the bottom leads to the locomotive ready track and steam engine facility. Note the connection between the freight and passenger tracks behind the signal at the left of the photo. Also note the coaling tower and sand house. A passenger train is arriving in the background while Buckeye, B&O and Pennsy cabooses occupy the cabooses track.

5: At the right of this photo is the double slip switch at Lodi at the east end of Sue City yard. The right hand track is the mainline, the left track is the east tail track. To the left, under a viaduct, is the Buckeye Railroad’s Olsen Diesel Shop where an F-7 is being serviced and a GE 44-tonner awaits its next job. A New York Central tug is tied up at the adjoining wharf.

4: A Buckeye switcher is coupling onto a local freight on Track 1 in the freight yard while another cut of cars sits on Track 2. Track 3 holds a train of loaded Pennsy hoppers. In the background, the B&O’s “Baltimore Oriole” has just arrived on Track 1 at the passenger terminal. Visible behind it on Track 3 is a string of loaded New York Central hoppers.
liners on the Buckeye operating between Cleveland and Ashtabula to the west and Pittsburgh to the east. The Pennsy operates a hotshot passenger train between Jey Junction and Pittsburgh as well. A midday local and an all-mail train originate at Sue City for Ashtabula. Also, a crew shuttle operates between the town immediately west of Jey Junction and Lodi with stops at Jey Junction and both passenger stations. Express perishable, merchandise and piggyback trains also run through the passenger terminal. A crossover at K Tower, adjacent to the roundhouse, connects the passenger and freight yards. This facilitates simultaneous two-way movements through Sue City and gives steam-powered passenger locomotives access to the roundhouse.

During an operating session, freight yard activity begins with arriving freight cars for Buckeye destinations being pulled from the B&O, Erie and Pennsy interchange tracks. These cars are classified into four trains, two through freights to Ashtabula and Pittsburgh and two local freights or turns that serve the towns and villages between Sue City and Ashtabula. Westbound through cars are sent to Collinwood Yard west of Ashtabula. At the end of the day, the outbound cars on the returning trains are classified and shoved onto the interchange tracks.

At the start of an operating session, the yard area also is filled with three loaded coal trains from the south that have been delivered during the night by the B&O, New York Central, and Pennsy for forwarding to the coal port at Ashtabula Harbor. The yardmaster usually scatters these throughout the yard, with one tucked on the west tail track, one parked under the passenger terminal, and one occupying one of the freight yard tracks. During the day, Buckeye crews will move these cars to Ashtabula for unloading and will return the empties to Sue City for forwarding to the south. Also, a Buckeye crew will make a caboose hop from the Sue City Yard west to the Buckeye's own mines to pick up loaded hoppers, move them to Ashtabula Harbor, and return the empties to the mine spurs. The many freight movements are greatly facilitated by the double slip switches at each end of the freight yard. Perhaps a similar yard could introduce a wider variety of operations to your layout as well.

~ O Scale Train Show ~

Presented by
Southern New England O Scale
Model Railroad Club
O Scale only (No Tinplate, please)

Featuring
Dealers, Displays and the Southern New England "O" Scale Layout
20' x70', Fully Scenic'd - Operating with Digital Command Control
Ample Free Parking - Food and Beverages Available

Saturday, October 9, 2004   9:30am - 4:00pm
United Methodist Church
161 Chestnut St., Gardner Mass

Admission $5, Family Maximum $8

Dealer Tables Available
Prior to Labor day 6ft tables $15.00 8ft tables $20.00
After Labor day 6ft tables $20.00 8ft tables $25.00

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Dealer and General Information: Bob Jones, Show Chairman
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DOMINION MODELS
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by Western . . . $129.00
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1951 Ford SFPD
by Brooklin . . . $85.00

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phone/fax: 540-375-3750 e-mail: dominionmodels@aol.com
The pictures above show the four versions of the SP-5000 that are now available and being shipped. Look closely at the different details for each version of engine with the tenders being identical except for engine number. Each model is all brass sheet and castings with tapered stainless steel axles, stainless steel wheels, full working spring equalizers with individual leaf springs, all ball bearings throughout, opening journal box lids, hatches, doors, windows & covers-moving booster piping, opening smokebox door with smokebox interior detail, punched rivets, scale rods and driver counterweights, full engine and tender brake and underframe detail with castings for the pedestal binders, silky smooth, powerful and durable mechanism with excellent speed control and no noise, full cab interior, double drawbar with inconspicuous electrical hookup, working 3rd cylinder detail, swinging tender bolsters and other details and features too numerous to list here. The models come factory painted only with all lights lit with reflectors in the headlights and number boards. All glazing is installed and dials in the gauges. Quality and detail throughout from LIK ENTERPRISES INC. new to the American prototype scene but steeped in the European market. The price for each model is $3800.00 with shipping and handling extra. N.J. residents must add 6% sales tax.

For more info contact:
Merchants Despatch Transportation (MDT) traces its roots back prior to the Civil War. In 1871, control of MDT was acquired by the Vanderbilt group, and MDT began leasing freight cars. At its peak, the MDT fleet numbered about 18,000 cars, mostly wood reefers with steel underframes. Roger Hinman has written an excellent reference covering the history of the MDT reefer fleet, complete with photos and diagrams, that was published in the NYCS Historical Society’s “Headlight”, Second Quarter, 1998.

The Red Caboose reefer kit is an excellent starting point for modeling several variants of the classic MDT reefer. In fact, Red Caboose sells a kit already lettered for MDT, which is a very close model of a 1930-1940 MDT car, straight out of the box. In this article, I’ll show how to backdate this kit to model MDT cars of the 20's (the more common version), and WW I. The latter version is suitable not only for MDT, but for the Rutland Railroad as well. The Rutland, which was controlled by the NYC at the time, purchased MDT-built reefers just prior to WW I.

Photo 1 shows a stock Red Caboose MDT reefer built exactly to the kit instructions. Note it has AB brakes, an Ajax brake wheel, red ends, and the lettering has no NYC oval herald. This is a model of a 17000-series MDT reefer built in the early twenties, and rebuilt in the thirties, with a new AB brake system and a new paint job. The only changes to this model are that the end ladders have been shortened top and bottom as per the prototype, and cut levers have been added to the ends.

To backdate the kit to model a 1920's car, we need to change to K brakes with a vertical brake staff, add some corner bracing, and make some changes to the painting and lettering. Build the roof and sides as instructed. I used TENAX-7R plastic cement to assemble this kit. The 1920's cars had white ends with black hardware, much like the sides. Before adding any detail to the ends, they must be painted white. If you are starting with a kit pre-lettered for MDT, this is much easier to do before you glue the ends to the car. You’ll want to plug the leftmost hole at the top of the car where the original Ajax brake wheel gearbox attached. I added the grab-irons before I painted the ends, and later painted them black. Use any good plastic-compatible white paint, then attach the painted ends to the car.

Next, add the corner braces, one per corner. I used Evergreen Styrene 1x6 (HO) strips, each a total of ¾ inches long. Bend them in the middle, and cement them midway between the top and bottom of the car side. When dry, paint them black. Now you’re ready to add the end details.

The kit’s end ladders are longer than those on the prototype, so shorten them.
top and bottom using either prototype photos or copy mine. Pre-paint the shortened end ladders black, and add them to the ends. Also add the brake platform and the roof walk supports, and paint them black. For the vertical brake staff and its hardware, I used plastic parts from Precision Scale (PSH 4002-1). There are three parts: a stirrup-shaped bottom support for the brake staff, a flat attachment plate for the upper brake staff, and a sleeve that holds the upper brake staff. I used K&S 1/32" diameter wire for the brake staff, and a brake wheel from my “junque” box. Carefully drill out the bottom support and the sleeve with a #67 drill. Attach the bottom support, inserting its locating pin into the hole originally meant for the Ajax assembly. Similarly, attach the upper support plate to the top of the side using the rightmost locating hole originally meant for the Ajax assembly. Mount the plate in a vertical orientation. Drill through the hole in the plate into the car end with a #70 drill. Cement the locating pin on the back of the sleeve into this hole. Now add the wire brake staff. At the bottom of the staff, ACC a short length of fine black chain once around the staff, thread it through the bottom support and ACC the other end to the bolster where the brake rod attaches. Add a brake wheel to the staff. Next, take the Ajax assembly supplied with the kit, cut off the retainer pipe/valve, and cement it to the end. Lastly, add the cut levers. Paint the end sills and all hardware black. Photo 2 shows the B-end details for this car.

Adding the K brakes to the underside is easy. Install the floor, but do not install the AB brake components, or the half rib that supports the AB air reservoir. Using small wire cutters, nip off the support posts for the AB brake air reservoir and triple valve. File smooth. I used a white metal K-brake casting. Drill the valve end to accept an air line (a #67 drill for 1/32 K&S wire). Attach the K-brake cylinder to the original AB brake cylinder mounting post. I used a scrap piece of brass rod. Drill the cylinder casting to accept the rod and glue it into the cylinder, leaving about 1/8" protruding from the cylinder. Drill a hole in the support post to accommodate the resulting peg, and ACC the brake assembly into the support post. The piston end of the casting should just touch the brake crank. Next, ACC a short length of 1/16" wire from the valve end of the cylinder over to the train line. Add the kit brake rods. (See Photo 3.) Paint all brake hardware black. Add couplers and trucks.

Changing the lettering for this car is easy. The 17000 series was built in 1923-24. You may want want to remove the “ER 1936” reweigh data and either add a “NEW 1923” or “NEW 1924” date or a reweigh date appropriate for the time period that you model. (If you model the late thirties leave it alone, it’s correct.) I found that the printed lettering can easily be removed by using a regular pencil eraser. Be careful not to erase the paint. On the right side of the car, add an NYC Lines oval herald, centered on the car side. Also add a “Built” date (again 1923 or 1924) in the lower right side. Champ’s R-110 MDT Reefer set contains the herald. The ends will require black lettering. I used Greg Komar’s dry transfer set #MDT-O-61A. Pick the M, D, & T from the “Merchants Despatch” line. Get the numbers from the capacity data. You’ll also need to continue the red stripe around the end of the car. The Komar set contains one. I added additional data from a Walthers freight data set. I wanted to model the 20000 series reefer, pictured in Hinman’s article. The Champ R-110 set is for that car. I had to remove the car number and all the data first. I used the eraser method, but repainting is certainly an option! Photo 4 shows the completed car. Since I model the mid-forties, I’ll need to heavily weather this car. After all, it wasn’t modernized or painted due to the Depression and WWII!

WW I Era Reefer and Milk Car

The cars built just before WW I were most notable for having five-foot wide doors with four hinges per door. They also had K-brakes, and additional corner bracing. The MDT cars had white ends and were painted and lettered like the 1920’s reefers. I kit-bashed two cars, a reefer, and a reefer that has been converted into a milk car. They closely approximate Rutland prototypes. You can letter the reefer model for MDT, Michigan Central, or Rutland. It’s your choice. I started with kits lettered for MDT, but any lettering (or an undecorated car) is fine if you’re making the Rutland cars, because you’ll repaint them anyway.

Changing the door detail requires some aggressive handling of the car, so you might want to do this before adding any details to the roof, ends, or under-
body. First, remove the hinges. I sanded them off. Be careful not to remove any of the latch detail. Next, you’ll have to scribe the areas where the hinges were (See Photo 5). I used Precision Scale (PSH 40729) reefer door hinges. Remember, they come 12 to a pack and you’ll need 16 hinges per car. The WW I cars had five foot doors, so the hinges are mounted $\frac{3}{8}$" outward from the original locations. Space the four hinges per door as shown in Photo 6. Add the latch and grab-irons. I also extended the drip strip out to five feet wide. Cement a scale five-foot strip of Evergreen 1x6 (HO) to the top of the existing drip strip. Now, here’s the hard part. Cement $\frac{1}{8}$" strips under the new strip at the ends to “extend” the old strip. File smooth. (If you’re a masochist, remove the old drip strip very carefully and add a new one.)

The K-brakes are modeled in exactly the same way as for the 1920’s car. Both the end and underbody details are the same. Note however, that there are two braces per corner for the WW I car. Evenly space them between the top and bottom of the sides.

For the reefer, I built the roof with bare hatches, no planking around them. You’ll need a frame for the hatch to sit in on the roof of the car. I removed the planking from the part supplied with the kit. The resulting frame was too high. I cut this frame down with a razor saw, then glued it to the hatch opening. Alternatively, you could build up a frame with styrene strips, and salvage the hinges from the original hatch frame part. Add hatch covers, latches, etc. Photo 7 shows this detail.

