



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report

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Hello again everyone! Fall is in the air, and there's lots to look at from behind the red and yellow sign, so let's get to it... after a brief word from our sponsor. I have a few selected Kadee Micro-Trains (pre-split) items, mostly painted for the New York Central, on eBay at press time for your consideration, closing on Saturday, September 21. If you're curious, check under my eBay name, which is "umtrr-author" (what else?). Thanks! Now, to the business at hand...

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



030 00 230, \$24.20

Reporting Marks: UP 369048.

50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Double Door, Union Pacific.

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. Small red, white and blue UP shield herald on

right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1980s to present.

The website RRPictureArchives.net provides two photos of the exact prototype car (i.e. a "bingo") as found in 2005 and 2006. There are some differences between model and prototype, the most notable being the doors, which are Superior type on the real 369048 and Youngstown type on the model. Also, there are short ladders on the actual car while MTL uses grab irons on the 030 body style. What's perhaps the most interesting difference, and not that easy to replicate, is the truck spacing, which is rather far in from the ends of the car. The outermost wheel of each truck is about even with the second rib inbound from the end... if that makes sense. The image on RRPictureArchives is large enough to see the UP's class, which is A-100-16. Could that "A" stand for "Automobile," a throwback, way back, to when double door boxcars often hauled motor vehicles? The 2006 image and a 2012 image of similar car 369084 on the same site both include graffiti at no extra charge – but don't expect an N Scale version of that since UP doesn't allow, ahem, "aftermarket decoration," on models of any of its cars (or that of its predecessors) in its license agreement.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for January 2011 shows 11 cars in the series UP 369045 to 369069. They're just a bit smaller than the MTL 030 body style at 5000 cubic feet (the Micro-Trains car is a model of an FMC 5077 cubic foot car). The inside length is 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 56 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet, and door opening 16 feet.

It was about 1983 that the Union Pacific decided to move to a mineral red color for its freight cars. So the ATP for this car with the small herald could be that early, though we'll give it a couple of years to take effect. The previous color scheme would probably have included yellow sides and silver ends and trucks if the car had a cushion underframe—and the extended draft gear hints at that. What helps with that premise is that MTL's Runner Pack #73 released in February is of Class A-100-16 cars as well, and that's how they were painted. So we could consider this the successor paint scheme, even though the cars in Runner Pack #73 aren't in exactly the same series in the ORER. It'll do.



031 00 430, \$21.90.

Reporting Marks: SBD 111935.

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door, Seaboard System.

Black with mostly yellow lettering including large roadname and reporting marks on left. Red and yellow stylized double S herald on right. Approximate Time Period: early 1980s to early 1990s, though this particular car survives (see below).

Before I'd even started the research for this car a long-time reader e-mailed me asking the same question I had: did this car have a roofwalk while in this paint scheme? I think the short answer is no, but it might be a little more complicated than that.

The first match when searching on "SBD 111935" online is a pair of photos, again on the site RRPictureArchives.net. The car, still in Seaboard System paint, is now the property of the Old Dominion Railroad Museum in Richmond, Virginia. Pictures taken in November 2006 show the car side facing the still-active Norfolk Southern (ex-Southern Railway) trackage, clearly with no roofwalk and cut-down ladders.

But wait... I continued looking and came across a page describing the car on the wesbite of the Old Dominion Chapter of the NRHS itself. It's noted there that the boxcar was donated to them in 1992 by the Commonwealth of Virginia, and was previously located at the Main Street Station (we presume also in Richmond). It was moved by truck to its present location and currently is used for supplies storage. The photo of the 111935 on that page shows it with no roofwalk but a full height ladder and at least one roof grab iron. We can also make out the Class Code, X-13-A. I can confirm the service date of September 1985 as well. That does fall into the brief existence of the Seaboard System, which lasted from December 29, 1982 to July 1, 1986 when it became CSX. To answer the question at the top of this commentary, I can't imagine that when repainted for SBD, the car would have kept its roofwalk, but as usual, it's hard to prove the absence of something. The start date of the Seaboard System leads to the early 1980s as the start of the Approximate Time Period.

The precise heritage of this car is probably something that we'd just be lucky to find. It appears that the X-13-A class belonged to the Seaboard Coast Line, so we could speculate that this is an ex-Seaboard or ex-Atlantic Coast Line car. There were mostly likely one or

more renumberings from as delivered to the Seaboard System as well. Without a build date – and neither I nor MTL have it – we can't go much farther than that.

Well, at least we can go to the ORER for April 1985. The car MTL depicts is from the series 111546 to 112086, which only had a total of 29 cars in it counting all the subsets. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 10 feet (yes, a “door thing” versus the 8 foot door on the MTL body style) and capacity either 4863 or 4952 cubic feet depending on the car or 110,000 pounds. In the CSX Transportation listing in the October 1991 ORER, nine cars remain in the group, but there is only one left in the July 1992 Register. I wonder if it's the 111935.



055 00 440, \$23.85.

Reporting Marks: PGE 261.

33 Foot Steel Two Bay Open Hopper, Offset Sides, Flat Ends, Pacific Great Eastern.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left. Black and white chevron herald on right. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s to about 1972 for this car (see text for why!), or late 1980s for the series.

Sometimes you really never know what you're going to get as the result of an internet search. For example, putting in "PGE 261" returns some references to Pacific Gas & Electric. And then there's this, from Railpictures.net : "Out beyond the PGE Squamish Locomotive Shop is littered with bent up rolling stock and locomotive carcasses." Which would include – believe it or not – PGE 261, which is not only bent up but upside down and without its trucks! The date given for the photo by S.L. Dixon is 1972, so the Approximate Time Period for this particular car definitely ends by then! Unless you're modeling the Squamish Locomotive Shops, that is.

And if you are, you will immediately note that while the car is an offset side steel two bay variety, the hopper bay doors are not what are used on the MTL 055 body style. Instead, they are what I believe to be generally known as the Enterprise type, parallel with the sides and, depending on the specific configuration, capable of dumping inside or outside the rails. Although this car probably didn't dump anything after 1972. The paint scheme in the photo is matched by Micro-Trains, including the use of the chevron herald which began in the mid to late 1960s (depending on which CDS Dry Transfer set caption you look at). I can make out a build date of 1950 on the prototype photo (do I turn my head upside down or the computer monitor?) which means this wouldn't have been the "as delivered" paint scheme.

Just for fun, I started at the build date anyway. The ORER for July 1950 offers only a Recapitulation of Car Equipment but the January 1955 Register does show the group of 20 hoppers numbered 261 to 280. Moving closer to a "stand in" status for this model, the inside length of the real ones was 40 feet 8 inches, and outside length 41 feet 8 inches. The capacity

was 2775 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. There weren't any 33 foot hoppers on the PGE roster at that time or, we presume, later.

In October 1972, by which time the Pacific Great Eastern had become the British Columbia Railway, the same twenty cars were still listed in the ORER. How's that possible if one of them is upside down outside a locomotive shop? My guess is that the record-keeping hadn't yet caught up with the fate of the 261. The next ORER I have in the Research Accumulation, July 1974, shows a consolidated group of hoppers 200 to 280 with 50 in that series. But that would still include the 261, since 30 are from the group 200 to 229 and the other 20 are from the group 261 to 280. This total doesn't drop until July 1980 when the total is 44. In the January 1985 Register, 35 of the series are listed with BCOL reporting marks, indicating a repaint or at least a restencil to the British Columbia name, while 10 remain with PGE reporting marks, all while the company itself had changed names again to BC Rail. (And yes, that total is back up by one from July 1980.) The very last car of the set, either 268 to 269, keeps the PGE reporting marks until sometime after January 2000 (!) but I think it's more realistic to call the ATP for the series at large at the late 1980s.



