

IrwinsJournal.com Presents:
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Hello again everyone! It's another full month of news and views, so let's get right to it...

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



069 00 190, \$25.25

Reporting Marks: PFE 300217.

**51 Foot Mechanical Refrigerator Car,
Riveted Sides, Pacific Fruit Express.**

Orange with black ends and aluminum roof. Black lettering including company name and reporting marks on left. Black and white Southern Pacific and Union Pacific heralds on right; on one side, SP herald on left and UP herald on right, on other side, UP herald on left and SP herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1955 (build date) to mid-1960s (based on paint scheme).

Growing up in Jersey City, right across from the Pennsylvania's Harismus Cove freight line, I saw plenty of refrigerator cars. But I don't recall seeing any in this 1950s scheme. The PFE cars I remember all carried the big billboard "Pacific Fruit Express" in all black. So I'm somewhat arbitrarily cutting off the Approximate Time Period at the mid-1960s, although there could always be exceptions here and there that lasted longer.

The car itself is somewhat of a stand-in for the prototype R-70-9 class of cars which was built in 1955 for the PFE by the Southern Pacific Equipment Company. I usually don't count rivets but I do see that the rivet patterns are different on the prototype than on the model, as are the mechanical refrigerator grilles. The door on the real cars went to the roofline while the MTL model's door stops short of that point.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for January 1955 shows this group as what I call a "coming soon" entry: tagged as an addition but with no quantity of cars listed yet. We do have the dimensions: inside length 44 feet 6 inches, inside width 8 feet 6 inches, inside height 7 feet 3 ½ inches, outside length 52 feet 8 ¾ inches, extreme height 14 feet 6 ½ inches, door opening 6 feet wide by 7 feet 3 ½ inches high, capacity 2758 cubic feet or 130,000 pounds. All 200 cars were in place by the January 1959 ORER which is the next one I have.

According to Lee Gautreaux's Railgoat site (<http://www.railgoat.railfan.net>) 140 cars out of the original series were fitted with meat rails and renumbered to the series 200196 to 200337 in 1963, ending their ATP regardless of the paint scheme. These were renumbered again to 250196 to 250337 in 1973, if you're keeping score. On Lee's site there is a shot of sister car

300166 as found in 1972, with the big Pacific Fruit Express that I remember from my childhood.



108 00 201 and 108 00 202, \$25.30 each
Reporting Marks: WP 70202 and 70206.
100 Ton 3 Bay Steel Hoppers, Western Pacific.

Black with one blue end. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. Simulated coal loads included. Approximate Time Period: 1979 to 1982.

If you blinked, relatively speaking, you missed these cars. The ATP isn't so Approximate this time thanks to the dual captions on Page 88 of Morning Sun's Color Guide to the Western Pacific. Accompanying photos of WP 70206, which has a blue end, and WP 70032, which has a white end, these captions provide just about the entire story of these hoppers.

Built by Greenville Steel Car Company in 1979, these were leased by the WP from PLM Incorporated in that same year in anticipation of service to a power plant at Valley, Nevada. This plant was located between the WP and Southern Pacific main lines. When the power plant opened, however, it was served by unit trains made up of the power plant's own rapid discharge hoppers. And so much for the WP's lease of these cars... as we would say today, "Fail." In 1982 the entire group of hoppers was transferred to the Rio Grande but kept the same road numbers.

That doesn't give a lot of space in which to land an ORER in the Research Accumulation, but we manage with the April 1981 edition. The series 70001 to 70240 carried AAR Designation "HT" and the description "Hopper, Open Top" —I'm a bit surprised that the rotary coupler isn't mentioned. The inside length was 47 feet 8 inches, inside width 9 feet 9 inches, outside length 53 feet 1 inch, extreme height 12 feet 9 inches, and capacity 4000 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. Considering that I don't think these cars did much work, I'm not sure how there could be only 238 cars out of a possible 240, but that is what's listed in the ORER.

We know we're not going to get a rotary coupler feature with any N Scale product, including MTL's, so I suppose one could conclude that the model is already a "stand in" if one is feeling particularly unforgiving. The Micro-Trains body style isn't in perfect alignment with the prototype car, for example the slope sheet angle isn't quite the same, but the "look and feel" is there. What I think is more limiting is the Approximate Time Period, coupled with (if you'll pardon the expression) the apparent lack of revenue use that these hoppers saw during their short stay on the Western Pacific.



109 00 100, \$22.35

Reporting Marks: PC 766058

**Heavyweight Depressed Center Flatcar,
Buckeye Trucks, Penn Central.**

Jade green with white lettering including reporting marks left of center. Simulated generator load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to late 1980s.

Micro-Trains has released PC 766058 but the car copy refers to PC 766059, just one number away but of a different series. That's OK though, as PC 766058 was originally part of the New York Central series that was modeled in Micro-Trains' first release of this body style back in May 2001. In other words, this Penn Central car represents the repainting of the NYC cars, which are very good matches to the MTL model.

Sister car PC 766056 as of 1979 is on RRPictureArchives.net, captioned as being ex-NYC 498995. That car was part of the NYC series 498991 to 498996, and it was the 498996 that was used by MTL for its first run model. (The 498996 car is pictured in the Morning Sun Color Guide to the NYC, not long after its build in 1961.) The NYC series became PC 766052 to 766058. The transition takes time: the count is two PC cars and three NYC cars in the April 1970 ORER, with all five are in PC markings by July 1974. That starts the ATP as early as the February 1968 merger date, but I think early 1970s is a better bet. The service date of June 1973 painted on the model fits right in. But the build date and AAR Designation shown on the car aren't correct; they should be 1961 not 1967 and "FD" not "FM" respectively.

The ORER for April 1974 provides the vital statistics. The "inside" length was 57 feet 9 inches and the "outside" length 60 feet 10 inches. The capacity was 245,000 pounds and as MTL states in its car copy, this car can't be run within the former NYC's third rail territory. In the ORER's "Heavy Capacity" section for all depressed center cars it's added that the depressed area of the floor was 21 feet long by 9 feet wide and the two six-wheel trucks were spaced 41 feet apart. And those metrics are just about spot on in the model.

All five of the cars in the group made it into Conrail as of the April 1976 Equipment Register. Interestingly, instead of decreasing, the series actually went up to eight cars numbered PC 766047 to 766057 in the April 1981 ORER registration for Conrail. Based on that listing it's reasonable to believe that these cars did cross to "CR" reporting marks with the same road numbers, though I can't say that with absolute certainty. At any rate, just one car of the original group remained in PC markings by October 1989 and that's where I stopped looking.

