

*IrwinsJournal.com Presents:*  
**The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report**

**Issue #173 – May, 2011**

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Hello again everyone! Well, it's a new month, a birthday for our daughter Thalia Elizabeth, and the coming of the internationally known Lilac Festival to our city. And there's a bit of a transition here at UMTRR as well. Between last month's news and views and this issue, I've finally moved away from my faithful (as in, eight year old!) UMTRR HQ desktop computer to a "new toy." It's still a desktop, but running Windows 7 and not XP, and also not capable of running a certain 16-bit oriented database program on which I have my N Scale Inventory! (That would be dBase III, and yes, I am severely dating myself.) So the old computer isn't going anywhere for a while, and this old dog—er, columnist-- has to learn new tricks, or at least the ins and outs of Office 2010. Yikes, where did they put that undo button anyway, where did my "Fantasy" font go, and why doesn't the Insert key work the way I expect it to any more? Well, at least control/insert and shift/insert still function.

Anyway, we trust that behind the red and yellow sign, they're more concerned about new releases, and if you like the new covered hopper, you get a double dose this time. We continue the parade of boxcars on a body style we just don't see much otherwise, and have a real surprise with respect to company service tank cars. Z Scalars from North of the Border may be quite happy with this month's F-7 locomotives. And we learn what the coming Holiday Train Set will look like... hey, the snow just stopped flying round these parts, so we are we ready to talk Wintertime again already? I guess we'll find out together, so let's be off.

**N SCALE NEW RELEASES:**



**031 00 380, \$19.60**

**Reporting Marks: MILW 16606.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Milwaukee Road.**

Brown with yellow door. White lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and "tilted rectangle" herald on right. Legend "LRD" in brown on door. Approximate Time Period: 1966 (rebuild date given by MTL) to early 1980s.

Rats, we're going to have to do this the hard way, I suppose. As you may have surmised, the first place I check for photo references is the applicable subset of books in UMTRR Research Library. If I come up short, then it's off to the Internet. Sometimes that takes a while...

OK, maybe it's not the hard way this time. George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" site is generally the first place I try (URL <http://www.rr-fallenflags.org>) and we get a bingo on MILW 16606 in the form of an image from the Jim Sands Collection, taken in 1966 in Milwaukee. It looks

to be fresh out of the paint shop. That makes sense considering the MTL car copy, which states that it was rebuilt and equipped with Load Restraining Devices (the “LRD” reference on the door) in April 1966. We have an unusual delta between prototype and model here: the MTL car is on Barber Roller Bearing trucks, while the real 16606 was, at least at the time of its portrait, equipped with friction bearing trucks! A more typical difference: the prototype car has riveted sides while the 031 body style has welded sides. The low angle of the photo precludes much in the way of further comment.

While MTL says the car was built in 1957, we’ll focus on the years following the rebuild. The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for January 1967 shows a relatively short series of thirty cars numbered 16606 to 16635. They were described as “Box, Movable Bulkheads” with AAR Classification XML. The inside length was 49 feet 9 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 9 feet (a slight “door thing” there versus MTL’s eight foot door), and capacity 4560 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds.

It seems that it might have taken the folks over at the ORER some time to catch up to the Milwaukee’s rebuilding of these cars. In the April 1970 Equipment Register we have a bunch of end notes for this group of cars, calling out “movable bulkheads, load dividers, or compartmentizers,” and “rub rails or side fillers” and finally “retractable side fillers.” The group remains at thirty cars with the 16606 one of four in a subset with a different inside width of 9 feet 4 inches.

By the time we get to the July 1974 ORER, we should be thinking about roofwalk removal, but we’ll check anyway: all thirty cars present and accounted for with a 17 to 13 split on the inside width. The second of those subsets which includes the 16606 carries an explanation: “Adjustable Side Fillers Removed.” I don’t think you’ll need to model that. Also, this group is end-noted “Specially equipped interiors and not suitable for general service.”

The Milwaukee Road became a Fallen Flag in 1986 with what was left of it being merged into Canadian Pacific’s Soo Line. The 16606 was not among the cars that were transferred to the new owner; it looks like they were off the roster no later than 1984. So “early 1980s” it is for the end of the ATP, but mind that roofwalk.



**037 00 080, \$25.90**

**Reporting Marks: CN 796060.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Door, No Roofwalk, Canadian National.**

Brown (including couplers) with mostly white lettering including roadname (English on both sides) and reporting marks on left and large “wet noodle” herald on right. Simulated interior load included. Approximate Time Period: 1969 (renumber date) or more correctly early 1980s (1981 service date given by MTL) to late 1990s.

Wow, another release in this relatively unused body style. The 37/037 series debuted back in 1979 (!) and between then and the turn of the century there were exactly three roadnames issued, one of which was the 1993 Holiday Car. The entire decade of the 2000s saw only three more new releases and one reprint. We've now matched that total in the first five months of this Year 2011.

It's a relatively short series of cars from which MTL pulled this example, according to my usual go-to place for CN rosters, Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site (at the URL <http://www.nakina.net> ). These cars were built by Canadian Car and Foundry in 1957 as Micro-Trains notes in its car copy. These cars were first part of the series 588500 to 588999 or 590500 to 590999, then went to the group 798050 to 798079 in 1969 before being renumbered to the group 796050 to 796079 during 1969. Assuming roofwalk removal at that time, we could start the Approximate Time Period there, but we would have to ignore both the service date of December 1981 and the presence of consolidated stencils. Cranstone confirms MTL's note about the cars being in auto parts service, which might explain the numbering a distance away from most of the CN's boxcars—but doesn't quite explain MTL's inclusion of a "stacked box load" in the N Scale car. (Unless that load is of auto parts. Somehow I think that load would be neater and more regular.) The ATP ends right around the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; Micro-Trains says the cars were in service until 1999 and Cranstone has the last ORER appearance as being April 2000.

We'll pick up an ORER from around the service date, April 1981. The cars have AAR Designation XP and are described as "Box, Steel, 10 inch travel hydraulic draft gear (Auto Parts)" with inside length of 50 feet 6 inches, inside width of 9 feet 2 inches, inside height of 10 feet 6 inches, outside length of 56 feet 9 inches (hmm, might want those medium extended draft gear trucks), extreme height of 15 feet 1 inch, door opening a somewhat unusual 15 feet 1 inch also, which means a "door thing" versus the model, and capacity of 4860 cubic feet or 115,000 pounds. All thirty cars in the series were present at that time.

I expected that I would strike out on a photo reference to a group of just thirty cars, but I was a bit surprised that I also came up empty on the two far larger groups of cars from which these thirty cars were taken, that is, CN 588500 to 588999 and 590500 to 590999. Nope: zip, zilch, nada. The closest I could get was CN 598035 which was an XP boxcar in the maple leaf paint that was built by Canadian Car and Foundry in 1957. The photo is in the Morning Sun Color Guide to the CN, Volume Two. It shows the 8+7 double door arrangement though otherwise the general look and feel of an MTL fifty foot boxcar, but given the road number outside the series used, that's not really enough to make any comparisons to the model. Oh well, can't win 'em all.



**065 00 711 and 065 00 712, \$28.35 each**  
**Reporting Marks: SL-SF 191096 and 191100.**  
**39 Foot Single Dome Tank Cars, Frisco (St. Louis-San Francisco) (Company Service).**

Black with yellow dome. White lettering including Frisco herald and reporting marks on left. Black lettering on dome. Approximate

Time Period: early 1970s (1973 service date given by MTL) to early 1990s at least.