The milk car has no hatches. You can either plug the holes, sand, etc., or cover the holes with 10mil styrene, as I did. I cut the thin styrene to fit between the roof ribs, and feathered the ends into the car side and the center of the roof. This patch is practically invisible after painting, and is much easier than trying to smooth out a plug. I used roof walk end platforms from an Intermountain boxcar roof walk. Brass wire and eye pins were used for the roof walk grab-irons (See Photo 8).

I painted the cars with Scalecoat II plastic compatible paint. The Rutland reefer is painted boxcar red and lettered with CDS dry transfer set # 430. The Rutland milk car is painted Pullman green and lettered with Champ decal sets #P-86 (Rutland Passenger) and #OD-19D (Express Reefer Data). If you wish to letter the reefer for MDT or Michigan Central, use the dry transfer or decal sets mentioned in the section on the 1920’s era cars from Greg Komar or Champ. The MDT/MC cars had boxcar red roofs and white sides and ends. Photos of these cars are in Hinman’s article. Lettering is very similar to the 1920’s cars. Photo 9 shows the finished Rutland cars. All the cars covered in this article were at home during the steam-Diesel transition era.
This month we will talk about getting your trolleys to run better. The biggest problem with cars produced lately is they are all insulated for 2 rail operation. In order to improve track pickup, we need to ground all 8 wheels. I have discovered a miracle product called Nickel Print Coating (by GC Electronics, a division of G.C. Thorsen, Inc., 1801 Morgan St., Rockford, IL 61102-2690). I found it at an electronic store. It sells for about $35 a bottle. This liquid metal needs to be stirred up and shaken as it congeals on the bottom. It can then be painted over the insulated joint between axles and wheels on each truck. Make sure any oil is removed from these surfaces before painting, or the coating will peel off.

It really works well and improves operation or cars on street tracks or open track 100%.

Making your cars run both ways if they are double enders is tricky, but easily done. Isolate the plus and minus wires to the motor. Run the ground wire to one pole base and the other wire to the opposite pole base. The pole hooks are connected together and to the trucks (see diagram).

Whichever pole is under the hook will operate the car in that direction. You will have to figure out which motor lead does this. Placing one pole on the wire will give you the power to run forward. Changing the poles will reverse the direction. With both poles down under the hooks it won't run.

Another few words on power stations. The latest development in power was the Ignitron rectifier that used tubes to convert AC to DC. The Seashore Trolley Museum picked up one of these units in a 10 ft. by 10 ft. building from the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway after they quit operations on May 30, 1953. The unit ran okay until one of the tubes failed and they discovered it would cost $10,000 to replace it. The unit was retired at that point, the museum not having the funds. Other power setups were used after this, but eventually new tubes were donated and this is used in reserve now. Newer light rail lines use small buildings along their lines every six miles or so, but I'm not sure what is inside these. More than likely a more modern electronics setup to convert AC power to the commonly used 550-750 volt DC.
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You’ll have to excuse me this month. It’s been hard, lately, to get a single thought stretched out to column length (Can’t be age; perhaps the influence of strong drink). I figured that a group of totally disassociated thought provocations might be a fun change of pace from my usual practice of flogging a single thought beyond recognition. So, without further ado (and with apologies to the late great Kin Hubbard) we present...

**Scace’s Short Furrows**

**Item:** Lately, there have been several really nice diecast steam locomotives introduced in the Hi-rail world. Lionel has announced a B&M Mogul, K-line has a decent scale Hudson out, and showed their B&A Berkshire at the last couple of TCA meets at York. The castings are exquisite, the proportions are good-to-excellent. There is nothing I’d like more than to be able to convince Lionel or K-Line that there would be the potential for an at least reasonable return on investment to do some of these locomotives in two-rail, much like Weaver’s 2-8-0 or 3rd Rail’s offerings (and I’ll keep trying!).

In lieu of that, perhaps there would be the potential for some after-market drives that would just bolt up to, say, the Lionel Mogul. We’ve been hearing you, here at O&T, asking for more on smaller railroads, and small modestly priced steam to run on them. Now that these newer diecast Hi-rail pieces are well within the “neurosis” tolerance of most scale types, after-market drives may be a new market niche. Although a more complex approach to steam conversions, the approach of drop-in driver sets has worked well for the Proto-48 folks. Can it work here, in a somewhat larger marketplace?

**Item:** I recently had the privilege of visiting Phil Opielowski, Bob Buck, Jimi Smith, and several others from the Amherst crew. If you remember, Phil is the guy who wrote the article on scratchbuilding a couple of B&A cabooses and a flanger out of styrene, which appeared on these hallowed pages a couple of issues ago. Phil has scratchbuilt some magnificent structures on his Ware River branch, including the stone station at Palmer, Mass. He and Jimi have formed a partnership, exchanging ideas and methods used in building structures, and Jimi has built some truly magnificent B&M structures as a result. The lesson here is one that I have been flogging for some time, now. There is wisdom in numbers. Seek out others around you who are well behaved and can pass skills and new ideas on for your benefit. In return, you can bring fresh approaches in different fields, such as painting, carbuilding, or trackwork, that benefit the other parties involved. I’m sure that Phil and Jimi are scurrying about taking photos of their work for the “Modeler’s Shelf” section of this august journal as we speak (Right, guys? That way, we won’t have to be inundated with Joe’s N&W stuff.). By the way, Phil and his darling bride, Brenda, were perfect hosts, plying this thirsty traveler with coffee and gin (in separate containers! C’m on!). I learned a lot, was pleased to see Phil’s and Jimi’s work, and always love matching stories with Bob. Thanks to all the Amherst guys for making me welcome.

**Item:** Take a look at those diecast automobiles and trucks on your railroad. Do they look like part of the scene, or a nifty collection? Part of the fun, unless you collect them (in the original boxes, thank you) as an adjunct to your railroad, is to paint and weather them. You do this with your rolling stock, so these puppies are fair game, too. If you model the 1940’s, as I do, you’ll discover that most cars were painted in single, rather mundane, colors. Dark reds, blues, and greens predominate with black. Grey was more common than you’d think. Whitewalls (for you young sprats, these were tires with white sides; very snappy!) were rare during the period, especially during the war. The lacquers used in that era tended to go flat, as well. Just look at some photos and you’ll get the idea. You ‘50s folks can go crazy with the two-tone paint and whitewalls to a point, but there were still a lot of more conservatively colored cars on the roads to go with those scarlet and white ’57 Chevys. The bottom line here is to check out photos and video footage from your era, and follow suit. It would amaze you how much of a difference this little bit of neurosis makes in the scenes you’re creating. Besides, it’s fun to hear the agonized screams from the diecast car collectors when you pry ‘em apart, paint them, and dull them down a bit.

**Item:** Many a newcomer to our world may be curious as to how the reservation system works for the various manufacturers. Because of the relatively small size of our marketplace, even the least expensive locomotive projects, and many of the higher end rolling stock offerings, are announced by manufacturers well in advance of their availability. The good folks at, for example, Sunset/3rd Rail will announce the project and “take reservations”. Reservations are considered a statement of real interest by the marketplace before significant capital is invested in development and production. This can be frustrating to us, because we must wait. Occasionally, the manufacturer will cancel a project, dashing our expectations. Then, we suk a lot, and say lots of untruths about trying other projects for that railroad.

Remember that what is a luxury to most of us is a livelihood to some of us. It only takes a couple of bad calls to break the bank, even with some of the larger importers and manufacturers. Some of the companies that import our loot are sole proprietors (one person running the entire show); for them it only takes one project gone sour to put them in the tank. Our reservation system, no matter how clumsy and drawn out it may be, is a very important market research tool for the manufacturer/importer, and a method for you to have your voice heard. Meanwhile, you B&O guys need to get on the stick, ‘cause we New Englanders want our 4-8-2!

Let’s go Exploring!  

**Easements for the Learning Curve**

Brian Scace

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26 • O Scale Trains - Sept/Oct '04
After cresting the summit of the North Cascades, the first town through which eastbound Cascade Northern Railroad trains pass is Early Winters. Named for an actual place, the town has been expanded considerably in my fictional version of its history. On the CNR, the depot serves a thriving upper Methow Valley agricultural community.

This is the story of how I built my depot. Most important to me in this project was capturing the personality and atmosphere of a small town depot in earlier times. I wanted it to be the kind of friendly spot where townsfolk of all ages would feel welcome to drop in any time to visit with the agent, or just to warm themselves by the stove on a cold winter’s day.

My O Scale model is based on the depot described in the February 1970 issue of Model Railroader by Ben King. Gene Deimling built a finescale version that was shown in the March 1972 issue of Finelines (now the Narrow Gauge & Shortline Gazette).

In building my model, board-by-board construction was used most of the time. The roof, for example, is fully framed and individually cut and stained cedar shingles were applied. The model has a complete interior. The ceiling is built up to resemble one constructed of lath and plaster. A variety of castings were used to add clutter to the interior with the purpose of making the building look like it is actually in use. In the absence of a commercially available product, items were scratchbuilt. Windows and doors are mostly Grandt Line products, as is the baggage wagon. This article will take you through the process I used in the hope that it will inspire you to build your own personal favorite.

Work on this structure proceeded on and off throughout the winter of 2001/2. A running joke in my family was that a couple of 1:1 size carpenters could have constructed a full size version of this structure in less time than it took me to build the model. That may be true, but would they have had as much fun as I did?

Construction

I like working with wood as a construction material. One attribute of wood is its ability to take paint and stain. All of the wood I used in this project was painted prior to installation. My usual procedure is to stain the wood with Builders in Scale Silver Wood Stain. I then wipe each piece of wood with the desired color using an old cotton T-shirt onto which a dollop of Floquil thinner has been dripped.

The MR drawings were the starting point for my depot. I elected not to elevate the baggage room floor as Ben King did. Earlier I noted that board-by-board construction was used most of the time. One place where it was not used was in the construction of the hidden portion of the main depot walls. Instead of building up a frame using scale 2x4’s, I used sheets of ⅜-inch thick basswood. I began by laying out the sides and ends of the structure on the sheets up to a height of 10 scale feet. Then, I cut the window and door openings into the sides.

Over the lower portion of the exterior I glued strips of 1x6 lumber to create the wainscoting. The same was done on the inside. Above this on the outside, 1x12 siding was applied. On the inside in the waiting room and ticket agent’s office, I glued a second layer of ⅜-inch thick sheet. I was careful to align the grain of each piece at a 90-degree angle. This was done to minimize warping. For the baggage room interior walls, I used 1x12 boards, aligned vertically, to construct the walls.

To bring the exterior side and end walls up to their full height of 14 scale feet, I added a 2x4 frame to the top of each wall and added siding. Care was taken to place the 2x4 studs in a logical position relative...
Grandt Line windows and doors were used everywhere except for the baggage room doors. In using these styrene parts, some care is needed to get three specific horizontal lines to match. These are: (1) the tops of the window and door frames, (2) the wainscot top and window bottoms, and (3) the door and wainscot bottoms. I worked on the outside first and found I could keep all of the horizontal lines straight if I trimmed the top off the Grandt Line window castings and let the bottoms fall where they may. My only problem is that the bottom of the door sits slightly higher than I would like. Inside I applied trim all around the windows and doors.

The front wall was constructed in three sections. Building the sections on either side of the bay window was a straightforward process. As I'd learned from previous experience, building the bay window itself would be an exercise in cutting, fitting and cursing. This project proved true to form.

I started the bay at the bottom and worked my way up. The floor and the interior wall below the windows were built first. Next, two triangular pieces were sanded to shape and used as a structural member between the windows. The edges of the window castings were carefully mitered. When all this was done, the portion of the bay above the windows was built. Because the interior of this can be seen when the roof is removed, I employed standard construction practices. Inside, the trim thankfully hid many of my sanding errors.

The two baggage doors were much simpler to build. Pre-painted strip wood was glued a piece of 1⁄32-inch thick basswood sheet cut to size. Trim of appropriate size was added to both doors and they were "hung" in a track hidden behind a wall-hung box built of strip wood. To complete this phase of the project, the four walls were joined.

**Top & Bottom**

A concrete foundation was built up from 6x12 strip wood. An inner 6x9 perimeter provided a platform on which to mount the floor. The floor material is 3x12 stock laid on a diagonal. It was weathered before installation. (See photos #3 and #4)

My interior ceiling was designed to look like lath and plaster construction. This was done by first cutting a piece of 1⁄16-inch thick sheet wood to size. Lathe made from 1 x 2 scale stock was glued to it at a 30-degree angle to the walls. Over the top of this a 2 x 4 structural frame was added. Two access holes were cut, one to allow a person to enter and the other for the chimney to pass through.