058 00 170, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: GARE 9905.

36 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Vertical Brake Staff, Truss Rod Underframe, Schott Brewing Company.

Yellow sides, brown roof and ends. Black door sill and hardware. Black lettering including company name and location and reporting marks on left. Black, white and red product legend on right, "Highland Beer" on one side and "Schotts Lager" on other side. Approximate Time Period: December 1933 (repaint date) to about 1937. Release #5 in an expected twelve in the Brewery Reefer Series.

The "Eastside Brewers" site (www.eastsidebrewers.com) includes an article by Kevin Kious and Donald Roussin that's reprinted from the **American Breweriana Journal**. (Pick "Brewery History" then "Highland" to reach the article.) Highland, Illinois is about 25 miles east of St. Louis, Missouri and had a brewery starting in the late 1840s. In 1856 Gerard Schott and his son Martin became partners in an existing brewery, eventually taking it over. Martin and his brother built a new brewery with Martin becoming its sole owner in 1870. In the 1880s Martin and his family purchased three houses next to the brewery and dug an aging cellar underneath all three of them—which became, for promotional purposes, "The Famous Schott Caves." (I suppose this illustrates that exaggeration in advertising is not limited to the present and previous centuries.) The firm was incorporated as the Highland Brewery in 1884 and did well up until Prohibition. Following the ban on alcohol which was lifted in April, 1933, the company became known as the Schott Brewing Company. Like many small beer-making enterprises, the company never really came back, and suffered through a series of financial difficulties before being liquidated in 1940. A new owner kept the Schott name and repositioned the brand as a low-price offering, but to limited success. The Gast St. Louis Brewery assumed control and moved its operations to Highland after its St. Louis plant was

damaged. Gast shut down in 1949 and the former brewery played host to a number of enterprises unrelated to beer, including most notably a corsage manufacturing operation. The “caves” were a children’s playground for a time and were eventually sealed by the owners of the three houses under which it extended.

Page 124 of the book **Billboard Refrigerator Cars** includes photos of both sides of this car, so we can get a look at the side not included in MTL’s Micro-News or website material. The “Schotts Old Lager” legend is similarly boxed and also included is the verbiage, “Aged in the famous Schott Caves.” It’s noted that the car GARE 9905 was part of the series 9900 to 9924 and was repainted for Schott in December 1933. From a design standpoint, the match to the 058 body style is pretty close, including grab irons on the sides, though there were end ladders on the real car while MTL has grab irons. But it’s also noted that the cars were 40 feet long, not 36 feet. The inside length on the actual car is shown as a bit over 33 feet.

The ORER for July 1935 will help with this, and sure enough, the outside length of the car is 42 feet 3 inches. That length is in the range of that of MTL 36 foot refrigerator car when considering the length over the couplers. (I measured.) However, I’m not sure I’d call it “right.” Some other key figures: Inside width 8 feet 2 inches, inside height 7 feet 3 inches, height to top of running board, 12 feet 4 inches, and to extreme height (meaning the top of the vertical brake staff), 13 feet 11 inches, door opening 4 feet wide by 5 feet 4 inches high, with capacity of 80,000 pounds of lading and up to 11,400 pounds of ice.



092 00 310, \$25.40.

Reporting Marks: ACFX 44684.

Two Bay Center Flow® Covered Hopper, ACF Industries (American Car & Foundry) / Shippers Car Line.

Gray with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left in Futura Bold font.

Approximate Time Period: 1980 (build date) to

present in general, but see text for more about this specific car.

The registration for Shippers Car Line Division, ACF Industries in the ORER for July 1980 shows a group of covered hoppers numbered 44674 to 44731. As with all of the 39,008 cars listed, these could have either “ACFX” or “SHPX” reporting marks. There were 58 cars in the group, the maximum possible; there’s a little triangle which denotes “Change from previous issue” in this group. The inside length listed was 34 feet 9 inches, outside length 41 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 2980 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds. Jumping all the way to the January 2011 ORER, the group was strictly ACFX reporting marks and was larger, numbering 44658 to 44875 and totaling 169 cars after adding up all thirteen of those annoying subseries. The owner of these cars, as you might already know, is now GE Railcar Services, and those 169 Center Flows are not even a rounding error against the total roster of 87,140 pieces of equipment in the registration. But there should be minimal if any errors between prototype and model here, since the MTL 092 body style is based on this same ACF2980 design.

So, we'd have just a basic, run of the mill Center Flow with plain old lettering—except that the lettering itself is different. Those reporting marks are in the “Futura Bold” font, which is more closely associated with the Chesapeake and Ohio than with American Car & Foundry. What happened here? Besides me acting like a complete “typeface geek”, that is. I could swear that I've seen a photo of this car somewhere with these unusually styled reporting marks, but I have not been able to figure out where that was. The Research Accumulation came up dry as did my online searching. Is the 44684 unique among ACFX two bay Center Flows? I don't know, but this does give me a chance to mention one of my grammatical pet peeves—you can't put a qualifier in front of unique, i.e. a car cannot be “fairly unique” or “very unique”—it would just be “unique.”

There is a 2001 shot of the 44684 with more typical stenciling of the reporting marks—and a fair amount of weathering and graffiti—which is posted to RRPictureArchives.net. That means, strictly speaking, that the ATP ended sometime between the 1980 build date and, well, twenty-one years later. That's not very helpful! As a series, certainly the cars remain in service, and there's plenty of photo evidence of this. Meanwhile, a 1985 photo of sister car 44682 lensed in Port Reading, New Jersey, not far from where I used to live, found on George Elwood's “Fallen Flags” site (www.rr-fallenflags.org) shows reporting marks that ACF usually utilized. There are other ways in which the reporting marks are painted on these cars as well, including in a single line. I'll leave the reader to checking those out, except to note that MTL could have plenty of follow on releases to this car, all somewhat different from each other.



115 00 031 and 115 00 032, \$24.30 each
Reporting Marks: FURX 710014 and 710140.

65 Foot 100 Ton Log Car, Roseburg Lumber Company.

Blue with white lettering including reporting marks on left and company logo in center (red on white). Simulated pulpwood loads included. Approximate Time Period: about 2004 to present.

How's this for lazy: I almost don't have to change the paint and lettering from last month's log car release, since it was also blue with white lettering including the company logo in center. (Well, that will cut down on the “copy and paste” errors this month... I hope.)

