

*IrwinsJournal.com Presents:*

## **The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report**

**Issue #180 – December, 2011 – Fifteenth Anniversary Issue!**

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Hello again everyone! We finish out 2011, and the fifteenth year of this humble enterprise (as we “officially” count it, anyway), with the latest release in the Micro-Trains series of heavyweight passenger cars, among other new and returning items. Let’s get right to it...

### **N SCALE NEW RELEASES:**



**054 00 200, \$22.55**

**Road Number: 114381 (will be “SOU 114381”  
in website listings)**

**61 Foot Bulkhead Flat Car, Southern Railway.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including roadname and road number in center. Simulated pipe load included. Approximate Time Period: 1972 (build date) to as late as the present.

We start off with a bingo—that is, an exact road number photo match—on Page 81 of Morning Sun’s **Southern Railway Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** by James Kincaid. The 114381’s photo was taken in 1979. It’s from the series 114350 to 114449. While the photo of the car is a bingo, the MTL 054 body style isn’t quite one. The most distinctive difference is the thicker and more substantial side sill, which gives the prototype a “boxier” look in my eyes. I think that the fishbelly underframe has a bit more heft as well, but that could be just the angle of the photo. For those for whom “ride height matters,” the real car is set lower to the ground, covering the trucks almost down to the roller bearings.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for July 1974 shows the group with all 100 possible cars in place, described as “Flat, Bulkhead, Tie Down Chains (Lumber)”. (That’s what it’s carrying in the photo in the Color Guide.) The dimensions were as follows: inside length 61 feet, inside height 11 feet, outside length 70 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, capacity 180,000 pounds. These statistics confirm what I’d suspected: the real car was a fair bit larger than the MTL model. I think that would explain the heftier look I perceived.

By the April 1984 ORER, the group had been split into several subseries based on capacity which added back to the original 100 cars. The AAR Designation had changed from FB to FMS. And there was an endnote indicating that the car could be loaded to various percentages of the load limit based on how widely spaced that load was along the floor of the car, for example, 73 percent of the load limit if uniformly distributed over thirty feet of the car. That suggests to me that despite the description, which had been modified to “Flat, Bulkhead, Constant Tension Band Anchors (Lumber),” other commodities could have been

carried. So the pipe load included with the car, while possibly not the optimal choice, was not completely implausible.

Wrapping up the ORER lookups for the series, in July 1992 we find the car count down just a bit to a total of 90 cars across a bunch of subsets, by this time under the ownership of Norfolk Southern. Fifty-seven remained as of the January 2000 ORER and fifty-three were shown in the October 2007 Equipment Register, the latest one I own--as I'm sure you're tired of hearing by now. Does this mean that "to present" is the end of the Approximate Time Period? Well, I see images of other cars in the series dating through February 2011, so it's certainly possible. And the images show cars carrying cargo other than lumber, including, guess what, pipe. And perhaps more interestingly, a large concrete "box" with a center opening, which looks heavy enough to test the load limit end note to which I referred above. The photographer of this car, 114446, surmised that the concrete "box" held a canister of nuclear waste! See for yourself over on [RRPictureArchives.net](http://RRPictureArchives.net).



**094 00 340, \$26.25**

**Reporting Marks: MRMX 501101.**

**Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hopper with Trough Hatches, Wisconsin and Southern (Midwest Rail Leasing).**

Gray with mostly black lettering including reporting marks and small W&S herald on left and large roadname across center. Approximate Time Period: mid-2000s to present.

As long as we're in [RRPictureArchives.net](http://RRPictureArchives.net) for the previous MTL car anyway, let's check for this one. And what do you know, another bingo; two images of the real MRMX 501101 as found on July 14, 2006 in Rochelle, Illinois. The real car is definitely a Plate C three bay center flow covered hopper with trough hatches. I can't quite read the capacity but it looks a little smaller than the MTL model which is of the American Car & Foundry 4650 cubic foot car. Before we get to that, though, let's see what we can find about Midwest Rail.

The company is actually named Midwest Railcar Corporation, and it was founded in 1998 as "a company specializing in leasing and selling quality commercial freight railcars to shippers and railroads as well as managing railcars for railcar fleet owners and users." Originally a privately held firm, in 2006 Midwest was sold to the Japanese conglomerate Marubeni, which traces its roots all the way back to 1858 (!) and the linen trading business. Marubeni owns a wide variety of enterprises ranging from wind power projects to importing of upscale shoes into Japan to an automobile dealership on Long Island. Yes, that's an operational definition of a conglomerate if I've ever heard one.

Anyway, the first ORER in the Research Accumulation in which I see Midwest Railcar is not until January 2002, and it only has the reporting marks MWCX at that point. The MRMX markings don't appear until... oh, no, July 2007, my next to latest ORER. With those marks there's a group of just three cars numbered 501100 to 501102, and they are a bit smaller than the MTL 094 body style at that, with outside length of 50 feet 11 inches, extreme height of 15

feet 6 inches, and capacity listed at just 4000 cubic feet. There are other onesie and twosie “series” of covered hoppers numbered as high as 501128, all of 4000 cubic foot capacity, among the 3548 total in the Midwest roster with either MRMX or MWCX reporting marks.

But wait, you might be saying, as I did, the photo is from July 2006, and the MRMX reporting marks don’t show until 2007? Sort of: MRMX does appear in the upfront listing of all reporting marks starting with my January 2004 Equipment Register, but it’s shown as belonging to the company “MRMX Leasing and Management, LLC.” It also has the dreaded asterisk denoting that the cars are not listed in the ORER. (Starting at some point, a large number of private owners, representing a non-trivial quantity of rolling stock, simply opted out of listing in the Equipment Registers.) It wasn’t until Midwest Railcar assumed ownership of the MRMX cars that they began to be listed, which of course doesn’t do much for the accuracy of the Approximate Time Period. A look at the other covered hoppers in the general group of 501100s in RailcarPhotos.com and RRPictureArchives.net didn’t show anything older than May 2006, so I’m going to go with “mid-2000s to present” for the ATP and hope I’m reasonably close.



**094 00 350, \$26.25**

**Reporting Marks: UP 14146.**

**Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hopper with Trough Hatches, Union Pacific.**

Gray with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname across center. Approximate Time Period: 1977 (build date) to as late as the present.

Yes, there has been a UP Center Flow done by MTL before, but it had round hatches and a road number from a different series. And yes, I did need to check: Catalog Number 93010 (so the first for the body style, in fact), released August 1994, with road number 78892.

The streak of exact matches to photographs continues with a double bingo for this car on RRPictureArchives.net. The first image is from March 1977 and shows that this car didn’t have Beginner’s Luck: the side in the photo looks rather creased in between the “Union” and “Pacific.” We can see that the UP Class is CH 100-35 and the “ACF Center Flow” legend is also clearly visible. Micro-Trains’ reproduction of the lettering looks good with the exception of an ACI Label. The second image takes us all the way to November 2005, and while other cars in the series have been redone in follow-on paint schemes such as the UP’s “Building America,” the 14146 is still in its as delivered paint. Though looking a bit worse for wear, it’s not in terribly bad shape, and the crease shown in the 1977 photo is long gone.

