



*IrwinsJournal.com Presents:*

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

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Hello again everyone... and yes, I guess I really did miss an entire Z Scale Weathered Release in last month's bytes. That will be fixed... so let's get started...

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



**034 00 391 and 034 00 392, \$23.40 each.**

**Reporting Marks: SP 210036 and 210256.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Double Youngstown Doors, Southern Pacific.**

Brown (including trucks and couplers) with white lettering including roadname and road number on left. Black and white circular "Southern Pacific Lines" herald on right.

Simulated interior load included. Approximate Time Period: 1956 to early 1970s at least.

Page 13 of the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two** provides the bingo to SP 210036. The photo was taken sometime during the mid-1960s and shows a car quite a bit more brown looking than the MTL model. Blame that on weathering. The cars did have riveted sides, a delta to the MTL 034 body style, but that's apparent only from close inspection of the images. The side sills on the real car are inset a bit more than usual into the underframe.

These class A-50-18 "Automobile" cars were built by the Southern Pacific Equipment Company during 1954 and 1955 and were originally numbered from 193000 to 193999. During 1956, renumbering into the group 209548 to 210547 began. According to the Color Guide, the series was cut back to 209548 to 210372 in 1966. The last two cars were gone by the January 1978 Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER).

Speaking of ORERs, let's check the January 1958 edition. By that issue only 33 cars had been moved to the 209548 to 210547 series. They were described simply as "Box, All Steel" with AAR Designation XM, with inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 51 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 15 feet and capacity 4963 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. In the July 1963 Register the car count was up to 311, and in the January 1967 ORER the shorter series 209457 (not 209548 as stated in the Color Guide) to 210372 held 612 boxcars. The 209548 to 210372 series had just eleven cars as of July 1974.

You might be properly wondering about the paint scheme for these cars. The SP switched to their large roadname and gothic reporting marks well before the removal of these cars from the roster, so wouldn't there have been a quicker end to the Approximate Time Period? Well, it depends. Back in the Color Guide, there's a shot of SP 209658 as of August 1971, with not only the paint scheme depicted by MTL but also with full ladders and the roofwalk intact. Online there is a shot of SP 210365 also as of August 1971, on Lee Gautreaux's website (URL [www.railgoat.railfan.net](http://www.railgoat.railfan.net) ). It seems that the older these cars got, the more brown they looked, something to keep in mind if you're modeling the 1960s or early 1970s.



049 00 700, \$23.35

**Reporting Marks: HPCX 1205.**

**40 Foot Double Sheathed Wood Refrigerator Car with Fishbelly Underframe and Vertical Brake Staff, Hercules Powder Company.**

Brown with black side ladders and grab irons.

White lettering including reporting marks on left

and company name on right. Color figure of Hercules (company trademark) in yellow panel left of door. Approximate Time Period: 1949 or 1951 to before 1955.

I have help here from UMTRR Gang Member Jeff Maurer, who was involved with the development of this car. The verbiage to the right of the door reads "For Nitrate of Ammonia and Nitrate of Soda Loading Only." Jeff notes that "Nitrate of ammonia, also known as ammonium nitrate, is a strong oxidant and must be kept away from heat or any ignition source or it can explode. Nitrate of soda, also known as sodium nitrate or Chile saltpeter, is very soluble in water and needs to be kept dry. It's still used in the production of solid rocket propellant.

"I'm not sure who the builder was," Jeff continues, "but the built date was December 1949 (I'm trying to verify this info). There is a possibility that these cars were bought from a scrapper and 'rebuilt' from the underframe up which would explain why a wood reefers were still being built in 1949." I do know that 8 cars show up in the Oct 1953 ORER.

There's a photo of the prototype car on the website of the Philadelphia Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association ( [phillynmra.org](http://phillynmra.org) ), captioned as having been taken in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1951. The Philly Division offered an HO model of the car. And the real thing was in fact an AAR Designation RB, or bunkerless refrigerator car, so we're good there. The real HPCX 1205 and at least one other car in the photo were both double sheathed with fishbelly underframes and a vertical brake staff. There are some detail differences, like the number of grab irons. The roof isn't visible in the photo.

Given the single 1951 photo, let's see what the ORERs reveal. In 1935, 1940 and 1945 Registers, the company has only tank cars listed. In the July 1950 Register, there are four boxcars to go with 177 tank cars, but that's not what we want either. Finally, in the April 1952 edition, we find 12 cars numbered 1200 to 1211. They were described as "Refrigerator, Steel Underframe" with the RB designation. The inside length was 33 feet, inside width 8 feet 5 inches, inside height 7 feet 4 inches, outside length 41 feet 5 inches, extreme height 13 feet 11 inches, and door opening 4 feet wide by 6 feet 4 inches high. No capacity information was provided. Jeff Maurer tells us that eight cars show up in the October 1953 ORER. But how's this for a short Approximate Time Period: they are gone by the January 1955 ORER. An ATP of no more than six years? Yikes. I suspect Rule #1 will be invoked on N Scale Model Railroads around the country. And "around the country" is alright here, since home points for Hercules Powder cars ranged from Richmond, California to South Charleston, South Carolina – or coast to coast.

Jeff Maurer provided a history of the company as well. "Hercules Powder Company had several plants around the country but the original plant was built in Santa Cruz, California in 1861 as the California Powder Works. This plant was later moved, starting in 1881 and finished in 1893, to Contra Costa County to be away from the population and closer to the Navy facilities in San Pablo, California. The previous site of the Hercules plant has now been transformed into the city of Hercules, about 25 miles northeast of San Francisco. California Powder Works was eventually bought out by DuPont in 1906, but in 1912 a federal court (citing the Sherman Anti-Trust Act) ordered Du Pont broken up. It was through this court-ordered action that the Hercules Powder Company was formed.

"Hercules had numerous locations around the country producing dynamite and black powder (nobody wanted to have to transport either commodity any further than needed) including locations in Hazardville, New Jersey (which exploded in 1912), Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Kenvil, New Jersey (which exploded on September 12, 1940 but was reopened in April 1941), and Carthage, Missouri (which exploded in July 1966). Like most manufacturers of explosives, Hercules preferred many small plants to a few large ones, however, finding the former locations of the explosive plants is not as easy as it seems (unless it exploded at some time). The plant in Hercules, California also had numerous explosions losing 59 lives between 1881 and 1919 with the largest occurring in Feb. 1908 when 24 men were killed in a single explosion.

"After World War II, Hercules began diversifying out of the explosives market and began getting into plastics, chemicals, and rocket fuel. In 1968, Hercules officially dropped the 'Powder Company' from its name and simply became Hercules Inc. They successfully made the transformation from making explosives to making fertilizers, rocket fuel, and other various chemicals. In 2008, however, the company was bought out by Ashland Inc. and Hercules disappeared into history." Thanks, Jeff! I'll just add that a former division spinoff firm, Alliant Powder, focuses on ammunition powder and uses a later version of the Hercules trademark.



065 00 840, \$26.95

**Reporting Marks: MPLX 1456.**

**39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Mexican Oil Company.**

Gray with red center band and dome. Black underframe and bottom of tank. Black lettering including reporting marks on left and company

name on right (except "Mexican" in red). Approximate Time Period: 1923 (build date) into the 1930s. Twelfth and final release of an expected twelve in the Tank Car Series.

I'm surprised to see that this car is the final entry in the N Scale Tank Car Series, as I had expected the Cities Service car that was the first in the Z Scale Tank Car Series to be crossed over from 1:220 to 1:160. And so much for copy and paste for me this time around.