Roseburg Forest Products, the name under which Roseburg Lumber Company has been known since the early 1980s, is a privately held company founded in 1936 in Roseburg, Oregon. According to the company's website (www.roseburg.com) founder Kenneth Ford “was a pioneer in the forest products industry. In 1946, he blazed a trail by purchasing 15,000 acres of timberland: Today, Roseburg owns over 600,000 acres of viable timberlands, ensuring consistent forest products for the future. We started designing a plywood facility in 1950, and soon began producing wood products as well as lumber. In 1997, Allyn Ford,

Kenneth's son, assumed ownership, meaning that Roseburg has been privately owned for 75 years." There's a seventy page 75th Anniversary book available for download on their website. An interesting quote from that book: "For a Douglas Fir—the tree which is the backbone of our business—75 years is just reaching adulthood." I found Kenneth Ford's story fascinating—and of course you can't beat the price of a free download. Today Roseburg is still in the Ford family with Kenneth's son Allyn at the helm. Before Kenneth's passing in 1997 he founded the Ford Family Foundation which has done a large number of charitable projects in the area in which it has operations.

While the company itself remains all in the family, the reporting marks of this virtual two-pack, FURX, belong to one of the largest lessors of freight cars in the North America—First Union Rail, part of the Wells Fargo empire. (I'll skip the Too Big To Fail remarks...). Micro-Trains says that it can't put an exact date on these cars, but we can estimate the ATP based on, well, a bunch of ORER lookups. We're helped on this via a bingo on the first road number 710014, photographed in 2012 and posted on RRPictureArchives.net (which I've been using a lot this month!). This lets us assume that we're to "the present" so we only need to go backwards from there.

And that lands us at the first appearance of these cars in the First Union Rail registration in my ORER pile, specifically—and much to my surprise—back only in the October 2004 issue. The series FURX 710000 to 710150 has all 151 possible cars in it at that time. The "inside length" is 65 feet 4 inches, "outside length" 68 feet 7 inches, extreme height 16 feet 6 inches with two exceptions at 15 feet, and gross rail weight 263,000 pounds. This series does not appear in the previous ORER in the Research Accumulation, which is January 2002. So it's a relatively short, and current, ATP for this pair. It's certainly possible that Roseburg owned these cars and then sold them off to First Union, but if so, the cars weren't listed in the ORER prior to that time, perhaps being part of the dreaded group of private owners that don't bother to publish their rosters in the Equipment Register. I did note on the website ShastaRails.com a 2004 photo of a Roseburg car with PTIX reporting marks, those belonging to Paneltech International which did not list its cars in the ORER. At the time, the car, PTIX 400134, was painted green.

Returning to the photo of the real FURX 710014, we find once again that there is lettering and consolidated stencils on the prototype that aren't replicated on the model. (The same was true with last month's Federal Paper Board cars.) I don't know why this is the case—perhaps even Micro-Trains has hit the limits of current technology when trying to paint or print on a component of a car that is less than one-eighth actual inch in height. Since being a font geek appears to be a bit of a theme thus far, I'll also note that the "Roseburg" inside the white shape is italicized, although it's correctly in red. There do appear to be some other subtle deltas like the placement of the brake cylinder and the exact shape of the fishbelly side. Addressing that on a diecast underframe might be a bit of a challenge and I suspect most N Scalers will leave this alone and declare "good enough."



141 00 120, \$28.50

Car Name: "Marquette" (will be preceded with "MILW" in website listings).

Heavyweight 10-1-2 Pullman Sleeper, Milwaukee Road (Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific).

Orange with maroon band at top of sides. Brown roof, underframe and trucks. Metallic gold lettering including roadname across top in maroon band. Approximate Time Period: 1927 to 1949.

We've gotten all the way to this point in the column this month before going over the Morning Sun Color Guide shelves here at UMTRR HQ. Micro-Trains clearly went over to its shelves as well, to pull some of the car copy for this release. We'll do the same via the information in the Milwaukee Road Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment, Volume 1.

Pullman-Standard built this car for the Milwaukee back in 1911 and it was initially named "Orleans." "The car was part of the Milwaukee's independently owned and operated sleeping car service," it's noted in the caption of the undated photo. In 1927, the car was renamed Marquette and it was assigned to secondary passenger trains until being scrapped in October 1949. I'm providing the ATP as being between those dates assuming that the paint scheme pictured did not change, however that might be a stretch. Micro-Trains' paint matches that of the car as pictured, with the exception of the end doors which are maroon. That can be fixed.

Going over to Tom Madden's "Pullman Project" database, I find two cars initially named "Orleans" but neither seems to be the one that the Milwaukee Road received; one was painted for the Pennsylvania Railroad and the other in Pullman's standard paint. Could be that the independent operation of the MILW isn't covered in the worksheets. At any rate, the side of the prototype that we can see in the Color Guide doesn't align with either side of the MTL 141 body style. The underframe is different as well, so this probably falls at least somewhat into the category of "stand in" for Milwaukee modelers.

The Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment for March 1943 shows the Marquette as being among six "Standard Sleepers, Steel" of length "70 feet and over." The other five cars were the Cascade, Green Bay, Kent, Manilla and Marcellus. The per diem on these cars was \$18.50 along with a charge of 10 cents per mile. I was curious about the spelling of "Manilla" so I checked and there are localities by that name in both Iowa and Indiana.

N SCALE REPRINTS:



025 00 190, \$20.90

Reporting Marks: CR 157146.

50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Door, Conrail.

Brown with yellow door. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname with "wheel on rail" herald on

right. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1980s. Previous Release (as catalog number 25190): Road Number 157315, May 1984.

According to Page 51 of the **Conrail Guide to Freight Equipment Volume 1** (as far as I know there is no Volume 2), there were four classes of Conrail boxcars which received the "yellow door" paint scheme indicating suitability for clean lading: X71, X74, X75, and BA50A, the last of which were the former Raritan River Railroad boxcars. Page 51 shows a photo of a set of stencils used to paint these cars, and another photo of painting work being done on Conrail's X71 class car 166000, formerly the Penn Central's PCA 166000. The book has no photos of any cars in the series in which the 157146 resides, so we'll need to dig a little deeper.

Given the service date of September 1981 that MTL provides, let's check the April 1981 ORER. The group CR 157001 to 157613 is of the class X74 and had these dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 55 feet 5 inches, extreme height 14 feet 11 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 5030 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds. There were 605 cars in the series at that time. The Conrail Historical Society notes that these were former Penn Central cars. Not all of them had yellow doors; for example, CR 157591 sported a white door—and jade green coming through the Conrail paint—as of November 1980. The car was previously PC 167059, so this wasn't just a matter of swapping out initials. No, that would be too easy.

Anyway, the Conrail X74 series of the same range had a car count of... exactly one... in the October 1991 ORER. Yikes! I think it's safe to end the ATP there, or just call it at the previous decade. Relatively speaking, these cars weren't that old—certainly when compared to some of the truly aged equipment that Conrail inherited from its predecessors—so I wonder whether this disposition represented a sale to another company versus a retirement and scrapping.

We get a near bingo online with a 1985 photo of CR 157147, just one road number away, on the Fallen Flags website (www.rr-fallenflags.org). The three-quarter view gives us a good look at the ends, which don't match the MTL 025 body style, or many other x-post boxcars for that matter! These ends are a throwback to the earlier cars like the PS-1s—a clue that this might be an American Car & Foundry "Precision Design" boxcar built in the 1960s and 1970s. But it isn't, according to the January 2000 issue of **Rail Model Journal**: while they're close, the X74 cars were actually built by Magor-Fruehauf in 1972 and 1973 for the Penn Central. The RMJ piece includes photos of PC 167382 and CR 157258.

