

IrwinsJournal.com Presents:
The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report
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Hello again everyone! Well, I thought I would be late—surprise! Micro-Trains announced the July releases at the National N Scale Convention, and thanks to the UMTRR Spy Network, we got the goods on what's coming with enough time to rush out the news and views prior to our Summer Vacation. Here we go...

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



077 00 190, \$26.25

Reporting Marks: BM 910.

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door,
No Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Boston & Maine.**

Blue with aluminum roof. Black door and bottom sill. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large herald on right. Black and white "Hydra-Cushion Underframe / DF Loader" device on left above reporting marks. Simulated interior load included. Approximate Time Period: 1968 (build date) to early 1980's.

Morning Sun's "Northern New England Color Guide" covers the Boston and Maine. On Page 30 there's a three-quarter view of sister car BM 911 as caught in July 1968. From the photo caption we learn that the series 900 to 999 were built by Evans and leased to the B&M by the United States Railway Equipment Company. The photo is at a bit of an unusual angle but we can note that the side ladders should be only half height, reaching to about the top of the "M" in the herald. There are also ladders both left and right of each side whereas the MTL body style has grab irons at the left.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for April 1970 shows this series in AAR Designation XL though described as just "Box, Steel." The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 55 feet 2 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 9 feet, and capacity 4980 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds. Two more nits to pick there: first, a slight "door thing" since the MTL car has an eight foot door, and second, I'd consider swapping for medium extension trucks to simulate the Hydra-Cushion underframe and get closer to the prototype's outside length. If you're going to body mount couplers, then set them outboard of the frame somewhat to hint at the same thing. Meanwhile, continuing through the Equipment Registers we show 98 of the original 100 cars in service in April 1976, and 94 in April 1981. By the April 1984 ORER this group was combined with 100 other cars also leased from USRE into the series 800 to 999 with 170 total cars. This series lasted to sometime between October 1996 where 94 cars were shown, to July 1998 when the group was not listed.



099 00 100, \$18.35

Reporting Marks: PRR 260665.

**Evans Covered Hopper, Three Bay,
Pennsylvania Railroad.**

Aluminum with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left and small “plain keystone” herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1965 (build date) to mid-1970’s.

Rob’s Pennsy Page (<http://pr.railfan.net>) cites Ed Kaminski’s book The Magor Car Corporation for information on this group of cars. Magor built the PRR H-47 and H-47a classes of cars in 1965. Though numbered higher, in the series 260871 to 260970, the H47’s came first, in May; followed by the H-47A cars, numbered 260656 to 260705 delivered in December. In total, there were 150 cars. We already know that the Magor cars and the Evans cars were pretty similar in design, and the five-four-five rib pattern is the same with both builders’ products.

There’s a photo of H47 PRR 260885 in Morning Sun’s Color Guide to the PRR Volume 2. It’s noted there that “by using an aluminum body on a steel underframe... the [H47’s] were about 7500 pounds lighter than the comparable volume H46.” The aluminum body was left unpainted and lettered in the last, and simplest, PRR lettering scheme. No fully spelled “Pennsylvania” here.

The ORER for January 1967, closest I have to the 1965 build date, also notes the construction right in the car description: “Covered Hopper, Aluminum, Steel Underframe.” The inside length was 54 feet 1 inch, outside length 57 feet 9 inches, extreme height 15 feet and capacity 4750 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. The Evans car that is the basis for the MTL model had a 4780 cubic foot capacity, so we’re just a tad bit off there, probably not a concern but we’ll leave that up to the reader.

Under the Penn Central’s registration in the April 1970 ORER we have 48 of the original fifty cars still in service with the original Pennsy reporting marks. Ten of the cars made it all the way to Conrail in April 1976 with PRR markings intact, but that’s where I stopped looking. Examples of “paint outs” into Conrail as well as more complete repaints can be found on the Conrail Historical Society web site (<http://thecrhs.org> , no “www”). According to the CRHS, nine H47A cars carried their PRR number to Conrail becoming CR 890963-890971, and the others were renumbered into Penn Central series 888695-888745, then becoming CR 888695-888745. Meanwhile, the H47s went to CR 891086-891108 if still in PRR paint on “C” day, and 75 cars were renumbered into PC series 888596-888693, then becoming CR 888596-888693. All in all, there are some more choices for future paint schemes for the folks in Talent.



113 00 750, \$21.95

Reporting Marks: None.

Disconnect Log Trucks with Long Log.

No paint, no lettering. Approximate Time Period: Most of the 20th Century.

The most recent disconnect log trucks with load was released in October 2008 and for me the timing is good for this fifth run since there's not much to say about this particular body style and I'm in a hurry! Unlike other loads provided with MTL releases, this one is attached to the, well, trucks (I can hardly say "car"!) and I've noted previously hearing that the attachment process is somewhat non-trivial. MTL goes with a another single large log load for this run, as it did for release number four; prior to that, the disconnect trucks had multiple log loads attached to them.



142 00 010, \$22.70

Road Number: None

Pullman Heavyweight Sleeper, 12-1 Design, Pullman.

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



142 00 020, \$22.70

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

Pullman Heavyweight Sleeper, 12-1 Design, Great Northern "Glacier."

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Dulux 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: 1924 (or 1936 with air conditioning) to 1948.

As I did last month, I'll take both of these cars together. The 12-1 heavyweight sleeper had 12 sections—the ones with the upper and lower berths, as I described last month—and one drawing room, that large compartment that could accommodate a family.

There's not a whole lot I can say about a somewhat unlettered "Pullman" car anyway (particularly when I'm pressed for time!) other than it allows for plenty of flexibility! And that flexibility is a good thing, since there were more than nine hundred Pullman sleepers

built to this particular plan, 3410/3410A. Not all of them were in pullman green, of course, and I think we'll be seeing a bunch of other paint schemes over time from Micro-Trains. The Branchline Trains website has three names for the otherwise unlettered Pullmans for you to get started: St. Carvan, Gorgeous Rose, and McBridesville.