My first try at constructing the interior ceiling was a complete disaster. I decided to use liberal quantities of white glue in affixing the lath. My plan was that the excess glue would...
look like plaster that had oozed out from under the lath during construction. I achieved this look initially, however, after being left overnight to cure, the dried glue warped the ceiling badly.

On my second try, I used ACC and in sparing quantities. This time I got a ceiling that looked less like it was mimicking the swells on the ocean and more like it belonged in a building.

For the structure’s roof, I went the full board-by-board route. A series of roof trusses was constructed from scale lumber. These were glued one at a time to the sub course of the roof on 18-inch centers. This structure was very fragile and had to be handled with great care to avoid accidental collapse. Once again, the bay window area proved a trial. A couple of monumental failures in getting pieces cut to the correct length and angle made me doubt the wisdom of what I was trying to do but, with perseverance, success was ultimately achieved. When 1x12 sheet was added to the eaves the roof was made stronger.

My shingles were made from real cedar. A cigar-smoking colleague of mine once lit up an after-lunch smoke that had a cedar wrapper. I noted that this thin piece of veneer might be suitable for use as a credible O Scale shingle once flattened and stained. During his brief infatuation with this brand of cigars, I assembled a stockpile of thin cedar sheets. Steamed and pressed they flattened out nicely. There are over a thousand shingles on the roof of the Early Winters depot. Cutting and staining tripled the number of steps involved in completing the roof. I found rainy winter afternoons, the radio tuned to the local NPR station, a #11 Xacto blade in an Xacto knife, and a lot of patience all to be assets. For those of you less compulsive, the Builders in Scale shingle strips would no doubt offer a viable option.

Out in front of the depot there is a passenger platform constructed of 2x12 timbers. A small wing serves the baggage room.

Details, Details, Details

Here’s where the fun really begins. I purchased figures and packages of detail parts from several manufactures suitable for use in my depot. After painting, they were used to bring life and clutter to my depot scene. Among the items employed were a mailbox, a gum machine, a pair of stoves, a mop, brooms, barrels and miscellaneous tools. One waiting bench was scratchbuilt and the other came from a kit. My suitcases were scratchbuilt from basswood, painted and given a metal handle.

The chimney was a major headache for a time. Search as I might, I could find no commercially available casting of a chimney suited to installation in an interior space. After discussing this problem with my friend Clint Crow of C. C. Crow, he was kind enough to cast one just the right size for my project. In combination with a Grandt Line cap, it helped create a classic small town depot interior look. Clint promises to add this valuable item to his fine line of Hydrocal castings.

To prepare the chimney casting, I sprayed it
with a coat of Badger Oxide Red paint and applied Scale Model Works modeler’s mortar between the bricks. The same procedure was used on the Grandt Line cap that sticks out through the roof.

Signs were something I wanted to have plenty of on my depot. The majority of them were made by building a frame around a pre-painted, \( \frac{3}{16} \) inch thick, sheet of wood and adding press on letters. A small square of styrene was painted grimy black and press on letters and strips used to create a black board on which train arrival and departure times could be posted. The red Railway Express Agency sign is a decal applied to a thin piece of styrene.

For the platform, I built a Grandt Line baggage cart and acquired some milk cans to display on it. To blacken white metal castings I use a product called Blacken-It made by the A-West Company. I’ve found that the length of time the casting is emerged in a bath of this mild acid solution determines how black it will become. A short bath will produce a tarnished look on an item like a milk or garbage can that in real life would be made from galvanized metal. A long bath will bring a dark, rich patina to the metal.

To get a weathered look on the structure, I used artist’s chalks.

So, there you have it. Now, if you’ll pardon me, I think I’ll just wander out on the platform and watch to see who gets on and off the afternoon local.

**Resources:**

Model Railroader
P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612,

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#7000 EMD F3-Ph4, F7-Ph1 early (2 portholes)
#8000 EMD F7-Ph1 late, F7-Ph2 (2 portholes, 48" brake, vert. grills)
#9000 EMD F9 (2 portholes, vert. grills)

F Unit “B” Body Kits: reg. $94.99, on sale $79.99
#1000 EMD F2, F3-Ph1
#2000 EMD F3-Ph2, F3-Ph3
#3000 EMD F3-Ph3, F7-Ph1 (horiz. grills)
#4000 EMD F7-Ph1 9late), F7-Ph2, F9 (vert. grills)

All kits include brass etched grills, appropriate detailed parts, and preformed grab irons for indicated model. These kits include only the parts above the frame.

P&D 5080K Atlas F Unit Mounting Bracket Kit for mounting P&D F “A” or “B” body to older Atlas chassis (includes all hardware): $30
At a recent running session we were embarrassed to discover that we had no cabooses. Everyone had the same, lame excuse, “Ah, err, well, um, my cabooses aren’t up to scratch so I didn’t bring one.” It was time to think about a caboose upgrade again. I had started once before but more pressing projects intervened.

My Burlington Northern caboose is a 30 year old Atlas extended vision model that I had acquired second hand. The loops at the tops of the ladders were missing so I had removed the roof walks and filled the resulting holes in the roof. (Although my rolling stock is mass-produced plastic I still like it to be distinctive. I don’t want my equipment to look the same as everyone else’s.) The surrounds of all the windows had been painted silver to simulate aluminum framing. As an experiment, the railings on one end had been cut away leaving only the end beam, brake stand and brake valve. I had fabricated new handrails from .020” brass wire and added “spray guards” to match a photograph. That end looked pretty good with the finer rails and no ladders or roof walks, but where was the photograph now?

A search of the most likely publications failed to find the photograph. However, I did learn that I had copied the railings of one of Burlington Northern's newer cabooses. These had been built without windows in the body side and without roof walks. Naturally, the ends had no ladders.

My search for photographs in books and magazines left me with a long list of the model’s shortcomings. Some would require a lot of work to correct. However, the next running session was looming so I decided to make only the following, simple modifications:

- Use the brass rail assembly at one end and leave the original plastic rail assembly at the other end. After all, only one end can be seen at a time!
- Paint over the left-hand window on each end wall. All Burlington Northern extended vision cabooses appear to have only one window on each end and that's to the right of the door.
- Plate over side windows that are there, not windows that should be there.
- Replace original trucks with correct Barber Bettendorf swing motion caboose trucks from Atlas O.
- Paint ends and step risers yellow and paint rails, grabs and lower step edges white.

I started by preparing the side windows for blanking. For the blanks to sit flush, the raised window frames had to be removed. I used an automotive points file (remember when cars had distributors with points?) held at an angle so that it passed through the window opening. By watching the strokes carefully I was able to file the frames away without gouging the sides. See Drawing #1.

Photograph 1. Removing the roof walks and end ladders and plating over the side windows gives the old Atlas caboose a distinctive appearance. Even after weathering, the Cascade green of the blanking plates makes them more prominent.
This procedure left the window openings with a slope around their perimeters. However, I cut the blanking plates bigger than the openings so the slope won’t interfere when attaching the plates. I did consider blanking the left-hand window on each end but these also have raised frames. I couldn’t use the points file to remove these frames because of the roof overhang on the ends. I decided to spray the left-hand windows yellow, and pretend they were not there.

Four ¼"x½" pieces and two ½"x½" pieces were cut from .010" styrene and painted with MODELflex Cascade Green. The greens don’t quite match which is actually good. Because the blanks were added later, they should be a different green.

I masked the body sides and roof, then sprayed the ends with grey automotive primer from an aerosol can. I sprayed straight over the window glazing. It seemed that, after painting, it would be easier to remove the old glazing and put in new. The end beams, railings, brake stands, brake wheels and valve assemblies were also sprayed with primer.

When the primer had dried, all the above parts were sprayed with yellow. In the step wells the step risers were brushed with yellow.

After all this yellow paint had dried I brushed the roof panels with a 50/50 mix of MODELflex L&N Grey and ATSF Silver, not forgetting the cupola roof or the smoke jack. On the end assemblies I brushed the corner verticals, the horizontal rail and the vertical rail above it with reefer white. The brake stands and valves were painted MODELflex Dark Tuscan Red.

When the paint had dried the blanking plates were taped in position over the side window openings. The blanked windows are such a prominent feature of the caboose that I wanted to be sure the plates were square and level. When I was satisfied with their placement I fixed them with ACC cement. This was done with the body lying flat on the table so that any excess cement squeezed out would not run down the body side.

With a felt tip pen I silvered the raised surrounds of the right hand window on each end and the end windows of the cupola. The sliding window frames in the end doors and cupola sides were also silvered with the pen. Next, I painted all of the grab irons reefer white, not forgetting the four on the cupola roof. The front edge of each bottom step was also brushed with reefer white.

I used Testor’s Dullcote from an aerosol can to eliminate any shine. A wash of Burnt Umber artist’s oil paint in turpentine gave a suitably grimy finish. Next, I replaced the glazing in all but the left-hand window in each end. Now it was time to assemble the caboose.

The AtlasO trucks were a disappointment. They have a 3-Rail bolster that is much too high. Bringing the car to its correct height would have involved cutting away the car’s bolsters and parts of the center sill and brake rigging. I wasn’t prepared to sacrifice the underbody detail, so I settled for All Nation caboose trucks. They have the correct leaf springs but have friction bearings which are inappropriate for 1983/84, the period I model. They do roll well and give the car a nice heft down low. Jerry Snow of Accurate O Scale has announced correct trucks with roller bearings, so eventually they will replace the All Nation ones. I brushed MODELflex Rust on the wheel faces and backs, and the axles. Rust was also brushed on to the leaf springs of the trucks. A Burnt Umber wash over the trucks readied my caboose for the next running session.

As time passes I find more discrepancies between this model and the prototype. Obviously, this is not the end. It is just another step along the path. At this stage my Burlington Northern caboose is not strictly accurate, but it is distinctive, and much more convincing than no caboose.

Photograph 3. Photographs of prototype cabooses show that the horizontal handrail should be removed, although the stiles are left in place. Now that I’ve found a prototype there really is no excuse for not altering this end, too.

Materials List:

- All Nation caboose trucks.
- Automotive grey primer in aerosol can.
- MODELflex Burlington Northern Green.
- MODELflex Dark Tuscan Red
- MODELflex L&N Grey
- MODELflex Railbox Yellow
- MODELflex Rust
- MODELflex Santa Fe Silver
- Styrene sheet .010" thick
- Testor’s Dullcote in aerosol can.

References:

- Central California Rails web site <http://cencalrails.railfan.net/bn12510.jpg>
- Resources:
  - All Nation, 23W546 St Charles Rd, Carol Stream IL 60188, 630-653-4288.

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- MODELflex Railbox Yellow
- MODELflex Rust
- MODELflex Santa Fe Silver
- Styrene sheet .010” thick
- Testor’s Dullcote in aerosol can.

Photograph 2. Here’s a “warts and all” close-up of the end with fabricated brass rails. I have since found a photograph on the Central California Rails website that shows BN 12510. It has plated over side windows and handrails that match these.
These photos were taken at the Mid-Atlantic Narrow Gauge Module convention in Kimberton, Pa., this past May. This modular layout takes the East Broad Top as its prototype focus. The modules belong to a loose knit group of guys, Gary Hart, Jeff Hart, Kevin Hartman, Richard Lowe, and Steve Cenova, who all model the EBT. They've been working on the modules since 1989.

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Some Thoughts for Scratchbuilders

on Finding Dimensions

Brian Scace
Prototype photos used by permission of Bob's Photos.

Much attention has been devoted to the construction methods, such as soldering brass, working with styrene, wood, Strathmore, et al. That's, after all, what how-to magazines like ours do for their worth. We supply a medium through which one person can explain to another person how something was done.

One aspect of this equation remains shrouded in mystery, receives little comment, and deserves more, as has been brought to my attention by Marty Iftody's letter published in Issue #12. He asks how to get the info needed before embarking on a scratchbuilding project. Here are some thoughts from my locomotive-building experience.

First, if there are drawings, I use 'em. Many of the historical societies, such as the New York Central System Historical Society, have drawing archives. These groups are worth joining to get access to these archives. Also, a post on some of the internet sites, such as Bobber Gibb's Otrains List [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/otrains], may get you linked up with someone who has a drawing you're looking for in his musty, dusty, files. Lastly, there have been literally thousands of drawings published in the model press over the years. Some are not so hot, but many are worthy of use.

