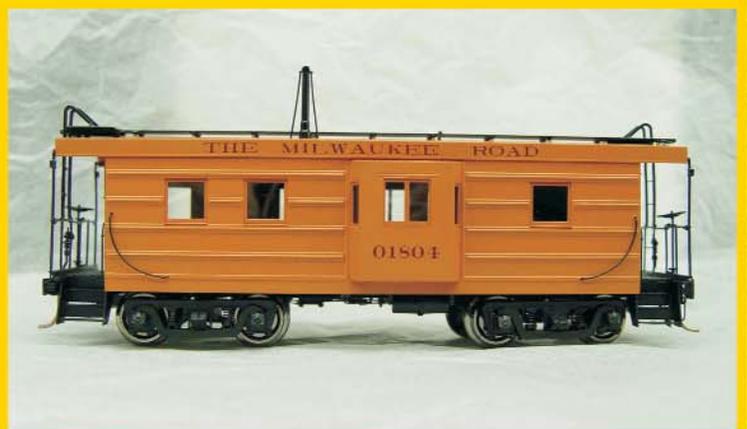


# DISPATCH



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

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## PRR F39 Piggyback Flat Car

In March 1955, 200 of these 75' TOFC cars were put into service on the PRR. Designed to carry two of the then-current standard 35' trailers, they were initially in PRR red with white lettering. Later, they became Trailer Train cars, and as of 1990, over 100 were still in service.

The kit consists mostly of pewter castings which can be soldered together with low-temp solder and iron, or glued together with a strong ACC or epoxy. Car weight with trucks and couplers is 11.4 ounces. While it will handle a 34" radius curve, it will look better on larger. Couplers, trucks, trailers, and decals are not included. The car is designed to use the SHS 35' trailers.

**#09203 S Scale PRR F39 Piggyback Flat Car \$89.95**

## F89 Piggyback Flat Car

Introduced in the early 1960s, thousands of these 89' long cars were built during the 60s and many are still in service. They have seen duty hauling trailers, containers, autos, pipes, and just about anything that is long!

The kit consists mostly of pewter castings which can be soldered together with low-temp solder and iron, or glued together with a strong ACC or epoxy. Due to its length, very wide curves are required. Couplers, trucks, trailers, and decals are not included. The car is designed to use the American Models' 40' trailers - SHS 35' trailer shown also fits well.

**#09200 S Scale F89 Piggyback Flat Car \$99.95**

Trailer not included.



## PRR H21 Hopper

Starting in 1911, 70-ton H21a "quad" hoppers were introduced for coal service. The original hoppers were built with the "old style" double-door configuration. During the 1930s and 40s, all old-style double-door hoppers were replaced with the "saw tooth" hopper.

The unpainted S Scale kit consists of high-quality, no-odor urethane castings for the body and brass brake components. Easy assembly with ACC or epoxy. Less decals, trucks and couplers.

**#09204 S Scale H21 Hopper \$ 79.95**

## Depressed-Center Flatcar



Designed to carry heavy and/or tall loads, the 40', 90-ton depressed-center flatcar is a unique car. It can be used in mainline freight service or as part of a work train with a piece of heavy equipment on top.

The kit consists of high-quality, no-odor urethane castings for the body, trucks, and brass brake components under both ends of the car. Less decals and couplers.

**#09209 S Scale Depressed-Center Flatcar \$ 59.95**

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

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**COVER:** Kelvin White's workbench in Oxford, England. This photo by Kelvin is titled "Work in Progress" and was a contest entry in 1996. Center photo is of the Tonkin 40' container and trailer. Bottom photos are pre-production models of River Raisin Milwaukee Road cabooses.  
**Background ©2006 iStockphoto.com/ Marco Prandina**

# ORDER BOARD

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April, 2007



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

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## NASG NEWS

### 2007 NMRA National Train Show

The NASG Promotions committee will have two booths, (678 & 679) at this years National Train Show in Detroit, MI (July 27 thru 29th). I will be bringing the SHS 5'X 9' operating display layout to run all suitable S scale items. We will also have a glass case to display some of the more expensive models.

S scale manufacturers can contribute to the promotion of S; by sending us literature to be inserted in an S Scale packet we will have available at the booth. I think 200 copies should be plenty. You could further help by lending display or running items for the layout. These can be handed over at the end of the NASG convention in Baltimore, or sent to us at:

S Helper Service Inc.  
77 Cliffwood Ave.  
Suite 7C  
Cliffwood, NJ 07721

Anyone who is attending this years NMRA convention and would like to help us at the booth would be welcome, either to help man the booth or set up.

-Don Thompson

*Continued on page 13*

# RAIL MAIL

**Stagnant:** You know, "S" can also stand for "Stuck" or "Stressed" or "Stymied." I've run into all three problems in the past (usually while trying to solder wires to my track). I'm one of those lucky people who is so bad at soldering that I've managed to solder a metal cuff-button to my railroad before - while I was wearing the shirt. Don't ask. The thing about any hobby is you have to find the part of the hobby that interests

you the most. If, for some reason you get tired of doing that, find something else to tinker with for a while, but you will invariably find yourself drawn back to the original thing. Yes, getting track installed and running does help immensely. Sometimes that's all you need to get yourself jump started. Silly as it sounds, snap-track and the various derivatives of such were one of the things that REALLY got people interested in the hobby. Snap-track (look, another "S" word) made it easy for people to get a basic layout set up and wired in a short amount of time, allowing them to concentrate on what they liked the most (unless that

*Continued on page 30*

## Jeff's Junction



### STAGNATION, NO APRIL FOOLS...

*After or before you read this check out the RailMail comments by others that drove me to put my own comments to pen.*

Why do we stagnate regarding building models and getting going on layout construction? Why do we procrastinate? Why do we hang on the internet and read magazines instead of getting going on projects?

Some of us don't, but many of us do, me included. I might add one excuse to my list that other S gaugers don't have - doing the *Dispatch*.

So why do many modelers in S put off really getting down to model railroading? The excuses follow:

**1. RTR stuff:** S modeling still requires a little more scrounging and building than other scales. But as far as locos and rolling stock goes, that excuse is disappearing.

**2. Time:** Most of us are a little older (50 plus), careers are winding down, we have a little less energy. We (mostly men) have to work longer hours, share more home chores (the Honey-Do List), often work two jobs, do our own home repairs, do our own taxes, try to figure out medical bills, attempt to master the TV remote, ferry kids to events, etc. I really got some modeling done when I was a teacher with those long vacations and summers off. Oh, I worked some in the summer too, but I still had a week here and there to work on a layout. But now, I'm in the private sector rut working longer hours, sharing work at home, doing the *Dispatch*, blah, blah, blah.

**3. Money:** Excuse number 3 is that money is often tighter nowadays. Declining retirement portfolios, energy costs, job losses, increasing health care costs (don't get me going on that one); things like that slow down using dollars for modeling.

**4. Club Activities:** Many of those in clubs who help with displaying layouts may have less time for modeling and building their own layouts.

**5. Lack of confidence in Skills:** Many of us have an inferiority complex when it comes to certain modeling skills - kit building, wiring, carpentry, DCC, scenery, track planning, etc. So, what to do?

**1. RTR Stuff:** Items are now readily available, so build up your roster. Buy track, accessories, building kits, etc. Put your plans for a layout on paper. Then, while things are in the planning mode you can do minor chores on the rolling stock (installing couplers, weathering, etc. Hi-railers can do minor maintenance. Often this can be done in front of the TV during those long commercials. Attend the swap meets to pick up stuff too and get motivated by being around others of like mind.

**2. Time:** As we move into retirement, plan ahead to use that time for more modeling and layout building. If laid off, do a little modeling as therapy while job hunting. Set aside a day, evening or two to work on the layout. If you're a sports fan, have a TV in your work area (see above). I now have a 27" TV in my rec room within sight of most of the layout where I can still watch my sports programs and old westerns.

**3. Money:** You remember that Johnny Cash song - "One Piece at a Time" (I'm guessing at the title) - about an auto factory worker who smuggled out parts and built himself a "new" car. Well, S modelers can do that too. Pick up a few things, one at a time, at the S meets or hobby shops. Always reassess your collection and sell off new purchases. Daily, throw your pocket change in a jug.

*continued on page 11*

# NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

**CASG** (c/o Willow Assoc., 4061 Glendenning Rd., Downers Grove, Illinois 60515). The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers still has some custom decorated AHL Tonkin Replica tractor trailers available for sale from the 2006 Fall S Fest. The tractor is a 1/64 Mack CJ and the trailer is the 28 foot bullnose. The trailer is white with a red roof and features the 2006 Fall S Fest logo on each side. The tractor is dark blue. Photos of the truck are available at the CASG site at [www.trainweb.org/casg/](http://www.trainweb.org/casg/). Cost is \$16.95 each with \$6.00 S&H for the first truck and \$2.00 for any additional. Payment should be with check or MO made out to CASG.

**FRENCHMAN RIVER MODEL WORKS** (72191 VM Hwy, Stratton, NE 2174 - 308-276-2174) has some 1/64 boat type things that might be of interest to those wanting details for water scenes. Check out the site - [www.frenchmanriver.com](http://www.frenchmanriver.com) for such items as a 13' fishing boat with outboard motor, wooden pier and ship's oars. A lobster type boat should also be available soon. The website also shows some store-front awnings in S.

**GC LASER** ([www.gclaser.com](http://www.gclaser.com)). As mentioned in the December issue, this manufacturer is producing S scale laser structure kits. A couple are shown in this issue including the Country Market and the Produce Loading Platform.

The Produce Platform has a footprint of 16-3/16" x 2-1/2" deep and 3-3/4" high. cost is \$69.99. The Country Market has a footprint of 4-5/8" x 4-1/8" x 2-1/2" high. Cost is \$29.00. A new kit is the J 2-story interlocking tower at \$169.99. Its footprint is 5-3/4" x 4-

11/16" x 7-15/16" high.

**PINE CANYON MODELS** ([www.pinecanyonmodels.com](http://www.pinecanyonmodels.com)) now has a poured concrete type cold storage warehouse available as a back-alley flat or a full building. The flat is 15-3/4" x 2-1/2" and sells for \$109. The full building can be either 18" x 4-3/4" or 15-3/4" x 7". It sells for \$189. Add 1-1/2" to the depth of each for the loading platform. Doug's Diner is the main building from Howard's Drive-in shown in the December *Dispatch*. The diner has a footprint of 7-3/4" x 5" and sells for \$74.

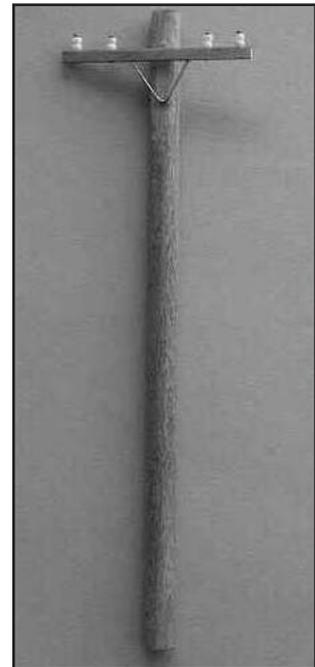
**RAGGS TO RICHES** ([www.ragstoriches.biz](http://www.ragstoriches.biz)) has announced the Aladdin General Store laser kit. It'll fit in any geographical area as a typical wood-frame 2-story general store. Two outhouses are included. These types of buildings were often a combo of post office, store, restaurant and gas station. This particular building once served as a depot as well. Retail price is \$145 with 32 optional detail castings for \$30.

**SMOKY MOUNTAIN MODEL WORKS** ([www.smokymountain-modelworks.com](http://www.smokymountain-modelworks.com)) is announcing a few more S freight car kits. Next will be a C of G 40' ventilated boxcar of the 30s-50s era. Then a Southern 50' PS waffle-side boxcar will follow this summer. This car was built in 1974 and is current today. Following will be the SAL B7 roundroof boxcar. Down the road will be a B&O wagontop boxcar, SAL 40' high side gondola and a Milwaukee Road 40' rib-side boxcar. Prices TBA.

**SnS TRAINS** ([www.sns-trains.com](http://www.sns-trains.com)). Just an update on some of their items. Telephone pole mention in my Jeff's Jct. last

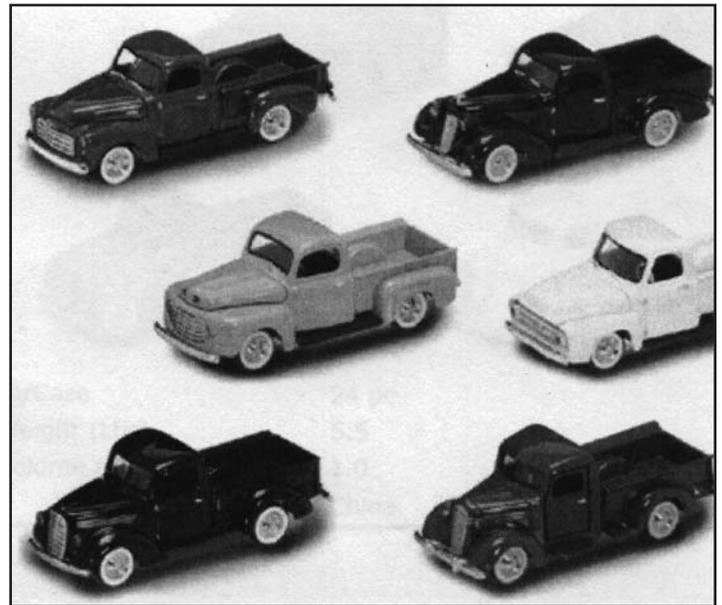
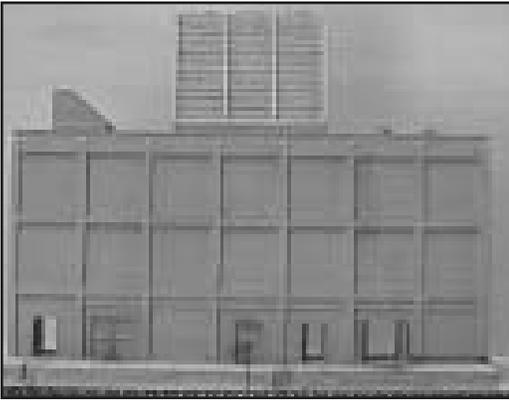
issue reminded Steve of his poles. These are single crossarm wood poles with or without transformer. They are 16 scale inches in diameter and are 24 feet tall. Cost is \$4 each without transformer and \$6 each with transformer. Other available items from SnS include various track cleaning cars, can motor conversion kits and some model railroad videos.

**YAT MING** (various distributors including Scenery Unlimited) has released some new die-cast 1/64 pickups. There are 3 series: custom (lettering on door), plain standard and hot rod version. They come in various colors, but the nice thing is that all are most are new tooling. Included are 1950 GMC, 1937 Studebaker Express, 1948 Ford F1, 1953 Ford F100, 1938 Ford, and 1937 Mack Junior. Prices vary. Scenery Unlimited sells them for \$4.95 each.