Besides the ends, I could quibble with the side sills and the number of grab irons as well. Very tiny lettering at the top right, just below the roof, indicates the prior ownership by the Penn Central, which I can just barely read. That the X74 class is missing from the MTL paint is a bit of a surprise; it should be below the consolidated stencils. Photos of CR 157070 and 157072 from February 1980 show more freshly painted cars and the use of yellow Superior doors on some of these cars. That's an easy variation for a possible future release.



101 00 010, \$26.15

Reporting Marks: NP 659995.

40 Foot "Hy-Cube" Steel Box Car, Smooth Sides, Single Sliding Door, Northern Pacific.

Dark green with white lettering including reporting marks and large straight "NP" initials on left. Large red, white and black monad herald on right. Approximate Time

Period: Mid-1960s (1967 build date given by MTL) to about 1985. Previous Release: Road Number 659999, April 2005.

As I noted in the commentary for the initial release of this car, and this body style, although you and I probably don't view moving a refrigerator as lightweight duty, the railroads do, relatively speaking. Transport of these items was a bit problematic once the weight capacity of boxcars was expanded. The cubic capacity of the older style boxcars was easily exceeded before the weight limits were. If appliances could be stacked two high, well that would be just great. And the "ugly ducklings," as these boxcars came to be called, allowed this.

Page 44 of the **Northern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** shows the previously released 659999 in all its green glory as lensed in Minot, North Dakota in 1976. Yes, these cars were painted in the NP's dark green, the same shade as their RBL insulated box cars classified as refrigerator cars. (For example, the MTL release 21210, a 40 foot plug door boxcar.) I should note that the lack of an "Excess Height Car" white stripe on the ends is correct for this car.

The ORER for April 1970 shows the NP series under the post-merger Burlington Northern, and it's a short one: just six cars, numbered from 659994 to 659999. They were AAR Classification XL, exceeded Plate C dimensions (you betcha!) and were equipped with DF-2 loaders and 20 inch cushion underframe, which probably means that MTL could have gone with even more extended draft gear trucks than they did. The inside length was 40 feet 8 inches, inside height a roomy 12 feet 9 inches, outside length 48 feet 4 inches, extreme height 16 feet 9 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity an echo-inducing 4900 cubic feet and 110,000 pounds. This was the highest numbered series on the NP's roster and the only cars in the 600,000s. This might have been due to the expected merger into the BN, which was well on its way when the cars were built at NP's Brainerd shops in 1967. But the cars stayed in NP reporting marks until between 1985, when two cars remained in the ORER listing for the Burlington Northern, to 1986, when the listing was gone.

Although the Color Guide photo shows the 659999 on NP rails, it's also possible that these ugly ducklings didn't get home much. The stenciling to the left of the door reads "When empty return to agent IC RR, Kankakee Illinois." That was the location of an appliance factory and the NP was among many railroads that supplied cars for that service. That pooling arrangement meant a number of roads had these cars, and MTL has offered some of them since the 2005 debut of this body style.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following item was announced as a mid-month release via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line," all on or about September 17.*



031 44 440, \$26.70

Reporting Marks: BM 77396.

50 Foot Single Door Boxcar, Boston and Maine.

Blue (at least that's how it started) with white lettering including reporting marks on left.

Black and white "B in M" herald on right. Extensive weathering including white "bleaching" effect and rusting over entire car. Graffiti along bottom and at top right of one side of car. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to late 1980s. Previous Releases: None.

There is absolutely no doubt that this car is Weathered, with a Capital W. It's also a car that MTL has released direct to weathering—no preceding "clean" release. Will there be a following release, as with the Canadian National boxcar that debuted in the Norfolk Southern Weathered Set a few months back? Or will this be like the Santa Fe "Super Chief" boxcar in last month's SF/SP Four Pack that, so far, does not have a "clean" companion? Time will tell.

Anyway, according to the **Northern New England Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 28, Pullman-Standard delivered one thousand 50 foot boxcars numbered 77000 to 77999 to the B&M during 1956. These cars were originally painted blue with a black door and bottom sill and had white reporting marks on the left and a large B&M herald on the right. Over time, some of these cars were assigned to and/or equipped for special service and renumbered, for example three to carry nitre cake in 1964.

One of these cars, the 77039 was painted—rather early—for the Bicentennial. Photos of it on RRPictureArchives.net date back to 1972—important because other than the special Bicentennial decoration it is in the same general paint scheme as this car, with the smaller B&M herald. And that helps with the Approximate Time Period. So do other photos on Fallen Flags that go back into the Seventies. However, there's a catch: all of the cars I saw that were painted with the small herald were also missing their roofwalks and had cut down ladders. There's a potential delta between model and prototype meaning that the 77000 series might have been a better choice for Micro-Trains. (As I often say, though, it's hard to prove the absence of something.)

Given those early 1970s images, let's check the October 1972 ORER. The series was at a solid 925 cars at that time, a larger car count than any other group of cars the B&M had and also more than a quarter of their total roster of 3401 revenue service cars. The inside length of the cars was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 51 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet, capacity 4840 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds, and door opening 9 feet. Yes, that's a "door thing" as the 031 body style has an eight foot door. If you can see it through all of that weathering, that is.

By July 1980, the group was down to a still healthy 653 cars and remained the leading car count among all series on the B&M. Six years later in the October 1986 Register, that was all the way down to a mere 43 cars. Between the July 1989 and October 1991 ORERs the series had been removed from the roster. We'll keep the late 1980s as the end of the ATP – with the roofwalk caveat – since the older the car got the more likely it would have looked like what MTL depicted in this release.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #80 (993 00 080, \$99.95), four Union Pacific drop bottom gondolas, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the March 2013 issue. The individual catalog numbers and reporting marks for these items are as follows: 083 51 010, 66758; 083 52 010, 66762; 083 53 010, 66784; 083 54 010, 66796.



Also, the CP Rail / Soo Line Center Flow Covered Hopper eight-pack (993 00 803, \$189.95) is scheduled to be available mid-month and should be at MTL dealers at UMTRR "press time." UMTRR coverage was in the March 2013 issue. The individual catalog numbers and reporting marks for these items are as follows: 094 51 090, 115655; 094 52 090, 116273; 094 53 090, 116491; 094 54 090, 116804; 094 55 090, 116952; 094 56 090, 116966; 094 57 090, 116998; 094 58 090, 117047.



The following items are in pre-order at present and are NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is February 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30.



Scheduled February 2014 Release:

993 00 085, \$79.95

Quantity four of 50 Foot PS-5 Steel 15 Panel Gondolas, Fixed Ends, CSX Transportation.

Reporting Marks: CSXT 704584, 704660, 704712, 704893.

Black with mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and CSX herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1990s to present. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 704698 and 704786, November 2010. The Runner Pack releases should carry individual catalog numbers 105 5x 536.

When the first run of these cars was done back in 2010, I noted that if they should have been dark blue and not black, you could partially blame me for that. MTL asked me in a general way about the current painting practice for CSXT gondolas. At the time I could not give a definitive answer one way or the other based on the photo references I could dig out, none of which align with the precise road numbers MTL selected. Since then, of course, the actual MTL models were released, and they are either black or the darkest blue I've ever seen.