At any rate, we make one more trip to the book **Tank Cars: American Car & Foundry Company, 1865 to 1955** by Edward S. Kaminski, and go to Page 104 for the bingo on this car. MPLX 1456 was one of 25 cars numbered 1439 to 1463 built in August 1923. The builders' photo is in black and white and indicates that the cars were AC&F's Lot 9651. These were AAR Specification III cars with 50 ton trucks and capacity of 10,179 gallons, close to the MTL 065 body style's size. Detail differences include the underframe type, the shape of the dome (taller and less wide on the model) and the ladder going only to the railing and not to the small platform below the dome. This isn't the only Mexican Petroleum car in the book; back on Page 42 there's a shot of the three dome tank car that was lettered for Pan-Am Oils and released by MTL in July 2008 (Catalog 066 00 030). Wish I had the AC&F book then!

What I did have at the time, though, was a thumbnail sketch of the company for which these cars were built. The Mexican Petroleum Company and other non-Mexican companies had control of an enormous amount of land and resources in Mexico in the first decade of the Twentieth Century; one source (**Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and the U.S.**, previewed on Google Books) stated that one-seventh of the Mexican land surface was owned by foreigners with United States companies holding more than all other countries combined. All well and good, but that Mexican oil had to get somewhere to be used. Edward L. Doheny, who controlled Mexican Petroleum through Pan American, formed an alliance with the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, part of the broken up Standard Oil Trust.

The Standard Oil breakup left marketers without production and vice versa, and the Standard Oil Company of Indiana took an interest-- literally-- in Pan American in 1925, paying \$37.6 million in what was the largest oil consolidation up to that point. In 1929, that ownership was upped to 81 percent of Pan Am. In 1957 Standard Indiana consolidated its crude oil and natural gas exploration and production into the Pan American Petroleum Company. In 1961 Standard's brand names of "Standard" (used in the 15 states of its original Standard Oil territory) and "American" began transitioning to "Amoco" and in 1985 the entire company became Amoco Corporation. Amoco was merged with British Petroleum in 1998 to form BPAmoco but the name of that company reverted to BP in 2001.

Somewhere in that corporate history is going to be the end of the Approximate Time Period of this tank car, probably given a change in the paint scheme which as we know is not information in the ORERs. The “box” for Mexican Petroleum on Page 973 of the April 1924 Register includes a very long run-on sentence listing 1563 total cars, among which are the 1439 to 1463. The April 1928 “box” for Mexican Petroleum mercifully splits up the run-on sentence into rows, and the short series in which we’re interested occupies five of them due to there already being missing numbers in the sequence. The 1463 is still on the active roster at that time. Without car counts we don’t know how many are left as of February 1931 but the series is still listed. In the January 1943 ORER the group is missing the 1463, ending the “strictly speaking” ATP, but I’m hesitant to end it even that late. I just don’t think that the cars of this group lasted that long in that white and red paint. Even if they did, they would probably be so covered with, well, Mexican Petroleum that they’d look pretty black.



**106 00 100, \$22.95**

**Reporting Marks: CSXT 700816.**

**50 Foot 14 Panel Steel Gondola with Low Cover,  
CSX Transportation.**

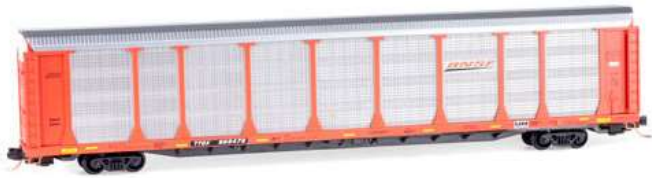
Black with mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and “CSX” on right. Black and white consolidated stencils on right. Red and yellow “Ease Up!” placards on far left and far right. Approximate Time Period: most likely the decade of the 1990s given the cover.

One number off can make a difference: CSXT 700817, found on George Elwood’s “Fallen Flags” site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ) as of 2012 is a gondola with coil steel hoods, not a low cover, although it is a 14 panel fixed end car. CSXT 700809 was the same when pictured in 2008. And CSXT 700831, just one among the fifty-six pages (!) of CSXT gondolas index at RRPictureArchives.net, doesn’t have a cover at all. Not much to go on here, though I think it’s fair to assume that Micro-Trains does have a file photo in their possession on which they based the car they selected from the overall series. And I would think that at the time that the photo was taken, the car in question had a low cover, or something close. That could have been for a very short time, though, so the “strictly speaking” ATP could be short indeed, and very hard to call out.

The ORER for July 2007 has a short series, CSXT 700825 to 700831, designated GBS but described as simply “Gondola.” The inside length is 52 feet 5 inches, inside height 4 feet 6 inches, outside length 57 feet 5 inches, extreme height 8 feet 5 inches, and capacity 2246 cubic feet.

From that midpoint, we go back and forth among the ORERs in the Research Accumulation to yield an ATP that ends before January 2011 and starts before October 1991. Stopping at the April 1995 Register, I note that the designation is GBSR, aligned with the MTL car copy. So for a little variety in verbiage, I’ll do a “most likely” ATP here.





**110 00 160, \$43.95**

**Reporting Marks: TTGX 965476.**

**89 Foot Tri-Level Enclosed Autorack, BNSF Railway.**

Orange (flat car and racking) with mostly black lettering. White reporting marks on black panel on left. Red TTX logo right of center. BNSF "Swoosh" herald on racking on right. Yellow conspicuity stripes along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: the present (2014 rebuild/repaint date given by MTL).

Well, you can't get much more to The Present than with this car. And you can't get much more orange either. There's a short discussion of this car and the choice of paint accompanying the photo of the real TTGX 965476 on RailcarPhotos.com. The car was originally built in 1975. There's a 2006 photo on RRPictureArchives.net of the car with a CSX rack and the much more typical yellow paint used by TTX. In 2014, this car was sent back to the shop and received racking from Trinity Industries. And orange paint. And the latest red TTX logo. Let's not forget those conspicuity stripes either. The car looks to be a good match to the MTL 110 body style, particularly the racking which suggests to me that Trinity used a proven design for its version of the equipment. As noted in the discussion of the car on RailcarPhotos, this isn't the first time a TTX car has been painted in "railroad colors"; and also noted there, it will be interesting to see how the paint holds up after a few years.

## **N SCALE REPRINTS:**



**027 00 220, \$21.30**

**Reporting Marks: GTW 598008.**

**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Grand Trunk Western.**

Blue with aluminum roof. Mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large "The Good Track Road" herald and slogan on right. Approximate Time Period: 1979 (build date given by MTL) to present. Previous Releases (as Catalog Number 27220): Road Number 598093, July 1994; Road Number 598103, February 2004.

With the previous release, we noted the slogan "The Good Track Road," besides being a play on the GT's initials, was also a bit of a shot at the competition. Circa 1970, one rival in the GTW's service area of lower Michigan was the Penn Central, which had become notorious for deferred maintenance-- and freight cars derailling while standing still! The insinuation was pretty clear; if you want your shipment to arrive in one piece, better specify "The Good Track Road."

The April 1981 ORER is the closest I have to the 1979 build date given by MTL. It shows the series 598000 to 598199, of 200 cars, described "Box, Steel, Plug Doors, Cushion Underframe, Lading Strap Anchors (Processed Food Products), 50K" and within Plate C dimensions. The AAR Designation is XF meaning these were cars in food service. Although the GTW is

perhaps best known for its connection to the automobile industry, let's not forget that Battle Creek, home of Kellogg's which is the largest cereal producer in the world, is also along GTW trackage. The dimensions listed were: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside height, 11 feet, outside length, 58 feet 3 inches, extreme height, 14 feet 9 inches, door opening, 10 feet, and capacity 5182 cubic feet or 158,000 pounds. In the October 1996 Register, there are a total of 192 cars, of which 67 have been "demoted" to the XP classification. Both the 598103 and MTL's previous number, the 598093, appear to remain in the main series of XF cars. The January 2002 ORER shows 183 cars that are all XP class. Moving as close as I can to "the present," the January 2011 Register has 114 cars remaining in the group.