The ORER for April 1981 is the closest I have to the build date of 1977 that MTL cites (and I verified via photos). It shows the series UP 14051 to 14150, described as “Covered Hopper, Steel, Interior Lining, Elongated Trough Hatches with Circular Hatches Inset of Covers.” The inside length was shown as 53 feet 3 inches, outside length 55 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15

feet 1 inch, and capacity 4580 cubic feet or 196,000 pounds. These dimensions indicate a car that's a bit of a delta to the MTL 094 body style. There were 96 in service at the time. Since there's a 2005 photo of the car, I can jump to the October 2004 Equipment Register, where 77 cars are listed as still in service. And the October 2007 Register shows 76 left. Great, another "to present" possibility that I can't really verify? Well, I think that the series made it to today, but I'm not so sure about the as delivered paint scheme. RailcarPhotos.com does have sister car UP 14058 in its original gray and black as of June 2008, so it's not impossible that some of these cars have escaped repainting.



**118 00 050, \$27.80**

**Reporting Marks: USA 8708.**

**Troop Kitchen Car, United States Army (Medical Department).**

Pullman green with white lettering including "United States Army" at top center, reporting marks and left and right. Red cross on white square at far left, far right and near center of roof. Approximate Time Period: early to mid-1940s (1942 build date likely).

This car is almost a reprint of the 118 00 030 Hospital Kitchen Car released in September 2003, the key difference being the painting of the red cross on the roof. The '030 didn't have it, this one does, and I suppose I'm still not sure whether with or without is correct, or perhaps both are. Back in 2003 I noted that the Pacific Southwest Railroad Museum had a guard car which was originally a Hospital Kitchen Car, and their website pages on the topic ( via the URL [sdrm.org/roster](http://sdrm.org/roster) , no "www") include a vintage photo of the way that particular car, now G-10, looked while in service as the hospital kitchen car. That's not really a bingo for this car, but I didn't expect to find one.

There are several web pages describing the use of railways to transport wounded and recovering troops, and this practice clearly peaked during World War II although it began in the American Civil War. The site [RailwaySurgery.org](http://RailwaySurgery.org) has a couple of pages specifically on the use of hospital cars including the kitchen car, and includes a scan of a New York Central Railroad advertisement describing how a hospital car worked. The site also has a reprint of an article on hospital trains that appeared in the September 1945 issue of **Railroad Magazine**. The specific MTL car isn't the focus of this piece—in fact, what is featured is the series of hospital cars built new by American Car and Foundry, which look more like streamlined passenger cars and were apparently converted to diners after the war. The site has a fascinating look at a topic about which I certainly didn't know much, and I recommend it to you. Meanwhile, this release makes a nice complement to the Troop Sleeper Runner Pack #58 also released this month.





145 00 010, \$22.70

Reporting Marks: None.

Paired Window Heavyweight Coach,  
Pullman Company.

Pullman Green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Delux gold roadname in center of letterboard. No other lettering. Approximate Time Period: mid-1930s, but see text.



145 00 070, \$22.70

Reporting Marks: T&NO 403.

Paired Window Heavyweight Coach,  
Southern Pacific / Texas & New Orleans.

Olive green sides and ends. Black roof, underbody and trucks. Delux gold roadname in center of letterboard. Reporting Marks at bottom center. No other lettering. Approximate Time Period: 1929 (or late 1920s) to mid-1930s.

We return to our protocol of taking both passenger car releases together for this commentary. The base prototype for this car is the Pullman Plan 2882-B which was used by the Baltimore and Ohio and other roads some of which I'm sure we'll be seeing down the line from MTL. However, there's already been a bit of consternation online over the choice of an otherwise unlettered car with "Pullman" on the letterboard as the first release in this new body style. There doesn't seem to be evidence that any coaches of this particular type ever carried Pullman lettering.

Jerry LaBoda, responding in several online venues, noted that Pullman rebuilt six Plan 2416 parlor-drawing room cars into coaches for use by the Great Northern. The GN leased them in 1935 and bought them in 1938, which I believe would make for a short ATP even as a "stand in." No, "stand ins" are what I believe this release to be... or perhaps "fill ins" like the Union Pacific observation car released in September, for those who want to "fill in" a passenger train consist even though the railroad in question didn't have that body style. Why would Micro-Trains lead with the Pullman scheme in that case? I don't know, but I suppose the modeler could consider this to be a really easily procured "mostly undecorated" coach. Claus Schulnd, writing on the YahooGroup "N Scale Varnish," noted that with some modifications the car could work for other Pullman plans, but that's a bit beyond the scope of this column.

For a look at the Southern Pacific / Texas and New Orleans release, we turn things over to our SP Special Correspondent David Carnell. Start quote:

"Detailed information on the SP/T&NO Coach released this month is found in **Southern Pacific Passenger Cars Volume 1: Coaches and Chair Cars** on Pages 204 - 206. T&NO (Texas and New Orleans) 400 - 404 were the "first clerestory roof steel coaches purchased new by the SP" in class 72-C3C-2. They were purchased as part of Order P-236 on May 24, 1928 and delivered by Pullman in Lot 6208 in late January and early February 1929. These cars were set up as three compartment coaches with a short center compartment for women and

children that seated only 18, and two end compartments for men that seated 34 each for a capacity of 86. Men's toilets were located at each end of the car and a women's toilet was located in the center section. This arrangement results in the window configuration of a small window at the vestibule end with four paired windows, a small window, six paired windows and a small window at the other vestibule end. The inclusion of the small toilet window in the center of the car means that the Micro-Trains car does not exactly match the SP car.

"The paint scheme is the as delivered scheme of green with gold lettering and the SOUTHERN PACIFIC LINES name. These cars were rebuilt with air-conditioning and modernized interiors in the 1935, 1936 and 1937 and were later converted to chair cars in 1951. T&NO 400 remained assigned to the T&NO, while cars 401-404 were reassigned SP numbers 2541-2544 in 1957. The cars were probably repainted into the SOUTHERN PACIFIC scheme in the mid 1930s.

"SP purchased 45 Pullman built coaches in class 72-C3C-2, 73-C-1 and 74-CC-1 classes. These cars all appear to be a close match to the MTL body style."

Thanks, David. In terms of other SP coaches, a UMTRR Gang Member tipped me off to what I believe is a builder's photo of an American Car and Foundry-built coach lettered T&NO 408. It's hiding in the "Historic Builder Photos" section under the "ACF" link over on George Elwood's Fallen Flags site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ). The photo is dated January 1928 and of course it's in glorious black and white. It's got eleven sets of paired windows plus a square window at each end; the MTL body style has ten sets of paired windows, plus I must caution that we're only seeing one side of the prototype car. At any rate, this is an example of the potential closeness of the model to another SP car, as always, your tolerance for variation may vary.

## **N SCALE REPRINTS:**



**054 00 011 and 054 00 012, \$23.35 each**

**Reporting Marks: BN 621455 and 621523.**

**54 Foot Bulkhead Flat Car, Burlington Northern.**

Green with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname in center.

Simulated plywood load included. Approximate Time Period: 1976 (build date) to as late as the present. Previous Releases: A six-pack, Catalog 54012, individual catalog numbers all 54010, Road Numbers 621353, 621387, 621466, 621468, 621534, and 621649, October 1986.

The build date of 1976 given by MTL firmly puts these cars as original equipment for the Burlington Northern as opposed to any of its predecessors. These two, and the previous six road numbers done back in 1986, all belong to the prototype series 621250 to 621649. The

April 1981 ORER shows 378 cars in the main series with capacity 186,000 pounds and another 20 in ingot service with capacity 178,000 pounds. The other dimensions are the same: inside length 56 feet 8 inches, inside height 11 feet, outside length 66 feet, extreme height 14 feet 9 inches. By the July 1982 ORER the series was down to 185 cars. But the group held almost steady at 177 cars under the Burlington Northern Santa Fe listing in the January 2000 Equipment Register. Do we have a “to present” again? There are a total of 43 remaining in the January 2007 ORER.