As an example of why I couldn't give a final answer, RRPictureArchives.net has the exact CSXT 704698 as of March 2009 and it looks pretty beat up, as well as being... wait for it... a faded shade of either black or dark blue. Ditto for the February 2007 shot of CSXT 704786. I can tell you that these cars are both 15 panel fishbelly side fixed end gondolas. Though the original MTL car copy references the "Ease Up" logos, they were not on either prototype car, but they were on the models and apparently will be on the Runner Pack cars as well. Meanwhile, the caption for the image of sister car CSXT 704708 tags it as ex-Baltimore and Ohio 370311.

At the time of the original run, the newest ORER I owned was January 2006. Listed were a whole bunch of series and subseries of gondolas in this number range. They are all nominal 52 foot 5 inch inside length cars, mostly with a 57 feet 5 inch outside length. Some carried AAR Designation GB, others GBS. The inside height of these cars was listed at 4 feet 6 inches and extreme height at 8 feet 5 inches, with gross rail weight of 263,000 pounds and capacity usually at 2246 cubic feet. The Micro-Trains car has an inside height of only about three feet, which tends to confirm my suspicion that the real cars are a fair bit larger than what MTL has for the 105 body style. The January 2011 Register, now my newest available, still shows a total of 236 cars in the assemblage, so I think the "to present" still holds.

I went back to the January 1996 Equipment Register and found perhaps an even larger mess than in the '06 book. At least I can provide a single main series, CSXT 704580 to 705378, which includes the MTL-selected road numbers. That group, or close to it, anyway, is found

as far back as July 1989 in my ORER accumulation. If you're curious, the July 1987 Register has the CSX Transportation listing, but nothing with CSXT reporting marks yet. The net of it is that the ATP could be the 1990s to present, but it would be a rather difficult task to untangle something more definitive for any given car in the series. Our friend "The Masked Railroader" confirmed this with some research; some cars remain in the CSX series from which MTL pulled the road numbers, and some don't.



Scheduled February 2014 Release:

993 00 804, \$145.95

Quantity eight of Chesapeake & Ohio.

Reporting Marks: C&O 77518, 77527, 77636, 77645, 78754, 78763, 78872, 78881.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and "C&O For Progress" herald on right. Simulated coal loads included. Approximate Time Period: 1971 (build date) to late 1980s. Previous Releases (as Catalog Number 108020): A two pack with Road Numbers 78945 and 78947, July 2000 (Catalog 108022). The Runner Pack releases should carry individual catalog numbers 108 5x 020.

Checking the previously released car directly, these were built in 1971 by Bethlehem Steel, whose logo is displayed right on the hopper. The April 1976 ORER shows the H250 class of "Hopper, Open Top" as numbered from 77000 to 78999, a whopping 1979 cars of 190,000 pounds each. That's an impressive number on its own, but only a fraction of the approximately 47,500 hoppers the Chesapeake and Ohio had on its roster. (And more than 1500 of those were 33 foot 2 bay hoppers, even at that late date.) I wish the ORER was still printing the "Recapitulation of Car Equipment" in 1976! Adding all those numbers together was not my idea of a good time!

The Fallen Flags website has several photos of cars in this series. (Surprisingly, the Morning Sun Color Guide for the C&O does not!) C&O 77098 was caught in 1988, for example. Comparing prototype to model, we have the right number of panels and ribs (14 and 13, respectively) and a general match to the "look and feel" of the car. One quibble is that the real cars used side and end grab irons and the MTL 108 body style has ladders instead. You might consider adding consolidated stencils to the cars if you're modeling the middle 1970s or later, a simple enough task.

Turning back to the ORERs, we pick up in January 1985 where 1,914 of the original series of cars remained in service. In the July 1989 Register, that plummets to 307, probably not because of obsolescence but because of repainting. The C&O had been changed to the Chessie System and then to CSX Transportation at that point. There are so many series into

which these cars could have been renumbered that I won't venture a guess. I'll simply be lazy and close the ATP right there with the caveat that even those surviving cars may or may not have been wearing their "For Progress" paint at that point.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: Available mid-month from Micro-Trains are the P.T. Barnum Vintage items for which pre-orders were taken in May:

153 00 041 and 153 00 042, \$16.25 each

Road Numbers: 18 and 26.

Civil War Era Flat Car, P.T. Barnum.

Blue with white lettering including "P.T. Barnum" on left and road number on right. Non-operating link and pin couplers included.



470 00 079, Wagon Pack #1, \$29.95.

The individual catalog numbers for these two wagons are 470 50 079 and 472 00 019.



470 00 089, Wagon Pack #2, \$29.95.

The individual catalog numbers for these two wagons are 470 50 079 and 472 00 019.



Here's a mid-month "surprise" release, although it is the time of the year for Micro-Trains' Christmas offerings to begin appearing:

993 21 200, \$229.95 - Home for the Holidays Christmas Set. Consists of the following items:



985 50 711, 4-6-2 "Pacific" Steam Engine (Model Power Locomotive, MTL Paint and Coupler) - Road Number 2013. Black with gold road number on cab and multicolored wreath on tender.



140 51 069, Heavyweight Railway Post Office, "Santa Mail". Road Number 1225. Green with black roof, gold lettering in center of side. Multicolor "string of lights" across top of side and red, green and black bows and garland across bottom of side.



141 52 009 and 141 53 019, Pullman Heavyweight 10-1-2 Sleepers, "Reindeer Lake" and "Christmas Valley". No road numbers. Each car is maroon with gold car name at top center. Multicolor "string of lights" across top of side and red, green and gold bows and garland across bottom of side.

144 54 019, Pullman Heavyweight 3-2 Observation, "Humbug Mountain". No road number. Maroon with gold car name at top center. Multicolor

"string of lights" across top of side and red, green and gold bows and garland across bottom of side.

My connection to the phrase "Home for the Holidays" is the song by that name. It was written in 1954 by Robert Allen and Al Stillman and was recorded by Perry Como that same year. That version reached #8 on the Billboard chart, and was available as a single in both 78 RPM (!) and 45 RPM pressings. Como re-recorded the song in Stereo in 1959. Since then, the Carpenters, Barry Manilow and Cyndi Lauper and Norah Jones have covered the song.

But the artist who sings this in my head is the late Robert Goulet, who was a favorite performer of my father's going back to when Goulet appeared as Sir Lancelot on Broadway in **Camelot** in 1960. (My parents received an autographed photo from Goulet many years later.) Goulet's version of "Home for the Holidays" appeared on his album **Robert Goulet's Wonderful World of Christmas** released in 1972. It got a lot of airplay in the Irwin household when I was growing up.

Home for the Holidays was also a 1995 comedy-drama film directed by Jodie Foster and featuring an ensemble cast including Anne Bancroft, Holly Hunter, Charles Durning, Geraldine Chaplin and Claire Danes. There is also a project called "Home for the Holidays" (at homefortheholidays.org) which "is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to unite military families who cannot afford to be together for important occasions."

Getting back to MTL, the previously unannounced release of this set makes at least me wonder whether we'll be seeing a single release Holiday Car for 2013. I hope so!

The following item is in pre-order at present and are NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is November 2013. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30.



021 00 560, \$24.65

Reporting Marks: None.

40 Foot Steel Box Car, Plug Door, "Happy Hanukkah" 2013.

Artist's representation on left, actual car may vary (and will vary from original illustration, see below).