You need to be careful here, for a couple of reasons. For locomotives and rolling stock, some of these drawings can lead you astray in a big way. When you get that big roll of Lima drawings for a B&A Berk in the mail, you may think you have the last word in fidelity. T'ain't necessarily so! Chances are that the drawing of the complete locomotive is what is called an "assembly drawing" or a "general arrangement". Assembly drawings and general arrangements (for our purposes, assume that these are one and the same) are used as keys to the other several hundred detail drawings of each individual piece that make up the whole. There's a detail drawing for the pilot casting, another for the cab armrest, and another for the bell, all number-keyed to the assembly drawing. Assembly drawings don't have to be all that dimensionally accurate, just good enough so that you can refer to the individual component drawings, and visualize the inter-relationship of the parts. Some companies' assembly drawings are quite accurate, while others were notorious. Alco, for example, was noted for form errors in theirs, resulting in some major gaffs in production Diesel models. Even high-end imports are not immune to this, as several NYC Hudson models have repeatedly erred in firebox shape, yet are faithful to the drawings used. Even the locomotive drawings in the various editions of The Locomotive Cyclopedia are flawed in this regard, because they are derived from assembly drawings, so be careful.

The next thing to be careful of is the drawing date. Look in the box under the drawing title for the last revision date. You need to be wary of this, especially if you are modeling 1952, and that locomotive of your dreams was built in 1929. Equipment was constantly upgraded and modified throughout its service life. Just as color schemes on, say, a boxcar changed over time, brakes were upgraded, safety appliances added, trucks were changed, and a thousand other things were replaced and upgraded. The result is a new detail drawing for that new brake cylinder, and that new drawing number noted on the assembly drawing as a revision. The whole assembly drawing quite probably will not be redrawn to reflect the revision, however, and you need to be aware of that!

We can conclude that there is info to be gleaned from the drawings, but they are not the definitive source we would like them to be. They are, however, a good addition to our arsenal. With or without drawings, the next step is to find photos. Again, photos are usually pretty easy to find, whether in books, the same historical society where you got the drawing set, or...
through one of the photo services. I have literally hundreds of B&A photos, mostly from Bob Liljestrands (Bob’s Photos, 37 Spring St, Ansonia, CT 06401. Phone 1-203-734-6666), for the purpose. Find a favorite photo supplier and avail yourself of this precious resource.

Though not dimensioned, photos never lie. They can mislead the unwary in a big way, however. Look at the three B&A Mike photos. These are all the same class locomotive, and all taken within three years of each other. 1201 has two air pumps, while 1209 has one, for example. 1201 has a different backup light than the other two. Clearly, 1201 has a 7500-gallon tender. Those tanks all look the same in the pictures, and probably no one would squawk if you wanted a single pump version and you numbered it 1209, and lettered the tank for 7500 gallons. After all they’re the same class! Well, you’ll have to decide your own level of neurosis. You’d probably get away with it, but I know that 1209 has an 8000-gallon tank that would be lettered as such! If you really are worried about it, the lesson here is to find photos of the same engine, all four sides, shot at the same time if at all possible.

The third important resource is the “Diagram Book”. Since we are looking at B&A H5 Mikes as our example, the diagram from
the NYC (B&A being under lease to NYC at that time) is now added to our array. Railroads published these for employees to have a ready reference as to the dimensions and operating character of various pieces of equipment, be they locomotives, freight cars, or passenger cars. Some railroads even had diagram books for standard track components, buildings, and signage. Since railroads were, understandably, very interested in clearance dimensions, this source is extremely useful for us. Again, hit the railroadiana shows, historical societies, or the Internet to find these books. Be careful to get the ones printed in your era.

Now, we’ll combine all our research material and see what we can build, still using my B&A H5 Mike as our example. This engine was built by consortium, the suspects being myself, Bud Jaggers, and the late George Dzicky. We had no drawings to work from of this particular engine, so the first step was to find photos of both sides of the same locomotive (#1211) taken at approximately the same date. Having my copy of the above-mentioned New York Central Locomotive Classification diagram book from the period, we were able to get the major dimensions. Even without this info, we can still get close so long as we know the size of, in this case, the drivers.

Blow up the photo as big as you can stand. The bigger you blow it up, the better the resolution of your measurements. Using the photo of 1206 for an example, you can see that I’ve drawn lines at the tops (Line C) and the bottoms of the drivers (Line D), which I know to be 63” diameter. You can then grid up some vertical lines (Line A-Prime, written A’, as an example), again using the drivers for distance, crossing both original lines. Next, I made the relatively rash assumption that the main part of the running board is straight and parallel, so another horizontal line (Line B) was struck using that feature. In our case, since the H5 boiler isn’t tapered, we could use the top and bottom of the boiler. Use your school trig to project more lines forward again for more dimensions. If this all sounds like Greek to you, get a textbook on mechanical or technical drawing. Look up the chapters on projections and teach yourself how to deal with them.

Before some genius writes to tell us that Scace is imperfectly educated, we concede that there are some errors inherent with grid dimensions from photos. Because the locomotive is taller than the photographer, for example, parts on top of the boiler may scale out a little shorter than they really are. In this case, there is an angular error between the lens and the top of the locomotive that we aren’t taking into account with our somewhat simplified method. The alternative is the use of
I have very rarely found that I have to use this grid/projection method as the sole basis for building any model, but I still use projections and grids, in combination with info from the prototype railroad (diagram books as an example) when there are no plans to be had. Even with plans in hand, I’ll use this method to determine the dimensions and locations of modifications and features seen in photos which may not be reflected in the drawings. Remember, do your best to match photos and drawings carefully regarding dates taken, try to get photos of the same locomotive, car, or whatever, to work from, and use your eye’s sense of proportion to detect errors. If it doesn’t quite look right, it probably isn’t. You can judge for yourself how our H5 came out.

◆

As I look back at my many years of involvement with O Scale trains, I can vividly recall my first real attraction to narrow gauge. I had previously learned that quite a few railroads had initially built narrow gauge lines and later widened them out to standard gauge, but I was deeply into the standard gauge learning curve and not really interested in the subject until one special event occurred. At a train show, I saw a new, large scale, LGB Denver & Rio Grande Western high side gondola and I was captivated by the look and feel of it. That’s when I started to get serious about narrow gauge.

I read about the tiny Hunslets and Avonsides that worked the Welsh quarries, and studied the history and development of narrow gauge around the world.

I began to research the numerous Colorado narrow gauge railroads and, for several years, I became totally immersed in learning all I could. I visited Colorado numerous times, followed the old lines, studied the preserved equipment, rode all the trains, attended National Narrow Gauge Conventions, bought a lot of books and became a Life Member of the Colorado Railroad Museum. Along the way, I bought narrow gauge trains in HOn3, Sn3, On2, On3 and most of the garden railroad size/gauge combinations. I bought and built riding equipment on 7.25” gauge and eventually topped it all off with a 1300 foot railroad around my two acre home, dual gauged for full sized 24” and 15” equipment. At the peak of my involvement, I owned four gas locomotives, over 40 ex- peat cars, a complete Chance Manufacturing amusement park passenger train and a 15” speeder with work trailer.

The more I learned about narrow gauge railroading, the more I became attracted to larger scale models of smaller equipment and began to shy away from the larger locomotives, freight and passenger equipment. I started the Critters List on the Internet and then the O Scale Trains List (now Otrains) followed by the On30 Conspiracy and Proto48.

You may be surprised to learn that, in North America and around the world, there have been significantly more 30” gauge main line and industrial railways than there ever were in 3-foot or 2-foot gauges.

No., I was not the first to get involved with On30. I created the On30 Conspiracy in 1996 and have enjoyed watching this particular scale/gauge combination grow and develop into the biggest narrow gauge list on the Internet with 1,661 members (compared to 777 for Otrains, 721 for On3 and 216 for Proto48). A large number of manufacturers are producing excellent On30 equipment at fair prices and many proficient modelers are building beautiful models and sharing their skills with newcomers.

What have I learned about O Scale narrow gauge train operations? Mainly, tiny 4-wheel locomotives that pick up current from the rails can have significant operating problems if they are not heavily weighted or do not have independent suspension on at least one axle. For slow speed and falter-free operation, I prefer can motors, flywheels, low gearing and a minimum of six (and preferably eight) current conducting wheels.

That brings us to the real subject for this month, creating a narrow gauge industrial line in conjunction with a standard gauge O Scale railroad and some dual gauge track work.

My friend, Neville Rossiter, who also writes for O Scale Trains Magazine, has installed an On30 line on his standard gauge switching railroad in Perth, Australia, primarily for some of his friends and fellow operators who have On30 equipment.

I hope to encourage a few OST readers and some Otrains members to consider installing a third rail on part of a standard gauge main line or spur track to create a section of dual gauge for visual interest and an operating challenge. It could be On42, On3, On30, On2 or even smaller and it could be incorporated into traditional O Scale or Proto48 standard gauge.

If any readers have created sections of dual gauge track, please contact me and offer some decent digital photos that we might be able to run in future columns. I am in the process of building my own dual gauge module to Proto48 and On30 standards and photos will be ready for our next issue.

Those on the Internet might want to check out my new O Scale, modular, dual gauge concept at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/O_DUAL

Happy trains to you until we meet again. ◆
Shifting Direction

This column has been appearing for over a year in O Scale Trains. Our Editor and Publisher suggested a different title to expose the material to more who might be interested in prototype accurate modeling in O Scale, independent of gauge. I am not sure how many readers haven't been reading my column because of the perceived subject matter or title. I am planning to add a greater emphasis on techniques useful in modeling and to continue to discuss prototype modeling. I will still endeavor to print news and information on Proto48 products and services.

Fine Scale is a very general term that doesn't define gauge, scale or even trains for that matter. When I first got interested in 3½"AAR (later Proto48) in the late 1960's, the term "fine scale" was used by a number of model railroaders in the Bay Area to describe highly detailed scratchbuilt models. I suspect the term came from Bob Brown's pioneering magazine called Fine-Lines. Bob created a forum for narrow gauge and standard gauge modelers to share their work. Much of the magazine was devoted to modeling techniques. I learned a great deal by reading Fine-Lines. Bob's magazine later evolved into the legendary Narrow Gauge & Shortline Gazette. Unlike the Gazette, I will try to keep the focus of my column on standard gauge since we already have a narrow gauge column. Starting with this issue, the column will be called Fine Scale Modeling. I will try to include one modeling tip per column. This month I will describe an approach to building curved roofs for cars such as cabooses.

Modeling Tip: Making Curved Roofs

Making a curved roof for a freight car or caboose has always been a vexing problem for me. I have tried various approaches with little success, until I tried laminating thin sheets of styrene over a jig or form. I mainly build in styrene, and like to use the same material for the whole car project rather than trying to blend dissimilar materials. Using one type of material in a model's construction avoids potential problems from dissimilar expansion and contraction rates. Plastic, wood and metal all expand and contract at different rates. Combining material can result in something warping, since uneven expansion will exert pressure on the structure. This technique works very well for styrene, producing strong and stable roofs.

Determine the radius of the roof from drawings. Make a styrene template with this radius. A constant radius roof simplifies construction greatly. You can use this technique for roofs that change their radius, such as passenger cars, though making the forming jig is more involved.

Construct a simple wood jig with the desired radius. Use the template to ensure a correct curvature. I use sheet balsa that I soak in water so it will bend easily without splitting. I glue down some strip wood to form the risers on either side of the jig. I use a thickened CA to build the jig, since it will dry very quickly. Place a metal rod in the center of the jig and let the balsa dry out. Glue the balsa to the jig.

The next step is to cut out several sheets of 0.010" styrene to a size slightly larger than the final dimensions desired. This will lessen the need to precisely align the layers in the lamination.

Place the first layer in the jig. Hold it down with either double-sided tape or a drop of standard ACC. You only want to hold the center down. Don't coat the entire surface.

Apply Plasti-Zap (CA formulated for styrene made by Pacer Technology) thinly over the first sheet. Keep it away from the edges, since it will bleed when it is laminated. Place the second sheet on the first, using a wood dowel or metal rod as a rolling pin to ensure a smooth bond. Wipe off any CA that is forced out of the laminating. Let the lamination set for a few minutes.

Apply subsequent layers using the same technique. Once you have built up the thickness to the correct amount, seal the edges with your favorite liquid styrene cement. Let the lamination set overnight.

Trim to the correct size. Pay attention to the fact that a lot of roof edges are actually parallel to the car side.

The last step is to fabricate formers to match the interior curvature (the same as the curvature of the car end). This prevents the lamination from changing shape over time. The formers counter the forces created when adding interior siding, as in the case of the model shown.