Way back when on a business trip to Tulsa, long time UMTRR Gang Member Richard Fisher gave me a tour of the area, including a short stretch of the really, really original Route 66. Yes, I am, er, different, enough that I would be interested and excited by a narrow slab of concrete, but hey, everyone has their quirks. More to the point of this column, though, Richard is a key resource for me on all things Frisco, and he helps out this time on this unusual paired release of company service cars.

“The blurb that MTL has on the cars is correct,” Richard reports, referring to the car copy, “but they remained in service at least until 1991. There were two here in Tulsa that were in service for diesel fuel. They were parked at the servicing facility and every so often they would get pulled out to service units on the road that had run out of fuel in transit. Then it was back to the Sun refinery for a refill. There were also some that would come in to be loaded and sent back out on the system. Usually two or three at a time.” Aha! So it makes perfect sense for Micro-Trains to issue two numbers on this release.

Richard added: “I sent pictures to MTL years and years ago. I may still have them somewhere.” As a matter of fact, Micro-Trains has had information submitted on these cars by several folks for that long, and the folks in Talent tell me that these cars were among the most requested that they’ve ever had. So there they were, and here you go. Speaking of go, I would have thought that these cars would have gone into the Burlington Northern roster when the BN took over the Frisco in 1980, however, they are not shown in the BN entry in the April 1981 ORER.

The SL-SF listing in an arbitrarily selected July 1974 ORER shows a series of 10,000 gallon 39 foot tank cars, 114 of them, actually, numbered SLSF 191100 to 191129, designated as “Special Service.” Micro-Trains says that the cars were built by American Car & Foundry in 1949. I have the group shown in that number series as early as the January 1955 Equipment Register, where all 130 possible cars were in service, at that time as just “Tank, Steel.” I suspect that we can’t call the ATP that far back since the cars might not have had that yellow dome and the callout for Diesel Fuel Loading Only.

We also know from a photo of SLSF 191065 from the same group posted on the Fallen Flags site that there was at least one other type of special service: Waste Oil Only. We don’t know what the tanker was doing in Cumberland, Maryland in 1996, but that’s another story. The match to the MTL 065 body style is a better one than usual, down to the ladder that ends in a

small platform below the dome just like the Micro-Trains model, although the dome is not exactly the same diameter or height as the one on the prototype car. The site [RRPictureArchives.net](http://RRPictureArchives.net) includes a shot of SLSF 191050 also from the same group, found in Havre, Montana in 1983 – which is not only on the BN system, but after the April 1981 ORER in which I didn't find these cars! It looks as if the dome on the car has been repainted from yellow to fresh black, not matching the rest of the fairly weathered car.

I imagine that it must have been a lot of fun for MTL to paint the domes on these cars yellow; no “dip job” on this release! I suspect that this is a contributor to the relatively high sticker price on each car in this virtual two-pack. Or maybe it's the increased price of the real oil that is used in the plastic that is the material utilized to make these model tank cars. But if this particular company service tank car has been sought after for years, it might just be a pick to click for this month anyway. You've been cautioned...



**096 00 030, \$26.95**

**Reporting Marks: RI 131494.**

**PS-2 3 Bay High Side Covered Hopper,  
Rock Island (Chicago, Rock Island and  
Pacific).**

Gray with black lettering including large roadname across car and reporting marks on left. Approximate Time Period: 1970 (build date given by MTL) to 1980 and beyond.

No, I wasn't deliberately providing a hint to this new release in last month's coverage of the IMC covered hopper. You might recall that I noted that IMCX 11388, one of the other cars in the prototype series MTL modeled, was clearly an ex-RI car as the “Rock Island” roadname showed right through the later paint. How was I to know that the very next month, an actual Rock Island covered hopper model would be released? Well, in short, I didn't...

Anyway, Micro-Trains tells us that this car was among the series 131000 to 131749 built by Pullman-Standard in August 1970. And so much for checking the April 1970 ORER. The next one I have, from July 1974, will have to do. The full description of these cars in that issue was “Covered Hopper, Steel, Triple Hopper, Self Cleaning, Continuous Center Trough Hatch for Loading, Three Discharge Gates on Center of Car.” The inside length was 49 feet 6 inches, inside width 10 feet 1 inch, inside height not given, outside length 53 feet 1 inch, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 4427 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. There were 1608 cars in the main series – can you say, “Runner Pack”? – and 95 more in the subgroups 130800 to 130834 and 130891 to 130950 that were lined. I don't think it's a stretch to say that these cars lasted to the very end of the Rock Island in 1980, at which point the entire listing was simply deleted from the ORER with no clue as to where the thousands of cars still owned by the company ended up. I can get us definitively to April 1976, when 1565 unlined and 94 lined cars remained on the roster. A few 4427 cubic foot covered hoppers numbered in the 508000s made it into “The Rock” paint so that's a possible follow on release.



Page 67 of the Morning Sun Color Guide to the Rock Island shows sister car RI 131600, fresh from Pullman-Standard on September 7, 1970 in Omaha. In the caption it's noted that the 36 inch high speed lettering used up eleven of the twelve panels, counting the space between "Rock" and "Island" and so the placement of the roadname is not symmetrical. This is faithfully reproduced on the MTL car. It looks like there's another potential release using the roadname in 30 inch block lettering, based on another photo on the same page in the MSCG.



096 00 040, \$28.60

**Reporting Marks: GNBC 1087.**

**PS-2 3 Bay High Side Covered Hopper,  
Farmrail (Grainbelt Corporation).**

Green with mostly white lettering reporting marks on left and large "Farmrail" roadname in center. Approximate Time Period: 1999 to present.

We have a bit of a paired release with the above Rock Island covered hopper, though you cannot plausibly run the two cars together in the same train. The Weatherford to Erick line, one of several operated by this company in Southwestern Oklahoma is a portion of the former Rock Island main line between Memphis and Tucumcari. At Clinton, that line crosses a former Santa Fe line down to Elmer and up to Westhorn, and the line between Enid and Frederick that was once part of the Frisco. Or at least that's as close as I can get by checking a 1966 edition of the Official Guide of the Railways, specifically the station list in the back of that book, against the system map of Farmrail that's on the company website (<http://www.farmrail.com>, not surprisingly). Or I could have checked the webpage about the company that's on Trainweb (<http://www.trainweb.org/southwestshorts/fmrc.html>). The operations are divided between two corporate entities: Farmrail has the ex-Rock Island and Santa Fe lines, and Grainbelt Corporation has the ex-Frisco trackage. Wikipedia says that Grainbelt started as a shortline in 1987 and that Farmrail has leased all of the trackage from the State of Oklahoma since 1993; however, Farmrail's own site says that the Grainbelt owns the ex-Frisco trackage. The Grainbelt reporting marks appear on the MTL model.

Grainbelt Corporation is in the ORER well before it's shown having any freight cars in its roster. We get only 15 "open top hoppers" in the July 1992 Equipment Register—not what we're looking for. And that's all there is until the July 1998 ORER, where there is a roster of 119 cars made up mostly of onesie-twosie listings of refrigerator cars and covered hoppers, and those fifteen open top hoppers. Not yet listed is the GNBC 1087! However, there are some 4427 cubic foot covered hoppers elsewhere in road numbers in the 1000s.

Thanks to my excessive number of ORERs dated from 1998 to 2007, I can narrow down the appearance of the car MTL modeled as being sometime between April 1999 and January 2000. I suppose that gets us the ATP of "late 1990s"—barely. The car is a 4427 covered hopper, with outside length 53 feet 1 inch and capacity of 190,000 pounds. The total roster had inched up to 141 cars as of the January 2000 ORER. I skipped to the January 2007

Register; the 1087 is still part of a roster that numbered 244 cars at that time. And as I've tiresomely mentioned before, that's as close to "to present" as I can get before acquiring a later ORER. I'm still looking...