Going back to the photo of PC 766056, it's carrying a transformer load, complete with the old Westinghouse trademark, that looks a fair bit like the one that Micro-Trains includes with the car. (Despite MTL's describing the load as a generator.) The ORER car description also includes "Transformer" as the intended load. Surprisingly (to me, anyway), there is a fairly minimal quantity of tiedowns to the car, and the two we can see appear to be attached directly to openings on the load itself.



143 00 010, \$22.70

Road Number: None

Pullman Heavyweight Parlor Car,
28-1 Design, Pullman.

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Metallic gold "Pullman" in center of letterboard. Approximate Time Period: 1924 to 1940s.



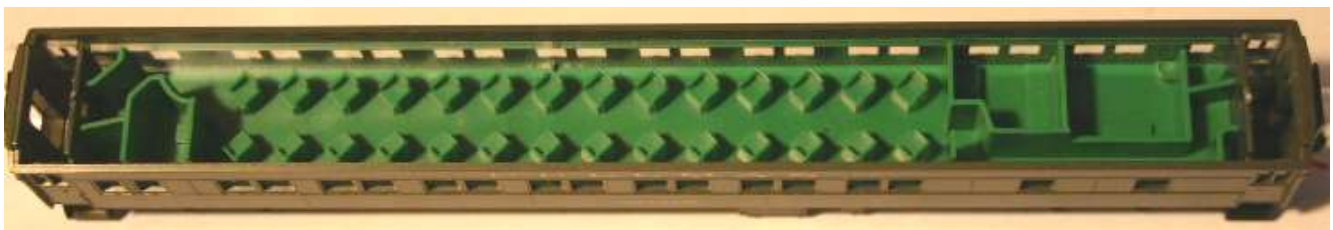
143 00 020, \$22.70

Car Name: "Natalie"

Pullman Heavyweight Parlor Car,
28-1 Design, Pullman "Natalie"
(Great Northern).

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Metallic gold "Pullman" in center of letterboard and car name at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: 1924 to 1938 or 1942.

The third new heavyweight passenger car from MTL is not a sleeper, but it's definitely not a coach either! This car is modeled after Plan 3416 with 28 chairs and 1 drawing room. Consider these seats to be "first class" type, not the standard "coach" seats that you'd find in other parts of the train. Photos of the interior of other parlor cars show large swiveling seats, some of which recline. Plans available in the Pullman Digital Collection at the Newberry Library also show the seats as circles; thanks to Bryan Busséy for the precise link: http://collections.carli.illinois.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/nby_pullman&CISOPTR=725&CISOBX=1&REC=2 (note that I tried to get the above into one line!) The Micro-Trains model emulates the plan with chairs set at a diagonal to the sides, see photo below. I'd expect "extra fare" to be able to enjoy them during a trip.



MTL Parlor Car (28-1) Interior View

According to Tom Madden's "Pullman Project" (<http://pullmanproject.com>) these cars were bought by several railroads, including the Great Northern of course but skewed a bit to the east otherwise: New York Central, Pennsylvania, Baltimore and Ohio, and Lackawanna, among others. Since one of the two releases is named "Natalie," here are some of the women's names that other Plan 3416 cars carried: Abigail, Amelia, Bertha, Celeste, Dora, Edith, Faith, Gertrude, Juliet, Nancy, Rosalind, Stella, and Buttercup (if you know the film "The Princess Bride" that is!). Some of these names might be considered somewhat unusual

today. A number of flowers gave their names to Parlor Cars, and then there are a few that could be both, "Violet" for example.

I'm not sure that the "Natalie" should, strictly speaking, be called a "Great Northern" car since it was owned by the Pullman Company. This car was outshopped in August 1924 and retired from active service in April 1938. In June 1942 the "Natalie" and "Cordelia" were bought by the GN and converted to coaches 1084 and 1083, effectively ending the Approximate Time Period for the MTL model. But the story doesn't end there, and to make it short, what was once the "Natalie" is now the streamlined buffet-parlor-observation car "Twin Ports" which is preserved at the Minnesota Transportation Museum – though it offers few clues to its heritage based on its original appearance.

The overall Approximate Time Period for Parlor Cars of this particular plan might not be as long as it is for the two sleeper body styles previously released by MTL, based on some looking around at railroad rosters and noting comments on the 'net that some cars were converted for other purposes. I'll keep the 1940s as the end of the ATP, at least for now, but if looking to place this 28-1 car into service for a specific railroad a little incremental research wouldn't hurt. It's also been pointed out online that this car could stand in for other similar configurations; but I'll leave that exercise to the modeler since tastes for "stand ins" vary.

N SCALE REPRINTS:



065 00 360, \$18.90

Reporting Marks: Seaboard 073150
(will be "SAL 073150" in website listings).

**39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car,
Seaboard (Company Service).**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and "Fuel Oil Car" on right. Approximate Time Period: early 1950s to early 1970s at least. Previous Release (as catalog 65360): Road Number 073222, September 1993.

It's usually dangerous to generalize a series of company service cars based on a single photo of one example from the series, but we're going to do so anyway in this case. Morning Sun's Color Guide to the Seaboard, Page 123, shows Seaboard 073152, a 10,000 gallon single dome tank car, as it appeared in April 1973. It looks pretty good, not only as a company service car, but also as a match to the MTL body style. It's not perfect, but it's surprisingly close for this reviewer. We do need to remember that the car in the photo doesn't carry the same road number as either this reprint or the previous release. Furthermore, the pictured car has a service date of October 1966 whereas the MTL depictions carry a service date of 1959. Well, at least we can presume that the ATP goes back that far.

Given that information, we turn to the ORER for January 1959. There is "Work Equipment" in the Seaboard's roster, fortunately for us, and that includes a group numbered from 73091 to 73219 of 117 cars with AAR Classification TM. The only other data we get is capacity of 100,000 pounds and an end note calling out assignment to company fuel oil service and being placed on a mileage basis effective January 1, 1951. 1951? Does that mean I can go back farther? Why, yes, it does: the January 1953 ORER has the same entry with 119 cars in the group. However, the July 1950 Equipment Register just has a big group of "Work Equipment," 982 pieces numbered from 70000 to 72599, plus tank cars in the 73000s. I think we can be safe with "early 1950s" as the start of the ATP, given the end note about fuel service in the ORERs and the legend on the car itself.

So how far forward can we go? The January 1967 ORER has a mixed up series of tank cars in water and fuel service numbered from 73000 to 73258, but through the end notes we can confirm that both the original and reprint road numbers MTL used for this car are 10,000 gallon fuel oil cars which is what the 65/065 body style represents. As you might recall from earlier reviews of Seaboard and Atlantic Coast Line models, once the Seaboard Coast Line is formed the ORER entries become a mess. It looks like from the April 1970 ORER that the company service cars do get restenciled though, with, for example, this month's reprint SAL 073150 becoming SCL 773150 as an exception to the usual renumbering scheme for work equipment. What we don't know, of course, is exactly when that happened. I'll stick with "early 1970s" as the end of the ATP but tack on an "at least."



