

IrwinsJournal.com Presents:
The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report
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Hello again everyone! The release dominating the release lineup this month is the long-awaited heavyweight sleeper. We'll take a look at, and inside, Micro-Trains' entry into N Scale passenger cars, and we'll run down the rest of the June releases from behind the red and yellow sign. Before I forget, though, let me mention once again that the July issue of the UMTRR will be delayed due to my travel schedule. Unless... first, the July cars are revealed at the National N Scale Convention and, second, someone gets me that information pronto! Well, maybe we'll just stick to the notion that we'll be late in July. Without further ado..

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



020 00 320, \$19.90

Reporting Marks: CNJ 23515.

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door,
Jersey Central Lines (Central Railroad of New
Jersey).**

Brown (boxcar red) with black ends. White lettering including reporting marks on left and "Statue of Liberty" herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1957 (build date) to early 1980's.

Rats, a car for one of the railroads I knew when I was growing up and we immediately run into a "door thing." Morning Sun's Color Guide to the CNJ/LV, Page 41, provides the bad news there. (Online, there is a shot of sister car 23514 on George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" website, <http://www.rr-fallenflags.com>.) Series 23500 to 23549 were built by Pullman-Standard in 1957 and had installed their PS-1 door to cover an eight foot door opening, versus the Superior door over a six foot door opening on the MTL body style. I suppose it's fair to ask the question, "How many people would notice?" But it would also be fair to point out that there is a model offered by another manufacturer that does have the eight foot PS-1 door and has been released in this same paint scheme.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for January 1959 shows the series in two groups: the first two road numbers followed by the last forty-eight. The dimensions are the same with one exception which we'll get to, but here's what they had in common: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 41 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet, capacity 3898 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The difference between cars 23500 and 23501 and the rest of the series is the inside width: 9 feet even on the first two cars and 9 feet 2 inches on the rest. The difference is accounted for by the use of damage free load restraining equipment. By 1961, ten more cars in the group would have this feature and, we

presume, the somewhat lessened inside width. (I'm not sure why the cubic capacity didn't change.)

We know from the Morning Sun Color Guide that some of these cars received a repaint with the same brown paint and much the same white lettering, but with a smaller "Liberty" herald featuring the entire "Central Railroad of New Jersey" roadname replacing the larger "Jersey Central Lines" monogram. But we also know that at least the 23514 survived as originally painted and with its roofwalk and full ladders to at least July 1983, more than seven years into the creation of Conrail from the Jersey Central and other bankrupt rail lines. As of the April 1981 ORER there were still seven cars in CNJ reporting marks in this series, including one with damage free equipment.

N Scalers who want more Jersey Central boxcars from MTL might already be aware of the special run commissioned by BLW which includes three more road numbers from this series. These have "paint-outs" with a service date of 1970 at the CNJ's shops at Elizabethport, and a black roof to go with the ends. Check their website for more information.



059 00 536, \$24.90

Reporting Marks: SFRD 20698.

40 Foot Steel Ice Refrigerator Car with Preco Fan, Santa Fe Refrigerator Department (AT&SF).

Orange with black roof and ends. Black lettering including reporting marks and large circle cross herald on left, and "Ship and Travel Santa Fe -all the way" herald on right. Small black and white circle crosses along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: about 1958 to mid-1970s.

The Number One Answer to the question "Name a famous refrigerator car line owned and operated by a railroad company" is probably going to be Pacific Fruit Express, but let's not leave out the Santa Fe Refrigerator Department, which rostered over fourteen thousand cars in 1945. (The PFE had more than double that at around 35,000.) SFRD cars could be seen practically anywhere on the North American railroad system. (Bonus points for naming the game show which would have had a Number One Answer, had they actually used such a question. Survey says...)

Like the PFE, the SFRD's fleet was meant for produce, not meat, as there were plenty of private owner cars for that. (Such as last month's Swift Premium car, for example.) One key commodity that the Santa Fe's refrigerator cars carried was potatoes out of the Bakersfield, California area. But on the way back west, they could be loaded with newspapers and magazines, canned goods or even express shipments, as long as the lading was clean. I even found an online reference to the transport of poinsettias for the holidays. Also online on the website of the San Diego Railroad Museum is the story of one SFRD refrigerator car carrying

oranges from California to New York in 1947, written by noted freight car historian (and prolific author!) Richard Hendrickson (direct URL <http://www.sdrm.org/stories/reefer/>).

These Santa Fe Class Rr-29 cars were originally built in 1940 by General American and numbered from 36000 to 36300. They were modernized in 1955 according to the Santa Fe Railway Historical and Modeling Society (<http://www.atsfrr.com>) and renumbered to the series 20500 to 20792.

The paint scheme Micro-Trains chose for this release isn't the "as delivered" version, as the car series was built in 1940 and the scheme that MTL chose wasn't introduced until 1958. In between, the "name trains" of the AT&SF got a lot of advertising on these cars, paired with the curved and straight line maps (the first straight line map being applied to an Rr-29, the 32697, according to the SFRH&MS) and then the "Ship and Travel Santa Fe all the way" slogan adapted in April 1947 to replace the maps. The scheme with large circle cross herald and slogan was the final one for these ice reefers, since by the 1960's mechanical refrigeration was rapidly becoming the preferred method of keeping things cool.

The Official Railway Equipment Register for January 1959 shows the 20698 as part of a larger series than I expected, 20000 to 20792 with 767 cars. (It looks like the first 500 road numbers were of class Rr-21 cars.) The inside length was 33 feet 1 inch, inside width 8 feet 2 inches, and inside height 7 feet 9 inches, as usual, allowing for all that insulation and the ice bunkers. The outside length was 41 feet 5 inches, extreme height 14 feet, and cargo capacity 1975 cubic feet or 77,000 pounds. Add to that between 11,500 and 12,700 pounds of ice, depending on the type (crushed, coarse or chunk). End notes indicate both the Preco fan and the presence of half stage icing grates. The January 1964 ORER showed 519 cars remaining in the series and the January 1967 Register, 236. Only 77 cars made it to the April 1970 book and they were gone no later than 1974.

A comparison of the MTL model to SFRD 20699 (just one number off!) in Morning Sun's Color Guide to the AT&SF reveals a key difference right off the top, so to speak: the hatches open toward the ends of the car, an attribute common to most SFRD cars, but uncommon otherwise. There are also platforms leading from the running board inboard of these hatches. There are some minor differences with respect to the ladders and bottom sills as well, and the MTL model's door is a bit larger than the prototype it depicts, but it's the hatch direction that looks like the main delta. What is a bit curious about the paint job is three missing digits on both the load limit and light weight stencils below the reporting marks. Both could be temporarily wiped out during the servicing process but normally cars wouldn't be released back into the fleet without the numbers being updated. I suspect that the lack of printing is a function of having to go right over a detail on the MTL carbody, although the photo of the 20698 in the Morning Sun Color Guide shows some rather faded numbers there as well. The image, taken in 1962, also shows that the white and black circle crosses along the bottom haven't fared so well either. And yes, there is one right inside the ladder on the right hand side of the car. I doubt that even MTL would have attempted that in years past, so I think we have an example of continuously improving technology in the paint shop in Talent.



116 00 060, \$27.90

Road Number: 10 (will be preceded with "D&RGW" in website listings).
Troop Sleeper, Denver and Rio Grande
Western Dynamometer Car.

Orange sides with aluminum band along bottom of sides, offset by black stripes. Black roof and ends. Black lettering including D&RGW initials at top left, speed lettering Rio Grande roadname at top right, "Dynamometer" bottom left of center and road number bottom right of center. Approximate Time Period: 1960's to 2000's.