And if that's not enough, try "The Pullman Project" website of Tom Madden, who's documented from official construction records every Pullman car built and operated by the company. His downloadable database (for personal use only, thank you!) has over 13,000 records at this writing. One of those records confirms that the car "Glacier" was a Plan 3410. If I'm reading the notes right, the car was placed into service painted in pullman green in 1924, had air conditioning added in 1936, and was sold in 1948 to the Southern Railway but leased back to Pullman. That gives as good as an Approximate Time Period as I can get. I'm sticking with the same ATP for the Pullman "otherwise unlettered" as I gave for last month's Pullman 10-1-2 sleeper. The key dates are the add of air conditioning and the Pullman Divestiture, although one could look deeper into a specific car name once one chooses it!

N SCALE REPRINTS:



027 00 180, \$17.50

Reporting Marks: CP 166192.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, CP Rail.

Yellow with mostly black lettering including "CP Rail" roadname and reporting marks on left. Approximate Time Period: 1968 to mid-2000s. Previous Release (as catalog 27180): Road Number 166049, April 1989.

A "copy and paste" is possible here from the April announcement of the Z Scale Runner Pack (994 00 021) of these cars. These cars were built in 1966 and according to Morning Sun's Canadian Pacific Color Guide, the paint scheme they wore was orange and black with black and red lettering... which is what Micro-Trains released back in February in N Scale (027 00 310). This paint scheme succeeded the original one, but both schemes co-existed for a while.

As noted previously, then, there were 200 cars in this series numbered 166000 to 166199 built by National Steel Car. When in the previous paint scheme, the cars had roofwalks but I don't think that will be an issue with this later decoration. We've know there are online photos on the Canadian Freight Car Gallery site (<http://freight.railfan.ca>) aligning with the MTL paint scheme. We also know that there are differences between prototype and model with respect to the ends and sides, and that the MTL depiction doesn't come with those famous thermostatically controlled underslung heaters. (Still an aftermarket opportunity...)

Though it's just before the switch from Canadian Pacific to CP Rail in 1968, we can use the ORER for January 1967. The series 166000 to 166199 is described as "Box, Steel, Insulated, Bulkhead, Cushion Underframe" with AAR Designation XIH. The inside length was 49 feet 6 inches, inside width 8 feet 9 inches, inside height 9 feet 2 inches, outside length 59 feet, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 9 feet, and capacity 3970 cubic feet with weight capacity not listed. An end note calls out three inches of insulation and the alcohol heaters. Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site (URL <http://www.nakina.net>) has the service date of the series 166000 to 166199 extending out to 2007, so in theory we almost make "to present," but not quite.



077 00 050, \$21.20

Reporting Marks: UP 507405.

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door, No Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Union Pacific.

Freight car red with yellow doors. Mostly white lettering including large roadname and reporting marks on left and slogan "Ship and Travel the Automated Rail Way" on right. Red, white and blue shield herald on right. Approximate Time Period: late 1960's (1968 rebuild date given by MTL) to early 1980's. Previous Release: Road Number 507406, December 2005.

When this car was first released in 2005, I lamented the fact that I couldn't find an online photo, though I wasn't surprised since there were only seventeen cars in the prototype series. However, at the time I didn't own Morning Sun's Color Guide to the UP, Volume One, and now I do. So I can tell you that Page 39 contains a photo of the MTL's first run road number 507406. It's noted that this car was a rebuild—done in 1968 as Micro-Trains indicates—and that it was also recapitalized at the time. That maneuver meant that the depreciation cycle could restart on the car, which was nice for the operating results versus having to expense the entire rebuild in the period in which it occurred. The company photo shows the car with shortened side ladders, a delta to the model.

The series 507400 to 507416 was painted brown (or "synthetic red"—whatever that is—per the MTL car copy) which, according to the RPI website, should mean that the cars did not have a cushion underframe. The more colorful yellow cars did. I guess that brown cars didn't rate the "Automated Railway" map either, but these did at least get the slogan.

The ORER for April 1970 shows these 17 cars with the simple description "Box, Steel" but with the AAR Classification "XL." The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15 feet, and capacity 5023 cubic feet or 109,000 pounds. The door opening is 10 feet whereas the MTL model has an eight foot door; yes, a "door thing" and one that MTL admits right in its car copy. A notation discloses that the cars have the 9 Belt DF-Loaders. All 17 cars were listed in the April 1976 ORER, 13 remained as of April 1991 but the series was gone by January 1985.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:

The following items were announced as “off-cycle” releases via the Micro-Trains website on June 17 and also via the MTL “E-Line” broadcast e-mail on June 22.



024 44 270, \$18.60

Reporting Marks: RI 47414.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door, No Roofwalk, Short Ladders, Rock Island.

Paint: Green with brown door. White lettering including reporting marks on left

and large roadname on right. Weathering: Light to moderate black and brown streaks on sides, and gray on trucks. Approximate Time Period: 1969 (refurbish date) to about 1980. Previous Release (unweathered, as catalog 24270): Road Number 47440, September 1997.

Yes, I was writing the UMTRR in September 1997; but no, I didn't write much about the first run of this release. It certainly helps that the Research Library has grown substantially since then. Specifically, Morning Sun's Color Guide to the Rock Island, Page 39, shows a quite new looking RI 47440, which was most likely the basis for the MTL release back in '97. The caption accompanying this photo provides more data by itself than I had in total back then.