092 00 010, \$22.85

Reporting Marks: GTW 315066.

2 Bay ACF Center Flow Covered Hopper, Grand Trunk Western.

Blue with white lettering including reporting marks and roadname on left and large GT herald on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1967 to mid-1990s, but see text. Previous Releases (as catalog 92010): Road Number 315060, October 1993; Road Number 315065, November 1999.

This was the first release in the 92/092 body style, and it's hard to believe that it's been almost seventeen years since that initial run and going on eleven years since the reprint. Back in 1999, the prototype roster of these cars was a real puzzle, and it still is, though the road number on this third run of blue and white cars is the exception to the rule. As I'll now explain...

We'll start with the Equipment Registers. The April 1970 listing for the GTW already has these cars, numbered 315050 to 315099 with a total of 50 cars, of which five are in slurry service. A few vital statistics: inside length 34 feet 9 inches, outside length 39 feet 5 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, capacity 2970 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. These were meant for pretty dense commodities! An end note advises, "Send bills for repairs and report cars

damaged or destroyed” directly to American Car and Foundry. This suggests to me that ownership of the cars may have been retained by AC&F, which built them, and there was some sort of leasing arrangement. I’ll jump to the April 1981 ORER which shows 43 cars in the main series and two more in slurry service. By October 1986 this is down to 39 plus 2.

And then the trouble starts. The July 1989 Register shows just two cars remaining from the original fifty, with road numbers 315059 and 315066. Huh? With the service date given by MTL as December 1989, and “PHS 12-89” that is painted on the car, just two cars remain?

But guess what. The GTW 315066 turns up on RRPictureArchives.net in a series of photos taken in 1990 and 1991 on the Central Vermont’s siding for the K&L Feed Corporation in Franklin, Connecticut. It’s not only the exact car but the service date information is clearly visible and it reads “PHS 12-89.” And so there, Mr. Irwin, it seems to be saying. The only other photos I found online for this series of cars is two of the other remaining car, GTW 315059, in much worse shape with “wrinkles” and a patched GTW reporting marks block over the original blue. With a date of 1990 and a location of the K&L Feed Corporation in Franklin, Connecticut—the same place! That one was still marked as leased to Canadian National, has a return to location of Milton, Vermont, and was captioned as being ex-ACFX.

The Central Vermont being part of the overall Canadian National system as was the Grand Trunk Western, these two cars were on “home rails” and perhaps they shuttled back and forth between Vermont and Connecticut... or perhaps not, I don’t think we’ll ever know for sure. We do know that the ATP for one of the two cars—we don’t know which—was over by the October 1996 ORER and that the other left the roster between January 2000 and January 2002. I’ll call the ATP for the entire series at the mid-1990s, but as we see, there were two exceptions, one of which carried the road number on this reprint.



112 00 710, \$34.15

Reporting Marks: RBBX 84710

Modified 89 Foot Bilevel Open Auto Rack, Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Silver-gray with black reporting marks on left, and small multicolor “The Greatest Show on Earth” trademark at left and right. Approximate Time Period: at least the 1990s to present for the Red Unit train, though ATP of individual cars will vary. Previous Release: Road Number 84712, catalog 112 50 710, as part of RBB&B Train Set (993 01 040), March 2010.

This reprint will drive record keepers nuts, as the first release was not a regular run at all, and therefore won't be in the lists that MTL keeps up on their website. No worries though, we've got you covered via the UMTRR website's release tables. Although this record keeping is beginning to drive me nuts...

I need to cheat a bit and reference the photo of the first road number released, 84712, to discuss this car. When I first saw the drawings of the model in October 2009 when the RBB&B Train Set was announced, I said to myself, "What is that?" A 2003 photo of the 84712 found on George Elwood's Fallen Flags (<http://www.rr-fallenflags.org>), and remember to look under "Royal American Shows") provides a good illustration. It's an open bi-level autorack with unusual partially enclosed sides, almost a wall of sheet metal with nine rectangular holes cut into it. Note that MTL's original car drawing showed ten openings, and this was corrected to nine before production – good deal!

There's a nice look at the same car without anything in it, also on Fallen Flags, from May 2000. But not so fast on the open part: yet another photo on Fallen Flags is from 1997 and shows the openings "closed" with metal. These look like they could be doors that slide down from the top level of the car. Certainly I'd think that like other shippers of vehicles by rail, the circus would want as much protection of their cars and trucks during their carriage by rail.

Here's why I had to cheat: photos of the real 84710, found on RRPictureArchives.net and taken from July 2006 to June 2010 show it as just a basic 89 foot flat car, usually loaded with wagons and trailers similar to that provided with MTL's Runner Pack #39. Since it's hard to prove the absence of something, I won't say definitively that this road number was "never" carrying a modified autorack.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:

The following items were announced as "off-cycle" releases via the Micro-Trains website on approximately July 15.



021 44 110, \$18.60.

Reporting Marks: ATSF 149941.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, Santa Fe (AT&SF).

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks and large circle cross herald on left and large roadname on right.

Weathering added, also graffiti on one side of car. Approximate Time Period: early 1970's, but see text. Previous Releases: As Catalog 21110: Road Number 149978, October 1981; Road Number 149968, February 1994; Road Number 149953, August 1996. Then, as Runner Pack #2 (993 00 002) and Catalog 021 5x 110: Road Numbers 149946, 149948, 149952, 149963, April 2007 (announced October 2006).

This is a new road number for a very short prototype series. When Runner Pack #2 was announced I had a lot of questions about the real cars in this group, not the least of which is whether they actually had plug doors. It appeared then that the short answer to that question is "no." I can update that "no" from October 2006 when Runner Pack #2 was announced, with, er, a more definitive "no." Oh, and before I forget, there's also a "no" on the ATP I provided in the UMTRR Update; it's certainly not from the 1950's as the paint scheme the cars are wearing wasn't introduced until 1972. Perhaps that should be an Oops Patrol item... what's the statute of limitations on ATP misses?

Well, one thing at a time. Let's start with the book "Santa Fe Freight in Color... The Series, Volume 1 - Boxcars" by Stephen Priest and Thomas Chenoweth. The series to which this reprint road number belongs is a short one, 149940 to 149989. That was a group of Bx-80 (not Bx-37) cars that were rebuilt from Bx-36 cars in 1959 and not only have a sliding door instead of a plug door, but also have a fishbelly underframe; at least the ATSF 149975. The ORER listing for these cars carries the description "Box, Steel Sheathed" which is a clue to a rebuild as well. All but three of these cars were gone by the ORER of July 1974, and a check of all my subsequent Registers through 1991 shows that the numbers were not reused (eventually, everything in the 140000s is cleared out). According to UMTRR Gang Member Rob McLear, this series of cars actually goes all the way back to the Bx-2 (!) class and were in service until 1974. They had ASF-A3 trucks, a 40 foot 9 inch outside length, inside height of 10 feet 4 inches, and 6-7-6 Youngstown doors. Rob cites the book "Santa Fe Boxcars 1869-1953" from the Santa Fe Historical and Modeling Society.

