

IrwinsJournal.com Presents:
The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report
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Hello again everyone! Well, it's a new year and a new format for the UMTRR, as we finally make it into, I guess at least the 1990's state of the art, with the change to a PDF file for these news and views. Based on the many e-mail responses I received (and thank you for them!) it looks like my test send was received with no worries. The new format means the return of fully qualified links—although I can't guarantee how long they'll be good, of course—and the introduction of color images of most releases, made available through kind courtesy of Micro-Trains. I do expect that there will be tweaks to the format as we all get used to it. Two things don't change: first, my robust independence as a reviewer and commenter, and second, the subscription rate charged for the UMTRR, namely, zero. Let's begin Year 14 of "free and worth at least that much," shall we?

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



046 00 390, \$19.45

Reporting Marks: CN 143866.

50 Foot Steel Gondola, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Canadian National.

Light freight car red (brown) with white lettering

including reporting marks on left and roadname in center. Brown trucks and couplers. Simulated crushed stone load included.

Approximate Time Period: 1952 (build date) to mid-1960's at least.

The April 1952 build date on this car fits right into the build dates of March to July 1952 for the Canadian National series of gondolas 143500 to 144999, as related by Ian Cranstone on his "Canadian Freight Cars" site (<http://www.nakina.net>). These 52 foot 6 inch interior length cars were built by Eastern Car Company and featured drop ends and a wood floor. Over time some of these cars were renumbered into other groups. Cranstone has the last in-service date as being in 1992. But the change to the CN "wet noodle" scheme, introduced in 1960, would, I think, limit the Approximate Time Period to well before then. We will tack on an "at least" to cover those cars that escaped the paint shop for a while after the "wet noodle" debuted.

The only photo I could find of a car in this CN series is, in fact, in a later paint scheme. It's the CN 143722 as of July, 1968 on Page 61 of the Morning Sun Color Guide to the CN, Volume 2. We are somewhat close between prototype and model, as both are 14 panels with fishbelly sides and drop ends. The photo doesn't fully show the car side with the brake hardware, but it looks like it might be a lever instead of a wheel. The drop in the side to form the fishbelly is "steeper" on the real car and occurs between the second and third ribs on either side, whereas the MTL model has a less steep slope and the drop is between the second and fourth ribs. And how's that for nitpicking. I guess I won't get into the rivet

patterns, then. However, I will note that as is typical for Micro-Trains gondolas, the inside length is a bit shorter than the prototype's and the outside length is a bit more.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for July 1953 shows 1499 cars in the series 143500 to 144999, with these dimensions: inside length 52 feet 6 inches, inside height 4 feet, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, outside length 55 feet, extreme height 7 feet 9 inches, and capacity 1996 cubic feet or 155,400 pounds. While a numerous group, it was only the fourth largest among all gondola series at the time, with the biggest series being a set of over 2200 steel 36 foot interior length drop bottom side dump coal gondolas.

Besides the crushed stone load, Micro-Trains also replicates the maximum height stencils on the car, one of which is actually for crushed stone. For gondolas of this size, the density of some of the material carried would exceed the weight limit before filling the cubic footage completely. The stenciling enables more flexible loading of the car, unless of course the amount to be carried is exceeded, in which case the car itself might become a little more "flexible."



059 00 516 and 059 00 526, \$24.50 each

Reporting Marks: PFE 45698 and PFE 44739.

40 Foot Steel Ice Refrigerator Car with Preco Fan, Pacific Fruit Express.

Aluminum with black details. Black lettering including "Pacific Fruit Express" and reporting marks on left. Black and white round Southern Pacific herald and red, white and blue Union Pacific shield herald on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1946 to 1962 (the 45698) or 1966 (the 44739).

In the overall history of N Scale, this is at least the third go-round for this experimental pair of Pacific Fruit Express cars, and there may be more which I don't remember at the moment. There was a pair of E-R Models limited release cars on the old Rivarossi bodies, best known around here as Atlas "First Generation" tooling. There was also a special run done on Intermountain kits for Challenger N Scale, which were quickly sold out. (I believe that Intermountain may have redone these cars for other parties as well.) And now we have a this larger production run (we assume!) from Micro-Trains.

This entry is legitimate, though limited—you won't see any reprints of these cars because there were just the two. Obtained from Consolidated Steel in 1946, these had experimental aluminum bodies, with the 44739 from Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) and the 45698 from Reynolds Aluminum. As with other test cars made of aluminum, they cost more initially but weighed a lot less. If successful, more of what we now call the Gross Rail Weight could be devoted to cargo instead of car. It was also thought that the aluminum bodies

would be more corrosion-resistant than steel. I think the fact that only two of these were ever built might give us the answer on the cost-benefit analysis, though the cars did see service until the 1960's. The Approximate Time Period ends differently for each car; the 45698 was wrecked in 1962 and the 44739 was scrapped in 1966.

The ORER for July 1953 does not specifically call out either one of these cars. Instead, they're grouped into the series 44701 to 45700 of 979 cars. (Which was just a fraction of the 38,565 registered to PFE at the time.) The only car description is "Ventilated" – the overall registration has the header, "Refrigerator Equipment." Here are the vital statistics: inside length 33 feet 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, inside width 8 feet 3 inches, inside height 7 feet 3 inches, outside length 41 feet 11 inches, extreme height 14 feet 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, door opening 4 feet wide by 7 feet $\frac{3}{4}$ inch high, capacity of lading 1988 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds, ice capacity between 11,500 and 12,700 pounds depending on type (crushed, coarse or chunk). End notes do call out Preco fans, type FG-34A, for both of the cars; and also let us know that the entire series is equipped for half-stage icing service.

So, among all of the models so far, how does the MTL offering stack up against the prototype? Well, I would expect some differences in all cases as the real ones were PFE class R-40-14 and none of the models are. Specifically with respect to the Micro-Trains car, though, I observed a couple of deltas from a photo of the 45698. First, the side sills on the prototype are completely straight; only the Preco fan drops below the carbody line. That can be fixed by the modeler. Second, the roof overhang is pronounced on the real 45698, it's almost like a foldover. But otherwise, this seems pretty good. Even the tack boards are in the right place. What's actually more of an issue with this release, and all the others, is the "uniqueness" of the two cars. Yes, I know, it can't be unique if there are two, but consider the odds of either of these cars appearing in operation among more than thirty-eight thousand in the Pacific Fruit Express roster alone, never mind the rest of the sum total of all North American freight cars. I suspect the selling point will be more the "unusual" factor than anything else, but that's not really new news in the world of N Scale Accumulation.



111 00 140, \$39.95

Reporting Marks: ETTX 820261.

89 Foot Enclosed Autorack, Trailer Train/"The Rock."

Flat Car: Yellow with black and white lettering including reporting marks on left and "Trailer Train" on right. Rack: Blue with aluminum panels, black and yellow lettering; blue panel with black and white "The Rock" herald at left. Approximate Time Period: 1977 to sometime after 1980.

Need a *Less* Approximate Time Period start? How about July 6, 1977? That was a Wednesday, I checked. Emery Gulash caught the freshly outshopped ETTX 820261 on that date in Novi, Michigan with a brand new tri-level enclosed autorack painted in the colors of "The Rock." That photo appears on Page 84 of the Morning Sun Color Guide to the Rock Island. "Modeling details include the pattern of blue trim on the ends and posts, white

excess height notations at the top of the doors on the car end, and the ACI panel on one of the posts.” Well, two out of three ain’t bad. The prototype photo shows the “The Rock” logo on a placard. Normally, this is how MTL depicts the logo as well, but this time, it’s printed directly on a panel.

The autorack atop this Trailer Train doesn’t look quite like the Micro-Trains model. The real car had just emerged from Paragon Industries (spelled “Pragon” in the Color Guide) according to the photo caption, so I’m going to assume it’s their autorack sitting on the car. And that’s how it looks—like it’s just “sitting” on the car. I’m sure it’s attached securely, but that’s not how it appears to me, as opposed to appearing to be a more integral part of the car as the MTL model looks. (To me, anyway.) The prototype ETTX 820261 did not have fully enclosed ends at the time its photo was taken, but it’s certainly possible that the very top of the ends was closed off sometime after the rack was originally deployed.