Stained glass motif in multiple colors of blue and green with black and yellow borders on a clear plastic body shell. Large yellow legend "Happy Hanukkah" across car. Top of nine candles, representing the menorah, across car. Gold ends and roof.

Perhaps the most important item I can share with respect to this pre-order is that the original pre-release artwork is wrong, and MTL knows it. There should be nine candles, not seven, and there will be nine on the actual car when it's released. In other words, it won't look like the car image at right, which was printed in the Micro-News.



This year's release is slated for November; last year's ended up being released in November as well. It looks like it will be just in time for gift-giving since this year Hanukkah falls on November 27 which is the day before Thanksgiving in the United States.

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

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



518 00 250, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: GARE 9905.

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Schott Brewing Company.

Yellow sides, brown roof and ends. Black door sill and hardware. Black lettering including company name and location and reporting marks on left. Black, white and red product legend on right, "Highland Beer" on one side and "Schotts Lager" on other side. Approximate Time Period: December 1933 (repaint date) to about 1937. Release #5 in an expected twelve in the Brewery Reefer Series.

Please see the commentary on the N Scale release of this car above (058 00 170). Note that the N Scale version has a more correct truss rod underframe while the Z Scale version has a straight underframe, however the Z Scale car is a 40 foot car which is closer to the prototype's actual length.



518 00 340, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: CP 5609.

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Canadian Pacific (Passenger Express Scheme).

Maroon sides, black roof, ends and side ladders. Delux gold lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname across top. Approximate Time Period: mid-1950s (1955 service/repaint date given by MTL) to mid-1960s.

The **Canadian Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 25, shows sister car CP 5618 in Toronto circa 1956, resplendent in new paint applied just the year before. The car is one of 100 in the series 5600 to 5699 that were built back in 1922 by Canadian Car and Foundry.

And as with the 2005 N Scale release of this car, that's where the bad news starts, accuracy-wise. The roadname is on the upper sill, not the car side (MTL's sill isn't wide enough). The real car looks less tall and more long than the model, has a roof that appears to be more rounded and is metal according to the photo caption, and rides on express trucks which almost appear chained to the body. Express trucks would be warranted for passenger service. So unfortunately, the MTL model is what you call your basic "stand-in." However, other than the release of a resin kit from a small specialty shop-- which as far as I know isn't happening, for CPR modelers it'll have to do.

Let's go to the ORER for January 1953 for a look; conveniently, it's in there even though it's classified as a passenger refrigerator car. The AAR Classification was "BR" for Refrigerator Express and the description was "[Refrigerator] Steel Underframe, Basket Bunkers, Ventilator." The inside length of all but four of the cars was 38 feet 8 inches (four had different ice tanks), inside height was 7 feet 3 inches, and outside length was 45 feet 10 inches. That's versus the 40 foot nominal length of the 518 body style. The doors were 5 feet wide by 6 feet 4 inches high, and capacity was 76,000 pounds of lading and up to 8100 pounds of ice. There were 99 total cars in the group in 1953 and 74 in January 1964.

It looks like between then and January 1967, the series numbering was flipped to the 280500s, since the dimensions of that group are the same. Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site (www.nakina.net) makes the same assumption, putting a question mark after the notation "Renumbered 280500 to 280571" with dates of 1965 and 1966 for this.

Z SCALE REPRINTS:



530 00 081 and 530 00 082, \$22.90 each
Reporting Marks: SP 60166 and 60190.

39 Foot Tank Car, Single Dome, Southern Pacific.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname on right.

Approximate Time Period: early 1960s to mid

1980s. Previous Release (as Catalog 14408): Road Number 60178, July 1987; Road Number 60170, September 1998; Road Number 60175, May 2001. All previous releases were available with either Marklin or Magne-Matic Couplers.

The series 60144 to 60193, previously numbered 47680 to 47729, was the SP's Class O-50-14. According to "Railgoat" Lee Gautreaux's site (www.railgoat.railfan.net) these cars were built in 1942 by General American Transportation Company and were of 8000 gallons capacity. The reference photo on the site is of SP 60165, taken in June 1993 – yes, that's past the ATP I am projecting, since, among other things, one side of the car is missing its dome ladder. The real car looks to be less tall than the MTL 530 body style, but the dome appears to be a bit larger.

In January 1955 all of the cars were in the original series. The January 1959 ORER showed the renumbering from one series to the other well underway, with 30 cars in the 60100s and 29 in the previous road numbers. There are a few dimensions: length 36 feet 3 inches, width 9 feet 1 inch, height 13 feet 1 inch and capacity 100,000 pounds. By January 1964 the renumbering is complete, and probably repainting into the as modeled scheme with the bolder roadname. That ORER lists a total of 1,130 tank cars operated with SP reporting marks plus a few more that have T&NO reporting marks. That's a lot more than I recall seeing for any other railroad, although some private owners far exceed that quantity.

The April 1970 Register shows 44 cars in the group and a notation calls out specifically that some of the cars in the series are "specially lined for sugar service"; specifically the 60150, 60154, 60155, 60174, 60179 and 60188. The tankers had been brought into a separate listing in the April 1976 ORER; 27 cars without sugar lining and four with remained. There were still four cars in the group as late as July 1989, but the ATP ends as far as Equipment Register lookups are concerned prior to the photo date on the "Railgoat" website.



980 01 120, \$135.95 and 980 02 120, \$99.95

Road Numbers: 1400 and 1900 (will be preceded with "CP" in website listings).

F7 Powered A and Powered B Units, Canadian Pacific.

Maroon and gray with yellow stripes. Yellow lettering including roadname and number. Red and white shield herald on nose of A-unit. Approximate Time Period: A-unit, 1954 to as late as 1978 and then

again as an Executive Unit from 1998 to present; B-unit, 1954 to as late as 1971, and then again as an Executive Unit from 1998 to present. Previous Releases: A unit (as Catalog Number 14012 and 14012-2), Road Number 4069, August 2003; Road Number 6402, February 1997. B Unit (unpowered, as Catalog Number 17012 and 17012-2), Road Number 4459, January 2004. All previous runs were available with either Marklin or Magne-Matic Couplers.

There's a bit of untangling needed for this pair of reprinted diesels. Let's get the bad news out of the way first: The CP 1400 was an FP7, several feet longer than an F7 in order to fit a steam generator, and the CP 1900 was an F9B, not an F7B.

The "Canadian Pacific Railway Diesel Roster and Photo Archives" website (now there's an accurate title – the URL is www.trainweb.org/galt-stn/cproster/topindex.htm) has a goodly amount of data on the entire, well, CP roster.

For a change, I'll start with the B unit: It was delivered in 1954 as part of the group of F9Bs 1900 to 1907. In 1971 these were renumbered to the group 4473 to 4478, but may have been relettered with the script style Canadian Pacific roadname before that. This change could have been as early as 1959, but I doubt that it occurred that quickly. The CP Rail scheme was adopted in 1967 which is another possible end to the ATP. I should mention that the line did have F7Bs, originally numbered 4424 to 4427, then numbered 1908 to 1911 in 1954. There was another group which started in the 4400s and became 1912 to 1919 in 1954 as well. Changing the last zero to an eight in the road number to make "1900" into "1908" is doable, although it would have been better if MTL had selected one of those numbers in the first place. Unfortunately, there aren't any photos of any of the F9B units on the site as originally done. However, that's not the end of the story: the 1900 rejoined the CP in 1998 as part of its executive fleet and was repainted into the original colors. I did find a photo of it on Flickr and others on RRPictureArchives.net. This leads to one of those weird "split ATPs" that we also had with the previous runs of these diesel models.