Rob McLear also tells us that the book lists the rebuild plug door series of cars as Bx-63 in the number series 40100-40144. "There were other cars converted with plug doors but these were in salt service and were in the Rr-62, -63, -67, -78, Bx-148 and Bx-149 series and none of these carried the numbers in the MTL series." We'll come back to that.

Meanwhile, the real Bx-37 class wasn't plug door boxcars either. There are several photos in the above "Santa Fe Volume 1" book (which is known as "The Priest Book" at UMTRR HQ) and at least one, of the ATSF 146259, on RailcarPhotos.com . It is in the "billboard" scheme which debuted in 1972, and the photo is from June 1982, but the car has single sliding doors. The number series was 145500 to 147499. Page 46 of Morning Sun's ATSF Color Guide shows three photos of Bx-37s including one in the billboard scheme photographed in 1973.

Would there have been a better choice for a road number series for this release? Yes, though still not perfect. And I'm curious as to why it wasn't selected, since it was used on the Z Scale Runner Pack #3 (994 00 003) announced in August 2008 and released in March 2009. The road numbers for that group corresponded to the Bx-115 series, which were rebuilt in 1996 from Bx-37s (aha!) and numbered between 21950 to 22689. Those cars had grainloading plug doors, not a perfect match to the one on the 021 MTL body style, but at least plug doors. Might you be considering renumbering, the ATP on that group of cars was from 1966 to at least 1981 although there were only twelve cars left in service by then.



074 44 090, \$21.40.

Reporting Marks: SL-SF 15090.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Frisco (SL-SF).

Orange (more like a red-orange) with mostly black lettering including reporting marks and roadname on left and slogan "Ship it on the Frisco" on right. Black and white Frisco herald on left above reporting marks. Weathering added, also graffiti on one side of car. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960's (1967 rebuild date given by MTL) to mid-1970's. Previous Release: Road Number 15097, March 2010.

Surprise! This road number does differ from the March release. I'd wager that the two numbers were run off at the same time and this second run was held specifically for weathering release purposes. There's not much to say otherwise beyond what was covered in the March 2010 UMTRR, to which I will refer you. I noted a question online as to whether the word "Vegan" – which seems to be what is "graffitied" on this car – is contemporaneous with the ATP of this release. According to what I read, it could be, as the Vegan Society was founded in 1944. Was the word "vegan" in general use in the seventies? That's a different question.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #42, Four Rio Grande (D&RGW) gondolas with load, is available. UMTRR coverage was in the February 2010 issue.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is February 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close August 31.

Scheduled February 2011 Release:

Runner Pack #48: 993 00 048, \$59.95

Reporting Marks/Road Numbers: None

Quantity three of 12-1 Pullman Heavyweight Sleepers, Pullman.

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Metallic gold "Pullman" in center of letterboard.

Approximate Time Period: 1930's to late 1940's. Previous Release (as catalog 142 00 010): no road number, July 2010.



This is one of the most natural choices for a Runner Pack that MTL could make. There were more than nine hundred Pullman sleepers built to this particular plan, 3410/3410A. There's plenty of demand from N Scalers for this particular car. Your typical passenger train might have several of these. And the initial single release has already blown out of the factory (see "Discontinued Alert") below. Not much more I can add here... other than, be sure to get your pre-orders in. I suspect even Micro-Trains might be surprised at how much demand there is for this future release.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:

In addition to the below item, delivery of The D-Day Locomotive and Caboose Set (993 21 101, \$169.95 is delayed to October per the Micro-News. It was originally scheduled for June. MTL says that this is due to delays in receipt of the FT chassis from Sanda Kan (already contracted for, prior to Sanda Kan's dropping of numerous customers).



074 00 124, \$23.95

40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #24: Warren G. Harding (29th President).

Cream sides and ends with green roof and black lettering. Multicolor rendition of the Seal of the President of the United States and dates in office

on left. Name of Vice President, home state of president and party affiliation at bottom left. Multicolor portrait of president in front of red, white and blue rendition of American flag in service during presidency on right. Birth date in small lettering at bottom right of side.

My favorite author, the late Jean Shepherd (best known for the works made into the film "A Christmas Story") often referred to the place of his elementary education as the Warren G. Harding School. I had thought that was a bit of a fiction, or perhaps an inside joke, given that Harding's presidency was... well, let's say it's not counted among the greatest. However, it appears that Shep did in fact attend the Warren G. Harding Elementary School in Hammond, Indiana! (For you fellow "fatheads" – that's short for "followers of Shep" -- it was on Cleveland Street and even had a flagpole for the "triple dog dare" that Flick put Schwartz up to. See <http://www.hhs59.com/harding.htm> for more.)

Like Shep on his legendary radio shows, though, I must get around to the point here. The Miller Center at the University of Virginia (<http://millercenter.org>) doesn't mince words: "Most historians regard Harding as the worst President in the nation's history." How did that happen? Apparently, through a lack of having any strong opinions, which means no enemies, but no progress. "Who would have suspected," the Miller Center notes, "that the man to succeed Woodrow Wilson, America's most visionary President, would be a man who saw the President's role as largely ceremonial?" Even the official White House site, which tends to accentuate the positive, seems to have a tough time coming up with platitudes. Of

all places in cyberspace, Wikipedia seems to be the most kind, noting that while there was plenty of scandal in the Harding Administration, the 29th President did manage some positive accomplishments.

Warren Gamaliel Harding (and how's that for a now-uncommon middle name?) was born on November 2, 1865 near Blooming Grove, Ohio. Both of his parents were doctors, quite unusual since at the time women were rarely granted medical licenses. "Winnie" had a rather uneventful childhood and then attended a small college, becoming its newspaper editor. In 1884, he and two friends purchased the Marion Star which was just about out of business at the time and turned that Ohio-based paper around. In 1891, he married Florence "Flossie" DeWolf who was five years older than he was and also pursued him relentlessly. As would have been said back then, Flossie was "from money" and that certainly helped Harding's business success. But so did his non-confrontational approach to being a newspaper publisher. Muckraking was clearly not his style, and that made him popular with political figures. Harding was an Ohio state senator for two terms and served as majority leader. While he lost a bid for governor in 1910, he was given the honor of entering William Howard Taft's name into nomination as candidate for President at the 1912 Republican Convention. He took the Republican nomination for United States Senator in 1914 and beat the then-Attorney General for the seat, though he was not comfortable with the religiously-oriented smear campaign that his operatives mounted against his opponent. The Miller Center called his Senate tenure "undistinguished," noting that he missed more sessions than he attended and skipped debates on prohibition and suffrage, both of which were Constitutional amendments! (It's also remarked by the Miller Center and elsewhere that despite Prohibition, there always seemed to be alcohol available in Harding's vicinity.)

