

IrwinsJournal.com Presents:
The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report
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Hello again everyone! Well, after I had an Epic Fail in February by sending out January's column by mistake, my ISP had an Epic Fail by, apparently, changing required e-mail program settings and not telling anyone, thus making it impossible to send out any e-mail at all, regardless of the column date. The fun was further augmented when the fine folks at a certain large company (that rhymes with "Sicromoft") decided that the UMTRR was spam and bounced back a lot of copies to me instead of forwarding them to you...

OK, enough whining. Let's get to the news and views for this month, before anything else happens, especially since these bytes are being squeezed in between business trips. I'm sure B&O fans will be pleased to note that this month finally includes their turn for the heavyweight coaches that are based on that road's prototype. And if you like Z Scale cabooses, you're certainly in luck this month as well. Have I mentioned that in N Scale, the boxcars are wild in March? Let's begin there...

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



020 00 856, \$20.50

Reporting Marks: NS 28226.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Norfolk Southern.

Brown with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left. White, black and yellow herald on right. Simulated interior freight load included. Approximate Time Period: late 1950s to early 1970s.

No, this car isn't lettered for the current Norfolk Southern, but for the previous Norfolk Southern... a distinction that will be really interesting to make when the current NS outshops its heritage diesel unit in the paint scheme of the original NS later this year. This first Norfolk Southern started as the Elizabeth City and Norfolk in 1870, connecting those two cities with 46 miles of trackage. Expansion was through a combination of building and buying until the line reached Charlotte, North Carolina. The railroad had its maximum coverage in 1920 with 942 miles of line. Along with the expansion came several receiverships, with the "final" version of this Norfolk Southern being incorporated in 1910. That was the same year that a slow ferry across Albemarle Sound in North Carolina was replaced with a five mile trestle.

The NS was purchased by and merged into the Southern Railway in 1974. Some additional corporate rearranging was needed when the Southern merged with the Norfolk and Western to form the Norfolk Southern. The original NS, apparently still in existence as a corporate

entity, was renamed the Carolina and Northwestern, in a throwback to another railroad that the Southern owned, though not geographically correct since Norfolk is actually northeast of Charlotte!

The January 1943 build date for the car depicted by MTL might be too early for an appearance in the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for that date, and is certainly too early for this car to be a true PS-1 as well. The road number 28226 also doesn't appear to be what the car originally wore, either, since I don't have it all the way through the January 1955 ORER. My next Equipment Register is from July 1959 and the series 28000 to 28236 is in the NS roster at that time with a count of 167 cars. The description was your basic "Box, Steel" with AAR Designation XM and these key measurements: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, extreme height 14 feet 7 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3713 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. Except for the weight capacity, the dimensions line up with cars in the group numbered 25500 to 25752, which was around in January 1943. I wonder if the additional weight capacity – gained, perhaps, by changing to 50 ton trucks, was indicated by a renumbering. It certainly seems possible, as the car count increased to 235 by the July 1963 ORER before slipping just one to 234 in the January 1964 Register. The 28000 group appears to be where several boxcar series ended up, as the April 1970 ORER has the same 28000 to 28236 group with three subsets by weight capacity – one of which is mistakenly noted as being 880,000 pounds! That would spread the rails! Wrapping things up, the July 1974 Register includes the NS roster under the Southern Railway's, and only 14 cars remain from the group.

We get a bingo on the 28226 via the site RRPictureArchives.net and a photo from July 1963. There's a considerable amount of either light colored weathering or paint fading (or both) on the car, along with door scrapes and a bent end ladder. The car has riveted sides which is a delta to the MTL model. Clearly visible on the car is the designation "XM6" which I'll assume is the Norfolk Southern's car class. There is also a 1966 photo of NS 28126 from the same series available through the Fallen Flags site (www.rr-fallenflags.org). Don't forget to look for the "old" Norfolk Southern.



020 00 866, \$31.95

Reporting Marks: D&RGW 69789.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door, Rio Grande (D&RGW).

Orange and silver sides with black center stripe including across door. Black ends, orange roof. Black lettering including large reporting marks on left and "speed lettering" roadname on right. Approximate Time Period: 1959 (based on paint scheme) into the 1970s. New release, but also issued in a Special Run four pack "Palmer Lake" for Joint Line N Scale (N Scale Collector/N Scale Enthusiast Numbers 02-75 to 02-78 for individual cars and 02-79 for the set).

The Rio Grande went all the way from 1916 to 1939 without buying any forty foot general purpose boxcars, but when they did start ordering them again, it was in considerable quantities... as in, more than two thousand! The last set of cars bought before World War II was numbered 69400 to 69899 and was delivered in February 1942. Unlike previous builds for the D&RGW by Pressed Steel Car Company, this last set had seven-panel Superior Doors and steel running boards. As delivered, these were in brown paint with white lettering including the speed lettering roadname. But in 1959, some cars rolled out of the Rio Grande's Burnham Shops in this attention-getting "Grande gold" and silver scheme.

Sister car D&RGW 69676 can be found on Page 35 of Morning Sun's **Rio Grande Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. Its paint has held up pretty well from 1959 to the 1976 photo date, although by this time the road number had been prefixed with "AX" to denote company service. The prototype car has straight side sills and riveted sides which are deltas to the MTL 020 body style. The real cars also had Duryea sliding center sills to help reduce damage to cargo, which were banned from interchange service in the early 1970s (various dates are shown in 'net searches).

The ORER for January 1959 is probably just a bit too early for these cars to be repainted. We'll take it anyway since it's the dimensions we want: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 4 inches, outside length 42 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3850 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The group was numbered 65700 to 69899, taking in several Pressed Steel Car orders, and totaled 2274 cars. The Duryea underframe interchange ban probably marks the end of the Approximate Time Period, and I've called it that way. For the record, there were 241 cars shown as still in service as of the April 1970 ORER and 165 in April 1976, and none in April 1981.



024 00 370, \$18.50

Reporting Marks: SL-SF 19210.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Roofwalk, Short Side Ladders, Saint Louis-San Francisco (Frisco).

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and slogan "Southeast - Southwest / Ship it on the Frisco!" on right (with word "it") on black panel. Black and white "Coonskin" herald on left above reporting marks. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s to mid-1980s.

Here's the first use of another recent addition to the Research Accumulation: Morning Sun's **Frisco/Katy Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. Page 60 of this volume includes a photo of sister car SL-SF 19212, just two numbers off the MTL-modeled example. This car was among 700 built by Pullman-Standard in 1957. The paint scheme is the as delivered, other than the DF-2 and the small ball and bar symbol on the door. Those items were added to the cars that were fitted with Damage Free loaders; at least 113 of the series were so equipped, beginning in the 1960s, according to information in the Color Guide.

And I suppose we should track those conversions with our handy-dandy collection of ORERs. As of January 1959 all 2827 cars in the series 17050 to 19899 were still the plain “Box, Steel,” though an end note called out nailable steel floors. By the July 1963 Register, 72 of the group had been fitted with loaders, among them the sequence 19200 to 19221 which includes the 19210 MTL modeled and the 19212 in the Color Guide. The AAR Designation was also changed from XM to XML. While we’re here, let’s grab the dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 41 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, capacity 3903 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds, and door opening eight feet—yes, a “door thing” versus the six foot door on the MTL 024 body style. We have a good match to the prototype otherwise, by the way. At that point in time, I imagine that the roofwalks and ladders were still intact and full respectively.

The figure of 113 cars fitted with loaders in the Color Guide shows up in the January 1967 ORER. All of these fell between 19201 and 19398 in terms of road numbers. Running boards were probably starting to be pulled by this time so the start of the ATP in the mid-1960s should be good.

The fact that the 19212 pictured in the Color Guide is “white-lined” as of the photo date of October 1983—literally, right through the road number, indicating that it is out of service and off the roster—suggests that the end of the ATP might be the early or mid-1980s. Jumping to the April 1984 ORER, then, and the Burlington Northern listing (the BN took over the SL-SF in 1980), there are still 40 XML cars in service and just 82 of the non-loader boxcars (seven of them marked “tankage loading only,” yuk). Though the 19212 is gone, just as the photo in the Color Guide indicates, the 19210 is still in service. By the October 1986 Register all DF-2 equipped boxcars are off the roster. So mid-1980s it is for the close of the ATP.



