



*IrwinsJournal.com Presents:*

## **The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report Issue #216 – December, 2014**

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Hello again everyone! Micro-Trains did its own take on the Black Friday / Cyber Monday madness by sneaking past me, and possibly many other people, no less than **eight** Weathered Releases that were available only online and only with a \$100 purchase. We have the scoop on these, and everything else going on behind the red and yellow sign, starting right now...

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



**042 00 150, \$21.90**

**Reporting Marks: GN 21953.**

**40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar, Single Door, Horizontal Brake Wheel, Great Northern.**

Red with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large outline goat herald on right. White simulated reflective stripes along bottom of sides. Matching round red hatches supplied, to be applied to the roof by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1967 (1967 service date on car) to mid-1970s.

Even for the Great Northern, this is an unusual paint scheme. It's not the only time a wood sheathed car received the "modern goat" or "outline goat" that was the final herald of the Great Northern. At least one and probably more Western Fruit Express refrigerator cars also received this usually "big sky blue" scheme—except the reefers were in yellow with black lettering. Red with white lettering, as on this car? That's a new one on me. MTL says that the cars carried foundry sand in dedicated service for Del Monte Properties at Valley, Washington. I checked and Valley (named for its location at the entrance to the Colville Valley) is on the now BNSF line from Spokane north to British Columbia.

Micro-Trains notes in its car copy that twelve cars were pulled from somewhere in the number series GN 45000 to 52999 – a group that was purchased between 1937 and 1942 – and fitted with hatches, becoming GN 21950 to 21961. This happened in 1961 so what MTL depicts here wouldn't have been the first paint scheme after the conversion. Besides the change to the handful of these cars, a thousand others from this large group were rebuilt in 1959 and 1960, and 148 more were made into stock cars. A photo of GN 45673 in the **Great Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 37, shows what an unconverted car looked like: it had a steel frame and ends, steel doors and tongue-and-groove siding. That's not really a match to the 042 body style. Also on that same page is GN 47638 with Empire Builder lettering and the large side facing goat herald that preceded the outline goat. No luck on the actual outline goat on a car of this type in the **Color Guide**, however. The "Great Northern Empire" website confirms the rebuild, the road numbers, and

a six foot door opening, but, alas, a photo is not available there either. As I expected, though, Four Ways West Publishing does have this car covered, specifically on Page 26 of their book **Great Northern Equipment Color Pictorial Volume 1**. That book isn't on my shelf, however.

While it's a couple of months prior to the apparent March 1967 repainting of this car into red and white, the January 1967 Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) will do for a lookup. Eleven of the twelve cars in the small group 21950 to 21961 are shown, with the description "Box, Steel Frame." But remember the roof hatches, which are called out in an end note, which change the AAR Designation to LC. The key dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, extreme height 14 feet 9 inches except for GN 21955 which was 15 feet 6 inches on that dimension, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3712 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. Nine of these cars were in the April 1970 ORER under the Burlington Northern registration. Two remained in October 1976 but they're gone by the January 1978 Register. The Four Ways West photo dates to 1974.



073 00 150, \$23.65

**Reporting Marks: MEC 6336.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Maine Central.**

Green with mostly yellow including roadname and reporting marks on left and large pine tree herald on right. Black and white consolidated stencils at bottom right. Four small white simulated reflective dots along bottom. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1980s at least.

Here's another unusual paint scheme—and now that I think of it, we do lead off with “a bright red and green” for Christmastime, don't we? The logo on this car is not your typical herald for the Maine Central, as there's no railroad name or “Pine Tree Route” included. The plant depicted looks more like a Christmas tree... and perhaps that's the point for a December release.

We get a bingo (an exact match to the car) on Page 36 of the softcover **Classic Freight Cars Volume 7** by Henry Maywald. MTL quotes the build date of 1951 and the rebuild date of 1972 from the photo caption for its car copy. The car's photo is from 1982 and the service date is 1981, which is used on the MTL model. Two deltas can immediately be seen: first, the “door thing” is back since the real car has an eight foot door versus a six foot door on the 073 body style; second, the actual MEC 6336 has a reinforced bottom sill that extends nearly the length of the car. Both of these deltas can be addressed and would add a bit of variety to a string of boxcars. It's noted on the “Remembering the Maine Central” website that these cars were PS-1s, original series 8000 to 8249, so the base model should be in the ballpark. That same site has an undated photo of MEC 6348 in a more typical paint scheme with large “MEC” and “The Pine Tree Route” herald. Larry Goss's “Maine Rail Photos” has a shot of MEC 6352 in that same paint scheme. Was the 6336 the only car painted with the “lone pine” circular herald? Well, it's hard to prove the absence of something...

The ORER for April 1981 shows 48 cars in the Maine Central series 6300 to 6349. They are described as “Box, Steel, Lading Band Anchors” with inside length of 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 44 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 8 feet and capacity 3887 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. With the MEC’s purchase of a relatively large quantity of fifty foot exterior post boxcars in the 1970s and 1980s, some of which are still riding the rails, I would expect these forty foot cars to have a precipitous drop off. But not so fast: all 48 are still on the roster as of July 1989, and twelve remain as of April 1995.

What’s not as clear is the paint scheme’s Approximate Time Period. Although I would guess that it was added when the car was serviced in 1981, that might not be the case, and it’s, well, at least theoretically possible to tack an “at least” onto either end of the “decade of the 1980s” ATP that I’m calling for this car. Feel free to invoke Rule #1 as desired.



**146 00 070, \$27.95**

**Reporting Marks: O&C 10040 (will be “SP 10040” in website listings).**

**Heavyweight Diner, Southern Pacific (Lines).**

Olive Green sides and ends with black roof, underbody and trucks. Gold lettering including roadname centered on letterboard, “Diner” at bottom center and reporting marks bottom left and right. Approximate Time Period: 1927 to – possibly- as late as 1946, or 2014 (!) (see text).

The Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society has published an extensive five-volume series of books on the company’s passenger cars. Their website ( [www.sphts.org](http://www.sphts.org) ) contains a “Passenger Car Finder” which pointed me straight away to Page 168 of Volume 4 of this series for the car modeled by MTL. This would be even more helpful if I actually owned Volume 4 of this series, which covers Dining Service Cars, but we’ll blame that on the lack of revenue from the UMTRR. I can note that the 10040 was an SP Class 77-D-6, as were sister cars 10027, 10038, 10041 and 10042 and several cars lettered for the Central Pacific as well. By the way, Volume 4 alone is 576 (!) pages.

Fortunately, thanks to Jerry Laboda’s recently expanded (again!) “Passenger Cars Photo Index” ( [passcarphotos.info](http://passcarphotos.info) , no “www”) we can locate the SP 10040 at its present home on the Niles Canyon Railway in Sunol, California. Jerry links to two images of the car on Flickr taken by “CaliforniaRailfan101.” It’s noted that the 10040 was newly restored in 2014. My sense is that the restoration also took it all the way back to its original paint scheme, including lettering for the Oregon and California subsidiary of the SP. This is the paint scheme that Micro-Trains used. MTL’s 146 series appears to be a stand-in for the prototype, but that doesn’t surprise me considering that Micro-Trains’ basis was a Pennsylvania diner.

Ignoring for the moment the 2014 rebirth of this car, I think the ATP for this car might be rather short. I augmented MTL's car copy with jumping around the web, and found out that the car was repainted in the "Daylight" scheme circa 1946, before being retired from dining service in 1951. I also learned that the car was built by Pullman-Standard. But the question that stays in my mind is how quickly the O&C reporting marks disappeared from the car. MTL itself says "Originally delivered to the Oregon & California Railroad in 1927, it was renumbered to Southern Pacific Railroad in 1928." To me that means relettering from "Southern Pacific Lines" to just "Southern Pacific." And does that also mean that the original ATP was just 1927? There might be more to this story, but that might be off the point for those who are much more simply looking for the Diner to continue their SP passenger set.



**146 00 080, \$29.95**

**Car Name: Alnwick (will be "CP Alnwick" in website listings).**

**Heavyweight Diner, Canadian Pacific.**

Maroon sides and ends, back roof, underbody and trucks. Buff (yellow/gold) lettering including roadname extended across center of letterboard, car name at bottom center and "Dining Car" at bottom left and right. Approximate Time Period: 1931 (build date) to at least 1968.

The ATP I'm calling for this car comes from the caption to a bingo on Page 14 of the **Canadian Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. The "Alnwick's" kitchen side is shown in the July 1968 photo. As MTL states in its car copy, the car was one of eight "A" series diners built in 1931. It was completed at the CP's own Angus Shops but started by National Steel Car Company; I'm not sure what the split between the two shops was. I found it interesting that coal was the fuel for the kitchen, and I had two follow-up thoughts: First, how prevalent was that; and second, I hope they used anthracite which burns a lot more cleanly!

I suspect I will reach "broken record" status in short order by repeating that since the MTL 146 body style is based on a Pennsylvania Railroad prototype, just about every other roadname will be a stand in to one extent or another. That is the case with this CP diner, which has a differing window arrangement on the side that we can compare with the model. I was curious so I checked: Alnwick is a small town in Northumberland, England, which has as its major attraction a castle, popular with both tourists and motion picture companies.

UMTRR Gang Member Stu Reeh picks it up from there, for which many thanks: "The kitchen side of Alnwick had, from left to right, a service door, two small three-pane windows in the kitchen area, three single windows in the pantry area, then six paired windows in the dining



area. The other side, again from left to right, had six paired windows in the dining area and five single windows along the corridor.

“Information from the 1960 **Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment** - reproduced in Patrick Dorin's book **Canadian Pacific Railway** - shows that Alnwick was one of 21 steel dining cars, AAR mechanical designation DA, with a seating capacity of 36, inside length of 79 feet 9 inches and length over buffers of 84 feet 6 inches.

“I have conflicting info on the number of cars in CPR's 'A' series: the 1960 ORPTE lists 21, including 19 with names beginning with A (and just to keep it interesting, it also lists four 48-seat dining cars with names beginning with A), while an article by Dale Wilson in **CP Tracks**, Volume 6 Number 2, Fall 1998) says ‘CPR and Canadian Car & Foundry collaborated to build 23 cars between 1929 and 1931.’ Dale’s article includes a copy of CPR folio drawing 23-C-1048, which lists Alnwick as being built in 1929 along with 15 other cars, with another eight cars built in 1931. John Riddell’s **Color Guide**, which may be where MTL got its info for its notes on this release, only mentions the second batch of cars.

“Dale notes that these cars ‘last saw revenue service in 1967 on the Expo Limited and up to 1966 had been the standby diners for The Dominion when stainless steel cars weren't available... Six cars were converted into work service diners and a single car, Argyle, survives at the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel at Cranbrook.’”



**986 00 041 and 986 00 042, \$109.95 each**  
**Road Numbers: 9590 and 9594 (will be**  
**preceded with “CR” in website listings).**  
**SW1500 Diesel Locomotives, Conrail.**

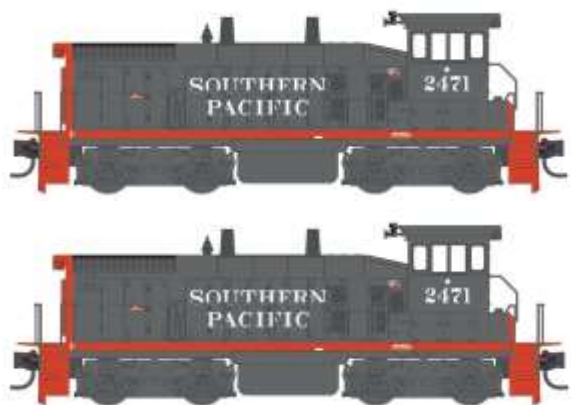
Blue with black and white handrails; black underframe. White lettering including roadname and herald on hood and road

number on cab. Approximate Time Period: late 1970s to late 1990s. Only the 041 release is shown here.