Let's start with a quick definition of dynamometer car: (Or maybe a quick spelling lesson, if you're me. Compound two words: "dynamo" and "meter," George.) That handy reference Wikipedia sums it up nicely: "a railroad maintenance of way car used for measuring various aspects of a locomotive's performance. Measurements include tractive effort (pulling force), power, top speed, etc." That'll work. Any number of large railroads had these cars although they were not exactly all made to standard designs. Witness this example, converted from a troop sleeper in the early 1960's by the Rio Grande.

One locomotive that certainly pulled this dynamometer car around was the famous, or perhaps infamous, Krauss-Maffei ML4000 diesel-hydraulic unit. Purchased in 1961 with three going to the Southern Pacific and three to the Rio Grande, the units were, well, not the easiest to operate or maintain. The Rio Grande dumped its three onto the Espee in 1964 and that was the end of that experiment, though the dynamometer car was kept.

Mike Danneman described how he built the K-M brutes in 1:160 in the November/December issue of **N Scale Railroading**, and in a sidebar also describes how to construct the Rio Grande's dynamometer car in N Scale, using... you guessed it, a Micro-Trains troop sleeper. Mike made several key modifications, which could also be considered deltas to the MTL body style, and the largest of which is the addition of a roofwalk—the fifty foot steel one available from Micro-Trains as a spare part. The Rio Grande also plated over a few of the original windows, and added small triangular bay windows to each side as well. Finally, there were ladders on the sides and ends. None of these would be terribly difficult changes.

ORERs aren't going to help with the Approximate Time Period, but we do have a couple of images to guide us. There's a photo of #10 in the Morning Sun Color Guide to the Rio Grande, Page 102, which is dated 1965. RRPictureArchives.net has a 1977 photo of the car at Burnham Shops in Denver. And Mike Danneman's article in NSR is accompanied by two photos of the #10 "sitting forlornly" at the same shops; they are not dated but I suspect that they are close to contemporaneous with the publication of the piece. So it's 1960's to 2000's, although we don't know for sure for what fraction of the ATP it was actually in service, other than behind those Krauss-Maffei units that is.



141 00 010, \$22.70

Road Number: None

Pullman Heavyweight Sleeper, 10-1-2 Design, Pullman.

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Delux gold "Pullman" in center of letterboard. Approximate Time Period: 1930's to late 1940's.



141 00 020, \$22.70

Car Name: "Hidden Lake" (will be "GN Hidden Lake" in website listings).

Pullman Heavyweight Sleeper, 10-1-2 Design, Great Northern "Empire Builder."

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Delux gold lettering including small "Pullman" at left and right of letterboard, large "Empire Builder" at center of letterboard and small car name at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: 1930's to 1948.

I must admit at the outset that I am not anything remotely resembling an expert on passenger cars. Fortunately, there are some excellent online resources out there to help us out with the story of this new Micro-Trains body style. And we'll have a look at and inside this model. I'll cover both releases in one commentary here.

First, some basics. The 10-1-2 design is a reference to the layout of the car: ten sections, two compartments and one drawing room. From the "Rails West" website we get some descriptions. An open section consisted of two opposing seats. At night these seats converted into a lower berth for sleeping, and an upper berth was dropped down from the car ceiling. The term "section" refers to both upper and lower berth. The upper berth was the least expensive option on a Pullman. I'll quote directly for the other two parts: "A bedroom provided comfortable private living and sleeping space for two passengers, clothes storage and luggage space, and a private toilet. At night the bedroom accommodated two full length beds, including an upper berth type bed that drops down from the ceiling. The drawing room provided a spacious living room with a wide sofa, two movable lounge chairs, private toilet, luggage space and a wardrobe for hanging clothes full length. It accommodated three full length beds at night, including an upper berth type bed that drops down from the ceiling. The drawing room was especially suited for family or group travel."

We need to add one more feature to the list: the vestibule, a significant improvement over the open platforms that were once used for passage between cars. George Pullman introduced “vestibule cars” in 1887; the car had an enclosed platform and a framed passageway or diaphragm between the cars themselves. The vestibule design made passing through the train much safer and also afforded some protection from deadly “telescoping” accidents. The vestibule was patented by Pullman and was featured in some of its promotion, for example a 1918 print advertisement I found imaged online.

There were 10-1-2 sleepers built to a number of plans. The one modeled by MTL is Plan 3585. Over 260 cars were built to this specification and its derivatives. MTL used the two vestibule version with pedimented ends which dates the car to the 1920’s. (For next issue: I try to understand what a pedimented end is!) Air conditioning was added to sizable parts of the Pullman sleeper fleet starting in 1929, and the MTL model has it, via the square boxes along one side of the peaked roof; so strictly speaking, the Approximate Time Period of these two models should begin in the 1930’s.

And the Approximate Time Period should end for the “Pullman” release of the, well, Pullman, by the late 1940’s. The backdrop for this was that Pullman itself owned the passenger cars, assigned them to specific railroads, and charged those railroads for the use of the cars. Since its takeover of the Wagner Palace Car Company in 1899, Pullman pretty much had a monopoly on sleeping car service. In 1940, an anti-trust complaint was filed against The Pullman Company at the instigation of several large railroads. The government sought divestiture of either the operation of the passenger cars or their manufacture, and Pullman chose to jettison the former. Probably the correct choice given what was to come, I’d say. A consortium of fifty-seven railroads purchased the Pullman Company in 1947, while the builder stayed on as Pullman-Standard. The Pullman fleet of cars were acquired directly by the railroads. The large “Pullman” across the letterboards was replaced by the actual owning railroads although a small “Pullman” might still be seen at the left and right of the sides, such as on the Empire Builder release. We know specifically from Charlie Vlk that the “Hidden Lake” car (140 00 020) was sold by the Great Northern to the Erie in 1948. We’ll presume that the Erie relettered it soon afterwards. Speaking of lettering, I haven’t mentioned thus far that the Pullman (the 010) release has only that single word to enable modelers to add their own decals. Considering the lukewarm reception that similar releases have had, for example unnumbered diesels and perhaps MTL’s own early Z Scale passenger car runs, I’m a little surprised at this, but it does add a lot of flexibility for the N Scaler. (And note that MTL is now putting names and numbers on its Z Scale passenger cars.) According to Branchline Trains which has done this same car in HO Scale, names with the word “Lake” were popular for the Plan 3585 cars. Happy decal hunting! (I’d start with a look at Micro-Scale’s website.) Also note that Rapido Trains’ “Easy-Peasy” lighting kits will fit in these cars; in fact MTL is remarketing them with their catalog number 995 14 001 with MSRP \$8.95.

I was going to provide images of both sides of the cars, as they are different, but then I noticed that MTL has already done this for us. The Pullman release (the 010) shows the side of the car which has the corridor alongside the drawing room and bedrooms. The Empire Builder release (the 020) shows the opposite side, to which the drawing room and bedroom

windows open. But one thing that MTL has not provided is a look inside the cars. So let's fix that. I didn't dare do that in the original format of this column!



Well, there goes the collector value of my copy of the Pullman car... Lifting off the roof, we get a peek inside. There are vestibules at either end with small parts separating them from the rest of the car, just as walls separated them from the rest of the prototype sleeper. Thanks to a heating pipe diagram (of all things!) available at the Pullman Digital Collection website of the Newberry Library, which has a archive of 2500 cubic feet (!) of Pullman records of various types, I can identify for you the various parts of the interior. From left to right there is the vestibule, then the Men's Room, the smoking room and lavatory; the ten sections, five to a side; the single drawing room with its own bathroom; the two bedrooms; the women's lavatory and women's room; and finally the second vestibule. Micro-Trains' execution of the interior looks like a good match for this plan, subject to the usual constraints for passenger car interiors—such as the need to, ahem, “shorten” any seated N Scale figures that one might wish to place in “seats.”