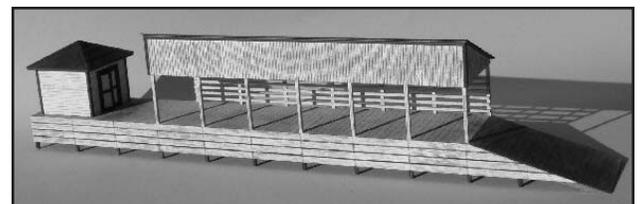


SnS Trains telephone pole. This one sells for \$4.

# WHAT'S NEW?



Let's go clockwise starting with the Alladin General Store from Raggs to Riches (Turner Models), then GC Laser produce stand, Pine Canyon cold storage flat, Pine Canyon diner, French River pier, Yat Ming pickups, French River fishing boat, GC Laser produce loading platform, and the LVSG Spiral Hill SHS hopper (see insert this issue).



# N.A.S.G. 2007

Get Your "S" To Charm City!

## Convention update

### TOURS AND MISC.:

1) Busses for all tours have been contracted. All busses are air conditioned, restroom equipped, and have video screens (not in the rest rooms).

2) The non-train related tour to Havre De Grace includes lunch at Mac Gregors, a waterfront view. Havre De Grace is a quaint town on the Chesapeake. Plenty of Shopping as well as touring.

3) The auction will take place in the dining ha;; after the banquet. All convention entrants are automatically enrolled for the auction--NO LINES --. See Jamie at his best.

### CONTEST INFO UPDATE:

In addition to the usual NASG model contest, we are reinstating the American Flyer Restoration and Imagination Contest last used at the 2001 Steamtown Convention. Models may be entered in one of two categories with the following requirements:

**1. Restoration** \*The restoration of an American Flyer model, including rolling stock, locomotive or accessory. A photograph of the model of the model must accompany the entry to prove condition of the model before restoration.

**2. Imagination** \*The model must be constructed in a fashion as if A.C. Gilbert would have produced it as a production model.

In planning models for the Imagination category we remind you that A.C. Gilbert frequently reused existing parts in new models.

In addition to awards in each of the two categories, a Best of American Flyer Award will go to one of the category winners.

The American Flyer Contest is being sponsored by the Chesapeake Northern Railroad which is providing the following prizes:

Best of American Flyer	*\$50
1st place each category	*\$50
2nd place each category	*\$25

Entry forms for all contests including the photo contest are available at [www.baafc.org](http://www.baafc.org) or from Monte Hepe, 188 Oak Drive, Pasadena, MD 21122-4421

### BALTIMORE DINERS

Well, it's back east again, so that means there are probably "eating" diners in the area. These are a couple that I'm pretty sure are still around:

- **Happy Day Diner**, 1959 De Raffele, at 8302 Pulaski Hwy, Catonsville, MD. This diner sounds from the website like it might be fun to check out. [www.happy-daydiner.com](http://www.happy-daydiner.com).

- **Forest City Diner**, a 1947 Silk City, in Ellicott City at 10031 National Hwy (U.S. 40).

- **Hollywood Diner**, a 1952 Mountain view, at 400 E. Saratoga, Baltimore. This diner was famous for being a set in the movie a set in the movie *Diner*. It now is a food service training center for at-risk youth. It is only open for breakfast - 7-9 a.m. and lunch 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Closed on Mondays.

- **Taste Diner**, 1939 O'Mahoney, at 7731 Woodmont, Bethesda, MD.



Happy Day Diner in the Baltimore area looks like a promising choice for nostalgia and hopefully, decent '50s type food.



## CONVENTION ACTIVITIES UPDATE

### Wednesday, July 11

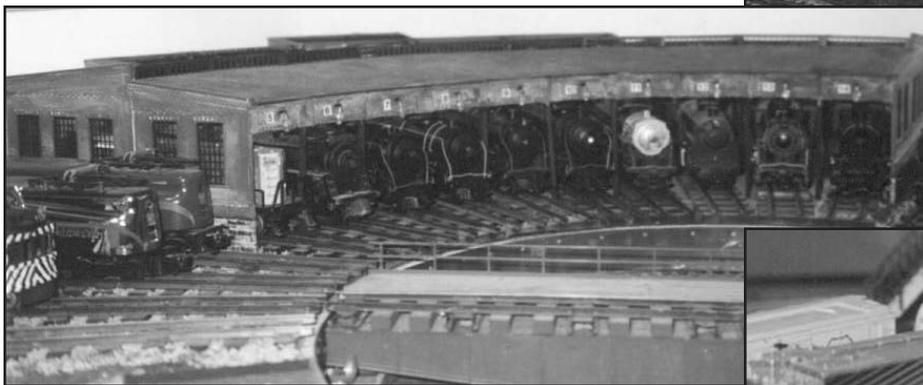
We are pleased to announce that we have arranged for four East Coast S Gauge clubs to bring their modular operating layouts to the convention. The featured clubs are: Potomac Valley S Gaugers of Ellicott City, Maryland; Atlantic Coast S Gaugers, Potomac and Old Dominion Division of Northern Virginia; Atlantic Coast S Gaugers, Carolinas Division of North & South Carolina or Tidewater Division of Chesapeake, Virginia; and North Penn S Gaugers of Norristown, Pennsylvania. Both S scale and S hi-rail operations will be featured. The operating layouts will be in a different location than the vendor halls and will provide the backdrop for the Wednesday night icebreaker reception. Conventioneers will be able to operate engines and rolling stock they purchase or bring to the convention on any of these layouts. Please make your arrangements with the specific clubs track you wish to use.

### Thursday, July 12

This is the highlight day of the Convention. All conventioneers are encouraged to visit the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum and its Ellicott City Maryland Station Museum and the Baltimore Trolley Museum. Conventioneers are reminded that there is no additional cost to visit these historic locations.

### Friday, July 13

BAAFC has arranged "a trip into the past" with a visit to the steam trains of the Chesapeake and Allegheny Steam Preservation Society operated in Leakin Park, Baltimore. The goals of the Society are twofold: 1) to preserve the part the steam engine has played in the development of transportation, agriculture, industry, and electric power in the United States; and 2) to create an awareness of the technology, history and romance of steam engines through exhibits, demonstrations, and a variety of education programs. The trains are operated on a 2-track main line. The trains are 1/8th full size and are mostly pulled with coal-burning live steam locomotives. The Railroad Division is part of a privately financed, operated and maintained miniature steam power museum. Steam power is demonstrated in many ways, although the railroad is the most visible. The locomotives are privately owned so trains run only when their owners can make them available. The Chesapeake and Allegheny operates over 3 miles of track on 10 plus acres. There are separate ground level tracks in 1 inch and 1-1/2 inch scales and elevated tracks in 1 inch and 3/4 inch scales. The 1-1/2 inch scale is gauged for 7-1/2 inch with minimum 75 foot radius curves.



Above: Photo of the roundhouse and turntable are on David Avedesian's layout that will be on the Friday night layout tour.

## LAYOUT TOURS

### Tuesday evening:

This tour includes three layouts that we hope will inspire those who have been hesitant to build a layout to begin construction. Ed and Nancy Schmidbauer's traditional Flyer layout shows how much fun you can have in a limited space and illustrates a creative way to expand your empire. Walt Westerfield's layout is hard to describe because it is always in transition. Walt never hesitates to dismantle all or part of his layout to try something new that strikes his fancy. Bob Davison's mid size Flyer/hirail layout showcases his structure, engine and rolling stock construction projects.

### Friday evening:

This tour includes four larger layouts. David Avedesian's Boston and Maryland Railroad features a large roundhouse withn operating turntable, many operating accessories and a long winding main line. Dave operates both TMMC and DCC. While not S gauge, we had to include Howard Zane's immense (2850 sq. ft.) world class HO layout. Sam Powell's beautiful scale layout was featured in the March/April Dispatch. Need we say more. Dan Vandermusse's Scale layout is operational but still under construction. It illustrates some scenery and building techniques that are quite interesting.

Clinic topics include History of Baltimore Street Cars, Scenery tips on trees and stone walls, digital photography, use of TMMC, use of DCC and East Coast American Flyer Modules.

Here are three photos of tour layouts at the Baltimore NASG convention this summer.



The diner and fountain, (above) and the Saval cars (below) are taken on Walt Westerfield's hi-rail layout. His layout will be on the Tuesday night layout tour.



# O/S SCALE WEST REPORT

Gerry Evans—Western Region VP-NASG

O/S Scale West 2007 was held in Santa Clara, CA from February 15th through February 17th with layout tours continuing on into February 18th. The show was extremely well attended, and, by my rough estimate as adjudged by vendor activity, about 200 S-Heads made an appearance.

S vendors included Southwind Models, Howard's Trains, Pacific Rail Shops, River Raisin Models, the late Palmdale Hobbies, and some independents. Also, while not strictly S vendors, NWSL and Clover House had a variety of interesting items for S buyers.

The Bay Area S Scale (BASS) club had their 11ft.x23ft. dual-track layout up and running under the leadership of Lee Johnson. On Friday evening, Bill Roberts arranged an S-only dinner that was attended by 30 show-goers.

While many many layouts were open for visits, I only got to Ed Loizeaux's stellar layout on Friday evening and Arden Goehring's 40ft.x40ft. "monster" on Sunday. Ed's layout is nearing completion...if that's truly possible. Arden has begun to add some scenery to his. He told me he determined to forge ahead with scenery completion.

In the model contest, S models probably equaled or out-numbered O models. On a popular vote, BASS's Bill Young's bridge took first-place, and Bill Roberts' trestle garnered third-place for structures. Two of my MOW cars took first and second in the MOW category.



**"No, my brass is shinier," Dan explains to Jettie.!**



**Howard Sheffield and James McAuliffe - "You mean it runs on roadbed without any track?"**



**Bill Young's First Place Model**

*Photos by Gerry Evans*



**Bill Winans and Dave Fontana wheel and deal.**

**Jeff' Jct. continued from page 5**

**4. Club Activities:** Borrow a few club members for a few work sessions. Provide some snacks and allow for some relax time after a few projects are completed. Invite only a few at a time; often only those with the skills you need help with. Sam Powell said as much in his *S Tracks* column on Round-Robin groups in the February *Dispatch*. You know the old saying - "Too many cooks spoil the broth." Many clubs do have small informal round-robin groups within the larger group for just this reason.

**5. Lack of Confidence in Skills:** Read the paragraphs in number 4 again. Offer your skills (say carpentry) to a buddy who knows how to hook up DCC wiring.

And lastly, motivate yourself. I find things that motivate me are reading magazines (don't overdo it), attending club activities (seeing trains running), attending S meets and the annual NASG convention where I get inspiration from layouts, people, clinics, contest models, etc.

So if you're a procrastinator, armchair modeler, time-strapped or just plain lazy, here is some food for thought to get out of "Stagnation."



The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum will be on a Thursday tour at the Baltimore NASG Convention, or you can visit it on your own. The museum is built on the site of the historic Mt. Clare Shops of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Lots of stuff to see: restored round-house, lots of locos and rolling stock. On the same tour you will visit the oldest railroad station in America in Ellicott City, MD.

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# S TRACKS

By Sam Powell

## Transferring the Railroad from Plan to Table Top.

I don't want to imply that designing a model railroad on paper is really easy, but it is easier than getting the plan turned into physical reality in the railroad room. This article is designed to explain one way that can be done in an attempt to nudge some future Robber Barron out there into action. I assume there is more than one of us who has drawn up a plan that sits in a file folder or desk drawer awaiting the application of layout material and labor. I am going to say once again, the effort is very rewarding. I encourage you to take the great leap.

Up until May of 2006 the second half of the Penn Creek Valley was still just on paper. I had vowed to get some good scenery down before finishing the benchwork and track so the model railroad looked appealing scenically early on in the process. Well, Jamie Bothwell visited me before both the 2005 and 2006 NASG conventions, and I realized while he was here the second time that I had not put any new track down between the two visits. It was time to put away the scenery materials and get out the saber saw. With the able help of the MMSCG, by November of 2006, we were getting very near the golden spike moment. The benchwork and track had been built and installed in a total of 4 months. I thought that perhaps if I shared this simple, quick process with you, it might inspire a few guys out there to get started.

The new Penn Creek Valley is not that far removed from it's tin plate ancestry in construction. I intended to use sectional track early on, but wanted larger radius curves, and turnouts that were not available at the time. The result is I got sucked into hand laying track again. But,

This time the layout design involves constructing table tops that fasten together in sections that can be later detached for moving. All major scenery is removable sections of foam, so before scenery is added, the base layout construction looks essentially like a tin-plate layout. Nothing is attached to the floor, or walls, and most sections are only slightly bigger than NASG modules. Construction itself is simple, straightforward, and goes pretty fast. The trick is figuring out what size and shape to make them so that your model railroad will work out in reality somewhat similar in appearance and function to your plan.

I think the process is essentially the same regardless of the track you are using. The tools involved are craft paper, an empty floor in the train room, scissors, pencils, felt tip markers, a box of push pins, and whatever materials you are intending to make your benchwork from.

### Getting the track plan transferred to full size on craft paper

I started by placing the craft paper on the floor, and drawing in where I thought my isles might be, but not actually cutting the paper yet at this point. The aisles should be 24 inches wide at a minimum. You can get by with less, but you will be knocking things over on the layout at the tighter places. If you must have an aisle narrower than 24 inches, and even that is a little on the narrow side, then avoid placing vulnerable structures near the edge of the layout. Once you have got your paper down, and your aisle placed, you must be able to place down a full S scale pattern of the track you intend to use. If this is sectional track, then you simply buy some sample track to move around as you mark your new track plan directly upon the craft paper.

Initially I was using SHS sectional track in my planning and had one plan drawn out, but I decided to

hand lay the track, and the plan changed. All it took was an erasure to change things at this point. The hobby shop where I bought the SHS track exchanged it, and nothing was lost but a little time. I drew my plan down on the craft paper using a 1/4" plywood template for 36" minimum radius roadbed and a flexible batten for larger curves. I purchased a set of switch templates from Tom Hawley to use for calculating the position and size of turnouts. At this point you can stare at the plan, and see if you like what you are seeing and change your plan with very little effort. Once I am pretty sure I like the plan, I trace the aisle edges in with the felt tipped pen. I finish by marking in the track full width across the ballast shoulders of the road bed. This will show us exactly how to align our roadbed latter in the process. I first draw in one side of the roadbed with the flexible batten as a guide. I then use a 2-1/4" square block of wood to gauge from the one side where the other side of the roadbed will lie. It is kind of like a track gauge, but the width of the roadbed instead of the rails.. I make a tick mark every foot or so, and then use the flexible batten again to connect the tick marks with a second line. I now have both sides of the roadbed indicated in felt tip pen. The finished roadbed, in my case is 2 1/2 inches. The size grows from 2 1/4" to 2 1/2" with repeated tracings. By the time you add the width of the felt tip pen you end up with the larger size. Since we later cut out the pattern and trace around that on the table top, we have added the width of a felt tip pen twice on each side.