The 1920 Republican Convention opened with no clear favorite, but there was one man that everyone liked, who was "correct" on every issue, and had no political enemies: Warren G. Harding. As a plus, it's said, he was good looking and would be sure to appeal to women who would be voting in a presidential election for the first time. (Don't shoot the messenger here... thanks.) The Republicans strategized that the country was weary of Woodrow Wilson's progressive agenda, tired from World War I, and ready to "return to normalcy." Harding's campaign promised that "return," and not much else. He won in the biggest popular vote landslide recorded to that time, beating Democratic opponent James Cox by more than seven million votes.

Harding's cabinet was a tale of two factions: extremely able, such as Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes and Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover (about whom we learned in May); and extremely corrupt, such as Albert Fall, Interior Secretary, who went to prison for his role in the "Teapot Dome" scandal (honestly, the only thing I knew about the Harding presidency prior to my writing this commentary!). Harding was also a mixture of pro-business and pro-reform. Higher tariffs, lower taxes on the wealthy, government reforms, immigration quotas, and advances in civil liberties all took place during his tenure. Through Charles Evans Hughes, he pursued a foreign policy bent on recovering Europe from World War I and dampening down the arms race that had started before then. But all in all, Harding, ever the nice guy, confessed that he was in over his head in the White House.

Probably not the optimal self-evaluation for a man in one of the most powerful positions in the world.

In addition to being suboptimal, Harding's presidency was also short-lived. Accounts vary somewhat as to how sick he was during his trip to Alaska (mentioned in last month's trivia contest). It was first reported as food poisoning, but whatever it was, it got worse. By the time he reached San Francisco, he was gravely ill. He died "suddenly and instantaneously" on the evening of August 2, 1923. By that time, the illegal activities of "The Ohio Gang" that Harding had appointed were in the process of being fully exposed, and it was rumored but never proven that his own wife Flossie had poisoned him. She did not allow an autopsy, which fueled the fire of suspicion. It would later be demonstrated that Harding had pursued several extramarital affairs. One Nan Britton wrote a detail account of hers with him in what's considered to be the first "kiss and tell" book declaring that Harding fathered her child. Letters to Carrie Phillips, with whom Harding had an affair lasting fifteen years, were found in 1964 (!) but are sealed until 2024 (!!). The Miller Center seems to summarize Harding's presidency almost as sad, and certainly as being in the wrong place at the wrong time; having to follow the visionary Woodrow Wilson as a man with almost no ideas of his own, who wanted most of all to be liked.

Ah, well, how to follow that. Perhaps with the Trivia Question. "Which President lost his mother to milk sickness at age nine"?!? Yikes, just can't seem to get away from the bad news this time. It helps to know that the disease—caused by drinking milk that becomes toxic when the cow giving it eats white snakeroot—was discovered in 1809. That's the same year that our 16th President was born. For a final hint, if you're in the United States, check your change for what is commonly called a "penny" (technically, it's a "cent") and see who's on the front. That "penny" celebrated its 100th Anniversary last year! Get those answers in, and good luck... no, I still haven't won a Presidential Oath car...

Nn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):



800 00 210, \$18.40

Reporting Marks: IR&N Co 212.

30 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar,
Ilwaco Railway and Navigation Company.

Brown with white lettering including "IR&N Co." on left and road number on right. Approximate Time Period: 1888 to no later than 1930.

At the very southwestern corner of Washington State, nearly at the mouth of the Columbia River, sits Ilwaco. It's now the gateway to the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Park, but in the late 1800's it was a site in search of a port—despite the extremely challenging tides of Baker Bay on which it fronted. A warehouse and wharf were built in 1874 and the

Ilwaco Steam Navigation Company purchased a steamship in 1875. The founder of that company, Lewis Loomis, also envisioned a rail line up the North Beach peninsula, and began to build in 1888. He got as far as Nahcotta, fourteen miles away, and began service in 1889 as part of a combined offering of river and rail passage to and from Astoria, Oregon on the other side of the Columbia. In theory, a mixed train operated on the line to connect with the boat, but those tides made anything approaching a regular schedule pretty infeasible. The main freight cargo was fish and seafood, including oysters (even though the town of Oysterville was north of the rail line).

By 1894 a Northern Pacific line shucked away much of the line's oyster traffic with a more direct route to Portland and Seattle. The Union Pacific's Oregon Railway and Navigation Company bought out Lewis Loomis in 1900 and took over operations. In 1909 a line opened bypassing Ilwaco to Megler, directly across from Astoria, which avoided the tidal and silting problems of Baker Bay. In fact the trackage into Ilwaco was abandoned in 1916.

The UP quit the entire rail line and water service in 1930 after motor vehicles destroyed what passenger service there was. The ferry between Megler and Astoria did continue under different auspices including the State of Oregon until July 28, 1966, the day before the US 101 bridge spanning the Columbia River was opened. (Hey, I've been on that bridge!) Narrow gauge coach #10 from the IR&N survives via the Ilwaco Heritage Foundation, apparently the only survivor of the roster. There's an "Images of America" book by Sydney Stevens of the Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum devoted to the line, also called the "Irregular, Rambling and Never-Get-There".

I didn't find any listings for the IR&N in the OREER Accumulation. The line was probably a mere footnote in the holdings of the Union Pacific and as such no narrow gauge equipment appears in the Oregon Railway & Navigation entry in the June 1905 Equipment Register, though it is noted that there are 353 miles of "water lines operated" which would have included the ferry service of the IR&N.

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



503 00 091 and 503 00 092, \$24.85 each
Reporting Marks: NP 48176 and NP 48181.

40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Superior Doors, No Roofwalk, Short Ladders, Northern Pacific.

Green including the trucks and couplers (!). White lettering including reporting marks on left. Large "NP" in white with black shadow on left. Large black, white and red monad herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1969 to early 1980s.

[The following is largely reprinted from the February 2010 UMTRR coverage of the N Scale release of this car.]