This car was one of 150 refurbished boxcars leased from United States Railway Equipment — that's their logo to the left of the door. The group 47300 to 47449 came in three different series based on inside height and door opening width. The one in which we're most interested ranged from 47402 to 47449, all of which had “DF2” loaders. Comparing photo to model, we see that MTL might have been better with their 073 body style (which didn't yet exist in 1997) as that car has full side ladders whereas the 024 body style has cut down ladders. On the other hand, RI 47346 from the USRE lease group shows up on Fallen Flags with cut down ladders and so does another RI green boxcar on “Boxcars and Freight Cars of North America” (<http://www.boxcars.us>) although we can't make out the road number. What we can't be equivocal about is the “door thing” — an eight foot Superior door on the series of cars versus the six foot door on the MTL model. There was at least one boxcar with a six foot door in this scheme — it's in the photo on “Boxcars and Freight Cars...” cited above.

The ORER for April 1970 falls is just after the 1969 refurbish and lease date of these cars given in the Morning Sun Color Guide, so we'll use it. The series 47402 to 47449 has all 48 of the possible cars, described as “Box, All Steel” with AAR Classification XL and these key dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 8 feet and capacity 3892 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. An end note calls out the ten belt DF2 loaders.

The ORER for April 1976 is the latest one prior to the demise of the Rock Island on March 31, 1980. It shows three subsets for the group based on the type of DF loaders — 21 numbered

from 47402 to 47425 with 10 belt loaders, which includes the road number depicted here; then six more numbered 47426 to 47433 with 5 belt loaders; and finally ten more with numbers 47434 to 47449 with 9 belt loaders. Our Approximate Time Period is good to at least then and probably up to the end of the line for the RI, but from there, as we already know, things get impossible to follow. The Rock Island's registration simply disappears from the ORER and its cars get scattered, stored, or scrapped.



094 44 210, \$28.85

Reporting Marks: SNFX 4616.

Three Bay ACF Center Flow® Covered Hopper with Long (Trough) Hatches, Shell Oil Company.

Paint: Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Multicolor Shell “scallop” logo on right. Weathering: Light to moderate gray and black streaks on sides, and gray on trucks. Multicolor graffiti on side of car shown in official MTL image. Approximate Time Period: Approximate Time Period: mid-1960's (1965 build date given by MTL) or early 1970's (1971 service date given by MTL) to early 1980's as painted. Previous Releases (unweathered) As catalog 94210, Road Number 4610, May 2002; as catalog 094 00 210, Road Number 4606, February 2010.

We just covered (if you'll pardon the expression) this car in the February 2010, so in the interests of time, I'll refer you to that issue of the UMTRR for the full story of this series. I will make a few notes though. First, with this third road number, over ten percent of the original series of 25 cars has been covered (SNFX 4600 to 4624). Second, this graffiti might be the most elaborate yet attempted by Micro-Trains. It reminds me of the large pieces of “artwork” I see during my occasional railfanning, and I wonder how long the car on which it is executed had to stay still! Third, I wonder if when the decision was made to reprint this car with road number 4606 as part of the February offerings, there was another decision made to run off some more cars with road number 4616 especially for this weathered release. In terms of setup costs and economies of scale, it certainly would have made sense.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #41, Three Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus “stock cars” (converted baggage cars), will be available mid-July according to the Micro-News. UMTRR coverage was in the January 2010 issue.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is January 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close July 30.

Scheduled January 2011 Release:

Runner Pack #47: 993 00 047, \$69.95

Reporting Marks: UP 169961, 170405, 170410, 170530

Quantity four of 50 foot combination door boxcars without roofwalk, Union Pacific.

Freight car red (or “synthetic red” in UP terms) with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and slogan “We Can Handle It. The Union Pacific Railroad People” on right. Large red, white and blue shield herald on left. Approximate Time Period: late 1950’s to mid 1960’s. Previous Release (as catalog 76040): Road Number 170456, May 2001.



“Formerly 33050” is the comment with the previous release of this car in the official Micro-Trains release database on their website. (I use the Excel version, if you’re curious.) And indeed, the first runs of this paint scheme were on the MTL combination door car with roofwalk, back in 1975 and 1992.

MTL’s car copy from the 2001 release described how these cars were hewn from 1950’s era 40 foot box cars. Hey, a prototype kitbash? More like a “stretch,” and I’m not referring to my description here. As the venerable “standard” forty foot boxcar became less useful, it was recycled into all kinds of configurations, some of them more glamorous than others. This is one of the better fates that befell the common cars. The Albina, Oregon shop where this work took place is actually located in Portland, by the way. I had to check after Rand McNally came up blank.

The previous run of this UP class BC-70-8 car carries a build date of 1972, and the closest ORER I have after that is July 1974, so that’s where I went. (And just to be sure, I checked the April 1970 Register-- not there.) The series was described as “Box, Steel, Staggered Doors, Side Wall Lading Anchors, 6 Foot Auxiliary Flush Side Doors, 50K.” The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, and the outside length is 58 feet 4 inches, indicating that at least medium or maybe long extended trucks should be fitted to this model to be a little more accurate. The door opening is 14 feet, counting that “6 foot auxiliary flush door” — “plug door” to the rest of us-- and that’s right on with the model. The quantity of cars in this group surprised me; the series is numbered from 169900 to 170649 and carried 749 pieces back in 1974. Many more than I would have guessed! Of those, 698 remained in April 1981, but six years later, a scant 34 cars were left on the rails, of which 15 had been demoted to just “Box, Steel.” A pretty short ATP in and of itself, to be sure, but not a bad “second time around” for a boxcar.