084 00 050, \$23.70

Reporting Marks: NP 118534.

40 Foot Drop Bottom Gondola with Woodchip Extension, Northern Pacific.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left, roadname in center, and road number repeated on right. Simulated woodchip load included. Approximate Time Period: 1959 to late 1970s.

A quick break from the lineup of boxcars for the month here. In its car copy, MTL mentions that these cars were originally built in 1937 and belonged to the series 52000 to 52749. The woodchip extensions were added later and the cars so modified went into the series 118500 to 118540. I suspected this car copy might have come from the **Northern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, but it didn’t as there are no photos of any cars like this in that volume. I can mention that first, the “two road number” scheme was typical for NP gondolas into the 1950s, and second, the 1930s era GS gons lasted a long time, whether they had woodchip extensions or not! The Color Guide shows several soldiering on into and past the Burlington Northern merger of 1970.

So how much luck will we have finding an image of a car of which there were apparently only forty copies? Quite a bit! Over on RailcarPhotos.com there is an August 1980 shot of a white-lined NP 118537, still with both road numbers. If the white-lined road number isn't enough of a hint, the word "RETIRE" is stenciled to the left of the reporting marks. The woodchip extension looks quite the worse for wear; in fact the panel for the end of the cars is missing. That does give us a nice look at the wood that was used for the extension. I'm sure it wasn't every day that the photographer out in Pasco, Washington where this image was taken saw a car built in 1937 sporting both an ACI identification label and consolidated stencils! (The modeler would need to add these to the Micro-Trains car if modeling that time period.) Data accompanying the car photo states that the rebuild with woodchip extensions took place in 1959, dutifully noted here as the start of the ATP. The car itself has its last service date in 1978, so the end of the ATP as "late 1970s" seems right to me.

All that's left is a quick ORER lookup, and we'll grab the July 1963 Register for that. Contrasting with MTL's car copy, the series is shown as running from 118500 to 118590 with 91 cars. The drop bottom doors are still in use according to an end note. These cars were described as "Wood Chip, Steel Underframe" with AAR Designation GSS. The inside length was 41 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet, outside length 43 feet 4 inches, extreme height 14 feet 5 inches, and capacity 3968 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds.

Considering several things, I'm surprised that there haven't been more releases of this body style from behind the red and yellow sign. First, these 084 body style cars sold out fairly quickly from the factory. Second, based on activity and prices realized on that Internet Auction Community, they are still in demand. Third, they probably ran in trains more than one or two at a time! It seems to me that a Runner Pack would be a good choice, but then, I'm not in the room when those choices are made.



101 00 110, \$27.65

Reporting Marks: CNW 57950.

40 Foot Hy-Cube Steel Boxcar, Single Sliding Door, Chicago & North Western.

Brown with mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and ball and bar herald on right. White lettering on red patch left of door. White and black "Excess Height Car" warning on ends. Approximate Time Period: 1969 to 1989 or 1990.

Though Hy-Cubes are probably more associated with Pullman-Standard (and I've read that "Hy-Cube" was a P-S trade name), the short series CNW 57950 to 57960 was built by Maxson in 1969. A laughably small thumbnail photo posted to a discussion board shows—barely—the actual car. The only deltas I can see is that the door is more of a wide panel type than the ribbed type used on the 101 body style, and that the roof of the real 57950 is flat, not peaked as on the Micro-Trains car. Sorry, I'm not paying for a membership to said discussion list to find out if whether there's a larger image. No C&NW Color Guides in the Research Accumulation... yet.

The ORER for April 1970 shows the series of just eleven cars described as “Box, All Steel, Wood Lined, Cushion Underframe” with AAR Designation XL. End notes call out Damage Free loaders and load dividers. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 12 feet 11 inches, outside length 45 feet 2 inches, extreme height 16 feet 10 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 4980 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. These cars were often for appliance loading and as such they’d “cube out” before reaching the weight capacity, even with the extra height available. That’s why, as MTL notes in its car copy, the forty foot versions of these cars gave way to larger varieties.

All eleven cars were still in place in the Chicago & North Western’s roster as of the April 1981 ORER, and ten were left as of April 1984. It looks like they all left the roster between the July 1989 Register, which had the ten, and the October 1991 ORER, which had zero. A better than usual estimation of the Approximate Time Period results this time.



145 00 091 and 145 00 092, \$31.40 each
Road Numbers: 5010 and 5015 (will
be preceded with “B&O” in website
listings).
Heavyweight Paired Window
Coaches, Baltimore and Ohio.

Blue and gray sides; black ends, roof, underframe and details. Delux gold lettering including roadname in center of letterboard and road number at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: early 1950s to early 1960s at least.

The Official Register of Passenger Equipment for January 1953 shows a series of ten cars numbered 5009 to 5019, described as “Coach, Steel,” with seating capacity of 74, inside length of 69 feet 4 inches, length “over buffers” of 74 feet 10 inches, and electro-mechanical air conditioning. We learned last month that the B&O’s famous paint scheme depicted here wasn’t fully adopted until 1953, so it’s nice to know that these cars were all still around then! (With enough left over for a Runner Pack or two, actually.) I’ll assume that since this painting took some time, we are good with the start of the ATP in the early 1950s and the end in the early 1960s when the paint scheme was moved to the C&O colors. But mind that “at least,” and feel free to invoke Rule Number One with respect to your B&O passenger train.

I will assume, safely, I believe, that these are the appropriate road numbers for the Pullman Plan 2882-B that is the prototype for this specific MTL 145 body style. At least, these road numbers had better be right, or the B&O experts out there will be all over this! I think we’re OK though, as it was noted on the “BnOinN” YahooGroup that MTL is collaborating with B&O passenger car expert Bruce Elliott on these projects, and is quite pleased with the results.

N SCALE REPRINTS:



027 00 140, \$20.20

Reporting Marks: MP 253515.

50 Foot Exterior Post Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, Missouri Pacific.

Brown with aluminum roof and mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and "buzzsaw" herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1976 into the decade of the 2000s. Previous Release (as Catalog Number 27140): Road Number 253561, June 1986.

This car and the one released by Kadee Micro-Trains in 1986 both belong to the series MP 253450 to 253749, a group of 300 cars built by American Car and Foundry as their lot 11-06831 in 1976. A photo of MP 253666 can be found on Page 51 of Morning Sun's **Missouri Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, but we'll try online for this series too, for example MP 253526 on the Fallen Flags site (www.rr-fallenflags.org). Considering that the MTL car isn't a model of the AC&F version, we have a pretty good match with only some minor quibbles on the door width, stirrups and the side sills. There is the caveat that I don't have a good look at the roof.

I've recently added to the Research Accumulation an digital copy of the ORER for July 1978, needed to fill a gap between my original hard copy 1976 and 1981 Registers, and here's the first use of that '78 edition. The series MP 253450 to 253749 is described as "Box, Cushion Underframe, Plug Doors, 2-1 Piece Bulkheads, 50K" with AAR Designation XL. The inside length was 50 feet 8 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 11 feet 3 inches, outside length 60 feet, extreme height 15 feet 4 inches, capacity 4948 cubic feet or 145,000 pounds, and door opening 10 feet 6 inches. That is a technical "door thing" versus the MTL 027 body style which has a plug door that's a little less wide at, um, ten feet even, tough to discern with plug doors. Anyway, at the time there were 289 cars in the main series and 10 cars in a subset with shipper owned pallets but otherwise identical.

Fast forward to October 1996, when the MP continues to have its own ORER registration despite having been bought by the Union Pacific in 1980. (The reason was financial: MP bonds were being paid off until 1997, when the UP then officially absorbed the MP.) The series is a lot smaller than I would have expected: 66 cars in the main series and 16 more cars in subsets, one of which was of twelve cars downgraded to 120,000 pounds capacity. The total was down to 61 cars across multiple groups (some of one car) in January 2000, this under the Union Pacific listing. A mere three cars remain as of the January 2011 Equipment Register, not enough to confidently state an ATP of "to present." It's also possible but not likely that any remaining cars would have been repainted into the Union Pacific scheme with MP reporting marks.



045 00 280, \$21.95

Reporting Marks: CP 301220.