Finishing the roof usually entails adding roof walk supports, cupola and roof walk. If the roof is of steel construction, you will want to apply a sheet of 0.010" styrene with embossed rivet details per the prototype. I would allow for this final sheet in estimating the number of layers required in the lamination. This final sheet can be bonded using normal styrene glue if applied sparingly. If the model has a wood roof covered with canvas or some other type of weatherproofing, you will want to install this before you apply the details. You can simulate this with a paper adhesive tape used for bandaging wounds. It is easy to work. Painting the roof helps set the tape permanently in place.
Reader Feedback

Power G & Sewing Machines

Thank you for the info about the new MRC Power G power supply. I got one, it works! Went back and got another one for the second mainline and when I do some future planned expansion, I will get some for that as well. And perhaps a spare or two backup as nothing lasts forever. A Big Boy and a Challenger pulling 80 Atlas hoppers on 160' of mainline is no problem for the packs!

A thank you to MRC for making this power supply, too. Others I know, upon my telling them/recommending the MRC pack to them, tried it and liked it, so they, too, are happy campers as well. Not everyone can afford or perhaps want all the expensive electronic gizmos, some prone to failure with expensive repairs. Some people I know have actually turned off the sound units in their new locos due to the racket several would create run at the same time.

Re: George Ritter’s question about rigid trucks. About a year or so back, I got some Atlas trucks that had been modified by removing the top retaining plate from the top of the truck and that allowed them to become “sprung”. However, the person who modified them did not seem to know, or be aware of, or perhaps didn’t care, that the side frames would not stay in alignment without that cast plate.

After some experimenting after I found that a pin could be inserted in a small hole drilled through the tab on the side frame and the bolster. Bend the pin over and it cuts the side frame play to almost zero. However, a little further experimenting showed one could remove the two screws holding the top plate on the “new” Atlas Andrews trucks that come on their steam-era box cars and the truck is now “sprung”. The Andrews trucks seem to be better made than the roller bearing and Bettendorf trucks and the side frames seem to stay true for the most part. If there is a problem with the sideframes twisting, resort to the pin method.

After reading more of the new issue, I have two cents about rivet machines. Irv Lange showed me how he used a Dremel cut-off disk to shorten and make the end of a needle smaller. With a little experimental trial and error to get it the right length and size, the machine makes fairly good rivets quickly. You do not want a new machine made of plastic and cast zinc. You want an older machine, such as a Singer or White. Sometimes they can be found at second-hand stores, garage sales, etc. I found White machines work better as they “bit” twice on the downstroke. Likewise, one that has “zig-zag” can make staggered double rows of rivets.

Carl Phillips

More On Trucks

Referring to George Ritter’s question about Atlas trucks. One thing to do is remove the truck mounted coupler bracket. This will let the trucks flex a little. After that it looks like cutting off the tabs on each side frame would finish the job (haven’t tried this yet), since the truck bolster actually goes through the side frames and is held there by the springs just like any other sprung truck. If he is really careful using a fine toothed saw, he might be able to do this without taking the springs out and disassembling the trucks.

Bob Hayes

Trucks: One More Time

Reader George Ritter asked about freight trucks. My experience is that Atcheam and Weaver trucks with Interstate steel wheels make an excellent choice for trackability, both staying on the rails and rolling. Also the car should be weighted to NMRA standards, 5 ounces, plus one ounce per inch of length. A forty foot box car should weigh 15 ounces.

Do rigid trucks track well? Yes, I have several 21-inch K-Line passenger cars converted to 2-rail using the original trucks with added 36-inch wheel sets. They track well on my layout which has less than 48 inch radii.

On the AtlasO cars, I usually change the trucks to Atcheam or Weaver because they look better. The AtlasO truck is made for 3-rail wheel sets and therefore, is too wide. I am in the process of changing all plastic wheels to Interstate steel wheels. They roll well and don’t pick up dirt as much. And they sound like the prototype.

Bill Krueger, Cincinnati, Ohio

Mystery Photo Revealed!

I believe the picture in O Scale Trains #15, pg 45, is of a track-alignment machine. The folding assembly that trails behind carries mirrors, and the main unit has a light source, probably a laser beam because it won’t spread out but remains a narrow beam. The main machine measures the location of the beam that is reflected back to it and so measures whether the main machine (and therefore the track it is on) is properly aligned with the track behind. The forest of hoses in the center indicates a set of hydraulic tampers to tamp the ballast around and under the ties to hold the track in the proper position.

Essentially this system is doing what the track gangs of an earlier age did by sighting down the rails, moving the track with crowbars, and tamping the ballast by hand.

I have never seen a description of these things, but I found one a few years ago and was able to study it and (I think) deduce what it does. I think that of all railroad equipment, track maintenance equipment is the weirdest, least documented, most mysterious, and hardest to figure out.

Edward C. Miller

Loves the Mag

I loved the photography throughout your magazine. I look forward to The Workshop, Easements for the Learning Curve, Traction Action, Modeler’s Shelf (which gets more interesting). I can’t wait to see what you come up with next. Man, this is very therapeutic, if you will! I salute Editor/Publisher Joe Giannovaro and Art Director Jain Simon, also Associate Editor Brian Scace. I read the magazine everyday over and over again. I might read an article 2 to 3 times. No, I am not looking for a check in the mail (smile). I am just thrilled and satisfied as to how far O Scale has advanced. How, you have more than just arrived. Now after all this I am sending money for A Guide to Modern O Scale.

I went to Springfield, Mass., Train Show and, hopefully, I will make the 2004 O Scale National Convention in Washington, D.C.

Ted Hardwick, Brooklyn, NY

Whelove Comments

Bob O’Neill’s article about the late Bob Whelove brought back fond memories of my trip to the 1970 NMRA National Convention at St. Louis. I had the pleasure of seeing the club pike at Webster Groves, and was able to visit the Wheloves at their home, thanks to Mrs. Whelove’s kindness in acting as chauffeur. They were fine people, and
their hospitality to a stranger made a lasting impression. I’ve tried to follow their example on various occasions when I’ve been able to provide information and transportation to modelers visiting in my area.

Woody Mathews (Seattle WA)

A Note From A Convert

I recently received a copy of A Guide To Modern O Scale. I have enjoyed it very much and have found it very informative. I think it provides a fine overview of the hobby. I like how you organized various aspects of O Scale in different chapters. One can find specific information quickly. At the end of each chapter, A Guide To Modern O Scale lists many sources one can explore to get more detailed information. From my own experience, your recommendations are “right on.” Some of these I haven’t explored but will soon.

I am one of those in your “target audience” since I recently became interested in O Scale. I have been an active/inactive model railroader since 1952 when my folks bought me a Lionel train set (best Christmas ever!). My interest in Lionel gradually declined as I grew older and became more interested in scale appearance. This led me into HO where I’ve spent most of my modeling life. I admired O Scale because of its greater realism and detail but in my area there were no O Scale modelers, layouts or hobby shops offering O equipment.

Times are much different now and with the Internet, a large number of fine hobby shops and manufacturers are only a few key strokes away. Other modelers with similar interests are easily contacted through various message boards. O-trains on Yahoo is one I find quite interesting with many helpful and knowledgeable modelers that will gratuitously share experiences and offer advice to a new convert like me.

Paul R. Sears, Rockford, Ill.

What We Need Is...

Hi Joe, I just wanted to say I note with very much interest your editorial [in O ST#15]. Do we think alike or what? We have had many O Scale meetings here and discussed the future of O Scale. Lately it’s dealing with the plastic manufacturer as Atlas, Lionel and K-line. Yes, indeed, the third rail will have to go. I came from the 3-Rail arena, as many of us did, and, quite frankly, if they would have been making the fine 3-Rail stuff then as they are now, it would have been much harder to switch to 2-Rail.

The topic you really hit a hot button with is track and switches. I have thought for a long time what we really need to get this 2-Rail hobby going into expansion is a nice affordable (Henry Ford version) set of track and switches, Track and switch. I can’t say it too much. Even the best model trains will not run without track and switches. If I ever come to power, I would make #6 R and L, curved Rand L and Y’s. Fixed curved snap track. Just like HO. I would make it attractive with fine scale detail, imitation spikes etc. Affordable, accurate scale track is the answer.

Sam Shumaker

Joe replies: Uh, Sam, what about the new Atlas track? Doesn’t that count?

Switch Built In Place

A big thanks for the recent article on building turnouts in place (OST#14, pg 34). Following the photos and text, I managed to build my first turnout ever, in place, on the layout and a curved one at that. I’ve been wanting to do that for years but never had the confidence. Now I’m going to do another. Neat thing is I don’t know or care what the turnout number is. I just follow the process and the turnout designs itself.

I did make one change: I simply soldered the two point rails to a tie bar cut from PC board. Some of my purchased switch kits came with soldered points and they work just fine. Its a lot easier to solder the point rails to the tie bar than it is to drill and tap the tie bar for those microscopic 00-90 machine screws. I used code 100 rail, insulated the frog, added a Caboose Hobbies switch throw, and soldered jumpers from the stock rails to the adjoining point rails. All rail dead frog turnouts work fine with my locomotives. None stall on the dead frog. But I do try to keep those insulated frogs short, 2½" to 3" in length.

Tom Houle

The Harvey Girls

Just read your latest Column in #15. Thought you might be interested to know that “The Harvey Girls” was also a 1946 Judy Garland movie. How much Hollywood deviated from the original thing, I can’t say, but that’s where the theme came from. I also think this film may have introduced the song “The Atchison, Topeka, and The Santa Fe”.

One other thing of interest (I think), is that I read recently on the Challenger Imports web site, that Samhongsa has ceased to be in the model train business. Also, Challenger is importing their first “O” engine (4 versions of SP 0-6-0). I posted this info on the O Trains List, and it didn’t appear to generate any interest.

I don’t know if it was read and noted or just ignored!

Considering the pile of brass done by Samhongsa over the years and the whining about no small brass engines being done, I sort of thought there would be some feedback!

Dave K.

Joe sez: Well, Dave, the news about Samhongsa getting out of the brass business is kinda old. It was circulating at the Chicago March Meet back in 2003. However, that’s news about Challenger getting into O.

Absolutely The Final Word On The Internet vs. The U.S. Mail

The debate about Internet vs. US mail seems a bit silly in this day and age. To individuals without Internet access and stores without websites, just consider my experience (and I’m just one person, so imagine the thousands like me). I’ve purchased hundreds of items over the Internet from hobby stores that I would never know existed and which otherwise would never have me as a customer. Retail stores only have a limited retail trading area. The Internet opens a retailer’s potential customer base to the entire world. As a customer, without the internet, I could only go to local shops (if there was one) or request some catalog (if it existed and I knew about the source). Now I do one of two things. If the retailer or manufacturer has a website, I go there directly. Sometimes you can purchase the items online or, at the minimum, view the items and print an order form, send them a check or call with credit card information. If I’m looking for an item my normal sources may not have, I just type in that item on “Google” and dozens of sources pop up in two seconds. Many times, I’ve looked for out of stock or out of production structure kits and found some obscure (to me) retailer who had the item and came up on the Google search. The Internet doesn’t hurt hobby stores, it enables them to create sales among people they could never reach. It’s a business expansion tool. Those retailers who have yet to establish a website presence must have a business death wish. Why would anyone restrict their customer base in this way (and then complain the Internet is ruining their business)? As for consumers, the Internet has opened thousands of resources to us that were inaccessible or unknown to us before. Could this be any easier?

Jerry Zaret
Review: PRR K4 4-6-2, $699.95 2-Rail, $779.95 3-Rail
Sunset High Iron Series
Sunset/3rd Rail, 37 S Fourth St, Campbell, CA 95008, 408-866-5764, www.3drail.com
reviewed by Joe Giannovario

A Bit ‘o History
In 1914 the Pennsylvania Railroad (The “Standard Railroad of the World”) rolled out the first of a new class of passenger locomotive, 4-6-2, K4s #1737. The K4 shared a common boiler design with a new class of freight locomotive, the L1, 2-8-2. This K4s’ was superheated and carried a new standardized grate area of seventy square feet.

A three year hiatus followed before another K4s was built. During that time 1737 underwent exhaustive tests, but the real delay was due to production of L1’s. In 1917 the Pennsy began to produce K4s’ in quantity with a first batch of 41 engines. All totaled, the PRR built 425 K4s’ and the design was so good from the outset that only minor alterations were made to the basic locomotive throughout its 14 year production history.

The Model
I was fortunate to have both a pre-production model and a production sample to work with for this review. Sunset is offering their K4 in Pre-World War II and Post-World War II trim. The Pre-war version has a slab pilot and the headlight mounted high on the smokebox front with the turbo generator behind it in front of the stack. The Post-War version has the “modernized” (ugh!) front end with drop-coupler pilot while the headlight and generator have swapped locations. Each version is offered in two different numbers and the 3-Rail version can be had with sound and TMCC® command control.