We’ll also have to consider in the Approximate Time Period the fact that the BN dropped the roadname after a while. Photos of cars still in service as late as 2007 found on the Fallen Flags website ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ) show the reporting marks only. While the details differ, the number of pockets for example, the inside length of this car is quite close to the MTL model. For the record, RailcarPhotos.com has a shot of BN 621548 as of September 2011, although without the roadname, so we know at least one car from the series lasted until no less than three months ago. The version with reporting marks only and without the roadname might make for a quick and dirty future offering.



**103 00 030, \$25.45**

**Reporting Marks: ATSF 37563.**

**60 Foot Excess Height Double Plug Door Boxcar, Waffle Sides, Santa Fe (AT&SF).**

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks and large circle cross herald on left. Black and yellow warnings at left and right ends of side sill and inside side ladders. Approximate Time Period: 1978 (build date) to late 1980s (based on paint scheme). Previous Release (as catalog number 103030): Road Number 37575, August 1998.

Micro-Trains notes that there were only four cars in the series 37562 to 37565. There’s not a lot in the Santa Fe’s class Bx-187, but it is a little more than just this quartet. According to **Santa Fe Freight Cars in Color, The Series: Volume One, Boxcars** by Priest and Chenoweth, the series numbered from 37562 to 37586 and was built by Berwick Forge and Fabricating in 1978. The book includes photos of three Bx-187s, one of which is of ATSF 37575 as of April 1987. It’s in the paint scheme MTL depicts except for a change to Helvetica (sans serif) reporting marks. The other two photos show the cars in a later mineral brown paint scheme, one with reporting marks only and one with a small circle cross at the top left. That reporting marks only paint scheme has also been done by MTL, as their catalog number 103050/ 103 00 050 in August 1999 and April 2007. I think the Approximate Time Period for this reprint is driven by the paint scheme and I’ll call it at the late 1980s even though it’s certainly possible that a stray car survived with the large circle cross beyond that. We appear to have a good match between prototype and model, with a minor quibble on the shape of the ends of the side sills. The number and placement of the “waffles” looks good and that’s what I consider to be the main spotting feature of this car.

The ORER for April 1981 has sure been getting a lot of use this month. Within it we find the short series to which MTL refers, 37562 to 37565. It's described as "Box, Double Plug Doors, DF Belts, Shock Control, Roller Bearing, Nailable Steel Floor, 50 K (Auto Parts)" with AAR Designation XP. They exceeded Plate F dimensions. The inside length was 60 feet 9 inches, inside width 9 feet 1 inch, inside height 13 feet 2 inches, outside length 67 feet 9 inches, extreme height 17 feet, door opening 16 feet, and capacity 7315 cubic feet or 163,000 pounds. The remainder of the Bx-187s were in a second group numbered 37566 to 37686 with somewhat different dimensions. As of January 2006 fourteen cars from the original series remained, but I think that's well past the ATP for the paint scheme... and allows me to sidestep the question of whether said ATP goes to "the present."

**N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** *The following items were announced as "off-cycle" releases for November via the Micro-Trains website on November 15 and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line" on November 16.*



**025 44 400, \$30.85**

**Reporting Marks: BM 3292.**

**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Door, Boston and Maine/Guilford.**

White sides, dark blue ends, aluminum roof. Large black "G" Guilford logo accented by red stripe on left above black reporting marks, on left. Black roadname accented with red stripe on right. Light to moderate weathering including on trucks and particularly on roof. Multicolor graffiti graphic featuring caricatures of a turkey and pilgrim on one side of car. Approximate Time Period: mid 1980s to present. Previous Releases in unweathered form: As catalog 25400, Road Number 3249, March 1988; as catalog 025 00 400, Road Number 3278, March 2011.

I guess it is a casualty of my giving up the mid-month "UMTRR Updates" that I missed the chance to be timely with this graffiti car. The theme, while probably not a reproduction of anything particular on a prototype car, definitely has a Thanksgiving theme. Well, if we mean Canadian Thanksgiving, both I and MTL are quite late since our friends North of the Border celebrate their holiday in October; but then again, I don't think that Pilgrim hats figure prominently in Canadian Thanksgiving.

Anyway, the prototype car was built by Pacific Car and Foundry. As noted back in March the 025 body style is not a match to that prototype, which is an eight panel flat roof boxcar. The "Big G" paint scheme co-existed with the previous blue and white with B&M roadname and the successor "Pan Am Railways" scheme, all on this series of cars numbered 3200 to 3399. The white paint used by Guilford upon its acquisition of the Boston and Maine did not hold up very well, as evidenced by photos of cars in the group that are available on Fallen Flags and elsewhere. Again back in May, we got a bingo on the previously released unweathered road number 3278 on Fallen Flags, dated May 2008.





077 44 210, \$23.65

Reporting Marks: MKT 2348.

50 Foot Steel Box Car, Single Youngstown Door, No Roofwalks, Full Ladders, Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT).

Green with mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and very large “M K T” from left of the door to right end of side. Light to moderate weathering including on trucks, in shades of brown. New road number in white on patch panel. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s (1975 service date given by MTL) to late 1980s. Previous releases in unweathered form: Road Numbers 2366 and 2370, June 2011.

Here’s another car from the series 2344 to 2382, which has a fairly tight Approximate Time Period as discussed in June. The group doesn’t appear in the July 1974 ORER, is shown with no car count in the April 1975 Register, and consists of 34 cars in the April 1976 book. It’s all gone again sometime between the July 1987 and July 1989 Equipment Registers. Based on a photo from the prototype series on Fallen Flags, the model is at least a decent match to the real car, although it appears that some or all of the cars had their side ladders cut down at some point during their service life.

I think MTL has listened to the complaint that some of their weathered cars have an obscured road number instead of a new one. Cars with partial road numbers are seldom seen on the prototype, unless they’ve just recently been covered over with graffiti, which is a different story entirely. Micro-Trains has answered the constructive criticism by providing a new “patched” road number instead of a “dirty” old one. That’s assuming that the base for this release is “leftovers” from the virtual two-pack released in June, an assumption I’m making.

## N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #58, four Department of Defense Pullman Troop Sleepers, is now available. UMTRR coverage was provided in the June 2011 issue. The individual road numbers are as follows: 9015, 9120, 9276, 9304. Please check back on the UMTRR Website later this month as I need to validate the catalog numbers for this set.



*The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is June 2012. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 30.*



***Scheduled June 2012 Release:***

**N Scale Runner Pack #64: 993 00 064, \$64.95**

**Quantity four of 40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door, Baltimore and Ohio.**

**Reporting Marks: B&O 470686, 470698, 470750, 470834.**

Brown with white lettering including large "B&O" and reporting marks on left, and legend "Baltimore and Ohio Time Saver Service" on right. Approximate Time Period: 1957 to mid-1970s at least. Previous Releases (as catalog 20346): Road Number 470687, August 1996;

Road Number 470699, September 1996; Road Number 470751, January 1997; Road Number 470835, May 1997.

This car was the subject of a "Runner Series" in 1996 and 1997, and now it's the forthcoming subject of a "Runner Pack" as well. The "Runner Series" was, how shall we say, not exactly a barnburner when Micro-Trains tested the concept in the mid-nineties. I think it's safe to say that the Runner Pack has been much more well received, otherwise we wouldn't be up to Number 64 in that series.