Oh, no, now he's done it, it's all to pieces. In the name of research and reporting, of course. There are five parts that go into the interior: the two pieces of window “glass,” the two vestibule dividers, and of course the interior itself. And just for giggles, I included the weight in the shot which sits comfortably below the interior. Note the notches in the interior, “glass” and weight which ensure that the parts can't be put in backwards. Unless you're me, that is... We'll have a short pause here while I reassemble my car... be right back!

N SCALE REPRINTS:



045 00 240, \$16.85

Reporting Marks: MKTT 3555.

50 Foot Flat Car, Fishbelly Sides, Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railway of Texas (Katy).

Black with white lettering including roadname and road number in center. Simulated cotton bale load included. Approximate Time Period: 1910's into early 1920's for this road number, renumber and go to the early 1950's (see text). Previous Release (as catalog 45240): Road Number 3554, March 2001.

Just in time for the National N Scale Convention, held this year in Houston — Houston, Texas that is! — we have the return of a car that is, well, quite Texan. Back in 2001 when this car was first run, I remarked that it had to be one of the most interesting plain black and white flat cars ever released, in terms of the pure historical interest. We'll "reprint" ourselves since the story is that good, again citing the very useful "Handbook of Texas Online" (URL <http://www.tshaonline.org>).

The MKT proper started out as the "Union Pacific Railway Company, Southern Branch" and had ambitions to get rich on land grants and becoming a rail power all the way down into Mexico. They didn't achieve either ambition, but did become the first rail line to make it to Texas and ran its first train to near Denison in the Lone Star State in December 1872. The MKT didn't have a charter to build and operate in Texas yet, but the legislature looked the other way and the line expanded. Then Jay Gould, who already controlled the Missouri Pacific, took over the MKT, and built up its Texas presence up significantly. His ambition was also Mexico; what he got instead was a legal fight from Texas Attorney General James Hogg, who cancelled the line's right to operate in Texas as a "foreign" corporation. This led to the incorporation of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas of Texas, in 1891, and the merger of a number of subsidiary railroads into that corporation. The MKTT eventually grew to operate more than one thousand miles of line in Texas, connecting such cities as Dallas, Houston and Galveston. The MKTT connected with its parent line at Denison, Otex and Red River, Texas. It wasn't officially consolidated into the MKT proper until July 1, 1960. In 1989 history repeated itself. The Katy which had once been under the control of the Missouri Pacific was purchased by the MP again, this time for the benefit of the MP's owner, the Union Pacific.

As MTL pointed out, this car was renumbered in the 1920's... or earlier, as shown by the October 1919 ORER which has just 20 cars in the "old series" (literally called that in the Register) from 3407 to 5240, and 103 cars in the "new series" 113000 to 113120, of 114 cars. The inside length is given as exactly 50 feet, which, if you're picky, actually makes the MTL model a little long, unlike usually, when it's a little short versus the prototype. They just can't win for losing sometimes... anyway, in my book it's close enough. The only other dimensions given are the width at 9 feet 4 inches, the height from rail at 4 feet 1 inch, and the capacity of

100,000 pounds. By the January 1940 ORER this group was already down to 49 cars, and by the July 1950, just twelve remained. By this time the MKTT listing had also been consolidated into the MKT's listing.

The cotton bale load is probably a little offbeat for a flat car, but it's another nod to the home of the 2010 National N Scale Convention as Texas is a major producer of the crop. Cotton gets heavier when it gets wet, and it also gets more abrasive, so I'm not sure it would be carried on a flat car these days unless there was absolutely no chance of rain. The MKTT listing back in the 1919 ORER showed a few "cotton cars" that clearly weren't flat cars. In 2006, the USDA issued regulations with respect to cotton that had a moisture level of more than 7 ½ percent; in short, don't do it. Cotton is sold by weight with a typical cotton bale being about 500 pounds. So the load, which looks like eighty bales to me, would weigh about 40,000 pounds, well under the 100,000 pound capacity of the car. Unless it gets wet!



094 00 230, \$25.95

Reporting Marks: CN 388520.

**3 Bay ACF Center Flow® Covered Hopper,
Trough Hatches, Canadian National.**

Gray with mostly black lettering including roadname (one side English "Canadian" and one side French "Canadien") and reporting marks on left and large "wet noodle" herald on right. White simulated reflective stripes along bottom sill. Approximate Time Period: mid-1990's (1995 build date) to present. Previous Release: Road Number 388531, May 2005.

The series CN 388000 to 388999 was built in 1995 and 1996 by the Trenton Works. As such the MTL model won't be an exact match. The ends are noticeably different and the car is a longer as well; its capacity is 5250 cubic feet, substantially greater than the 4650 cubic feet of the ACF car that the 094 body style represents. There's no shortage of example photos, with eighteen on Chris vanderHeide's Canadian Freight Car Gallery (<http://freight.railfan.ca>) alone and more on Fallen Flags, spanning the time period from 1998 to November 2009 and locations in Ontario and British Columbia as well as "the States." There's also a mix between the "IEN" and "IAN" sides and several different photo angles. At least one November 2009 shot shows yellow conspicuity stripes replacing the white reflective rectangles that were originally on the car.

The ORER for October 1996 shows a bunch of subseries of cars in the overall group, which differ only by their capacity-- if that. There is no inside length on these cars but the outside length is 58 feet (the MTL model is about 53 feet 10 inches). The extreme height is 15 feet 6 inches, which is the same as the CF4650. Most of the cars have a capacity of 224,000 pounds and a few are a thousand pounds more-- don't ask me why, I don't know. The total is 896 cars, not 1000, but Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site has these being built through March 1996 so it's possible that they weren't delivered and listed in time for the October 1996

edition. Getting as close to “the present” as I can, the October 2007 Register shows 954 cars altogether in five subseries, this time with an outside length of 60 feet.

As usual, the need for the bilingual roadname contributes to the price. If you want to see how the real CN cut its costs, a photo of the next series, the 399's, in the Canadian Freight Car Gallery shows a different paint scheme with just reporting marks.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:

The following item was announced as an “off-cycle” release via the Micro-Trains website on May 18 and also via the MTL “E-Line” broadcast e-mail on May 18.



021 44 100, \$21.10

Road Number: 505605 (will be “SOU 505605” in website listings).

40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Southern Railway.

Paint: Brown with white lettering including “Southern Gives A Green Light To Innovations” (with green dot inside letter “O” in Southern) and road number on left, and “Southern Serves the South” on right. Weathering: Light to moderate black and gray streaks on sides. Multicolor graffiti on one side of car. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970’s to 1980 at most, see text. Previous Releases (unweathered, as catalog 21100): Road Number 505601, August 1980; Road Number 505603, December 2001 (a “not a reprint”).

During a recent Bluegrass Festival that took place not far from UMTRR HQ, Thalia Elizabeth and I had a chance to take in the music of one Tony Rice, who works a number of musical styles into the mainstream of bluegrass playing. (For example, the opening number in the set was a cover of “My Favorite Things,” the Rogers and Hammerstein standard made famous in **The Sound of Music**.) I was interested enough to check out Rice’s other offerings and discovered that he recorded a song written by Norman Blake that fits right in with this release: “Greenlight on the Southern.” Checking the lyrics, the reference is to the Southern Railway. I wonder if Rice is a model railroader? Or maybe he’s a railfan: I found a video online of Blake and Rice together performing the song “New River Train.”

Anyway, the “Green Light” slogan of the Southern was used from 1969 to 1982, but going back to the UMTRR for December 2001 we find that the Approximate Time Period for this car was probably a fair bit shorter than that. MTL gave a service date of August 1972 for this car and an originally build date in 1959. But the Southern had zero cars numbered in the 500000s as late as the January 1967 ORER. The April 1970 Register shows some boxcars in that general number group, none of which are in the 505600s and none of which have any actual car counts. It’s not until July 1974, the next latest edition I have, that I pick up the group 505600 to 505660, with, er, zero cars in the main series and two exceptions each listed on their own, namely 505600 and 505601. And there are just four cars in April 1975, three XMs and

one XF for Food Loading, the 505601. We'll grab some dimensions from the series, such as it is: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet, outside length 44 feet 4 inches, extreme height 14 feet 7 inches, door opening 10 feet (wider than what's on the MTL car, therefore, a "door thing") and capacity 3713 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds.