50 Foot Steel Flat Car, Fishbelly Sides, CP Rail.

Red with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and CP Rail roadname right of center. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s to early decade of the 2000s. Previous Release (as Catalog Number 45280): Road Number 301227, August 2005.

The first time around, the MTL model carried peeler logs, this time, it's covered pallets. But the car series is still the same: citing once again Ian Cranstone's Canadian Freight Cars (URL www.nakina.net), CP 301200 to 301299 is a renumbering of 100 cars originally built by Canadian Car and Foundry in 1952. These 52 foot 6 inch cars lasted until January 2001 according to Cranstone. We'll start with the April 1976 ORER, close enough to the November service date given by MTL. That listing shows a larger series from 301200 to 301799, with 502 cars plus six more with special tiedowns for auto frames. As mentioned, the cars have a 52 foot 6 inch "inside" length, a 55 foot 8 inch "outside" length, height of 3 feet 8 inches, and capacity of 166,000 pounds. There is a notation with load limits by length to indicate the concentration allowed on the cars. They are listed as "Flat, Steel, Wood Floors." MTL must have picked up on this as the floor on this release is brown instead of Action Red – meaning we have a "Not A Reprint" by my definition. There were just 38 total cars in this group in the January 2000 ORER, which is where I stopped looking.

The previous number MTL ran is in Morning Sun's **Canadian Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 93. When photographed in 1979, it was indeed carrying a peeler log load. It also had steel stakes and binder chains connecting opposite stakes. I don't see any reason why these cars should not carry a covered pallet load instead, but as usual, the details of tiedowns and the like are left to the modeler.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following item was announced as an "off-cycle" release for March 2012 via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line, all on or about March 15.*



031 44 390, \$22.45

Reporting Marks: B&O 299202.

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Baltimore & Ohio.

Brown (boxcar red) with white lettering including reporting marks and small capitol dome herald on left and large "B&O" on right. Moderate weathering and road number in white on black patch panel. Approximate Time Period: about 1964 to as late as the mid-1980s. Previous Release (in unweathered version): Road Number 299206, November 2011.

It was only a few months ago that the “clean” release of this car debuted, so we’ll summarize from that coverage. The series 299000 to 299216 was originally built in 1951 by American Car and Foundry. It’s the B&O’s Class M-61A, converted from M-61 via the addition of DF-1 belt loaders. We know from the B&O Historical Society, via a file available on the Baltimore_and_Ohio YahooGroup that the capitol dome herald used on the car dates to the 1960s. A post by Bob Witt on the “BnOinN” YahooGroup narrows this to about 1964 so that’s where I started the ATP. Both Bob and the Morning Sun **Color Guide to B&O Freight and Passenger Equipment** give 1953 as the date for the add of the DF loaders. As I noted back in November 2011, the ORER tracking is messy, with groups being merged and the car counts going up and down, but the ATP is definitely over between the January 1985 and October 1986 ORERs. Chances are that the “strictly speaking” Approximate Time Period would be shorter with roofwalk removal and ladder shortening occurring sometime before that. The AC&F-built prototype is not a match for the MTL 031 body style; for example the real car had riveted sides versus welded sides on the Micro-Trains car.



111 44 151 and 111 44 152, \$42.90 each
Reporting Marks: CN 704386 and CN 7-----
(most of road number obscured).
89 Foot Enclosed Tri-Level Flat Cars,
Canadian National.



Black flat car with white lettering including reporting marks on left. Black and aluminum racking with white roof. CN “wet noodle” herald on placard on rack. 151 car has moderate weathering and large multicolor graffiti on most of right half of one side. 152 car has moderate to heavy weathering and black graffiti across one side. Approximate Time Period: mid-1980s to as late as the present. Previous Release: Road Number 704367, June 2011.

As much as I would prefer not to admit it, autoracks today look a lot more like what MTL released here than the unweathered version of this car that they ran in June of last year. The large graffiti might not be based on a particular prototype, but it’s certainly a realistic depiction of what we see every day.

A key topic with the “clean” car was the apparent exception that it represented. In general, this series of cars, CN 704365 to 704451 was equipped with “Radical Anti-Vandalism Enclosure” or “RAVE” fully enclosed slatted doors, which are different from the more typical clamshell type end door that MTL uses on the 102 body style. Checking again with Ian Cranstone’s “Canadian Freight Cars” site (www.nakina.net) this series had the RAVE doors and were also apparently rebuilt in 1985 from the 700775 to 701074 series which was originally built in 1976. Cranstone notes that some of these cars were subsequently restenciled into the CNA series 704365 to 704451 in 1996; that is, the same number series with the CN’s reporting marks for “built in the USA” cars. He shows the group as in service from 1986 to the present. I could not call a foul on the first road number, though, as a photo of it

on RRPictureArchives.net as of December 2008 showed the end door that Micro-Trains uses on the model, and not the RAVE door. Online photos of other cars in the series did show RAVE ends. I did not get a bingo on the first weathered car and as for the second, a road number with the last five digits obscured is going to be ambiguous anyway.

Last time, my latest available ORER was from October 2007 so I'll update with to the January 2011 edition for a lookup. The series of cars as listed in the Equipment Register entry takes in several adjacent groups from Ian Cranstone's table, and spans the road numbers 704276 to 704519. There are 185 cars in the main series, which is described as "Flat, Tri-Level Fully Enclosed Rave Doors 10 Inch End of Car Cushioning, Axle Spacing 5 Feet 1 Inch, Truck Centers 63 Feet 9 Inches." So the doors are part of the description. That's pretty specific. There are seven exceptions in four subsets, described simply as "Flat," with identical dimensions except for the Gross Rail Weight. Before I forget: inside length 89 feet 4 inches, outside length 93 feet 10 inches, extreme height 18 feet 11 inches, and height to top of sides a mere 2 feet 10 inches – top of sides this time referring to the flat car below the autorack.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcements, Runner Pack #62, four fifty foot U.S. Army flat cars with tank loads, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the October 2011 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 045 51 180, Road Number 38140; 045 52 180, Road Number 38158; 045 53 180, Road Number 38362; 045 54 180, Road Number 38373. Note that the tank loads included with the Runner Pack are unassembled and unpainted.



993 00 070, \$74.95

Quantity Four of 39 Foot Single Dome Tank Cars, United States Army Transportation Corps. Black with white lettering including reporting marks and "United States Army" on left and Transportation Corps logo on right. Approximate Time Period: 1960s and 1970s. Previous Releases: Road Number 10986, July 1995; Road Number 10936, June 2003.

The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 065 51 370, Road Number 10938; 065 52 370, Road Number 10944; 065 53 370, Road Number 10950; 065 54 370, Road Number 10956. Note that this Runner Pack was not previously announced.

It's been a while since we've had a surprise Runner Pack, at least one that isn't weathered. As before, we'll recap from past releases of this car in both N and Z Scales. MTL had

previously stated that this car was serviced in built in 1942. But the ORER for July 1950, which shows almost 3400 tank cars registered to the Department of the Army, doesn't include any tank cars in the 19000s. The same is true in the January 1959 Register. Finally, we get somewhere in the January 1964 ORER, where the armed forces have all been consolidated under the rather bureaucratic sounding "Department of Defense - Defense Traffic Management Service" listing. A group of ICC-103 type tank cars with USAX reporting marks are numbered from 10038 to 11167. There are 851 cars in this group so there's a reasonable chance that all the Runner Pack road numbers are included.

By the April 1970 ORER, the restenciling of rolling stock from USAX, USNX, et cetera reporting marks into unified DODX reporting marks was well underway, although the series of tankers with which we're concerned could have been wearing either the new or old initials. The group is down to 530 cars by then. By April 1976 it looks like the DODX transition has been completed, and there are only 126 tankers in the series left, so that's where I stopped looking.

There's a photo of USAX 10956 in the book **Classic Freight Cars Volume 2**. It is also a single dome tank car with about the same looks, found in Anchorage, Alaska in 1977. However, the Fallen Flags site (www.rr-fallenflags.org) has two photos from 1968 and 1969 of tank cars in the same group that are painted silver and black with black lettering but still including USAX reporting marks. Does that mean that we've overreached on the Approximate Time Period? It's hard to say.

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



Scheduled October 2012 Release:

993 00 068, \$89.95

Quantity four of 50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcars, Single Door, CSX Transportation.