For the fourth of the roadnames originally announced one year ago, we reprint the UMTRR coverage from that issue. The website of the Conrail Historical Society ( [thechrhs.org](http://thechrhs.org) , no “www”) has a bit of background. The line had 121 of these, inherited from predecessors Penn Central, Reading, Indiana Harbor Belt and Indianapolis Union. Five of these were sold by 1984 and a few more were gone by 1996, but the majority survived to the split of Conrail in 1999. As with most of their equipment, the transition to Conrail Blue was not immediate. The CRHS site has an ex-Penn Central unit, 9505, with only that same “CR” in white right over the PC herald. And I recall ex-Reading units at Port Reading, New Jersey, ignominiously painted out with a hasty “CR” – in Penn Central font, to add further insult-added where the Reading herald was once proudly displayed.

The 9590 and 9594 are both former Reading units. RRPictureArchives has a 1977 shot of one of those infamous paint-outs; they couldn't even get the digits in the road number (which was 2751) straight, they were in such a hurry. The unit is back in a proper paint scheme by November 1979 and is working in Edison, New Jersey. And the 9594, ex-Reading 2755, is actually in Port Reading as of March 1979. It's possible that somewhere in the archives, I have a photo of this one myself. One aftermarket detail that might be interesting to add is a canvas cover over the front of the hood. The 9594 went to Norfolk Southern as its 2235 and the 9590 became NS 2234 and then ADMX 2234, working for Archer-Daniels-Midland.

*In addition to the above, the following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is stated for Spring 2015 (no specific month). UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 31st.*



**986 00 071 and 986 00 072, \$134.95 each**  
**Road Numbers: 2471 and 2510 (will be preceded with "SP" in website listings).**

**SW1500 Diesel Locomotives, Southern Pacific.**

Gray with red front hood, steps, platforms and bottom sill. White lettering including roadname on hood and road number on cab. These units will include SP-specific lights and number boards and Flexi-Coil trucks. Image above is preliminary artwork (only the 071 shown). Approximate Time Period: 1967 (earliest delivery) to mid-1990s.

Richard Percy's "Espee Modelers Archive" ( [espee.railfan.net](http://espee.railfan.net) , no "www") includes a rundown of the 240 (!) SW1500s delivered to the Southern Pacific between 1967 and 1973, 46 of which went to SP subsidiary Cotton Belt. (An obvious follow-on release.) All of these were initially painted in the scarlet and gray that MTL depicts. There were changes to these units across deliveries and then later as well; witness for example the photos of the 2471 that were taken in 1980 and 1994 respectively. These units may also have started out pristine—a nearly new 2471 as of 1968 is shown on RRPictureArchives.net—but as with most SP power, didn't stay that way for long. Washing of diesels simply wasn't an Espee priority. I should point out that parts of the handrails were painted white, a bit of detail that will probably need to be handled by the modeler. (Some brands of paint used on RC cars will "stick" better to the handrail material that MTL utilizes.)

The start of the ATP is staggered based on deliveries, which is duly noted above. The site Utahrails.net helps with the other end of the ATP: most of the former SP and SSW units were transferred to the series UP 1060 to 1233 in 1996 and 1997, with no doubt a lot of repainting as well. These became "UPY," or Union Pacific Yard, units in the early part of the decade of the 2000s.

As promised when the initial announcements of SW1500s were made, this release will feature newly tooled Flexi-Coil trucks, which will open up (or should I say, "U.P."?!?) additional

roadnames for Micro-Trains to produce. There will be specific Southern Pacific details as well; any question about whether these parts can be amortized need only recall the 240 units that the SP and Cotton Belt had, plus two that were in SP “Kodachrome” paint, a handful that received the late SP “Speed Lettering” scheme, and of course a large number of Union Pacific possibilities. That should keep the folks in Oregon busy cranking out Flexi-Coil trucks for a while.

## N SCALE REPRINTS:



020 00 029, \$19.95.

**Reporting Marks: NH 35172.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door, New Haven (New York, New Haven and Hartford).**

Second release in the MTL “1972 Series.” Boxcar red (brown) with black door. White lettering including script-style herald on left and reporting marks on right. Approximate Time Period: 1948 (build date) into the 1960s. Previous Releases: as Catalog 20029: Road Number 35149 (in “Small XM” and “Large XM” variations), November 1972 and Road Number 35159, February 1973, these two with brown Youngstown doors; then a “Vintage Reprint” three pack, 20029-2 with road numbers 35153, 35155 and 35157, May 1995; then a single “25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary” reprint with Catalog 20029, Road Number 35143, October 1998. The last four reprints have black Superior doors as does this reprint.

This is probably one of the five or ten most famous of all of Micro-Trains cars. It was the one pictured in the advertisement used by Kadee to introduce the new line of rolling stock to the world, back in November of 1972 (see excerpt from that ad at right—although I don’t think the photo is “actual size N-Scale” here). Most people think it’s the first Micro-Train release, even though it isn’t; it came out a month after the first group debuted. And here’s a bit of trivia: the road number printed on the car in the advertising, 32883, was never actually released. The lettering on the right isn’t the same as the production car either. It was probably a car mocked up in order to meet the months-before ad deadlines that existed at the time. Just imagine if the car pictured in the ad suddenly showed up on the collector circuit!

**STANDARD 40' BOXCAR BY**  
**Kadee®** Good news for you N-Gaugers. A highly accurate replica of a 40' boxcar with detail only found in larger scales until now. Available undecorated or with micro-small readable roadnames and data. Comes in a see-through plastic box, ready-to-run. See them at your hobby shop today.



actual size N-Scale

**JUST LOOK AT THE DETAIL!**

It’s actually a good thing that 32883 wasn’t a production road number, since the series of prototype cars was actually 34500 to 35999, 1500 cars out of a 2500 car order built by Pullman-Standard in 1947 and 1948. These cars had two things that make them different from the 020 body style: a ten foot inside height, lowest of all the PS-1s built, and a seven foot door. The previous 1000 cars, 33500 to 34499, were of the more typical ten feet six inch inside height. The ORER for July 1950 provides the rest of the usual dimensions I quote: inside

length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, outside length 40 feet 8 inches, extreme height 14 feet 6 inches, and capacity 3715 cubic feet or 120,000 pounds.