The Morning Sun Color Guide to the UP, Volume 2, a recent addition to the Research Accumulation, has a photo of a just out of the shop UP 170430 from the series on Page 11. There are some significant differences between model and prototype, starting with the door. No, not a “door thing” in terms of width of opening, but of type of plug door, which looks more like the one that MTL uses on its 60 foot double plug door boxcars. (And if were smarter about these things I’d give a manufacturer and model for said door, but I’m not, so I can’t.) The lack of roofwalk is correct, but the sides also have short ladders and the one on the right is atop a recess in the side. The photo caption explains that this group of cars was rebuilt from B-50-47, -48 and -50 class cars that were originally built in 1957.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:

In addition to the below items, The D-Day Commemorative Freight Car Set (993 21 100, \$179.95) which is actually a group of modified Railway Post Office cars, is to be released mid-month per the Micro-News. This release was delayed from last month.



047 00 411, \$25.95

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Ice Refrigerator Car, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Billboard Car #11: “Marvelously Trained Elephants.”

Reporting Marks: None (reference in UMTRR website will be “RBB&B Billboard Car #11”).

Brown with multi-color depiction of trained elephants performing across car. Red and black “Ringling Bros” name at top center and white on black banner “Marvelously Trained Elephants in New Novel Acts” across bottom of side.

Micro-Trains wraps up its series of billboard circus poster cars — at least, as far as we know — with this release. The poster which inspired this car goes back to “pre-merger” days, when the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey had not yet joined forces. That would be prior to 1919. I found the source image online right away but the reference didn’t date the poster so no additional help there.

While this is (we think!) the conclusion of the billboard poster series, the licensing arrangement with Feld Entertainment is not over yet. Writing in The N Scale Collector Magazine, MTL’s Ben Thielemann hinted that there was more to come, so... stay tuned.



074 00 123, \$23.95

40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #23: Lyndon Johnson (36th 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.

You don't even need to type in the full name of our 36th President to find a wealth of information: "LBJ" is enough. Lyndon Baines Johnson was born August 26, 1907 not far from Johnson City, Texas, which his family had helped settle. Having a town named after your predecessors doesn't guarantee riches, though, and young Lyndon experienced difficult times growing up. As a teacher, he learned more about poverty, and remembered what it was like, especially when he could do something about it. Interestingly, his grandfather declared at Lyndon's birth that the child would become a United States Senator. His grandfather was right, and then some.

While teaching, Lyndon completed his degree and taught public speaking at a Houston high school; his team won the district debating championship. When Richard Kleberg won a seat in the House of Representatives in 1931, he asked the twenty-three year old Johnson to come to Washington as his secretary. Johnson learned the ways of Congress and was elected Speaker of "Little Congress," an organization of congressional workers. On a trip home in 1934, he met Claudia Alta Taylor, known as "Lady Bird"; they married two months later.

LBJ moved from being Representative Kleberg's secretary to being the Texas Director of the National Youth Administration, the youngest state director appointed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. From there he won a special election against eight other candidates to take the 10th Congressional Seat in the House of Representatives, a seat to which he would be re-elected until 1948. During that period was World War II; Johnson, who had been appointed a Lieutenant Commander in the U. S. Naval Reserve, was the first in Congress to volunteer for active duty, to which he reported on December 9, 1941, two days after Pearl Harbor. President Roosevelt ordered him and all others in Congress back to their offices and Johnson's active service ended on July 16, 1942. Meanwhile, Johnson made his first run for United States Senator, not successfully. In 1948 LBJ took the Democratic nomination for Senator by just 87 votes out of a quarter-million cast. The Miller Center notes that "Everyone knew that the election was rife with fraud," but with very little Republican presence in the Lone Star State, the primary win meant a landslide in the general election. In the Senate, Johnson worked hard and took advantage of circumstances. In the 1950 election, the Republicans took out the two Democratic leaders and Johnson became the "whip" or assistant to the leader. In 1952, the Republicans unseated the Democratic minority leader and

Johnson took that role. Then in 1954, the Democrats regained the majority of the Senate and Johnson became majority leader. All in just one term. Along the way LBJ developed the “Johnson Treatment” which he used to persuade his fellow senators to his point of view. Working with fellow Texan Sam Rayburn who was then Speaker of the House, an impressive amount of legislation was passed, including the Civil Rights Act of 1957 which Johnson called one of his proudest moments.

Johnson was ready and willing to take the next step into the White House but was faced with John F. Kennedy as his opponent in the 1960 election. JFK was a big underdog and LBJ helped balance the ticket. They defeated—just barely-- Richard Nixon and Henry Cabot Lodge. Kennedy gave Johnson some responsibilities including the Space Program, but otherwise kept him at a distance, as did JFK’s inner circle of advisors.

That all changed on November 22, 1963 when John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Lyndon Baines Johnson was sworn in as President aboard Air Force One before returning to Washington. He promised, “I will do my best, that is all I can do.” He asked that Kennedy’s cabinet and aides stay on for continuity.

And Johnson certainly tried to do his best. His approval ratings were enormous and he took the 1964 election against a divided Republican Party’s nominee Barry Goldwater by the widest margin in American history and an Electoral College proportion of ten to one. One of the most effective political advertisements ever came out of this campaign: the “Daisy” ad in which a little girl picked flowers until (seemingly) obliterated by a nuclear bomb.

His presidency can probably be summed up as a contrast between domestic advances and foreign difficulties. Recalling his difficult youth, he advocated the “Great Society” program which offered a hand up to those who needed it. On the other hand, the escalation of the Vietnam War polarized the country and cost Johnson dearly. By the time the 1968 election season began, LBJ was opposed on many sides, and decided that he would not seek reelection. He retired in relatively poor health and died on January 22, 1973, two days after he would have concluded a second full term as President. The Miller Center sums his legacy up this way: “The legacies of death, renewal, and opportunity attached to the Johnson administration are ironic, confusing, and uncertain. They will likely remain that way.”