It's not easy being green... all green! Especially if you're a freight car. MTL was quite accurate in its car copy; the NP paint shop was in fact directed to paint this **entire** car green, right down to the trucks and couplers. The photo of sister car NP 48189 on Page 44 of the Morning Sun Color Guide to the NP shows this clearly. Also shown is the Burlington Northern-style dimensional data, all underneath the reporting marks on the left side of the car. There are some differences between model and prototype, the first of which I noticed was the side sill. The full ladders, lack of roofwalk and six foot door are all correct. Online, there's a bingo on George Elwood's Fallen Flags site (<http://www.rr-fallenflags.org>) which has a 1969 broadside view of the 48176; thanks to Paul Graf for pointing that out.

The car was redone in 1969 although rebuilds of the 1940's era boxcars had been going on since 1959 according to the MSCG. Even so, we'll start with the April 1970 ORER as being closest to the 1969 paint date, and that already brings us to the Burlington Northern registration. The NP series 47500 to 48999 had just 276 cars in it out of a possible 1500, described as just "Box, Steel" with AAR Designation XM. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 44 feet 5 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 3897 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. No mention of green couplers though!

The July 1974 ORER is the next stop and the car count is actually up a bit to 278 cars. This suggests to me that a few more rebuilds were done and lettered for the NP after the BN merger, or maybe the data was a little slow getting to the ORER folks! However, the series length had been cut down considerably to cover only 47500 to 48207. In April 1976 the car count slipped back to 267 cars plus one for that dreaded "tankage." But it's nearly all over for the group in April 1981 with just 35 cars remaining. That's just enough to give us an "early 1980's" end for the Approximate Time Period.



535 00 300, \$24.80

Reporting Marks: UP 25461

30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Cabooses, Union Pacific.

Yellow with black frame, trucks and details. Red lettering including roadname at top center and reporting marks at bottom center.

Black and red safety slogan "There's No Romance in Taking a Chance" on white panel below roadname. Approximate Time Period: 1973 (start of the safety slogan program) to 1989 for this specific car; others' ATP end ranges from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s.

This is a new release by virtue of the particular safety slogan, however MTL has run cabooses like this with other UP Safety Slogans. I can "Be Specific" (so to speak!) about this particular

car thanks to the donation of the book "Cabooses of the Union Pacific Railroad" to the UMTRR Research Library by a reader. Thanks... and I can finally use it now!

The first thing I'll be specific about will most likely already be obvious: at best, the MTL body style is a "stand in" for the real UP center cupola steel cabooses. The 25461 belonged to Class CA-7, which is steel, and has a center cupola, but that's about where the similarities end. Have a look at sister car 25462 on Fallen Flags to see for yourself. Or check out UP 25625 on RRPictureArchives.net which even has the same safety slogan. Both cars, and I assume the real 25461 as well, also sported large red "P"s on the cupola ends, standing for caboose pool service, not present on the Micro-Trains depiction.

It was in fact the series of Pool cabooses that became the canvases for what was actually the third round of safety slogan use by the UP. The sayings were the result of an annual system-wide contest among railroad employees in 1973, 1974 and 1975. "There's no romance in taking a chance" was contributed by Don P. Steward of Los Angeles.

The 25461 was retired on June 15, 1989 according to "Cabooses of the Union Pacific". As noted above, other cabooses in the group were retired on different dates. Many were donated to cities and towns along the UP's right of way.



553 00 080, \$22.50

Road Number: 4363 (preceded by "RI" in website listings).

Lightweight Pullman Baggage Car, Rock Island.

Silver with black lettering including roadname at top center, "Railway Express Agency" at bottom center and road number on right. Approximate Time Period: 1961 to early 1970s or later, see text.

We go right back to Morning Sun's Rock Island Color Guide for this car. So does Micro-Trains for that matter as the car copy appears to be based on the caption for the photo of the 4363 that's on Page 24 of that book. As MTL reports, twenty-five baggage / mail / express cars were built in 1961 by the St. Louis Car Company and numbered 4360 to 4384. The REA legend on the car is a hint of its multiple purposes.

The photo of the 4363 in the Color Guide is from 1969 and shows it in very good shape. It also shows that one opening per side has a single sliding door while the other has a double door, a difference between model and prototype. The underbody detail looks different as well. The real car had an inside length of 65 feet 7 inches and an outside length of 70 feet 1 inch over the buffers. It had a twenty-five ton capacity and included bathroom facilities as well as space for a messenger. Messenger space would be appropriate given the potential for high value express shipments.

In the MSCG it's reported that some of the cars were retired in 1970 and 1971, but some stayed around for company service following the takeover of the RI's intercity passenger service by Amtrak. The 4363 appears to be one of those kept on, as seen in an image on RRPictureArchives.net . Renumbered to a maintenance of way road number 96532 (which is what you'll need to do the lookup on if checking the website) but with all the original lettering still showing, the car is rusting away on a siding in Union, Missouri sometime in the nineties. (The photographer says that he believes the picture was taken in June 1999 but could have been earlier.) The location is the Central Midland Railway/Missouri Central in Union. That line operates former Rock Island trackage from St. Louis to Union.



982 01 211, \$185.95

Road Number: 1331 (preceded by "RI" in website listings).

GP-9 Diesel, Rock Island.

Red with yellow ends and white sill stripe. Black frame and trucks, red handrails. White roadname in slant style lettering on long hood. White roadnumber on cab. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to mid-1980s.

This particular unit has an interesting heritage according to the all-time Rock Island Diesel Roster found on TheDieselShop.us. The 1331 was rebuilt from an FT-B diesel in April 1959. The site RRPictureArchives.net gets specific on the actual unit: the RI's 97B. I don't have a retirement date or disposition but that information is often hard to find given the circumstances of the Rock Island's demise.

The "billboard" paint scheme with the slant style lettering was used on freight cars from 1970 to 1975, so "early 1970's" should be right for the start of the Approximate Time Period. There is a photo of the 1331 on RailPictures.net that's dated September 1972. There are a couple of key differences between model and prototype. Most visible is that the real 1331 did not have dynamic brakes. It did have some unusual smokestacks and roof fans, not unlike the trio of F7 B-units that the Geep was coupled to in the photograph. Perhaps those are attributes resulting from its being rebuilt from an FT? Anyway, the paint scheme does look on target even if the body of the diesel isn't quite right. According to a post in the Rock Island Technical Society's message archive and photos I've seen, the 1331 had a paper filter box retrofitted in between 1972 and 1975. When that change was made, the "O" in "Rock Island" no longer fit full size! See the results in a photo from June 1983, which has the unit stored in Silvis, Illinois, on RRPictureArchives.net.

Z SCALE REPRINTS:



555 00 010, \$31.80

**Reporting Marks: RBBX 60005.
Dormitory Car (Converted
Passenger Car), Ringling Brothers
and Barnum and Bailey Circus.**

Silver-gray with black reporting marks on left, red and white banner across most of side reading "Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey", and small multicolor "The Greatest Show on Earth" trademark at left and right. Approximate Time Period: at least the 1990s to present; ATP of specific cars may vary around that general range. Previous Release (as catalog 555 50 010 in RBB&B Train Set 994 01 050): Road Number 60007, March 2010.