I took the pre-production model of #1737 (Pre-War version) out to Gordon Whitlock’s C&O Boyertown Division layout (OST#6 - out of print) for a test run. Gordon’s layout has 64” minimum radius curves and lots of long curved switches. Sunset says the minimum radius for this 80” d rivered racehorse is 56” for the 2-Rail version, and 0-42 for the 3-Rail version.

The locomotive ran smoothly in both directions. At 3 volts and 800 mA, the markers, class lamps and headlamp came on. At about 4 volts and 900 mA, the locomotive began to crawl slowly. At 5 volts and 1000 mA the locomotive was rolling smoothly. At no time did the current draw exceed 1000 mA. This is great for an O Scale locomotive. The pre-production model had a buzz in the motor but the production model ran flawlessly on my own test track.

This is Sunset’s first steam locomotive built for them in China. In most respects, the Chinese got it right the first time. This is the first imported PRR K4, to my knowledge, that has a correct boiler. The course diameters are correct as is the taper. The model is built like a tank from heavy gauge brass and the paint is virtually scratch-proof. The cab windows slide and have real glass in them. There are also working wing vents and a sliding roof hatch. The water cistern hatch opens, as well, although there is no detail below.

The tender is a very nice representation of a 130-P-75 “Kiesel” tender. The prototype held 22 tons of coal and 13,475 gallons of water. There is a coal load installed. The underframe carries a scoop and some brake components but there is literally no other detail. Really, who sees that anyway when the loco is running?

The mechanism is nearly perfect and runs like a fine Swiss watch. All chassis dimensions checked against the drawings in my MR Loco Cyclopedia, Vol.1. While the finish on the lead truck wheels may be a bit bright for most, a little dab of paint will fix that easily enough. I liked the finish on the rods, too. I’ve seen some criticism of the rods online but they look perfectly fine to me compared to the photos in Pennsy Power 1 (by Bert Pennypacker and Al Stauffer). The trailing truck looks dead on to me, right down to the lower springs being real springs and not cast on. The trailing truck buffer plates on the frame are where they should be, a very prominent detail often overlooked on early imports.

I especially like the matte finish paint Sunset uses on its models. Almost everyone knows that PRR steam engines are not painted black, but Brunswick Green. Sunset’s model paint is as nice a rendering of Brunswick Green as I have seen (and I’ve seen the prototype). You may need to take it out into the sunlight to see the green sheen, but believe me, it’s there. The cab roof is a nice oxide red as is the tender water deck. The keystone on the smokebox is Toluidine Red as it should be, not Tuscan as some think.

Okay, by now you’re wondering in what respects it misses the mark. There is a mis-match in fonts between the cab numbers and the tender lettering (post-war cab numbers, pre-war tender lettering) . The injectors under the cab are conspicuous by their absence. The pipe from the engineer’s side of the cab to the power reverse is not there although there is a hole in the front cab wall and a bracket on the running board so you could install one yourself. The handrail posts are circa-1970 spindle and ball rather than the U-clamp we’re used to seeing now and the handrails don’t curve up into the junction boxes on the front cab wall. The bell is not mounted correctly either, but then no import has done that right, yet. To mount it properly a hole needs to be punched into the brass and a plate soldered from below. The bell should mount flush with the lagging because Pennsy mounted theirs directly to the boiler, not the lagging. However, to do this correctly would have made the model more expensive because it would require more labor.

There are two more items to note and both have been noted before on every review of any steam engine made for both the 2- and 3-Rail...
markets. The tender does not close couple to the locomotive. It can't if you want to run it on even medium curves. For those who need to close the gap, drill a new hole in the drawbar and then shorten it so it won't short out on the tender. The other item is the classification lamps. Stop with the green class lamps, already! You can now buy white LEDs. All class lamps should have white LEDs and a set of clear and green lenses the buyer can install as appropriate. I'm going to give an ATTABOY Certificate to the first importer that convinces his builder to do class lamps that way.

My Conclusion
The Sunset High Iron PRR K4s is a model that recalls the heyday of U.S. Hobbies' Japanese imports at about that same price (which if you account for inflation since the late 70's makes this a damn good bargain). It's solidly built of heavy material with a great mechanism and a modicum of detail. Some of the detailing is retro (the handrail posts), some is missing (the injectors), but some of it is right up to date (real glass in sliding windows). Unlike the old USH stuff, this comes factory painted so you shouldn't have to ever take it apart.

If you are a Pennsy purist, you won't like this model. There, I said it! You'll find lots of things to pick at... nit, nit, nit. Save your money and order a Kobs K4s (about 5 times the cost of this little jewel, but it'll be near-perfect).

But, if you're a Pennsy fan who likes the look of PRR steam and doesn't get all torqued about bell mounts and junction boxes, this is a really great model that will run with the best of them for a long time.

Since the PRR L1s uses the same boiler and cab as the K4s, maybe Sunset will do an L1s as a future High Iron project. Whatever Sunset does, the Chinese are definitely way ahead on the learning curve when compared to where the Koreans started. Anyone recall the F.E.D. "Disaster Series"? I'm sure future projects will improve with each iteration. Sunset's next High Iron project is the SP M-6 and M-9 Moguls due out in 2005.

NEWS: New kits now available from B.T.S., P.O. Box 561, Sefner, FL 33583, 813-643-1105, www.btsrr.com

BTS has announced several new kits. All have standard BTS features such as accurate laser cut components, peel 'n stick window sashes, slot 'n tab construction, accurate details, careful engineering for easy construction and thorough instructions. One of these new kits is the Anderson Pulpwood Yard (Kit #17480). At the yard, small truck loads of pulpwood, small logs cut into about five foot lengths, are loaded onto pulpwood cars for shipment out to the mill. Stacks of pulpwood can be seen around the yard waiting for the arrival of the next empty wood rack - slang for the pulpwood car. The Anderson Pulpwood Yard kit includes the office, storage shed, truck scale, oil drum rack, two wood racks, signage, raw materials for pulpwood, and over twenty metal detail castings. Laser-etched nail holes, self-adhesive shingles and window sashes, and tabbed construction are features of this laser-created kit. Office and scale footprint is 34" x 40'.

#17480  O Scale $ 89.95
Review: Sunset's CB&Q O5 Northern
Sunset/3rd Rail, 37 S Fourth St,
Campbell, CA 95008
408-866-5764, www.3rdrail.com
reviewed by Brian Scace

This thing reminds me of the used car salesman's line, "It's big. It's ugly. It's powerful. It's what America is all about." I now have an idea of what attracts the small klatch of rabid CB&Q fans. If Burlington engines have anything, it's "presence". After unpacking mine, here's what I saw.

The fit and finish is typical of Sunset's current offerings, nice and tight with a flawless paint coat. The lettering is nice and straight. To my eye, untrained as I am to the Burlington, it looks as it should.

Of course, I like the funky lights. Going forward at a good clip (6 Volts or so), the simulated oscillating light starts in. It flashes rather than oscillates, but I liked the effect enough to turn out the room lights and open this thing up, looking for all the world like a blast up the Aurora racetrack to St. Paul.

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. Scott says he has some in stock, so get your dealer to give him a shout.

Notes for the Neurotic

Most of us can stop reading this review at this point, and make our choices with confidence. I've included a couple of things for the neurotics among us.

Citing Jack Farrell's book "The Northerns", I learned some things about these engines. The original subclass was built by Baldwin, with standard cabs and Elasco feedwater heaters. Later subclasses were home-built, with Worthington heaters, all-weather cabs, different pilot deck arrangements, and other differences as reflected in the Sunset model.

The photos indicate that the coal fired configuration was common during their passenger service from Aurora to St. Paul. The extra lighting cluster, with the oscillating warning light, also appears to be standard for this service, and a postwar feature.

I'm not a Burlington historian, so take these observations with a grain of salt. Once you CB&Q types have stopped laughing at this neophyte, weigh in here with your wisdom to help those who worry about these things to get it right. My point is that checking out the features such as the lighting, fuel configuration, and pilot arrangements so you can configure them for your era is a lot of fun, and a source of pride once you're done.
One of the goals of famed railroad photographer O. Winston Link was to photograph not only the machinery of the railroads, but to capture the human side as well. Faces of Railroading does just that by providing 160 images of people with trains. This collection of photos features the work of Link, Steinheimer, Wood, and others. Images by professional railroad photographers and creative amateurs are presented side-by-side. But, these are not the usual photos that appear again and again in other railroad books. Author Carl A. Swanson has done an outstanding job of gathering very unique and interesting images that portray the people behind the greatest industry America has ever seen. He provides brief, but thorough, commentary on each page. Many of these photos I have not seen before. These images show the faces of the humans who made this thing work from all sides of the track: stations and depots, locomotive facilities, backshops, and yard offices. Railroad work was not pretty, but it represented the efforts of a professional group of laborers who were not afraid to get their hands dirty and apply their skills to do whatever it took to get the job done.

The faces shown are quite literally the unsung heroes of railroading in the mid-20th century when traveling meant going by train. And the train meant good jobs for thousands of Americans. The country was held in place by the railroads during the Great Depression. As America entered World War II the railroads were called upon to rush train after train of troops and supplies to the front. With the post-war industrial boom, the railroads again provided the link that made it all happen. Behind it all were the dedicated railroad people who were always at their posts of duty.

If you are interested in railroad history, railroading, or just enjoy looking at railroad images, this book is sure to please. If modeling railroads is your cup of tea, the unique images presented here will provide behind-the-scenes ideas for projects, as many of the photos are unique and never-before-published. The ultra-high resolution images are printed on superior paper and make this a very attractive book that is easy to look at and enjoy.

Faces of Railroading
By Carl A. Swanson.
Kalmbach Publishing Company. Hardcover; 160 pages; 160 b&w photos; $29.95.
reviewed by K. Jeb Kriigel
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ERRATA
Page 55, OST#15: We neglected to mention the photo on page 55 was taken on Pete Trunk’s Philadelphia & Erie.
Page 40, The Erie berk was built by Fred Fazio, not Frank Fazio. We apologize for the error.
Jim Hackworth
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This limited edition model was prepared for the Central Electric Railfans’ Assn. and was initially made available only to those participating on a recent CERA tour. We have a small number of unsubscribed models available on a first-come first-served basis. This model features a new, improved cast body with the correct rear-end contour.

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The “junk” is a combination of Weaver plastic rail, wheels, axles, Chooch junk piles, various old diecast vehicles, pallets, Arttista figures and junked items from the workbench. A small crane was scratchbuilt from styrene and the sides from a Bachmann signal bridge.

Everything was then glued down using a white glue and water mix. The complete area was given a light rusty spray along with rail brown color and an India ink wash.
“The O Scaler’s Own Paper”

Last column I talked a bit about some of the earlier publications that treated our scale, from its earliest times up until after WWII, when the dominance it had enjoyed within the hobby began to be threatened by smaller scales and the cultural and economic forces that encouraged them. I had hoped to treat a second part in this column, but I am still trying to establish more facts about the Vane/Corey Jones O ScaleRailroading. I never had a chance to meet either, although their distinctive personalities came through in their periodicals very clearly. Since many of their friends are still around, as well as their daughter/sister, Ginger, I would not want to misrepresent their contribution to the hobby through my ignorance. I would be glad to have any reminiscences readers would like to share about them for that future column (I have some already).

One follow-up to my last column, however: After I submitted it, I came into possession of a nice, thick book titled Handbook for Model Builders, by the Staff of the Model Builder, published by Lionel in 1940, much of it reprinted material from the magazine. With this before me, I realized what had been tickling my mind in discussing the magazine. Many of the articles, particularly some of the more challenging construction articles, were anonymous, and there is no masthead identifying any of the faceless staff in any issue I’ve found (at least so far). Then there is the matter of M B being published in Mt Prospect, Ill., a very long way from the factory in Irvington, N.J., or corporate headquarters in New York City. Perhaps someone can enlighten me (or us) about this, but I do wonder if someone well-known (Frank Taylor? Al Kalmbach?) was not ghosting the publication on contract for Lionel.

But, in lieu of bringing O Scale magazines down to O ST this time out, I’d like to share what I know about one of my favorite artifacts, questions about which recur from time to time on the O Trains list, the Rail Craft freight car line.