Quickly to this month’s Trivia Question: The first president to visit the “State” of Alaska is a red herring... the territory would not be a state for another 36 years when Warren G. Harding set foot there in 1923. Get those entries in!

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

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



500 00 641 and 500 00 642, \$22.20 each
Reporting Marks: WAB 750 and WAB 751.
40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Youngstown
Doors, Wabash.

Dark blue with yellow lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large “Follow the Flag” flag herald on right. Approximate Time Period: early to mid 1960’s at least, could be earlier, see text.

You’d expect that a railroad with a train called “The Blue Bird” that painted some of its passenger cars in blue would also have express boxcars in that color, and that’s just what the Wabash had. The paired release this month covers half of this group of four cars numbered 750 to 753. MTL mentions that these were owned by the “NJI&I.” That would be the New Jersey, Indiana and Illinois, a Wabash-owned short line that ran some eleven miles from Pine to South Bend, Indiana (not in Illinois, nowhere near New Jersey!). The NJI&I rostered a fair number of cars which were generally painted for the Wabash with NJI&I reporting marks or sublettering.

How about a prototype photo? Long time UMTRR Gang Member Andy Bogle helps out with a check of the Morning Sun Color Guide to the Wabash/NKP/DT&I. Page 21 of that book shows the 751 caught in December 1963 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The car still has marker brackets attached; typical of freight cars assigned to passenger train service.

In the MSCG caption it’s noted that the four cars were ex-NJI&I series 1400 to 1403, part of the larger group 1400 to 1699 which were former New Haven boxcars built by Pressed Steel Car Company in 1941 and Pullman Standard in 1944. That would mean the MTL body style won’t be an exact match to the prototype cars.

Also noted in the MSCG is that for a brief period between April 1964 and October 1966 they were shown in the Wabash’s Equipment Register listing as standard boxcars. They don’t show in any of the ORERs I have. I didn’t see the NJI&I series from which the cars were taken until the January 1967 ORER, which surprises me. There’s an example of that group on Page 53 of the Color Guide. This makes me wonder how far back the Approximate Time Period could go. Perhaps it’s not all the way back to the build date of the car, and perhaps it’s not much earlier than the 1963 date of the photo in the MSCG, either. The New Haven started a big selloff of cars after 1960, again guiding us to a shorter ATP than I first imagined.

Andy told me he’s hoping for an N Scale version of this car from MTL, and I think the odds of that are pretty good. The only previous release of this paint scheme in N of which I am aware is a special run on an Intermountain boxcar, commissioned by IPIC Model Trains of Groveland, Illinois in February 2002.



507 00 431 and 507 00 342, \$31.20 each
Reporting Marks: MILW 2632 and MILW 2635.

50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Plug Doors, Milwaukee Road.

Brown sides with dark yellow band, black ends, aluminum roof. Brown and yellow lettering including large roadname and

reporting marks on left and herald on right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960's (1964 build date given by MTL) to early 1980's at least.

According to MTL the car was built in February 1964, and that's the "New" date on the Micro-Trains N Scale release of MILW 2635 from November 2005, but either the folks at the Milwaukee Road anticipated these cars arrival or they had something very similar in the same numbers, since there is a 2600 to 2659 group of AAR class RBL cars in the January 1964 ORER. The full car description was "Refrigerator, All Steel, Insulated, Roller Bearings" and the vital statistics were as follows: inside length 50 feet 1 inch, inside height 9 feet 6 inches, outside length 51 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 8 feet 2 inches, capacity 4632 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. All 55 cars were in service at the time... or maybe "before" their time, who knows?

By the April 1970 ORER the "Roller Bearings" were replaced with "Plug Doors" in the description and the outside length had increased to 54 feet 4 inches-- get out those medium extended draft gear trucks-- but the car count remained at 55. The note "Cars in this series have specially equipped interiors and are not suitable for general service" that MTL uses comes out of this issue of the Register, and probably other issues as well. In the April 1976 ORER we get to find out what the special equipment is, as the description changed again, to "Refrigerator, Cushion Underframe, 9 Sparton Belt Rails, Plug Doors, 25K." Four cars in a subseries had pallets that were considered part of the car and four others weren't listed as having Cushion Underframes, but the outside length wasn't any different on those four. By this time, of course, you'd need to be thinking about roofwalk removal as well, so the "strictly speaking" ATP is at or near its close. (But see below.) How that "Sparton Belt Rails" translates to that large S and small E and L on the door, I really can't be sure, but maybe the "E L" stands for "Equipped [with] Loaders"?!?

And MTL further notes that "more than twenty years later, cars in this series were still operating with MILW reporting marks in the same paint scheme." That brings us to the October 1986 ORER and the Soo Line listing, where this is confirmed: eighteen cars in the 2600 to 2653 group, with yet another description change: "Refrigerator, 9 Sparton Belt Rails, Plug Doors, 25K." Ten remained in July 1989 and one, the 2633, made it all the way to July 1992. If I recall correctly, the Soo Line didn't make it a habit of restenciling the freight cars it acquired when it took over what was left of the Milwaukee in 1986.

Although I suppose this is what happens 27 years after a car is originally painted, a shot of MILW 2611 from May 1981 as found on RRPictureArchives.net shows an extremely dirty car. It's also a fairly dark shot, but it'll have to do. I could quibble with some details but in general the "look and feel" is there. And so is the roofwalk.



552 00 090, \$22.50

Road Number: 330 (will be "RI 330" in website listings).

Lightweight Pullman Coach
Passenger Car, Rock Island.

Silver with black lettering including roadname at top center and road number on left. Approximate Time Period: 1962 to early 1980's.

This is a follow on release to last month's lightweight sleeper. Although MTL's car copy has a parallel story as well—the car was obtained from Pullman when the latter's monopoly on sleeping car service was broken up in 1947. But not unlike an issue that this author often has, there may be a "copy and paste" error here. Read on...