The ORER for April 1981 is past the demise of The Rock, but it’s the closest one I have after 1977 so it’ll have to do. Trailer Train’s extensive registration includes the series ETTX 820261 as part of a subset numbering forty cars out of the main series 820000 to 820299. I’ll just give the dimensions of the subset: inside length 89 feet 4 inches, inside width 9 feet, outside length 93 feet 10 inches, extreme width 10 feet 3 inches, extreme height 18 feet 10 inches, height from rail to extreme width 4 feet 8 inches, capacity 118,000 pounds. The height at extreme width and extreme height were two metrics that distinguished this subset from the main series, and I suspect also hinted at the specific racking atop the flat car.

As close as we can get to the start of the ATP, we can’t get anywhere with its conclusion. The end of the Rock Island was chaotic and the cars in the roster got scattered to the winds or even “lost.” Making things more difficult is the fact that Trailer Train or some other party could easily have changed out the rack for that of another member railroad, or just painted out the “Rock” legend and reporting marks on the rack (which as you know, are different from that on the flat car). And the car is listed only under the Trailer Train registration as well, which is how I was able to find it a year after The Rock had crumbled. So “sometime after 1980” might be a copout, but it’s the best we can do, although it also allows the runner plenty of latitude as to how long the car might be operated on his or her N Scale pike.



120 00 520, \$22.50

Reporting Marks: UPCX 709

40 Foot “AAR/USRA” Boxcar with Murphy Roof, Universal Portland Cement Company.

Gray sides, black ends and roof. Black reporting marks (on left), routing instructions and dimensional data. Red “Universal Cement” on

left and slogan “Concrete for Permanence” on right; red and white trademark on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1923 to early 1930’s.

I don't really mean to name-drop here, but this story involves Ben Affleck. No, wait, not that Ben Affleck!

Benjamin Franklin Affleck, also known as B.F., was rising through the ranks of the cement department of the Illinois Steel Company when that operation was spun off in 1906, becoming the Universal Portland Cement Company. Affleck was the sales manager at the time of the divestiture and became the company's President in 1915. He was in charge through the entire Approximate Time Period of this car and into the merger of Universal with the Atlas Cement Company in 1930. The combined operation became a subsidiary of United States Steel, just as Illinois Steel was, so the spin-off came full circle. Among the operations of Universal was the large Buffington Plant in Gary, Indiana. The routing instructions on the car Micro-Trains modeled specify return of the car to Buffington, Indiana via the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway, also a long time United States Steel subsidiary.

Cement, like steel, can be a fairly standard commodity and as such could be subject to intense price competition. Unless the various companies that make portland cement conspire otherwise! On March 2, 1921, Affleck and thirty-nine other officers of cement corporations were indicted by a federal grand jury under the Sherman Antitrust Act for restraint of trade and attempts at monopoly. The companies involved were alleged to have tightly controlled the supply of cement, refusing to sell any builder more than the amount needed for a single job, and preventing them from using any unexpected surplus on other jobs; prices quoted on cement were invariably the same to the penny.

If you're a cement maker not allowed to conspire on pricing (imagine that!), then you're subject to the up and down cycle of the building industry. This affected any number of companies, and eventually U.S. Steel decided to exit the business. The Universal Atlas Cement division was sold to Lehigh Cement in 1980. Lehigh, also known as Lehigh Portland Cement, had been independent for many years until being bought by a German firm in 1977.

And that brings us into the Lehigh Valley – the river valley in Northeast Pennsylvania, not the railroad. There was a shortline railroad there called the Northampton and Bath, which is where Micro-Trains said the freight cars of Universal Cement were transferred following its merger with Atlas Cement. And guess who owned the Northampton and Bath? Right... United States Steel. It all ties up rather neatly, for a change. The original Atlas Cement Company was in the area; in fact there is a "memorial museum" devoted to the company and the industry in Northampton. The N&B was chartered to serve the cement business and operated from 1902 to 1984. Noted freight car historian Eric Neubauer devoted Volume 20 of his *Freight Cars Journal* series to the Northampton and Bath. And hopefully we'll now see Micro-Trains issue a car for that line, which for a time used a huge can't miss it "NB" and a large diamond herald on its boxcars.

But I digress. Micro-Trains gives 1923 as the build date for this car, one of three hundred built by American Car and Foundry for Universal Portland Cement. The April 1928 ORER will have to do, and way in the back on Page 992 we have a text-based registration for the company. "The box (M. C. B. Designation "XM") cars of this Company are marked

‘Universal Portland Cement Co.’ and ‘U.P.C.X.’ and numbered 701 to 1000 inclusive; inside dimensions: length, 40 feet 6 inches, width, 8 feet 6 inches; height, 8 feet 7 inches (capacity 2955 cubic feet, 100,000 pounds). Total, 300 cars.”

Micro-Trains mentions that the UPCX boxcars were given the reporting marks of the Universal Atlas Cement Company, UACX, but I’m not sure that lasted too long. The July 1935 ORER which is the next one I have after 1928 shows just sixty boxcars under that registration, but the Northampton and Bath already has 218 cars numbered 701 to 1000 with the same dimensions as the Universal Portland Cement boxcars. We’re beyond the Approximate Time Period by this point anyway.

I don’t have a photo of the Universal Portland Cement car available, but I do have shots of the cars in N&B paint in the book “Classic Freight Cars Volume 7.” I would expect there to be some quibbles, most notably grab irons instead of a ladder on the right end, but I think MTL has the overall design of the car fairly well matched, including the ends, roof, vertical brake staff, straight side sill, and six foot Creco door. Not too bad, actually.

One more thing: the cement bag load, while probably needing some restraints of some sort, is legitimate. The book “The Lehigh Valley Cement Industry” published as part of the “Images of America” series by Arcadia has several photos of bags of cement being filled. There were 94 pounds of cement per bag. Photos also show that they stacked up nicely in trucks, and, I would think, boxcars.

N SCALE REPRINTS:



020 00 556, \$18.70

Reporting Marks: NH 36848.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, New Haven.

Black with orange doors and white lettering including large "N over H" herald on left, and roadname and reporting marks on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1956 (refurbishment /

repaint date) to late 1960's.

Previous Release (as catalog 20556): Road Number 36833, November 2001.

The Morning Sun Color Guide to the New Haven describes how 975 boxcars from the New Haven's 30000 series were sold to Harris Trust Company, refurbished by the Hyman Michaels Company, and leased back to the NH. When returned to the railroad, the cars were numbered in the 36000 series. There were three major paint schemes used, and this is a variation on one of them. Page 23 of the Color Guide shows NH 36833, which was the model for the first MTL release, complete with its extra-large N over H in white and the orange "safety appliances" — ladders, grab irons and such. The photo is clear enough that I can read the dimensional data right off the car: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10

feet even, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, overall height 13 feet 11 inches, capacity 3715 cubic feet or 120,000 pounds, and light weight 46,500 pounds. Sharp-eyed observers will note that these dimensions are a bit smaller than the MTL body style, particularly the height. The side sills differ from the Micro-Trains 020 shell as well. But there's no "door thing" this time with a six foot opening for that orange door.

I mentioned back in 2001 that there was quite the drop in car count for this series 36000 to 36990, from 976 cars in the January 1959 ORER to just 195 in the January 1964 Register. I had speculated that since the cars were originally built in the early 1940's, perhaps they were just retired or scrapped. Wrong! (And I guess that makes for a long term Oops.) Most of the 36000 series was actually part of a large selloff of the roster which took the New Haven down from 8300 freight cars in 1960 to 5400 in 1965 and just 2600 in 1969 when the NH was shoved into the Penn Central. We can hang on to the mid-1960s for the end of the ATP, though, as among those 2600 freight cars in 1969 were 63 from this series.



109 00 230, \$21.35

Reporting Marks: Southern 50005.

Heavyweight Depressed Center Flat Car with Commonwealth Trucks and Attached Load, Southern Railway.

Freight car red with white lettering including roadname and road number in center. Includes simulated large generator load.

Approximate Time Period: 1954 (build date) to no later than the late 1980's, based on paint scheme.

Previous Release (as catalog 109230): Road Number 50003, August 2003.

The story of this car was pretty complete for the first run of this car, so I should be able to safely repeat myself, first by quoting our resident Norfolk Southern expert Joe Shaw. Back in 2003 he wrote, "For the Southern depressed center flat car, the Morning Sun Southern Railway Color Guide has two pictures of SOU 50003 on Page 77. It also has pictures of 50009 and 50011. The series is SOU 50000-50013. The MTL copy was written from information in the two captions (General Steel casting built by Southern in 1954, etc.) Pictures show two brake wheels, and a 2-54 built date. The first picture shows the car in April 1970 with the original 'Roman' lettering as MTL produced. The second picture is from September 1989, with the thicker modern SOUTHERN lettering, the kind with the green-filled O. Reweigh date on the car in the latter scheme is 7-88, but it appears to have been reweighed at least once after being repainted."