Thanks to a bingo on the car on RRPictureArchives.net, we can push things back to at least February, 2009. A broadside view of the car as found in Frederick, Oklahoma on its home rails shows the paint and lettering precisely as depicted by MTL, including the phrase "I Care/ Larry Rippetoe" below the "sunrise" herald. So, who is Larry Rippetoe? According to several citations online, he's a Farmrail employee; and other Farmrail employees are named with the "I care" phrase on other freight cars. That's a nice touch and certainly a sign of commitment to personal service.

I was reminded of one somewhat local connection to Farmrail during my research: It's a part owner of the Finger Lakes Railroad, which operates trackage here in Western New York in, well, the Finger Lakes Region. The line is perhaps best known for its diesels which sport the "lightning stripe" paint scheme of the New York Central railroad or the Cornell Red of the Lehigh Valley. That's a long way from Oklahoma, but the tribute to the railroads of the past is something that the two companies have in common.



**450 00 030, \$21.80**

**Reporting Marks: NWZ 208712.**

**40 Foot Trailer, Norfolk & Western.**

Aluminum trailer. Black reporting marks on white panel at rear and on rear right door. White roadname in block lettering in center.

Black and white round "Hamburger" herald at front of side and on rear left door. Approximate Time Period: 1969 to mid-1970s at least, but see text.

The Morning Sun Color Guide to the N&W, Page 94, shows the prototype NWZ 208712. It was one of the series 208700 to 298824 built in 1969 by Great Dane. These vans were 40 feet long and had 15 inch drop floors, meaning that the MTL model isn't really a match for the real thing. It's noted in the MSCG caption that conventional vans without drop floors were painted the same way.

Speaking of paint, I was not aware that the first Norfolk and Western vans were painted in passenger train colors! They were tuscan red with gold lettering and sported the previous "script" herald. There's an example on the previous page of the Morning Sun Color Guide. Vans in these colors were apparently all gone by 1973. Following the 1963 round herald depicted on this month's MTL model was the runtogether "NW" herald (and I somewhat hesitate to call it a herald) introduced in 1971.

I can't help with ORER lookups. By the time these vans arrived on the scene, or at least by the April 1970 Equipment Register, the rosters of trailers and containers had been moved to a

publication called The Official Intermodal Equipment Register. I'll take a shot at the ATP lasting at least a few years after the N&W "hamburger" gave way to the "NW."

## N SCALE REPRINTS:



102 00 050, \$25.85

Reporting Marks: WP 3766.

60' Excess Height Double Plug Door  
Box Car, Rivet Sides, Western Pacific.

Brown (Box car red) with mostly white lettering including large roadname on left and very large "WP" initials on right. Approximate Time Period: 1973 (build date) to possibly as late as The Present. Previous Release: Road Number 3767, February 1999.

"Box, Steel, Special Cushioning Devices, Load Dividers, Nailable Steel Floors, Rubrails, Not For General Service (Auto Parts)." Wow, that ORER description, from the April 1974 book, is almost as long as the car is. While we're there, let's check the rest of the vital statistics for this short series 3761 to 3767: inside length 59 feet 7 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 11 feet 2 inches, outside length 65 feet 3 inches, extreme height 16 feet 10 inches, door opening 16 feet, and capacity 6963 cubic feet or 169,000 pounds.

The Morning Sun Color Guide to the WP has sister car 3765 as caught in London, Ontario in 1994. It's got the same pool marking 322 which was for loading in Lima, Ohio. The group of cars was built by Greenville in August 1973 according to the MSCG. There were consolidated stencils on this car at that time so that's a possible add for a bit more fidelity.

The Approximate Time Period extended to "The Present" when this car was first released in 1999. They were still listed under the Union Pacific registration in the October 1996 ORER and MTL mentioned as part of their car copy for the first run that the sister car 3767 was spotted coupled to a similar Detroit, Toledo and Ironton car in 1998. I noted then that the WP car had the same pool number, 322, stenciled as the DT&I car did. In fact, up to that point, all of the MTL models had that same pool number.

As it turns out, we might be able to continue that "To Present" ATP, as four of the seven cars are still listed in the UP registration in the October 2007 ORER. And there is a shot of WP 3765 in Windsor, Ontario as of April 2008 posted to RailcarPhotos.com, not looking so great but still in its original paint job. I suspect that running between Ohio and Ontario meant it couldn't get near any Union Pacific paint brushes.





106 00 210, \$18.80

**Reporting Marks: GN 73813.**

**50 Foot 15 Panel Gondola, Fixed Ends, with Low Cover, Great Northern.**

Vermillion red body and cover with white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname across car. Small black, white and red herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1964 (based on renumbering) to mid 1970s. Previous Release: Road Number 73818, January 2001.

I must have been on a road trip when this car was first released in January 2001. And that trip must have included a visit to a well stocked hobby shop, because I was able to cite a reference book I don't own! Scott Thompson, writing in his Great Northern Freight Car Pictorial Volume 2, notes that the GN didn't really own any solid bottom gons until 1951. Changing commodities including steel accounted for the change. The series of cars from which this model was taken were fitted with three section covers according to Scott; yes, the MTL version of the cover is only one piece but I don't consider that to be a big deal. I'd wager that the three sections should have fit so well together that only under close examination would the seams be evident. Otherwise, that cargo wouldn't be all that well protected, would it?

A book I do have in the UMTRR Reference Library is the Morning Sun Color Guide to the GN, and Page 87 includes a photo of the previous release, GN 73818 in an undated photo. The cover sections look pretty beat up and almost completely a galvanized steel color, but there are still traces of red paint visible, so I think we are OK with MTL having their "low cover" in red to match the body.

The ORER for January 1964 shows a short series of 25 numbered from 73800 to 79824, described as "Gondola, Mill, All Steel, Removable Roof." An accompanying note adds that the last four of these cars also had removable bulkheads. The inside length is shown as 52 feet 6 inches and the outside length as 54 feet 6 inches, making the model a quibbly bit short using a previous 106000 release as the guide. Capacity is given as a whopping 180,000 pounds-- whoa! The GN's other gons in the neighborhood show only 100 to 140 thousand pounds. Perhaps the trucks were upgraded. Or perhaps someone at the ORER made a typo.

Continuing through the Registers, we find all 25 still in use in April 1970 under Burlington Northern, with 73818 including the removable bulkheads. In the April 1976 book the series was split up, with only 73800 to 73814 keeping their removable roof sections, and 73815 to 73824 listed as just "Gondola, Mill" with class GBSR. But wait, doesn't GBSR stand for a gondola with a roof? Hmm. I was able to end the ATP for the first run in right there in the mid-1970s since the 73818 was the back half of that split, but I have to keep looking this time given the reprint's road number. And then there's Micro-Trains giving a service date of 1980 in its car copy! Therefore, we keep going for at least one more lookup: there are four cars in the main series GN 73800 to 73814 in the BN registration as of the April 1981 Equipment

Register but seven cars in a subset without the roof. Those figures are two and eight in the April 1984. I think I can stop looking now! Sure, you could take off the roof and run it a little longer, but don't forget to add weathering and distressing to the car sides. Gondolas get banged around quite a bit.

Fun fact: The Micro-Trains release with catalog 105540 which was done as part of the 2000 Edition of the BN Four Pack, is numbered 72839, which means that it's from the prototype series from which these covered gondolas were taken. You might already know that the paint schemes are similar. On the covered gondola there are white reflective blocks along the bottom of the sides.