The **New Haven Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** includes a chart of car counts that saves me a fair amount of time: 1498 in 1950, 1478 in 1955, 1462 in 1960, then down to 957 in 1965 and just 350 in 1970. The NH did sales and leaseback of cars starting in 1955, and then large selloffs of cars after 1960. By the time the Penn Central absorbed the NH in 1969, just 2600 freight cars remained of a fleet that numbered 8300 cars in 1960.

The first of the sale and leaseback boxcars retained the “script style” paint scheme that MTL used back in 1972 and uses again now. From mid-1955 onward, though, the NH’s boxcars were painted in either black or red-orange and carried the large “McGuinness” N over H monogram. That doesn’t mean the script herald went away overnight, though, as Page 14 of the Color Guide includes a photo of NH 34001 that was taken in January 1970. And Page 17 of the same book has a 1973 shot of NH 35386 in the later simplified “Alpert Scheme” of white on oxide red (named for a President of the railroad, George Alpert) with the famous script herald “ghosting” through. Online, there’s an image of a very tired looking NH 35237 with restenciled reporting marks on George Elwood’s “Fallen Flags” site. In that image, the New Haven looked like quite the Fallen Flag indeed.

One question remains: from the first two cars in 1972 and 1973 to the other releases starting with the three-pack in 1995, the door was switched from the Youngstown type (all that Kadec had available in 1972!) to a Superior door—but a black one. The few photos I’ve seen show doors matching the brown car color, but after some searching, I found a reference: “All cars from 30000 [to] 35999 were originally delivered painted freight car brown equipped with black sliding doors,” according to the website “The New Haven in 1959” (found at the URL [newhavenrailroad1959.webs.com](http://newhavenrailroad1959.webs.com), no “www”).



**044 00 071 and 044 00 072, \$21.85**

**Reporting Marks: BN 602639 and 602658.**

**50 Foot Steel Flat Cars, Straight Sides, Burlington Northern.**

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

Simulated Howitzer gun load included (unassembled). Approximate Time Period: early 1970s through decade of the 1980s. Previous Releases (as catalog 45070): Road Number 602692, November 1978; Road Number 602623, November 1987; Road Number 602626, December 1994.

MTL notes in its car copy that these cars were built in 1960 as part of series 602600 to 602699. The road numbers of the predecessor railroads (Burlington, Great Northern, Northern Pacific and Spokane, Portland and Seattle) don’t go that high however, so we’re actually looking at a renumbering of some sort. I have the Color Guides for all four of those predecessor railroads but there was no image in any of the books to a set of flat cars built in 1960.



I can tell you that I pick up the BN series in the October 1972 ORER. The group which could hold one hundred cars only had sixteen at the time. The dimensions: "inside length" 53 feet 6 inches, "outside length" 57 feet, and capacity 110,000 pounds. The cars are described as simply "Flat" with the standard AAR Designation FM. Despite what I've often said about the BN being slow to repaint cars from its component railroads, the company did go from effectively zero equipment with BN reporting marks in the April 1970 Register all the way to 17,576 cars in the October 1972 issue. That's a lot in just over two years, and it's not all equipment purchased new during that timeframe.

By October 1976, there's no longer a subtotal by reporting marks in the BN listing, but the series in which we're interested is up to 72 cars. That's back down to 64 in April 1984, and just four in the April 1989 ORER which is where I stopped looking.

A July 1982 photo of sister car BN 602688 over on RRPictureArchives.net might have been the inspiration for the load which Micro-Trains included with these reprints. The various accessories of the "military load" aren't included, but the gun sure is, and it looks very much like what's on the model flat cars, down to the covering. While we're here, I'll mention that the ends of the flat car differ from the 048 body style, and the real car has an end mounted brake wheel on a horizontal staff. It's rather hard to see the underframe but I believe it might have a fishbelly center.

And exactly what is on that flat car? Micro-Trains calls it a "howitzer," but it turns out that the term has become relatively generic. Initially, a "howitzer" was a short barreled instrument, that is, with the barrel only between 15 and 25 times the caliber (approximate internal diameter) of the ammunition. The United States armed forces began labeling larger-barreled guns as "howitzers," particularly since World War I.



**051 00 070, \$34.90**

**Road Number: 99085 (will be "SOO 99085" in website listings).**

**34 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Caboose, Straight Cupola, Soo Line.**

Red with black roof, underframe and trucks. Red end rails, yellow grab irons and silver smokejack.

White lettering including roadname and road number below cupola, split by black and white "Dollar Sign" Soo Line herald. "WC" (Wisconsin Central) sublettering at top corner opposite cupola. Simulated window "glass" installed. Approximate Time Period: mid-1950s at least (see text). Previous Release (as Catalog 51070): Road Number 177, February 1990.

Pick a reason or two why this car qualifies as a "not a reprint": different number series, painted roof, finished grab irons, red end rails, interior "windows," modified lettering. Or pick them all! No need to be conservative here. About the only thing that's the same, other than the body style, is the "Dollar Sign" herald which the Soo Line used through the 1950s (though the large roadname was introduced in 1951 so there's some overlap). I also checked

this car against the original run and can tell you that the red paint isn't quite as bright as it seems in the image above—it is in fact close to the shade Micro-Trains first used in 1990.

The original name of the Soo Line, and its official name until 1961, was the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Sainte Marie (or Sault Ste. Marie). "Sault" is pronounced "Soo" and there lies the origin of the nickname for the railroad. The Soo was formed in 1888 via a merger of two other railroads. It leased the Wisconsin Central for 999 years starting in 1909, and merged it and the Duluth, South Shore and Atlantic in 1961 to create officially what had been called the Soo Line for decades before.