Joe added then that there are images of both the 50003 and sister car 50006 on the Southern Railfan Site's photo archives (<http://southern.railfan.net/images/archive/archives.html>, select "Freight Cars" then "Bulkhead and Flat Cars") and that's still true. The 50003, from October 1987, is in the heavy "Southern" lettering, as in the second picture that Joe cited. The 50006, which is not dated, has just reporting marks suggestive of the Norfolk Southern style

of lettering, and what looks like it might be a small version of the "NS" logo. That would be a third style for the folks in Talent to replicate.

Thanks again, Joe. On to the Equipment Register from January 1964: The series is listed as AAR Classification "FD" and the simple description "Flat, Steel" which is a bit curious considering other depressed center flat car writeups I've seen. The inside and outside lengths are both shown as 57 feet 9 inches, perhaps a typo. The inside width is 9 feet even and extreme height (obviously without load!) is 4 feet 2 inches. Note E adds, "Length of depression of cars... 21 ft, height from top of rail to top of floor plate in center, 2 ft. These cars are equipped with steel loading floors and have 2 six wheel trucks. Spacing between truck centers 41 ft, between axles 4 ft 6 inches." I checked these metrics against an MTL DC flat and they line up pretty close to dead on. Given Joe's photo references, I got lazy here and stopped looking since we know the ATP will stretch to the time in which the repaint to the bolder "Southern" roadname occurred, that is, 1989 or earlier.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:

The following items were announced via the Micro-Trains website on December 15 as "off-cycle" releases and were first covered in a "UMTRR News Flash" sent to subscribers on December 16. Note that both multi-packs are sold out and discontinued.

993 05 030, \$119.95 - Weathered Southwest Three Pack. Consists of the following items:



025 44 520, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 025 5x 520 as part of Runner Pack #24, February 2009.

Reporting Marks: GWSR xxxxxx (road number obscured). Road numbers of the Runner Pack were 767043, 767090, 767135, 767166.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Door, Golden West Service.

Blue with yellow lettering including reporting marks on left. Red and yellow "Golden West Service" herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1990's to mid-2000's.



094 44 270, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 094 5x 270 as part of Runner Pack #23, January 2009.

Reporting Marks: KCS 286019*.

3 Bay ACF Center Flow Covered Hopper, Long Hatches, Kansas City Southern.

Dark forest green (essentially black) with gray roof and top side plate. Red and yellow bands at bottom of sides. White and yellow lettering including reporting marks on left ("KCS" in yellow outlined in red). Red and yellow KCS Lines "heritage herald" on right. Approximate Time Period: the present.

*Note: Reporting Marks are as shown in image on MTL website, but I would not be surprised to see other road numbers from the Runner Pack in some copies. Those other road numbers are 286018, 286020, and 286021.



111 44 130, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 111 00 130, May 2009.

Reporting Marks: ATSF 86080.

89 Foot Tri-Level Closed Autorack, Santa Fe (AT&SF).

Red with white top end panels and aluminum roof. White lettering on flat car including simulated reflective panels and stars at each end of the sides. Blue panels (second from left and second from right) with mostly white lettering. Circle cross herald and reporting marks on left panel. Roadname in Cooper Black font and verbiage "Always on the move toward a better way" on right panel. Approximate Time Period: late 1970's to late 1990's at latest.

Weathering on all cars consists of varying combinations of black, brown and gray streaks. The 025 44 502 and 111 44 130 also include graffiti.

993 05 040, \$99.95 - Weathered Eastern Four Pack. Consists of the following items:



024 44 310, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 024 00 310, May 2009.

Reporting Marks: CB&Q 34236.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Roofwalk with Short Ladders, Chicago, Burlington and Quincy.

Cascade green ("Burlington Northern" green) with white lettering including "Burlington"

roadname and reporting marks on left. Split table dimensional data on left. Simulated reflective panels along bottom sill (covered with weathering).

Approximate Time Period: 1969 (service/repaint date) to early 1980's.



046 44 270, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 046 00 270, December 2008.

Reporting Marks: WAB 11615.

50 Foot Steel Gondola, Fishbelly Sides, Drop

Ends, Wabash. Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left, large roadname in center and "Follow the Flag" slogan and herald on right. Simulated crushed metal load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1960's to early 1970's.



062 44 070, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 062 5x 070 as part of Runner Pack #18, October 2008.

Road Number: 363305* (will be preceded with "PRR" in website listings).

50 Foot Gondola, Composite Sides, Drop Ends, Pennsylvania Railroad. Red oxide with white lettering including large roadname across car, road number in center, and small plain keystone on far right. Approximate Time Period: mid 1950's (1956 repaint date) to mid 1960's.

*Note: Road Number is as shown in image on MTL website, but I would not be surprised to see other road numbers from the Runner Pack in some copies. Those other road numbers are 363222, 363236, and 363300.



066 44 040, Previously released in unweathered form as Catalog Number 066 00 040, November 2008.

Reporting Marks: PC 70755.

Three Dome Tank Car, Penn Central (Company Service).

Jade green with white lettering including reporting marks on left and small herald on right. Approximate Time Period: early to mid 1970's.

Weathering on all cars consists of varying combinations of black, brown and gray streaks and areas. The 046 44 270 and 062 44 070 are shown with loads which are also weathered. The 024 44 310 also includes graffiti.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #35 (Four Chesapeake and Ohio 50 foot plug door boxcars) has been released (image at right).

UMTRR coverage of Runner Pack #35 was in the subscriber edition (only) of the July 2009 issue.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is July 2010.

UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close January 31.



Scheduled July 2010 Release:

Runner Pack #41: 993 00 041, \$84.95

Reporting Marks: RBBX 60002, RBBX 60004, RBBX 63006.

Quantity three Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus "Stock Cars" (passenger baggage cars).

Silver-gray with black reporting marks on left and small multicolor "The Greatest Show on Earth" trademark at left and right. Micro-Trains decoration and six-wheel passenger trucks with Magne-Matic couplers on Con-Cor model.

Approximate Time Period: at least the 1990's to the present; ATP of specific cars may vary around that general range.

Previously Announced Release: Road Number RBBX 63004 as part of the RBB&B Train Set, catalog 993 01 140, scheduled release March 2010.

If this release were announced just a couple of months later, we'd have an actual model with which to compare with a prototype photo; as it is, we again don't have that much to go on. I can refer to my notes from when the Red Unit Train Set was announced in October 2009. RBBX 63004, which will be part of that set, is a full length baggage car that's been modified with screened windows and some closed off windows. The stock Con-Cor 85 foot smoothside baggage car in N Scale doesn't have any windows at all, other than in the baggage doors, so I'm wondering how MTL will pull off simulating the other openings in the car. I speculated in my advance commentary on the Train Set that perhaps Micro-Trains will use pad printing, as on the Canadian Northern roadname of the 36 foot wood refrigerator car (058 00 080, May 2009).

Meanwhile, let's check photos of two of the three prototype stock cars in this Runner Pack on RRPictureArchives.net and guess what, they don't look like each other. RBBX 63002 is more like a passenger car with a single baggage door; one of the thirty (!) images available on that one site shows clearly that the second baggage door opening has been plated over. RBBX 63006 has both doors in place and a fair number of windows, some with screens. There are thirty-four (!) images on the RRPictureArchives site. It's noted that this car is the former Union Pacific 5747 and UP MOW 904815. We go to the Fallen Flags website (URL is <http://www.rr-fallenflags.org> , and look under "Royal American Shows") for the RBBX 60004 which has five windows with screens on the side that we can view, and some unusual replacement doors in the baggage door openings. They look as if they might swing out or down instead of slide into the car side as in the traditional arrangement. As if this wasn't enough for folks to call "Stand In!" none of the prototypes looks like the RBBX 63004 that's coming with the Train Set. Ah, well, I've already noted given the disparity in the individual cars in the Ringling Brothers roster, a more exact representation of the Red Train was going to require either a lot of work or a pile of money. The differences in individual cars noted here is just more evidence in support of that statement. I've read some stronger opinions, for example, "No thanks, I'll wait until someone does this correctly." Er, good luck with that...