In MTL's car copy, the builder, National Steel Car, is noted. I would expect that to mean deltas between the prototype and the 027 body style. Most notable of these for me is a diagonal rib either side of the door in place of the first adjacent vertical rib on the real car.

Back in 2004, I thought that "to present" would work for the ATP since the Fallen Flags site has several examples from the prototype series dating up to December 2003. I can now update that to the latest photos on that site. GTW 598081 was captured in December 2013 and had conspicuity stripes added. GTW 598149 was caught in January 2013. In both cases, the original deep blue color has faded out quite a bit, and, of course I suppose, there is a lot of, "extra decoration." I wouldn't be surprised to see this very car soon from MTL as a Weathered / Graffiti Release.



057 00 070, \$22.80

**Reporting Marks: C&O 53048.**

**33 Foot Two Bay Open Hopper, Composite Sides, Flat Ends, Chesapeake & Ohio.**

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

Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1940s to early 1950s. Previous Releases (as Catalog Number 57070): Road Number 55364, July 1977; Road Number 53252, November 1977 (considered rare); Road Number 55442, April 1996; Road Number 55463, October 2001.

It's probably worth repeating the basic facts about the "war emergency" type of freight cars. These were an attempt to save precious steel for other uses during World War II. Wood replaced steel wherever possible without jeopardizing the structural integrity of the car. The December 2000 issue of **Rail Model Journal** has an article on what are more properly called "AAR Emergency Composite 50 Ton Hoppers" which includes a General American Transportation photo from August 1943 of sister car C&O 54398, and a shot of C&O 55619 which was built by American Car & Foundry in March 1944. There were more than 11,000 of these cars built, not counting "non-standard" variations on the recommended specifications from the Association of American Railroads. The C&O led the pack with 3,000 copies of the car type, in the series 53000 to 55999.

After a “not a reprint” for the October 2001 release, which had the roadname much smaller than in the previous three runs, MTL returns to the lettering format it had used before. This lettering matches what’s in the photos of the 54398 and 55619 in the RMJ piece. According to our C&O Special Correspondent James Pugh, there were three different builders for these cars including General American. That might-or might not- account for the lettering differences. So might the use, however briefly, of the 1953 paint scheme which also included the C&O herald.

At any rate, the ATP for this car effectively ends with the rebuilding of this group with steel sides, as MTL indicates. A chart in the **Rail Model Journal** piece shows the flip between October 1953 and October 1954: From 2,975 composite cars came 2,941 steel cars with 32 leftovers. It would be quite the interesting-- and challenging-- project to rework this MTL model into a steel sided version. The April 2001 **Rail Model Journal** illustrates what those cars looked like, post rebuild.

We’ll finish up with a quick sample ORER check, from the April 1952 edition: the series 53000 to 55999 stood at 2980 cars, just twenty short of the original size of the fleet. They were described as “Hopper, Self-Clearing, Composite” with the addition of “Twin hoppers, self-clearing, dumping between rails, tight ends” in an end note. The inside length was 33 feet, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 8 inches, outside length 34 feet, outside width 10 feet 2 inches, extreme height 10 feet 8 inches (same as the inside height), and capacity 1970 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The space occupied by the thicker wooden sides cut down the inside length versus all steel cars and thus the cubic foot capacity.



**108 00 100, \$23.40**

**Reporting Marks: UP 18119.**

**100 Ton Three Bay Open Hopper, Union Pacific.**

Brown (the UP’s “Synthetic Red”) including trucks and couplers. Yellow lettering including reporting marks and large roadname in center.

Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: 1962 (build date given by MTL) through late 1980s. Previous Releases: Road Number 18122, February 2003; Road Number 18121, October 2008.

Bethlehem Steel built a lot of 12 panel 3 bay hoppers for the Union Pacific, starting with this series which was given UP class H-90-1. There’s a listing of these in the July 1996 **Rail Model Journal**, and photos of cars from later UP series that were also built by Bethlehem in the September 1996 RMJ. Meanwhile, the **UP Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**, Page 37, has a shot of UP 18122, the first road number run by Micro-Trains. The prototype car looks a bit less tall and more long than the MTL 108 body style. There’s a contradiction between the caption, which notes that these were 100 ton cars, and both the painted capacity of 180,000 pounds and the UP Class itself H-90-1, the “90” standing for 90 ton cars.



In the January 1964 ORER is listed the Union Pacific series 17950 to 18199, of 250 cars that had an inside length of 45 feet, outside length of 48 feet 1 inch, extreme height of 11 feet 1 inch and capacity of 180,000 pounds. Between April 1970 and October 1972 the capacity rose to 100 tons. That's frequently a function of the trucks under the car rather than the structure of the car itself, and might explain the caption in the **Color Guide** as well. In the October 1972 ORER the collection is down to 248 pieces; in the October 1986 edition that's down to 97 cars total and in the October 1991 Register it looks like there's just one left.

**N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** *The following items were announced a mid-month releases via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line," all on or about September 16.*



**027 44 110, \$28.95**

**Reporting Marks: CNA 404904.**

**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Canadian National.**

Brown with white lettering including roadname (English one side, French other side) and reporting marks on left and large "wet noodle" herald on right. Black and white consolidated stencils on far right. Moderate weathering in dark gray and black. Extensive graffiti across bottom of one side including phrase "Graffiti is Dead / But the Zombies R Comin'." Approximate Time Period: 1978 (build date) to present. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): As Catalog 27110, Road Number 404917, June 1985; Road Number 404149, May 1988.

Graffiti is Dead, but the Zombies Are Coming? Is that a secret message of some sort? Is it an announcement of a change in direction for the Weathered Release program? Is it a shot at a certain large Class One Railroad, which doesn't allow graffiti on any of its modeled equipment per its license agreement, but neglected to "be specific" (pun intended) about trains that have a similar paint scheme to its own, but with zombies? I guess we'll never know.

Anyway, what we do know is that this car is an oldie but goodie—I had to double check to make sure I wasn't missing a more recent release, but no, the most recent run of this car was indeed prior to the split of Micro-Trains from Kadee. (I don't own either previous run.) And that means I have nothing to reprint for this reprint, other than to note that besides the extra decoration, it's a "Not A Reprint" since it has a brown roof while the first run had an aluminum roof. (Or is that weathering?)

Let's head over to Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site ( [www.nakina.net](http://www.nakina.net) ) for a check. Cranstone has just thirty-five cars in this group, CNA 404900 to 404934, built by International Car Company in October 1978 and featuring steel lining, nailable steel floors, a 15 inch travel end of car cushion, and strap anchors. Based on his ORER lookups, the cars were in service from 1979 to the present. Being built in the United States, these cars were required to carry the CNA reporting marks... which I wish auto-correct would stop changing to "CAN"...

I was a bit worried that I would not find a photo reference, but *Fallen Flags* comes through with a shot of CNA 404901 as of June 1980. It's looking quite clean and a couple of shades darker than the usual Canadian National paint of the time, and the roadname looks a bit "heavier" than the Micro-Trains car. The sides look pretty close between prototype and 027 body style, but the ends on the real car differ as they are more like the old Dreadnaught type than what's used by MTL on their x-post boxcar. This photo doesn't afford a look at the roof. In another opinion on the lettering, though, CNA 404918 as found in November 2006 has "thinner" lettering which seems closer to the MTL depiction.