There is not only a bingo on photos of this car, there is a bingo on the actual car, which resides at the Mid-Continent Railway Museum in North Freedom, Wisconsin, about an hour north of Madison (and at [www.midcontinent.org](http://www.midcontinent.org) as well). The Approximate Time Period comes from Mid-Continent's statement that the car was restored to its mid-1950s paint scheme. There is additional information on the car accompanying two photos of it which allow views of both sides of the car. It's noted that the car, built by Haskell and Barker in January 1909 while the Wisconsin Central was still independent, was extensively rebuilt in 1911 to align with other cabooses built for the Soo Line by American Car and Foundry, at which point it was also renumbered to 99085. The AC&F design used a single window on one side and also had a taller cupola than the Haskell and Barker design, sometimes but not always with a single cupola window on two sides. The cars also had wood underframes with truss rods; when a steel center sill was fitted in 1925 the truss rods remained. The net of all of this is a "stand in" designation of some degree (your determination may vary) versus the MTL 051 body style. The Soo Line sold the 99085 in 1967 to Mid-Continent, so the ATP of the caboose in active service wouldn't have lasted any longer than that.

And here's an interesting item I found: Another similar Soo Line caboose became a "tiny house" for a woman who now lives in it full time! No "Dollar Sign" herald on this one though. See the story at [tinyhouseblog.com/tiny-house-concept/marcias-soo-line-caboose/](http://tinyhouseblog.com/tiny-house-concept/marcias-soo-line-caboose/).



101 00 050, \$32.70

**Reporting Marks: ATSF 14066**

**40 Foot "Hy-Cube" Steel Box Car, Smooth Sides, Single Sliding Door, Santa Fe.**

Red sides, black ends (except for "Excess Height" stripe at top), roof, side sills, ladders and tack boards. White lettering including large circle cross

herald and reporting marks on left. Large white and yellow "Super Shock Control" slogan on right. Circled "DF" stencil in black at top right corner. Approximate Time Period: 1967 (build date given by MTL) to mid-1980s. Previous Release: Road Number 14064, May 2006.

I can pretty much reprint myself from the May 2006 coverage of the original run of this car, since I had plenty of information and three prototype photos from which to work.

Let's start with the bingo to that May 2006 release, ATSF 14064, found looking nice and clean in a 1968 photo on Page 36 of the **Santa Fe Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. There are a couple of differences between the Transco-built prototype and the Micro-Trains 101 body style, but the biggest one-- literally-- is the placement of the large circle cross herald. The logo is moved up on the MTL car to clear the placement of the tack board. That tack board is on the door on the prototype car. The other noticeable item is the straight sills on the prototype, however a little knife action will make short work of that nitpick. The use of separate ladder castings allows for the small black and white circle crosses to be correctly placed under the side ladders, a nice touch. And how's this for a "not a reprint": This time, the lettering under the herald reads "When empty return reverse to agent, PRR, Hollidaysburg, Pa." The 14064 needed to be returned to Columbus, Ohio.

The "Priest Book," or **Santa Fe Freight In Color, The Series Volume 1 - Boxcars** by Stephen Priest and Thomas Chenoweth, has a significantly less clean ATSF 14032 posed in Kansas City in 1972. That car was built in November 1966 and is stenciled for return to the New York Central in Marion, Ohio. "Notice the black tack boards, side sills, roof and ends," the authors point out. They also mention that many of the cars in the series went to Maintenance of Way service in this as-delivered paint scheme. It probably would have made them among the standouts in the company service train, if their paint had held up at all.

So about when was that demotion to MOW service? Let's try to figure out. First, a stop at the April 1970 ORER for the reading of the usual vital statistics. The 68 cars (of a possible 69) are divided into two different series. The first is described as "Box, Load Divider, Roller Bearing, Shock Control, Hi-Cube, Appliance Loading" and covers the number 14000 to 14037. The second is written up as "Box, DF-2 Belts, Roller Bearing, Shock Control, Hi-Cube, Appliance Loading" and carries road numbers 14038 to 14068. Fortunately for my sanity (and perhaps yours) both cars share the same dimensional data with the exception of the cubic footage capacity: 4810 on the first group and 4990 on the second. Here's the rest: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 12 feet 11 inches, outside length 47 feet 9 inches, extreme height 16 feet 11 inches, door opening 9 feet wide by 12 feet tall. Is that a "door thing?" Yes, as the MTL door is ten feet wide. Weight capacity is 107,000 pounds on both sets and there's a double dagger that translates at the bottom of the ORER page to "Large cars exceeding Plate C dimensions." In 1970 that was still a relatively rare occurrence.

In the January 1985 ORER the cars were properly located in the "Plate F" size specifications, but there were just five left in the first group and four in the second. A single car, the 14067, hung on in the July 1987 book. I guess you'd have to be looking for these cars in Maintenance of Way storage tracks by then.

The third proto-photo is on Fallen Flags; ATSF 14037 was caught in Secaucus, New Jersey in December 1978, with a "TS 2-75" (Topeka Shops) reweigh stencil, consolidated stencils just to the left of the right hand side ladder, and no specific return instructions. The car's red paint looks a bit long in the tooth, but it's the black roofline that is peeling pretty badly. And, in keeping with the series split, it doesn't have the circled "DF" either.

**N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** Before we get to the usual mid-month releases, let's cover the N Scale portion of that Black Friday Surprise that Micro-Trains had on their website. If you happened to be visiting their site (or more specifically, the interim site to which you were redirected), then—lucky you!—found their holiday special: purchase \$100 worth of items from their online store and select a special “Christmas themed” MTL freight car at no extra cost. Such a deal! So far, these cars were only available through that offer.