When I "pre-reviewed" the RBB&B Train Set in the November 2009 UMTRR, I noted that this car wasn't like anything I'd ever seen and that the prototype for the road number 60007 run then appeared to have a diesel generator installed! The photo of the real RBBX 60005 as found on RRPictureArchives.net looks quite a bit more like a traditional baggage car.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:

The following item was announced as an "off-cycle" release via the Micro-Trains website on approximately July 15.



522 44 100, \$24.80.

**Reporting Marks: D&RGW 5637x (last
digit obscured by weathering).
50 Foot Steel Gondola, Steel Fishbelly
Sides, Drop Ends, Rio Grande.**

Orange sides, black drop ends. Mostly black lettering including speed lettering "Action Road" herald on right. Simulated stone load included. Weathering added and may include trucks based on image on the MTL website. Approximate Time Period: late 1970s to mid-2000s. Previous Releases: As catalog number 522 00 100, Road Number 56379, March 2005; then Runner Pack #4 (994 00 004) and Catalog 522 5x 100 April 2009, Road Numbers 56376, 56380, 56400, 56423.

I think this is a pluck from the Z Scale Runner Pack #4, so it's possible that other of the four road numbers in that group might be included. The MTL image is small but it appears to me that it's 56376 on the road number.

I'll "reprint" some of the commentary from the September 2008 coverage of the Runner Pack from which I think this car was taken. Built in 1977, the April 1981 ORER reveals series 56375 to 56424, of 50 cars with AAR Classification GB. The vital statistics: inside length 52 foot 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 4 feet 6 inches, outside length 57 feet 2

inches, extreme height 8 feet 1 inch, and capacity 2244 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. The Rio Grande rostered more than one thousand gondolas at the time, out of its total count of some ten thousand cars in its revenue fleet.

The Rio Grande Historical and Technical Society's website (<http://www.drgw.org>) notes that these cars were built with 13 rib or 14 panel sides and Improved Dreadnaught ends with 4 ribs. Yes, that means the cars should have fixed ends, not drop ends and the brake wheel on the prototype is on the end of the car, not the side. This is confirmed via a photo of one of the prototypes of this car found in Jim Eager's Morning Sun Color Guide for the D&RGW.

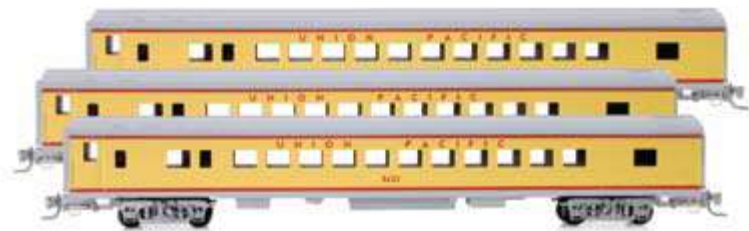
In the July 1992 Register, 17 of 48 cars were split into the a subseries with AAR Classification GBS, but that didn't last long, as in 1996 only one of that GBS subset remained. There were still 36 cars in several subgroups in the January 2000 Register under the Union Pacific registration so you're covered that far, although I'd set the weathering machine to "heavy." The October 2004 ORER has 30 cars left and the January 2006 has 28, but we'll hedge with "mid-2000s" as the end of the ATP. Photos on Fallen Flags of similar DRGW cars show them to be predominantly black, not orange, and not necessarily from repainting. Perhaps I need to rethink that ATP after all.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #20, four New York Central gondolas, has been released. UMTRR coverage was in the February 2010 issue.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is February 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close August 31.



Scheduled February 2011 Release:
Runner Pack #26: 994 00 026, \$79.95
Road Numbers: 5422, 5430, 5454
(will be preceded with "UP" in website listings).
Quantity three of Union Pacific passenger coaches.

Armour Yellow sides, Harbor Mist Gray roof and underside, and red stripes at top and bottom of sides. Road numbers at bottom center.

Approximate Time Period: 1950 (build date) to early 1970s.

Previous Releases: Catalog number 552 00 010, No road number, January 2009.

We can reach back to the original release in January 2009 of the four different streamlined passenger cars in Union Pacific paint and recall that the prototypes for these cars (and for this MTL body style in fact) were built in 1950 by Pullman-Standard. It looks like that's true, but there were another 38 cars constructed by American Car & Foundry in 1954 to the same floor plan. The road numbers were 5400 to 5449 for the P-S cars and 5450 to 5487 for the AC&F cars, so there's a little bit of a mix here on the road numbers selected by Micro-Trains.

I called the Approximate Time Period as ending around the same time Amtrak began, in 1971. That's roughly right, but Don Strack's "UtahRails.net" website lists dispositions for each (!) of the one hundred cars in the group. Here's a fun fact: a number of these cars went to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus! And of those, the 5422 in this Runner Pack became RBBX 42012. The 5430 went from the UP to the Penn Central to Amtrak and then became a private car "Amber Trail." The 5454 went from the UP to the Grand Trunk Western and then to SEMTA (later SMART) which took over passenger service in Michigan from the Grand Trunk Western.

I reported in 2009 that there were no photos of the car class in Morning Sun's Guide to the UP; but now we have Volume 2 of the Color Guide and on Page 72 are photos of a Pullman-Standard example, car number 5430, and an AC&F version, car 5484. It's noted in the MSCG that there are slight differences between the two versions with the AC&F cars having air-operated sliding doors (cue **Star Trek** sound effect?) and radios with roof-top antennas. We make the Approximate Time Period even more approximate with the July 1974 date on the photo of the 5484.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



502 00 526, \$22.95

Reporting Marks: OH 1803.

40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, Ohio State Car.

Aluminum sides, black roof, ends, sills and door hardware; blue and black primary lettering including reporting

marks, state name and outline map on left. Four color process graphics including state flag, state bird (Cardinal) and state flower (Scarlet Carnation) on right. Twenty-sixth release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

[The following is largely reprinted from the April 2005 UMTRR coverage of the N Scale release of this car.]

It's round on the ends and HI in the middle... yeah, I know, not the most complementary way to start the description of the Buckeye State. But it is something I remember! I also remember the first foray into the state, which was part of my "Whirlwind Tour" of August 1988. It was the first "new" state in which I set foot on that long driving vacation. In fact, I

was in the state on August 8... or 8/8/88, and among other things, had a pleasant walk around the city in which the mythical radio station WKRP was located, Cincinnati. Just over the river in Covington, Kentucky, an all-Elvis radio station could be heard as well, but that's another story entirely. My most recent trip to Ohio was back in 2009 and it was my first stop in Columbus, the capital and largest city. I am still looking to get back to Cleveland to the "Christmas Story House," the actual exterior location for the movie of the same name based on stories written by my all-time favorite author, the late Jean Shepherd. You'll shoot your eye out, kid! (And yes, this is the second reference to Shep in this month's column.)