The ORER for July 1980 shows all 35 cars in the group, with an inside length of 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet, outside length 58 feet 1 inch, extreme height 14 feet 11 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 5277 cubic feet or 156,000 pounds. Jumping to the January 2011 Equipment Register, eleven cars remain in service, so I think we can squeak by to an ATP of "the present" ... or invoke Rule #1. Just watch out, those Zombies R Comin'.



034 44 380, \$24.95

Reporting Marks: B&O 289250.

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

Oxide red with white lettering including small capitol dome herald and reporting marks on left

and large "B&O" on right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960s or, strictly speaking, 1978, to early 1980s. Previous Release (in unweathered form): Road Number 289247, April 2014.

It's much more likely that this car would have looked like this rather than the "clean" car released by MTL in on or after March 31, 1978, when the U-1 "yellow dot" stencil was required. The main scheme was used beginning in 1964 while a compendium of boxcar schemes on the B&O Historical Society website ( [www.borhs.org](http://www.borhs.org) ) gives 1962 as the starting point, and from then to 1978 or later is a long time to gather the effects of being in service.

The question of whether this car should have its roofwalk if it's meant to represent June 1978 returns. Page 11 of **Classic Freight Cars Volume 8** shows the previous road number, 289247, but that doesn't mean the 289250 was in the same condition at the same time. As noted previously, there can be quibbles with the side sill shape and the ends, plus the fact that the real car had riveted sides. I also noted that the underlying shade of brown looks darker than the red oxide that was used by Micro-Trains – unlike, for example, the forthcoming Runner Pack of the 120 series boxcars (see below).

Also as noted back in April, the ORER for January 1978 shows just seven cars numbered 289245 to 289251, AAR Classification XL, "Box, Steel, Evans 9 Belt DF Loaders." The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 15 feet and capacity 4952 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. There is a "door thing" here since the prototype cars had an 8+7 foot configuration versus the 8+8 foot pair on the MTL car. This specific small group remained just a short time longer, as they are in the April 1981 ORER but gone from the April 1984 Register.

### N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:

In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #96 (993 00 096, \$109.95), three CP Rail 89 Foot Flat Cars with Containers, is now available.



UMTRR coverage was in the March 2014 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 071 51 230, 521120; 071 52 230, 521133; 071 53 230, 521219. These are the second through fourth road numbers for this car. The individual catalog numbers for the containers are: 461 51 060, K-Line; 461 52 070, Hanjin; and 461 53 080, Genstar. These containers don't have road numbers.

*The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is February 2015. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30.*



#### ***Scheduled February 2015 Release:***

**993 00 101, \$74.95**

**Quantity four of 40 Foot Standard Steel Boxcar, Single Door, Flat Panel Roof, Baltimore & Ohio.**

**Road Numbers: B&O 276266, 276194, 276299, 276357.**

Oxide red (see text) with white lettering including large "B&O" and small road number on left, and roadname with "13 States" circular herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1955 through 1960s at least. Previous Release (as Catalog Number 120240): Road Number 276383, April 2000.

I need to begin this commentary with an important note. Since the first run of this car fourteen (!) years ago, MTL has received feedback and confirmed that the B&O's version of Oxide Red is a better color choice for these particular cars rather than the darker brown they used in April 2000. And so Oxide Red they will be. That's not apparent from the image in the Micro-News or on the MTL website (or in the above image either for that matter), so it's worth mentioning. Consider it another example of Continuous Improvement by the folks behind the red and yellow sign.

The **Baltimore and Ohio Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 64, includes an April 1962 photo of B&O 272660 in the paint scheme that will be used by Micro-Trains. It's showing a fair amount of rust but the original paint is clearly more of the red oxide shade than the brown shade done on MTL's first run of this car. The M26D and M26E cars had Duryea cushion underframes – not something we'll see on the MTL 120 body style,

or anything else in N Scale so far. The Creco (Chicago Railway Equipment Company) three panel door is appropriate.

The ORER for January 1958 showed a whopping 5295 cars in the series 272500 to 277999. That's more cars in one series than the majority of railroads had on their entire roster. The inside length of these cars was 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 8 feet 7 inches, outside length 43 feet 1 inch, extreme height 13 feet 4 inches, door opening 6 feet and capacity 3056 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. As of July 1963, the car count had slipped to 3978, plus two with roof hatches, and by then, the B&O was already three general boxcar paint schemes past the one that appears on this car. Two of these were the "Time Saver" and "Sentinel Service" versions, but the third, which debuted around 1962, was a simplified version keeping the large B&O initials but removing the roadname and swapping the "13 States" herald for the capitol dome only logo. It seems to me that some of the cars stayed in the paint scheme MTL selected through their retirement; for the record, the roster was down to 183 in October 1972 and only fifteen as of April 1976. But I'll call an "at least the 1960s" on the ATP anyway.

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



**045 00 505, \$24.95**

**Reporting Marks: USAAC 667409.**

**50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Car with 40 Foot Container, "Belle Wringer."**

Release #5 in the N Scale World War II Nose Art Series. Flat car is gray with black lettering

including reporting marks on left and "U.S. Army Air Corps" in center. Container is green with multicolor artwork including nose art depiction on left.

I see that in neither the February 2013 pre-review nor the July 2013 release of the Z Scale version of this item, which was the first in that 1:220 series, did I say very much about the actual aircraft on which this particular version of the "Belle Wringer" decoration was painted. That can be fixed.

The apparent inspiration for this particular version of "Belle Wringer" (there are several, some more risqué than others!) is a 1941 illustration by Gil Elvgren. Elvgren, whose full first name was Gillette, was an advertising, illustration and yes, pin-up and glamour girl artist who lived from 1914 to 1980 and was active from the 1930s to the 1970s. Much of his work was for the firm of Brown and Bigelow, which made calendars and advertising collaterals. His work also appeared in Good Housekeeping and The Saturday Evening Post, which is about as far from nose art as one could get at the time.

I have noted previously that the B-24 "Liberator" bomber aircraft numbered over eighteen thousand, the most-produced American military aircraft. It was faster than the B-17 "Flying Fortress" but more difficult to fly. It was deployed by every branch of the Armed Forces during the Second World War, in Europe, Asia and the Pacific. As MTL states in its car copy, this particular "Belle Wringer" was part of the Black Pirates squad. The 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb



Group in general also used the nickname “Jolly Rogers” and a variation of the “Jolly Roger” skull and crossbones pirate flag that remained in use in that group long after World War II.

**In addition to the above**, the “Toy Trunk Line Set” (993 21 230, \$229.95) which was originally scheduled for November has been moved into release this month. Coverage of this item was in the April 2014 UMTRR. At that time only the preliminary artwork was available, but the images of the actual items are available now, so here they are, and they’re considerably more colorful than the original artist’s renditions:



**985 50 712; Atlas 4-4-0 Loco; Road Number 2014.**

**153 51 049; Flat Car with Teddy Bear and Package.**



**153 52 049; Flat Car with Mouse pull toy. (I think we can guess who the mouse is supposed to be... Micro-Mouse, that is!)**

**153 53 049; Flat Car with Wind-up Tank Toy. (I guess if I were Micro-Mouse, I might be a little nervous if I had a tank following me!)**



**151 54 049; Box Car, “Toy Box Caboose.”**

Note that these items all have link and pin couplers, not the standard Magne-Matic couplers. Other than the Road Number 2014 on the 4-4-0, there are no reporting marks or road numbers on the set components.

MTL announced that the “Zombie Halloween Train Set” (993 21 230, \$229.95) originally scheduled for this month has been delayed to October. This still works for Halloween Trick Or Treating though.