The prototype series for these cars is B&O 470600 to 470999, which was the line's M-67 class according to Morning Sun's **B&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. That book has Pullman-Standard as the builder, but the folks on the Baltimore\_and\_Ohio YahooGroup, including our own UMTRR Gang Member Brian DeVries, has the M-67s assembled in 1957 at the B&O's own shops in Dubois, Pennsylvania from P-S parts. The cars are classified as PS-1s, although with a 10 foot interior height and an eight foot door, both of which are deltas to the MTL 020 body style. There's a Pullman-Standard photo of B&O 470687 in a three-quarter view on Page 67 of the December 1982 issue of **Mainline Modeler**.

The "Time Saver Service" paint scheme dates from late 1957 to 1962 according to a compendium of schemes on the Baltimore and Ohio Historical Society website ( [bohrrs.org](http://bohrrs.org) ). Of course some cars could have kept the Time Saver lettering long after it was discontinued in favor of the "capital dome billboard" in mid-1962. I've called this out in the Approximate Time Period. There is a photo of B&O 470078 from the previous series of boxcars in the Morning Sun Color Guide, still in Time Saver paint as of at least May 1974.

The ORER for January 1959 shows the 400 cars in the series described as simply "Box, Steel" with the AAR Designation XM. These had an inside length of 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet as noted above, outside length 41 feet 10 inches, extreme height 14 feet 7 inches, door opening 8 feet, and capacity 3719 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. Cruising quickly through the Equipment Registers from there, we find 368 cars in service in April 1970 but just 53 in April 1981 (just to use that edition again this month!).

One attribute of the lettering is the letter “T” in a circle to the left of the reporting marks. Jim Mische, responding to a question posted on several YahooGroups, noted that the “circle T” meant that the car was fit to less-than-carload (LCL) service, meaning that it was a clean, mechanically sound car that met main line clearances everywhere on the B&O system “especially the Parkersburg Division.” Since the B&O was an early railroad, clearances were an issue; in fact tight tunnels were a key driver of the development of the “wagon top” boxcar by the railroad. The presence of a “circle T” did not mean any given car was in LCL service, just that it could be in LCL service.

Meanwhile, it’s possible that what actually appears as the Runner Pack has some changes from the image in the Micro-News and on the website. Brian DeVries confirmed that these cars will be in the correct red oxide paint color, not the “boxcar red” brown of the “Runner Series.” Brian also suggested to MTL changes to the road numbers, which can all be aligned with the actual build month (!) lettered on the car. You read it here first—unless you subscribe to the YahooGroup “BnOinN,” that is!

## N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



**045 00 391 and 045 00 392, \$15.85 each**

**Reporting Marks: RBX 30 and 37.**

**50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Car, Ringling Brothers (“Vintage” Paint).**

White with brown lettering including reporting marks on left and “Ringling Bros.” in vintage style lettering in center.



**Companion Release: 470 00 019, \$29.95, Ringling Brothers Two-Pack of Circus Wagons.**

First wagon is fully enclosed, green with yellow ornamentation and white wheels. Second wagon is a “cage” type with white frame and wheels and gold bars and “Ringling Bros.” legend across top.

I think it might be time to declare the “Big Top Extravaganza” series complete, since by my count there have been the nine cars, caboose and locomotive. But obviously, we’re not done yet with the Ringling Brothers cars. Fortunately for the length of this column, there is not a whole lot to say about the “vintage” paint scheme, except perhaps that strictly speaking, its Approximate Time Period would pre-date the 1919 merger with Barnum and Bailey. (“Strictly speaking”? For a Special Edition?) The style of lettering used for the Ringling Brothers name somewhat resembles the “Playbill” font I have available on my computer and would be suitable for the era in which these cars would have run, had they existed. The wagons, of course, are for placement atop the cars, probably no more than one per car, which works out exactly as it should.



074 00 139, \$23.95

**40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #39: Theodore Roosevelt.**

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.

The youngest person to ever hold the office of Chief Executive became President on September 14, 1901, when William McKinley died after being shot by an assassin eight days before. The man who had been “kicked upstairs” to the Vice Presidency by New York State party bosses in a bid to get him out of the Governor’s chair now held the White House. Considered to be the first “modern” President, Theodore Roosevelt returned the Presidency the focus of power of the United States Government.

Theodore Roosevelt, Junior, was born on October 27, 1858 to a wealthy family. Young Teddy toured Europe, studied at Harvard, and built up his body to combat a sickly childhood (he suffered from asthma). He reveled in the “strenuous life” for most of his existence. He married Alice Hathaway Lee in 1880 and served two terms in the New York Assembly from 1882 to 1884. Roosevelt was struck by the incredible tragedy of having his young wife and his mother die on the same day, February 14, 1884, in the same house in New York City. His first child had been born only two days before. Soon after, his daughter was placed with his sister and Roosevelt gave up public life, retreating to the West. He rode, ranched, and fought outlaws. In 1886 he returned to New York City, having rediscovered and married his childhood sweetheart Edith Kermit Carow. They set up residence in a house called “Sagamore Hill” in Oyster Bay, Long Island. During the 1880’s he wrote a number of books including the four volume set **The Winning of the West**. And he also went back to politics.

His restart was an unsuccessful run for New York City’s mayor in 1886. He campaigned for Benjamin Harrison for President and was appointed by Harrison to the Civil Service Commission. Harrison’s successor Grover Cleveland, despite being a Democrat and Roosevelt a Republican, reappointed him. In that position, Roosevelt clashed with those who wanted civil service positions to be patronage jobs. That continued with his Presidency of the New York City Police Board, which he cleared of corruption. President William McKinley appointed Roosevelt to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy, but he was the acting head when the battleship Maine sank in Havana Harbor. Roosevelt readied the Navy for war with Spain and then resigned to enlist as commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Volunteer Cavalry – the famous “Rough Riders.” Roosevelt’s charge up “San Juan Hill” (actually Kettle Hill) near Santiago, Cuba, captured the public’s imagination. He returned a war hero and the Rough Riders became legendary.



Roosevelt was placed in the Republican ticket for Governor of New York against the Tammany Hall—oops, Democratic—nominee. Roosevelt prevailed by a few thousand votes, mostly delivered by the Republican machine and its head, Thomas Platt. Governor Roosevelt then proceeded to ignore his party bosses on patronage jobs and taxation of the assets of public services, all of which contributed to the Republican campaign. Platt realized he had made a big mistake, and therein conspired with national Republican leaders to give Roosevelt the nomination for Vice President for William McKinley's second term in 1900—in other words, to “kick him upstairs” before he could run for Governor again. The fix was in and Roosevelt was nominated by acclamation. He campaigned extensively on McKinley's behalf, by train over 21 thousand miles. McKinley won the 1900 election by a larger margin than he'd won in 1896, and Roosevelt became Vice President.

And then came September 1901. Initially, Roosevelt pledged to continue the policies of McKinley so as not to further distress a nation in mourning, but he quickly decided that he would seek the Presidency via election for the 1904 term as well. He had history against him: a President who ascended to the office resulting from the death of his predecessor had not previously been elected for the next term. Roosevelt had already become known for progressive policies and he was not afraid to stand up to corporate interests he thought were counter to the people's interests. This made party bosses, and Congress, and the captains of industry, nervous. They got even more upset when, in 1902, Roosevelt had the Department of Justice sue for, and eventually win, the breakup of the giant Northern Securities Company, a railroad trust financed by J. P. Morgan. Had Roosevelt not won this battle, the Burlington Northern Railroad might have been created a lot sooner than 1970.