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



047 00 406, \$25.95

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Ice Refrigerator Car, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Billboard Car #6: "Chariot Race."

Reporting Marks: None (reference in UMTRR website will be "RBB&B Billboard Car #6").

Brown with multi-color representation of a chariot race on right. Large "Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Combined Circus" on left.

Are chariot races the original spectator sport? I'm not enough of a historian to state that definitively, but we know from descriptions of Ancient Roman culture, and also the film "Ben-Hur," that these events packed the Colosseum, way back in the first century A.D. According to one source I found online (<http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/circus.html>), chariot racing actually dates back some six centuries before that. And the venue in which they were held was called... a circus! As with other diversions, not everyone was completely pleased with the concept. The first century satirist Juvenal wasn't; he's the one who coined the phrase "bread and circuses." The four factions of chariot racers, known by their colors, were cheered for in a manner similar to today's support of professional sports teams; one could be a "partisan of the Blue" then as a New York Mets fan, now. (And hopefully with more success... never mind.) Chariot racers were held up as heroes and celebrities, and were even commemorated with statues. A second century charioteer who kept detail records of his exploits won a remarkable 1462 races out of 4257 starts and even more remarkably, retired at age 42 with total earnings of 36 million sesterces, which in today's dollars would be, er, a lot. But chariot racers were often slaves, although some were able to buy their freedom if they did well enough racing. Assuming that they survived, that is. Many racers didn't make it out of their twenties.

Circus operators including the subjects of the MTL Special Edition releases knew that simulated Chariot Races would pack audiences under the big top as it had the circuses of Ancient Rome, and several featured them in their shows. And of course, they advertised these events on their posters as well. This example from the 1930's is rather interesting on several points. First, note the symbolism of there being four white horses on the lead team, and four black horses on the team that is pursuing them; same as in Western legend as told by Hollywood, the good guys had white horse and the bad guys black ones. Second, the white team is being led by, let's say a very attractive young lady. You might remember my commenting on this with the "Lady Acrobats" car—males were not necessarily in the audience to see the elephants and tigers! (No "cougar" jokes please...) And the circus was one of the places where beautiful women could be seen in what would have been rather scandalous costumes elsewhere. Third, is that supposed to be fire burning underneath the chariots? No wonder the horses looked frightened! I assume that this is meant to convey the impression of speed, not intended to be literal. The last thing a circus operator wanted was a fire under the big top.

While this poster is from the 1930's per MTL, and the "Combined Circus" text confirms this, the Ringling Brothers had advertised chariot races as far back as at least 1916. There's a poster first printed in that year with two teams of horses; the background quartet is all white and the foreground group is two white and two black horses. As in the poster on the car, the drivers are dressed as Romans.



074 00 117, \$23.95

40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #17: Richard Nixon (37th 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.

I was still quite young and certainly did not understand politics when the story of the scandal that eventually brought down the 37th President broke. "Watergate Plumbers?" I recall asking myself. "What's wrong? Is there a sink that's clogged or something?" Being that I was still quite young, I didn't understand that the word "leak" didn't always include water going where it shouldn't. But I was old enough to know where I was when the first and only resignation of a United States President occurred on August 8, 1974, and I would imagine that most other people alive at the time still remember as well. The Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia (<http://millercenter.org>) has on its site the video clip of that resignation speech.

I was wondering what the Miller Center, which does its very best to be scholarly and unbiased, would have to say about Richard Nixon, and so I went there first. "Before the spectacular fall, there was an equally spectacular rise." And that's certainly fair.

Richard Milhous Nixon was born on January 9, 1913 in Yorba Linda, California and grew up in nearby East Whittier. In early life Nixon proved to be excellent in both debating and theatre, and it was in the Whittier Community Players that he met his wife Pat, whom he married in 1940. Nixon left his position in a Whittier Law Firm for a brief job in Washington and then service in the Navy after Pearl Harbor. Upon his return to California, Nixon was tapped by Southern California Republicans to run for Congress. Negative campaigning is said to have aided his victory. He rose to national recognition with the investigation of Alger Hiss as part of the House Un-American Activities Committee, was endorsed by both Democrats and Republicans for an easy re-election, and in 1950 set his sights on the Senate. Once again, some interesting tactics helped his successful campaign, but also earned him the nickname "Tricky Dick." The next step in Nixon's fast rise was his 1952 nomination for Vice President by Dwight David Eisenhower. Questions about the candidate's funding led to Nixon's famous "Checkers" speech, in which he said that he would return campaign gifts except for his daughter Tricia's cocker spaniel puppy. That speech boosted his reputation

and Eisenhower and Nixon won in a landslide. It was a remarkable jump from obscurity to a heartbeat away from the Presidency.

But that Presidency would have to wait; as much as television worked for Nixon with the "Checkers" speech, it worked against him in the first ever televised debates in 1960. Nixon's opponent was John F. Kennedy, who looked healthy and radiant on the small screen, while Nixon looked pale and sweaty. Nixon also alleged numerous dirty tricks on the part of the Kennedys, although he had already proven that he was hardly above those himself. The election of 1960 was the closest of the Twentieth Century, but when it was over, Nixon was defeated. "I vowed that I would never again enter an election at a disadvantage by being vulnerable to them -- or anyone -- on the level of political tactics," Nixon is quoted as saying. A much better known quote of his was made after he was soundly beaten in the 1962 race for the governorship of California: "You won't have Dick Nixon to kick around any more."

Nixon's retirement was short lived. He worked to remake himself as more of a statesman than a politician. Centerpiece of this was a series of television programs in which he answered questions from citizens, not reporters. The Republicans were united behind him for the Presidency in 1968 after he turned back a serious challenge from Ronald Reagan, and the Democrats were split by the Vietnam War and in disarray. A third party challenge from George Wallace took more votes away from Democrats and their candidate Hubert Humphrey than from Republicans. Nixon took only 43 percent of the popular vote, just one percent more than Humphrey, but took the Electoral College by a rate of 3 to 2.

Nixon was more interested in foreign policy than domestic issues. On that front he is perhaps best known for defrosting relations with both China and the Soviet Union, and by reaching out to both superpowers effectively playing them against each other. Back at home, the economy which had been going well during 1968, settled into a period of "stagflation": inflation without underlying growth. In 1971 Nixon instituted wage and price controls which was enormously popular and helped him win a landslide re-election in 1972. However, what became known as the Watergate Scandal was already underway. Named for the hotel in Washington where the Democratic National Committee was located (and where I would stay on business travel many years later!), the scandal was actually a series of illegal activities including break-ins and searches, and perhaps more damning, the attempts to cover them up. The basis for the activity was Nixon's worry that some of his questionable foreign policy orders would be uncovered following the publishing of the Pentagon Papers (which did not implicate Nixon's Administration at all) and the resulting suggestion that any such "fishing expedition" be stopped before it could start. Unfortunately for Nixon, conversations about these activities were secretly tape recorded -- at Nixon's order -- and once they were revealed to the nation, there was nowhere to go but out of office. Nixon resigned in disgrace but was pardoned by Gerald Ford following Ford's succession to the White House.

There was still one final act to the public life of Richard Nixon. While clearly shamed by the Watergate scandal, he was still an expert on international relations, and he became an elder statesman and author on the subject. He returned to China and pressed for normalizing

relations. He also quietly advised his old opponent Ronald Reagan and his successor George W. Bush. By the time of his death on April 22, 1994, Nixon had regained at least some of his stature and his funeral was attended by all of the living presidents at the time. Scholars who examine Nixon's life and career may conclude that every move he made was politically based, for example creating the Environmental Protection Administration as a pre-emptive strike to stop even more sweeping legislation. But whatever the rationale, there were major changes in American government during his tenure.

Nn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE): No releases this month.

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



500 00 621 and 500 00 262, \$20.60 each

Reporting Marks: RI 147760 and RI 147982.

40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Youngstown Door, Rock Island.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks and "Route of the Rocket" slogan on left. Black and white "Ship Rock Island Rocket Freight" herald (including standard RI herald) on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1949 to early 1970's.