Morning Sun's Color Guide to the RI shows a photo of the 328 or "Topeka" and calls it out as part of the series 323 to 338 which would include the number 330. The MSCG says that these sixteen coaches were built by Pullman for the Rock Island in 1947 for general service on the line's "Rocket" trains. These coaches have corrugated, not smooth, sides. The website of the Rock Island Historical Society (<http://www.rits.org>) seems to align with this, showing the 330 as the "Des Moines" and giving the same build information of Pullman-Standard in 1947.

However!!!

This particular car was rebuilt in 1962 by the Rock Island and at that time was converted to a smoothside car with no name. It remained in service for the RI until the road ceased operations, and wandered around a bit. By 1988 it was in Guthrie, Oklahoma and destined for scrap. But in 1989 Bart Barton purchased the 330, had it moved to the Arizona Railway Museum in Phoenix. A rebuilding taking many years followed, and the car, renamed the "Jane Marie" is now a self-contained family private passenger car. Externally, though, it still looks the same as when it was in service for the Rock Island. "Almost all of the furnishings are authentic railroad, and many are from Rock Island cars that were scrapped. The china and silver are authentic Rock Island," Barton writes on a page on the RITS site. "The curtains in the kitchen and bathroom are from the fabric used in coaches with the Rock Island logo."



970 01 101 and 970 01 102, \$185.95 each
Road Numbers: 163 and 167 (preceded
by "MILW" in website listings).
SD40-2 Diesels, Milwaukee Road.

Orange with black band at top of long hood. Black roof, frame, trucks and details. Black roadname on long hood and on nose. White roadnumber off-center in black band. Small red and white tilted rectangle herald on cab. Approximate Time Period: about 1978 to mid-1980's.

Ah, another puzzle of renumbering and relettering to try to piece together. When built in 1972 these locos carried the road numbers 3033 and 3067. On RRPictureArchives.net there is a photo titled "Newly Repainted SD40-2s at Milwaukee" dated October 1978 and showing the 167 in the paint scheme used by Micro-Trains. (Oh, wow, there's a Gold Trans Am in the that photo too... ooh, ahh... oops, sorry.) I'll note that there's a 1976 photo of the 167 in what I guess is the previous paint scheme, similar but without the roadname on the long hood or nose. But wait... there is a 1985 photo of the 167 in a third paint scheme with just the word "Milwaukee" on the long hood and a large roadnumber at the back, and a 1986 photo of the same loco showing the Hiawatha symbol on the nose. What was that ATP again, George? Yikes. Please note I estimate the ATP for the entire series of locos in most cases...

Anyway, there are photos of the 163 in the paint scheme MTL used as early as late as 1985 on the same website. (There's also a photo of the unit as MILW 3033, but alas, it is undated.) But by January 1987, the SD40-2 was Soo Line property and had black covering the roadname and other identifying marks, with new roadnumber 6380 and "Soo Line" on the nose. Between then and 2005, the unit was sold to TFM and became its 1425. A photo shows it as one of several KCS-family diesel dead in tow behind CSX power in October 2008, captioned as on the way to Wadesboro, Georgia. As of just last month, June 2010, it was still there awaiting its fate.

The biggest nit I can see to pick on the MTL depiction of these units is with respect to the road number, and I will immediately forgive them for this: on the real units, it was applied directly to the dynamic brake! Micro-Trains offsets the "163" or "167" just off to the side. You might also want to paint the ends of the handrails white to match the prototype.

Z SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: No releases since last UMTRR.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #19, three Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus "stock cars" (converted baggage cars), has been released. UMTRR coverage was in the January 2010 issue.



The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is January 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close July 30.

Scheduled January 2011 Release:

Runner Pack #25: 994 00 025, \$79.95

Reporting Marks: NP 98593, 98600, 98636, 98639

Quantity four of Northern Pacific 40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Plug Door.

Dark green with white lettering including semicircle roadname and reporting marks on left, and "Scenic Route of the Vista Dome North Coast Limited" slogan on right. Small red, white and black NP "monad" herald on right. Red and yellow "DF2" designation on door.

Approximate Time Period: 1959 (build date) to mid-1980s. Previous Releases (as Catalog 14915, now designated 502 00 150): Road Number 98585, September 1996; Road Number 98638, March 2003, both previous releases with either Magne-Matic or Marklin couplers.



As I've grown fond of writing (and perhaps you've grown weary of reading!) these are examples of "Refrigerator" cars masquerading as boxcars. This particular car is AAR Designation RBL and described as "Refrigerator, Steel." The ORER for January 1964 which is the closest I have to the 1959 build date shows the group 98550 to 98649, 99 cars out of the possible 100. The inside length was 39 feet 11 inches and outside length of 42 feet 1 inch, capacity 100,000 pounds and door opening 8 feet 3 inches. An end note tells us that all cars are "equipped with ceiling hooks for application of portable heaters and harnesses" as well as "crossbar type loading devices."

The April 1970 ORER shows 96 cars remaining under the new owners Burlington Northern, and there are still 66 extant in the April 1981 book. I suspect this group was instead subject to the more typical BN practice of not being restenciled. In fact, we go out to July 1987 for this listing although there was just one car remaining in it at that time. It's probably true, though, that the roofwalks would have been gone on any remaining cars before then, so that Approximate Time Period would be a bit shorter.

Morning Sun's Color Guide to the NP, Page 57, includes a shot of prototype car 98583 from the series. I'm sure that the observant will find differences, for example, straight sills on the prototype, but terms of overall effect, we're okay. Author Todd Sullivan reported that though the NP was already favoring 50 foot boxcars at the time these were built, there remained enough interest on the part of the road to build four series of these cars, totaling 250 pieces. They were assembled at the line's shops in Brainerd, Minnesota.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



502 00 525, \$22.95

Reporting Marks: VT 1791.