And that's possibly about all she wrote, as we're back to three cars total in April 1976 and no series at all in April 1981. We probably don't know one way or the other whether 505605 was one of the few road numbers in this group, but we might question whether it would have seen any graffiti during its short tenure. I didn't expect to find any images of a small series that apparently existed for just a few years, and I didn't, but there are plenty of examples of similarly painted cars complete with Green Light out on the 'net.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #39, Three Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus flat cars with loads, has been released. This Runner Pack was delayed from May to June.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is December 2010. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close June 30.

Scheduled December 2010 Release:

Runner Pack #46: 993 00 046, \$74.95

Reporting Marks: MOBX 11103, 11105, 11124, 11136.

Quantity four of Mobil Oil 39 foot single dome tank cars.

White with black frame and details. Black lettering including reporting marks on left. Blue and red 1950's Mobil trademark on right. Approximate Time Period: late 1950's to mid 1960's. Previous Releases (as catalog 65120): Road Number 11129, October 1991; Road Number 11135, May 1999.



While probably best classified as a "falling flag" with Exxon becoming the more dominant name in the ExxonMobil Corporation, there is still some life left in the brand with the flying horse. When the most previous run of this car was released by MTL in May 1999, the recombination of two of the largest components of the Standard Oil Trust was underway; it was official on November 30, 1999.

The history of Mobil actually begins right up the road from UMTRR HQ in Rochester, New York. It was 1866, and the challenge was fueling-- not cars, but kerosene lamps. Two

entrepreneurs tried a vacuum process to get more and better kero out of a barrel of crude oil, but the only result was less odiferous residue. Or was it? No, that residue was the best lubricant found up to that time. And the Vacuum Oil Company was on its way. It expanded rapidly, bringing products such as Gargoyle Steam Cylinder Oil to market. The success and expansion didn't miss the gaze of John D. Rockefeller, and he bought most of Vacuum to add to his Standard Oil Trust. This was the first union of Standard and Vacuum; there would be a second. As part of the Trust, Vacuum expanded internationally; and the name "Mobiloil" was used in England circa 1899. But then the Standard Oil Trust was broken up in 1911; Standard Oil of New York, the technical owner of Vacuum, and Vacuum itself were forced to divorce. Just after that, the famous Pegasus trademark was introduced by a South African affiliate of Vacuum; it had already been used by other members of the Trust.

To make the long story short, the two firms remerged in 1931 as the Socony-Vacuum Corporation, and then Socony-Vacuum Oil Company. Both firms had expanded beyond their original Trust lines of business by that point and were on their way to becoming what we now call "vertically integrated." By far, the most recognizable brand of the company was neither Socony nor Vacuum, but Mobil, either as "Mobiloil" or "Mobilgas." To reflect the obvious, the firm changed names, first to Socony-Mobil in 1955 and then to just Mobil in 1966.

A unified Pegasus trademark for all of the company had been unveiled in 1933 to celebrate the Socony-Vacuum merger. The trademark used on these cars actually had a pretty narrow Approximate Time Period, as logos go. It was introduced in 1954 and phased out in 1966 with the introduction of the still used large blue "Mobil" with red "o" on a white sign. Pegasus then received a separate sign affixed to the sides of Mobil gas stations, as well as places on drinking glasses, playing cards, plastic cups, t-shirts and anything else the marketing folks could think of. The Mobil web site even included a brief history of the mythological creature.

If only the ORER were more informative. The listings for Mobil during the ATP are buried way in the back of the volumes, in condensed form that gives series of cars but no details or car counts. The build date on the previous reprint was 1926 and the apparent service date in 1961, which is of a little help I suppose, but the paint scheme remains the key driver of the ATP. We do know that the series 11100 to 11199 was still extant in 1964 and consisted of some unspecified number of 10,000 gallon capacity AAR class TMI tank cars, the "I" standing for "Insulated." There were a total of 1,951 cars on the roster, all tankers. By April 1970 the total had dropped to 1,526 but the series in question had expanded to 10100 to 11149. I'd question whether the cars still wore the modeled paint scheme by then, given the change in the logo. I'd guess that basic black would have taken over as the color for all MOB tank car equipment, and so I'm calling the ATP at the mid-1960's. Modern ExxonMobil tank cars still roam the rails, but now carry the somewhat awkward reporting marks "XOMX". Not nearly as elegant as a Pegasus in flight.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:

In addition to the below items, MTL has announced that the D-Day Commemorative Set (993 21 100, \$179.95) has been delayed to mid-July. It was originally scheduled for release this month. Also, the D-Day loco and caboose set (993 21 101, \$169.95) has been delayed to mid-August.



047 00 410, \$25.95

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Ice Refrigerator Car, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Billboard Car #10: "Tiger."

Reporting Marks: None (reference in UMTRR website will be "RBB&B Billboard Car #10").

Brown with multi-color depiction of a tiger train unloading scene with "Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey" across top (split left and right), and "Circus - The Greatest Show on Earth" at bottom (split left and right) on yellow, purple and white background.

If internet image searches are any indication, the poster that is the inspiration for this month's car is hardly the best-known of the RBB&B collaterals featuring the tiger. A 1914 poster showing a tiger leaping from the grasslands, claws out and ready, was designed by illustrator Charles Livingston Bull and pops up first in several different versions of the image search. (It's also landscape oriented and thus easier to fit on a freight car. Maybe we'll see it on a future release.)

While simple and relatively uncluttered, fairly unusual for advertising of the period, the graphics of the poster still have to be altered significantly to fit on a Micro-Trains car. The tiger's head dominates the printed poster, occupying perhaps two-thirds of the printed page. I didn't find any examples of the poster image online, but the small reproduction provided in the Micro-News gives me the notion that the word "Circus" is above the slogan "The Greatest Show on Earth" on the actual poster though it's to the left of the slogan on the car. I suspect that the very bottom of the poster was used to indicate the next stop on the circus tour, added later.



074 00 122, \$23.95

40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #22: Franklin Pierce (14th 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.

Someone I know who is not a model railroader but is aware of this modest enterprise and the coverage I've been providing on this series of cars asked me the other day what I thought I would learn about Franklin Pierce. My answer: "Everything." As in, I didn't know anything about him.

And perhaps that might not have been a bad thing. Franklin Pierce had been selected by the Democratic Party for President in 1852 on no less than its forty-eighth ballot, after not having even been in nomination until the thirty-fifth ballot. His one term tenure as Chief Executive appears to have been judged as one of the worst in American history. How could this have happened to a brilliant lawyer from New Hampshire, and to the country for that matter?

Let's back up a bit first. Franklin Pierce, son of Benjamin Pierce, was born November 23, 1804 and enjoyed a relatively pleasant and easy childhood followed by attendance at and graduation from Bowdoin College in Maine. (One of his friends there was Nathaniel Hawthorne, part of the MTL trivia question.) Pierce's father was elected Governor of New Hampshire in 1827 and Franklin himself was elected to its state legislature in 1829. Two years later he became Speaker of the House for the state. From there, somewhat on the coattails of the popularity of then President Andrew Jackson, young Franklin was elected to the House of Representatives. He wasn't yet thirty years old. His time in the House was unremarkable and his life in Washington not particularly good. Marriage to Jane Appleton in 1834 seemed to be a pairing of complete opposites; Jane was shy, deeply religious and temperate while Pierce was outgoing, well-connected and a heavy drinker. And he was a Democrat while his wife came from a family that strongly supported the Whig Party. Appleton hated Washington and stayed away most of the time even when Pierce became a United States Senator in 1837. His record there was also not distinguished and for perhaps no other reason than to return home to New Hampshire, he resigned his Senate seat in 1841. The friendships he made with Southerners, including future Confederate President Jefferson Davis, cemented his pro-slavery views. Back in his home state, Pierce rose to prominence as a celebrated trial lawyer, and embraced the temperance movement, even leading a movement to ban alcohol from Concord. While he remained active in politics, he refused offices and appointments, including the post of Attorney General under James K. Polk whom he had helped to elect.