*In addition to the above, the following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Delivery is scheduled for January 2015. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30.*



***Scheduled January 2015 Release:***

**064 00 140, \$79.95**

**Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus  
"Legends" TOFC 2-Pack.**

Will consist of two 064 series 57 foot TOFC flat cars in silver with black lettering including reporting marks (RBX 103 and RBX 110) on left and "Ringling Bros®" on right. Each car will have a trailer (body style TBD) with multicolor contemporary circus advertising artwork for

Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus "Legends." Note: Illustrations are artist renditions and actual product may vary. Catalog numbers of individual items will be noted on the UMTRR website when available (probably after the actual release).

I'm not sure that all three of the animals depicted on these two trailers (or containers in the Z Scale version) would be considered "Legends," but you get the idea. Let's start with the one that actually did walk the earth until about four thousand years ago: the Woolly Mammoth. While quite big, he wasn't the largest in the Mammoth family (genus *Mammuthus*); that honor belonged to the *Mammuthus Sungari* which tipped the scales at 15 tons versus the mere five to seven ton weight of the Woolly Mammoth. The animal did have impressive tusks, which could be fifteen feet long. They did co-exist with early humans, who hunted them more or less to the point of extinction, although the changing climate of the time didn't help. Humans used Woolly Mammoths for their meat and for their fur. There's a lively debate as to whether these giant animals could be "cloned;" it all depends on whether their DNA is still viable and whether a suitable host, like another pachyderm, could be found. Well, there's the ethical questions as well, I suppose.

On the other trailer (or container) is the magical Unicorn, the stuff of myth, legend, a motion picture (**The Last Unicorn**) and a song written by Shel Silverstein (who also gave us "A Boy Named Sue") and most notably performed by the Irish Rovers. Well before unicorns were utilized on a number of different heralds, they were portrayed back in the Indus Valley, in what is now India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. There's also a Chinese version and one or two versions mentioned in the Bible, one of which had a "coat of many colors." Coats of arms of Scotland, Great Britain and several locations in Europe all feature unicorns. The actual origin of the legend isn't known, but it's suspected that its "sighting" could have been a mis-interpretation of an actual animal.

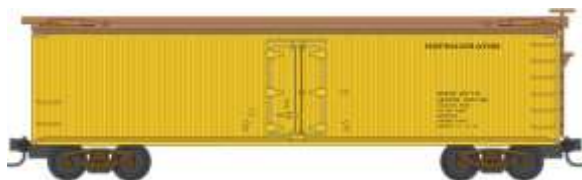
And then there's what's easily my favorite mythical figure, the Pegasus. Unlike the Unicorn, the winged horse has a single dominant thread of legend, and that's Greek Mythology. Pegasus is also a proper name; he was the child, if you will, of Poseidon and Medusa. He was captured by Bellerophon and shared many adventures with his master. Did you know

he had a brother named Chrysaor? I didn't. Chrysaor wasn't a beautiful all-white winged horse, however.

In my coverage of some of the Micro-Trains releases painted for Mobil Oil, which used a version of Pegasus in its logo, I've already noted several of its uses in popular culture (and Wikipedia can help with more). The most important meaning of Pegasus for this writer, however, is as the symbol of poetic inspiration. One of these days I'll pull out that collection of Pegasus-themed memorabilia that I once accumulated.

**NARROW GAUGE RELEASES (Nn3, HO<sub>n3</sub>):** Pre-order announcements this month for N Scale Three Foot Narrow Gauge, also known as Nn3:

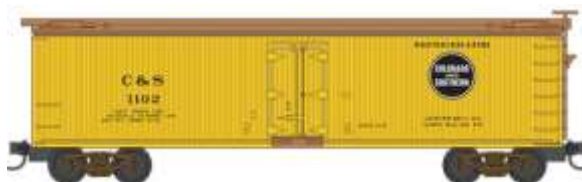
*The following items are in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Delivery is scheduled in December 2014. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30. Preliminary artwork shown; actual release may differ.*



**803 00 001, \$22.70**

**Nn3 Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Vertical Brake Staff, Dimensional Data.**

Yellow sides, brown roof and ends. Brown trucks. Black lettering including "Refrigerator" at top right and dimensional data (only) at top right in general style of Rio Grande Southern release (see below). Approximate Time Period: 1900s through 1940s.



**803 00 010, \$25.90**

**Nn3 Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Vertical Brake Staff, Colorado & Southern.**

Yellow sides, brown roof and ends. Brown trucks. Black lettering including reporting marks on left, "Refrigerator" at top right and black and white C&S "button" herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1927 to no later than 1943.



**803 00 020, \$23.50**

**Nn3 Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car, Vertical Brake Staff, Rio Grande Southern.**

Yellow sides, brown roof and ends. Brown trucks. Black lettering including reporting marks on left, "Refrigerator" at top right and dimensional data at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: 1938 (acquisition date) to no later than 1952 (RGS abandonment date).

The forty foot refrigerator car that is the 518 body style in 1:220 or Z Scale scales out to about 29 feet long in 1:160 or N Scale. That's roughly right for a narrow gauge reefer, and it's also the third time that Micro-Trains has repurposed body styles across Z and Nn3 Scales. Trivia question: What are the other two body styles? The answer after this commentary. But let's

go one farther here: the three paint schemes coming have been previously done by Micro-Trains... on **HOn3** refrigerator cars, specifically, their 850 series! So let's dig into the archives, from up to eight years ago (!) to see what we can find.

I suppose that Approximate Time Period is whatever you really want it to be for the **Dimensional Data** car, though the first four decades of the Twentieth Century are probably the most appropriate. There is of course no Dimensional Data Railroad to discuss otherwise. This car is basically the 803 00 020 car for the Rio Grande Southern, minus the reporting marks on the sides and ends. And all the rest of the lettering was, was just the reporting marks. Anyone wanting additional RGS reefers, or something for your own pike, you've got a great head start here.

They didn't turn out to be much more than curiosities, except among the hardcore collector set. Today I think this concept is a bit more popular than it was in the 1970s.

The **Colorado and Southern** refrigerator with the "button" herald was the first-ever HOn3 release for Micro-Trains, back in April 2006. Road Number 1102 was among the prototype series 1100 to 1119 and were painted in this scheme in 1927. Conveniently near the start of this ATP is the ORER for April 1928. The inside length of these cars was just 23 feet, but that's between the ice tanks which carried 5712 pounds of chunk ice or 4896 pounds of chunk ice. The inside height was 6 feet and one-half inch, which means I could have just stood upright inside-- and the inside width was 6 feet 7 inches. The outside length was 30 feet even, outside width was 7 feet 11½ inches and the extreme height was 12 feet. The smallness of these cars can really be appreciated by considering the space capacity after the ice tanks are subtracted-- a mere 914 cubic feet. (So it's plausible to repurpose a "full-size" Z Scale wood refrigerator car for an Nn3 model, though I wouldn't expect the dimensions to be an exact match.) The first two C&S cars in HOn3, 1113 and 1116, were sold off to the Rio Grande Southern in 1938. But this time, the road number will be 1102. Does that matter? Not much, since all narrow gauge equipment for the C&S was delisted from the Equipment Register no later than January 1940. The C&S's last narrow gauge run was made in 1943 and I'm not nearly expert enough to say whether any of the refrigerator cars lasted that long. So an "at least" ATP for this one.

The ORER information for the **Rio Grande Southern** is not useful: "Freight Cars Owned Are Not Employed In Commercial Service." In fact, there aren't even reporting marks listed in the index. We know from MTL's car copy from the HOn3 release (May 2006), though, that there were three refrigerator cars purchased from the Colorado and Southern and numbered 2101, 2102 and 2103. The dimensional data should be the same as what I quoted on the C&S cars above, since, well, they were the C&S cars.