### **N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:**

The following items were announced as "off-cycle" releases for April via the Micro-Trains website on April 14 and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line" on April 15.



**099 44 110, \$29.25**

**Reporting Marks: SOO LINE 71389 (will be "SOO 71389" in website listings).**

**Three Bay Evans Covered Hopper, Soo Line "Colormark."**

Aluminum with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Blue roadname across top of side. Blue and yellow "wheat stalk" device on right. "Colormark" legend at top left. Light to moderate weathering and multicolor graffiti at bottom left of center on one side of car. Approximate Time Period: 1967 (build date given by MTL) to early decade of the 2000s. Previous Release (unweathered): Road Number 70463, January 2011.

This car was quite the hit when released in unweathered form in January, officially sent to the Discontinued List in March (though we recall that there effectively was no bye-bye board in February so it could have been that soon). So a second number makes sense here, and I believe that it was planned to be a weathered release from the start (as with many N Scale weathered cars these days). It's far too close to the January UMTRR to provide a complete retread of that issue's commentary, but I will mention that this car comes from the same prototype series 70451 to 71449, odd numbers only.



**108 44 040, \$24.55**

**Reporting Marks: PRR 180162.**

**100 Ton Three Bay Open Hopper, Pennsylvania Railroad.**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and small plain keystone herald on right. Yellow dot at top left of side. Simulated coal load included. Light to moderate weathering mostly along side ribs. Approximate Time Period: 1964 (build date) through late

1970s. Previous Releases (unweathered): as catalog 108042, a three pack of Road Numbers 180176, 180187 and 180193, November 2000; as catalog 108 00 040, Road Number 108154, November 2010.

A funny thing happened on the way to this commentary. You might recall that when the most recent release of this car was issued in November 2010, it gave me the excuse to verify the reason for the yellow dot, which meant “suitable for unit train service,” but that this did not mean these cars were always actually in unit train service. A photo taken right here in Rochester in 1964 of a single car on a siding was evidence of this. And for me, it’s happened again. An excellent presentation I attended recently on the subject of the Baltimore & Ohio’s coal dock operations in the Rochester area (technically, it was the former Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh dock and car ferry in the Charlotte area of the city) was accompanied by an impressive number of slides. In one of those slides appears another single car in this series. It looked to be in about the same condition as the MTL weathered release, in fact. The B&O shut down its coal dock operations here after the 1970 season ended, so the weathering job on this car, which was built in 1964, would be good at least for the early 1970s. Strictly speaking, of course.

Like the four unweathered releases before it, the 180162 belonged to the PRR’s H43 class of open hoppers, of which there were once two thousand in the series 180000 to 181999. By 1981 all but nine of these cars were either repainted for Conrail (often skipping any Penn Central markings!) or off the roster entirely.

### **N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:**

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #51, the “Ringling Brothers Multi-Pack” of two animal/supply cars and one stock car is now available. UMTRR coverage was provided in the November 2010 issue. These are Con-Cor passenger cars with MTL paint, trucks and couplers.



*The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is November 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close May 31.*



***Scheduled November 2011 Release:***  
**Runner Pack #57: 993 00 057, \$64.95**  
**Reporting Marks: None.**

Quantity four of forty foot modern log cars with uprights, including loads. No paint, no lettering. Approximate Time Period: Most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Previous Releases: Technically, none, but there have been ten previous releases of this body style (114 xx xxx) with differing loads starting in May 2005 with three cars in the Chehalis Western Train Set (993 01 010) and continuing with single cars in July and September 2005, May 2007, July and August 2008, January 2009, and February 2011.

Well, this is an easy Runner Pack to pre-review! You can either use log cars or you can't, and depending on that, you're either interested in this quartet or you're not. If you've been keeping up with the previous runs including the Chehalis Western train set (which is where this particular body style of log car debuted) you've got quite a train to pull into the logging camp, or to the lumber mill. Based on the Micro-Trains image, this Runner Pack will have differing loads for each of the four cars, so it will be interesting to see how the individual catalog numbers for these play out. It's our habit to post these to the UMTRR Website upon actual release of course, so stay tuned.

### **N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:**

In addition to the below, Micro-Trains has announced that its Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey FP-7 diesel has been delayed until June 2011.



**058 00 100, \$34.95**

**Railway Post Office, Ringling Brothers Big Top Extravaganza Car #5, "M'lle Adgie and Miss Leitzel" Reporting Marks RBBX 20151.**

Red with black roof, underframe, trucks and diaphragms. Multicolor representations of "M'lle Adgie" on left and "Dainty Miss Leitzel" on right. Yellow on blue panel "Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey" across top center; yellow with black outline lettering "The Greatest Show on Earth" in center; red and yellow lettering in blue panel "Featuring M'lle. Adgie's Dancing Lions / Dainty Miss Leitzel Marvelous Gymnast" across bottom center.

Anyone who's questioned the MSRP of \$34.95 for each of the cars in the Big Top Extravaganza – and that would include me – might have less cause to quibble with the sticker price on this release, given the intricacy of the artwork on it. As for another release of an RPO that is not for a prototype railroad... well, at least there were the Union Pacific and Pennsylvania this year, right?

Both of the young ladies pictured on the RPO were actual performers in the Ringling Brothers shows. I came across a small image of a 1915 program in which M'lle Adgie and her dancing lions were mentioned. Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey itself sold reproduction posters in the 1970s. Among them – besides many which were the inspiration for the Billboard car set that MTL completed last year! – were one featuring Dainty Miss Leitzel, "World's Most Marvelous Lady Gymnast" and the aforementioned Mademoiselle Adgie and her lions.



I mentioned some time ago that one attraction to the circus for male attendees was the manner in which the female performers were dressed – quite briefly even by more modern standards and positively scandalous back in the 1910's and 1920's! In the poster, "Dainty" Miss Leitzel is shown in a halter top and skirt that is way above the knee, not something that was likely to be gotten away with outside the big top. The book "Blue Vaudeville" (on Google Books at this writing) quotes an May 1898 review of Adgie, "who combines the talents of the lion tamer and disrober." The critic wondered "where this boudoir business is going to stop." While Adgie's appearance apparently predated her joining the circus, and presumably the addition of "M'lle" to her name, one wonders whether the "disrobing" continued to accompany the lion taming. With no YouTube (or less savory websites) available in 1915, however, we will have to leave that question to the circus historians and out of scope of this review.



074 00 132, \$23.95

**40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #32: Bill Clinton (44th 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.

Is the Presidency of William Jefferson Clinton too close to the present to provide the usual commentary here in these bytes? If I say yes – which I do-- I wouldn't be alone. The Miller Center at the University of Virginia states, "The Clinton presidency is still with the nation in ways that make it difficult to draw sound judgments about its lasting historical legacy." They note that he was the first Democrat since Franklin Delano Roosevelt to be elected to a second term, and that he guided the Federal budget from record deficit (at the time) to unprecedented surplus; but also that his foreign affairs track record was probably mixed and that he was only the second President to be impeached. "What might have been" had Clinton not been tied up in scandal "may be Clinton's greatest obstacle to gaining historical stature," the Miller Center concludes.