The next step is to determine where the layout sections are going to be joined. The joints must not be under a turnout. Also, things are simplified if the track is kept to a minimum at the joints. Since my main yard is pretty long, I violated this rule once, and there is a joint right across the yard tracks. This will require some fussing with if

and when I move the layout. You have to figure where your house's doorways, stairways, and corner hallways are going to restrict the size you can move, and take that into account in your planning. At this stage of my life, I am not getting any stronger, so I kept the section's sizes down to make it possible to move the layout without a small army coming in to help.

### **Building table-top sections**

Once you have decided where the sections will join, mark the edges of the seams with a felt tip pen, and cut out the paper around the edges of each section, one section at a time. I leave the patterns for the unbuilt sections on the floor, so I don't get the patterns for the sections mixed up. Each pattern will be placed back up on the table top once it has been constructed, and is on its legs. Your favorite construction type is fine, but I will recount how I made mine.

I started with a pair of 1/4" Luan mahogany sheets clamped together, and pinned the paper pattern to the top one. I then traced around the pattern with a felt tip pen. I used a saber saw, and carefully cut out both sheets at the same time, thus assuring they are just the same. One piece of Luan will be the top surface upon which the track is mounted, and the other piece will be the bottom surface of the table top. I place 1x2's on edge between the top and bottom piece, thus constructing a hollow core door of a specific dimension. These go along the edges, and across the width and along the length, down the length of the section. There is a 1x2" perimeter frame that protrudes down from the lower side that not only stiffens the final construction, but provides a place for legs to be fastened, and to bolt each section together. The entire depth of the table top, included both pieces of Luan, the core spacers, and the lower perimeter stiffeners is about 4". All of this is glued and screwed together with yellow wood glue,

and 1" sheet rock screws. Of course, a power screwdriver is a must. I will write later more details of this construction. It is a modification of the construction used by an O scale modular layout group.

If you intend your layout top and all the track to be perfectly flat, with no grades, then you must have the layout section supported on a flat surface when you glue and screw the last side in place. Whatever shape it has when the final side is glued on will be permanent. If the table has a sag in it, or a hump in it, then it will stay that way. You can use this to introduce grades, or crest hill tops etc, by purposely supporting one end a little bit when you glue up the final side. Just be aware of what you are doing, and how it fits into the final grade scheme of your layout. Also be aware of the warp in the 1x2's that you select. If you want the layout surface to have a grade, or transition into a grade, then place the direction of the warp appropriately to have the grade profile you want in the end. I must confess that I originally did not intend to have the grade elevation change on the Penn Creek Valley. My early sections were not flat, as I did not pay particular attention to the straightness of the table top as I was gluing it up. The end result was that the early sections produced a natural transition into a grade that in the end was quite appealing. There is a difference of 12" in the grade of the lowest and highest sections. It all flows quite smoothly and looks planned, but it was not. This is what artists call a "happy accident". Be forewarned if you use this type of construction, and take care to produce the gradient changes you want.

As each new section is constructed, it is placed in the layout room on its legs and bolted to the already constructed sections. The legs have leveling screws in the bottom to allow the layout to be leveled up as construction progresses. As

each section is done, the paper pattern is then pinned to the table top. As the constructions of table top sections accumulates, you can see your track plan begin to take shape. This is the time to study the plan more carefully and see if you want to make changes in it. Try to imagine the trains traversing the layout, and see ahead of time if any changes will improve the visual effect or operation style. Look to see if you have enough passing tracks, etc. You can put some actual track and trains down, and see if the effect is what you were hoping for. If not, then now is the time to change it.

Once you are happy with the design, then you can start laying track. The style of track you are using will determine how this works for you. If it is sectional track it will go pretty quickly. If it is to be hand laid, or flex track it works well to cut the track patterns out of the paper, pin those track patterns down to the table top, and then trace around them so you have your track plan now drawn directly to the table top. You can then install roadbed, and track directly between the lines you have traced on the table top.

Construction of the table tops does not take too long. I found it took me about 3 hours to make each section, and another hour to make the legs. My layout, which is nearing completion of the mainline of 180 feet, has 18 separate sections. This represents about 100 hours of time, which in our hobby is not a lot. Of course there is the track and scenery, wiring etc, but this is a pretty quick start towards getting your layout built. Plus, you can move the entire layout if you wish later on in the event you move to another home. I hope this description has been clear, and inspiring to future empire builders out there.

**Please address any questions  
or comments to  
Sam Powell  
Spowell786@Verizon.net**

A Review...

# TONKIN PEM 40' CONTAINER

By Tom Hawley

The new 1/64 containers on chassis from Tonkin / PEM have arrived and they have a lot of potential. A few definitions first.

A container in this context is a cargo-shipping container made to certain standards as to shape, size, and strength. Standard lengths today are 20, 40, 45, 48, and 53 ft. For ocean shipping the 20, 40 and 45 ft foot containers predominate. Containers are called intermodal because they are transferred between the modes of highway, rail, and sea vessel.



A chassis is a special highway semi-trailer, usually just a skeleton or framework, designed specifically and exclusively to carry intermodal containers.

The Gooseneck is the slightly raised front end of the chassis frame. It fits into the container's gooseneck tunnel, a recess under the front of the container. This allows the top of the tractor's fifth wheel to be almost directly under the bottom of the container, allowing maximum overhead clearance.

The PEM container is a good S scale model of a basic 40 foot international or ocean-going general cargo container. It measures accurately out to 40 scale feet in length, 8 scale feet in width, and 8½ scale feet in height, a very common size. I don't know if it's based on one specific manufacturer's container, but it is very much like the typical 40 ft container that one sees on chassis on highways; on railcars, and being loaded on and off container ships in our ocean ports. The dimensions of the container's gooseneck tunnel appear to be correct.

It comes unlettered, but in a brownish-red color that is typical of many real containers. The door-locking rods at the back end are painted a silvery color. Hyundai decals and a little dull-coat would make one of these containers look perfect. See the site shown <http://home.xnet.com/~cmhewitt/photo> Of course you don't want your entire 40 ft container fleet the same color, you'll want to do some painting as well as decaling.

Now the container's drawback: It really has only one and that's the weight. Thirteen ounces is acceptable for maybe just a few or them in a train, but a realistic intermodal train with scores of these containers, double-stacked, is going to be a bit much. Thirteen ounces is 106½ S-scale tons. S scale still needs accurate containers of all lengths including 40 foot in light-weight plastic.

The chassis in many ways looks like a chassis should look. It is black, has red tail lights and conspicuity markings on the sides. It has the rear impact guard (ICC bumper), also reflectorized red & white. It has wheels with rubber tires of an appropriate size, with shiny rims that can be dulled down, and mud-flaps. For a good description of a real chassis, see <http://www.cheetahc.com/chassis/>, and specifically, click on 40' Tandem Axle Eight-Pin Gooseneck Chassis under 20' and 40' Capable Chassis. On that page, don't overlook the link to download a schematic, just below the picture.

Now the chassis' negative points. A minor point is that the conspicuity stripes run along the top of the frame. All real chassis I've seen have them along the bottom except where they would be hidden by the wheels. But the principal problem is that the frame sits far too high above its wheels. The frame is for some reason placed so high above the bogie or wheel assemble that when the container is on the chassis, the distance from top of tire to bottom of the container is about 20 scale inches. On a real one, that distance is more like six inches. A real unloaded container chassis has a maximum height above the ground of 48 inches. Ours is about 64 inches. This causes the top of the container, when on the chassis, to be about 14 foot above the ground.

Maximum legal vehicle height in most states is 13½ feet. But it shouldn't be hard to lower the frame, assuming the metal can be cut.

All real chassis have a horizontal member at the front that comes up in front of the container a few inches. According to John Becker (Modelintermodal Yahoo list)

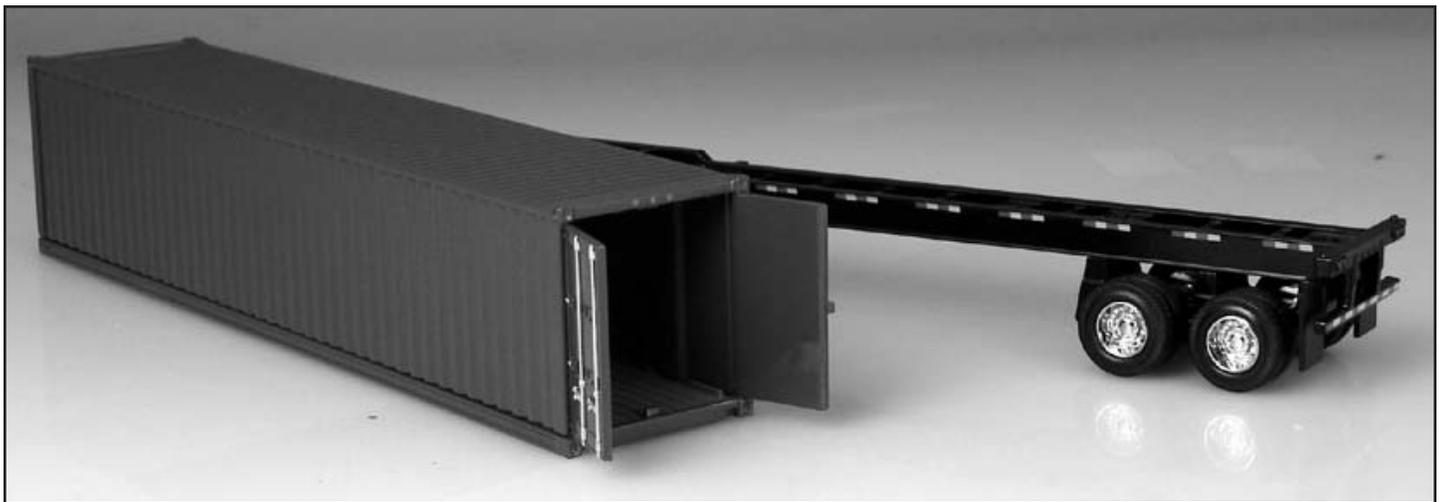
"That is known as a bolster and its purpose is to secure the front of the container when it is mounted on the chassis. There is a pin that extends into the front of the corner casting on the container to lock it in place. The pin does retract via a handle in the bolster. . .The trailer's air and electrical connections are located within the bolster." It's totally missing on ours. Perhaps it could be fabricated.

This brings us to the enigma of the S Scale America containers. They come in kit form from Des Plaines Hobbies, and rumor has it DPH may someday sell

them assembled and painted. Using decals also available from DPH, they make excellent containers. Their only problem is that they are slightly under-size. Perhaps they were made to a scale of 1/66. So while they're great containers and look perfect in the SSA Husky Stack cars, you can't stack one above a PEM container. The corner castings don't line up.

The possibility of lengthening the chassis to carry the longer SSA containers should also be considered. One sees these on the highways, especially common ones like J B Hunt. But since the SSA containers are slightly too small, the gooseneck tunnel will have to be enlarged out slightly to make them fit on the chassis, or the gooseneck could be filed down to fit.

Nevertheless, both the new PEM containers and the SSA containers that have been around a few years have an important place in S scale intermodal modeling. Just don't put them one above the other.



Above is a photo of the 40 foot Tonkin container and chassis. Photo courtesy of Rick Williams of Tonkin Replicas



Chad Hewitt photo 10/05

Prototype photo of two containers on a TTX straight flat taken by Chad Hewitt.

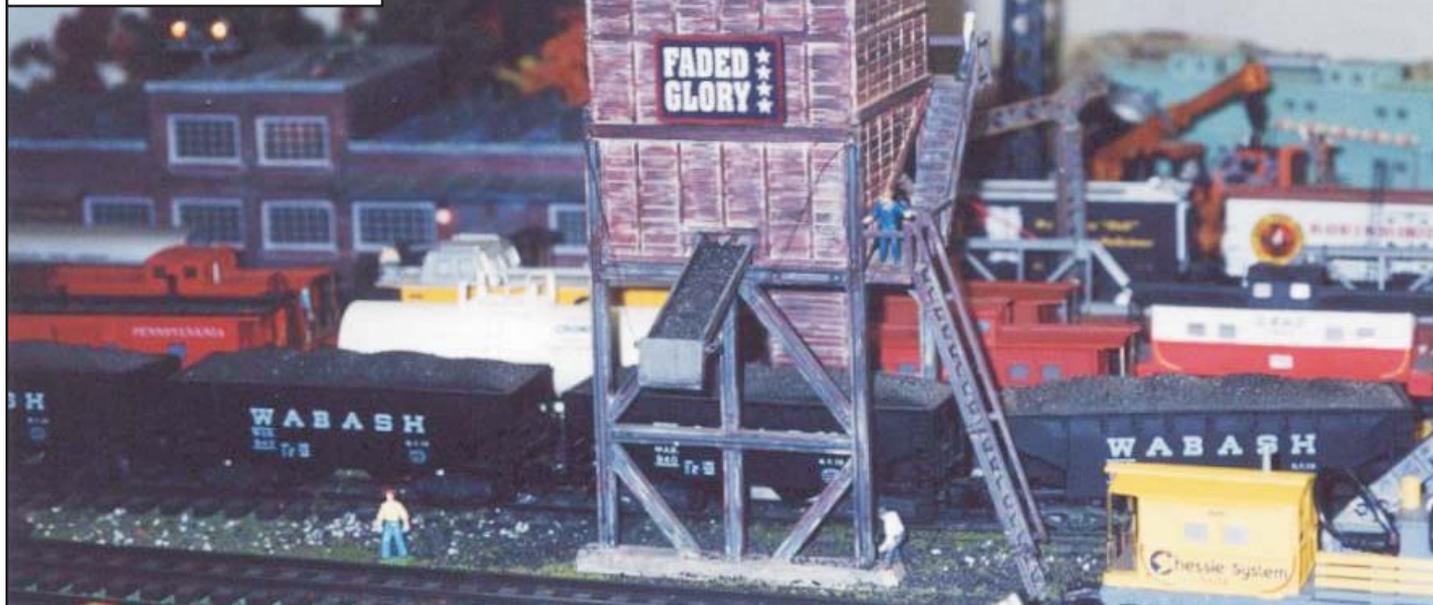
As a follow-up to my request in last year's *Dispatch*, I would like to say a heartfelt "Thank You" to those S-gaugers who donated AF trains that are now running on a Christmas layout at the Cardinal Hayes Home for Children in Millbrook, N.Y. I would particularly like to thank Larry Morton of North Carolina, Farley Snow of Alabama, John Garren of Connecticut, and Jim Bezek of Pennsylvania for donating trains. The trains are bringing enormous joy to dozens of disabled children and young adults whose lives can often be a little dull. The administrator at the home asked if I could leave the layout up until spring. No problem. I installed a barrel loader. And we run an AC Gilbert handcar. These little items are more popular than the trains! Any kind of operating car or accessory would add to the fun. I've been asked to set up an additional layout next Christmas at another site. All donations will continue to be gratefully accepted.