Even so, Roosevelt realized he needed to tone down his rhetoric and work within his party to gain re-election, and the corporate interests still conceded that they would “rather have an ‘unpredictable head of a predictable party’ in power than the ‘predictable head of an unpredictable party,’” which is to say the Populist-leaning Democrats. And so the capitalists poured millions into Roosevelt's campaign. This did not guarantee them any favors when Roosevelt won re-election handily for a full term. During that full term, he took aim at the railroads again via the Hepburn Act, which gave the Interstate Commerce Commission the authority to regulate shipping rates. It was among the first times that a President went directly to the people to garner support for legislation. Roosevelt also sided with the “muckrakers,” or investigative journalists such as Upton Sinclair, author of the book **The Jungle**, and fought for passage of the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act. In what might be his greatest domestic legacy, he instituted the system of National Parks. Roosevelt frequently spoke directly to the general public, and treated his position as a “bully pulpit” from which he could influence public opinion.

Roosevelt's presidency coincided with the expansion of United States territories beyond its continental boundaries. In fact, he was the first President to leave the country during his term in office, to visit the building of the Panama Canal in 1906. That construction was made possible through support of Panama's revolution against Columbia. Roosevelt was much more activist than passive in the rest of Central and South America, calling the United States “the policeman of the Western Hemisphere.” But Roosevelt also successfully negotiated an

end to the Russo-Japanese War, for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize, and defused a volatile situation among Britain, France and Germany over control of Morocco and Egypt.

When elected for the 1904 term, Roosevelt pledged he would not run again, and he groomed William Howard Taft as his successor. As we recall from the coverage of Taft's presidency (April 2011 UMTRR), Roosevelt was very displeased with Taft's first term, and broke away from the Republican Party to form the Progressive or "Bull Moose" Party to oppose his former protégé for the election of 1912. Neither man won; Woodrow Wilson took the election. Wilson's agenda was similar in nature to Roosevelt's except on the subject of entering World War I. Roosevelt opposed Wilson's neutrality stance. When the country finally could not avoid entering the war, all four of Roosevelt's sons entered military service and Roosevelt himself volunteered but was turned down. Tragedy struck Roosevelt's life again when his youngest son Kermit was shot down over Germany. The 26<sup>th</sup> President was never the same after that and though he campaigned for the war effort it was not with the vigor that the public had come to expect. Theodore Roosevelt died in his sleep on January 6, 1919. According to the Miller Center, "one commentator said that death had to take him while he slept else it would have had a fight on its hands."

We'll get right to the point on the Presidential Trivia Question and go from the youngest to have ever been served as Chief Executive, this month's Teddy Roosevelt, to the oldest: Ronald Reagan. Get in those answers... not many months left in this contest!

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

### **Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:**



**510 00 190, \$18.95**

**Reporting Marks: B&O 401071.**

**50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Door,  
Chessie System (Baltimore & Ohio).**

Dark blue with mostly yellow lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and "Ches-C" herald on right. Approximate Time Period: later part of 1984 to early 1990s.

We get yet another bingo for this exact car as of December 1985 on RRPictureArchives.net and immediately realize we don't have a bingo between model and prototype. I need not go any farther than the doors: they are Superior type with a square placard mounted on them — we'll get back to that — and have an external wheel-operated opening mechanism. (Imagine a brakewheel mounted on a track and you have the general idea.) The photo is large and clear enough to read a new date of August 1971, but I am quite sure that the B&O was not the original owner.

The giveaway is the placard on the door of the prototype car, which would have been originally painted up with the logo of the National Railway Utilization Corporation. That

company was a large player in the Incentive Per Diem boxcar bubble of the 1970s. NRUC bought, built and leased boxcars to several shortline railroads including the Pickens Railroad in South Carolina which it owned outright. When the IPD market collapsed, many of these still perfectly good boxcars were picked up by a number of other railroads, including, obviously, the Chessie System. In many cases, these cars were patched just enough to remove the name of the previous railroad, or just relettered with new reporting marks, but in this case, the car got the full repaint treatment complete with Ches-C. In its car copy, MTL notes that the car was painted at the C&O Shops in Raceland, Kentucky, and was leased in 1985 from Helm Leasing, which picked up some of the former NRUC cars.

The series 401000 to 401144 which includes this car does not appear in the April 1984 ORER but is in the January 1985 ORER, so we can get relatively precise with the start of the Approximate Time Period. These cars had the AAR Designation XL and these dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 3 inches, inside height 11 feet, outside length 55 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet 5 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 5138 cubic feet or 153,000 pounds. All 145 cars were in service at that time. The dimensions suggest that the prototype was also a bit larger than the MTL body style represents.

By July 1992, to which I skipped in the ORERs, there were a total of 106 cars in several subsets in an expanded number series 401000 to 401199, still with B&O reporting marks under the CSX Transportation registration. The description of the main series had been changed to include “door assist.” Maybe that’s what the “wheel on a track” device is called. The series is not listed in the October 1996 Equipment Register. I’m sure it’s possible that the cars were again repainted, this time into CSX livery, or perhaps they were returned to the lessor, but either way, we’re still at the end of the ATP for this model.



**510 00 200, \$27.45**

**Reporting Marks: CPAA 211077.**

**50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Door,  
CP Rail.**

Red with aluminum roof. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks and roadname on left. Small orange rectangular panels along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: late 1990s to present.

It was last year at this time that the N Scale version of this car was released, and the story of the car hasn’t changed. Z Scalers don’t get the vent cover panels that were supplied with the N Scale model, but they shouldn’t be too hard to replicate. Otherwise I can reprint myself from the December 2010 coverage of the N Scale car.

A bingo to the exact car is on the Canadian Freight Car Gallery ( <http://freight.railfan.ca> ) as it appeared in February 2003. It’s noted that this car is in wood pulp service and is vented. The car was originally built by Berwick Forge and Fabricating, which means it’s not an exact match to the MTL body style. The largest difference I noted was with the car ends based on photos of other cars in the series.

CP isn't the original owner of these cars according to the caption accompanying the website photo; Berwick built the car in 1979 and CP got them in 1996 which would start our Approximate Time Period. The reporting marks really are in two different styles, with the "CP" in standard lettering and the "AA" in italics. It looks like the "AA" was added later. Ian Cranstone confirms this on his "Canadian Freight Cars" site ( <http://www.nakina.net> ) stating that they were ex-CP of the same number series. MTL says that the CPAA reporting marks designated a USA built car—that's true. But the use of the car in the USA is not exactly correct. In fact, all of the photos of cars in the group on the Canadian Freight Car Gallery were taken in Canada.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for October 1996 has an end note: "Cars were purchased in the United States and under U.S. Customs regulations may be used in the same manner as cars carrying Marks of United States owned railroads in the handling of both international and U.S. domestic traffic." This applied to all of the series of cars marked "CPAA" including the one in which we're interested. The group of "Box, Steel" was numbered 211000 to 211100 for 101 total cars. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet, outside length 55 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet 4 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 5277 cubic feet or 196,000 pounds.

The photos online date to no later than August 2007 and the ORER for October 2007 shows 95 of the original 101 cars still in service. Is that good enough for a "to present" ATP? Probably.



**527 00 101 and 527 00 102, \$22.85 each.  
Reporting Marks: WP 1466 and 1483.  
60 Foot Bulkhead Flat Cars, Western Pacific.**

Black with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. Simulated covered plywood loads included. Approximate Time Period: 1978 (build date) to no later than 1989.