Reporting Marks: CSXT 141004, 141052, 141073 and 141088. Dark blue with aluminum roof. Mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and small underlined "CSX" on right. Approximate Time Period: 1990s to present, but note repaint information in text. Previous

Releases (as Catalog Number 25550): Road Number 141001, March 1996; Road Number 141053, April 1996; Road Number 141072, May 1996; Road Number 141085, June 1996.

Those of you who have been with me since near the beginning of the UMTRR—and thank you for that!—or have been following Micro-Trains since then, might remember MTL's experiment with "Runner Series" of cars. These consisted of four of the same car, released in consecutive or nearly consecutive months. The last time we saw CSX x-post boxcars from Micro-Trains, there were four in a 1996 Runner Series. I think it's interesting that a former

Runner Series item is revived as a Runner Pack, and it will be interesting to see how well this entry does in the market. The Runner Series were simply not as popular as I think MTL expected. Maybe it was just an idea ahead of its time.

Anyway, the four cars in the Runner Pack come from the same group as the four cars in the Runner Series, namely, 141000 to 141999. I first pick these up in the July 1989 ORER. (CSX Transportation has a listing in the July 1987 Register, but the CSXT reporting marks weren't yet in use.) The main series is described as "Box, Steel, Sheet Metal Lining, Lading Strap Anchors, 50K, Reinforced Nailable Steel Floor" and has 131 cars. And then, we have a mess: eleven more subseries totaling 284 more cars, differing in either one dimension or in capacity by cubic footage or weight, and sometimes also by AAR Type Code. Well, at least the inside dimensions: length 50 feet 6 inches, width 9 feet 6 inches, height 10 feet 7 inches, and the door opening, 10 feet, are the same all the way across this mismatched bunch of boxcars. That's what shippers care about.

It's noted in **Rail Model Journal** and elsewhere that CSX took over leases of former "Incentive Per Diem" and Railbox boxcars and as we'll see, this is the heritage of at least some of the 141000s. Between that and the fact that we have a mélange of various cubic foot capacity boxcars, we know that without a bingo on the specific car road numbers, we can't reliably compare model to prototype. We do know that the 025 body style is based on the FMC 5077 boxcar, which means that we can eliminate about 238 of the 415 cars in the group from the "exact match" category just on the basis of capacity.

So, do we need "bingos" on these specific cars in order to check up on them? Maybe, maybe not. Fallen Flags has CSXT cars all around the road numbers that MTL has used. Several of these are former Railbox cars that were restenciled only, for example CSXT 141003 which was photographed in 2005 still mostly in RBOX paint. This does cast a bit of doubt on the Approximate Time Period given the paint scheme, so we've added a caveat. The 141003 on Fallen Flags still shows an ACF trademark in the lower left, and if that's true of the other cars in the neighborhood of that road number, we know we don't have an exact match between the real and the MTL model which is based on an FMC car. A shot of CSXT 141012 also from 2005 shows the paint scheme we're after. I like the image of CSXT 141570 from the fall of 1999, looking brand new and freshly painted.

Completing the ORER lookups, the series increases over time to reach 911 cars in ten different groups as of July 1998, then drops to 706 total cars in January 2000, then rebounds to 903 cars in fifteen groups in the January 2002 Register. The January 2006 shows 762 cars in thirteen groups, and my current proxy for "to present," January 2011, indicates 560 cars, again in thirteen groups.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



074 00 143, \$23.95

40 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Without Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Presidential Series #43: Millard Fillmore.

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.

I've occasionally connected my main hobby of model railroading and a secondary interest in coin collecting, and in terms of this penultimate release in the Presidential Series, there is even a geographic connection not far from UMTRR HQ. On February 18, 2010, the Fillmore Presidential Dollar was released in Moravia, New York, and our daughter was among those who attended the official ceremony that put these coins into circulation. (Well, more or less, given their popularity.) She even received a free sample! As my friend and fellow author and internet columnist Scott Fybush wrote, "Fillmore may rank near the bottom in most polls of presidential popularity, but he's still revered in the town where he was born – which may explain why some 700 Moravians overflowed the high school cafeteria to listen to speeches recounting Fillmore's life and legacy and to watch as Deputy U.S. Mint Director Andy Brunhart ceremonially dumped out a bucket full of the coins with the help of students dressed as Millard and Abigail Fillmore." Given that our daughter, who went along with Scott and his daughter, was born on a 13th, and Fillmore was the 13th President, there's still another connection.

Fillmore was born into an impoverished family on January 7, 1800, the second of eight children. Moravia wasn't prime farm country, and there was little time for education after hard work just to stay alive. Fillmore taught himself to read though he managed only six months of formal schooling, and that at age seventeen. His teacher, Abigail Powers, was just nineteen. In 1826, they would marry. Meanwhile, Fillmore overcame his lack of education, and he read law in 1822 and became a clerk for a judge.

The young lawyer was elected to the New York Legislature in 1826 and to the House of Representatives in 1829, where he served four non-consecutive terms. To oversimplify Fillmore's politics, if Andrew Jackson was for it, he was against it. Jackson's expansion of presidential power angered several different political parties, including Fillmore's, the "Anti-Masonic Party" (look it up!) that later merged with the Whigs. After several unsuccessful bids for office, Fillmore became New York's state comptroller in 1847, which attracted national attention. This was aided particularly by one Thurlow Weed, who was a state and later national power broker. Through nothing more than an attempt to balance the Whig ticket between North and South, the Whigs added Fillmore the Northerner as the Vice Presidential candidate to Zachary Taylor the Presidential candidate for the election of 1848.

Can you imagine a race of that magnitude where the two men on the same ticket didn't even meet until after the election? That's what happened with Taylor and Fillmore, who did win the very tight race against the Democrats. But Taylor didn't like Fillmore very much and quickly relegated him to his position as President of the Senate.

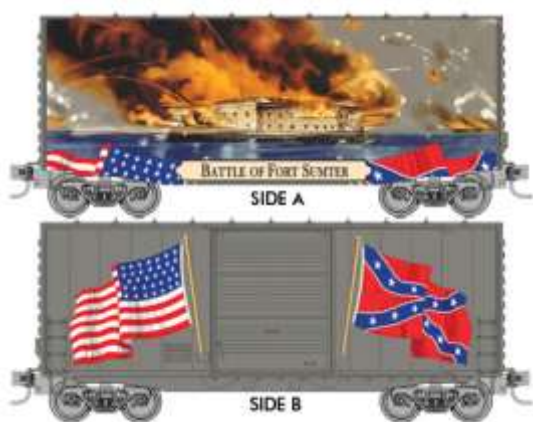
In a controversy that clearly pre-figured the Civil War (the next Special Edition Series from MTL, as we'll discuss next), the set of proposals that would become the Compromise of 1850 was stuck in Congress with President Taylor refusing to take a position on it. Then Zachary Taylor died in office, and Fillmore became the new Chief Executive. Fillmore supported the Compromise of 1850, and with help from Senator Steven Douglas (who would later face Lincoln for the Presidency) and Daniel Webster, got it passed. And it backfired; as the Miller Center reports, "Fillmore believed he had helped to safeguard the Union, but it soon became clear that the compromise, rather than satisfying anyone, gave everyone something to hate. Under the strains of the failed agreement, the Whig Party began to come apart at the seams." As a leader in getting the Compromise of 1850 passed, Fillmore became unpopular with many Whigs, so much so that he was not re-nominated for the Presidency by his own party! Instead, the nod went to Winfield Scott, who like Zachary Taylor was a former military general. Scott was perhaps even less popular than Fillmore and was easily defeated by Franklin Pierce. And that was effectively the end of the Whig Party as a national force, although pieces of it would end up in the Republican Party. Fillmore was then struck by the twin tragedies of losing his beloved wife and daughter shortly after leaving the Presidency.

Fillmore attempted to regain the Oval Office as the candidate of the "Know-Nothing" Party and what was left of the Whigs. He came in third place, but that helped to hand the election to Democrat James Buchanan. That completed Fillmore's political career and he retired to Buffalo. He remarried and became active in charitable and pro-Union causes until his death in 1874. While then-President U.S. Grant hardly made mention of the former President's passing, Millard Fillmore was honored as Buffalo's first citizen. He had founded the University of Buffalo in 1844. Now part of the State University of New York system, "UB" is the largest public university in the Northeast and the largest component of SUNY.