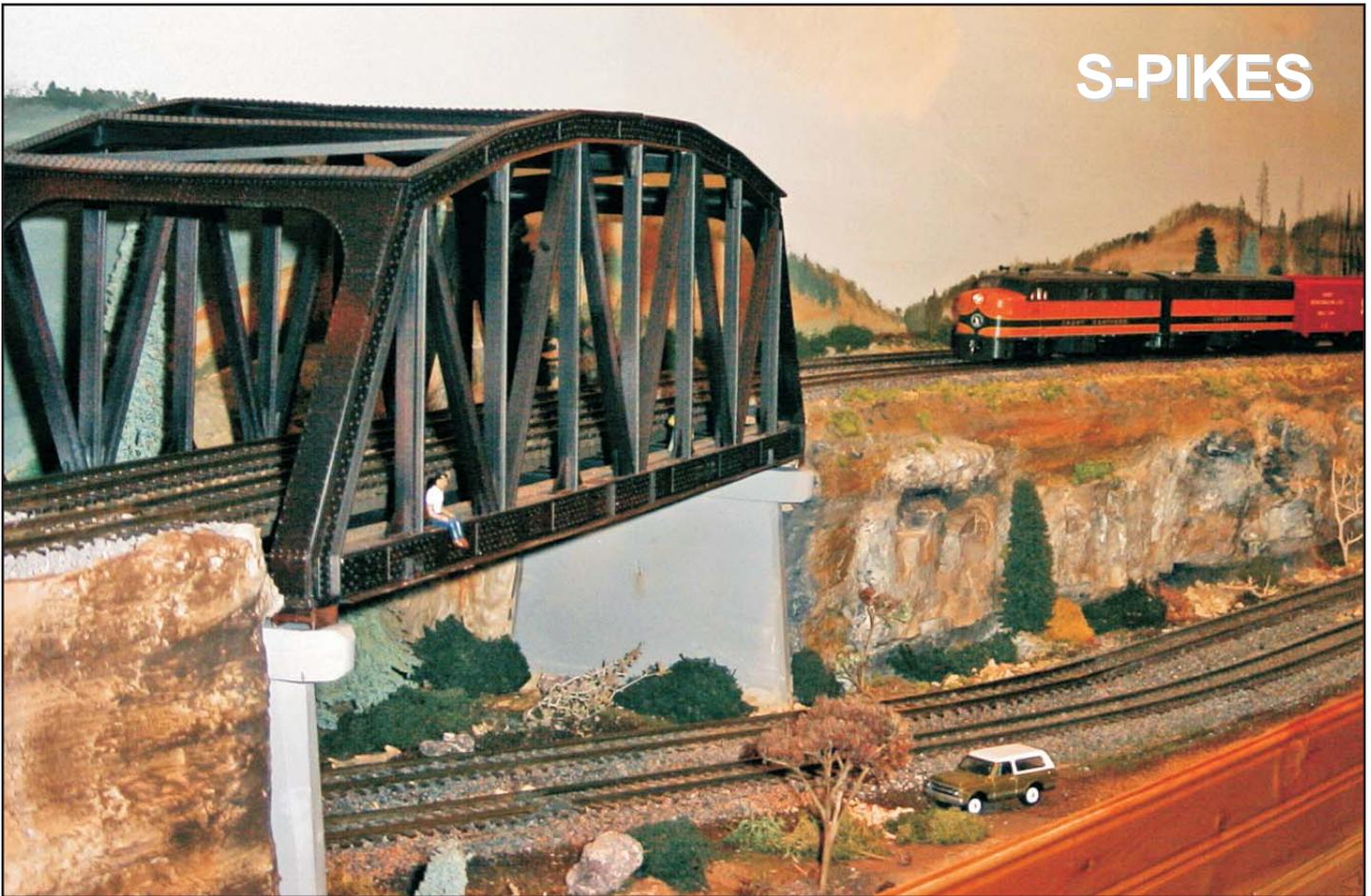
I've enclosed a photo of E.J., a resident of Cardinal Hayes, learning how to use the "deadman's" handle on the AF transformer. I wish I could teach the kids that the deadman's control doesn't have to be used every 5 seconds and that the trains do not always have to run at 120 MPH...in reverse! Thanks again to our S-gauge community, Al Marotta.



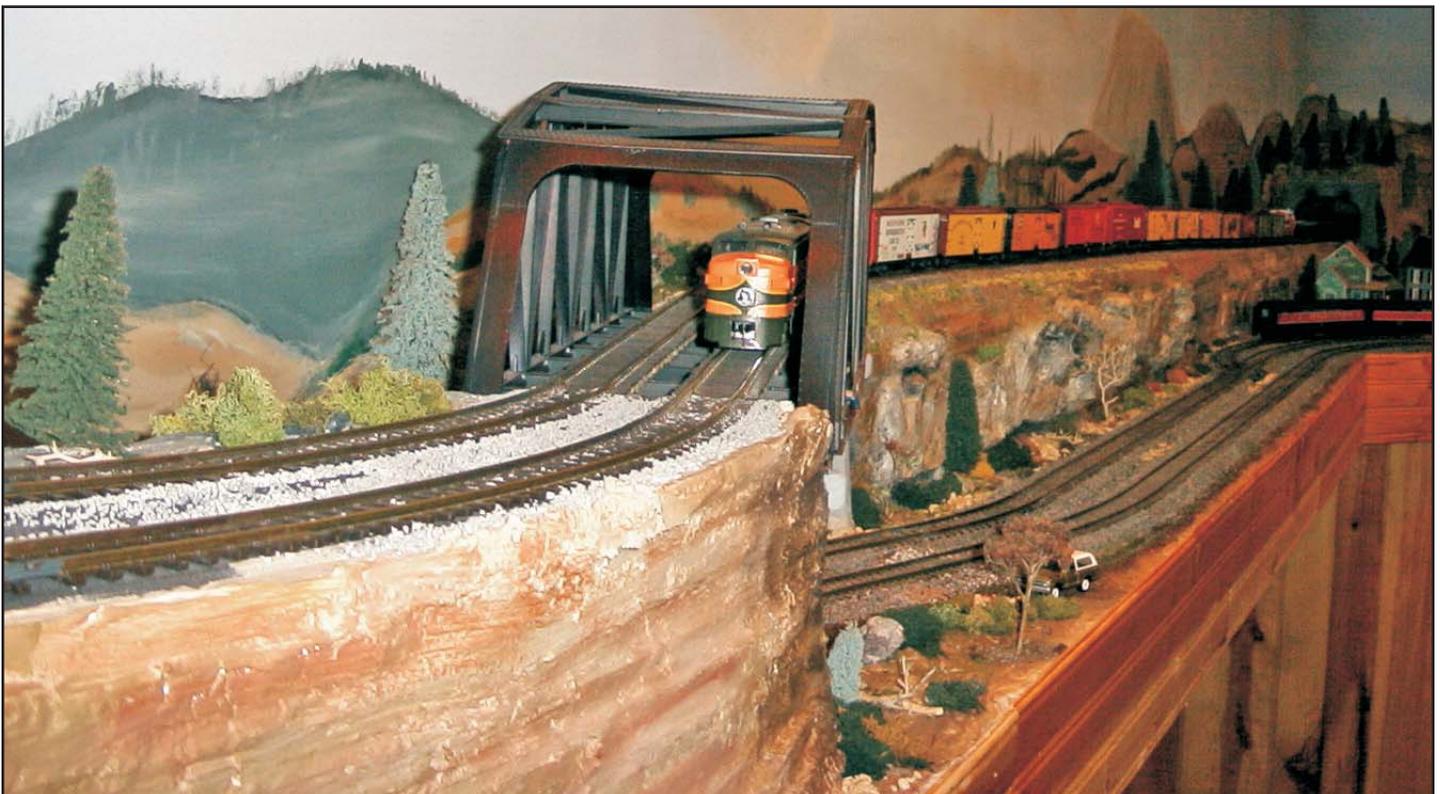
Photo by Al Marotta

Below is a scene on Bob Davison's hi-rail layout that will be on the Tuesday evening layout tour at the Baltimore NASG Annual Convention this summer.





Above and below are two photos of the layout of Roger Meekhof of Kalamazoo, Michigan. The double-track truss bridge is kitbashed from two Lionel #2122 bridges. Roger says he's working on cutting down an Atlas O roundhouse to fit his S layout. *Photos by Roger Meekhof*



# The Straight & Narrow

By David L. Heine

## News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

### Track and Ties

I have been slowly getting ready to start track laying on my new layout. My current layout plan will test my track laying skills. When I designed this layout, I used what ever track arrangement I thought was best, not what is available ready-to-run. As a result, only about 30% of the turnouts on the layout are available as RTR. The remainders are dual gauge, curved, 3-way or some other variation. This leaves me the choice of paying for custom track work or just hand laying everything myself. While the track will be hand laid, I still want it to look good, like the best flex-track.

I have also been doing some research into what was typically used by narrow gauge railroads. Rail size, tie size, and the use of tie plates depend on the particular railroad and where it was used. Many times the railroad used very light rail initially, then upgraded the mainline but not the sidings. Sometimes there was more than one upgrade as locomotives and cars increased in weight and capacity. There is an article in the November/December 1989 issue of the *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette* that compiles known tie sizes and rail weights for several Colorado and California narrow gauge railroads. Rail weights used ran from 30 lb. to 85 lb.

One of my favorite railroads is the East Broad Top and the EBT has a strong influence on the basic design of my layout, even though the details are much different; so I tend to use it as a guide if I am undecided. The EBT mainline was mostly 60 lb. rail but after they received the heaviest 2-8-2's they

upgraded certain sections to 70 lb. and 85 lb. rails. Even with the upgrade, there still were sidings with 40 lb. and 50 lb. rail.

In S scale, commonly available model rails scale out shown below.

The rail Code is actually the rail height in thousands of inches. Prototype rail is rated in pounds per yard length. To confuse things, there was more than one standard rail cross section so rails of the same weight could have different heights.

**Code** Approximate Size in S Scale:

125 equals	155 pound rail
100 equals	110-115 pound
83 equals	85-90 pound
70 equals	65 pound
55 equals	40 pound
40 equals	25-30 pound

The use of **tie plates** varied greatly. Some narrow gauge railroads did not use them, some on mainlines only, and some seemingly at random. Tie plates did help prevent the rail from cutting into the ties and in some cases spread out the weight so that lighter rail could be used. The D&RGW used them on their mainline tracks, but others did not. I checked into what the EBT used and it appears they installed occasional tie plates at random. I found a picture showing the 85 lb mainline rail with tie plates on one tie and none on the rest in the picture. Most logging railroads did not use them except possibly on their busiest mainlines.

I recently built some three short test tracks to try some new ideas and refresh my track laying skills. I started with two scraps of homasote fastened onto the two boards. The first two test tracks were on

one piece and the third one was on the section piece.

**Test Track 1** – This started with staining some standard gauge ties and gluing them to the homasote. I then laid three Code 83 rails gauged to S/Sn3 dual gauge. In this case is used etched tie plates from Simon Parent, which are useable for both Code 70 and Code83 rail. I followed Simon's directions for installing these, and found that correctly filing the end the rail makes a big difference in the ease of placing the tie plates on the rails. The tie plates have two simulated spikes that fit around the rail edges and two holes, with which you can also add regular spikes with you wish. I added spikes every few ties but the remainder are just glued. Since this was just a test, I did not bother painting the rail or tie plates.

For **spikes** I used the Proto:87 Stores spike sample kit (<http://www.proto87.com/p87stores/>). They make several sizes of spikes and include four variations in the sample kit. The ones I used are the spikes that are 150% of HO scale size, which means the spikes work out to about 110% of an S scale spike. These spikes are made of etched stainless steel and come in two different lengths. The short ones will essentially just go into a tie, while the longer ones will go into the roadbed. In the sample set they also include two versions of spikes almost to HO scale, but these are very small. I found that I could use the Xuron spike insertion pliers (sold by Micro-Mart) only with the 150% long spikes; all the others were too short. Even though these spikes are small, I found them relatively easy to use, and I actually had fewer problems than using standard spikes.

**Test Track 2** – This test track started with staining some Sn3 ties and gluing them to the homasote. I then laid three Code 70 rails gauged to Sn3/Sn2 dual gauge. I use HON3 gauge for Sn2 which is

actually too wide at 26.4" so the two non-common rails are fairly close to each other. Because of this, it would be difficult to include the tie plates on this track configuration; they would be touching and overlap if you were off a little on the alignment. In this case I again used the Proto:87 Stores 150% of HO spikes, but every rail was spiked with two spikes per rail per tie.

**Test Track 3** – In this case I also wanted to experiment trying to model rail laid on small logs for modeling logging railroad track. I used stained Sn3 ties for half this section and the second half I used ties made from bamboo skewers. I cut them to a very approximate

length using a diagonal cutter pliers, like those used for cutting electrical wires. This partially crushed the ends and gave them a rougher appearance. Since in many cases when logs were used they were just hewn flat when the rails were laid as needed, I left mine as they came. In this case I spiked Code 55 rails to the ties for Sn3 again using the same spikes as the other two tracks. Since bamboo is hard, I had to drill a hole on either side of the rail for the spikes using a #78 drill. Again I installed two spikes per rail per tie. Contrary to popular belief, you can hand spike Code 55 rail and have not have the wheel flanges hit the spike heads if you use small enough spikes. The largest spikes

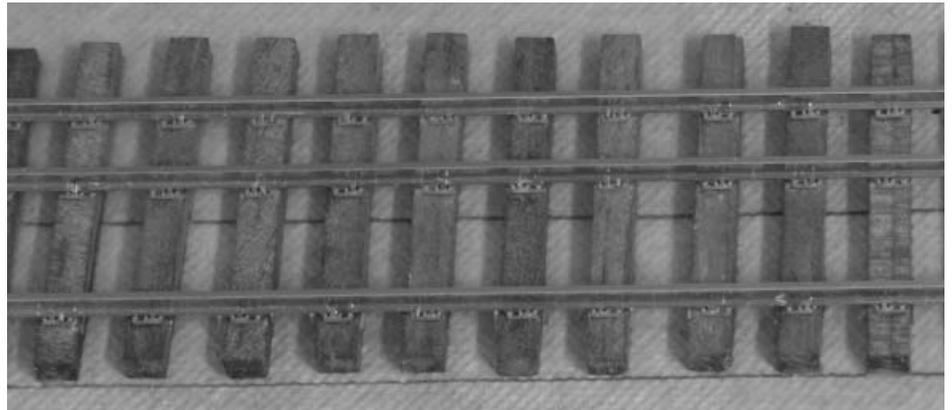
that I have found you can use is Micro Engineering small spikes.

I found that everything I tried worked, but will take some time. Using the bamboo skewers seemed to work and was easier and faster than using twigs. The down side of the bamboo skewers is the need to drill holes for the spikes, but I am still planning to use them in some areas. I would also like to try using Code 40 rail for some logging spurs.