According to Morning Sun's **Western Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, after the Western Pacific bought ten Centerbeam flat cars from Thrall in 1977, they went back to Thrall in 1978 but for a group of bulkhead flat cars instead. The series was numbered 1451 to 1490 and there's a photo of the 1483, one of the two cars MTL modeled, on Page 68 of the Color Guide. The Micro-Trains car is a bit shorter than the prototype, which was 66 feet 8 inches long and had 61 feet 1½ inches of space between the bulkheads. The bulkheads look somewhat different between prototype and model. And of course real flatcars rode a lot lower to the track than out of the box models.

We'll go to the April 1981 ORER for the rest of the usual dimensions: inside height 11 feet, extreme height 15 feet 6 inches, capacity 198,000 pounds. All forty possible cars are in service. The Equipment Register differs from the Color Guide with a listed outside length of 68 feet and also indicates that the cars are for wallboard. But the photo in the MSCG clearly shows a



load of lumber. Jim Eager, who wrote the Color Guide, noted on the YahooGroup "WPList" some years ago that the these Thrall bulkhead flats were for lumber service.

These cars lasted only about a decade on the WP. The July 1987 ORER shows only fifteen left out of the original forty. By the next ORER I have, July 1989, the Western Pacific is part of the Union Pacific and the bulkhead flat cars aren't part of the roster. Interestingly, the Centerbeam flat cars that preceded them remain under WP reporting marks.



**970 01 141 and 970 01 142, \$185.95 each**  
**Road Numbers: 8071 and 8078 (will be preceded with "CSX" in website listings).**  
**SD40-2 Diesels, CSX Transportation.**

Gray and blue cab and long hood. Yellow and blue nose with yellow sill. Black underframe and trucks. Yellow end rails and blue side rails. Large blue "CSX" on long hood. Yellow cab number on nose. Approximate Time Period: early 1990s to as late as the present.

I have come to appreciate the CSX paint schemes, but the variety drives me nuts. Which one is this again? Ah, thanks to Dean Hancock's "CSX Photo Archives" site and his "CSX Paint Schemes" page (the latter, [www.trainweb.org/csxphotos/html/CSXSchemes.html](http://www.trainweb.org/csxphotos/html/CSXSchemes.html)) I can say with confidence that the scheme is the "YN2," "YN" standing for "Yellow Nose," more officially known as the "Bright Future" and apparently also called the "Hockey Stick" scheme. This was the version used on more CSX units than any other, and was in place from 1990 to 2002 when it was replaced with the "YN3" or "Dark Future" scheme (the gray eliminated and replaced with blue and the lettering changed to gold).

At one point the series to which these two SD40-2s belonged was numbered 8000 to 8488, a staggering 401 units, but according to "The Diesel Shop" ([www.thedieselshop.us](http://www.thedieselshop.us)) most of these are now gone. (And that doesn't count the locos of the same type picked up in the split of Conrail between CSX and Norfolk Southern.) We go back to Dean Hancock's site to find that as of October 2011, the 8071 is still in service, and in "YN2," but the 8078 is off the roster. They were originally built for the Louisville and Nashville and carried the same road numbers then. Hancock has a photo of each of these units in "Family Lines" paint in addition to an image of each in the "YN2" scheme that Micro-Trains depicts. How's this for a paint nitpick: this time, MTL did the end rails in all yellow and the side rails in all blue, probably responding to comments about single color handrails being incorrect. Well, it's better, but on the 6018 the middle of the end rails are CSX Gray and the ends of the side rails are yellow. Can't win 'em all.

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

**Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** *The following item was announced as an “off-cycle” release for November via the Micro-Trains website on November 15 and via the e-mail “Micro-Trains E-Line” also on November 16.*

**994 50 100, \$99.95 - Northern Roads Weathered Set.** This consists of the following four items described below. Further detail on each release can be found in the UMTRR covering the most recent previous release. All of these cars are assumed (by me) to be weathered versions of previous releases. Catalog numbers shown are subject to verification, please check the UMTRR website release table later this month.



**503 44 101, Reporting Marks GN 11---** (last three digits of road number obscured)  
**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Roofwalk, Short Ladders, Great Northern.**

Green with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and outline goat herald on right. Weathering and black overspray obscuring road number on left. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s (based on paint scheme) to early 1980s. Previous Releases in unweathered form: Road Numbers 11157 and 11160, January 2011.



**507 44 472, Reporting Marks NP 386--** (last two digits of road number obscured).  
**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, Northern Pacific.**

Green with orange-yellow stripe across car. White lettering including semicircle roadname on left and “Scenic Route of the Vista Dome North Coast Limited” on right. Red, white and black NP monad herald on right. Light weathering and green patch panels (different color green than body color) obscuring part of road number and dimensional data. Approximate Time Period: 1965 through mid-1990s, but see text. Previous releases: Road Numbers 97729 and 97732, June 2011.



**522 50 250, Reporting Marks WP ---** (road number obscured).  
**50 Foot Steel Gondola, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Western Pacific.**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname across car. Weathering in black including obscuring of road number. Approximate Time Period: 1949 (build date) to mid-1980s. Previous Releases: as catalog 13105, Road Number 6610, April 2002 (with either Magne-Matic or Marklin Couplers); Catalog Number 522 5x 250, Road Numbers 6603, 6614, 6618, 6629, Runner Pack #29, May 2011 (but see October 2010 UMTRR for coverage as that’s when pre-orders for the Runner Pack were announced).



**531 50 160, Reporting Marks NP 754-- (last two digits of road number obscured).  
PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, Northern Pacific.**

Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname at top center.

Weathering mostly in black, and oxide red patch panel obscuring part of road number and dimensional data. Approximate Time Period: 1959 to late 1980s. Previous release in unweathered form: Road Number 75427, April 2011.

**Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:** In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #36, four Canadian National 50 foot x-post boxcars, has been released. UMTRR coverage was in the June 2011 issue. The catalog numbers and road numbers for individual cars in this Runner Pack are as follows: 510 51 160, 419550; 510 52 160, 491565; 510 53 160, 419581; 510 51 160, 491594.



*The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is June 2012. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of Runner Packs in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 30.*

**Scheduled June 2012 Release:**

**994 00 042, \$74.95**

**Z Scale "Multi-Pack" #42: Pennsylvania Railroad Variety Pack.**

Consists of the following items, all lettered for the Pennsylvania Railroad and all technically reprints:



**502 50 260, Reporting Marks: PRR 19444.  
40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and shadow keystone on right. Yellow "Insulated" and "PC" (for Pullman Compartmentizer) on door. Approximate

Time Period: 1960 (build date) to mid-1970s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 19440 and 19492, January 2009.

This car was among part of the Pennsy's Class X54A and was in service for Campbell's Soup. Sister car PRR 19492 (one of the two road numbers run by MTL in 2009) is pictured on Page 88 of Morning Sun's **Pennsylvania Color Guide Freight and Passenger Equipment** (Volume One), as it appeared in its original paint as of January 1975. The MTL model's paint is just about dead on, down to the "PC" (not standing in this case for "Penn Central"! ) on the door and the use of the shadow keystone. There are two deltas versus the prototype: first, the real

car had riveted, not welded, sides; and second, the sills on the prototype are completely straight, rather unusual on a car of this type, and a fixable detail if one is so inclined. The X54 and X54A were the last forty foot boxcars built by the PRR, and given the insulation they are technically refrigerator cars with AAR Class "RBL."