Micro-Trains' willingness to borrow from one scale to the other works in my favor again, as the N Scale Runner Pack #31, released in September 2009, includes these same two road numbers. And the Morning Sun Color Guide to the Rock Island hasn't changed either in the interim. So we can repeat that on Page 35 is a 1966 photo of car number 148393. The caption tells the story: it's one of at least 150 cars painted in the "Route of the Rocket"/ "Rocket Freight" dual slogan scheme. The 148393, which is in fact one of the road numbers MTL is modeling, was part of a multi-year order from the Pressed Steel Car Company and was built in 1942, after the delivery of 1000 cars in 1940 and 1900 more in 1941. The 1942 group was a more modest series 147750 to 148549, or 800 cars. The paint scheme dates to 1949 per the MSCG, and as it was part of a renewal process we might not know exactly which road numbers were actually done this way or whether they were all from the same series of cars. The PS-1 body style isn't a complete match for the Pressed Steel Car of the prototype, for example riveted sides versus welded ones on the model. But I like one detail on the prototype 148393: the stencil "ER 4-63" which stands for a reweigh in April 1963 in East Rochester, New York, just down the road from UMTRR HQ.

Let's dig into the ORER Accumulation, first stop July 1950. The series 147750 to 148549 was described as "Box, Steel, Z-Bar" with 777 cars in the main series plus 20 exceptions tagged as "Auto" boxcars. We'll come back to that. The dimensions of the main group were: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 6 feet, capacity 3898 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The exceptions, which did not include either of these two numbers, were

“equipped with skidless motor racks for automobile motor loading” and had differing inside height of 9 feet 5 inches and capacity of 3496 cubic feet.

Since we have a 1966 picture to go from, we use the January 1967 ORER. Of the original 800 cars in the series, a fairly healthy count of 368 remain in the main series, along with six exceptions with a higher capacity of 110,000 pounds, again not catching any of the Runner Pack numbers. I should mention that the 1966 photo in the MSCG shows the 148393 with its roofwalk, so no worries there either. That count was down by more than half in the April 1970 ORER, with 152 cars of 50 ton capacity and just two with the 55 ton capacity. For the record, the series was nearly gone by the July 1974 Equipment Register, with just ten cars hanging on, but then we need to wonder whether any of those remaining had the dual slogan depicted by Micro-Trains.



511 00 081 and 511 00 082, \$25.80 each

Road Numbers: 18044 and 18384 (preceded by "SOU" in website listings).

50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Southern Railway.

Brown with aluminum door. White lettering including large "Southern Serves The South" (in all caps) and road number on left, and "Super

Cushion Service" (in all caps) on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1965 (build date) to late 1980's at least.

The Morning Sun Color Guide for the Southern Railway, Page 43, provided Micro-Trains with the car copy for this release and provides us with a photo of the prototype. Let's start with the photo caption: as MTL states, the series 18000 to 19499 was built by Pullman-Standard in 1965 at their plant in Bessemer, Alabama. The cars have Hydroframe-60 cushioning and Camel twelve foot aluminum doors. The 18044, at least, was assigned to the CNO&TP subsidiary of the Southern Railway for bookkeeping purposes. The lettering below and to the right of the road number notes that the cars are specially equipped and instructs return to the Southern at any junction point, for loading at a location that I can't quite make out.

What can easily be made out are deltas between model and prototype. The photo in the Morning Sun Color Guide is a three-quarter view, and the ends differ considerably between real and MTL depiction. The car also has an either completely flat or nearly flat roof, much less pitched than the 511 body style. The Hydroframe-60 equipment includes very extended draft gear as well; "Super Cushion Service" indeed! N Scalers might be able to get away with long extension couplers to simulate this, but Z Scalers don't have any such alternative. (I'd certainly admire an attempt to model an operational cushion underframe in 1:220.) Although most exterior-post boxcars did not have running boards, these did. The sides are mostly OK, though we have a "door thing" with the Southern's use of a 12 foot plug door versus the 10 foot door on the Micro-Trains model. By now I suppose many of you are thinking "stand in" with regard to this car, and I wouldn't fault that.

The ORER in the UMTRR Research Accumulation that's nearest to the build date is the January 1967 edition. Note that while the various railroads that made up the Southern Railway System are named, there's no grouping by the subsidiaries—lucky us. The series 18000 to 18499 had the following inside dimensions: length 50 feet 6 inches, width 9 feet 4 inches, height 11 feet 2 inches. The outside length was 60 feet 5 inches—wow, those **were** extended draft gear!—while the extreme height was 15 feet 5 inches and the capacity was 5139 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. All 500 cars were in place at the time, as I would expect not even two years after their construction.

By April 1976 the main group was down to 434 cars, but there was a subset of 25 more that were described as "Box, Cushion Underframe, Containers, 25K." I skipped from there to the October 1986 ORER, where I found, well, a bit of a mess: 442 cars, with 163 cars in the main series, plus 279 more in eight subsets differing mostly by capacity, except for a "group" of two cars that still had "containers" in the description. I wonder what the nature of these containers were?

From there I jumped to the October 1991 Equipment Register, the earliest I have which shows the Norfolk Southern as the successor to the Southern Railway. There were 85 cars in the main series, plus another 337 in fifteen subgroups which were as small as a single car. Three of those subgroups were called out for paper loading. The 18044 was in a "paper loading" subset and the 18384 was in a subgroup with 150,000 pounds capacity. Of the original 500 boxcars, 113 survived to be listed with SOU reporting marks in the Norfolk Southern registration for January 2000. Fifty-six were still around for the January 2007 ORER. What's less clear, though, is whether they were still in the as-delivered decoration. Given the Southern and then Norfolk Southern tendency to repaint as little as possible, I wouldn't doubt that there were still cars advertising Super Cushion Service, though obviously in a very weathered manner. However, the more recent photos of cars from this series found on RRPictureArchives.net show them in plain NS paint with SOU reporting marks, for example, SOU 18010 as of May 2008. Co-existing with the NS speed logo is a plain roadname only scheme, as evidenced by a February 2009 image of SOU 18103. So we'll grudgingly back down to an late 1980's Approximate Time Period despite some of the 500 cars apparently making it to or darn near The Present, but tack on an "At Least" just in case.



538 00 090, \$17.80

40 Foot Modern Log Car with Uprights (Release #9)

No paint, no lettering. Simulated redwood timber load.

Approximate Time Period: most of the 20th Century.

Back in 1933, the Canadian Economics Association published a paper that was presented at a meeting of the Royal Canadian Institute in 1932. The title of the paper was "The Trade in Square Timber" and here's a quote from the first page available free online: "New countries which rise rapidly to wealth and civilization invariably depend for their progress on the

exploitation of some readily available natural resource.” The authors note that this “is strikingly illustrated by Canadian history.” True enough, I suppose; and it also helps us confirm at least the Approximate Time Period for square timber, if not specifically its loading onto unpainted “modern log cars.” (“Modern” is relative here!) Any car loaded with this more processed wood would need to be coming from a sawmill versus directly from a forest, of course.

We can go back even further, to 1912 and the “Mining Engineers Handbook.” There’s examples of how to use timber to support mine shafts along with cost estimates and line drawing illustrations. Which leads us to another use for this car: transporting timber into a mining area. Now that might be an interesting concept for a Z Scale pike: wood from forests to sawmills, and then square timbers from sawmill to mine. And then, mine products outbound.



970 01 061 and 970 01 062, \$185.95 each
Road Numbers: 1642 and 1652 (preceded by
“NS” in website listings).
SD40-2 Diesels, Norfolk Southern.
Black including frame and details. White lettering including “speed” Norfolk Southern herald and roadname on long hood and road

number on cab. “Thoroughbred” horse outline and stripes on ends.

Approximate Time Period: early 1990’s to present.

Given that I’ve been around for as long as I have as a railfan, I’m always tempted to drop the word “new” in front of “Norfolk Southern” whenever the reference is to the current use of the name. But I think that I might be more confusing than clarifying if I’m trying to distinguish this Norfolk Southern of the present with the Norfolk Southern that ran between Norfolk and Charlotte and became part of the Southern Railway and then, well, the current Norfolk Southern.

Anyway, no doubt about where these locomotives came from: they were among the series 1636 to 1652 built in July 1974 as order number 74615 from Electro-Motive for the Norfolk and Western. The numbers remained the same when brought over to the Norfolk Southern. This according to one of several NS diesel roster sites out there; the particular one I used was <http://www.nsdash9.com> . It was reported there that the 1642 is stored but still on the active roster, which to me yields a “to present” Approximate Time Period for both units. Both units are among the thirteen of the seventeen in the group that have bi-directional control. Note that the NS, like the N&W did, likes to run long hood forward. I was a bit surprised that the N&W did not order these with a high short hood.