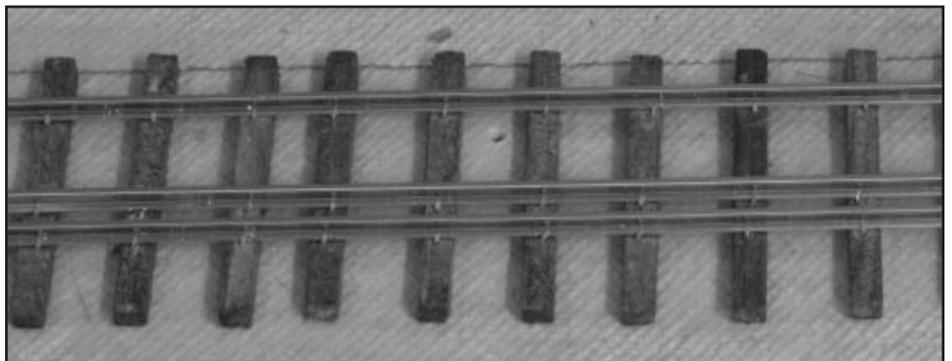
**As always, feel free to write if the mood strikes; or send Jeff some pictures of your latest work.**

**Dave Heine  
davesn3@rcn.com**

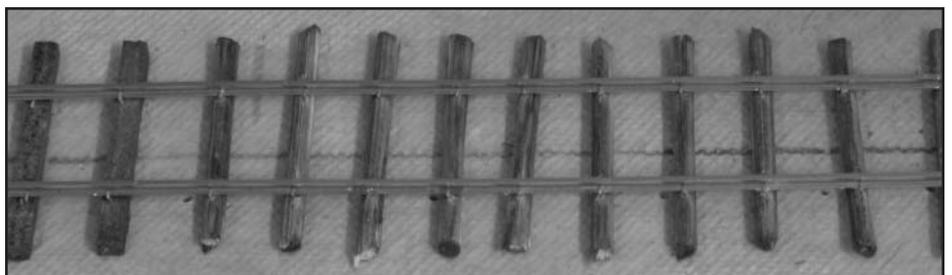
**Top right is Test Track 1 with standard S dual gauge track with Sn3 third rail. Tie plates were used infrequently by narrow gauge railroads but this view shows etched tie plates from Simon parent that are useable for both code 83 and code 70 rails. Rail here is code 83.**



**Test Track 2 shows code 70 rail on dual gauge Sn3/Sn2 without tie plates. Every rail is spiked with 2 spikes per rail per tie.**



**Test Track 3 shows Sn3 track using a combo of flat ties and log ties.**



# PROJECT ALCO

By Bob Werre, photos by the author

After World War II, America's Railroads began to quickly dieselize their entire fleets. The American Locomotive Works was the second largest builder of diesel locomotives and their line of road switchers quickly found homes on many railroads lugging freight drags along with the occasional passenger gig.

In the May/June, 1981 issue of the *S Gaugian* it was announced that S scale was finally going to join the rest of the model railroad community with it's first brass S standard gauge imported engine. Alco Models proudly announced the Alco RS-3. The engine was a complete success and shortly thereafter the RS-2 and the RSD-4/5 were imported.

I broke open my piggy bank and acquired one RS-3 and the RSD model. It wasn't too long before the paint shop turned out two painted models, the RS-3 received a C&NW scheme and the 4/5 received the beautiful orange/black scheme of the Milwaukee Road.

However just like the real Alcos, dependability became an issue so it wasn't long before these engines became branchline engines as the newer, sleeker and more

costly steam and diesel engines from other manufacturers entered the market with increasing numbers. Face it, a lowly RS couldn't compete with Overland's GS-4, SD-40-2, Southwind's cab forward, River Raisin's Allegany or Sunset's Big Boy.

## THE PROBLEM:

Several years ago the Houston S Gaugers setup our modules and several Alco's wearing Santa Fe's black and silver were brought to run. The owner soon announced that the engine had developed problems. He noticed the gear box casting had warped! Meanwhile my units seemed to be running fine. A couple of years later I decided to convert my motive power to DCC control. I decided to try installing a dual decoder setup so I could use Soundtraxx's sound module along with a Digitrax decoder, plus I had decided to remoter the unit. This setup is a tight fit but was completed. However, when reassembling the unit I stripped out one of the truck mounting lugs on the gearbox casting. The parts just seem to crumble. Just recently that same engine started showing signs of additional trouble. Sure enough, the axles were starting to freeze in the axle slots. After working on that engine the whole mounting lug

now had dropped off and the other side's screw mount was crumbling. Folks, we have trouble in River City!

A quick check with my club members and fellow Yahoo groups members told me that, to varying degrees, most of these engines had problems and many no longer ran. The zamac casting on the gearbox were crumbling, warping and/or swelling

## THE SOLUTION;

I decided that these older Alco's could be rebuilt and like TV's Seven Million Dollar Man, made even better! A number of options were discussed, some not simple. However I think I have found the easiest way to keep these vintage, historical engines running for years to come.

## WHAT'S NEEDED:

To up-grade our Alco's we will need to purchase Railmaster's North Yard drive unit for their Alco's. This is available in the US from Jeff Smith, Railmaster's dealer for the U.S. for \$165. . In addition you should acquire a set of Alco/GE side frames from American Models.

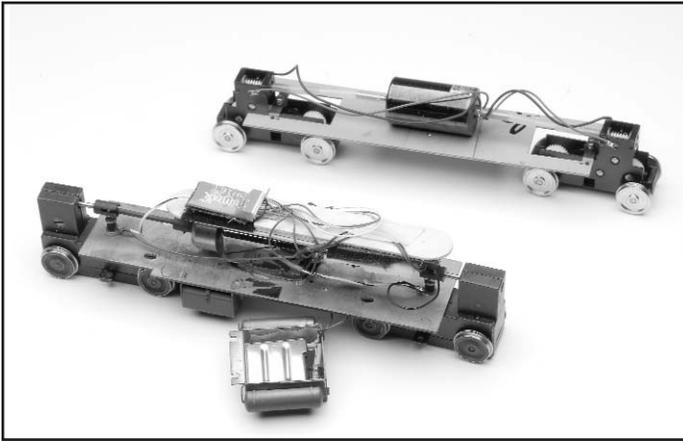
A little metal cutting and drilling a few holes will complete the conversion. I used .172 screws for reassembly, so you will need appropriate drill bits and taps. You will also need some silicone type bathtub caulk, some scrap plastic, and perhaps some lead weights.

## TRUCK SIDEFAMES

First let's talk about the sideframes. We actually have at least four choices. I picked, in my opinion the easiest and most trouble free, to deal with by using the American Models 'all in one' side frames that I got with a U25B model. Earlier RS-3 and FA's engines that have two plastic sideframes and a sheet metal frame/gearbox cover—we don't want these! As shown in photo # 3 it's an easy task to cut away the under part of the plastic sideframe assembly leaving just the perimeter frame. We will need to add some plastic spacers and drill holes to mount this assembly to the Railmaster gearbox. You will need plastic that is .10 thick and approximates the contour of the existing profile. However it is important here to leave room for the wheel flanges. Locating the mounting holes is the only tricky thing. I positioned mine approximately half way down and of course, cen-

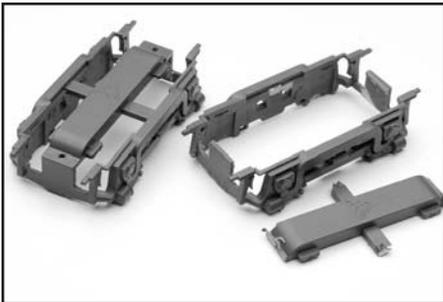


#1 complete setup: Shown here are the basic elements we will be working with.



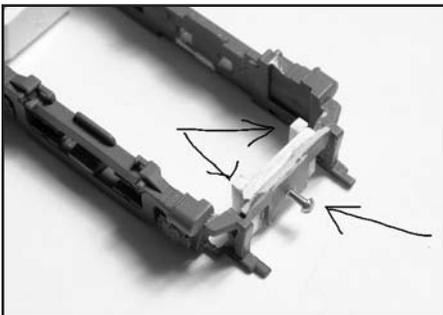
**#2 Frame comparison:** Shown here is a comparison showing how similar the two chassis are. The original Alco frame with two DCC decoders and speaker add to the complexity of this modification.

tered. Please check this out on your model. All four of the mounting holes



**#3 modify AM sideframes:** Remove the center area from the stock sideframes with a wirecutter and clean up with a file.

outside will receive a # 47 drill. The predrilled holes in the RailMaster gearbox are ready to accept .172 screws. Some small strips of scrap plastic will keep the



**#4 modified sideframe:** Scrap plastic glued to both ends of the frame for a snug fit. Leave room for the wheel flanges! Additional short pieces of plastic strip are glued to fit next to the Railmaster truck thus keeping the frame from rocking to the side.

sideframes from rocking.

Other sideframe options include using the original cast brass side frames, soft metal sideframes from Railmaster, or multi-piece brass sideframes from BTS or Tom Lennon at MilePost 169 Models (who has a large stash, I'm told). Using either of the brass options involve making four cross-members to complete the

sideframe unit (the Railmaster comes with a metal cross-members). This side frame module is fastened to the Railmaster gearbox on the end. Please note that the RM gearboxes are designed with two metal sides and insulated spacers so that the two halves won't short. This is a great advantage because 8 wheel pickup is much better than the 4 wheel on the originals. Using the metal sideframes might involve a lot of work to make sure the sideframes don't short.

### MODIFYING THE CHASSIS

The next challenge is to strip both the Railmaster and Alco Models chassis of all its removeable parts. We will use the Railmaster floor as a template for removing unwanted areas and for drilling holes to mount the new trucks to the original Alco floor. Photo #5 shows the two floors ready for this procedure. The sheet metal Railmaster floor is a bit unusual in that the cutout for each gearbox/truck assembly is different. Notice that we need to do a little fancy cutting to avoid cutting away the original Alco Models mounting holes. We don't want to have to relocate them on the body shell!

### MOUNTING THE TRUCKS

The mounting of the new Railmaster trucks to the old Alco floor



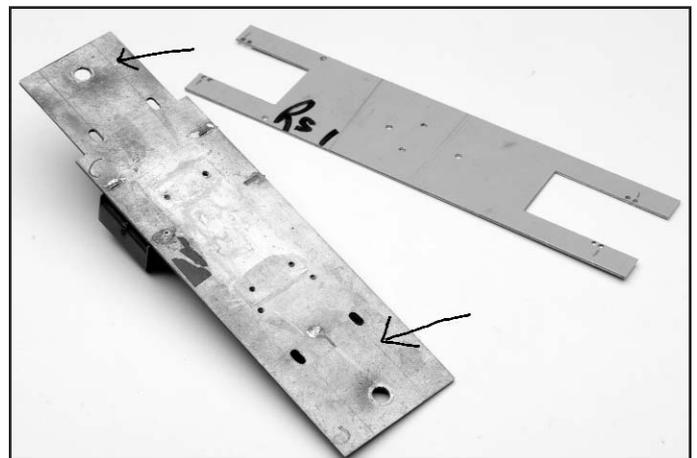
**#6 Drilling floor:** Next drill the mounting holes for .172 screws.

requires drilling up to eight #53 holes and tapping with a #172 tap. The Railmaster floor has two pair of holes on each end, even though you will only need one pair on each end. I originally just drilled one pair on each end but later had clearance problems so you should drill all eight holes and just use what you need. Additionally the original Railmaster gearbox yokes are mounted underneath the floor. We will reverse that and mount the gearbox yokes on the topside of the floor.

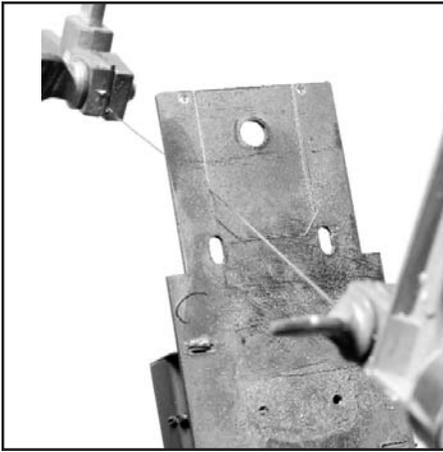
This should put the couplers at the correct height. While you at it remove one of the kingpin springs on the Railmaster trucks. This will help the unit's stability and running level.

### MOUNTING THE MOTOR

Mounting the Railmaster supplied motor is best done with a silicon caulk. One



**#5 both floors:** Etched areas indicate areas on the original floor that need to be removed. Make sure to mark the eight areas where to drill truck mounting holes.



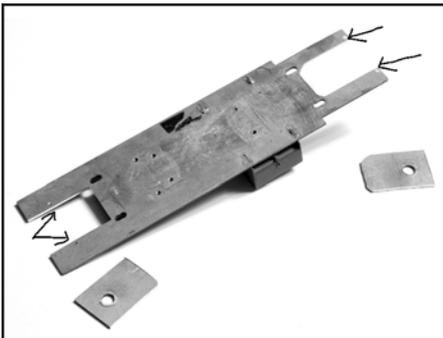
**#7 Cutting the frame:** After the holes are drilled, a jeweler's saw is used to cut out the floor to make room for the new trucks.

could reattach the original Canon motor with it's brass motor mounts but the Sagami motor is a stronger motor so I recommend using it or go one more step as I did.

In my particular case I had already replaced the Canon motor with a Northwest Shortline/Sagami flat can motor in the 18 x 36 size.

This motor was sold as a drop-in replacement for an Athearn diesel and contained the flywheel. The replacement kit contained some very nice universals made from a textured plastic that doesn't seem to slip like many I've tried.

The next thing after re-attaching the motor is to hook up the drive shafts and wire the little fellow up for a test run. On



**#8 Floor with cutouts and mounting holes:** Arrows indicate the location of the truck mounting holes. The 'drops' from the frame are shown.

my particular situation I had attached both my decoders to the motor using a Popsicle stick and some silicon caulk and Velcro to suspend one decoder over the

drive shaft. I had also mounted a PFM edgeport speaker in the fuel bunker under the engine. I wanted to keep all these hard fought features on this rebuilt.