The Miller Center states that although Fillmore is largely a forgotten President, "It is often said that the best compromise is the type that pleases none of the compromisers. By the end of his presidency, Millard Fillmore knew this all too well." While the Compromise of 1850 cost Fillmore his political career, he may have deferred the Civil War for another decade.

The Presidential Trivia Question for this month could very well be, "Who's Left?" as there is just one of the forty-four Chief Executives who has not been honored. For the record, though, your last chance to win an Oath of Office car from Micro-Trains hangs on knowing the answer to their actual question. Two of the parts are about equally simple: first Supreme Commander of NATO and champion of the Interstate Highway System. To get a chance at the car, "Like Ike," that is, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Good luck!

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



Catalog Number TBD (101 Series), \$24.95

40 Foot Hy-Cube Boxcar, Smithsonian Civil War Series Car #1: Battle of Fort Sumter.

Gray with one smooth side across which is rendered a full color depiction of the Battle of Fort Sumter based on artwork provided by the Smithsonian Institution. Other side of car is in gray with United States and Confederate flags either side of the door. Note that image at left is for representation only and actual car may vary. No reporting marks or road number is expected to appear on this car.

While we were still dating, my wife-to-be asked me one night if I had been watching the Ken Burns series "The Civil War." "Why," I joked, "I know how it ends!"

But as it turns out, although I certainly knew how it ended, there was a great deal that I did not know about the Civil War. It's only recently that I began to get a better sense of this through reading the book **Team of Rivals** by Doris Kearns Goodwin. I highly recommend it, although at more than 750 pages (not including footnotes!) it is a somewhat longer read than the UMTRR. There are a number of pages in the book devoted to the event that officially began the War Between the States, and what preceded it. So with the close of the Presidential Series about to occur, we're off on a different historical trek here within this bytes.

The story of Fort Sumter actually began just six days after South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860. Major Robert Anderson, the commander of Fort Moultrie, which was also in Charleston Harbor, secretly moved to Fort Sumter. Fort Sumter wasn't even finished yet but was considered easier to defend than Fort Moultrie. That may have been true, but it could still be blockaded by the Confederates, and after multiple warnings to surrender, that's what South Carolina did. Here's something else I didn't know: the first shots of the war were not from cannons, but from the guns of cadets at the Citadel, the military institution in Charleston. That took place on January 9, 1861, more than three months before what we know to be the Battle of Fort Sumter. The Citadel cadets successfully repelled a Union attempt to resupply the fort.

And it was another attempt to replenish supplies that figured into what we know as the official start of the Civil War. President Lincoln was informed that Fort Sumter would run out of food by April 15 and so authorized a supply mission with a number of ships coming into Charleston Harbor. According to Doris Kearns Goodwin writing in **Team of Rivals**, five of the seven members of Lincoln's cabinet did not support this decision. There was considerable concern that an armed attempt to replenish Fort Sumter would lead to more states leaving the Union as well as further inflaming sentiments in the already Confederate

States. William Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State (and one of the rivals for the Republican Presidential nomination that Lincoln won) was particularly upset at Lincoln's choice to fortify Sumter.

At any rate, the plan to get supplies to Fort Sumter was not successfully carried out. The Confederates learned of the attempt and decided to attack before the Union ships could make it into position. Before dawn on April 12, 1861, firing commenced on Fort Sumter and the United States was at war with itself. Thirty-four hours later, the fort was surrendered. After the First Battle of Fort Sumter, Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas and Tennessee seceded from the Union.

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

993 21 170, \$249.95

Ringling Brothers Excursion Train Set.

Scheduled to consist of the following (catalog numbers are subject to change and will be verified following the release of this set):



(801) on cab and "Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey" on tender, each accented with yellow filigree ornamentation at corners. Note: Locomotive is subject to change.



bottom of side with yellow filigree ornamentation either side. Additional yellow filigree ornamentation between windows. Full color illustration of a hippopotamus on left and full color representation of a lion on right, each inset into yellow ovals with yellow filigree ornamentation. No reporting marks or road number.



yellow filigree ornamentation either side. Additional yellow filigree ornamentation between windows and on letterboard. Full color illustration of a zebra inset into a yellow rectangle with yellow filigree ornamentation. No reporting marks or road number.

985 50 706, Model Power 2-8-2 Steam Locomotive with Micro-Trains paint and coupler. Black with gray smokebox. Red lettering including road number

140 50 009, Heavyweight Railway Post Office Car. Black with red lettering including "Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey" on letterboard and "The Greatest Show on Earth" along

142 50 009, Heavyweight 12-1 Pullman Sleeper. Black with red lettering including "Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey" along bottom of side with



144 50 009, *Heavyweight Pullman Observation Car*. Black with red lettering including “Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey” along

bottom of side with yellow filigree ornamentation either side. Additional yellow filigree ornamentation between windows and on letterboard. No reporting marks or road number.

The website (circushof.com) for the International Circus Hall of Fame near Peru, Indiana includes a glossary of circus terms, which is sourced from the book **Circus Lingo** by Joe McKennon. You might remember the “advance car” that started this Special Edition series for Ringling Brothers (MTL 047 00 400, June 2009)? Well, it certainly existed, although I think it might have been a passenger car – at least I hope so, for the sake of the men who made all arrangements for excursion trains to bring patrons from outlying areas to the circus. These were in place from the 1880s to World War I. “Dozens of these trains were run to otherwise unprofitable towns bringing in hundreds of show goers making the ‘nut’ for the show that day,” according to the glossary, which also correctly points out that excursion trains were run for many other types of special events. (For example, to the beach on Lake Ontario that’s not far from UMTRR HQ, so that city dwellers could escape the heat of summer.)

I would suspect that most if not all of these excursion trains were actually operated by the railroad using said railroad’s own equipment. This is probably analogous to today’s charter busses to sporting events, festivals, and the first thing I thought of, casinos. Since we’re talking about a Special Edition anyway, might as well do it up fancy, and Micro-Trains certainly has based on the preliminary artwork. By the way, this is the first time I’ve seen the word “filigree” in a sentence in quite a while!

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

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



534 00 011 and 534 00 012, \$17.80 each
Road Numbers: 220306 and 220455 (will be preceded with “PRR” in website listings).
33 Foot Two Bay Hopper, Ribbed Sides, Flat Ends, Pennsylvania Railroad.

Oxide red (the PRR’s “Freight Car Color”) with white lettering including roadname and road number on left and circle keystone herald on right. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: 1942 to late 1950s at least.

These two road numbers are the same as the last two numbers that were released in N Scale, in January 1996 and February 1999 respectively. Reaching back to the UMTRR from that latter date, I see that I noted that the prototype series was the PRR’s H-31, just as MTL states in its car copy. Specifically, these two were part of the series 220301 to 220841. There was another series of the same class numbered 222501 to 222670 according to “Rob’s Pennsy

Page" (prr.railfan.net , no "www"). The cars in which we're interested were built in 1942 and rode on Barrett-Whitehead trucks. Rob's page summarizes car counts from ORER data: all 541 possible in the series in October 1944, one less in October 1948, and a drop of a few here and there along the way to October 1963 when there were still 525 in service. There was a big drop to 272 by April 1968, and I know from my previous research that none of these survived into Conrail. However, it's quite unlikely that the cars would have remained in the circle keystone paint scheme all that time anyway, though it's of course difficult to prove the absence of something. The circle keystone was supplanted by the shadow keystone herald in the 1950s; we could take that as the end of the ATP as long as we add an "at least."

Let's grab the ORER from January 1943 for the usual dimension review: inside length 31 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 9 inches, outside length 32 feet 9 inches, extreme height 10 feet 4 inches, capacity 1859 cubic feet level full or 100,000 pounds. That "level full" space was usually augmented by piling coal a bit higher, somewhat like the simulated coal load included with the car, or perhaps a bit less conservatively than that.

A three-quarter builder's photo of the first car in the series, PRR 220301, is also available through Rob's Pennsy Page. Those Baker-Whiteley trucks don't look too far off from MTL's choice for under their model, especially at 1:220th actual size. Overall, we do have the look and feel of the H31 here; the basic features like number of ribs (or panels) and grab irons instead of ladders check out. I don't doubt that some nits could be picked – okay, here's one, the edge at the top of the ends is a bit longer than on the prototype. Another PRR photo of another H31 shows one of the later paint schemes, with large roadname and road number and small keystone at the top left. Certainly a candidate for a future release.