The January 1964 ORER shows the series 19400 to 19499, though RBLs still described as "Box, Steel," with these dimensions: inside length 40 feet, inside width 9 feet 3 inches, inside height 9 feet 7 inches, outside length 41 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 8 feet 2 inches wide by 8 feet 10 inches high, capacity 95,000 pounds or 3545 cubic feet. In April 1970 under the Penn Central registration, there were 98 cars, but in the July 1974 book there were just 34. In that 1974 registration it's noted that the cars were equipped for application of heaters, and only three cars were called out for assigned service. Twenty nine of the cars made it into Conrail and the April 1976 Equipment Register, however, they were all gone by April 1981's ORER.



**505 50 180, Reporting Marks: PRR 47212.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door.**

GAEX scheme of dark green with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. Red and white keystone herald on right. Approximate Time Previous Release: as Catalog Number 13518, Road

Period: early 1960s to early 1970s.  
Number 47172, October 2002.

The aforementioned PRR Color Guide, Page 94, includes a shot of sister car PRR 47136. It's from the series PRR 47100 to 47247. The unusual paint is a leftover of sorts from the GAEX experiment, which was a joint venture of General American Transportation and Evans Products to develop a fleet of "modern boxcars" to help stem the tide of traffic being lost to trucks. The Pennsy signed up to lease the first hundred cars in 1950, and then took over ownership of 148 cars in 1960. They were repainted in 1961 but kept largely kept the GAEX scheme, the only difference being the reporting marks and road number. It's important to note, though, that the cars the Pennsy received were from two different production runs that don't look identical. And neither is a match for the MTL body style, for that matter. The principal delta on the 47212 is a seam across the middle of the side.

And just to make things interesting, the January 1964 ORER shows only a series numbered 47100 to 47209. Huh? The next Equipment Register I have is January 1967 and the full set 47100 to 47249 is present there, with a total of 148 cars. They were AAR Classification XME and description "Box, Steel, DF Loaders." Inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 53 feet, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch. The door opening is 8 feet and capacity 4872 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds, with four exceptions that had 110,000 pounds capacity. By the April 1970 Register under the Penn Central, the series was at 138 cars with 100,000 pounds capacity plus nine more with 110,000 pounds capacity. Some of the cars had pallets considered to be part of the car.



These cars became the Penn Central series 264651 to 264789. In at least one case it was just a very quick restencil and the "No Damage" and "General American" logos and even the Pennsy Keystone herald were left intact! (Which would be an easy "do" for Micro-Trains, no?) The April 1976 ORER's Conrail listing shows 66 cars in PC lettering and none left with PRR reporting marks.



**511 50 010, Reporting Marks: PRR 112021  
50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door.**

Dark boxcar red with white and yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and "Cushioned Car" and plain keystone herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1965 (build date) through late 1970's. Previous Release: Road Number 112015, December 2006.

The original run of this car was the first release in the body style for MTL in Z Scale. The X58 group was the only series of Pennsy boxcars built to the "modern" exterior post design that is standard today. The cars were built in 1964 and 1965 and varied by subclass. The 112015 was part of the unsuffixed X58's numbered 112000 to 112399 and were actually AAR Classification RBL, or technically "refrigerator" cars given their insulation, duly noted on the door. X58As were Class XPs, X58Bs were XLs and X58Cs were XLs or plain XMs. Equipment inside these cars varied so one might have seen an "SL" (Transco SL-1 loaders) or an "LD" (Equipco Load Divider bulkheads) instead of the "DFB" (Evans Damage Free Bulkheads) above the reporting marks. It all added up to more than 2500 cars of this type as of April 1968; the X58s were 1074 of these. "Rob's Pennsy Page" ([pr.railfan.net](http://pr.railfan.net), no "www") has this information and an on-line equipment diagram, of each of the subclasses, no less.

The January 1967 ORER shows the series 112000 to 112299 of 300 cars and the series 112300 to 112399 with 100 cars differed only in the cubic foot capacity, 4358 for the former and 4444 for the latter. All other dimensions were the same: inside length 50 feet 2 inches, inside width 9 feet, inside height 10 feet 3 inches, outside length 57 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet 2 inches, and weight capacity 135,000 pounds. It's noted—I don't recall where—that these were among the last cars repainted from the Pennsy scheme, although I recall some pretty hideous paint-outs rolling by me in New Jersey. Entering Conrail in the April 1976 ORER, there were still a total of 168 cars with the PRR keystone in place. The Penn Central had repainted some X58s into, for example, the series 361299 to 362372. By April 1981 the end was near for the PRR paint, with just 14 cars left in this particular group. But Conrail paint, or at least stenciling, was on some X58 cars numbered 361910 to 362009.

The Morning Sun Color Guide to the Pennsy, Volume 2, notes alongside a photo of PRR 118223, also an X58, that the insulated cars were meant to carry pre-cooled foods that needed to be kept cool but not actually refrigerated enroute. The insulation weight took the capacity down to 135,000 pounds from the 140,000 that was typical of the other X58 subclasses. As long as I've got a reference photo or two, I'll deliver the not so good news: the MTL body style is a stand in. Topping the list of differences (pardon the pun) is that the real cars had a

roofwalk and full ladders! The prototype cars had eight ribs on each side of the door while the model has seven. The ends on the real cars are the more “traditional” 4/4 Dreadnaught type (I think that’s right) but the MTL model has the more modern squared off end ribs.



**523 50 020, Road Number 352611 (will be “PRR 352611” in website listings).**

**50 Foot Steel Gondola, Straight Sides, Drop Ends.**

Red oxide with white lettering including roadname and road number on left and circle keystone on right. Approximate Time Period: 1930s through 1950s. Previous Release: Road Number 112015, December 2006.

We go right back to Rob’s Pennsy Page for this car. The road number corresponds to the PRR Class G22, which was in several series including 352000 to 352831. These were built in the 1910s and some were rebuilt in the 1930s. There were 769 of these cars in this group in the October 1944 ORER, and over 700 remaining into October 1953 based on a table on Rob's site. From my January 1953 ORER we have the description “Gondola, All Steel, Tight Ends, Flat Bottom.” So that’s a delta to the model which has drop ends. Continuing with the dimensions, the inside length was 46 feet 2 inches, inside height 3 feet even, outside length 48 feet, extreme height 7 feet 4 inches, and capacity 1288 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. There were 728 cars in the main series, another 20 equipped with bulk containers (the 352819 not among those), and one that was given a drop bottom. There might have been better numbering selections, such as those corresponding to the Pennsy's G27 class which were a little longer and had drop ends, example series 344500 to 348999.

The “circle keystone” scheme as depicted by MTL looks fine. The series was all but gone by the Penn Central merger, but the paint scheme should have been replaced prior to then as it was supplanted by the shadow keystone in 1954. We’ll go at least through the fifties to get around to a repaint with respect to the ATP. Given the build date, the front end of that ATP will be the start of the circle keystone scheme in 1930.

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



**502 00 540, \$22.95**

**Reporting Marks: FL 1845.**

**40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, Florida 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 (mockingbird) and state flower (Orange Blossom) on right. Forty-first release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

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

There is a road sign in the Sunshine State that holds more than a passing interest to me: “End 1.” By that, I mean U.S. Highway One, which begins in Maine and ends in Key West, Florida. Wanderer that I am, I have often thought about driving the entire length of US 1 over time, and perhaps the best known mileage of that route is the Overseas Highway that hops more over the ocean than the Florida Keys that it connects. Railfans know those 130 plus miles of US 1 as the former Florida East Coast “Overseas Railroad” that was built by railroad and real estate magnate Henry Flagler, opened in January 1912 and almost totally destroyed in the Hurricane of 1935. The book **Last Train to Paradise** is an excellent read on the topic.