### OPTIONS

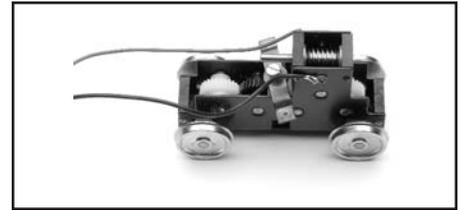
Another option one might consider at this time is closing up all the exposed gears on the Railmaster gearbox. This can be accomplished using anything that is non-conductive. Using several thin pieces of plastic tacked with some silicon type caulk should hold until pried open. Actually the only part of the gears that can't easily be reached for lubrication is the worm itself, so you could cement the lesser covers with a more permanent fix

### ADDING WEIGHT

We now have to deal with a loss of traction caused by the great reduction in weight. Those two zamac gear towers weigh about a pound and the Railmaster unit is very light. First I stacked a couple of the glue-on ¼ ounce lead weights that most hobby shops carry directly over the worm on each gearbox. Next I drilled a small hole in the floor above the permanently soldered tank and poured steel shot into the hole. A couple of miniature tubes of super glue, squirted into the area held most in place. Be careful how you add this glue as I had some run out and down the tank's side. I next added a couple of weights under the drive shafts caulked to the floor. You will have to experiment with your own needs but make sure you have clearance for the drive shafts and to reattach the body shell to the chassis

### FINISH UP:

The last item to do is to reattach the com-

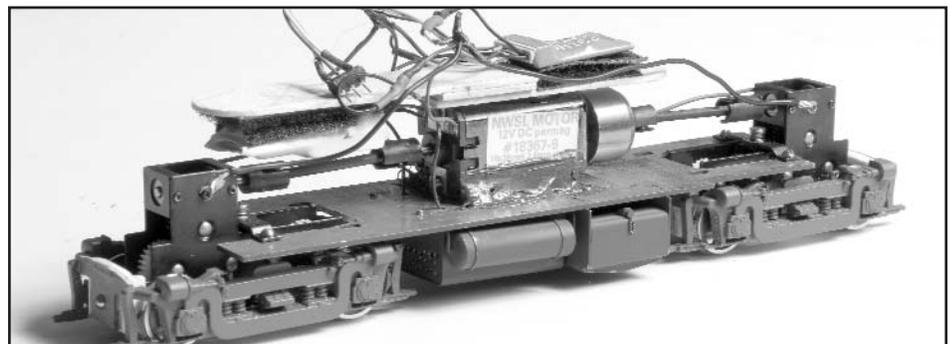


**#9 Railmaster gearbox:** This is the main element in keeping those Alco's running. The gear box consists of a steel worm and a series of robust nylon gears sandwiched between two metal sideframes. Plastic spacers allow for all wheel pickup. Notice a pivoting yoke that will fasten to the original Alco Models chassis. Also shown is the openness of the arrangement. Some modelers might want to cover these openings.

pleted chassis to the brass shell and run a train! You have now accomplished what most railroads actually did to their Alco's as time and wear took their toll. Yours should be a long ways from the scrapers torch! I have found the Railmaster conversion to run quieter than in it's prior state and it seems to have the same pulling capacity.

### MORE HELP NEEDED:

In regards to making needed corrections to the 3 axle truck Alco's, we will need to go back to the drawing board or convince a supplier to make a replacement truck that will work.



**#10 Completed unit:** This view shows the American Models sideframes, the Railmaster gearbox trucks, the original Alco Models modified floor, a replacement Sagami motor, flywheel, and drive shafts, plus two DCC decoders with speaker hidden in the fuel tank. A tongue depressor cemented to the motor allows for the attaching of the decoders without fouling the drive line.

# THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

**T**he **Bristol S Gaugers (BSG)** brought their modular layout to the train show held on Jan. 27-28 at the Big E Fairgrounds, as sponsored by the Amherst Railway Society. The **BSG** met at the home of Jan and Chet Brown for their January meeting, and enjoyed an operating session on the host's layout. New member Dan Lundy was welcomed into the club membership. The club layout presently uses pneumatic turnout controlled devices, and there was discussion at the meeting about purchasing a new air compressor to operate the system, or converting over to electric turnout controllers, using the tortoise switch motors. The club brought their layout to the recent Greenberg Train Show in their area, and the HUB Train Show sponsored by the Northeastern Region, NMRA. Member Bill Tarbox was scheduled to hold the March meeting of the club at his home, and Al Coughlin is scheduled to host the April meeting of the club. The club is actively planning for the 2008 NASG Convention and a site has been booked with recent considerations made on the convention car. All tours are planned and costs for attendees will be determined when contracts are signed with the bus companies.

**T**he *Canadian S Scale Quarterly* is the voice of **S Canada**, a dedicated group of Canadian modelers in S scale. Ken Garber edited the most recent issue of the *Quarterly* that includes a description and photos of the CNR type H-6-d ten wheeler (4-6-0) as built by Simon Parent. **S Canada** members set up modules at the Toronto Christmas Train Show as held at the International Centre that included a 4 ft. long “train table” display that can rotate short trains at each end, and send them back in the direction that they came from. Use of this display made it possible to operate three trains at the same time at the show. Club member Chris Abbott has standards for the Free-Mo module design that is a new standard featuring a single track operating set up and allows for interchangeability among various modules. Where each set of modules inter-

face, the track has to be centered. Between module ends, the track can wander wherever the builder wants. Modules can be viewed from either side and flipped 180 degrees for variety. Metal alignment dowels have been specified for accurate module interface, and the plan is to use better quality electrical connectors to insure good electrical connection between the interfacing modules. The Club set up a display at the Copetown Train Show, as sponsored by the Canadian Assoc. of Railway Modelers (CARM) held on Feb. 25, at the Copetown Community Centre, Copetown, ON. A new member of the NASG, Evvin Rohr, from Dollard, Que., Canada contacted your column editor to obtain information about the **S Canada** group and contact person for the club. A listing of many S clubs appears in the summer issue of the *Dispatch* along with contact persons, when the NASG membership listings are included.

**T**he **Connecticut S Gaugers (CSG)** set up and operated their modular layout at the Cheshire High School Ram Band sponsored train show on March 4, 2007. The show was the first time that S trains were operated with AC, DC and DCC power supply. Operation with DCC was a first for the club on their modular layout. This show, held in the Cheshire High School, is sponsored by the Ram Band, and band parents prepare and serve food at the show. The band sponsors shows in the Spring and Fall, and these shows are the first time that the **CSG** club set up a layout for public display under the direction of the club founder, Bill Krause. On Feb. 10, the club visited the Peter's Railroad Museum, in Wallingford, CT. The museum is a not-for-profit display that includes an HO model RR with Colorado mining in the town of Oak Creek, with the D&RGW running through it.

**CSG** Club member Al Marotta obtained various S-AF trains from friends and acquaintances which were used to set up an operating layout at the Cardinal Hayes

Home for learning disabled children, in Millbrook, N.Y. Cardinal Hayes Home has a small campus with four group homes and one dormitory for children who are severely disabled or medically frail. Many of the children do not have families and will require constant care for the rest of their lives. Most have never seen an electric train. The residents have really enjoyed the train layout set up by Al, and it will remain set up until mid-April. The layout includes several separate tracks so more than one train can be operated at the same time. The layout is in a room that was dedicated to the train set up, which was made prior to Christmas. The residents of the Home enjoy operating the layout, and watching the trains. Operations are usually made when Al can be present to oversee the activity. The Home is pleased with the response that the residents have made to the display, and would like to set up another layout next winter season. A larger room will be made available to Al next winter for an expanded layout set up. Al gratefully acknowledges several NASG members who have contributed AF trains for the layout set up, and could use more trains and accessories for the layout.

**T**he **Pioneer Valley S Gaugers (PVSG)** met at the home of George Reneris on January 18. The host gave a clinic on soldering wires, which is a useful task for all model railroaders to master. Eleven members and a guest of Jeff Mills attended the meeting. Dave Plourde coordinates the club activities, and edits the club newsletters. Dave was scheduled to host the club members in East Longmeadow, MA. on February 22, however, a sleet and ice storm made it necessary to cancel the meeting. Bob Gravel was scheduled to host the March meeting of the club on Thursday evening March 22, and Jim Richardson is scheduled for the April 19 meeting at his home. Many members of the club attended the train show at the Big E Fairgrounds on Jan. 27-28. The **PVSG** is planning a meeting with members and guests in June, at the Steaming Tender Restaurant in the Palmer, MA. historical railroad station. A similar meeting last year had a good turnout and the members and friends enjoyed the event.

**The Western N.Y. S scale Association ( WNYSSA)** set up their modules at the TTOS Show, held on Jan. 27-28, at Leonard Post, Cheektowaga, N.Y. Four new members were signed up including: Karol Kaminski, Scott Nowicki, Tom Koziol, and Jim Thomas. The club held a meeting on Jan. 25, at Danny's South Restaurant, Orchard Park, N.Y. The meeting is on the same day as the WNYRHS Train Show at the Agricenter, Hamburg, N.Y. Club members attended the show and the meeting for lunch on the same day. Gregg Mummert and Bud Rindfleisch coordinated the meeting at the restaurant. The club is considering setting up a layout at the Train Show to be held at the Central Terminal, in September. The March club meeting was held at the home of Paul Wachowicz in Tonawanda, N.Y. The club has planned to set up and operate a layout jointly with the RASG club at a train show sponsored by the GSME on April 15, at Batavia Downs, Batavia, N.Y. Club member Dave Blaufuss' wife Joan was recently hospitalized from a stroke, and members are sending wishes for a speedy recovery.

**The Rochester Area S Gaugers Club (RASG)** had a good end to 2006, as they have been able to keep their layout set up at the Medley Centre, a local mall. Work on the modular layout is expedited when the layout can be left set up between work sessions. The layout was set up in the back room of a storefront at the mall that houses an N gauge modular layout owned by a separate club. The club set up and operated their layout at a two-day train show sponsored by the Rochester Institute of Technology train club, held at the school's field house on Dec. 9/10, 2006. The layout measured 10 ft. x 20 ft. and included a yard with closed frog turnouts that can handle hi-rail and AF flanges. More work is required to have the yard handle scale flanges. Bill Johnson maintains the club website and posted close up photos of the layout at the RIT train show. The layout modules were brought back to the Medley Center Mall, thanks to the generosity of the N gauge club. General maintenance and electrical system improvements are being done on the layout in preparation to future use. The club members met at the home of Betty and Chuck Smith, and operations were enjoyed on the host's layout. The layout is powered from a plug socket

screwed into a light fixture, and there is a pull switch that can be used to instantly shut off electrical power to the layout, stopping all operation instantly. It is useful to have a means to shut off power to the layout, both when operations are ceased and in an emergency when trains

**The Waybill** is the official newsletter publication of the **South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSJG)** and is edited by Michael McConnell. The club had the opportunity to set up and display their layout at the Echelon Mall, along with two smaller S layouts, one in each window of the store, and to have space in back of the main store area in which to set up and work on a new modular layout that the club is constructing. The cost of all this was the display of their layout to mall shoppers on various specified days, including a most frequent schedule at Christmas time when the Mall management wanted to bring shoppers into the mall. The club entertained and informed many hundreds of visitors to the mall. They presented model railroading to the public ( and more importantly, S gauge model railroading). In return, the club members got to work on their new layout in a roomy environment. Three loops of track were installed on the new layout.. One of the store window display layouts from the Echelon Mall site has been sold, and proceeds were used to purchase a roomy trailer for the new layout. The **SJSJG** were required to be completely moved out of the Echelon Mall store that they occupied by the second weekend in January. The club meets on a regular basis on the first Friday of the month, at the Stratford, N.J. Senior Center.

A recent issue of *The Waybill* included an article by Greg Berndtson on the construction of a Providence and Wooster bay-window caboos. The construction was based upon a "normal" AF caboos to which extensive renovations were made to follow the prototype P & W caboos being modeled. Club member John Bigley wrote an article describing "Traveling in the Pullman Car" that was included in a recent issue of the club newsletter. The **SJSJG** club has a feature somewhat unique to S clubs, in the form of various committees. There is a layout committee, history committee, trip committee, play trains committee, and by-laws committee, among others. The com-

mittees each have responsibility for certain functions connected with the smooth operation of the club. Members are assigned or volunteer for the committees, and have an opportunity to participate in the club affairs through their responsibility as committee members. This makes the members feel important to the operations of the club, and spreads the responsibility of the organization around so the officers do not have all the responsibility of club operations on their shoulders. The club has and can obviously undertake many operations and activities because many members pitch in to help in the planning and carrying out of the various club undertakings.

**The Neshaminy Valley AF Club (NVAFC)** recently held their 200 th meeting at the home of Jim & Susan Duffy. The host has an AF layout on which 10 vintage AF trains can be operated at the same time. Several club members visited the very large O gauge layout of Fred Muntzer. The club displayed their portable layout at the train show, in New Hope, PA., on Feb. 4. Paul Fenn invited the club to set up and operate a layout at the April 28 train show to be held at Paul's factory. The February meeting of the NVAFC was held at the home of Ray & Pat Nase, in Souderton, PA. and those attending operated the layout that the host has under construction using American S Gauge track. Mike Ramsey coordinates the club activities and ably edits the club newsletters distributed via e-mail. Mike is coordinating the purchase of a Sacramento Northern insulated boxcar (by Lionel ) which is the S Fest West club car. Club members can order the car through a joint purchase by Mike.

**The Call Board** is the unofficial newsletter of the **Potomac Valley S Gaugers (PVSG)** who were scheduled to meet at the home of Elaine and Sam Powell, in Gaithersburg, MD., on March 18. Sam has an expanded layout, with scenery, designed for point-to-point operation, with a sneak route at the base of a peninsula in the middle of the room to provide continuous operation of trains. The trains are operated with a Lenz DCC system. There were matters to discuss at the meeting, including club members participation in the 2007 NASG convention to be held this summer in Baltimore, MD. Richard Lind ably edits the club newslet-

ter, and a recent issue included an article on the Rowlesburg, WV Area Historical Society's centennial celebration for the B & O stone arch Tray Run Viaduct. The bridge is an example of early 20th century RR architecture and engineering, standing 500 ft. long and 150 ft. high. The celebration will be held on April 28 and include all day programs at the RR depot Museum, Rowlesburg, WV., Cannon Hill, and the viaduct itself. Richard and Nancy Lind will host the club members for a meeting on May 19, in Frederick, MD.

**The Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC)** is sponsoring the 2007 NASG convention to be held in Baltimore, MD, on July 10-14, 2007. Dave Blum and Monte Heppe lead the convention committee. They presented a report on the status of the convention plans at the January club meeting, hosted by Paul and Russ Love. The meeting was held at the Marley Station Mall, in Glen Burnie, MD. on January 20. Paul and Russ are part of a group that constructs and operates a train layout at the Marley Station Mall during the holiday season. Donations are collected and made to charity. The layout is a very large O gauge one measuring 38 ft. x 10 ft. The layout can operate seven trains at the same time, on two levels. The layout contains a wide variety of scenes including: city scene, winter carnival scene, farm scene, industrial scenes, and an amusement park. One of the trains operated on the layout included a Chicago Flyer engine. The club set up and operated a layout at the Great Scale & American Hi-Rail Train Show, in Timonium, MD. on Feb. 3/4, and the Great Train Expo, in Upper Marlboro, MD., on Feb. 24/25. The latter show is the former Greenberg Train Show, held at the Showplace Arena at the Prince George's Equestrian Center on Route 4. Dave and Sam Blum were scheduled to host the March meeting of the club. The club was planning to bring and set up a layout at the TTOS Model Train & Toy Show, in Earleigh Heights, MD. on March 18.