But he decided to enlist in the military assuming that it would aid his political ambitions as it had his father's years before. Obtaining a commission as Brigadier General, Pierce went off to the Mexican War and was given a force of two thousand men despite having no previous military experience. He was thrown from his horse and injured, that's not in dispute; but based on what source material you read, he either bravely served as a fearless leader despite a significant injury, or he was pretty much a non-factor in the campaign. He served under Winfield Scott during the war, and then opposed him for the Presidency in the general election of 1852 after the aforementioned forty-eight ballots at the Democratic Convention.

The platforms of the two parties weren't that different, essentially setting up a personality contest. Pierce was less well known and considered to be likable, and his lack of personal electioneering didn't change that perception much; whereas Winfield Scott harmed his own cause by hitting the campaign trail. The election went to Pierce with about 51 percent of the popular vote and carriage of 27 of the then 31 states. Winfield Scott would be the last Presidential candidate for the Whigs.

Personal tragedy struck the Pierce family in January 1853 when the only child of three to survive was killed in a train wreck in Andover, Massachusetts. Jane Pierce called this accident divine punishment for Franklin's being elected to high office. Things did not get much better from there, although Pierce promised at his Inaugural an era of peace and prosperity, and appointed a politically diverse cabinet that is the only one to date to stay intact for the entire term of a President. However, his Vice President, William R. King, died just 45 days into his term and was not replaced.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, signed by Pierce, is generally regarded as having pushed the country farther toward Civil War. This law repealed the Missouri Compromise and allowed new states to decide for themselves whether to allow slavery. It was shepherded through Congress by Illinois Senator Steven Douglas (who would later oppose Lincoln for the Presidency) for what is reported to be the purpose of ensuring enough instability in the South to enable the building of the Transcontinental Railroad starting in Chicago. If that's true, it's a scary illustration of the concept of ulterior motives! We do know that then Secretary of War Jefferson Davis favored a Southern route for the railroad and during Pierce's administration the Gadsden Purchase of land from Mexico was made, perhaps to facilitate such a southern route. Meanwhile, what happened as a more direct result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act was "Bleeding Kansas," as pro-slavery supporters and abolitionists both crossed into the territory in an attempt to sway the question in their direction, and inevitably clashed with violent results. This and other issues made Pierce so unpopular that he was not renominated for the Presidency by his own party for the Election of 1856, and some Northerners were so furious that they left the Democrats altogether and with some remnants of the Whig Party formed the Grand Old Party, also known as the Republicans.

Following his single term as President, Pierce continued to sympathize with Southern interests and kept Jefferson Davis as a close friend. He opposed Abraham Lincoln's policies, which almost cost him his house at the hands of an angry mob and certainly cost him what was left of his reputation. His difficulties with alcohol returned, and he died from cirrhosis in October 1869.

For the answer to this month's Trivia Question, we need to advance from the mid-1800's to the mid-1900's, a fact made fairly obvious by the mention of this President's service in World War II. While this man was possibly the youngest Senate minority leader, it's also reported that he was the "least senior," which is not quite the same thing. He's best known by his initials: LBJ. I'll leave the rest to you and wish you better luck than I've been having winning an Oath of Office car.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is December 2010. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close June 30.

Scheduled December 2010 Release:

987 01 661, \$99.95

"Micro-Mouse" Merry Christmas FT-A Powered Locomotive.

Green with multicolored decoration depicting Micro-Mouse character



aboard a steam locomotive powered train loaded with Christmas presents. Legend "Merry Christmas" at front. No reporting marks or road number. MTL artwork shown, exact decoration may vary.

If you liked the Micro-Mouse on the Holiday Cars, you're going to love him on his own locomotive. And if you don't like the Micro-Mouse on the Holiday Cars, well, er,...

Moving right along... MTL says that this loco and its Z Scale counterpart (see below) "are designed to go with previous and upcoming annual Micro-Mouse Christmas car releases." Does that mean we'll see a 2010 Holiday Car, featuring a certain cheery rodent, in addition to the diesel? If so, that will extend the train from its current tally of twelve releases on which Micro-Mouse is depicted—an unbroken streak from 1991 to 1998, then the 2002 and 2003 cars, and finally boxcars in 2008 and 2009.

Although the use of the MTL mascot on a locomotive is new, this is not the first time that Micro-Mouse appeared riding in or on train. The 1993 car had him in a gondola pulled by diesel (an FT, maybe?) and trailed by a caboose. The 1996 car had a train, but that was Santa riding it, with Micro-Mouse peering from behind a ribbon on the other side of the car.

Although it's very much the "off-season" for such things, these and all of the other Micro-Trains holiday cars to date are (warning: plugola ahead) on the UMTRR Website, on the page called, appropriately, "A Holiday Gathering."

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

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



506 00 141 and 506 00 142, \$20.70 each
Reporting Marks: D&RGW 63505 and
D&RGW 63536.

40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Double Youngstown
Doors, Rio Grande (Denver & Rio Grande
Western).

Brown (boxcar red) with white lettering including reporting marks on left and speed lettering roadname on right. Simulated interior loads included. Approximate Time Period: 1957 (build date given by MTL) to mid-1970's.

The first stop for research this time, just as it was in January 2003 when the most recent N Scale reprint of this car was released (with the road number 63505, even), is the website of the Rio Grande Modeling and Historical Society (<http://www.drgw.org>). Their freight car listing shows the "second" series of cars 63500 to 63699, built by Pullman Standard in May 1957, just as MTL notes. [If you're curious, the "first" series in this number sequence was a 1920's era group of 36 foot boxcars, not likely to be confused with these cars.] The RGM&HS confirms that these cars were used in either general service or autoparts carriage; that makes sense considering that some of the units were equipped with DF fixtures. The January 1964 ORER goes farther, giving the individual numbers of cars with that equipment; however all of those cars were in the 63600s so the three MTL releases don't play there. Here's something more obscure: twelve of the seventy cars were also equipped with Fisher Body Roof Containers for 1964 Model Automobiles. I wonder if that changed every year?

While we're in the ORER, let's check the vital statistics: inside length 50 feet even, outside length 51 feet even, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch. Since the prototypes were PS-1s and the MTL body style is a model of a PS-1, you'd expect the look and feel to be pretty darn close. But MTL actually admits a "door thing" in its car copy, stating-- correctly-- that the prototypes had an 8 plus 7 foot door arrangement, while the model has two 8 foot doors.

According to the RGM&HS, most of these cars were sold off to the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad to become their series 7200 to 7399 in 1977, and the rest were retired before 1983. My guess is that the roofwalks were pulled concurrent to or even before that event, shortening up the ATP. I have a dim memory of seeing a photo of one of these cars converted to Maintenance of Way service, somewhere on the 'net. Speaking of photos though, there's a 1968 shot of a freshly painted 63629 on Page 39 of Morning Sun's Color Guide to the D&RGW. Other than the "door thing" we have a good match to the prototype. Though the Rio Grande was well into the gold and silver paint scheme by the time these cars were built, these cars stayed in mineral red.



511 00 091 and 511 00 092, \$24.80 each
Reporting Marks: WC 27102 and WC 27114.
50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door,
Wisconsin Central.

Maroon with aluminum roof. White reporting marks on left. Yellow herald on left and roadname on right. Yellow simulated reflector striper across bottom of sides. Approximate Time Period: late 1980's (WC was re-formed in 1987) to mid-2000s.