I wanted to get a handle on when these locomotives were repainted from N&W black to, er, NS black. Based on images on RRPictureArchives.net, it’s no later than August 1990 for the 1642, and there’s a May 1987 image of the 1652 among the more than fifty photos of that

single unit on the site. Both units are seen roaming the NS system, from New Jersey to Illinois to Georgia, in all kinds of weather. No, I didn't try to look at every photo, though I was tempted. I did check a few shots for comparison to the model, and the largest delta I found was on painting. The ends of the handrails should be yellow, that's a definite; and it looks like the edges of the steps should be yellow as well. If you're later in the ATP, you'll want to add a side sill stripe in white, which will probably be a bit of a challenge. All seventeen of these units had dynamic brakes so no worries there, but some also had air conditioning—the two numbers MTL chose did not and therefore don't run afoul of omitting that detail.

Z SCALE REPRINTS/Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: No releases this month.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #13 (994 00 013), Four Great Northern stock cars, has been released (image at right). UMTRR coverage was in the subscriber edition (only) of the July 2009 issue.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is June 2010. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 31.

Scheduled July 2010 Release:

Runner Pack #19: 994 00 019, \$84.95

Reporting Marks: RBBX 60002, RBBX 60004, RBBX 63006.

Quantity three Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus "Stock Cars" (passenger baggage cars).

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 1990's to the present; ATP of specific cars may vary around that general range.

Previously Announced Release: Road Number RBBX 63004 as part of the RBB&B Train Set, catalog 994 01 050, scheduled release March 2010.

As with the N Scale release, this is more of a "stay tuned" than a review, as we await the first stock / baggage car that will be issued by Micro-Trains as part of their Z Scale Red Train set. The road numbers here are the same as the N Scale Runner Pack #41 above, where I've discussed the prototype cars. An interesting unofficial disclosure made on line contradicts what I'd been thinking about this Z Scale offering. It does appear that these will be full length baggage cars from new tooling, not the shorter cars that are already in production.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



502 00 519, \$22.95

Reporting Marks: MO 1821.

40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, Missouri 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 flower (Hawthorn) and state bird (Eastern Bluebird) on right. Nineteenth release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

[The following is largely reprinted from the December 2003 UMTRR coverage of the N Scale release of this car.]

“Neither South nor West” was how I heard someone describe the Show-Me State during a radio interview. But the state is still called “Gateway to the West” and if you don't believe me, have a look at that Arch in St. Louis, or more properly, the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. A trip inside the Arch to its top was part of my first visit to the 24th state. I had just finished college, doing it in three and a half years instead of four. This allowed me to visit a friend who was completing his studies at St. Louis University. Oh, yes, that would also make it January. The winter storms that greeted me for most of the trip left me alone for one day, during which I walked from roughly Forest Park to the Arch, a distance of probably too many miles. It was a sunny day-- a sunny three-degree above zero (Fahrenheit) day. I took a bus back.

Lewis and Clark didn't have quite that problem, but there would be other much more difficult trials for them ahead, I'm sure they knew as they set out from St. Louis on May 14, 1804. 131 years prior, in 1673, another famous pair, Marquette and Joliet, were the first Europeans to set foot in what would become the state. Native American tribes living there at the time included the Osage, but prehistoric people lived in the area from about 7000 B.C. France claimed the territory first, ceded it to Spain, got it back and then sold it to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Although California is now best known for earthquakes, the worst ever recorded in the Continental United States were centered near New Madrid and hit in three events starting in December 1811, ringing bells as far away as Washington DC and believed to be above an 8 on the Richter Scale, possibly as high as 8.8. (The 1906 San Francisco earthquake was about a 7.8 but the 1964 Alaska quake near Anchorage was a 9.2.)

Missouri was embroiled in the slavery controversy as part of its petition for statehood. The number of slave and free states was even when Missouri petitioned, and obviously the two camps wanted Missouri in their camp. The “Missouri Compromise” had Missouri come in as a slave state with Maine entering the Union as a free state, even though there was plenty of anti-slavery sentiment in Missouri. The onset of the Civil War caused a division of territory between the Union and Confederate interests until 1862 when the Union secured the entire

state at the Battle of Pea Ridge. Missouri freed its slaves prior to the Emancipation Proclamation as well.

Before the railroads, there were the riverboats, and the first made it to St. Louis in 1817. (A phrase heard on riverboats was "Mark Twain," the pen name Samuel Clemens took; he was born in Florida, Missouri in 1835.) Ground was broken for the Pacific Railroad in 1851... that's the Missouri Pacific, by the way, not the Union Pacific. The Pony Express began in St. Joseph in 1860, becoming famous out of all proportion to its length of service-- just 19 months from April 1860 to November 1861 when it yielded to the transcontinental telegraph. Another famous Route-- 66-- traversed the width of the state and went through Saint Louie, and Joplin, Missouri, on its way from Chicago to L.A. and it lasted a bit longer than the Pony Express, from 1926 to 1985. Route 66 is one of the Blue Highways, and the author of the book by that name, which is one of my personal favorites, is William Least Heat Moon who was born in Kansas City. He is part Osage, by the way, bringing things to a bit of a full circle. Other famous Missourians include Harry Truman, the only United States President to have a hit pop song named for him (by the group Chicago, it reached #13 in March 1975); plus Walter Cronkite, Charlie Parker, Scott Joplin, George Washington Carver, Stan "The Man" Musial, Walt Disney, J.C. Penney, and Sacajawea, guide and translator for Lewis and Clark and model for the often-maligned but still attractive U.S. one dollar coin.

From the Missouri State Archives comes a possible answer to a question I've had for a while: Why is it called the "Show-Me State"? Here's a quote from there, <http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/history/> : The most widely known legend attributes the phrase to Missouri's U.S. Congressman Willard Duncan Vandiver, who served in the United States House of Representatives from 1897 to 1903. While a member of the U.S. House Committee on Naval Affairs, Vandiver attended an 1899 naval banquet in Philadelphia. In a speech there, he declared, "I come from a state that raises corn and cotton and cockleburs and Democrats, and frothy eloquence neither convinces nor satisfies me. I am from Missouri. You have got to show me." Regardless of whether Vandiver coined the phrase, it is certain that his speech helped to popularize the saying.



515 00 606, \$29.95

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Billboard Car #6: "Chariot Race."

Reporting Marks: None (reference in UMTRR website will be "RBB&B Billboard Car #6").

Brown with multi-color representation of a chariot race on right. Large "Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Combined Circus" on left.

Please see my commentary on the N Scale version above.

994 01 060, \$239.95

Micro-Trains “Z Scale 25th Anniversary” Train Set. Consists of the following items (exact catalog numbers will be posted to the UMTRR website when they become available):

982 series GP-9 Locomotive, Lake County Railroad. Road Number: 700 (will be “LCR 700” in website listings). Yellow with black roof, frame and trucks. White roadname on black panel on long hood. Yellow “LCR” on black panel on cab, black road number on cab. Approximate Time Period: 1996 to at least 2005.

506 series 50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Door, Oregon and Northwestern Railroad. Reporting Marks: ONW 5109. Yellow with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname on right. Black, white and red herald on left. Simulated interior load of plastic pellets included. Approximate Time Period: 1979 (build date) to 1984.

523 series 50 Foot Gondola, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, White City Terminal Railroad. Reporting Marks: WCTR 17010. Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left. Simulated zinc load included. Approximate Time Period: mid-1990’s to mid-2000s.

527 series 60 Foot Bulkhead Flat Car, Oregon, Pacific and Eastern. Reporting Marks: OPE 10001. Yellow with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left. Simulated injection molding machine and CNC machine loads included. Approximate Time Period: most of the 1980’s.

540 / 761 series Gunderson “Husky-Stack” Well Car with 40 Foot Container, Northwest Container. Reporting Marks: NWCX 1016. Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. Container is aluminum with red lettering “25 Years of Z Scale!” and red, yellow and black Micro-Trains Line logo. Approximate Time Period: 2002 to present.

799 series Kadde Metal Products Company structure kit, unassembled and unpainted.

MTL is celebrating its now 25 year run as a manufacturer of Z Scale items with a tribute to some of the “small” railroads that are also located in Micro-Trains’ home state of Oregon, and one private owner. While the rolling stock items are, to one extent or another, stand ins where MTL doesn’t have the exact body styles available (or shall we say “not yet”?) I do like this idea. Although it’s certainly going to create a fair amount of work for me for this commentary just to cover each of the roadnames here!