*The following items were available via a special promotional offer via the Micro-Trains website only from Friday, November 28 to Tuesday, December 2:*



**995 02 011, \$N/A**

**Reporting Marks: None (will be “GN ----” in website listings).**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, No Roofwalk, Full Ladders, Great Northern.**

Sky blue with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large outline goat herald on right. Light weathering, blacked out reporting marks and white Christmas Tree stencil right of door. Approximate Time Period: 1967 (rebuild date) to early 1980s. Previous Release: As Catalog Number 74030, Road Number 6646, May 1998; then Catalog 074 00 040, Road Number 6650, February 2014. (Note that the Weathered Release in this paint scheme from July 2014 had a roofwalk and Catalog Number 021 44 570.)



**995 02 012, \$N/A**

**Reporting Marks: None (will be “SOU ----” in website listings).**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Southern Railway.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including slogan “Southern Serves the South” and road number on left. “DF” in yellow on door. Light weathering, white Christmas Tree stencil on right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960s through mid-1970s. Previous Release (unweathered): Catalog Number 020 00 896, Road Number 21047, April 2013.



**995 02 013, \$N/A**

**Reporting Marks: None (will be “BCOL --” in website listings).**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Combination Plug & Sliding Door, No Roofwalk, British Columbia Railway.**

Dark green with light green sliding door. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname and herald on right. Light to moderate weathering particularly on roof, patched out reporting marks and white Christmas Tree stencil right of door. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s given paint scheme (1971 build date) to at least the



mid-1990s. Previous Releases: Runner Pack #86, Road Numbers 40002, 40054, 40166, and 40178, Catalog Numbers 076 00 13x, March 2014 (pre-reviewed in the October 2013 UMTRR).



**995 02 014, \$N/A**

**Reporting Marks: None (will be "PRR -----" in website listings).**

**50 Foot Steel Double Door Boxcar, Youngstown Doors, Pennsylvania Railroad.**

Brown with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on right. Black and white shadow keystone on left. Light to moderate weathering, blacked out reporting marks, and white Christmas Tree stencil below roadname right of doors. Approximate Time Period: Late 1960s (based on paint scheme) to late 1980s. Previous Release (as Catalog 34472/34080): Road Number 32156, July 1974 (with both Magne-Matic and Rapido Couplers); then Runner Pack #81, Road Numbers 32129, 32144, 32152 and 32163, Catalog Numbers 034 00 08x, October 2013 (pre-reviewed in the April 2013 UMTRR).



**995 02 015, \$N/A**

**Reporting Marks: ATSF ---- (road number obscured).**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Door, Santa Fe (AT&SF)**

Brown with white lettering including "Ship and Travel" slogan and reporting marks on left and large circle cross herald on right. Small simulated circle cross reflectors along bottom of sides. Dalman two-level trucks are installed on this car. Light to moderate weathering, patched out reporting marks and white Christmas Tree stencil right of herald. Approximate Time Period: after 1959 (generally) or 1961 (service/repaint date of this car) to about 1970. Previous Releases: Catalog Number 078 00 130, Road Number 7153, October 2013.

I have a feeling that the price of \$N/A I noted in the description of each of these promotional items might just become \$!!!! (or perhaps \$&@%#/) in the aftermarket before too long. This was most definitely a case of "you snooze, you lose" at least through "Press Time" since the above five cars (and three more in Z Scale, see below) were available only for a few days, only through the website and only if you ordered \$100 or more. Each of the cars has the "knocked out" road number, or completely knocked out reporting marks, which, as stated in previous UMTRRs, is extremely unlikely to be seen on actual North American railroads. That's hardly the point of course since these are meant to be fun and festive. I mean, just look at the Christmas Tree that's been added to each of the cars!

By the way, if you're in the UMTRR Gang and happen to have procured one of these cars, I'd love to see the side of each of them that wasn't in the images I pulled (just in time, I might add) from the MTL website. Feel free to drop me a photo via e-mail. And now, we return you to the regularly scheduled Weathered Releases...

The following items were announced as 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 December 15.



**045 44 070, \$23.85**

**Reporting Marks: UP 58484 (at least).**

**50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Car, Union Pacific.**

Yellow with brown trucks and couplers with yellow extended draft gear. Black reporting marks left of center and dimensional data on right. Red "Cushioned Load Union Pacific" in center. Light weathering. Car comes with a simulated small aircraft fuselage which is to be painted and decorated by the modeler; a decal sheet for this is included. Approximate Time Period: 1966 (build date) through early decade of the 2000s. Previous Releases (as Catalog 45070): Road Number 58290, April 1977; Road Number 58315, June 1991; Road Number 58527, December 1998; Road Number 58522, November 2000; then Runner Eight Pack #5, Catalog Number 993 00 805 with individual Catalog Numbers 045 5x 070, Road Numbers 58461, 58482, 58484, 58516, 58529, 58530, 58535, 58538, May 2014. Note: It's possible but not confirmed that any of the eight numbers in the Runner Eight Pack may have been utilized for this Weathered Release.

I don't know about you, but I think the Weathering on this car might be called Extremely Light. I really am not sure I see any, in fact, at least in the image MTL posted on its website. I suppose that won't be the main draw here anyway; no, the load is going to be far more interesting, even if it does need to be finished by the modeler.

Recapping my January 2014 pre-release coverage of the Eight Pack, the prototype cars were built in 1966. The ORER for January 1967 indicates an "outside length" of 57 feet 11 inches for this series, 58290 to 58589, which had 226 cars at the time. Of these, 32 remained as of January 2000 though not all were listed as "Cushion Underframe." Two hung on through at least October 2007. There's an August 1966 company photo of UP 58527, on Page 51 of the **Union Pacific Color Guide to Passenger and Freight Equipment** (Volume One). Note that it had an end brake wheel whereas the MTL 045 body style has a side mount brake wheel; but the yellow draft gear is right on.