The man who became the 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States was born on August 19, 1946 and named William Jefferson Blythe. His father was killed in an auto accident before he was born, and he later took the surname of his stepfather, Roger Clinton. Initially the family lived in Hope, Arkansas before relocating to the resort town of Hot Springs. From early childhood on, Clinton was passionately interested in politics. I didn't realize that he has something in common with me: he attended Boys' Nation, a program sponsored by the American Legion that honored young leaders from the Boys' States programs held in forty-nine states. He had to have been in Boys' State first in order to qualify for Boys' Nation. And I was in Boys' State too, although in New Jersey not Arkansas, and some three decades later. Let's just say his



experience in this civics training event was a lot more impressive than mine! There is a now-legendary photo of the young Boys' Nation delegate Bill Clinton shaking the hand of then-President John F. Kennedy in 1963. (If I had known that going to Boys' Nation meant personal tours of Washington sites and an audience with the President of the United States, I might have tried harder at New Jersey Boys' State... but I digress, as usual.) Clinton's mother Virginia told him that someday he too would be President. He came close to being elected President of the Student Government at Georgetown University in Washington after being made the leader of his Freshman and Sophomore classes. But after losing that election, he clerked for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee – the real Senate this time, not the one that is part of Boys' Nation, that is! Just before graduation from Georgetown, Clinton won a Rhodes' scholarship but was also subject to being drafted. Clinton was conflicted but ended up first going to England on his scholarship and then luckily getting a very high number in the draft lottery. His conduct did lead to some controversy, but it wouldn't be the last time that happened.

In 1970, Bill Clinton entered Yale Law School, where he earned his degree and met Hillary Rodham. He married her in 1975. An unsuccessful campaign for a seat in the House of Representatives was followed by election to Arkansas Attorney General, and then the Governor's office, at the age of 32. His first term did not go well, and so he became the youngest person in American History to not be re-elected Governor. That was hardly the end of it; Clinton regrouped and retook the position in 1982, the first of four consecutive terms. He parlayed that into a push for national office, specifically the nation's highest. The 1992 election pitted him against sitting President George H.W. Bush and self-financed candidate Ross Perot. Perot took popular votes—19 percent of the total cast—from both parties, but hurt Bush more. Clinton easily won the election in terms of Electoral Votes, though with a minority of the popular vote.

As noted at the outset, I'll not describe the Clinton Presidency, but leave you to the scholarly discussions found on the Miller Center website for more information. Like many former Presidents, Clinton has had an active life since leaving the White House, and his wife Hillary, more so, as Senator from New York, a Presidential candidate in her own right and then as current Secretary of State. In recent years Clinton has joined his former political adversaries, the George Bushes, in charitable work aiding victims of Hurricane Katrina, the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, and the Haitian earthquake of 2010.

Let's get to the trivia question, and my brother might be interested in one of the clues: this President's first name was Stephen. Obviously this Chief Executive didn't use it regularly. His wife was the youngest First Lady in history? Too hard to figure out. The third item is the one to go for: he presided over the dedication ceremony for the Statue of Liberty. To get this right, you have to know that even though "Liberty Enlightening the World" (the official name for the statue) was a gift from France in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American Independence, it took years for a proper place to be built for Lady Liberty, and so she wasn't dedicated until 1886. And who was President then... for the second non-consecutive time? Yes, that would be Grover Cleveland.

Wait, isn't that "double dipping?" Well, when the Presidential Series first started, I asked MTL whether Cleveland would get two cars to go with his two terms as the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> President, and the answer was yes. And hopefully, here comes your winning contest entry. Good luck!

*The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is October 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close May 31. Note that the images provided by Micro-Trains (not reproduced here) are for representation only.*

### **993 21 130, \$249.95 - Sugarland Peppermint Company Train Set.**

Scheduled to consist of the following items:

- 4-4-0 American Steam Locomotive and Tender. Black with gray smokebox. Green panel on tender with legend "Sugarland Peppermint Co." in white and red. Road number 100 on cab in red and white on green panel. Model Power locomotive with Micro-Trains paint and couplers.
- 40 Foot Boxcar, Single Door (020 series). Green with red door. Tied pair of candy canes in red and white with green ribbon on left and right. Includes "peppermint products" interior load.
- 40 Foot Modern Log Car with Uprights (114 series). Black with no lettering and "cut peppermint beams" load.
- 50 Foot Fishbelly Side Gondola with Drop Ends (046 series). Green with red drop ends. Candy canes and peppermints in red and white across car.
- 36 Foot Wood Sheathed Caboose with Straight Cupola (051 series). Green with red cupola. Red and white "Merry Christmas" on left (or right) of cupola. Multi-color "Micro-Mouse" character below cupola.

Peppermint is a hybrid of the watermint and spearmint plants and is cultivated around the world. It's usually found in moist, shaded locations. It can spread quickly even though it does not produce its own seeds; in fact it's considered to be an invasive species here in the Great Lakes region of the United States. (Well, at least it isn't kudzu.) The plant is known to have medicinal and therapeutic properties and is also used for teas, honey and chewing gum. And of course we won't forget Peppermint Patty, the famous Peanuts comic strip character created by Charles Schulz. Schulz said his inspiration for the name came from a dish of peppermint candies, not from the York "Peppermint Pattie" which was not introduced nationally until 1975, or after the creation of the character.

Micro-Trains' latest Special Edition train set celebrates the tradition of peppermint candy for the holidays. And they also slip in their own tradition for the season: Micro-Mouse, who appears on the caboose. Does this mean that there won't be a standalone Holiday Car release, which usually features the MTL mascot character? We don't know yet.

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

## Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



500 00 700, \$22.20.

**Reporting Marks: D&RGW 68222.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Denver and Rio Grande Western.**

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and speed lettering "Rio Grande"

roadname on right. Approximate Time Period: 1939 (build date) or 1958 (based on service date given by MTL) to possibly as late as the mid-1980s.

The boxcar roster on the website of the Rio Grande Modeling and Historical Society (at the URL <http://www.drgw.org> ) confirms Micro-Trains' car copy that the series 68000 to 68399 was built in 1939 by Pressed Steel Car Company. These cars had 12 panel riveted sides, 4/5 Dreadnaught ends, a Duryea underframe, and a six foot Youngstown door. So we don't have a match to the MTL body style on those details, other than the door.

The Morning Sun Color Guide to the Rio Grande offers some additional deltas to the model: a Murphy roof and straight side sills. There are photos of sister cars 68337 and 68375, taken in 1985 and 1991 respectively. Both cars are in the same paint scheme as the MTL model, which I believe was the as delivered decoration. These were the first steel boxcars for the Rio Grande, in fact the first 40 foot general service boxcars purchased by the line after 1916 (!) and were also the first to get the "speed lettering." Incredibly, the 68337 also had a wood roofwalk when photographed, long after that method of construction had been outlawed.

What the two cars pictured in the Color Guide also have is "AX" before the road number, which was the Rio Grande's way of denoting company service. (Which might have allowed them to get away with the wooden running board.) MTL didn't use the "AX" which enables a more general use for the boxcar. But they also omitted digits from the load limit and light weight stencils, in the same positions as on the cars in the MSCG. I don't think that these cars could hold only 1200 pounds, and they certainly didn't weigh only 400 pounds! On the other hand, I am simply amazed that the folks in Talent were able to get the words "Work Safely" in between rungs of the side ladders. That's accurate to the prototype cars, and are the size of dimensional data. So that's how tall when reduced to Z Scale? Where's my micrometer...

The ORER for January 1943 shows the series with 399 of the possible 400 cars numbered 68000 to 68399, listed as "Box, Steel" with these key dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 4 inches, outside length 42 feet 11 inches, extreme height 14 feet 11 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3840 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. (I've rounded a few of these to the nearest inch.) Jumping to the January 1964 ORER which is after the rebuilding date of 1958 given by MTL, we find an amalgamation of groups of cars into a larger series, 67500 to 69899, with 1973 cars. The dimensions are the same as in 1943 except for extreme height, listed an inch more at 15 feet

even. By April 1970 that collection was down to 241 cars and 153 in April 1981. January 1985 is the last Equipment Register in which I see any cars in this group, other than the company service boxcars of course. I think roofwalk removal would have occurred by then so mid-1980s is probably somewhat of a stretch.