**The Chicago Flyer** is the official newsletter of the **Chicagoland Assoc. of S Gaugers, Inc. (CASG)**. The club welcomed back to active participation two members, John Demillio, and Mike Moyer. John lost his mother, cousin and

aunt in a short period of time several years ago and could not be active in the club activities. Mike lost his mother after serving as her primary caregiver, and then had some health problems himself. Club members expressed their sympathy to both John and Mike and welcomed them back into the club. Skip Sanchez was a member of the club in 2003, and has not been active since then. Skip came to the November meeting with some friends to explain that they were working on a train layout at a park district field house in Chicago, and are looking for help in this endeavor. The CASG members at the meeting pledged to support the effort of Skip and his friends and help with the layout set up. The Board of Directors has recommended that the club make two changes to the club constitution. One change will eliminate term limits for officers other than the President and Vice President of the club. The second change involves establishing a third trustee as required when the club became incorporated. The constitution may be revised to add a proviso that one member person cannot hold more than one position on the board of directors at one time. When there was a lack of willing member participation, it was sometimes necessary to have one person serve on two functions, but this is no longer necessary, as there are enough members agreeable to serving on the club boards and committees.

The CASG club is conducting a survey under the coordination of member Joe Craig to solicit members' ideas on how the meeting attendance can be improved, and possible changes in meeting time that would make it easier for the members to attend the meetings. The idea of meeting in members homes where there might be layouts on which trains could be operated might be a consideration. The club has created a new membership/host committee. Joel Weber has agreed to serve as chairman of the new committee, which will be responsible for greeting new persons at each club meeting, introducing the new persons to the members at the meeting, and participating in the various train shows where the club displays their layout to recruit new members and get them active in the club activities.

CASG member Roy Plotnick is a professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago and has been collecting information and

memorabilia about the children's story, *The Little Engine that Could*. Roy was recently spotlighted in the School's employee newsletter for his study of the story. CASG member Skip Sanchez is in the process of developing, with several friends, a model RR club in a Chicago park district facility, on the northwest side of Chicago. They have been given a large room in the park's field house and a budget from the district. The plan is to get children and teens involved in the program. The CASG has encouraged its members to participate in the program, with help in building benchwork, designing a track plan, and any other phases of building the model railroad. This is a great way to show case our favorite model railroad gauge, and to generate some interest in model railroading with younger persons. The club set up and operated their layout at the High Wheeler 2007 train show as sponsored by the Fox Valley Division of the NMRA on March 3/4, at the Athletic Building at Harper College, Palatine, IL. **The Chicagoland Assoc. of Narrow Gaugers (CLANG)** narrow S gauge layout was also set up and operated at the show by Don Campion and Roger Sesterhenn. The club planned to display their layout at the All American Railroad Show, sponsored by the DuPage Division of the NMRA on March 24, at Lyons Township High School, LaGrange, IL. For those participating, lunch is provided by the DuPage Division. The club is thinking about their summer family outing to be held most probably in August. Phil Kosin, the unofficial social chairman of the club, is searching out possible locations for the outing, and the Hesston Steam Museum in LaPorte County, IN. is one place that is under consideration. The museum has the collection of steam trains in two and three foot gauge and 15-inch gauge from the estate of printing mogul Elliot Donnelly in Lake Forest as well as a large shay-type steam loco back in operation for visitors to enjoy. Will Holt is President of the CASG, Joel Lebovitz, V.P.; Joe Taylor, Secretary; Bruce Lorence, treasurer; Joe Craig, Officer-at-large; and Bob Brown, Joel, and Phil Kosin serve as Trustees.

**The Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG)** met at the home of Tom and Illa Hartrum, for their February meeting in Huber Heights, OH. Mike and Monica Mitter hosted the club members for their

January meeting and prepared roast turkey which was served along with food brought by the club members attending the meeting. The club displayed their layout at the Eaton Holiday Train Show, and received an honorarium for the eight day event. Club members were assigned to operate the layout on the various nights that the event was held. Over 4700 people attended the event over the three weekends that it was held. In addition to the normal club layout, the club had a 5 ft. x 9 ft. layout with Mike Lewis' AM Flyer O gauge train on the outer loop. There was a figure 8- S gauge loop inside with a long train such that the engine barely missed the caboose on the end as the train was operated on the layout. Jan Mason set up a 5 ft. x 7 ft. S gauge layout, and there were two O gauge layouts including a scale one and a hi-rail one. There was a 14 ft. x 24 ft. G gauge layout and a 10 ft. x 20 ft. Lego train layout at the show as well. **MVSG** member John Clifford is coordinating the supply of club name badges. The club is planning to bring, set up and operate their layout at the Spring S Spree, to be held on March 30/31, in Hilliard, OH. at the Makoy Center, as sponsored and organized by the Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG). Bob Guckian is coordinating the operation of the trains at the Spree display. There are two hour time slots when members can sign up to bring and operate their trains on the club layout. The club recently bid farewell to long time member and active club secretary, Norman Haas. Norman and his wife, Pat are moving out of state and will not be able to continue their activities with the club.

**The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG)** are planning the up-coming Spring S Spree, to be held on March 30-31 in Hilliard, OH. The two-day event will include various activities, including a large train trading hall, banquet, clinics, train races, operating S layouts, a Friday night pizza party, and a "building in a bag clinic". Thomas Brinker is coordinating the registration for the event. The hotel where the attendees can get favorable rates is the Hampton Inn West, located two miles from the Makoy Center where the event is being held. The club has details of the event on their web site at [www.COSG.org](http://www.COSG.org). On Feb. 17 the club members met to discuss details of the S Spree prior to set up of their layout at a

retirement center. On the following day at the Worthington Retirement Center where the layout was set up and operating, another meeting was held to discuss final details of the Spree. It was decided to set up a vendor table for several vendors who cannot attend the Spree but want to display and sell train items at the event. The **COSG** offered to set up a table with items brought to them for display and sale at the event, where club members would collect money for any sales, and return any unsold items along with sales receipts to their respective vendors. Janet and Art Lofton hosted the club for a meeting on March 18, in Westerville, O., and Dana and Kim Davis were scheduled to host the club members on April 15, in Ostrander, OH. The club was planning to set up and display their layout at the Buckeye Memorial Show, at the Lausche Building, on April 21. Set up will be on Friday for the show.

**The Stateline S Gaugers (SLSG)** met at the home of George Sorenson in Belvidere, IL for their February meeting. Members were invited to bring any items that they wished to sell, swap or give away. J. Larson gave a clinic on making your own decals, and the American Flyer Boys Club video was shown. The March meeting of the club was held at the home of Bob and Barbara Disse, in Poplar Grove, IL. Member Gene Kujawa is scheduled to host the club meeting on April 15, in Poplar Grove, IL. and club president Dick Bird will host the club members for their May meeting. The club newsletter is edited by Vera Flood, and issues provide interesting facts about railroads. The world's longest stone arch railway bridge over a river is the former Pennsylvania RR bridge over the Susquehanna River at Rockville, PA. The bridge was built in 1902 to replace the iron truss bridge of 1877, and is 3680 ft. long. **SLSG** club officers include: Dick Bird, President; George Sorensen, V.P.; Vera Flood, Secretary; Dave Pippett, Treasurer; and Dave Oberholtzer, John Gianos and David Wilma Board of Trustees members.

**The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG)** held their February meeting at the home of Dale Baker and 18 members attended. The club is planning to set up and display a layout at the National Train Show, in July,

and the modules to be brought were discussed. It seems that the club has enough corner modules to make 2.5 complete loop sets of corners. The members that coordinate the layout set ups have constructed two additional new broad radius 90 degree corners. Some of the club members suggested that the club scrap their older shorter radius corner modules and use only the larger radius new modules. The club members met at the home of Brooks Stover, on March 25, and the host of the meeting gave a clinic on his construction of S structures. There was an auction of left over items from the past NASG convention as sponsored by the club. Brooks has a newly built S layout based upon the Buffalo Creek & Gauley prototype RR with great scenery. The layout operates S Helper Service 2-8-0 steam locos which are typical of the prototype railroad. Brook's layout has been featured in nationally distributed model railroad magazines. Ken Garber is president of the club and Sig Fleischmann treasurer who gave a report of the club treasury at the February meeting. The club has set up a standing committee headed by member Jerry Poniatowski called the AF Committee that will be staffed by several club member volunteers to provide support on AF trains to the club members and any outside requests for information. The SMSG will consider additional committees that can provide support to help others in the club or not, on such subjects as DCC, operation, track work, S scale trains, etc.

**The Northern Ohio S Scalers (NOSS)** were hosted by John and Pat Henning at their home in Valley City, OH. on January 28. The club members discussed attendance and display of a layout at the Spring S Spree on March 30/31. John and Pat Henning hosted the club members for their February meeting at their home. Chuck Klein, NMRA DIV. 4 Superintendent came to the meeting to meet with club members attending and extend an invitation to the **NOSS** members to attend the NMRA Division 4 meetings where guests are welcomed. The NMRA meetings are held every second Friday at the Church of the Redeemer, Westlake, OH. Work continues on the club modules, as members Gary and George made framing for the new corner module and laid out the module size on a sheet of 4 ft. x 8 ft. plywood.

Jack Sudimack coordinates the club activity, and John Henning ably edits and distributes the club newsletter issues.

### The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG):

The February meeting of the club and a swap meet were both cancelled due to a The BSG March swap meet is the last one this spring, and the shows will be resumed in September. Club president Steve Lunde held a "play with trains" session at his home in early February. Those attending operated the host's trains, and a good time was had by all. The club recently welcomed new members William Weissman, from Sussex, WI. and Paul Bartelak, from Waukesha, WI. The club set up their hi-rail layout at the Society of Model Engineers train show held at the Milwaukee School of Engr. It was a two day event with set up on Friday.

### The Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN)

set up their layout at a train show held at the Spokane Community College in the Student Activities Building. The show was organized and sponsored by the River City Modelers, and was on the day after the club set up their modules. The club had their annual banquet on March 10 at the Conley's Place Restaurant, Spokane Valley, WA. Members of the club are considering a train trip, taking AMTRAK to Kalispell, MT. with possible return on the same day. There was a good turnout at the show and many of the IESGAPN members showed up to help operate trains and take down the layout after the show was over. The club brought their layout to Pullman, WA. to the Palouse Empire Train Show. Members brought the layout on Saturday before the show and stayed overnight to be at the show on Sunday. They returned back to the Spokane area on Sunday after the show.

The Sacramento Valley AF Club (SVAFC) is sponsoring the Flyer Fest West 2007, to be held on May 4-6, in the Elk Grove, CA. area. Hotels along Route 99 are recommended to persons attending the event. . Don Rosa is coordinating registration for the event. The event will feature a Sacramento Northern insulated box car, produced and decorated by Lionel, LLC. The car comes with AF compatible trucks and couplers. See S Calendar for details. One feature of the event on Saturday between Noon and 3:30 P.M.

will be a clinic held by David Dewey, the AF columnist for the *Dispatch* who will offer diagnosis of AF locomotive and accessories. No repairs will be made, diagnosis only.

### The Bay Area S Scalers (BASS)

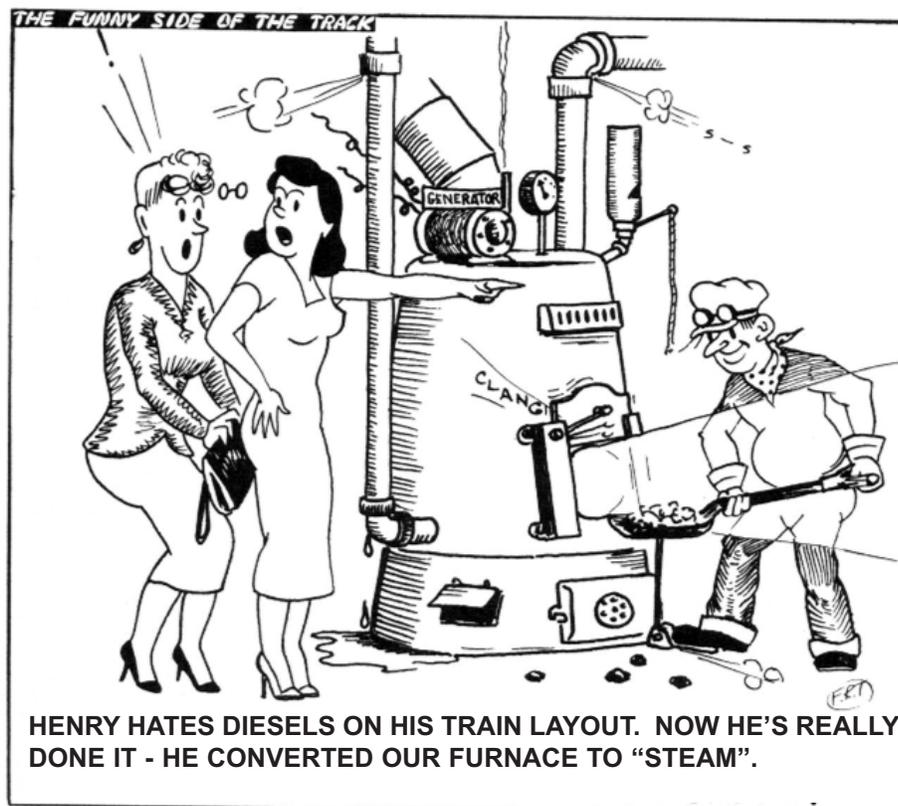
set up their modular layout at the O scale West plus S train get together on February 15-17. The club is planning to set up and display their layout at the Dunsmuir RR Days celebration on July 6-8. Member Ed Loizeaux is hosting visitors to the OSW + S Convention and the NMRA Pacific Coast Region Convention on May 2-6. Ed's layout features large radius curves, scale equipment, and New York Central prototype. Jim Sweeney is recently retired and has been working on his S scale layout and Oakland Pier Terminal building and water front scene. The layout has been the subject of scenery improvements, and locomotives and rolling stock have been dusted and serviced.

### The February meeting of the Southern Calif. S Gaugers (SCSG)

was held at the home of Gene Capron, in Pomona, CA. Ten members attended the meeting., including three new ones. Richard Rowe is an AF collector, and he is getting back into the hobby after some period. Barry Gries is also an AF collector, and he is

planning an around the room layout. Tom Houston is a recent returnee to S after having AF trains as a boy. He has purchased American Models and S Helper Service equipment. Dennis Bagby hosted the club members for their March meeting, in Altadena, CA. The January club meeting was held at the home of Jeff Kruger, club activities coordinator, in San Dimas, CA. The host gave a clinic on "Operation-Giving Your Layout a Purpose". Eight members, including the host, attended the meeting. Fred Ruby brought an AF Blue Comet loco and custom painted passenger cars for display. Fred was recently elected President of the Plasticville Collectors Association. The SCSG club is planning on the purchase of business cards to advertise their group. The card will include a logo.