**094 44 200, \$31.95**

**Reporting Marks: IC 799208.**

**Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hopper, Trough Hatches, Illinois Central "Theory."**

Dark gray with white lettering including reporting marks on left and 1990's IC herald on right. "A" side is decorated with a full side mural "Theory" based on a prototype photo. Light weathering and road number partially obscured on the "B" side. Approximate Time Period:

The Present. Previous Releases (in unweathered form, Catalog Number 094 00 200): Road Number 799623, March 2002; Road Number 799626, March 2008; Road Number 799607, March 2014. Both sides of car shown.

Sara at MTL “pre-announced” this Weathered Release on the company’s Facebook page on December 12 and provided a link to a prototype photo on the site Flickr. The photo was taken in March, 2014 at an unknown location (though it looks like somewhere in Western Canada to me—just a guess!) so The Present would definitely be the Approximate Time Period here. Here’s the link: [www.flickr.com/photos/46373993@N08/13502905485](http://www.flickr.com/photos/46373993@N08/13502905485) for your own look-see. Despite my own reluctance to “like” graffiti, I must admit that the preservation of the Illinois Central name on the original was quite creative. Though that feature wasn’t replicated on the MTL version, the rendition in 1:160 size is impressive. My usual question: how is it that a car stands still that long to be so intricately redecorated? Meanwhile, there’s little question that the creator of this mural is a fan of the CBS television series **The Big Bang Theory**, which, in a bit of a full circle, has had model trains in at least one episode. (Although I suppose I fit the target audience, I’ve never watched the show.)

Most of the rest of the series IC 799500 to 799799 should also still be in service as they weren’t built until 1996. I was able to confirm this back in March courtesy of our friend “The Masked Railroader” who has access to online data. There are plenty of shots of these cars on George Elwood’s “Fallen Flags” site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ). The prototype car is a 5150 cubic feet capacity version versus the MTL 094 body style which is of an ACF 4650 cubic foot car. I might note that the “B” side has the last three digits of the road number missing. I’d attend to that promptly, though it’s a hint that Micro-Trains may have repurposed “leftovers” from the previous unweathered release.



**115 44 001, \$25.95**

**Reporting Marks: None**

**65 Foot Log Car, Blue Painted Unlettered.**

Blue with tops of stakes in yellow. Heavy weathering and simulated “wood residue” on

car. Approximate Time Period: 1980s to present. Previous Release: Runner Pack #90 (993 00 090), February 2014. Any of the Runner Pack items (obviously!) could have been used for this Weathered Release.

Not much to say here (and good thing as this issue is probably at record length already!) except to note that some prototype log cars I’ve seen in photos do look this dirty. Interestingly, I never did get an official image of the unweathered version of this car but I did find one and note that the yellow stake ends appear to be an incremental bit of paint for this release.

Micro-Trains announced around December 15 that the “ATSF Weathered Set” (993 01 280, \$229.95), originally scheduled for this month, will be released in January 2015. Stand by...

**N SCALE RUNNER PACKS:** In addition to the below announcement, Runner Pack #99 (993 00 099, \$74.95), four New York Central Two Bay Ribside Open Hoppers with loads, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the July 2014 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 056 51 170, 837965; 056 52 170, 837987; 056 53 170, 838329; 056 54 170, 838350. These are the third through sixth road numbers for this car.



*The following item is in pre-order at present and are NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is May 2015. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 31st.*



**Scheduled May 2015 Release:**

**993 00 104, \$119.95**

**Quantity four of Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers with Trough Hatches, Washington State Department of Transportation / Blue Mountain Railroad/ "The Grain Train".**

**Reporting Marks: BLMR 1008, 1015, 1019, 1022.**

Yellow with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left and "The Grain Train At Work For Washington State" right of center.

Multicolor grain icons on right. Approximate Time Period: 1995 to mid-decade of the 2000s. Previous Releases (as Catalog 94070): Road Number 1025, July 1996; Road Number 1018, August 1998. Catalog Numbers for the individual cars are expected to be 094 5x 070.

Back in 1998 when the second road number of this colorful car was issued, I presented two paragraphs direct from the website of the Washington State Department of Transportation, which still explain quite nicely the story behind the prototype. Therefore, time for a bit of copy and paste:

"Washington State has also been hard hit by rail line abandonment. Since 1970, Washington's rail system has diminished by almost 40 percent from approximately 5,000 route miles to 3,100 rail routes today. Of the 3,100 route miles remaining, about 1,600 route miles are vulnerable to abandonment. In an attempt to preserve the state's vanishing rail branch lines and with the approval of the State Legislature, WSDOT initiated the Grain Train Program. This program is a response to grain car shortages in the wheat growing Palouse region. The Grain Train Program has helped preserve rail lines in eastern Washington, reduced road damage costs, reduced air pollution, avoided road accidents, and saved energy from efficient rail movement.



“Data shows that the state’s freight rail involvement has directly contributed to saving substantial public dollars by mitigating some of the road damage due to the increased trucking traffic and directing some of these savings to freight services.”

Now, let’s return to the WSDOT website and see how they’re doing: “The Washington Grain Train serves over 2,500 cooperative members and farmers in one of the most productive grain-growing regions in the world. The Washington Grain Train helps carry thousands of tons of grain to deepwater ports along the Columbia River and Puget Sound for transport to ships bound for Pacific Rim markets. The Washington Grain Train began operations in 1994 and currently has 118 grain cars in the fleet (100 are owned by the state, and 18 are owned by the Port of Walla Walla). The Union Pacific Railroad, BNSF Railway Company, and Washington short-line railroads operate the cars and carry the grain to market. Since its beginning in 1994, the Washington Grain Train program has moved more than 1.2 million tons of grain from Washington to national and international markets.”

What has changed since the first two runs of this car is the reporting marks. Instead of the Blue Mountain Railroad or BLMR, the cars are now lettered PCC, for the Palouse River and Coulee City. There have been some small changes to the graphics as well, but you’d have to look carefully to see them. Based on a number of photos of “The Grain Train” hoppers on RRPictureArchives.net, this change appears to have occurred on or before 2007, so we’ll call the ATP at the middle of that decade. The PCC operates several branch lines in Eastern Washington, three of which are centered around Walla Walla.