**500 00 710, \$27.20.**

**Reporting Marks: TP&W 7069.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Toledo, Peoria and Western.**

Green and yellow sides, green ends and roof. Yellow and green lettering including large "T.P. & W." on left, reporting marks, small roadname and "The Progressive Way" slogan on right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960s (1966 service date given by MTL) to early 1970s.

Once in a while a car is released by Micro-Trains and you just have to say, "wow." That's what I said when the N Scale version of this car was released in May 2005. Now it's in Z Scale, and it's still a "wow." From toward the end of what I call the Era of Color, this green and yellow car is striking and once again demonstrates that the prowess of the MTL painting department.

This car doesn't exist in the January 1964 ORER, so it's probably OK to surmise that when it was serviced in 1966, it was re-numbered. Another clue to this is the insignia of the United States Railway Equipment Corporation, down at the lower left of the side. A principal part of the USRE's business was purchasing cars, rebuilding them and leasing them back.

So we go to the next volume in the UMTRR Research Repository, January 1967. The series 7000 to 7099 is shown with the "denotes increase" diamond tag. The group is described as simply "Box, All Steel" and AAR Classification XM with inside length of 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, height from rail 14 feet 5 inches (for some reason, the extreme height isn't given), door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3898 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. There were 100 cars in the group as of that listing, and 97 in the April 1974 book, but the whole group is gone by the April 1976 ORER. Pity. Perhaps this was a return of the cars to USRE.

RRPictureArchives.net has photos of cars in different series that are of the same general idea though not from the same roster group. A fifty foot car, TP&W 1298, is shown as it appeared in a Jim Sands photo circa 1966 in Marshalltown, Iowa in the same scheme as the MTL model. Then there are views of TP&W 5036 and TP&W 5067, which include a logo that probably would no longer be considered politically correct: a caricature of an Indian smoking a peace pipe. One of the photos is a closeup of that logo; see if you agree with me on the lack of political correctness. I believe that it is OK that the logo isn't included on the MTL model, since I don't think all TP&W cars had them. The Fallen Flags site has TP&W 5050 from the same series circa 1969. Also there is an "in-motion" shot of TP&W 7049 which is from the series MTL used, and does not have the logo.



**506 00 251 and 506 00 252, \$28.70 each.  
Reporting Marks: CR 173330 and  
173347.  
50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double  
Youngstown Doors, Conrail.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large “wheel on rail” herald on right. Simulated “jet engine container” interior load included in each car. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s to late 1980s, but see text.

The “big logo” version of the Conrail paint scheme graces the cars in this virtual two-pack. This scheme with the large herald is from the earlier days of the Consolidated Rail Corporation; as time went on, the herald seemed to get smaller and smaller, at least in general. The two cars were built in 1957 for the New York Central in their lot 862B, numbered from 45000 to 46899 and at one time carried the Central’s famous “Early Bird Service” herald.

Sister car CR 173334 is pictured in the Conrail Color Guide to Freight Equipment Volume One from Morning Sun, as found in March 1977 in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. As I had suspected, the car was in fresh paint. But it doesn’t have a roofwalk and the ladders are cut down, and there’s your “see text” part of the commentary. The prototype had 8+7 foot double doors, for a “door thing” versus the model, but no one I know of makes that particular body style in Z Scale. The right hand door on the 173334 clearly isn’t original; as was true sometimes in early Conrail practice (or maybe dating back to the Penn Central), the railroad did what it had to do to keep cars moving.

The ORER for April 1976 showed only two groups of cars with CR reporting marks, neither of which had anything to do with these boxcars. The next Register I have is April 1981 and we find a rather large series, 172981 to 174047, with a small proportion, 236 cars, actually occupying said series. The inside length of these basic “Box, Steel” cars was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 15 feet, and capacity 4929 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. Incidentally, there were still 37 cars in the original New York Central series at the same time, so it is theoretically possible to run the Conrail and NYC boxcars (produced by MTL in August 1996 and reprinted in December 2007, catalog 506 00 16x), though with a lot of weathering on the latter. It’s likely that Conrail used the same number series for the boxcars that predecessor Penn Central did based on the dimensional data, and there remained 125 cars in the PC group 172981 to 174707... however, though Kadee released a 50 foot double door boxcar in Penn Central back in April 1988, it wasn’t from that number series.

Anyway, briefly returning to the ORERs, this group of cars was already down to 104 in the April 1984 Register, dropped to just 19 in the July 1987 edition and 15 in the July 1989 book which is where I stopped looking.





**535 00 320, \$29.60.**

**Reporting Marks: CN 79290.**

**30 Foot Steel Caboose, Center Cupola, Canadian National.**

Red with black roof, cupola, underframe and hardware. White lettering including CN herald and reporting marks in center. Approximate Time Period: 1967 (build date) to late 1980s, but see text.

Okay, how many of us already knew that this would be what we tend to call a “stand in” before checking any references? At least me, and there’s your “see text” and the point at which you can say to yourself, “It’s a CN caboose to run behind the locomotives” (see below). The prototype was built by Hawker-Siddeley, a fact confirmed on the Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery site ( <http://canadianfreightcargallery.ca> , no “www”) which includes a photo of the actual 79290 as it appeared in 1985. It’s a center cupola caboose – sometimes called a “van” on the CN east of Thunder Bay, Ontario – but it’s not very similar to the MTL 535 body style otherwise. The real CN cabooses were longer, had smooth sides, a cupola that extended slightly beyond the sides, and sported several different window arrangements.

In the Morning Sun Color Guide to the CN Volume 2, which also has a photo of the 79290, it’s noted that while 129 of the original 150 cabooses were still in service in 1987, just one was left as of 1991. These cars, which were built to replace some of the wood cars that were on the Canadian National’s roster, were themselves replaced by, well, no caboose at all.



**980 01 190, \$129.95**

**Road Number: 9166 (will be “CN 9166” in website listings).**

**F7-A Powered Diesel, Canadian National and**

**980 12 190, \$49.95**

**Road Number: 9195 (will be “CN 9195” in website listings).**

**F7-B Unpowered Diesel, Canadian National.**

Both units are painted in the 1960’s “zebra” scheme of black with white diagonal stripes and yellow stripe at the bottom of the unit. A-unit has a red nose with black region below cab. Both units have white lettering: the A-unit has the CN herald on the nose and the road number just behind the cab while the B-unit has the road number at the rear end of the side. Approximate Time Period: 1973 (or mid-1960s generally) to late 1980s.

There are several images of the 9166 on the Fallen Flags website, including three Kermit Geary photos taken in Toronto at the end of August 1986. There are several detail deltas versus the model as might be expected. Two of those three are action shots, and the 9166 leads an A-B-A set of F-units. Could that middle unit be the 9195? Ah, it’s just too hard to

tell. No worries though, as Fallen Flags also has shots of the 9195 from 1987 at Toronto and also Fort Erie, Ontario, just the other side of the border from Buffalo. The rear end of the unit is painted red; have to check with MTL as to whether their unit is also. Please stand by...

While we're waiting, I'll note that the 9166 started life as the 9110 and was rebuilt in 1973, confirming MTL's car copy. The year 1973 would be a pretty late date for repainting this unit into the "zebra" scheme, since that replaced the green and gold starting in 1961 when the "wet noodle" logo was adopted. The CN Lines site (<http://cnlines.ca>, no "www"). reports that this unit was fitted for snowplow service in Southern Ontario "by providing removable steel grill for the windshield and covers for the roof-mounted radiator fans." The install of this equipment definitely ends the "strictly speaking" ATP and maybe even the casual ATP – the covers are quite large! See what it looked like for yourself, also on Fallen Flags. This modification would have happened between August and December 1996, not too bad of an estimate. The 9166 was retired in 1989 and the 9195 in 1988. Looking quickly through the roster of F7s on the CN Lines site, it appears that none of them were on the roster after 1989.