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



## EXTRA BOARD

### DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS

Gerry Evans noticed a font problem in the December issue in the *Populating the AM Models GGI*. The 2nd paragraph had fl where it was supposed to be a fraction. Here's the reprinted paragraph:

*From the sheet stock, cut the following pieces and label them as indicated: 1" x 17/32" labeled #1; 1" x 3/4" four pieces labeled #2, #3, #6, and #7; 3/4" x 1/2" two pieces labeled #8 and #9; 1 1/4" x 1/8" two pieces labeled #10 and #11. You'll also need two pieces of 1/16" x 1/16" x 3/4" labeled #4 and #5.*

### S IN THE NON-S PRESS

- Jan. '07 *CTT*: A seven page feature on Rob Keller's vintage American Flyer layout. There is also a sidebar by Mike Keller on controlling Flyer signals. There is also a *Collectible Classics* feature on the AF 979 deluxe action caboose.

- Feb.'07 *CTT*: Short sidebar on the Gilbert Alco PAs. Review on the Lionel Dockside 0-6-0T.

- Mar. '07 *CTT*: About the only S in this issue is a 1-pager on the Planter's Peanuts car.

- Feb. '07 *Railmodel Journal*: Cover plus 16 color page feature by Brooks Stover on his BC&G layout.

### TOM'S TURNOUT IN THE NEWS

Tom's Turnouts (Tom Stoltz) made the front page of a local Maine newspaper with a nice article on Tom's hobby-business. The link will probably be expired by the time you read this, but Tom will probably be able to forward a copy of it - [www.tomsturnouts.com](http://www.tomsturnouts.com) - [tstoltz@adelphia.net](mailto:tstoltz@adelphia.net).

## S-TIPS

**SHS Wheelsets:** I have a batch of S Helper hi-rail wheelsets that I would like to swap for SHS scale wheelsets. I discovered that the

SHS hi-rail wheels can be pressed on to AF blunt axles and the Flyer cars roll better, have a better appearing wheel profile and behave better than the frequently out-of-gauge Flyer wheels. To sweeten the deal I will include one hi-rail coupler for every two wheelsets (4 wheelsets - 2 couplers per car). What I did: **1.** I used a Northwest Short Line wheel puller to remove the Flyer wheels from their axle. **2.** I stuck the axle in my drill and buffed the blunt end (which rides in the side frames of the truck) with a fingernail buffing pad. **3.** I cleaned the mounting holes in the side frames with a Q Tip. **4.** Slide the SHS wheels on to the axles (the wheels are snug but can be pressed on by hand). **5.** Gauge the wheels using a simple gauge made from styrene or brass. **6.** Re-insert new wheels and axles in the Flyer side frames.

- Jim Schall, Tennessee  
[schall@highland.net](mailto:schall@highland.net)

### FLEX TRACK ADHESIVE

**Q.** ...white and yellow glue sets up hard and seems to make a mechanical bond to (plastic) ties but an "adhesive" bond. On our club S-Mod modules, which do get banged around a bit, occasionally the mechanical bond breaks loose, even when the ties are surrounded by glued down ballast.

**A.** ...On Jim Six's layout (HO) we have used DAP Kwik Seal Kitchen & Bath Adhesive Caulk (first almond 70798 18013 and later Clear 70798 18008. These are 5.5 fluid oz (162 mil squeeze tubes) with success. You trowel it on to a paper thin thickness, and apply the track (several minutes to work it). The track will not budge, even on a tight curve. But, it will pop right up if you slide a putty knife under the track.

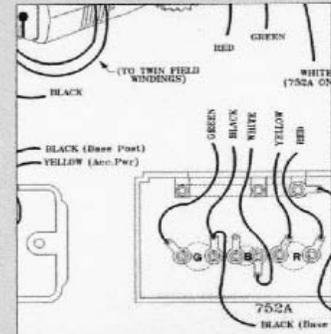
A quote from Chuck Hitchcock, who mentioned this in an article - "It has a lot to do with 'initial tack', the ability of the adhesive to hold the track where you put it, yet allow it to be trued up on starights and curves before it sets up. I tried

other brands and found the track had shifted after I thought I had it placed securely. It even slipped off super-elevated curve shims. DAP has not done that. I would therefore not use another brand."

- Mark Plank

Thanks to donor *Jim Bresnahan*

Tom Krell's AF Accessory Diagrams  
**Including pushbutton innards!**

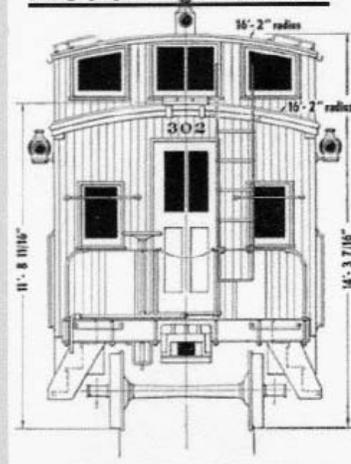


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# S-CALENDAR

**May 4-6, 2007:** Flyer Fest West, Sacramento, CA, trading, clinics, contests, races, dinner, excursions. Guest - Julie Gilbert Trail (A.C.'s granddaughter). Info Don Rosa 916-682-6961 or email: ffw2007@comcast.net.

**July 10-14, 2007:** NASG Convention Baltimore, MD. Best Western Hotel, 410-033-9500. Tours will include layouts, Metro Shops, B&O Museum and more. convention website for info: www.baafc.org.

**July 22-28, 2007:** NMRA National Convention, Detroit, MI. www.nmra.org/2007/. Several S layout on tour.

**Nov. 2-4, 2007:** Fall S Fest, St. Louis, MO. New larger location - St. Louis Marriott Hotel near airport. www.trainweb.org/afsgsla/.

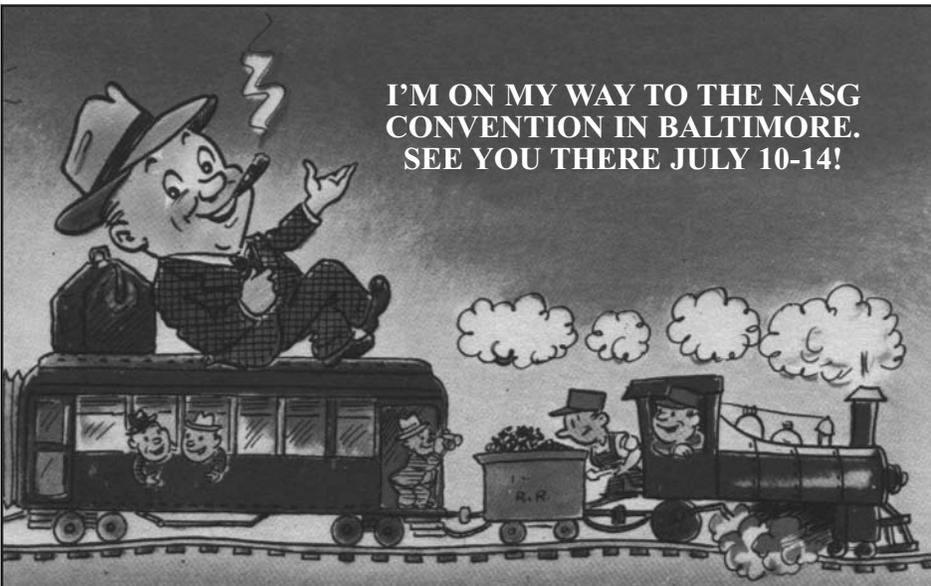
**Feb. 14-17, 2008:** 23rd Sn3 Symposium, St. Louis, MO. Ten Sn3 layouts, plus others, Manufacturers, clinics, contests, . Marriott St. Louis airport. 314-423-9700. Info, Jeff Boock 636-928-9969. website: www.sn3symposium.org/2008symposium

**Aug. 5-10, 2008:** NASG Convention, Lowell, MA. Details TBA.

**Bids open** for NASG Annual Conventions -- 2009 and beyond. contact Lee Johnson, 2472 Lariat Ln., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-6635. 925-943-1590 - email: leemax@jps.net.



Here's an updated photo of one of Baltimore convention hosts and the author of our S Tracks column. That's Sam Powell posing in front of a full-size steam engine while on a trip to Hungary.

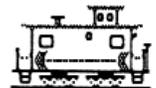
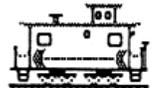


I'M ON MY WAY TO THE NASG CONVENTION IN BALTIMORE. SEE YOU THERE JULY 10-14!



## WANTED

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## Railmail cont. from page 5

WAS the track, then they didn't).

Everyone has a niche to fill in a hobby. I'm a kitbasher, and it's what I enjoy the most. I have track on a board and subroadbed but no wiring yet because I just plain haven't gotten that far. Am I stuck on the wiring? Yes, for a while I was, and it discouraged me. Was I stuck on the track plan? Yes, and again, it discouraged me. Have I gotten over it? Um...I ripped out the track and re-laid it. No wiring yet because I keep forgetting to buy the wire. Am I still discouraged? No, because I found a way around the thing that had me stalled. You know what one of the best "S" words out there is? "Solutions." Sometimes it just takes longer to find them.  
- Brian Empanger

**More on Stagnation:** Stagnation can occur in any scale or hobby. I have been battling it for many years in all of my hobbies. I believe it has more to do with our aging, than interests. With age, we know more, so some of the learning excitement is gone.

As a manufacturer of S products, I worried that I would burn my modeling interest out and lose interest. After more than 5 years, it has not changed my interests. What has changed is how much time I have available to build a model for myself. So I stagnate in progress on my railroad. Virtually, there has been no progress on my layout at all, but the dream still exists.

It is important that we never lose our dream or let anyone take that dream away. We stack kits in the closet, go to shows, read magazines, surf the web and talk trains with great interest, but no modeling gets done. For some, it's not important that anything ever gets done. We have the dream! In my other hobby, I have several friends who have an old car sitting in their garage or back yard. The wife says "Get rid of that old thing, you're

never going to restore it". It is the wrong thing for her to say. He has the car and the dream!. She should never take that dream away. Life can sometimes destroy our dream, if we have to sell the car or trains to pay bills.

So... If we think we are stagnating in our hobby, getting old and slowing down, keep your railroad goodies and keep the dream. We will be very depressed if we sell them and later feel the old flame burning to go back. Go to the layout and just start tinkering with something and you will soon find that hours have gone by and a project is done. That is how all the kits get produced here at Pine Canyon. We eat the elephant one bite at a time! Hope this cheers you up,  
- Keith Blanchard

**Even More on Stagnation:** Hi guys, Hmmm, I knew "S" stood for a lot of things....superb, superior, secret, etc. I never thought about stagnation! I guess I'm as guilty as the others when it comes to getting my projects to completion. Unfortunately for me the last couple years life issues have gotten in my way. I had the usual temptations to go into O or HO when the plethora of great models have hit the market, but I stayed in S....I like the size, and the friends I have made over the years sealed it for me. Andre and Greg, I can appreciate your comments about the 12" = 1' "jobs" we have to go to everyday and sometimes at the worst possible hour of the day, I will soon be wrapping up my career on the real railroad which started over 40 years ago, then my all my S scale kits will be "shaking in their boxes" out of fear of which will be built next! Andre a newcomer), don't get too "depressed" Consider joining a club, even if it's not an S club, for encouragement, support, even help with projects. I fondly remember the Delaware Valley S Gaugers and later the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers clubs held "secret project" meetings whereby members unveiled

their....secret modeling projects from the past year or so. Kind of an inspiration to get something done. All in all, this is still a hobby and it's supposed to be fun, right?  
- Bud Rindfleisch

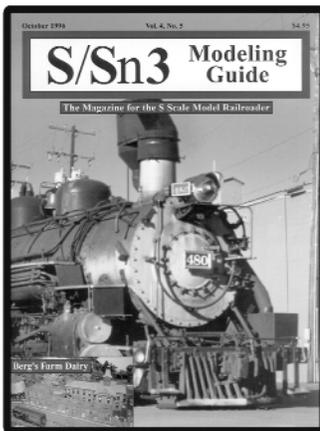
**Club Contacts:** I'm eagerly awaiting my new NASG membership package. I've read both sample issues of the *Dispatch*, and I like what I see. I noticed one thing though... your Club Sandwich section has no addresses included nor contacts for events. How is an interested party to find one of these club events without an address?  
- Erv Rohr, Canada

*Well, Erv, no we don't usually put contact info in the Club Sandwich as it comes out 5 times a year. However, you probably don't have a membership issue - that's our August issue, that has individual member contact information as well as a club listing with contact info. Another method of finding out things from this column is to contact the column editor Dave Pool - his info follows the column.*

**Permanent S Club:** Thought you might be interested to know of another permanent S-layout club located in Lincoln Park, MI. It's a multi-gauge club of about 40 members. The layout is about 28 feet long. Trains run Saturdays January to November 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The club is open for longer periods in November and December.

It's located at the JFK Memorial Building in Lincoln Park, Michigan, just east of Fort Street.  
- David Knight, Romulus, MI.





DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE!

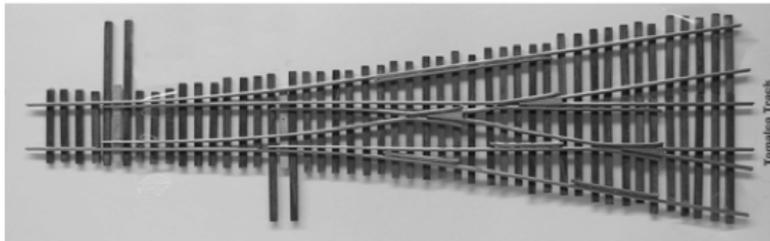
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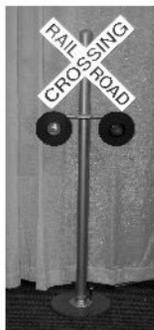
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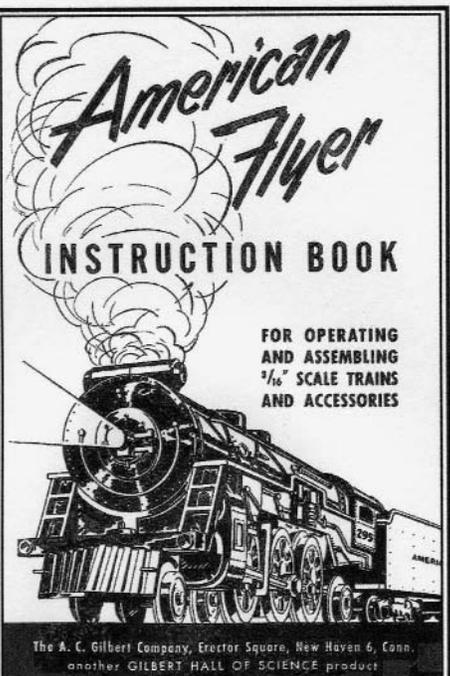


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