534 00 021 and 534 00 022, \$18.86 each
Reporting Marks: SP 460600 and 460676.
33 Foot Two Bay Hopper, Ribbed Sides, Flat Ends, Southern Pacific.

Oxide red including trucks, wheels and couplers. White lettering including reporting marks on left, round "Southern Pacific Lines"

herald left of center and large roadname on right. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: mid-1950s to as late as the late 1990s.

The road numbers of these two cars align with two of the four road numbers in the N Scale Runner Pack #56 from October 2011, so we can borrow from the April 2011 coverage of that release. I'll start, though, by remarking that Lee Gautreaux on his SP Freight Cars Site (URL www.railgoat.railfan.net) states that the series SP 461432 to 461678 was originally Texas & New Orleans 2000 to 2249, so some allowances to the ATP should be made.

As listed in the January 1959 ORER, though, these two hoppers are in the group 460557 to 461431. The inside length was 31 feet 6 inches, outside length 32 feet 7 inches, extreme height 10 feet 9 inches. There were 875 of these 70 ton hoppers in service. The description is interesting: "Hopper, All Steel, Enterprise." This refers to the hardware below the bay. If it's

“selective” then the material in the hopper can be dumped either between or to either side of the rail. If it’s not selective, then it’s not as flexible. According to an original specification sheet posted on Richard Percy’s “SP Modeler’s Page” (espee.railfan.net , no “www”), the series in question had Enterprise Selective doors mounted lengthwise on the car, that is, across the bottom along the side. “Crosswise” would be the description of how the MTL model’s bay doors are. So what we have here is a different kind of “door thing” than what is usually reported in these bytes, and not something I’ve ever seen modeled in Z Scale.

Stepping quickly through the ORERs we find that in January 1964 there were 874 cars in the series, in April 1970 there were 844, in April 1976 there were 559, in April 1981 there were 353, in January 1985 there were 146, and in July 1989 there were still 54. A more than thirty year life span would have been pretty good, but I wouldn’t expect the paint scheme as modeled by MTL to have made it that far. In fact, the spec sheet I referenced shows a hopper in yet another variation, with the large roadname but without the herald.

There are several photos of prototype cars, which were SP’s class H-70-17, available on Lee Gautreaux’s site, one of which made it all the way to August 1998! The paint jobs are in various states of decay, which makes it either difficult or impossible to tell whether the original paint with the herald is under all that dirt, grime and rust.

Z SCALE REPRINTS: Holy cupola, Batman! There are five cabooses to report on this month... none of which are on dealer standing orders. I suspect I know what that means... limited quantities. (Unofficially speaking, of course.)



535 00 030, \$23.15

**Road Number: 18720 (will be “CR 18720” in website listings).
30 Foot Steel Caboose, Center Cupola, Conrail.**

Blue with mostly white lettering including “can opener” (aka “wheel on rail”) herald running from left to center, and roadname and road number on right. Approximate Time

Period: 1976 to the end of the caboose. Previous Release (as Catalog 14703): Road Number 18738, with Marklin Couplers in June 1985 and with Magne-Matic Couplers in June 1987.

We’ll start with what is probably the model that is closest to a prototype of the quintet of reruns. Conrail inherited some of these Northeastern Style cabooses from predecessor roads including the Lehigh Valley, Reading and Jersey Central. A 1979 photo of the 18720 found on RRPictureArchives.net shows that it, too, is not an exact match either, but it is a center cupola caboose that at least once had four windows per side. The 18720 was the former Reading 92874, and the location at which it was photographed, Rochester Junction on ex-Lehigh Valley trackage, is not far from UMTRR HQ. (The right of way is now the “Lehigh Valley Trail” all the way across the county in which I live, and I’ve biked that whole length.)

Conrail gave Class N4 to these “Northeast Standard” cabooses, with numbers 18705 to 18763 according to the Conrail Historical Society (thecrhs.org , no “www”). Photos of the N4s found there, including another of the 18720, were taken as late as 1985.



535 00 120, \$19.95

Reporting Marks: ATSF 2012.

30 Foot Steel Caboose, Center Cupola, Santa Fe.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks only below cupola. Approximate Time Period: early 1940s to as late as 1976, but see text. Previous Releases (all as Catalog 14712): Road Number 1994, February 1994; Road Number 1998, April 1997; Road Number 2000, December 2000; all with either Marklin or Magne-Matic Couplers.

I noted with the last release that with one exception (which I forgot to note, making for perhaps a twelve-year-old oops) the road number of these Santa Fe waycars matched the year in which MTL released it. And did that speak to the prototype fidelity of this model? I suspected that I knew the answer without even checking.

OK, though, for the record, the ATSF "Version 4" waycar offered by Division Point Models in brass in HO Scale is a 28 foot offset cupola steel caboose that was numbered 2001 to 2200 and built in 1942 and 1943. No match there, except to say that they're both waycars. Not a surprise there. Oh, and the previous road numbers? They would be from the series ATSF 1979 to 2000, except that they're not since the real ones were also steel offset cupola waycars with radial roofs, built by American Car & Foundry in 1931.

For those interested in the Santa Fe's steel waycars of this type (the real one, not the MTL model), there is an extensively detailed three-part Powerpoint presentation (made into PDFs) that was made at the 2010 Convention of the Santa Fe Railway Historical & Modeling Society. Find the downloadable (!) files at www.atsfrr.com/Reviews/HO/Freight/IMRCaboose/Index.htm. I absolutely did not hesitate to read these, and was nearly lost in them before dragging myself back to the next caboose in this review. I did pick up what would have been the end of the ATP for these cars, which was the directive in 1976 that any remaining waycars with four digit road numbers would be renumbered into the 999000s series.



535 00 140, \$21.55

Reporting Marks: UP 25398.

30 Foot Steel Caboose, Center Cupola, Union Pacific.

Yellow with red lettering including road name at top center and reporting marks at bottom center. "Go Big Train" slogan in black on white panel in center. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to mid-1980s. Previous Release (as Catalog 14714): Road Number 25602, June 1997, with either Marklin or Magne-Matic Couplers.

Some time ago, we at UMTRR HQ received as a gift a copy of the book **Cabooses of the Union Pacific Railroad**, which is perhaps the definitive volume on the subject. From it we learn that the real UP 25398 was originally built as part of 100 class CA-6 cars by the railroad from August to November 1955. Originally numbered 2700 to 2799, they were renumbered 25300 to 25399 between February 1959 and July 1962. The safety slogan "Go Big Train" was among 37 different safety slogans painted directly on UP cabooses starting in 1973. The class

was retired during the late 1970s and the decade of the 1980s. The 25398 left service in June 1986 and was donated to the City of Marchysville, Kansas.

While it's true that both the MTL 535 body style and the Class CA-6 cars are both steel center cupola cabooses, that's about where the similarity ends. (OK, they both have two four-wheel trucks.) The real CA-6 was 38 feet 7 inches long over the running board, sixteen feet high, has a square cupola, includes three step platform stairs... well, you get the idea.



535 00 190, \$29.60

Road Number: 477740 (will be "PRR 477740" in website listings).

30 Foot Steel Caboose, Center Cupola, Pennsylvania Railroad.

Brown with black roof. Brown details, white grab irons at ends of sides. White lettering including roadname and road number across center. Black and white "shadow keystone" herald below cupola. Approximate Time Period: 1955 (based on paint scheme) to late 1960's. Previous Release: Road Number 477730, October 2007.

The 477740 is one of 200 N5B cabin cars built by the railroad in 1941. The previously released road number, 477730, is on Page 98 of Morning Sun's **Pennsylvania Railroad Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment, Volume 2**. This class of cars was numbered from 477620 to 477819 and went through a number of paint schemes during their service on the PRR. For example, in 1965 the Pennsy had gone to Focal Orange as its cabin car color, with no roadname, just a plain keystone herald and roadnumber. But the 477730 was still decorated in the circa-1955 scheme when photographed in that same year of 1965. That's the scheme that MTL selected, and the depiction of it looks good, down to the region assignment below the road number. Given that the Pennsy had bigger things to worry about than repainting its rolling stock, I'm calling the ATP to the late 1960's and the coming of the Penn Central, but that could be a little bit of a stretch.