Oh, and to finish the thought, Micro-Trains reports that the B-unit's ends are in fact painted red. So we're good on the fidelity for that detail.

**Z SCALE REPRINTS:** No releases this month.

**Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** The following item was announced as an "off-cycle" release for April via the Micro-Trains website on April 14 and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line" on April 15.



**511 44 090, \$28.80**

**Reporting Marks: WC 2711x (last digit of road number obscured on side shown on MTL website).**

**50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Wisconsin Central.**

Maroon with aluminum roof. White reporting marks on left. Yellow herald on left and roadname on right. Yellow simulated reflector stripes across bottom of sides. Approximate Time Period: late 1980s (WC was re-formed in 1987) to mid-2000s. Previous Releases (unweathered): Road Numbers 27102 and 27114, June 2010.

We know for certain that this car belonged to the prototype series 26745 to 27376, which consisted of 448 cars as of the April 1989 ORER and stood at 404 cars in the October 2007 Equipment Register. We also know that the Canadian National took over the Wisconsin Central in 2001 making the line a Fallen Flag for the second time. What we suspect, but do not know for certain, is that this weathered release is a repurposing of the remaining stock of the June 2010 run of the unweathered 27114, or Catalog 511 44 092. Actually, I more than suspect, since that's been the pattern for Z Scale items of this type. Although I am loathe to admit it, not being a fan of, ahem, "unauthorized decoration," the considerable graffiti

treatment MTL put on this car is rather common here in The Present and would have been for at least the last few years before as well.

### **Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:**

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #29, four Western Pacific Gondolas with loads, has been released. UMTRR coverage was in the October 2010 issue.



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



**Scheduled November 2011 Release:**  
**Runner Pack #35: 994 00 035, \$64.95**  
**Reporting Marks: None.**

Quantity four of 40 foot log car with uprights.

No paint, no lettering. Each car comes with a simulated log load. Approximate Time Period: Most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Previous Releases: Technically, none, but there have been eight

previous releases of this body style (538 00 0x0) with differing loads in August and December 2005, April, September and December 2006, March 2007, July and August 2008, and January 2010.

Please see previous UMTRR reviews of this car in N and Z Scales.

### **Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:**



**502 00 534, \$22.95**

**Reporting Marks: ND 1889.**

**40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, North Dakota 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 (Western Meadowlark) and state flower (Wild Prairie Rose) on right. Thirty-fourth release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

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

The order of admission into the union of North and South Dakota is forever unknown. President Benjamin Harrison signed both statehood bills on the same day but mixed them up and didn't look (or so it's told) when signing them. (Harrison did pretty well in terms of states; six were admitted during his single term.) So technically the two Dakotas are the 39th and 40th states, but we don't know which is which. Alphabetically, N comes before S, so North Dakota is viewed as the 39th State in many accounts. So far three initiatives to drop the "North" from the state name have failed, most recently in 1989.

Here's a bit of trivia: while we know North Dakota as principally agrarian, the first export was flint-- in approximately 9500 BC! The Native Americans were still hunting mammoths and giant bison. Tribes like the Cheyenne, Hidatsa, Sioux and Dakota inhabited the area thousands of years later; "Dakota" comes from the Sioux for "friends" or "allies."

In the major land grabs department, Henry Hudson claimed the area for England as part of the Hudson Bay watershed in 1610 and LaSalle claimed it for France as part of the Mississippi River watershed in 1682. It wasn't until 1738 that the first European actually visited the area, 25 years after England received the northern part of the territory from France. Spain got into the act as well, taking from and then relinquishing to France the Missouri River basin. France in turn sold off the "Louisiana Purchase" to the United States. Louis and Clark explored it, including the area along the Missouri River in both directions of the historic cross-country trek, with more than a little help from a young Native American called by several versions of the name Sacagawea. Lake Sakakawea, the result of damming the Missouri, is more than 200 miles long. A 12-foot-high bronze statue of Sakakawea and her baby son Baptiste stand in Bismarck (and by the way, it is spelled "Bismarck," sorry Micro-Trains). North Dakota became part of the Missouri Territory in 1818 and was "finished" when the 49th Parallel was fixed as the boundary between the US and British Territory that would later become Canada. Pieces of the Missouri Territory were sliced off into other territories, and for a time between 1858 and 1861, the area had no formal government! Military occupation and native displacement followed for some years after that. The first homestead in northern Dakota was not established until 1868.

The Northern Pacific Railroad was built in the territory starting in 1872 and made it to Bismarck the next year, but the Montana border wasn't reached until 1881. What became the Great Northern entered near Grand Forks and reached Montana in 1887. What's now the Soo Line completed to Portal on the Canadian border by 1893. But 1905 was the biggest year for railroad construction with over 500 miles completed; at one time, "granger" lines of the Class I railroads covered the state. The last major construction was a Great Northern branch in 1916.

While there are at least two sayings about Minot: "Only the Best Come North," the motto of the Minot Air Force Base, and "Why not Minot? Freezin's the reason" that is probably not a motto of any kind, did you know that the state is the leading producer of sunflowers?

Speaking of flowers, the International Peace Garden straddles the USA/Canada border, partly in Rollete County and partly in Manitoba, and "The Peace Garden State" was adopted as North Dakota's nickname in 1957. Almost due south of the Peace Garden is the town of Rugby, the geographical center of North America.

Famous North Dakotans: an' a one an' a two, Lawrence Welk was a-raised in a-Strasburg and his boyhood home is a-open; the bandleader's television show started in 1955, was produced for 26 years, and is still seen worldwide including during PBS Pledge Weeks. Actresses Angie Dickinson and Ann Sothern are from the state as is basketball coach Phil Jackson. Commentator Eric Sevareid was from Velva in the state; author Louis L'Amour grew up in Jamestown and singer Peggy Lee was born there.

Of all the states in the union, South Dakota was the state that I most slighted in terms of setting foot, which occurred during the Whirlwind Tour of 1988. North Dakota did a little better. After reaching Interstate 29 from the top right hand corner of South Dakota, my friend Paul and I headed due north to Fargo, and had lunch there, specifically at a local mall. Within that mall was a display commemorating the life of Roger Maris, long time holder of the record for most home runs in a single baseball season-- and quite despised for it by many baseball fans, I'm afraid. How could he have deigned to topple the long standing achievement of Babe Ruth, the Bambino? Well, he did, and obviously the modern record holders didn't have any problem passing him; although it's questionable whether these more recent achievements were, eh, entirely performed naturally. Enough said about that! Back in 1988, if performance enhancing substances existed, I certainly hadn't heard about them, and I doubt that my traveling companion who was a devoted baseball fan had either. Well, I guess that's progress.

*The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is October 2011. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close May 31. Note that the images provided by Micro-Trains (not reproduced here) are for representation only.*

**994 21 030, \$249.95 - Sugarland Peppermint Company Train Set.**

Scheduled to consist of the following items:

- SD40-2 Diesel Locomotive. Green with black underframe. Legend "Sugarland Peppermint Co." in white and red in center of long hood. Road number 100 on cab in red and white.
- 40 Foot Boxcar, Single Door (500 series). Green with red door. Tied pair of candy canes in red and white with green ribbon on left and right.
- 40 Foot Modern Log Car with Uprights (538 series). Black with no lettering and "cut peppermint beams" load.
- 50 Foot Fishbelly Side Gondola with Drop Ends (522 series). Green with red drop ends. Candy canes and peppermints in red and white across car.
- 30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose (535 series). Green with red cupola and end railings. Multi-color "Micro-Mouse" character below cupola flanked by words "Merry Christmas" in red and white.