40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, Vermont 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 (Hermit Thrush) and state flower (Red Clover) on right. Twenty-fifth release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

[The following is largely reprinted from the June 2006 UMTRR coverage of the N Scale release of this car.]

Our fourteenth state gets its star turn this month. The slogan aligns with the name: Vermont derives from the French for "Green Mountain"-- that's the physical feature, not the railroad. The actual French is "Les Monts Verts," my wife would tell you, which would have resulted in the only three word state in the union had the phrase not been corrupted.

According to the "Virtual Vermont" online magazine (URL what you'd think it is!), "Both of the great eastern nations - the Algonquian and the Iroquois - knew the land that became Vermont. In a lifetime of studying the Native place-names of New England, the late John C. Huden was able to identify roughly two hundred names that one or more of the Native tribes had applied to places within Vermont. Nearly one hundred derive from the Abnaki, who spent more time in the area than any of the other Algonquian tribes. Another dozen derive from the Mahican, while a few come from the Narragansett, Natick, Pennacook, Pocumtuc and Wampanoag. The Mohawk tribe of the Iroquois nation gave names to about fifty places, and the Chippewa also seem to have named a few places."

In 1535 Jacques Cartier was the first European to see the territory; it took until 1609 for Samuel de Champlain to find the lake that bears his name.

A border dispute and the resulting conflicting claims led the formation of the Green Mountain Boys, led by transplant (from Connecticut) Ethan Allen. It seems that having just bought their land, the future Vermonters weren't going to simply allow New York, which

had gotten a ruling that they owned land out to the Connecticut River, take over and “resell” the same land to them. The New Yorkers gave the Green Mountain Boys their name when they stated-- incorrectly-- that they were going to push the boys all the way back to the Green Mountains. Allen was also briefly involved in the American Revolution, taking Fort Ticonderoga without a shot but being captured by the British after a disastrous attempt to attack Montreal. The 1777 Battle of Bennington-- which was actually fought outside the town-- was a turning point in the Revolution. In the same year, Vermont declared its independence and proclaimed itself a republic. In 1791 that republic became a state. Montpelier became the capital in 1805 and is still the smallest of our capitals in terms of population.

Vermont was an early leader in the anti-slavery movement; in fact, the Republic passed a law forbidding transport of African Americans out of Vermont back in 1786! There probably wasn't a direct relationship but the northernmost battle of the Civil War was the St. Albans Raid in 1865, brashly undertaken by Confederates who came down from Canada. Perhaps a more direct relationship was that the Republican Party held the governorship from 1855 to 1962.

There have never been that many people in Vermont, relatively speaking. In 1930 cattle outnumbered humans. It wasn't until 1964 that the last three towns in the state got electricity. Hate billboards? You'll like Vermont, where they've been banned since 1968. Small standard signs replaced them to point out businesses along main highways and off on side roads. Vermont was probably also the last state to get radio traffic reports; they were begun in 2006 according to my friend and online broadcasting industry columnist Scott Fybush. Why they need them, he and I are not sure. Well, other than the fact that they can be sponsored. But I digress...

Vermont natives include two Presidents: Chester A. Arthur and Calvin Coolidge, and at least one contender, Stephen A. Douglas. John Deere, of farm implement fame, was born in Vermont also. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, LDS Church founder and leader, were natives. The original crooner, Rudy Vallee, was from Vermont as well, as was speculator and rail baron Jim Fisk, Wells Fargo founder Henry Wells, and, in a more contemporary mode, golfer Patty Sheehan. Virtual Vermont identifies other “transplants” besides Ethan Allen, including painter Norman Rockwell, poet Robert Frost, petroleum pioneer Edwin Drake, and Hetty Green, “The Witch of Wall Street” who was the wealthiest woman in America.

I hate to have to say this, but my memory is unclear as to when I first set foot in the state. It could have been a quick hop over to Bennington during a trip to Massachusetts, or a longer stay that began in St. Johnsbury and wound through Montpelier and Barre (a great name for a railroad, by the way) and on to Burlington. I do know that I've been there several different times, the most recent of which was the “New England Swing” of May 2008 made by the whole family. One place I'd still like to visit is Derby Line, where the Haskell Library and Opera House straddles the border with Rock Island, Quebec. During performances the players are in Canada while the audience is in the United States. And the library books are in Canada while the reading room is in the USA. Houses sit on the border there as well.



515 00 611, \$29.95

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus Billboard Car #11: "Marvelously Trained Elephants."

Reporting Marks: None (reference in UMTRR website will be "RBB&B Billboard Car #11").

Brown with multi-color depiction of trained elephants performing across car. Red and black "Ringling Bros" name at top center and white on black banner "Marvelously Trained Elephants in New Novel Acts" across bottom of side.

Please see the review of the N Scale release above.

HOn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):



New Release: 855 00 080, \$35.30

Reporting Marks: SP 317.

30 Foot Flat Car, Southern Pacific.

Freight car red (brown) with white lettering including reporting marks on right. Simulated crate load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1910's to as late as 1960, but see text.

You could have a really long Approximate Time Period for this ordinary flat car, or, well, you might not. The Southern Pacific purchased the Carson and Colorado Railroad in 1900, seeing it as a route it could upgrade between Los Angeles and its Central Pacific. When that didn't happen, the SP reincorporated it as the Nevada and California in 1905, then sold it to its Central Pacific subsidiary in 1912, from which point all equipment was lettered SP. The operation lasted until 1960 as a narrow gauge line.