The Wisconsin Central has twice become a "fallen flag." The original Wisconsin Central became a subsidiary of the Soo Line, and ended up in the Canadian Pacific fold. The second Wisconsin Central was born after the Soo picked up much of the Milwaukee Road, and spun off the "Lake States Transportation Division" which was purchased by a consortium led by railroad industry veterans. From that point, service was emphasized, and growth was steady, but the prospects for a regional line in the shadow of Class I giants was uncertain. So the line was put up for sale and the Canadian National bought it in 2001. I don't think the irony of the situation should be lost here... a piece of railroad once owned by the CP became a vital link for archrival CN!

The road numbers in this virtual two-pack are those run by Micro-Trains as its two N Scale releases of this car, in February 1994 and September 2002 respectively. Those releases had the roof painted maroon to match the rest of the car, whereas this release comes with the roof painted aluminum. Based on the photo evidence on Fallen Flags it appears that the aluminum is correct, but weathered so quickly that some cars look as though they do have a maroon roof. While I'm looking at the photos I'll note that the roadname looks a bit more "stenciled" than what MTL depicts, although there are variations within the car series.

That car series was numbered 26745 to 27376, as listed in the April 1989 Register. As of that date there were 448 cars in the group described as simply "Box, Steel" with AAR Classification XM. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, outside length 57 feet 6 inches (indicating a cushion underframe, confirmed in the photos), and inside height 10 feet 7 inches. The door opening was 10 feet even which would match the MTL body style.

In October 1996 the original series has been split into an annoying number of subseries varying on several dimensions including extreme width, outside length and capacity. Why, I don't know, but I can tell you that 27114 and 27102 appear to have stayed in the main series. Overall it adds up to 474 cars if my math is right. In the January 2002 ORER listing (still as WC Limited) and found more subseries and about 420 cars still rolling. There are just a few subsets and a total of 404 cars in the October 2007 ORER which is the latest one I have which would usually be enough to take us "to present" on the ATP. However, MTL states in its car copy that these cars were built in 1967, which means the 40 year rule for interchange service

may have kicked in. Rebuilds along the way would reset the clock on the 40 year rule, so my “mid-2000s” end for the Approximate Time Period is probably conservative. I do note that the majority of the photos of cars in this group found on Fallen Flags are from no later than about 2004, which means either the cars did go away, or that photographers got tired of taking pictures of them!



550 00 080, \$22.50

Road Number: 606 (will be “RI 606” in website listings).

Lightweight Pullman Sleeper Passenger Car, Rock Island.

Silver with black lettering including roadname at top center, car name “Golden Chariot” at bottom center and road number on left. Approximate Time Period: 1947 to early 1960’s at least.

Introduced in 1947, the post war train “Golden State” was the passenger train jointly operated by the Rock Island and Southern Pacific between Chicago and Los Angeles. The transfer point between railroads was Tucumcari, New Mexico. The “Golden State” was an extra fare train that carried through sleeper cars between Chicago, St. Louis and Minneapolis to California and back, the latter two via pickups and setouts of specific cars. (Yes, switching of passenger cars!) The December 1951 issue of **The Official Guide of the Railways** notes the use of 6-6-4 sleepers for the Minneapolis and St. Louis service, which could very well have included the “Golden Chariot.”

Page 13 of Morning Sun’s Color Guide to the Rock Island includes a photo of the “Golden Chariot,” one of the RI series 601 to 606. Thirteen total cars were built by Pullman-Standard in 1942 and served for Pullman on the Golden State for the SP and RI. When Pullman’s monopoly on sleeper service ended, the SP took six of the cars and the Rock Island seven. In 1947 the RI changed the Pullman numbers which were 501 to 506 and added names.

The photo of the “Golden Chariot” appears to be of the opposite side of the car from the one Micro-Trains shows, but thinking mirror image I think we’ve got a pretty good match between model and prototype. The lettering on the real car seems to be on separately applied letterboards that are not much larger than the lettering footprint itself, a bit different than the direct printing on the car. The photo of the real car is dated in the early 1960’s so we’re sure that the Approximate Time Period lasted that long, but I’ll add an “at least” here.



**970 01 091 and 970 01 092, \$185.95 each
Road Numbers: 5054 and 5056 (preceded by "ATSF" in website listings).
SD40-2 Diesels, Santa Fe.**

"Warbonnet" scheme of blue and yellow with large yellow roadname on long hood, blue road number on cab and blue modified circle cross herald on nose. Black frame, silver trucks and yellow handrails. Approximate Time Period: 1977 (build date) to around the year 2000.

Gene Crosset is in the process of compiling and making available an incredible amount of data pertaining to the Santa Fe's all time diesel roster. While he's not finished yet (and he notes that progress is slow), the compendium is done for the diesel model in which we're interested. Gene's website is <http://rosters.gcrosset.com/atsf> with no "www."

The 5054 and 5056 were both delivered in November 1977 and wore the blue and yellow warbonnets that MTL depicts. They had 81 inch short hoods and vapor air conditioners mounted on the cab roof (a detail modelers might consider adding). They were rebuilt to SD40-2u diesels within days of each other in June 1988 at the Santa Fe's San Bernadino, California shops. Both were transferred to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe at the time of the merger. Both were initially "patched" and renumbered, the 5054 to BNSF 6713 in 1988 and the 5056 to BNSF 6715 in the year 2000. That technically results in a "split" ATP but I'll go with the later date here since other SD40s hadn't been "patched" yet.

The site RRPictureArchives.net has a couple of photos of the 5054 from 1996 and 1998, and three of the 5056 from the mid-1980s, 1990 and 1992. It looks like the details on these units changed over time, for example the placement of the air horn. But one thing that seems consistent is the use of hose headlights, which is a difference between prototype and model. I do note that the all yellow handrails look correct, so no painting required.

Z SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:

The following item was announced as an “off-cycle” release via the Micro-Trains website on May 18 and also via the MTL “E-Line” broadcast e-mail on May 18.



510 44 011 and 510 44 012, \$28.90 each

Reporting Marks: RBOX ---- (road numbers obscured by graffiti on visible side).

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Door, Railbox.



Paint: Yellow with aluminum roof and mostly black lettering including "Railbox" and reporting marks on left and multicolor “Next Load / Any Road” device on right. Weathering: Moderate black grime and dirt on sides and roof, particularly at top and bottom of sides. Multicolor graffiti (different

on each release) obscuring road number on one side. Approximate Time Period: mid 1970's (1975 build date) to mid 1980's. Previous Releases (unweathered): Road Number 17834, March 1985 (Marklin Coupler) and March 1987 (Magne-Matic Coupler); Road Number 17700, September 1988 (both couplers); Road Numbers 17728, 17746, 17785, and 17818, Z Scale Runner Pack #1, January 2009. First two releases as Catalog Number 14201 and Runner Pack as Catalog Number 510 5x 010 for individual cars.

Micro-Trains is getting a lot of mileage out of these cars, not unlike the real railroads, actually. Runner Packs have been offered in this scheme in both N Scale (Runner Pack #15) and Z Scale (Runner Pack #1) and now we’ve got a couple of weathered and, ahem, additionally decorated, cars for Railbox as well. I get the sense that these cars are “leftovers” from the Z Scale Runner Pack; the covering of the road number is usually a good clue.

I could get some additional mileage myself and refer you to either the January or June 2008 editions of the UMTRR; however the Runner Pack coverage isn’t posted to the website, so I’ll summarize here. Railbox was set up as the large railroads' counter to the “Incentive Per Diem” boxcars that were being leveraged by leasing companies and American shortlines to address a massive rolling stock shortage in the 1970's. This particular series of cars – well, we think it’s the same series! – was built in 1975 by FMC and should be a good match to the body style. While there were 1800 cars in the original group, the entire series was out of the Equipment Register by 1986, probably distributed out to the member railroads once the IPD bubble had burst. There is still the occasional former Railbox car through the area of UMTRR HQ with reporting marks restenciled. I could see an enterprising Z Scaler doing the same in order to bring forward the Approximate Time Period.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #18, four Burlington Northern Husky-Stack well cars (994 00 018, \$84.95), has been released. UMTRR coverage was in the December 2009 issue. Also released after being delayed from May is Runner Pack #17, Three Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus flat cars with loads. So there are two Runner Pack releases this month.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is December 2010. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close June 30.