Let’s start with the one line I’d never heard of before, and it’s the one on the diesel. The Lake County Railroad operated over a 55 mile route between its headquarters of Lakeview, Oregon and Alturas, California. This line was, believe it or not, once part of the Nevada-California-Oregon narrow gauge empire that went into the Southern Pacific in 1929. The SP standard-gauged much of the N-C-O and operated the Lakeview to Alturas section into the 1980’s. In March 1985, SP filed for abandonment, but Lake County, Oregon stepped in to purchase the line in 1986 in order to save rail service for four forest product companies in Lakeview. For day to day operations, Lake County initially hired the Great Western Railway

of Colorado which appropriately called this line their N-C-O Division, connecting to the Southern Pacific at Alturas. The Great Western's contract expired at the end of 1996 and the county took over direct operation. By then, three of the four forest companies were out of business and the Union Pacific takeover of the SP caused further difficulties. However, a perlite mine opened along the route, giving the Lake County a new purpose for existence.

In 2005, the Modoc Northern Railroad leased from UP the former SP trackage into Alturas and Lake County leased its line to them from 2007 to 2009. UP took back its rails in 2009 and Lake County assigned service to Frontier Rail in May under the name "Lake Railroad." For more on the line, check out <http://www.trainweb.org/highdesertrails/lcr.html>.

Among the locomotive roster for the Lake County was GP-7 Number 700, which was built in 1953 for the Nickel Plate Road, went to the Norfolk and Western, and was then sold to Weyerhaeuser Timber. It spent some time on the Chehalis Western (itself the subject of an MTL Special Edition train set in 2007) as its #776, then went to the Columbia and Cowlitz and finally to the Lake County in 1996. While part of the lease to the Modoc Northern, the engine had a mechanical failure and is reported to be in storage. Without even going to pictures, you'll note that the GP-7 is not a GP-9; checking a photo of the real Lake County #700 found on the "Western Rails" section of Trainboard (<http://www.trainweb.org/westernrails/or/>) the first delta easily found is the lack of dynamic brakes and the second delta is the all white handrails and stanchions.

You know the news can't be good when the first citation found for a railroad in a 'net search is the site "Abandoned Rails," and so it is with the Oregon and Northwestern. This line extended from a connection in Burns, Oregon some 50 miles northward to Seneca, the site of a network of logging lines and lumber operations of the Edward Hines Western Pine Company. Although a common carrier in the technical sense, the O&NW was primarily in the business of hauling wood products down to the Union Pacific, which it did for Edward Hines from 1928 to 1983 when the entire operation was sold to the Snow Mountain Pine Company. The business and the railroad were already in severe decline by then, and when the Union Pacific connection was closed in 1984 due to flooding, the O&NW was basically done for. Noted for its all-Baldwin diesel roster, happily the line's four diesels and caboose were saved thanks to the efforts of the Feather River Rail Society, which kept two of the locos and the caboose.

The O&NW 5019 boxcar MTL depicts is one of a series numbered 5001 to 5250, actually a somewhat unusual fifty foot exterior post boxcar built with left offset double doors by the Fruit Growers Express Company in 1979 and leased to the O&NW by the Brae Corporation. The N Scale 030 body style is actually a lot better match for this car than the Z Scale 506 body style, but obviously Micro-Trains is using what is currently their closest 1:220 match, or as my friend Tony would put it, "Doing the best they can with what they've got." I'll call the Approximate Time Period for this car at the end of the O&NW's life, though I note that some of these cars were actually stranded on the line when the Union Pacific connection was lost and had to be hauled away by truck! Some of these cars are still in service for other lines; I remember seeing hasty restencils on them some years ago. Page 43 of the May 2002 issue of

Rail Model Journal has a photo of sister car O&NW 5092, while RRPictureArchives.net has a 1981 shot of O&NW 5109, which looks like it's missing the third digit of its road number.

Wondering what those "WCTR" reporting marks stand for? The WCTU, actually, and I don't mean Women's Christian Temperance Union. (Which is what you get if you type in wctu.org, by the way.) The WCTU we're interested in for this report is the WCTU Railway, formerly the White City Terminal & Utility Railway, formed in 1954 from trackage formerly belonging to the Southern Pacific. The line operates 14 miles of trackage in an around – you guessed it – White City, Oregon, north of Medford and not far from the Talent headquarters of Micro-Trains. (White City is the present location of Kadec Quality Products, the "brother company" of Micro-Trains; more about that later.) The WCTU was owned by Union Tank Car Company, and is now part of Railserve; both companies are part of the Marmon Group which is 60 percent owned by Berkshire Hathaway. (So Warren Buffet was in the railroad business prior to taking over the BNSF.) The WCTU interchanges with the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad at White City, which then hands over cars to the Union Pacific.

I usually think of the White City Terminal as having boxcars, such as the elusive (for me, anyway) Micro-Trains N Scale release (30120, November 1985, and plainly lettered), but the line does have a fair amount of equipment including gondola number 17010. We get a bingo over on RailcarPhotos.com; it was found in June 2003 in Galesburg, Illinois and photographer Doug Stark wonders via a note whether it's a former Pittsburgh and Lake Erie car. The prototype car is a mill gondola that is 65 feet long and significantly taller than the MTL model so we have some deltas there. My quick run-through of ORERs yields an Approximate Time Period starting no earlier than after the July 1992 issue (though it's shown as a "change from previous" in the October 1996 Register) and ending no later than October 2006.

The Oregon, Pacific and Eastern was a movie star of sorts! Filmed along the right of way of the line were the movies "Emperor of the North" and "Stand By Me." The original OP&E lasted from 1912 to 1994, beginning as the Oregon and Southeastern in 1904. It ran from a Southern Pacific interchange in Cottage Grove, Oregon to Culp Creek, about 17 railroad miles away. In 1947 it was purchased by the Booth-Kelley Lumber Company, which was acquired by Georgia-Pacific in 1959. In 1970 the line was purchased by a joint subsidiary of Bohemia, Incorporated and Kyle Railways. Kyle also owned the now-defunct Yreka Western in far northern California and other rail lines. Bohemia bought out Kyle's share of the OP&E in 1987; Bohemia shut down and tore up the railroad in 1984. There is a "new" OP&E which was established in 2001 but it's not related to the one to which refer here.

Perhaps the best known rolling stock of the OP&E are its blue boxcars with white lettering and "goose" herald. But for this set MTL has gone for a bulkhead flat car. We hit another bingo on RailcarPhotos.net with a May 1983 shot taken at Roseburg, Oregon. The details are definitely different, for example there are tie-down tensioning devices installed. But we do have a 61 foot long bulkhead flat car here, which is relatively close, all things considered. We also have an obvious restencil, and what looks to me like a 1976 build date, though I can't be sure of this. Back to the ORERs we go: the April 1981 edition shows the short series 16001 to

16021 with all 21 possible cars with outside length of 70 feet 6 inches, making the MTL depiction a bit short overall. Speaking of short, the Approximate Time Period was also as the series is gone by the July 1989 ORER.

Turning to the Husky-Stack which rounds out the rolling stock in this set, there's not only a real Northwest Container Services which offers logistics services in conjunction with both the Union Pacific and the BNSF Railway, but they own their own well cars. Quoting directly from the firm's website <http://www.nwcontainer.com> : "NWCS owns its railcars, which gives us the advantage of car availability and scheduling flexibility in an ever-changing market. In 1997, NWCS purchased 24, 5-well double stack container cars from Gunderson in Portland, OR. These cars were specifically designed for NWCS use and are the only cars of their type in the world. NWCS also purchased 6 additional 5-well double stack container cars from Gunderson in 2002, and 10 more in 2005. These purchases have brought the NWCS car fleet to 40 cars." A photo on the website is rather small but gets the point across. One potential caution on the paint scheme: photos of the entire five unit set that is NWCX 1016 illustrates that the lettering may be "mirror image" from one side to another, that is, with the "Northwest Container" to the right of one side of the car and to the left on the other side. There's plenty of time for MTL to adjust this if necessary, which is one advantage of the pre-order protocol. No need to adjust the container of course, as that's the one completely fanciful item in the set, at least as far as I know.