How the RGS survived after the Denver and Rio Grande Western, which had control of the line, let it slip into receivership in 1929 was a matter of National Security, according to the account in George W. Hilton's book **American Narrow Gauge Railroads**. Court-appointed Trustee Victor Miller did quite the job of keeping the line afloat, including the introduction of the famous Galloping Geese and moves to become less dependent on nominal parent Rio

Grande for rolling stock-- perhaps including purchase of those three reefers from the Colorado and Southern. When Cass Herrington replaced Victor Miller as Trustee in late 1938, a government loan from the Reconstruction Finance Company was denied and it looked like the end. World War II changed that and the RGS was able to get some financing by selling its facilities to the Defense Supplies Corporation and leasing it back. "It was revealed after the war," Hilton wrote, "that the government's interest in keeping the RGS operating stemmed in part from the uranium-bearing ores produced along the line. Even tailings from the mines from previous years were shipped out to the plants that were fabricating American nuclear weapons." Stephen S. Hart goes farther into the narrative in his on-line entry "Atomic Age Narrow Gauge: Uranium and the Rio Grande Southern Railroad" that was actually written as a college term paper! (The URL for this is rather long but direct: [www.riograndesouthern.com/RGSTechPages/\\_bdwhite/atomic.htm](http://www.riograndesouthern.com/RGSTechPages/_bdwhite/atomic.htm) .) But after the end of the war, and despite a second government loan, shippers deserted for trucks; and the RGS was torn up in 1952.

I can direct you to three references to the C&S/RGS refrigerator cars in print media according to the Model Train Magazine Index: two are in **Slim Gauge News** of Fall 1971 and the third is in the July/August 1982 issue of **Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette**.

Oh, and here's the answer to that trivia question: the other two cars that share Nn3 and Z Scale releases are the double sheathed wood boxcar (800 series in Nn3, then 515 series in Z) and the single dome tank car (530 series in Z, then 814 series in Nn3). The trucks underneath these cars are different depending on the scale.

## Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



**530 00 403, \$26.95**

**Reporting Marks: KOTX 503.**

**39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Kanotex.**

Black with white lettering including company name and reporting marks on left and "Makers of the Kanotex Petroleum Products" on right. Red star mostly under an enlarged letter "O" in

Kanotex on right. Arch bar trucks installed on this car. Approximate Time Period: 1915 (build date) through 1920s (a guess on the end of the ATP). Release #3 of an expected twelve in the Tank Car Series.

It's been long enough since the pre-review of the N Scale version of this car that a recap is in order. The Kanotex Refining Company succeeded the Superior Refining Company in 1909. It was named for the three states in which it originally marketed its products: Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. The original trademark, two-thirds of which are reproduced on the MTL release, was a Kansas sunflower behind a red star for Texas behind a large O for Oklahoma. The brand was sold in 1953 to the Anderson-Pritchard Oil Corporation (APCO); APCO is itself a "fallen flag" among oil companies.

The October 1919 ORER doesn't have a listing for Kanotex so we know that the ATP doesn't start that early. The August 1924 ORER, Page 969, has a listing of the Kanotex Refining Company's 223 car fleet at the time. This included a short series numbered 501 to 506 which held only 5000 gallons each. That's capacity usually denotes a pretty small tank car, a fair amount less large than MTL's 530 body style. Five of the six cars are listed in the January 1943 Register (the 504 is missing) and we also learn that the cars were of 60,000 pounds capacity. That's all, though, and of course not a word on how they might have been painted!

Kanotex cars are discussed in the February 1998 issue of **Rail Model Journal**. In 1926 AC&F supplied the company with Type 21 single dome tank cars of 8000 gallons capacity, which were painted aluminum with black underframe and lettering. In the 1930s the paint scheme changed to aluminum with a large red and black "KANOTEX" across the entire car (offered in HO Scale in the Proto 2000 line by Life-Like). The 1950s saw the billboard sized lettering change to black only. Kanotex also converted some of their single dome tank cars to two-dome cars! More correctly, these were two-compartment cars, made so via a pair of ends joined back to back inside the tank itself. There's even a three compartment (three dome) car, KOTX 879, that is in the collection of the Museum of Industry and Transport in Galveston, Texas, which was unfortunately damaged by Hurricane Ike. The point of all this, though, is that none of these cars were painted as per the MTL car, which begs the question, what's the source material for this paint scheme?

That would be Page 90 of the book **Tank Cars: American Car & Foundry Company 1865-1955** by Ed Kaminski. The car was built in 1915 according to the photo caption and so we have a good start for the ATP. The end of the Approximate Time Period is more of a guess based on the change in paint colors that came with the 1926 order of tank cars from AC&F.



**533 00 091 and 533 00 092, \$20.50 each**  
**Reporting Marks: MP 58731 and 58850.**  
**33 Foot Two-Bay Offset Side Hoppers, Flat Ends, Missouri Pacific.**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left, large "Route of the Eagles" slogan in center, and Missouri Pacific Lines "buzzsaw" herald on right. Simulated coal

load included. Approximate Time Period: 1948 (introduction of slogan) to at least early 1960s.

It's a somewhat beat up bingo on MP 58850 that appears on Page 74 of the Missouri Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment. The car was built in June 1936 and was captured in the "Eagles" paint scheme in February, 1963. There are some dents and there's some rust and other discoloration, and there's also a thin metal band, riveted to the car side we can see, that stretches from the end of the car all the way to the center, including right underneath the "Route of" in the "Route of the Eagles" slogan. From the photo it appears that we've got at least a good "look and feel" match between prototype and model.



Meanwhile, on the next page of the **Color Guide** is a shot taken the same day of February 1963 of MP 59299 which was painted in brown and white, without the slogan and with a larger buzzsaw herald. If that doesn't prove that multiple schemes on MP hoppers co-existed I don't know what would. Information on the RPI Website confirms the MTL car copy; the "Route of the Eagles" slogan was introduced in 1948 and discontinued in 1961. Also in that year, the color of all open cars was switched from black to brown, under the idea that this would mean one less paint color to have in inventory. RPI cites Ed Hawkins for this information, who in turn cited the Winter 1985 issue of **The Eagle**, which is the magazine of the Missouri Pacific Historical Society. That's enough for me to call the ATP at "at least" the early 1960s though my sense is that cars with the "Eagles" slogan were around longer than that.

The ORER for April 1950 shows the series MP 58750 to 60949 with 2187 cars, described simply as "Hopper, All Steel" with AAR Designation HT. The inside length was 33 feet, outside length 34 feet 1 inch, extreme height 10 feet 8 inches, and capacity 2707 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. This larger group combines several different series; for example the two cars MTL depicts were part of the set 58750 to 59249 according to the Color Guide. In July 1963 following the change in paint schemes, the series was at 1960 cars, plus another 30 that were converted to wood chip service. I did one more Equipment Register lookup, in the October 1972 issue, only eleven cars remained.



**980 01 330, \$119.95 and 980 02 330, \$99.95**

**Road Numbers: 314A and 314B.**

**F7 Powered A and B Units, Great Northern.**

Both units GN "big sky blue" with white band at top, gray roof, black underframe and trucks. Both units have white lettering including roadname and outline goat herald at center of side and road number at rear. A unit has white on black numberboards. Approximate Time Period: 1967 to 1970.

According to the website [Greatnorthernempire.net](http://Greatnorthernempire.net), the 314A and 314 B were built in April 1952. The A unit wore the original "Empire Builder" scheme, then the "Modified Empire Builder" scheme and then the "Big Sky Blue" scheme that MTL used for this release. The B unit went right from the original Empire Builder to Big Sky Blue. The 314A was repainted to Burlington Northern 644 and was sold to Precision National Corporation in 1980. The 314B became BN 645 and was sold to Hyman-Michaels in 1981.