And some of you could be thinking that using the standard "Northeastern" style MTL body style to stand in for a Pennsy N5B could also be a bit of a stretch. There are key differences you'd notice straight away: first, there are two windows, not four, and they are up against the roofline, which is curved and slightly over the sides as well. Second, the so-called center cupola is actually just over a foot off-center, enough to be noticeable, at least to me. But this release does enable running something behind Pennsy Power.



535 00 320, \$29.60

Reporting Marks: CN 79276.

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. Previous Release: Road Number 79290, May 2011.

It's a pretty fast reprint for this car, and I don't have to go too far back in the UMTRR Archives for commentary to, uh, leverage. And leverage I will, starting with the question: 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." The prototype was built by Hawker-Siddeley, a fact confirmed on the Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery site (at canadianfreightcargallery.ca, no "www") which includes a photo of the previously run road number 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 Morning Sun's **Canadian National Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**, which also has a photo of sister car 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.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following item was announced as an "off-cycle" release for March 2012 via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line, all on or about March 15.*

994 05 020, \$109.95 – Southwestern Four-Pack. Consists of the following items:



506 50 270, Reporting Marks UP 5540 – (last two digits obscured).

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Door, Union Pacific. Brown (including trucks and couplers). White lettering including roadname and reporting marks

on left and slogan "Ship & Travel the Automated Rail Way" on right. One yellow door. Red, white and blue shield herald with "Union Pacific Railroad" right of slogan. Moderate weathering with vertical streaks on parts of sides. Approximate Time Period: 1961 (based on paint scheme) to early 1970s. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Road Numbers 554038 and 554050, August 2011.

You can check the August 2011 UMTRR for more, but the prototype series, UP Class A-50-12, was quite small and didn't last very long. One of the previous runs, the 554038, is shown in fresh paint in a company photo in Morning Sun's **Union Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** (Volume 1), Page 25. The car is a decent match to the model. The ORER entries show a door opening of seven feet, which I'll call a bit of misinformation. That yellow door is another addition for this weathered car. It's obvious that either of the "virtual two pack" could have been the source for this run, given that the last two digits are covered. This is true of all four of the items in this set, in fact.



507 50 440, Reporting Marks: ATSF 55---- (last three digits obscured).

50 Foot Boxcar, Plug Door, Santa Fe.

Boxcar red (brown) with white lettering including reporting marks and large circle cross herald on left and roadname on right. Light weathering and extensive graffiti across bottom half of one side of the car. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1980s at most. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Road Numbers 55326 and 55333, November 2010.

Like the UP boxcar above, this is another rather uncommon group from a very common railroad. The Bx-186 class was a group of rebuilds of not one, not two, but three former series of AT&SF cars. The RR-57 class originally built in 1955 contributed 273 cars numbered 55000 to 55272. The RR-58 class built by American Car and Foundry in 1956 provided the next 95 cars numbered 55273 to 55367; that includes the road numbers Micro-Trains depicts. And the RR-59 class which was built by Pullman-Standard was used for the last 140 cars numbered 55368 to 55507. There are photos of each group of cars in the book **Santa Fe Freight Cars The Series Volume One**. The immediate delta to the MTL model is that the real Bx-186s are shown without roofwalks. I suspect that was the case for all of the cars of this class given both the 1980 date of the rebuild and the later "billboard" Santa Fe roadname which was first used in 1972. The full ladders look to be a match as does the paint scheme. Given the lateness of the paint scheme, the ATP isn't very long. Given that they were all off the roster by June 1989's ORER, we use "at most" for the ATP qualifier for a change.



507 50 440, Reporting Marks: GARE 50--- (last four digits obscured).

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, GARX/Denver and Rio Grande Western.

Orange with black ends. Black lettering including reporting marks on left and "Rio Grande / The Action Road" speed lettering roadname and slogan. Green "No Damage" device on left. Black weathering streaks and black simulated spray painted areas including over most of the reporting marks and dimensional data on left. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s to no later than the late 1980s. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Road Numbers 50920 and 50925, December 2010.

Perhaps more messy than this weathered car is the history of the prototype. Though the series starts reasonably enough with the Rio Grande taking 100 cars on lease from General American in the late 1950s, though that's before this particular paint scheme was adopted. While it seems apparent that the larger group registered under General American, namely, 50000 to 51999, includes cars leased to other railroads, even that seems reasonable versus how it ended up: a massive group numbered 100 to 53999 (!) that was all the way down to three cars in the July 1989 ORER.



531 50 150, Reporting Marks: SP 50--- (last four digits obscured).

Two Bay PS-2 Steel Covered Hopper, Southern Pacific.

Gray with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname in black lettering across car. Moderate to heavy weathering including on trucks. Approximate Time Period: early 1960s or mid-1970s to late 1990s. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Road Numbers 401333 and 401339, January 2011.

While these cars, in the series 401100 to 401349, were built in 1957 by Pullman-Standard as noted in the MTL car copy, the as-delivered scheme is not what Micro-Trains chose for their models. That would have been a perhaps more familiar decoration with the SP round herald and a smaller roadname on the right. Based on photos on Lee Gautreaux's "Railgoat" website (www.railgoat.railfan.net) the as-delivered paint scheme lasted on at least one car in the group until at least 1996, so there was a co-existence with the later paint scheme that MTL selected. While I'm not sure when the later "bold roadname" appeared, strictly speaking, the ATP is driven by the double panel consolidated stencils which appeared in the 1970s. Besides that, photos of SP covered hoppers also show a fair amount of inconsistency in lettering practice.

The SP listings combine the Class H-70-16 and H-70-18 covered hoppers—essentially the same—and in the April 1975 Equipment Register 429 cars were still in service. That count was 290 cars in the January 1985 ORER. After seeing 32 in the April 1999 Equipment Register, just one car remains in the January 2000 issue, these last two being part of the Union Pacific registration with SP reporting marks.

Before I forget this, which I almost did, I should offer my usual view of whether all four of these cars could be plausibly run together in a train. Although the Z Scaler is as always free to invoke "Rule #1," the "one of these cars that is not like the others" in terms of the Approximate Time Period is the Union Pacific boxcar, which was gone before the Santa Fe boxcar appeared in its large Cooper Black decoration. The commonality of the consolidated stencils across the other three cars also helps, though we are probably bending things a bit with respect to the GARE/Rio Grande car as well since there were very few left in the 1980s.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #40, four Pacific Fruit Express wood refrigerator cars, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the October 2011 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 518 51 010, Road Number 13; 518 52 010, Road Number 15; 518 53 010, Road Number 20; 518 54 010, Road Number 22. Note that the photo at right shows two cars' "Side A" (with UP herald) and two cars' "Side B" (with SP herald).



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



994 00 046, \$79.95

Quantity four of 40 Foot Despatch Stock Car, Rio Grande (D&RGW).

Reporting Marks: D&RGW 34613, 36419, 36428, 36457.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and speed lettering roadname on right. Approximate Time Period: mid 1950s to mid 1970s. Previous Release (as catalog number 13802, now 520 00 020): Road Number 36475, May 1988, with both Magne-Matic and Marklin Couplers.

A check of the rosters posted on the site of the Rio Grande Modeling and Historical Society (at www.drgw.org) shows that these cars were built in 1955. That seems pretty late for stock cars, even for a Western railroad. From the roster tables it looks like these were the most recent stock cars the Rio Grande built; the RGM&HS lists them as retired by 1976. The **Rio Grande Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** from Morning Sun confirms that these cars were new builds in '55 and were the last 100 livestock cars constructed by the line. Photos of the 36431 and the 36432 on Page 57 of the Color Guide confirm that the MTL 520 body style is not too good of a match for this car. That's not a great surprise since the Micro-Trains car is based on a New York Central prototype. Key among the deltas is the placement of the letterboards: below the centerline for the reporting marks on the left, and above the centerline for the roadname on the right. Although the real door splits in half to enable independent unloading of each of the two decks, the MTL door actually does suggest this with its wide center section. Just don't try to actually open one half at a time.