However, despite a whopping seventeen page registration in the October 1919 ORER, including a very cool system map, there is no mention at all of the Espee's narrow gauge equipment. We do better in the April 1928 ORER in terms of a listing, but there's no SP 328 among 49 total flat cars. Ditto for the January 1943 ORER where they're down to just ten flat cars. In the July 1950 Register the road number 317 is painted on a hopper! And the January 1955 ORER has no narrow gauge listing at all for the SP. But according to the "Slim Rails" website, the February 1960 issue of the magazine Railroad Model Craftsman has an article called "20 Ton Stake Flatcar" which includes a drawing of... SP 317. Could that have been the basis for the MTL model? If that issue of RMC were in the Research Accumulation I would be able to tell you...

At any rate, depending on what's in those crates, you might be bumping up against the 20 ton constraint. Narrow gauge or not, there will need to be some way of anchoring that load to the flat car; fortunately the stake pockets will be useful for that exercise.

HOn3 SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: No releases since last issue.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: New this month in Micro-Track is a 83 foot through plate girder bridge, with either black or gray sides for \$9.95 each (Catalog 990 40 950 or 951). The Z Scale building kit is a cannery which could go nicely with the pier kit—in fact MTL suggests this. Catalog 799 90 931 has an MSRP of \$39.95 and also includes a crane. New in N Scale is a “Military Hospital Kit” which could have other uses (499 90 912, \$69.95). A quick aside: It was mentioned in an online discussion forum that these kits were heavy cardstock, not wood, which prompted others to reply that it was definitely “not your father’s cardstock” and at least one unaffiliated laser-kit maker to provide some insight into the true costs of bringing one of these kits to market. Meanwhile, there are N Scale scrap wood loads for forty foot gondolas (499 43 961, two for \$8.95) and Z Scale zinc loads (799 43 928, two for \$8.95).

At the National N Scale Convention MTL made two announcements. First, Eric Smith confirmed what’s been discussed online for quite a while: a E-8 passenger locomotive will be out in 2011 in Z Scale. (Yes, it’s the N Scale Convention, but...) Second, coming in the Winter will be a new body style: the PS-2 3 bay covered hopper, high side version. This model will come with body mounted couplers “allowing for close coupling and proper car height above the rails” according to the printed announcement at the convention, as well as separate bay hatches and etched metal roofwalk. No prices or roadnames yet. Thousands of these cars were built so there should be plenty of choices for paint schemes.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: Easily topping the bye-bye board is last month’s N Scale Pullman “otherwise unlettered” 10-1-2 sleeper (140 00 010), although unofficially I’ve heard that the Empire Builder version is gone also (140 00 020). In catalog number order, here are the other sold out N Scale releases: the PRR boxcar with grain door (024 00 180, April); the D&H flat car reprint (045 00 210, May); Ringling Brothers Billboard Cars #2 and #3 (047 00 402 and 403, September and October 2009); the Reading hopper with red coal load (056 00 180, March); the second black Texaco tank car (065 00 682, May, first number already outta here); the second Northern Pacific “all-green” boxcar (073 00 112, February, first number also gone); the Frisco orange boxcar (074 00 090, March); the Rutherford Hayes Presidential Car (074 00 113, September 2009); and the weathered Norfolk Southern hopper (108 44 190, mid-month February). In Z Scale, the second Rio Grande flat car has left the building (525 00 142, September 2008, first number sold out). And finally the Hamburg Sud containers in Z are closed out (761 00 030, February 2009).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: The key piece of Incremental Information I wanted from the June releases relates to the 10-1-2 sleepers: Just what is a “pedimented end”? Joe Levitsky shared an image which helped me, and Charlie Vlk, writing on the YahooGroup “N Scale Varnish” that it means “there is a step in the end where it joins the clerestory roof.” This is versus, say the Pullman plan 2410 which has a rounded end/roof junction. Still with

the Pullmans, I got a question on whether the lettering color is “Delux” Gold or “Dulux” Gold. I’m not sure, actually, as I’ve seen both spellings. But there is a paint company called Dulux so I’m giving that the nod going forward.

OOPS PATROL: One oops on last month’s bye-bye board rundown: it’s both numbers of the of the Burlington (CB&Q) gondola with load (522 00 16x, May 2008) that are sold out; I had reported incorrectly last month that one was still available. I also called the Z Scale Rio Grande boxcars (506 00 14x) 40 foot boxcars when they are 50 foot boxcars. Still having trouble with that copy and paste thing, I see...

FINALLY, SANDA “KAN’T”: There has been chatter and speculation of varying volume and intensity on various ‘net venues around the decision by Sanda Kan, a Chinese manufacturer that has been making a lot of model railroad equipment, to focus exclusively on its larger customers. The company was recently purchased by Kader which is also the parent of Bachmann. Sanda Kan has dropped a significant list of American and European customers, including Micro-Trains. The large majority of MTL’s product is made in the factory in Talent, so the only products affected include Micro-Track and the N and Z Scale locomotives. (Only the chassis of these locos, though, as the shells are made in Oregon.) MTL advised its dealers that it’s already working to find alternate sources for these items but notes that there might be some delays and back orders resulting from this development.

I can’t say I’m surprised that Kader is ensuring that it has plenty of manufacturing capability for its own brands to the exclusion of the competition—that’s “nothing personal, just business.” If I were one of the marketers still being allowed to contract with Sanda Kan for now, I’d be actively looking for alternatives, post haste. Fortunately for MTL and the rest of the world, there are alternatives available and one has already stepped up to offer its services. As far as Micro-Trains is concerned, this is a hiccup, not a disaster, and their decision to keep the vast majority of their design and manufacturing under their own control and their own roof is looking better every day.

And that’s all for now. UMTRR HQ is “closed” until mid-month but we’ll be back from holiday in time for the expected Weathered Releases announcement. Until then, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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