Peppermint is peppermint in any scale, so not much to add there. What I think will be of greatest interest to Z Scalers, whether Special Editions are on their shopping list or not, is that MTL is planning to include the SD40-2 diesel in the set. That means that they expect to have these back in production by then. Perhaps that means that the other Z Scale items sourced or partially sourced overseas will also be available once again.

**HO<sub>n</sub>3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):** Here's the first release of the year... and what do you know, it's another log car...



**New Release:**  
**865 00 060, \$36.10**  
**Reporting Marks: None.**  
**30 Foot Log Car with Load.**

No paint, no lettering. Simulated "varied log" load included. Approximate Time Period: Most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

I was tempted to go with my spiel "Previous Releases: Technically none..." that I used for the N and Z Scale Runner Packs, and I suppose I could. There have been five previous log cars done in HO<sub>n</sub>3 with 865 00 0x0 catalog numbers, dating back to January 2007. The theme remains, though: you're either looking for this car, or a bunch of these cars, or you don't. We'll call it good enough that there's finally a new HO narrow gauge car from behind the red and yellow sign this year.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** I was tempted to add the Ringling Brothers 1970's Blue Train set of wagons to the "new releases" section, since I have an image I could use (at right), but then I realized I'd have to transcribe the description of said wagons, and I'm far too lazy for that! We'll let the picture substitute for the thousand words, or less, this time. Catalog 462 00 040 has an MSRP of \$59.95.



More typical for this section of the column, we have new load packs in three scales this time. In Z Scale there is a pair of freight loads (799 43 936, \$9.95). For N Scale there is a pair of machine loads (499 43 970, \$9.95). In HO<sub>n</sub>3, and for standard gauge HO also there is a three-pack of log loads (899 43 904, \$13.95).

Though the Waterfront Series of buildings is getting more airplay right now, the Z Scale logging series is no slouch either, and there are some accessories to go with that set of structures. There's a three pack of "finished lumber stacks" (799 43 937, \$12.95) and two pairs of differently styled "logging bulldozers" (799 91 901 and 799 91 902, \$14.95 each).

Though not an official MTL announcement, Joe D'Amato posted a couple of test shots of the forthcoming Micro-Trains heavyweight observation car on his blog (<http://nscalework.blogspot.com/>). "[The] due date is still not in cement" said Joe on a posting to the "N Scale Varnish" YahooGroup.

**STRUCTURE KITS:** In Z Scale, there are three new kits in the Waterfront Series, and they take you down to the commercial boardwalk that once occupied many a shorefront (and still does in some cases). The boardwalk itself is one kit (799 90 944, \$29.95) and includes steps down to a small lower level. I think that implies placement along a true waterfront instead of a beach. Two buildings to place on that boardwalk are also out. The "Taffy Company" (799 90 945, \$15.95) offers a traditional treat found at the Boardwalk, although I could see this structure repurposed for other retail ventures at or away from the shore. The "Trading Warehouse" (799 90 946, \$21.95) includes a crane on the second floor, presumably to bring in items from the ground, or from a boat, depending on how the kit and the boardwalk are placed. MTL says that two more structures will be released in July to complete the scene.

In HO Scale, Micro-Trains releases its most ambitious kit thus far. It kicks off a Military themed series with a one story "Military Barracks" kit (899 90 906, \$39.95). To fit into those barracks, there's a kit to build twelve bunk beds (899 90 907, \$19.95), certainly one of the more unusual detail parts I've seen. These might find their way to many different layout scenes or building interiors.

In N Scale, the first MTL kit meant specifically for the backdrop debuts: the "Warehouse Flat" kit (499 90 926, \$32.95) is nine inches long but just an inch deep, good for those backs of layouts and for squeezing in an incremental adding a freight car spotting location.

**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** As one HOn3 car enters, one leaves: the Nevada County Narrow Gauge flat car (855 00 040, March 2009) is outta here. In N Scale, three Presidential cars have left office: the Franklin Pierce (074 00 122, June 2010), Lyndon Johnson (074 00 123, July 2010) and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (074 00 130, March). There are just two other N Scale items on the bye-bye board, but one's a surprise from just last month: the Rio Grande boxcar reprint (037 00 070). The other is the British Columbia Railway combination door boxcar from January (022 00 080).

In Z Scale, there's a little more activity. We'll cover these in catalog number order. The weathered Union Pacific "Challenger" boxcar has left the building (501 44 192, October 2009). You can't "show me" the Missouri State Car anymore (502 00 519, January). The Pennsylvania Railroad boxcar without roofwalk is gone (503 00 110, February). The weathered Santa Fe boxcar that was uniquely painted is sold out (505 44 240, March), as is the fifth Ringling Brothers billboard car (515 00 605, December 2009). Hey, we've gotten this far without worrying about paired releases... well, that just ended: the first number of the TTX bulkhead flat car is out (527 00 081, February, second number still available) and so is the first number of the Florida East Coast well car with container (540 00 101, October 2010, second number still available). Finally on the outs list is the Alaska Railroad passenger sleeper (550 00 040, May 2009).

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** David Carnell says he “finally got around to looking for a photo of the SP/T&NO #383 wood caboose (Catalog 050 00 220, December 2010).” He reports, “I found a picture of this caboose in the paint scheme MTL released on page 148 of Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Volume 2: Caboose by Tony Thompson. The caboose is painted brown with orange ends and the lettering is an exact match. The car does not have roller bearing trucks. It’s actually riding on Vulcan L section trucks. Unfortunately, the photo is not dated so we do have an issue with determining the ATP.” Thanks, David! Now we know there was at least one of these, at some time...

File this under “Three paint schemes, one train.” While on a visit to New Jersey I came upon a Conrail Shared Assets train pulled by Norfolk Southern diesels on the former Jersey Central trackage along the Turnpike. Within that train were 50 foot x-post single door boxcars in no less than three paint schemes done by Micro-Trains: the blue and white Boston and Maine, the Maine Central Guilford “Big G” scheme, and the most recent Pan Am Railways scheme. What are the odds of that? Apparently, not zero, at least not yet! So go ahead and run all three schemes together, as the Approximate Time Period remains into The Present, for now.

I mentioned last issue that ZTrains.com was going to kick off a series of articles featuring the Z Scale waterfront series of kits. The first installment of that series has now been posted. The location for the scene is a bit of a curveball, as the author himself states: Florida. The URL for Part One is <http://www.ztrains.com/z-scale-basics/waterfront-project-introduction/>.

Mike Morehouse would like to add to the list of famous Colorado residents that appeared in last month’s commentary on the Z Scale state car: Bandleader Glenn Miller. “Although he was not born in Colorado (he was born in Iowa in 1904), his family moved to Fort Morgan, Colorado in 1918 where he went to high school and in 1923, he entered the University of Colorado at Boulder. Miller is originally from Iowa, released in June 2010, #24 in the series.

**OOPS PATROL:** As Copy, paste, forget to change: Last month’s Ringling Brothers Big Top Extravaganza Car, with the polar bear, had the description from the previous month’s car, which had the elephants. Thanks to Gerhard Postpischil for catching this.

**AND THAT S ALL FOR THIS MONTH:** We’ll be back shortly with the UMTRR Mid-Month Update, and then with the June UMTRR. Until then, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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