Centuries before there were Federal Highways or railroads, Native American tribes such as the Seminole, Utina, Choctaw and Creek inhabited what was not exactly a paradise: swamps, snakes, and lots of water, but not always the useable kind. Before the Europeans arrived, native societies of the peninsula developed cultivated agriculture, trade with other groups and a social organization reflected in temple mounds and village complexes. Ponce de León is generally credited with being the first European to set foot there, or should I say come ashore, near St. Augustine in April 1513. He gave the area the name based on the Spanish Eastertime celebration “Pascua Florida” (feast of the flowers). Early attempts at colonization were beaten back by natives, disease and pirates, but St. Augustine was the first permanent settlement in the United States as of 1565. If you don’t count its being looted and burned by England’s Sir Francis Drake in 1586, that is. The French parried there as well, and among the pirates was the famous Blackbeard. England took over Florida in 1763 but Spain got it back in 1783 as part of the peace treaty that ended the American Revolution. As payback for Spain allowing Britain to use Pensacola as a naval base during the War of 1812, Andrew Jackson stormed it, and kept at it until Spain ceded control to the United States in 1821. Many Americans including escapees from slavery had already made their home there. That meant trouble for the Native Americans and the “War of Indian Removal” which was looked after by, among others, the same Andrew Jackson, this time as President. Florida became the twenty-seventh state in the United States on March 3, 1845. It seceded into the Confederacy in January 1861 but was not as ravaged by the Civil War as other states to the north. After the war, farming shifted from plantation type to cultivation by tenant farmers and sharecroppers, both African American and white.

It would be hard to select a state on which there was greater impact from the coming of the railroads. They brought tourists in and citrus out. With the state tied into the network, it was possible to ship fresh oranges from South Florida to the Northeast in a few days. Henry Flagler and Henry B. Plant built huge hotels along their rail lines to meet the lifestyles of the rich and famous, and others able to afford a vacation. But the 1920s brought two hurricanes, land scandals, and the Mediterranean Fruit Fly. And then came the Depression.

The post-World War II years saw the shift from railroads to aircraft and automobiles as the dominant way for the huge influx of tourists to reach Florida, just as it had elsewhere. Population skyrocketed, placing the Sunshine State fourth overall among the United States,

and the economic base diversified as well, with a number of large companies relocating headquarters there. CSX is the dominant major rail carrier, but don't count out the Florida East Coast, without its Overseas Railroad but with its solid operation running from Jacksonville to Miami.

My first visit to Florida was not early on in my personal States Quest; it took place in 1996 and was among the last few in the fifty state journey. And it was the hard way: driving all the way down from Atlanta to Tallahassee and back in a single long day. I didn't set foot in the Sunshine State again until 2004 with a short business trip in the Tampa/St. Pete area, literally my first time on the peninsula that so many people, and theme parks, call home. So there's still Key West to visit, eventually.

**HOn3 SCALE (NARROW GAUGE):** No releases this month.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Here's the news that Z Scalers have been waiting for: with transition to the new overseas vendor complete, Micro-Track sectional stock is expected to arrive at MTL by the time you read this. (In fact, MTL posted on its Facebook page that they'd already arrived.) Turnouts, which will follow, might be a bit late for the Christmas stocking, but perhaps will be back on dealer shelves in time to keep those New Year's Resolutions. With the Z Scale SD40-2s back in business as well, MTL has re-announced its train set lineup as well. MSRP on those ranges from \$279.95 to \$299.95 based on the locomotive included. For both N and Z Scales, MTL has announced an upcoming series of "Produce Billboard Refrigerator Cars". I checked with MTL and these will not be Special Editions (aka "Fantasy Cars") but based on prototypes. More to come on this. Meanwhile, Micro-Trains merchandise now includes polo shirts and a multi-purpose "pocket tool."

**STRUCTURE KITS:** Perhaps the Z Scale structure is prefiguring a new body style this month. The "Coal Mine Tipple Kit" (799 90 955, \$37.95) is large enough to load up to six hoppers. And who's already announced that they will be making hoppers? Hmm... Meanwhile, in N Scale, the second pair of pre-order Ringling Brothers themed kits have been released: the Service Station (499 90 934, \$32.95) and the Circus Entrance (499 90 935, \$19.95). Both of these kits have uses beyond their original intent, of course.

**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** Not as long of a list as usually occurs around this time of year, for which we're grateful. I'm not particularly surprised that last month's colorful NdeM boxcar *está agotado*, I mean, is sold out (024 00 350). Following in numerical order, two weathered boxcars have left the building: the Rock Island 40 footer (024 44 270, mid-month June 2010) and the Norfolk Southern Halloween-themed x-post 50 footer (025 44 730, mid-month October). I am a bit surprised that the relatively plain B&O 50 foot single door boxcar is outta here (031 00 390, October). Also discontinued is the D&RGW "updated lettering" flat car (045 00 380, July). The 40 foot bilingual CN boxcar *est épuisée*—well, I think you get it (074 00 150, November 2010)—and that's probably the only time I'll be able to say "sold out" in three languages. Oh, I haven't said it in English yet: so, October's "big" FEC boxcar is sold out (076 00 120). The Illinois Central hy-cube boxcar is gone (101 00 100, November 2010). The first number of the Western Pacific reporting marks only hopper has emptied (108 00

201, August 2010, second number still available). The oldest of the N Scale releases on the bye-bye board this month is the autorack decorated for “The Rock” (111 00 140, January 2010). Finally, though not a freight car, for completeness that the show’s over for the Ringling Brothers Wagon set (462 00 040).

Turning to Z Scale, we open with both numbers of the New York Central 40 foot boxcar closed (500 00 68x, April)—though I suspect its inclusion in October’s Weathered Set has something to do with this. The Oklahoma State Car is, OK, gone (502 00 529, November 2010). The second number of the Santa Fe 50 foot plug door boxcar is sold out (507 00 442, November 2010, first number still available). Finally, the weathered version of the Pennsylvania “Star Union Line” wood boxcar is gone (515 44 170, November 2010).

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** None received this month.

**OOPS PATROL:** Several numerical errors crept into the November UMTRR—I’m tempted to say “as usual”... With respect to the BNSF Multi-Pack (993 00 063) announcement, the prototype series for the 50 Foot X-Post boxcar should read “713955 to 714315” and the probable BN series from which the BNSF 2 Bay Center Flow covered hopper was drawn had an extra digit and should read 435800 to 439589. The Presidential Car for James Buchanan is 074 00 138 not 137. The Z Scale Mandan Turkey refrigerator is 518 00 050 not 051 and the Z Scale MKT caboose is 535 00 330 not 535 50 069. And just for a little variety, the unintended consequences of copy and paste resulted in the Southern Pacific RPO being called Pullman Green when it’s Olive Green. (And I almost did it again this month...)

**FINALLY, FIFTEEN AND COUNTING:** Unlike the Tenth Anniversary which was a relative extravaganza and included sales of a few specially decorated (by me) cars to mark the occasion, the ending of the fifteenth year of this column is a relatively low key event. In fact, these days it’s probably enough of an event to just get these bytes out the door... if you count Runner Packs, Weathered Cars and Special Editions, Micro-Trains has racked up more than 200 individual items in 2011—and that’s just in N Scale. Couple that with the usual ever increasing demands of The Rest of Life, and it’s safe to say that I’m pleased that I’m still able to keep counting issues of this review and commentary. OK, so maybe I should plan something more elaborate for the Twentieth Anniversary? Let’s not count that high yet!

Until next time, and next year, the best to you and yours in this Holiday Season.

Cheers, George

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