The A unit started as 4099, one of the short series 4099 to 4102 built in 1953 and renumbered in 1954. The latest this unit's first ATP on the CP could have lasted is 1978 when, as MTL reports, it was sold off to VIA (more or less the Canadian version of Amtrak, to oversimplify things). The same caveat applies to the paint scheme as with the A unit, that is, the block lettering could have been replaced with the script lettering roadname much earlier. There's a nice shot on RRPictureArchives.net of the A and B pair together as of 2005.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following item was announced as an “off-cycle” release via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail “Micro-Trains E-Line,” all on or about September 17.*



507 44 610, \$49.95

Reporting Marks: CGW 541 and 555.

Two pack of 50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, Chicago Great Western.

Maroon with yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and large “DF” on right. Red, black and white “Lucky Strike” herald on left above reporting marks. Moderate weathering in shades of brown. Approximate Time Period: 1963 (build date) or 1967 (service date) to early 1970s at least. Previous Releases

(in unweathered form): Road Numbers 541 and 555 (the same road numbers), July 2013.

Oh well, the streak of renumbered Z Scale Weathered Releases ends at one (last month’s C&O plug door boxcar pair). The “clean” runs of these cars are from only two months ago, probably not enough time for MTL to declare that these were surplus, so I’ll speculate that “dirty” versions were planned from the get-go. I’ll leave it to the reader to pull the July issue of the UMTRR for the full commentary.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #57 (994 00 057, \$79.95), four Pacific Fruit Express / Western Pacific 40 foot double sheathed wood refrigerator cars, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the March 2013 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 518 51 200, 52125; 518 52 200, 52163; 518 53 200, 52237; 518 54 200, 52294.



Also, the Union Tank Car Company 39 foot tank car eight-pack (994 00 803, \$129.95) is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the March 2013 issue. The individual catalog numbers and reporting marks for these items are as follows: 530 51 030, 73244; 530 52 030, 73253; 530 53 030, 73262; 530 54 030, 73271; 530 55 030, 73300; 530 56 030, 73319; 530 57 030, 73328; 530 58 030, 73337.



The following items are in pre-order at present and are NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is February 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30.

Scheduled March 2014 Release:

994 00 062, \$79.95

Quantity four of 50 Foot PS-5 Steel 15 Panel Gondolas, Fixed Ends, CSX Transportation.

Reporting Marks: CSXT 704584, 704660, 704712, 704893.

Black with mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and CSX herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1990s to present. Previous Releases: None. The Runner Pack releases should carry individual catalog numbers 522 5x 240.



Please see the commentary on the N Scale Runner Pack above (993 00 085). However, note that the Z Scale cars have drop ends, while the prototype cars have fixed ends (as will the N Scale Runner Pack cars).



Scheduled March 2014 Release:

994 00 804, \$179.95

Quantity eight of 50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Single Door, Railbox.

Reporting Marks: RBOX 20520, 20648, 20664, 20682, 20750, 20794, 20875, 20883.

Yellow with aluminum roof and black door. Mostly black including roadname and reporting marks on left. Small black, red and blue "Next Load / Any Road" logo on right. Approximate Time Period: early 1990s to no later than 2007. Previous Releases: None. The Runner Pack releases should carry individual catalog numbers 510 5x 220. The image at left is of N Scale cars for illustration purposes only; actual cars may differ.

What do I mean, "Previous Releases: None"? Well, there's a subtle difference between this

forthcoming eight pack and previous MTL Z Scale boxcars painted for Railbox, for example, Runner Pack #1 from back in January 2009. It's a "small" difference, you might say – the size of the "Next Load / Any Road" logo, to be specific. The smaller logo denotes a later delivery of x-post boxcars to Railbox Corporation. This paint scheme is not a match to the closest MTL N Scale version of this car, namely, Catalog 25562, a three-pack done in January 1997, at the very beginnings of what's become the UMTRR. The road numbers aren't in the same series either. (Methinks there has been some photoshopping of the N Scale car to

provide the illustration above.) In other words: I've got to start from scratch for this commentary.

Very well, then. According to the December 1999 issue of **Rail Model Journal** (the start of their extensive coverage of the "Boxcar Boom of the 1970s" written by Jim Eager) calls out the Micro-Trains Z Scale model as being based on the American Car & Foundry entry. AC&F was a major supplier of cars to Railbox, though just one of five.

One of the others was Pacific Car and Foundry, which supplied the XCF11 Class of cars to Railbox in May 1976 with road numbers 20000 to 20399, followed by the identical Class XCF11A numbered 20400 to 20899—which is what we want since the road numbers selected by MTL fall into that set. The 1975 order was delivered in the "traditional" (so to speak) RBOX paint with larger roadname and "Next Load" logo, along with the slogan "The nationwide boxcar pool"—that is, the way that Runner Pack #1 was painted. This is all from the March 2002 issue of **Rail Model Journal**, which also notes that the XCF11s went to the Union Pacific following the dispersion of the Railbox fleet to individual railroads. However, as we'll see, that reference is to the original delivery, not the second one. The prototype being PC&F and not AC&F, there will be differences between the MTL 510 body style and the actual car. I'll leave that exercise to the reader.

So all we have to do, then, is figure out the start of the ATP as being from when Railbox started using the more spartan scheme. Pulling out one more **Rail Model Journal** issue, this time from February 2002, it's noted by Mike Budde that Railbox started repainting their cars since the early 1990s with the smaller logos. That'll do.

The October 1991 ORER certainly qualifies as being "early 1990s" and so I'll grab that. The series 20400 to 20899 remained healthy at the time at 482 cars out of a possible 500. (But note that the original series, 20000 to 20399, is already gone from the roster.) The cars were described as "Box, Steel, Nailable Steel Floor, Lading Strap Anchors" with inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet, outside length 55 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet 5 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 5077 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds. The series remains largely intact into the absorption of the Railbox fleet into its parent TTX Company's registration, sometime between the January 2000 and January 2002 issues of the ORER. At that start of 2002 there were still 475 cars in service out of the original 500. There is a fairly abrupt end to the ATP, however: 473 cars in the January 2006 Equipment Register and the series completely gone in the July 2007 edition.

The Fallen Flags website attests to the fact that not all of the cars in this series got the later version of the Railbox paint: witness for example RBOX 20450 as of June 2006, just before the entire series was deleted from the Railbox roster. But the very next car in the series, RBOX 20451, has the paint scheme selected for the forthcoming Runner Pack as of March 2005. As you might have already seen for yourself, these cars have become canvasses for plenty of graffiti—which means I wouldn't be surprised to see MTL do some of its own in a later release.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



524 00 103, \$24.95

Reporting Marks: USAAC 667421

60 Foot Flat Car with "Surprise Attack" container.

Release #3 in the World War II Nose Art Series.

Green flat car with white lettering including reporting marks on left and "U.S. Army Air Corps" in center. White container with multicolor artwork including nose art depiction on left.