Scheduled December 2010 Release:

Runner Pack #24: 994 00 024, \$59.95

**Reporting Marks: B&O 465065, 465074, 465446,
465653**

Quantity four of Baltimore and Ohio 40 Foot Steel
Boxcars, Single Youngstown Door.

Brown (boxcar red) with white lettering including reporting marks and small Capital Dome herald on left and large "B&O" on right. Approximate Time Period: early 1960's to early 1970's.

Previous Release (as Catalog 14115, now designated 500 00 150): Road Number 468599, September 1989, with either Magne-Matic or Marklin couplers.



The previous run of this car was so far back in Kadee Micro-Trains' history of Z Scale that it might as well be a new release. From a prototype reference standpoint, this Runner Pack probably does qualify as a "not a reprint" anyway as the original road number 468599 corresponds to the B&O's class M-62 and the four numbers in the Runner Pack align with the B&O's boxcar class M-55a.

The B&O series 465000 to 465899 was built in 1941 and 1942 by Pullman-Standard but somewhat predate the PS-1 design that is the basis for the MTL body style. A key difference between model and prototype was the use of a flat plate roof on the real cars. The ORER for January 1945 provides another delta: the 10 foot inside height. Many of the B&O's series of boxcars were built to that size in order to accommodate clearances along the line. Shrunk to Z Scale, this wouldn't be all that discernable, but run in a train, the height difference would be apparent. The rest of the key dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, outside length 42 feet 11 inches, extreme height 14 feet 7 inches, door opening 6 feet, capacity 3713 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. All 900 possible cars were in service at the time. Given the paint scheme MTL selected which was used beginning in the early 1960's, I'll skip all the way to the January 1964 Equipment Register, where we find 867 cars on the roster, not

bad. By April 1970, though, that had dropped to 236 cars in the main series plus five more specially equipped to haul tin cans (!). Just ten cars remained as of the April 1974 Register.

I drew a complete blank on prototype photos for this series of cars, both online and in the print resources I have available. Information from the B&O Historical Society website indicates mid-1962 for the paint scheme selected by Micro-Trains, except in reverse with the "B&O" on the left and the capital dome on the right. A photo of B&O 468108 in Morning Sun's Color Guide to the B&O has the same paint scheme as the MTL car; although it's a different series, that does confirm its legitimacy. So does the paint scheme's appearance in the CDS Lettering "Railway Equipment Diagrams" book. However, what MTL needs to be wary of is the paint color it will use for the body. The photo on the website suggests that it will be a brownish "boxcar red" and that would not be right; these B&O boxcars should be bright red oxide as in the N Scale boxcar release from February. There's still time for the folks in Talent to work on that.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:

In addition to the below items, the "Z Scale 25th Anniversary Train Set" (994 01 060, \$239.95) is expected to be released in mid-June per the latest MTL information. UMTRR coverage of that set was in the January 2010 issue which is when MTL accepted pre-orders.



502 00 524, \$22.95

Reporting Marks: IA 1846.

40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, Iowa 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 (Eastern Goldfinch) and state flower (Wild Prairie Rose) on right. Twenty-fourth release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

[The following is largely reprinted from the July 2004 UMTRR coverage of the N Scale release of this car.]

It may be called the Hawkeye State but it's the M*A*S*H character Radar O'Reilly who hailed from Iowa, Ottumwa, to be specific, not "Hawkeye" Pierce. But I digress...

Although I've never been to Ottumwa, I have been to Iowa several different times over the past three decades. The first visit was part of what I call "The Whirlwind Tour" of 1988, and I traversed the state from the southeast to north central on the way up to Minnesota. The most relevant visit for this column was a stop in West Burlington, once home to a major shop of the Burlington Route (CB&Q). It was the year 2000 and I got a good look around at the activities that were still taking place under the auspices of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe. I also got a taste of Sterzing's Potato Chips which were still packed in paper bags at the time

and were only available in a limited area around "West B." Overall, I've gotten a pretty good look at our 29th state, even stopping at a couple of the "Bridges of Madison County" and at the birthplace of John Wayne.

Iowa is named for one of the Native American tribes that once lived there; others included the Miami, Ottawa, and Sioux along the Mississippi River, and the Missouri, Omaha and Oto in what is now the western part of the state. The first Europeans to explore the area were Marquette and Joliet, but perhaps the most famous explorers to visit were Louis and Clark in 1804. In between, the area belonged to Spain, then France, and then to the United States as part of the vast Louisiana Purchase. After Louisiana became a state, the area was part of the Missouri Territory, then attached to Michigan before the Iowa Territory was created in 1838, but counted in the Wisconsin area for Census purposes. The first bill making Iowa a state failed the popular vote because the area's boundaries didn't align with those approved by the territory's Constitutional Convention. Once that was all straightened out, the state became official in December 1846. Ten years later, land grants for four railroads beginning in Dubuque, Lyons (Clinton), Davenport and Burlington were made, but the first line didn't get all the way across the state until 1867.

Although Iowans make more money from manufacturing than anything else, first and foremost the state is known for its agriculture. It ranks first in the production of soybeans, eggs, corn and hogs and it boasts nearly 100,000 farms. As you might expect, there is plenty of attention paid to the weather and the climate, not just meteorologically, but economically speaking. The Great Depression was just one affliction that small town farmers have faced. And I wonder how many of those nearly 100,000 farms are still owned by individuals as opposed to multi-national corporations.

An Iowa Timeline I reviewed specifically pointed out milestones on the subject of reducing the isolation of Iowans from each other. The advent of Rural Free Delivery (1896), the Extension Department of Iowa State College (1902), automobiles (circa 1905), radio (1919) and television (1950) are all noted. Hey, what about the Internet?

Besides the aforementioned John Wayne and Radar O'Reilly (actor Gary Burghoff, who played Radar in both the film and television versions of M*A*S*H is actually from Connecticut, by the way), famous Iowans have included Herbert Hoover, Amelia Bloomer, "Buffalo Bill" Cody, talk show host Johnny Carson, band leader Glenn Miller, "Music Man" composer Meredith Wilson, actor William Frawley (Fred Mertz in **I Love Lucy**), singer Andy Williams, writer of "Little House on the Prairie" Laura Ingalls Wilder, contemporary author (and personal favorite) Bill Bryson, pollster George Gallup, labor leader John L. Lewis, and Jerry Mathers as "the Beaver."



515 00 610, \$29.95

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Billboard Car #10: "Tiger."

Reporting Marks: None (reference in UMTRR website will be "RBB&B Billboard Car #10)."

Brown with multi-color depiction of a tiger train unloading scene with "Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey" across top (split left and right), and "Circus - The Greatest Show on Earth" at bottom (split left and right) on yellow, purple and white background.

Please see the review of the N Scale release above.

The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is December 2010. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close June 30.

Scheduled December 2010 Release:

982 01 059, \$175.95

"Micro-Mouse" Merry Christmas GP9 Powered Locomotive.

Green with multicolored decoration depicting Micro-Mouse character aboard a steam locomotive. Legend "Merry Christmas" on short hood. No reporting marks or road number. MTL artwork shown, exact decoration may vary.