Rail Craft was based in Webster Groves, Mo., from the late 1930s up through the early 1950s (with time out for WWII). If an O Scale wants a model of the distinctive but very common Norfolk and Western peaked-end hopper, he has several possible options. He (or she) can buy one of the excellent and highly detailed recent brass imports from PSC and others. He can hope to find one of the Quality Craft wood and white-metal kits from twenty-odd years ago (there are a few minor errors in the kit). He can spend quite a bit of time and ingenuity re-working an International import from the mid-1950’s to correct quite a lot of errors (I’ve done it, and it is WORK!). He can scratchbuild one, perhaps using the old Taylor article in Twenty Projects for Model Railroaders (with scale drawings useful for correcting either the QC kit or the IMP import). Or, he can hope to find a Rail Craft, which will need only the level of additional detail the modeler desires.

At its greatest extent, the Rail Craft line consisted of three hoppers, a USRA-type twin, a panel-side twin (oddly termed “off-set side” by RC and best suited to a Wabash prototype) and the N&W peaked-end twin. There were also three gondolas, an Erie high-side (although that prototype had a drop-bottom which the model does not include), the Missouri Pacific panel-side long gondola (also available as a wooden kit in the Suncoast line) and a Texas & Pacific car. Also offered was that curious hybrid, the KCS hopper-bottom gondola, the unique (Ed Bommer, our resident B&O guru, says there was only one) B&O “More Service” experimental flat with variable ends, and the basic B&O flat car on which it was based. Perhaps it will have struck you that each of the RC offerings is based on a specific prototype car rather than the rather generic kinds of kits that were usual until comparatively recently, when modelers began to be as particular about the accuracy of cars as they had about locomotives. Some of Rail Craft’s prototypes are still unavailable commercially today.

Doubtless the most striking feature of RC cars is the amount of galvanized (tin-coated) steel used in their construction. Some time ago, another O Scaler (I can no longer recall whom) said the test for a RC car was simply to check it with a magnet. The B&O flat cars had a wood deck/core, but otherwise the cars were all metal with various formed shapes and stampings soldered together. Depending on when any given car was made, it may have more or fewer brass parts in addition to the galvanized steel components. While it is usual for the stamped panels in the Wabash-type hoppers and MP gondolas to be brass, I do own one hopper that is entirely galvanized. I also have another hopper that uses brass for the bulb angles at the top of the sides and ends and for the frame members at the bottom, although every other one I’ve seen uses galvanized steel there. Although I have seen scans of them and have instruction sheets that discuss their assembly, I have never owned a RC car entirely in pieces, although that was the cheapest way to buy one. One could also pay a bit more for an assembled basic body, requiring only soldering on end detail and steps. Lastly, for about twice the cost of the complete set of parts, one could get a car ready for trucks and couplers (perhaps requiring installation of the brakewheel, too). As nearly as I can tell, the three-level pricing was common toward the end of production, as modelers considered price more and more, and also as labor costs rose after WWII. It appears the earlier production was mostly of assembled bodies with some modest work needed by the buyer.

At least one of the “factory-assembled” bodies I’ve bought exhibited very poor workmanship, and the reason may have been explained by someone who related the history of the line some time back (I cannot recall who it was to credit him, but would be glad to do so). From what I learned, the owner/developer of the line was a Mr. Beeman, in the suburban St. Louis area, who taught in a vocational (or “trade”) school. He had ready access to a full metal shop and the skills to use it. I conjecture that he may well have used student labor in producing at least some of the line, with or without compensation beyond scholastic credit. It would make sense, as those completing a unit of metal shop (industrial arts, as it used to be called when I was in high school) would have learned how to form, bend, shears, die-stamp and solder, using all the tools needed in producing a Rail Craft freight car kit. That one car reminds me that not everyone is an honors student.

At a model railroad show you may see a metal hopper or gondola, more than likely under a coat of thick enamel. If it is not obvious that it is a KTM piece, imported by Max Gray or US Hobbies, it is very likely a Rail Craft car. If most of the components are there and the price seems reasonable to you, I think you will enjoy cleaning it up and re-soldering the crooked details. If you are indeed having a good day, you may find a kit in its original box, never built from fifty or sixty years ago. I am not sure, but I think the first RC boxes were a deep red with black lettering and fairly large (conveniently so to hold a finished car with trucks and couplers). The letter (I think) kits came in slightly smaller cream/beige boxes with red lettering, with the gondola and flat kits in smaller boxes than the hoppers. If it is untouched, you should find an envelope or two of detail parts, a mimeographed instruction sheet (perhaps done in the school office?), and a genuine blueprint of the car itself—not highly detailed but suffi-
cient to locate all the parts to be added. The rivets are oversized by modern standards, but that seems to have been common a generation and more ago. I suspect it may have had something to do with paint back then not having so fine-ground a pigment, so that detail had to be more emphatic not to be obscured.

They are rugged cars, well-proportioned, and with adequate detail. If you want a hopper, gondola or flat primarily to operate, consider Rail Craft. There are a surprising number of them still out there. Again, purely from conjecture, I think Mr. Beeman was ready to retire from teaching after twenty-odd years, and by the early 1950’s the first of the Japanese brass imports were just starting to come in; they sold more cheaply than the RC kits could (at least initially). Probably he considered he had had a good run and could retire the line, perhaps as he moved to the Sunbelt. I would welcome more information to share about the Rail Craft line.

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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 42’ flat car (SP #42881) was modified to carry trailers. Both flat car (Red Caboose) and trailer (Berkshire Valley) are kits built by Juerg Luetscher of Switzerland. The early TOFC operation of SP in the 50’s attracts his interest. He’s building a full TOFC train.

Any chance you could put this in the mag as a “who done it”? I have asked on the OTrains List and haven’t had any luck. I bought this at O Scale West this past February and haven’t a clue who made it. It has a brass cast boiler/cab, Lionel Hudson valve gear, cylinders and trailing truck, All Nation/GMC pilot truck, cast brass frame and what looks like a Lobaugh C&O 4-8-4 sheet brass tender.

The engine is well done and runs great. The boiler is definitely a C&O Hudson and I would assume that others are out there somewhere as it is a large cast hunk of brass that someone went to a lot trouble building a master for.

There is a “sticker” on the cab floor from “The Hobby Depot, Elizabeth, NJ”. Perhaps most of your readers are on the OTrains List and have seen me write about the engine but having a photo may help to jog someone’s memory.

— Thank you, Ron Morse
and Along Came Scale...

As you know I am a Hi-Railer in transition. I have ventured out into the deep waters of O Scale on a few occasions, but always within sight of the safety of Hi-Rail. After all, I have a lot of time and money invested in my Hi-Rail empire and, while it is fun to go exploring and think about operating in a total scale environment including 2-rail track, to actually sail into those uncharted waters is a bit frightening. Hi-Rail is fun and it is comfortable. It works and it lets me enjoy the best of both worlds, the ease of operating trains and having everything as scale as possible. Besides, I like all of the available features like smoke, synchronized chuff, bells, and whistles.

Just when I thought it was safe to venture out into the waters of scale, just when I thought I was comfortable with my Hi-Rail choices, along came major manufacturing change that will affect those choices and quite literally force me back out into those scary, deep uncharted waters. This time I may go further than I have ever gone before... way out beyond the great 3rd-rail barrier. I need a safe harbor.

I guess you could call me a hybrid Hi-Railer. I have many model railroad friends on both sides of the tracks. My 2-rail friends have always had major manufacturers working for them to produce very scale and highly detailed locomotives and rolling stock. Names like Max Gray, O verland, Precision Scale, and Kohs come to mind. My Hi-Rail friends have always had to beg and plead for help from the likes of Lionel, K-Line, Williams, and M.T.H. to get them to not only build a locomotive, but build it as correctly as possible. No matter how good a model it might be there always seemed to be compromises in production for the 3-Rail operators. On the other hand, Atlas and Weaver have a proven track record of offering detail and quality in both 2-rail and 3-rail products for several years.

Then along came scale. Atlas really set the standard. Competition rose to produce the most scale looking locomotives and rolling stock that we have ever seen. Attention to detail was the accepted goal. Each catalog from the traditional 3-rail manufacturers offered never-before-produced items with lots and lots of details. Racing competition to announce products and get their models to market rivaled that of the Broadway Limited and 20th Century Limited. Realistic model railroading was born and it flourished and it has become a revolution.

Now, to those deeper waters, recently announced locomotives and rolling stock that are scale 2-rail and coming from some 3-rail manufacturers. Imagine Kadee-style couplers included in every box of rolling stock. In their search for their niche in the marketplace, their quest led them to the realization that O Scale is not dead. There is a whole new market of 3-rail hobbyists who are sitting on the fence ready to jump in. These are what I call hide-bound Hi-Railers who have no wiggle room... nowhere else to go in their search for realism. Their next logical move is to scale.

Who would have thought that we would have scale locos with a 2-rail/3-rail switch capable of running on 2 or 3 rails? Who would have thought that we would have such choices? These announcements of new products will rock my boat and the ripple effect will be seen throughout this hobby. I can now have all the benefits and features of 3-rail with M.T.H.’s DCS system and run on scale 2-rail track! These are totally new concepts and even my 2-rail friends are excited.

In giving M.T.H.’s announcement a lot of thought, I have come to the realization that I tend to model in degrees. I transition a lot as I learn new methods and new ways of doing things. Change is inevitable in model railroading just as it is in the real world. Technology brings change. I have decided that I will maintain some track on my layout as Hi-Rail to accommodate my roundhouse full of 3-rail trains. I will also convert some of my tracks to scale 2-rail which will allow me to operate the new scale locomotives. This way I can experiment and determine if I like them without having to have a “fire sale” with my investment. After all, this hobby is supposed to be fun, not frustrating. It is great that I can use my DCS system for both track systems. This will allow me to test and play with the new offerings and TRANSITION. This will allow me to grow my interests in the hobby and mature.

It has been said that you can never go back and I think this is right. These new products and announcements force me to deal with these issues now instead of later. And since I am a Hi-Railer in transition, I may just make my move into scale 2-rail a little sooner than later. New technology is seeing that. You know, I never really had a love affair with that center rail anyway!                                           

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**Stevenson Preservation Lines**

O Gauge Kits and Parts from past Master Modelers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Catalog 2002-1</th>
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<td>Alexander</td>
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<td>Pearce Tool Co.</td>
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Bob Stevenson, 2326 230th St. Boone, IA 50036
Send your photos to O ST Modeler’s Shelf.

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FOR SALE: Overland - USRA Heavy 2-8-2, N/P $1450; NKP S-2 2-8-4, N/P $1550. KTM/US - UP 4-8-4 Stu Kleinschmidt drive N/P $2400; UP 4-8-8-4 Stu Kleinschmidt drive A/P $2900. Ph: 815-464-6794 (after 4 PM Chicago time).

FOR SALE: Red Caboose tank and reefers, also US HOBBIES plug-door box car and Intermountain built-up and kit cars. USRA Chooch kits. Ph: 717-624-8894. John Hoffnagle, 10 Sunset Ln, New Oxford, PA 17350-1618


KEY Reserve now, firm reservations only. EMD E9: Burlington Silver/Red A-A, IC A-B, and UP “Streamliner” A-B. Also EA, E1, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7 and E8. Write or fax 412-766-4213.