The website PlaneJunkie.com notes that not much is known about this particular nose art. The panel of the original B-24M "Liberator" aircraft on which this design is painted is on display at the American Airpower Heritage Museum in Midland, Texas, as MTL also states in its car copy. PlaneJunkie also comments that this "Vargas Girl" design appeared on other aircraft. Alberto Vargas (1896-1982) was a well known painter of pin-up girls. **Esquire** Magazine introduced the Vargas girls in its October 1940 issue, but Vargas was already well known for his portraits of glamorous women, including for the theatre and the motion picture industry. One of Vargas' last works was for the cover of the album "Candy-O" by the rock group The Cars.

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

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: The latest N Scale Civil War structure is a "Loco Shed Kit" (499 90 957, \$32.95) which easily fits many decades past that timeframe, especially on shortlines, branches and logging lines. A pair of interior boxcar loads have been released (499 43 999, \$9.95). In Z Scale, the Canadian Pacific F7 diesel from this month will also be available in a train set (994 03 130, \$239.95). This time MTL notes that the selection of freight cars in the set may vary.

The MTL Factory Tour video already streaming on YouTube is now available in "hard copy" via a DVD (995 30 002, \$10.00, or autographed by MTL CEO Eric Smith, 995 30 003, \$15.00 – and now we know what Eric's signature is worth!). Alright, so it hasn't passed "Gangnam Style" yet, but as I type this, the view count online is past 13,500.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: The "D" key on my computer keyboard is filing a grievance after my updating the website with this month's bye-bye board – and the July and August outs as well, on which I needed to catch up. Let's start with a single line in the Micro-News: "All Z Scale State Cars." I'm not going to torture myself (or you, perhaps) by noting every catalog number and month of release, but I will note the roll call of the twenty-six (!) states for which the cars have been retired, in the order in which they were issued: Hawaii, Maine, Nebraska, Mississippi, Iowa, Vermont, Ohio, New Mexico, Maryland, Delaware, Louisiana, Arkansas, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Idaho, West Virginia, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Massachusetts, Arizona, New Jersey, Utah, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and California, which was the last released in September 2012. I have a feeling that any leftovers of these still

on the MTL shelves went to the grinder... which may mean that these 26 have now become more scarce than the ones that sold out in the more typical manner. We'll see if the aftermarket reacts, but I think it's fair to say that the Z Scale State Special Editions weren't as proportionately popular as the N Scale set.

Although not specifically called out in the Discontinued List, all of the Weathered Releases for last month are also outta here per the Micro-News. That would be the "STEEL" autorack set (993 05 150) which is no surprise at all to me, the Southern Pacific Weathered Passenger Car Set (993 05 180), the Santa Fe / Southern Pacific Freight Car Four-Pack (993 05 190) and the Z Scale pair of Chesapeake & Ohio boxcars (507 44 570).

Sticking with N Scale, the Northern Pacific double door boxcar reprint (023 00 250, June) has left the building, as has the first number of the Union Pacific yellow x-post boxcar (027 00 351, May 2012). Two tank cars are drained: the second number of the SL-SF "Frisco" company service car (065 00 712, May 2011) and the Colorado Animal By-Products car (065 00 720, December 2012). Last month's Canadian National unweathered boxcar (073 00 140) has left early. The ACF Industries "Sparger" Demonstrator Center Flow covered hopper has bottomed out (092 00 260, August 2011). Two reprinted depressed center flat cars are outta here: the Pennsylvania (109 00 010, November 2011) and the Norfolk & Western (109 00 240, September 2011). Finally in 1:160, the "White Train" Ringling Brothers autorack has left town (112 00 720, September 2011).

In Z Scale, both numbers of the Northern Pacific green boxcar (507 00 47x, July 2011) are sold out. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe x-post single door boxcar (510 00 210, October 2011) and the Grand Trunk Western x-post plug door boxcar (511 00 130, June 2012) are gone. The second number of the American Refrigerator Transit wood refrigerator (518 00 042, October 2011) is shut down. Both numbers of the Golden West Service bulkhead flat car (527 00 11x, January 2012) have been unloaded. The weathered US Army tank car (530 44 280, December 2011) is empty, as is the Norfolk & Western covered hopper (531 00 190, January 2012). Finally, the second number of the Santa Fe open hopper (533 00 012, March 2012) is gone after the first number sold out last month.

Since I'm so far behind on the website updates anyway as I write this, I'll mention that most of the MTL Runner Packs in N Scale are sold out. It's easier to note what's left as of August 29, 2013: #61, four North Western Line refrigerators; #67, three Department of Defense 54 foot tank cars; #75, four CP Rail yellow boxcars; #76, four Santa Fe mechanical refrigerators; #77, four black New Haven boxcars; and #802, the eight pack of Pacific Fruit Express mechanical refrigerators. Also, the Canadian Pacific five passenger car set (993 01 230) is still gettable, as are four weathered packs: four BNSF boxcars (993 05 100), four B&O hoppers (993 05 110), four Soo Line boxcars (993 05 120), and three NS gondolas (993 05 140). There is a larger variety of Z Scale Runner Packs still available from MTL stock. As with all other releases, just because Runner Packs are gone from the factory doesn't mean they are out of stock at authorized Micro-Trains Dealers.

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: Further to the Georgia-Pacific log cars from last month (115 00 01x), our anonymous assistant who's adopted the name "The Masked Railroader" reports that a few of these cars including the 174 have been remarked POTB, for the Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad. That's out on the Oregon Coast, which may explain how I came across a photo of the 174 in that state. "Masked" also pointed out that the Georgia-Pacific series, which is still in service, is an odd mix of Plate C and Plate F cars.

While the Erie Lackawanna placards as modeled on the forthcoming autorack with vandal panels (112 00 530) are long gone, "Masked" also tells us that twelve cars from the ETTX series are still rolling the rails, with the same road numbers but TTBX reporting marks, including the 940772.

Long-time UMTRR Gang Member Andy Bogle noted with respect to the Silver Edge Beer release that an investor has bought the rights to the Drewery's Beer name and is planning to reopen a brewery in South Bend, Indiana. Here's a link to the "Elkhart Truth" blog post which includes the press release from the new owner of the Drewery's name: blogs.etruth.com/hopnotes/2013/01/07/drewrys-brewing-company-to-return-to-south-bend/ .

Bob Williams wrote in: "For the Incremental Information Department, The Southern Pacific Z Scale 6325 and 8219 F7 locomotives from the August issue #200 are pictured together at www.railpictures.net/photo/312965/ . This answers the frequently asked question: Could these locos have ever have been harnessed together?" Yes, it does! Thanks to Bob and all who contributed Incremental Information this month. It's always nice to hear from readers.

OOPS PATROL: Too much copy and paste again: the N Scale Norfolk & Western 60 foot boxcar has catalog number 122 00 050, not 122 50 040 as reported in the August UMTRR. In the July UMTRR, the correct previously released road number for the N Scale British Columbia boxcar, 076 00 050 is 5565, not 5545 which was the road number of the July reprint.

However, it's not a copy and paste error on the road number of August's Z Scale "Nose Art #2" flat car with container release: both it, namely "Caboose" and the first release "Belle Wringer" have the same road number, 667409.

AND THAT WRAPS UP THIS MONTH: Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers, George

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