As is typical with Micro-Trains' holiday items, there are differences between the N and Z Scale releases. The choice of locomotive is obvious of course – there's no FT in 1:220 nor does MTL market a Geep in N Scale. The artwork is also different and that's a little less common. No room to fit Micro-Mouse's entire train on the long hood of this unit, so he, and we, will have to settle for the steam locomotive only, at least according to the artwork. And it's not a done deal that this announcement will get past the artwork stage. Previous plans to issue Special Edition locomotives in Z Scale were dropped when pre-orders weren't sufficient. We will see what happens this time.

HOn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):



Reprint: 850 00 001, \$39.15

Reporting Marks: None

30 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Dimensional Data.

Yellow sides, freight car red roof and ends. "Refrigerator" legend and dimensional data on

far right. Approximate Time Period: 1900's through 1940's. Previous Release: March 2007.

I checked the archives for March 2007 and this is not only a reprint but essentially a duplication of the previous "dimensional data" refrigerator car, except for the price tag that is—two dollars more MSRP this time. The ATP is "whatever you want it to be", since the roadname is also. This is basically the 850 00 02x car for the Rio Grande Southern, minus the reporting marks on the sides and ends. And all the rest of the lettering was, was just the reporting marks. Anyone wanting a few more RGS reefers, you've got a great head start here.

As I wrote in 2007, there is of course no Dimensional Data Railroad to discuss here, but I will note that the issuance of a "dimensional data" car harkens back to the early days of Kadon Micro-Trains, when a number of the initial N Scale body styles were issued that way. They didn't turn out to be much more than curiosities, except among the hardcore collector set. I had a couple of them and basically ruined them trying to put on decals. Oops.



Reprint: 860 00 010, \$42.40

Reporting Marks: C&S 4505.

30 Foot Gondola, Wood Sided, Colorado and Southern.

Freight car red (brown) with white lettering including reporting marks on left. Black and white circle herald on right. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1920's to late 1930's (1937 service date). Previous Releases: Road Number 4507, January 2008; Road Number 4517, February 2008.

It's unusual enough to have two HOn3 releases in the same month, but it's even more unusual for both of them to be reprints, although I suppose the dimensional data refrigerator car is a bit of a stretch. This third number for the C&S gondola could be a technical "not a reprint" since it has a load and the first two releases didn't, but I think that is also really a stretch. Well, I won't stretch here and offer mostly a reprinting of myself from the January 2008 UMTRR.

The C&S as of the August 1924 ORER rostered four series of "Coal" cars-- what we usually refer to as gondolas. By far the largest series was from 4003 to 4407, with 275 cars. The group numbered from 4412 to 4496 consisted of 39 cars. The series from which MTL took the 4507 was from 4498 to 4547 which was of 49 cars. Finally there was a small set of 14 cars with drop ends numbered from 4600 to 4614. All of these cars were around the same dimensions and carried 50,000 pounds of lading although the cubic foot capacity varied. All together this amounted to 377 cars or more than one-third of the 1007 narrow gauge cars the C&S operated at the time.

The 4507's vital statistics were as follows: inside length 29 feet 6 3/4 inches, inside width 7 feet 1 3/4 inches, inside height 3 foot 4 inches, outside length 30 feet, outside width 8 feet 4 1/2 inches, overall outside height 9 feet, capacity 704 cubic feet.

In the April 1928 ORER the number of cars in the 4507's group remained at 49, but the large series was off 96 cars to 179 in just four years. By February 1931 that was down again to 94 cars. However, the 4507's group stayed at 49 cars. MTL mentions that many C&S coal cars were converted to flat cars, but that may have been the other series, at least not initially.

Though the build date of this car is 1910 as per MTL, the "button herald" was in use starting approximately 1920 according to San Juan Decals which offers the button herald as well as other C&S schemes including the large "C & S" that preceded it on these cars. Using the 1937 service date printed on the car would result in an awfully short Less Approximate Time Period, as the C&S narrow gauge was torn up starting in 1938 and equipment was being sold off. So I went with the broader ATP in this case.

HOn3 SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: No releases since last issue.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: The "standard" wheel sets introduced on Micro-Trains N scale cars in March are now available in 48 and 100 axle packages, in both 33 inch and 36 inch wheel diameters. These "standard" wheels are compatible with Code 55 track of all makes. "High" and "Low" profile wheel sets are also still available at this time.

Z Scale six-wheel passenger trucks with truck mounted couplers are now available in black (004 02 091) and aluminum (004 42 091), both with MSRP of \$8.30 per pair.

Building kit announcements for this month are more like buildings and accessories. In N Scale is the Military Repair Shop, Office and Gate (499 90 911, \$29.95) and in Z Scale is a "Fences and Gates Kit" which includes both "open" and "privacy" styles (799 90 930, \$19.95).

Finally, there's a multi-pack of ten assorted HOn3 Scale loads (899 43 903, \$34.95) and a pack of two cement bag loads which were in the Universal Cement boxcar (499 43 690, \$8.95 for a pair).

DISCONTINUED ALERT: The Z Scale items outnumber the N Scale items on the Bye-Bye Board this month. So we'll start with the 1:220 outs, in catalog number order: the Canadian National boxcar with grain door (500 00 590, August 2009) has left the building. The second number of the Great Northern red double door boxcar is gone (501 00 132, November 2009, 1st number still available), as is the first number of the Pennsylvania plug door boxcar (502 00 231, January 2009, 2nd number still available). The state car for Indiana is sold out (502 00 513, July 2009). The first number of the "Rock" boxcar is out (503 00 041, December 2008, 2nd still available). The second number of the Burlington (CB&Q) gondola with load is unloaded (522 00 162, May 2008, 1st number still available). Finally in Z Scale, the weathered Northwestern Oklahoma Husky-Stack car with containers has rolled away (540 44 081, March). Moving up to N Scale, the April mid-month weathered Canadian National x-post boxcar is gone (026 44

030). And speaking of boxcars, add the Ontario Northland (020 00 836, March) and the Harry Truman Presidential Car (074 00 112, August 2009) to those that have left the building. A pretty quick sellout is the first number of the Texaco tank car in black and white from just last month (065 00 681, 2nd number still available). A somewhat slower sellout than I would have expected is the CB&Q Railway Post Office car (140 00 030, November 2009). Finally, we have one Nn3 “out,” the Denver, South Park and Pacific boxcar (800 00 170, October 2005).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: Remember that one of a kind Santa Fe auto rack released in May 2009 (111 00 130), with the unusual slogan “Always on the move toward a better way”? Well, it seems that slogan is older than I thought, and it was used at least one other time. As I mentioned, while researching the SFRD ice refrigerator car this month, I came across a print advertisement for the shipment of poinsettias for Christmas. That ad included the familiar Santa Fe circle cross herald – and the not so familiar slogan! The ad was placed in the newspaper **The Milwaukee Journal**, issue date December 15, 1957! That’s some two decades before the slogan appeared on the uniquely painted ATSF 88099.

OOPS PATROL: One of these days I’m going to get the catalog numbers synced back up with the actual releases on the Z Scale State Cars and the N Scale Presidential Cars. Yes, it’s another case of Careless Copy and Paste. It’s right this month... I think. But wait, there’s more! The N Scale MKT Center Flow Runner Pack #45 is coming in November, not October.

RUNNER PACK ERROR FOLLOW UP: Last month I reported that a reader found an error in Runner Pack #40, the four pack of Northern Pacific combination door boxcars that was released ahead of schedule in May. On his copy, the road number 8715 is missing on one side of the car. I asked if anyone else has seen this and received just one reader’s response and his Runner Pack was without the error. Hardly a statistically valid sample, but enough to conclude that this MTL oops is not pervasive. Is it rare and collectible? That, we can’t tell.

RUNNER PACK LISTING: In case you missed the announcement in the May News Flash, I have added a new page to the UMTRR Website listing Runner Packs by scale with announcement and release dates. Most of these listings also have images courtesy of MTL, and I’ll be working to fill in the gaps in that set of images as soon as schedules permit.

AND THAT’S ALL FOR THIS MONTH. Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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