Mail Order Trains Plus, 349 Roosevelt Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-1024

FOR SALE: Extra On30 cars, shays, misc. Ph: 254-547-3932

For Sale: OMI FA1/ FB1 (0355/0357) $950, OMI BL2 (0375) $700, Russell Snowplow (0781) $400, Jordan Spreader (0014) $400, OL NW2 Phill $450, GP7 $400, C&LS R366 UH $850, RR11 HH $850, Car Works PRN boxed car $150, Sunset & B&O caboose [5-, 8 window] $150, B&O painted caboose [5-, 7 window] $190. All unpainted (except last mentioned caboose), original box, TRO. Email [imunro@paradise.net.nz] or write Ian Munro, PO Box 24, Wellington, New Zealand

INTERMOUNTAIN BUILT-UP CARS - Gondolas: CB&Q, C&O, NYC, SP, MoPac, PRR, SL&SF; Box cars, refrigerators, hoppers, tankers, $39 plus $10 shipping. SASE for three pages of listings. Phone: 727-391-3135, John Clemens, 5273 97 Way N, St. Petersburg, FL 33708-3752

WANTED: Max Gray Erie K5 Pacific. Will answer all responses. Phone: 440-543-4764, email: [tpuckey@msn.com], Tim Puckey, 17091 Wing Rd, Chargin Falls, OH 44023-2601

FOR SALE: Max Gray UP Big Boy, painted black, runs good, $950; Max Gray C&O H8, needs front gear box (front gear is frozen), good paint, $875. Ph: 708-456-6122, John Zito, 2259 N Elm St, River Grove, IL 60171-1802

WANTED: Max Gray, SP 2-6-0, also Lobaugh SP 0-6-0 (kit or built up). Will trade my Big Boy or C&O H8 for brass Max Gray freight cars. Send list. Ph: 708-456-6122. John Zito, 2259 N Elm St, River Grove, IL 60171-1802

FOR SALE: Sunset - PRR N1, 2-10-2. $900; PRR 11, 2-10-0, short tender, $900; PHH1, 2-8-8-2, $1400. Ph: 502-228-6336. James L Burch, 4005 Hayfield Way, Prospect, KY 40059-9706

Reserve: Pacific Limited 1924 modified ARA Single Sheathed box cars for the Frisco. Four versions Wood door with either KC or AB brake or Youngstown door with KC or AB brake. SSAE for info. Email: [tbone@epud.net], T-Bone Models, 32264 Cleveland, Cottage Grove, OR 97424-9381
### STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

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<td>SP AC-12 Cab Forward 4-8-8-2, PSC, New, Crown Model, Samhongsa, No. 4290, F/P</td>
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<td>NYC PAPB, Key, New, Lightning Stripe - Samhongsa, F/P</td>
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<td>PRR H21a Quad Hopper, Atlas plastic, new, 1st run, circle herald</td>
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<td>UP Streamline Passenger Cars, Wasatch, New, Nine Car Set, Unptd: # 9000 Dome/Obs, Western Sleeper, National Sleeper (two), #7000 Dome, Placid Sleeper, ACF 5450-5487 Chair car (two), RPO Postal mail/storage car 5816-5820</td>
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September 2004

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 dannylynswy@yahoo.com

24-25: Indianapolis, Indiana
Indianapolis Midwest “O” Scale Fall Meet - NOTE: CHANGE IN DATE & LOCATION - Marriott Convention Center, near I-465 East and I-70 East (hotel phone 317-322-3716) - 2-Rail O Scale, Proto-440, On3, On2, O Trolley/Traction displays and sale. Friday registration 10 am, trading hall opens 2 to 9 pm; Saturday registration 8:15 am, sales 9 am to 3 pm, lay-out tour 4:30 to 7 pm (7 layouts open); Sunday layout tour 9 am to 2 pm (9 layouts open); advanced registration by August 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) 382-3322. Contact jcantermkp@aol.com

25: St Paul, Minnesota
Twin City Model RR Museum Hobby Sale, at the Education Building at the Minnesota Fairgrounds. Show is 9 Am to 3 Pm, $4 admission, under 8 FREE. TCMRM, 1021 Bandana Blvd. E, Ste 222, St Paul, MN 55108, 651-647-9628. Contact paulgruzetman@usfamily.net

26: Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Victoria Model Railway Show 14th Annual Event, presented by Vancouver Island Sub-division, Seventh Division, Pacific Northwest Region, NMRA (Canada). Held at Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 3220 Cedar Hill Rd, Victoria, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Adults $5; Family $12; NMRA/PNR Members $4; Children under 10 FREE when accompanied by an adult. Operating model railroads including the O Scale Cascade Pacific Railway. contact: David Tomljenovich 250-652-1894. Contact dtomljenovich@showca.ca

October 2004

1-2: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Southwest O Scale & Oklahoma Narrow Gauge Group Combined Meet. All O scale (2- and 3-Rail) and any scale Narrow Gauge dealers are invited. Modular layouts and model contests. Oklahoma Christian University, 2501 Memorial Rd., OKC, OK 73013. Registrations $15 (includes spouse and children), first two tables, $10 each, add’l tables $5 each. Contact George Wallace 405-751-7649 (home) or 405-755-4894 (fax), or write George at 11937 Stratford Dr., OKC, OK 73120.

2: 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 Geffchen 39 Rugby Rd. Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 (973)857-2825 before 10:00pm. Meet located at the First Presbyterian Church of North Haledon, 201 Squawbrook Rd., North Haledon, New Jersey. Contact pharборd@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 9 pm; Sat: sales 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 hzane1@comcast.net

9-10, Sequim, Washington
NORTH OLYMPIC PENINSULA RAILROADERS presents the Fifth Annual TRAIN SHOW AND SWAP MEET at Greywolf Elementary School, 171 Carlsborg Road, Sequim, Washington. Saturday Oct 9th, 2004-10:00am to 4:00pm, Sunday Oct. 10th, 2004-10:00am to 3:00pm. FREE ADMISSION. This is a “multi-scale” show with door prizes. For information on swap tables contact Bob Nelson at (360)681-7538 or email: bbb@olycomen

9: Gardner, Massachusetts
O Scale Train Show, Southern New England Model RR Club Annual O Scale Train Show and Open House on Sat. Oct. 9, 2004, 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Dealers, Displays and Door Prizes, featuring the SNE 20′ x 70′ layout operating with Digital Command Control. Located at United Methodist Church, 161 Chestnut Street, Gardner MA. Directions: Route 2 to either exit 22 or 23, then follow Train Show signs, or see map on our web site. Ample free parking, Food and Beverages available. $5.00 discount on dealer tables prior to Labor Day. Admission: $5.00 Adults, Family Maximum $8. Contact Bob Jones at PO Box 272 Ballouville CT 06233, (860) 774-8622, bjmmodels@jun o or see our web site www.snemrr.org for more details. Contact bjmodels@juno.com

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 Dan Robillard, 74 Colonial Blvd., West Haven, CT, 06516, 203-932-0185. Contact danobetnessobri@att.net

10: St Paul, Minnesota
Twin City Model RR Museum Burlington & Zephyr Day At Bandana Square. Show is Noon to 5 PM, $3 admission, under 5 FREE. TCMRM, 1021 Bandana Blvd. E, Ste 222, St paul, MN 55108, 651-647-9628. Contact paulgruzetman@usfamily.net

15-16: Brevard, North Carolina
Narrow Track 04 Two day narrow gauge meet features model/prototype seminars, manufacturer displays, operating modules, and a popular-vote model contest. To receive a non-binding registration form, write to narrow Track 04, 216 Broad St, PMB 405, Brevard NC 28712-3702.

16-17: Birmingham, AL
16th Annual Model Train Show sponsored by the Steel City Division of the SER/NMRA & the Wrecking Crew Model Railroad Club. Show location: Bessemer Civic Center, 1130 9th Avenue SW or Bessemer Super Highway. 2 blocks off Exit #10 on I-20/59. Free, Safe parking. Easy access to site. Adults $6.00, under 12. Free. Admission good for both days. Free “how to’s”, operating layouts, collectibles & more. Door prizes drawn every hour. Note: The layouts at Westlake Mall will also be open. Come visit a HUGE O Scale layout, two HO layouts and two N scale layouts. Contact fanchermw@msn.com

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 contact Mike Crandall, 718-829-1764. Email: (Jim Mardiguian) Contact dlwh4668@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; (215) 639-3864. Bring an index card with your name, address etc., for a $1.00 off your admission. Contact eostrains@att.net

November 2004

6: Wind Gap, Pennsylvania
Eastern O scalers Swap Meet - Plainfield 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, Benesalem 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

7-8: 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 CNYNRHS@aol.com

26-12/-12: North Haledon, New Jersey
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. Club located at 569 High Mountain Road, North Haledon, New Jersey 07508. Contact pharборd@optonline.net

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.
Nickel Plate Road 2-8-4 #757 by Harry Hieke, Eagle's Nest Miniatures

Harry says his goal here was to produce the most detailed O Scale engine ever. He was limited only by economic considerations. He used previously imported models in HO, O and G scales, plus photos and scale drawings as references. There is also an NKP 2-8-4 at Strasburg, Pa., at the Pennsylvania (State) Railroad Museum. Harry took over 150 photos of the prototype there. Phil Sciarra and Dave Vaughn lent their engines for reference.

This engine features a built up firebox, smokebox, and backhead plate which used just under one thousand nut-bolt-washer castings. Each smokebox dog is made of five separate parts and is operable. Harry opened the frame like the prototype and it is equalized like the prototype. The brake rigging is all there and it works, too, although Harry says not that well since a prototype brake shoes shoe moves maybe one-half inch. All the journal lids open.

Harry says he is most proud of the powered auger in the tender. It took a couple tries but it now rotates when you press down on the tender cistern lid. Harry says he can modify this mechanism to power a water scoop, a power reverse, etc.

There are 22 bulbs in the engine and tender, and there are a total of 25 hinged surfaces. The loco was painted and weathered using a stencil weathering technique Harry developed. According to Harry, this is the best he’s done to date.
I’ve just returned from the O Scale National convention in D.C. and what a great time we had. It’s always great to put faces with the names we see every time we process the mailing list. I was able to also spend some time talking with the many dealers and manufacturers who keep O Scale alive and vibrant.

I was most pleased to see both K-Line and M.T.H. at the show. While primarily providers of 3-Rail equipment, both have made serious commitments to scale 2-Rail. K-Line showed their Shay and their B&A Berkshire both in 2-Rail. These K-Line offerings will be welcomed additions to the 2-Rail side of the O Scale fence.

I talked at length with Andy Edelman, vice president of marketing at M.T.H. We discussed not just the re-entry of M.T.H. into the 2-Rail marketplace but also about the future of model railroading as a hobby activity. M.T.H.’s take is that we need to engage the “computer generation” of youngsters and young adults who show an interest in the hobby. One thing that I think is “cool” about the D.C.S. system is its flexibility. For example, D.C.S. will operate off either AC or DC power. If you have a conventionally wired 2-Rail layout and put an M.T.H. 2-Rail locomotive on it, it will run just like any other engine — sans the sound and smoke. Add the M.T.H. D.C.S. components to your layout and you now get command control of your loco, plus all the sound and smoke features. There are no switches to throw on the engine. The D.C.S. board senses the track voltage and acts accordingly.

Another great aspect of this convention was the marvelous layouts open for touring. I didn’t get to as many as I would have liked but what we saw was magnificent, both 2- and 3-Rail. The Capital Area O Scalers are to be commended for extending an open hand to the Hi-Rail community. This was a convention that had plenty to interest both 2- and 3-rail modelers alike. I know some dealers did as much business on the 3-Rail side as they did with the 2-Rail side. Considering what M.T.H. and K-Line are doing, this “integration” at the national is only going to benefit everyone.

By the time this reaches your hands you may have heard a rumor that OST will be sponsoring the 2007 O Scale National. We have Ron Sebastian of Des Plaines Hobbies to thank for “volunteering” us after no one bid for the date at the banquet. Jaini and I have agreed to consider being the 2007 host but we’re not committing to anything until we study this a bit more. We should have an answer for everyone by next issue.

I was as surprised as anyone that no one was there ready to bid for 2007. Perhaps a “national” convention is now passé. Maybe the regionals, like the Chicago March Meet and the September Indy meet draw large enough crowds that modelers don’t feel as compelled to attend the national anymore. If that’s true, then hosting a national with dwindling attendance poses a significant financial risk. That’s part of what we’re going to study over the next two months.

We pretty much finished the magazine before we went to the convention except for this column, so we don’t have any photos for you in this issue. We will have them in next issue. However, I’d like to recognize the contest winners:

**Steam** — First Place, Louis Bartig for a magnificent MoPac 2-8-4; Second Place, Joe Ferraloli for a B&O W1 class 4-8-4; Third Place, Charles Bard, CN class U4a 4-8-4.

**Diesel** — First Place, Joe Ferraloli, for his Diesel critter; Second Place, Joe Ferraloli, B&O SW1; Third Place, Ben Brown, G&W MP15 switcher.

**Electric** — First Place, Joe Ferraloli, freelance railbus; Second Place, Bob Fryberger, Midland Lines doodlebug; Third Place, John Crisi, NYC class R2.

**Freight Cars** — First Place, John Young, B&M reefer #13271; Second Place, John Young, B&M reefer #13128; Third Place, Ben Brown, MEC gondola.

**Passenger** — First Place, Bruce Aikman for modeling a complete B&O passenger train; Second Place, Ben Brown, B&M milk car; Third Place, Bob Hoffman, GN full-dome car.

**Freight Car** — First Place, Ben Brown, B&M milk car; Second Place, Ben Brown, G&W MP15 switcher.

**MoW** — First Place, Mack Creswinski, RGS Flanger;

**Structures** — First Place (and Best of Show), Mike Miller, Dig-Rite Shovel Company diorama; Second Place, Doug Kirkpatrick, Evergreen Hill gas station; Third Place, James Hartgraves, scratch gas station.

Mike’s diorama was so cool I have to give you a glimpse below with more to come next issue.

Meanwhile, keep high ballin’!
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