Painted in 1967, repainted in 1970, according to the MTL copy, at least if I'm interpreting it correctly. That's not much of an Approximate Time Period for these diesels in this paint scheme. But hold on a moment: the A unit appears in 1973 with the blue paint intact though worn and only a restencil of the reporting marks and road number, in a photo posted to the site [RRPictureArchives.net](http://RRPictureArchives.net). It's also shown the same way in a photo dated August 1976, but to contradict that, it's shown in BN Cascade Green in a photo dated January 1976. I didn't

find any shots of the 314B; I guess B units just weren't as popular as photo subjects. As with most F-units, the particulars differ a bit from railroad to railroad. For example, there are grab irons running up the nose on the right side of the cab and there's a hatch on the roof of the unit behind the fans. Z Scalpers with an eye for such details will want to add these – and I know there are Z Scalpers who do this!

**In addition to the above**, the “Amtrak Commuter Train Set” (994 01 120, \$229.95) will be available mid-month and should be in stores by the time you read this. Coverage of this item was in the May 2014 UMTRR. At that time only the preliminary artwork was available, but the images of the actual items are available now, so here they are:



**980 51 180 - Amtrak F7A Powered Diesel.**  
Road Number 101.



**553 52 050 - Amtrak Streamlined Baggage Car.** Road Number 1006.



**552 53 050, 552 54 050 and 552 55 050, Amtrak Streamlined Coaches.**  
Road Numbers 4603, 4607 and 4613.



*And in addition to the above*, the following items are in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is January 2015. 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.



**550 00 120, \$32.90, Streamlined Sleeper Car, Northern Pacific.** Road Number 364.



**551 00 120, \$32.90, Streamlined Dome Car, Northern Pacific.** Road Number 551.



**552 00 120, \$32.90, Streamlined Passenger Coach, Northern Pacific.** Road Number 506.



**554 00 120, \$32.90, Streamlined Baggage Car, Northern Pacific.** Road Number 401.

Each car is two-tone green (dark green top, lighter green bottom) with white stripe across center of side. White lettering including roadname offset from center on sleeper and baggage cars and in center on dome and coach. Road number on left except on dome where it's on the right. Small red, black and white monad (without roadname) in center except on sleeper where it's offset to the right of center. Dome car has words "Vista-Dome" and "North Coast Limited" split by monad in center. All cars have black underframes and trucks. Artwork is preliminary and is subject to change. Approximate Time Period: 1952 or 1954 into the 1960s.

While the North Coast Limited was inaugurated by the Northern Pacific back in 1900, it was in 1952 that this particular version, an inside and outside redesign by famed designer Raymond Loewy (who also gave us the Pennsylvania GG1 electric's legendary design). The redo was over time, so the start of Approximate Time Period has a bit of a split to it. The 1960s were the last decade of operation for the "name train," which ran from Chicago to Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, in separate sections for the last part of the trip. Part of the route was on the Burlington, and the CB&Q contributed some of the equipment which was painted in the same two-tone green. In 1967 the North Coast Limited was combined with the Great Northern's Empire Builder passenger service. Later, CB&Q's Zephyrs were added. The last gasp of this passenger service was Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha which operated from 1971 to 1979.

The **NP Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** helps with bingo or near bingo photos of three of the four cars in the pre-release announcement. In fact, the Color Guide goes car by car on a typical North Coast Limited consist, starting at the front with the baggage car and ending with the fifteenth car, a round-tailed observation.

The **Color Guide** refers to the short series NP 400 to 405 as a "Water Baggage" car. The 403 is pictured on Page 5 of the **Color Guide** and is referenced in the **Official Register of Passenger Equipment** (ORPTE) for January 1953, also as a "Water-Baggage" car that was 85 feet long with a 60 foot baggage and mail compartment. These cars were built by Pullman-Standard in 1947. On his website, Fred Klein reports that the "Water Baggage" car carried two 1500 gallon water tanks for the F7 motive power, used to make steam heat—certainly needed at times along the northern tier of United States along which the North Coast Limited operated.

What splits the start of the ATP is the arrival of the Dome Coaches numbered from 549 to 599, which came to the NP in 1954. Page 7 of the **Color Guide** shows the other side of the 551 from what MTL shows in its artist's rendition of the model. The roof of the real 551 had horizontal corrugations which aren't present on the 551 body style. These cars were built by the Budd Company.

Also on Page 7 of the **Color Guide** is a shot of Coach 506, a 56 seat car among the group 500 to 517 that were delivered to the NP by Pullman-Standard in 1946. It's noted that the Northern Pacific ran at least one "flat-topped" car between dome cars on its trains. The window arrangement and underbody equipment do look a bit different on the model versus the prototype, but I think that "close enough" will be the verdict among many Z Scalers.

The one car on which I don't get a bingo in the Color Guide is the streamlined sleeper. Going back to the ORPTE for January 1953, there are two 85 foot "Sleeping Cars, Lightweight Steel" numbered 364 and 365. An end note indicates that these cars had six bedrooms and ten roomettes, along with electro-mechanical air conditioning. I'll speculate that MTL saw that the car was a closer match to the 550 body style than were cars that were in the Color Guide, for example NP 368, an 8-6-4 Sleeper that was part of the group 367 to 372.

Micro-Trains returns to its pre-order protocol for this quartet, which allows them to determine how many Z Scale modelers are interested in cars for the famous North Coast Limited. It's a sharp paint scheme for a train that's going to need some stand-in cars for sure, but let's not forget that the usual power for this train was a set of similarly painted F7s. And what diesel locomotives does Micro-Trains produce in Z Scale? Hmm...

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

**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 August 15.*



**549 44 010, \$31.85**

**Reporting Marks: PFE 301216.**

**51 Foot Mechanical Refrigerator Car, Rib Side, Pacific Fruit Express.**

Orange sides, aluminum roof, black ends and underframe. Black lettering including reporting marks and Southern Pacific and Union Pacific heralds on left and stepped three-line "Pacific Fruit Express" name on right. Light to moderate weathering, mostly in black on sides and roof. Approximate Time Period: 1960 (build date) to no later than 1976. Previous Releases (Unweathered): Road Numbers 301216 and 301233, January 2014. Note: It's possible but not confirmed that both of the previously released road numbers were used for this Weathered Release.

I still don't know how I missed this Weathered Release last month, but I did. Fortunately, it hasn't yet sold out at Micro-Trains which would have made this Oops into an **OOPS** among my 1:220-centric readers.

At any rate, I covered the "clean" version of this PFE Class R-70-12 mechanical refrigerator car in January. One thousand of these cars were built in 1960 in the PFE's own shops. Originally numbered 301213 to 302212, these were moved into the 305000s when their load dividers were removed starting in 1968, and the ORERs indicate that "no later than 1976" is all we can do for these cars in their original numbers. There's also a fairly surprising lack of photo evidence for these cars—just a single close-up of PFE 301213 on Page 31 of the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, and a black and white

shot of PFE 301979 on Ken Harstine's "Boxcars and Freight Cars of North America" site (URL [www.boxcars.us](http://www.boxcars.us) ).

If you've read this far, you might be interested in something I'm trying out: a corrected version of the August 2014 UMTRR, posted on my website and quite easy to download (I hope). If you'd prefer to have the above car in the month in which it belongs, please help yourself at [www.irwinsjournal.com/umtrr/mt2014-08-corrected.pdf](http://www.irwinsjournal.com/umtrr/mt2014-08-corrected.pdf) .