The January 1959 ORER shows all 100 possible cars in the D&RGW series 36400 to 36499, with AAR Designation SF and description "Stock, Steel Underframe, Double Deck." An end note gives the heights of each deck: 4 feet 2 inches on top and 5 feet 8 inches on the bottom. The inside length is 40 feet 7 inches and outside length is 41 feet 10 inches. The door opening is 6 feet wide. In January 1964's Register there was one less car but nothing else had changed. Skipping forward, the April 1970 book shows 95 cars, the April 1976 book shows 90 cars (not necessarily contradicting the above historical society data-- ORER data took a while to update), and the April 1981 book shows zip, not only of this series but of D&RGW stock cars in general. That reflects the decline, to just about nothing, of livestock service provided by railroads by that time.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



502 00 545, \$22.95

Reporting Marks: AZ 1912.

40 Foot Box Car, Plug Door, Arizona State Car.

Aluminum sides, black roof, ends, sills and door hardware; blue and black primary lettering including reporting marks, state name and outline map on

left. Four color process graphics including state flag, state flower (Saguaro Cactus Blossom) and state bird (Cactus Wren) on right. Forty-fifth release in the Z Scale States of the Union series.

[Note: This commentary is largely reprinted from the August 2004 UMTRR.]

Sorry, folks, but the first thing that comes to mind when the State of Arizona is mentioned is the notorious sentence-- notorious to me, anyway: "But it's a **dry** heat." The exchange usually goes somewhat like this:

Me: "Boy, it's really hot in Arizona."

Arizonan: "Yeah, but it's a dry heat. Not like back east."

Me: "So what? I'm in a toaster instead of a crockpot."

The second time I was in Arizona, Phoenix, to be specific, I had the most intense illustration of my point that I think I will ever experience. It was August, it was a business trip, and the high temperature was 114 degrees Fahrenheit for three days straight. I couldn't sleep on the night before leaving for home, had the television on and the weather report noted that it was 99 degrees. At five minutes to twelve at night! I got up and went downstairs. The hotel I was staying in had those automatic sliding exit doors, and when they opened, a blast of hot air just about knocked me over. 99 degrees at Midnight. Yikes.

But it's not always that way, and when it's 80 degrees at Christmastime, when you've already been through too long of a winter with too much snow already, and it's not even officially winter yet. That was my experience of my first visit to the state, sufficiently long ago that one could leave the airport during a layover. I got myself to downtown Phoenix, had a look around, and enjoyed the warmth. I've also seen the desert at night, far away from the lights, which is something that everyone should experience. And of course the northern part of the state, where the Grand Canyon lies, has nothing like the climate of the Valley of the Sun. It's high enough to have the seasons, and it does snow there quite a bit. As nice as the Grand Canyon is, it's still a bit touristy; there are also immense gorges that don't have guardrails as well, if you know where to look. Don't look too closely, though. Watch that first step.

The Western-centric history of Arizona begins about 14,000 years ago when the first Native Americans settled there. The Hohokam were in Southern Arizona about 300 BC and for the next 1700 years, the Native American cultures dominated. The Spanish set foot in the 1500s,

led by Father Marcos de Niza. One purpose for the visit was religious conversion, but another was gold; Coronado claimed the Southwest for Spain in 1540, one year after de Niza's visit. Spain and then Mexico held the territory until the Mexican War, when most of what is now Arizona became United States territory. (The Gasden Purchase filled in the last piece of the current area of the state.) Dry heat or not, Phoenix became the territorial capital in 1889, 26 years after the territory was established. On February 14, 1912-- yep, Valentine's Day-- the territory became the 48th State. Women gained the right to vote in Arizona in the same year. The Grand Canyon National Park was founded seven years later.

There were probably two major events which led to the explosive growth of the state: first, Hoover Dam, completed in 1936 to tame the Colorado River and provide irrigation to thirsty desert lands; and second, the development of air conditioning. I'm not really kidding about this; I've talked to people who were "there before" and who note somewhat ruefully that it's a lot more crowded now. No kidding; the state was up to 4.7 million people by 1998 and most of them lived in and around Phoenix. The 2011 estimate was a whopping 6.5 million.

Given that growth, there are probably a lot more Famous Arizonans growing up now than there have been up to this point, but I found a few. The three I immediately thought of were Barry Goldwater, perhaps its most famous Senator; Lynda Carter, TV's "Wonder Woman" now pursuing a second career as a singer and Stevie Nicks, the Welsh Witch of Fleetwood Mac and the singer I still most want to meet. (If you're reading this, Stevie...) Apache warriors Geronimo and Cochise are said to be from the Arizona Territory. The first woman appointed to the US Supreme Court, Sandra Day O'Connor, is an Arizona resident, and labor leader Cesar Chavez was born in Yuma. And from Phoenix is Jeannie-- oops, I mean Barbara Eden, who played the role in the sitcom "I Dream of Jeannie."

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

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: A bit of a mixed bag consisting of one load, two structure kits, a new "undec" and one set of interiors to discuss this month. The load is copper, for the 108 series N Scale three-bay hopper (499 43 981, two for \$9.95). The structures are an N Scale combination café and general store, both with wooden sidewalks which suggest a bit of a Western (or Western revival) motif (499 90 940, \$41.95) and a Z Scale Roadside Coal Dump (799 90 959, \$9.95). The new painted undecorated car is the 3-2 Observation (144 00 001, \$20.40) which is already done in Pullman Green and Black for you. The set of interiors is for four of the N Scale heavyweight passenger cars released so far: the set includes one each for the 10-1-2 Sleeper, the 12-1 Sleeper, the 28-1 Parlor Car and the Paired Window Coach (499 35 901, \$5.20). I can see some serious trading going on amongst N Scalers who need a few of some of these interiors, and don't need the others, for passenger car projects.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: Starting in N Scale this time, perhaps the biggest surprise on the bye-bye board is the sellout of the Gerald Ford Presidential Car from just last month (074 00 142). I am far too lazy to check on whether any other of this series was gone in the first month of release, but certainly most if not all of the Presidential cars have taken longer than that to sell out, and most are still available according to MTL's website listing. Also gone

from last month are **five** other cars: the Union Pacific “Automated Railway” boxcar (032 00 470), the reprinted Canadian National “Supertherm” boxcar (038 00 330), the Southern Railway boxcar (038 00 420), the Morrell’s Pride refrigerator car (049 00 610), and both numbers of the reprinted Southern Pacific tank cars (065 00 33x). And one more item from last month: the third set of Ringling Brothers Vintage Wagons (470 00 039).

Two other N Scale cars released in January of this year are already outta here too: the Great Northern two bay hopper reprint (055 00 060) and the second number of the Northern Pacific three bay hopper (108 00 212). From 2011 the lineup that’s left town includes the Great Northern green boxcar (024 00 360, November), the first number of the Norfolk Southern x-post boxcar (025 00 731, August), the brown and yellow Milwaukee Road boxcar (031 00 380, May), the Ringling Brothers “Elephant” Stock Car, #3 in the Big Top Series (035 00 200, March), the CP Rail covered hopper (096 00 060, September), and the unweathered Canadian National autorack (111 00 150, June). The oldest N Scale car to leave the building this month is the weathered Texaco tank car (065 44 680, mid-month December 2010), although I already have it as gone. I should also mention that the Santa Fe Vintage Poster set (993 21 210, August 2011) is no longer listed on MTL’s website as available, or even “Contact Your Dealer,” so we might assume that it’s also gone. I’ll try to remember to confirm this with the folks at the red and yellow sign.

There’s a short list of four Z Scale items that have sold out: the Michigan State Car (502 00 537, August 2011), the B&O Chessie System x-post boxcar (510 00 190, December 2011), the Grand Trunk Western covered hopper (531 00 180, August 2011), and the Illinois Central Sleeper (550 00 020, February 2009). We wrap up the discontinued this month with the HOn3 Scale Colorado & Southern Gondola with load (860 00 060, November 2009).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: Joe Levitzky provided a photo reference to last month’s Southern boxcar (038 00 420)...and it is on RRPictureArchives.net, which I suppose should almost make this an Oops Patrol item...

OOPS PATROL: The usual typos crept into the March bytes, but I was not happy with my errors in the website listings. Hopefully I’ve caught most of them now.

FINALLY, BACK ON THE ROAD: It’s time to pack the suitcase again, so until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers, George

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