As interesting as all of this is, for me the coolest part of the set is the kit for the Kadee building in Medford, Oregon! It's true that the production of model railroad products by brothers Keith and Dale Edwards started in California, went to Seattle and back to California before settling in Medford. But that was all before the first Micro-Trains car was issued, and certainly before the first Z Scale item was manufactured. That did happen down on 720 South Grape Street, and to commemorate those modest beginnings, Micro-Trains has reproduced in 1:220 size the place where it all started. My only question: when do we get the same building kit in N Scale?

HOn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):



New Release: 850 00 060, \$38.85

Reporting Marks: C&S 1118.

30 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Cars, Colorado and Southern.

Freight car red with black lettering on sides including large "C. & S." initials and small

roadname on left, and "Refrigerator" (in all caps) and road number on right. White lettering on ends (reporting marks).

Approximate Time Period: early 1910's to late 1920's.

Oh, no, not another one! By that, I mean another chance to show off my relative ignorance on these cars. I mentioned last month with the reprinted brown C&S refrigerator car that I had

not come across any online documentation of same, and here we have a new release variation on the theme. I suspect that MTL utilized the four part treatise on the refrigerator fleet of the Colorado and Southern found in the magazine "Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette" in 1991 and 1992... not part of the UMTRR Research Accumulation.

Between the MTL car copy and some information found on the San Juan Decals page, I can state with some reasonable confidence that the Approximate Time Period for these cars is the early 1910's to the late 1920's. The start of the ATP lies in the fact that the cars were repainted when renumbered circa 1912 per Micro-Trains' information. The end comes with the adoption of the "button herald" and is a little more "squishy". MTL has previously noted use of the button herald starting in 1928 while the San Juan Decals site has the transition from this "block lettering" version "beginning in the 1920's" with most repaints later in the decade. We'll keep the "most" as the operative word and call the end of the ATP in the later part of that decade. If the prototype police descend upon you, ask them for sufficient evidence!

Speaking of prototype police, they can't complain about the lack of truss rods on this car. The cars 1100 to 1119 were the C&S "Type III" refrigerators which were of steel frame construction, quite unusual for narrow gauge operations.

For last month's reprint, we used the ORER for April 1928, but since this month's paint scheme predates that one, we'll jump back to the Equipment Register for October 1919. The information is basically the same, which should not be a surprise: inside length 23 feet, inside height was 6 feet and one-half inch, inside width 6 feet 7 inches, outside length 30 feet even, outside width was 7 feet 11 1/2 inches and the extreme height was 12 feet. Capacity was a mere 914 cubic feet or 50,000 pounds.

HOn3 SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: No releases since last issue.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: As in December, MTL adds one laser cut building kit in each scale this month. N Scalars see the Military HQ Building (499 90 906, \$26.95), which as usual could have some uses outside "the base" as well. In Z Scale, there's a Packing House (799 90 925, \$49.95) complete with nice looking cooling tower, integrated loading dock and signs. This structure has already had some great pre-reviews online, and I can see why. There's a new N Scale load: simulated Crushed Metal for 50 foot gondolas (499 43 955, two different for \$8.95).

Micro-Trains has hinted at the 2010 plans for Z Scale in some online postings. While timing is still being worked, E-8 and E-9 diesels are in development as has been previously disclosed; they'll leverage the chassis built for SD40-2. A long Pullman-Standard Lightweight Baggage Car will be released, first as part of the Ringling Brothers offerings and later in other roadnames. Other new rolling stock is in the planning stages – no "teases" yet there. Finally, more Micro-Track is approaching the tooling stage.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: There is usually a flurry of activity in the months just prior to the end of the year, but this time, the pile-up on the Bye-Bye Board was saved for after the

changing of the calendar. Although I expect that the cars actually left the building in December and were just reported as such in January. Anyway, two of these cars were quick sellouts from December: the Baltimore and Ohio boxcar with load (020 00 806) and the GARX/Rio Grande plug door boxcar (032 00 450, and I can't say I'm surprised there). Others sold out of the factory in N Scale in catalog number order are as follows: the New York Central "reprint of a unique boxcar" with script herald (031 00 310, *May 2009*); the Canadian Pacific green "newsprint" boxcar reprint (038 00 220, *August 2009*); both numbers of the Great Northern bulkhead flatcar with load (054 00 18x, *September 2009*); the Trailer Train COFC flat with CAST containers (072 00 220, *October 2009*); and both numbers of the Norfolk Southern hopper with load (109 00 19x, *also October 2009*). We have an oldie but goodie gone in Nn3: the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic caboose (816 00 020, *May 2005*).

In Z Scale, let's take a deep breath first as that list is even longer and includes a bunch of cars where the remaining release of a virtual two-pack is now sold out (I hope that makes sense!). Again in catalog number order, we have: the first number of the Union Pacific "Challenger" boxcar (501 00 191, *December 2008, both numbers now out*); the second number of the Cotton Belt boxcar (502 00 202, *November 2008, though my records show both numbers already gone*); the first number of the Chicago and North Western "Route of the 400s" 50 foot plug door boxcar (505 00 231, *September 2008, second number still available*); the second number of the Western Pacific 50 foot double door boxcar (506 00 232, *June 2008, both numbers now gone*); the second number of the Norfolk and Western stock car (520 00 152, *May 2008, both numbers out*); the second number of the Santa Fe and Milwaukee Road gondolas (523 00 042, *August 2008 and 523 00 052, October 2008 respectively with both numbers gone*); the second number of the Northern Pacific flat car (525 00 092, *January 2009, both numbers out*); the first number of the Rio Grande flat car (525 00 141, *September 2008, second number still available*); both numbers of the Canadian National bulkhead flat car with load (527 00 05x, *June 2008*); the first number of the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie tank car (530 00 231, *November 2008, second number still available*); and the first numbers of the Union Pacific (531 00 081, *May 2008*) and Central of New Jersey (531 00 091, *August 2008*) PS-2 covered hoppers, both numbers in both cases sold out.

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: With respect to last month's Baltimore and Ohio boxcar (020 00 806) I noted that the photo of the 467673 on the Fallen Flags site showed that car from the series with a Superior Door and wondered whether that pointed to some variety in the series. Brian DeVries said he's seen photos of the 467000, 467071, 467081, 467109, 467286, 467439, 467468, 467577 and they all had Youngstown doors like the MTL model. He added that "contributing to the relatively early demise of the cars of this class was their construction with the Duryea cushioned underframe. The B&O embraced this technology, but it turned out to have a substantial failure rate."

Going back to the June release of the white UTLX three dome tank car (066 00 050), Charlie Vlk has this backstory: "I don't have the car number, but the car in question was, at the time of donation, a John H. Grace Company (GRYX) car. The Ford Museum wanted a more recognizable name on the car so it was lettered up for UTLX. I am working with Stan Grace, the last owner of the company, on a complete roster of the cars so probably eventually will be able to come up with a GRYX number for the car and its original number (many of the GRYX

cars were secondhand). GRYX was a small fleet operator and I did a clinic on its history at the Naperville Prototype Modelers meet in November. It was not affiliated with the Grace Chemical Company who also operated tank cars."

Thanks to Brian and Charlie. As always, Incremental Information is most welcome. I'll even share my vast subscription revenues with you...

OOPS PATROL: It seems I've been cutting and pasting and not changing the catalog numbers on the Z Scale Special Edition Ringling Brothers Cars... those responsible have been sacked. The website listings are correct.

FINALLY: IS IT REALLY *THAT* MANY PAGES? Since this is the first time that you're seeing the UMTRR in this format, you might be asking yourself, "Is it really that many pages?" And the short answer is, well, yes, it is. The addition of product images adds a bit to the length (and the weight, in terms of the size of the PDF file, but I'll see what I can do about that), and the font size is actually larger as well in response to some feedback I received on the test send. Fortunately, disk space is a lot less expensive than it was when Issue #1 of the UMTRR was released! Although I suspect that Issue #1 was also proportionately shorter. The good news is that we have eliminated the problem of the "forty-character line" that plagued many readers; although I was certainly sending out the UMTRR as a plain text message, certain electronic applications were taking all my "standard" size lines and breaking them into little pieces. Also please note that I have no material financial interest in either ink or paper manufacturers!

At any rate, before this bleeds into yet another page, let me close by hoping that you like this new format, which will also extend to the "News Flashes" that I expect to be issuing on a regular basis as Micro-Trains continues to announce—and sell out of—the "off cycle" Weathered Releases. Until then, or perhaps until February's news and views, do the best you can.

Cheers,
George

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