*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 16.*



**511 44 200, \$31.85**

**Reporting Marks: CNA 404567.**

**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Canadian National.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and CN

herald with website on right. Approximate Time Period: 2003 (service date) to present. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Road Numbers 404567 and 404576, October 2013. Note: It's possible but not confirmed that both previously released road numbers were used for this Weathered Release.

Recapping from the dual "clean" release from last October, the driver of the Approximate Time Period for this car that website address [www.cn.ca](http://www.cn.ca) that's just below the herald. The railroad started advertising their presence in cyberspace around the service date that MTL gives for these cars. I don't think Zombies were intended to be included in the advertising.

The prototypes belong to the series CNA 404400 to 404579 which were built by Berwick Forge and Fabricating in 1974 according to Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site (at [www.nakina.net](http://www.nakina.net) ). They came with steel lining, hardwood floors and end of car cushioning, and an earlier paint scheme. The CNA reporting marks denoted cars built in the United States that "under U.S. Customs Regulations may be used in the same manner as cars carrying marks of U.S. owned railways in the handling of both International and U.S. traffic." That's from the April 1975 ORER which showed the series at its full complement of 180 cars. Cranstone states that cars from this series remain in service.

From that April 1975 ORER we get the vital statistics on these cars: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 11 feet, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet 4 inches, door opening 10 feet and capacity 5257 cubic feet or 197,000 pounds. As of the January 2011 Equipment Register 125 cars remained in service, so "to present" seems right to me.

George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ) has shots of CNA 404426 in this "website" scheme as of October 2005 and other cars painted the same way (no exact



“bingo” to the chosen road numbers though). There is also the 404423 as of February 2012 in what I think would be the original scheme for these cars.

**Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:** In addition to the below announcements, Runner Pack #69 (994 00 069, \$69.95), four Southern Pacific two-bay open hoppers with loads, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the April 2014 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 534 51 020, 460583; 534 52 020, 460595; 534 53 020, 460610; 534 54 020, 460631. These are the third through sixth road numbers for this car.



*The following items are in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is February 2015. 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 2015 Release:**

**994 00 074, \$109.95**

**Quantity four of 50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Double Door, Baltimore & Ohio / Chessie System.**

**Reporting Marks: B&O 288020, 288156, 288188, 288224.**

Dark blue with yellow lettering including Chessie System roadname and reporting marks on left and “Ches-C” herald on right. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to early 1980s. Previous Releases (as Catalog Number 13706): Road Number 288651, September 1989; Road Number 288041,

January 2004. Individual catalog numbers for this Runner Pack should be 506 5x 060.

Although the Chessie cat continues to be one of the most recognized symbols in railroading, in the form depicted on this reprint, it actually had a life shorter than many real cats-- just seven years, from 1973 to 1980, when Chessie became part of CSX. (Chessie was redubbed an “official mascot” after that, and of course the cat remained on the rails until repainting, which has taken a while.) Let’s start with the ORER for April 1976, which shows the group numbered 288000 to 288698 with 278 cars in the main series and 98 more cars scattered across five subseries, mostly with differing capacities (110,000 pounds versus 100,000) or some special equipment or designated service. The key dimensions were: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, door opening 15 feet (a minor door thing with an 8+7 configuration), and capacity 4952 cubic feet. In 1981 there were 330 cars remaining but by 1985 that had slipped all the way to 35 pieces.

As usual, it’s hard to prove the absence of something, so take that grain of salt with what I’m about to mention. While there are no examples of this particular series of cars in the **Chessie**

**System Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, there are also no Chessie-painted boxcars with their running boards still installed. With the book not helping here, we go online, first to George Elwood's Fallen Flags site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ) where there's an undated in-motion photo of B&O 288135 from the same series. That car doesn't have its roofwalk. Other photos of cars in this series on Fallen Flags aren't yet in Chessie paint: B&O 288313 carries the B&O "Time Saver Service" lettering as of May 1972, and B&O 288420 has the "Sentinel Service" lettering as of July 1979—and doesn't have a running board. The lettering on that car indicates that it belonged to the B&O class M-65, but I don't believe that those class designations carried over to the Chessie Era.

**Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:** *The following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Delivery is scheduled for January 2015. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close September 30.*



**Scheduled January 2015 Release:**

**524 00 140, \$79.95**

**Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus "Legends" COFC 2-Pack.**

Will consist of two 524 series 60 foot flat cars in silver with black lettering including reporting marks (RBX 103 and RBX 110) on left and "Ringling Bros®" on right. Each car will have a container with multicolor contemporary circus advertising artwork for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus "Legends." Note: Illustrations are artist renditions and actual product may vary. Catalog numbers of individual items will be noted on the UMTRR website when available (probably after the actual release).

artwork for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus "Legends." Note: Illustrations are artist renditions and actual product may vary. Catalog numbers of individual items will be noted on the UMTRR website when available (probably after the actual release).

Please see the pre-review of the N Scale announcement above (064 00 140) above for more information.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The N Scale structure this month is a "Locomotive Maintenance Stand" (499 90 969, \$26.95). Locomotive to be maintained not included! Also released is a two-pack of interior loads for 50 foot boxcars (499 43 913, \$9.95). In Z Scale, there are two new train sets, one for the Southern Pacific and one for the Great Northern, each with an MSRP of \$239.95. These sets have an F7 diesel, five cars and caboose, plus a loop of Micro-Track. Add a power supply and you're all set. And I think that MTL also snuck in an N Scale train set featuring the Union Pacific SW1500 (993 03 310, \$259.95) when I wasn't looking.

**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** The Z Scale Bye-Bye Board kind of shows up in large groups this time, beginning with six of the Ringling Brothers Billboard Series of wood boxcars; namely numbers 1, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 (Catalog Numbers 515 00 6xx; I'll spare you, and me, the tedium of listing them all). Then there are four Weathered Releases which have left the building: the 50 foot double door boxcar for the Great Northern (506 44 260, September 2012), the 50 foot fishbelly gondola also for the Great Northern (522 44 460, May 2014), and both the Northern

Pacific single and Canadian National two-pack of mechanical refrigerator cars (548 44 010 and 548 00 020, July 2014). Two of the Meat Reefer series are packed up: the Southern Star (518 00 180, March 2013) and the Nuckolls Packing Company (518 00 190, April 2013). And the only car I can't group with something else is the Pennsylvania Railroad streamlined baggage car (553 00 060, September 2009).

The lead release that has left the building in N Scale is the virtual two-pack of the Union Pacific "Challenger" boxcars from last month (023 00 27x), after it took quite a while for the first release of January 2002 to be sold out. We'll continue in catalog number order from here, with both the Unweathered and Weathered versions of the Soo Line white x-post boxcar (027 00 360, February 2014 and 027 44 360, May 2014). The second number of the Canadian National flat car with load has rolled out (045 00 322, June 2013). The reprint Norfolk Southern 57 foot TOFC flat is empty (064 00 050, December 2013) and the reprint Pennsylvania tank car is out of fuel (065 00 230, October 2013). The automobile boxcar with the large Santa Fe roadname is gone (078 00 130, October 2013). The Rio Grande Hy-Cube boxcar has exited (101 00 130, August 2012), as has the Wabash Greenville boxcar (122 00 010, November 2012, and that's quite a while for a first run of a new bodystyle). Finally we go back to the Civil War Era, figuratively of course, for the sellout of the Manassas Gap (153 00 050, December 2013).

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** None received or found since last issue.

**OOPS PATROL:** Cut and Paste Follies once again: the catalog number of last month's N Scale Shell Tank Car is 065 00 830, not 065 00 820. The catalog number of last month's N Scale C&NW TOFC flat with trailer is 064 00 020, not 064 00 120.

**AND THAT WRAPS UP SEPTEMBER:** Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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