Native American tribes like the Miami and the Wyandot were in what is now Ohio in the 1600's when the first European explorers arrived. First the French claimed the territory, then the British, and then it became part of the Northwest Territory of the United States. Marietta was the first permanent white settlement, circa 1788, and just five years later, the State of Ohio became our 17th. Chillicothe was the capital at first, then Zanesville, then Chillicothe again, and finally Columbus in 1816, which, unlike most state capitals, is at least reasonably close to the center of the state! Canals were big in Ohio before railroads, for example, between Cleveland and Portsmouth and between Toledo and Cincinnati, neither of them a short hop. This began a long history of manufacturing and commerce in the area, although there was still plenty of farmland to exploit as well. And that part about "high in the middle"? Well, I can tell you that Ohio is really not all that flat, with the highest point at over 1500 feet (stop laughing, Rocky Mountain residents!).

Given my taste for the offbeat, you'd probably expect that I would mention that in the former capital of Zanesville is the only Y-Bridge in the world. Y is it called a Y-Bridge? (Sorry. It's my only chance to make that joke.) It's literally built in the shape of a Y, at the intersection of the Muskingum and Licking Rivers. The bridge literally forks in the middle, forming a Y shape. And yes, I've driven on it! More along the mainstream, Ohio has given the country more presidents than any other state: U.S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, William Howard Taft, and Warren G. Harding (see above!). Two key Halls of Fame are located relatively close together: the Football-- oops, American Football!-- shrine in Canton and the Rock and Roll in Cleveland. The R+R Hall is there because the term is popularly credited to Alan Freed, disc jockey who was on the air in Cleveland at the time. Science and technology advancements from Ohio abound in the automotive and telephone industries; the cash register was invented there, and the traffic signal was patented in 1923 by Cleveland native Garrett Morgan.

Other famous Ohioans include inventor Thomas Edison (born in Milan), flight pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright, space pioneers John Glenn and Neil Armstrong, writer Zane Grey (from Zanesville, no less!), movie mogul Steven Spielberg (born in Cincinnati), athletes Jesse Owens, Jack Nicklaus and Pete Rose, actors Clark Gable and Paul Newman, and comedians Drew Carey and Arsenio Hall. The "Ohio Memory" site has more 26,000 citations from 330 sources, which will keep anyone busy for a while.

HO_n3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):



New Release: 865 00 050, \$31.65

Reporting Marks: None.

30 Foot Log Car with Load.

No paint, no lettering on car, but included simulated log load is painted per information in the Micro-News.

Approximate Time Period: most of the 20th Century.

This fifth release of the body style, well, expands your fleet by twenty percent, I guess, if you've purchased the previous four cars. As usual, there is not a whole lot to report on a car with no paint, no lettering, and a specific use, other than to say that it would have been possible to find this car or similar ones on logging railroads around much of the country.

HO_n3 SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: No releases since last issue.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: New building kits are here. In N Scale, there's a grain elevator (499 90 913, \$39.95) and in Z is a ranch house with small shed (799 90 932, \$24.95). The N Scale cement container load featured in the March release of the New York Central gondolas is now available in a two pack (499 43 962, \$8.95). And for a little variety, in Z Scale we have an undecorated fishing boat (799 43 929, \$11.95).

The big announcement, however, is of the kickoff of the next Special Edition series with the circus theme. The "Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Big Top Extravaganza" will be a series of colorfully painted rolling stock of different types retailing at \$34.95 each, pulled by a Model Power American 4-4-0 steam locomotive decorated by Micro-Trains. This series is scheduled to begin on January 1, 2011. So far we see only "paste ups" of a few examples that look to be a bit like rolling billboards. Don't look for prototypes for these cars – they will be all for fun. It's noted to dealers that they need to be placed on Standing Orders apart from the usual Standing Orders for the rest of the monthly MTL lineup (except for the locomotive), and to potential customers that they should preorder with dealers by August 31.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: Once again, we lead off with a Pullman: last month's 142 00 010 12-1 sleeper with just the Pullman name is outta here. (Apparently, though, neither of the Great Northern "Empire Builder" Pullmans is officially gone, so we will undo the "D" on the website release table for the 141 00 020 from June.) Also on the bye-bye board in N Scale are the CB&Q "golden freight car" (024 00 250, April), the weathered Shell Center Flow (094 44 210, mid-month June), the first number of the New York Central gondola with cement containers (105 00 721, March, second number still available), and the Santa Fe RPO (140 00 040, February). The N_n3 Scale Durango and Silverton caboose has also left the building (816 00 030, September 2008).

Z Scale “outs” outnumber the N Scale ones this month. Freight cars first, in catalog number order: the first number of the Baltimore and Ohio boxcar with load (500 00 631, May, second number still available); the Burlington “golden freight car” boxcar (503 00 080, March); both numbers of the Union Pacific “We Can Handle It” boxcars (507 00 53x, February); the Ringling Brothers Billboard Car #3 (515 00 603, October 2009). Also gone are three GP35 locomotives: Soo Line (981 01 070, August 2006); Rock Island (981 01 101, May 2007) and Missouri Pacific (981 01 122, June 2008).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: Continuing on the topic of “what color lettering is that on the Pullmans?” Charlie Vlk checked in with this: The Gold on the Micro-Trains Pullmans (so far) has been “Metallic Gold,” the old signpainter technique where real Gold Leaf is laid into a wet paint base and burnished for the lettering. The imitation gold color is often called Dulux Gold as it was a standard DuPont paint in the Dulux line and it was used by many railroads. There is another DuPont paint line with a different chemical base, Duco, which also has an imitation gold color. PRR had their own replacement for metallic gold; it was a more buttery color than the rest and was called Buff. Some railroads had their own mixes of imitation gold; there are separate Badger (paint) lettering golds for NH, B&O, and SOO, as well as a Metallic Gold.

With respect to the 113 00 750 Disconnect Log Trucks, Kent Sullivan notes that “while [the car] certainly could have been used most of the 20th Century, with a log that big, we're talking before 1950, and likely before 1940, in most places.”

OOPS PATROL: Nothing reported since last issue

AND THAT’S ALL FOR THIS MONTH: Unless breaking news warrants, we’ll be back next month with the full-length September issue, and before then with the Weathered Car update, assuming that more weathered cars are announced later in August. Until then, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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