We get bingos for the 1009 and 1015 on RRPictureArchives.net but surprisingly given the colorful nature of these cars, not much on the other usual go-to sites. It’ll do, though. The cars seem to be close to the 094 body style from what I can see, but they’re not exact, particularly on the ends. I suspect that the cars were not constructed by American Car and Foundry, which would explain the differences since the MTL car is based on an AC&F prototype.

We didn’t have any luck last time these cars were done with lookups in ORERs. There’s still no mention of the Blue Mountain Railroad in any of the Registers I own other than the compendium of all reporting marks at the front of the book. However, the successor Palouse River and Coulee City does appear for the first time in my ORER pile in the January 2006 issue, so that ATP end in the mid-decade of the 2000s looks about right. The 1008 and 1015 are 4650 cubic foot cars, while the 1019 is a 4427 cubic foot car and the 1022 comes in at a 4400 cubic foot capacity. Considering that the State of Washington bought these second hand, that’s not surprising. The PCC did have enough other cars to reach a total of 191 on their roster at that time, all covered hoppers of one type or another.

## N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



**045 00 507, \$24.95**

**Reporting Marks: USAAC 667421.**

**50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Car with 40 Foot Container, "Surprise Attack."**

Release #7 in the N Scale World War II Nose Art Series. Flat car is olive green with white lettering including reporting marks on left and "U.S. Army Air Corps" in center. Container is gray with multicolor artwork including nose art depiction on left.

As noted in the September 2013 coverage of the Z Scale release of this item, the website PlaneJunkie.com states 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 mentions 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.



**101 00 813, \$23.95**

**Modified 40 Foot Hy-Cube Boxcar, "Santa's Balloons."**

**Car #3 in the Postcard Series, final release for 2014 (more to follow in 2015 and 2016).**

Ends, roof, side sill and edges of sides are green.

End ladders are red. Side A has a multicolor

rendition of a picture postcard with off-yellow and green graphics at left and right. Side B has a "Postcard Message" from Micro-Trains. No reporting marks or road number appear on this car. Pre-order coverage was in the June 2014 UMTRR.

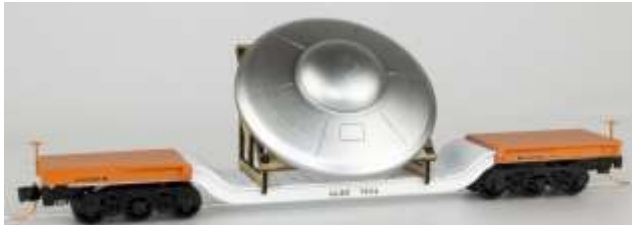
**In addition to the above,** the "Area 51 Train Set" (993 21 240, \$239.95) was released mid-month and should be at dealers as you read this. The images for the items in the set weren't available when I pre-reviewed the set in July, but they are now, and here they are with their individual catalog numbers (including for the loads, for the truly curious):



**986 50 019, SW1500 Diesel**, Road Number 51 (what else?) (will be “GLBX 51” in website listings).



**118 51 029, Troop Kitchen Car “Crew Car,”** Reporting Marks DODX 20535.



**109 52 019, Heavyweight Depressed Center Flat Car**, Reporting Marks GLBX 7024. The “Flying Saucer” load has Catalog Number 499 43 125.

**065 53 049, 39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car**, Reporting Marks DODX 351.



**064 54 009, 57 Foot TOFC Flat Car**, Reporting Marks DODX 55246. The crane is a spin cast load, Catalog Number 499 43 612, and the 20 Foot Container load has Catalog Number 462 50 009.

**100 55 109, 36 Foot Steel Caboose with Offset Cupola**, Reporting Marks GLBX 1002. Hmm, the original artwork didn’t show that “passenger” in the window!



*In addition to the above, the following item is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Delivery is scheduled for February 2015. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 31.*



***Scheduled February 2015 Release:***

**470 00 209, \$34.95**

**Medicine Wagon Two-Pack #1**

Will consist of two 15 foot wagons of different designs. Both will be brown with mostly white and yellow lettering with multicolor accents or artwork.



If people believed that the traveling circus or carnival was a bit sleazy, then the medicine show was probably off the scale of disrepute. This combination of entertainment and sales pitch was meant to entice the buyer to part with his or her money for a varying type of “miracle cure” item of medical value that was, at best, questionable. Medicine shows gave way to other diversions such as television and radio, with the last of the type surviving more as a nostalgia play until

about 1990. It's doubtful that the actual hucksterism that accompanied the “traveling show” has vanished—ever watch “infomercials” late at night? (Don't feel that you need to answer that.) References to the medicine show survive, though: we still make reference to the general term “snake oil” and the team of Michael Jackson and Paul McCartney acted as “Mac and Jack,” traveling salesmen on a horse-drawn wagon in the video of the 1983 hit “Say, Say, Say.” (The single hit number one on the pop charts in the USA and Canada, and the top ten in more than twenty other countries. Somebody had to buy it.)

“Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic” was an actual product, and a popular one at that. In 1885 the only cure for malaria was quinine, and it, well, didn't taste very good. By adding ingredients to the bitter but effective remedy, the pharmacist Edwin Wiley Grove hit the jackpot with his remedy and sold millions of bottles of the stuff, outpacing even Coca-Cola by 1890. The aim was to reduce the fever from malaria, which was a serious problem in much of the Southern United States, thus the name “Chill Tonic.” Grove died in 1927, but the product lasted much longer: even after the company Grove founded was bought out by Bristol-Meyers in 1957, “Chill Tonic” was still in production.

And yes, the advertising to be depicted on the MTL wagon model was not only legitimate as well, but well known. I'm not sure how well its message, “Makes children and adults as fat as pigs” would play today, or what that has to do with malaria, for that matter.

As for “Doc Stumps Amazing Growth Elixir,” the product hawked on the other MTL wagon, well, all I can say is my usual search engine asked if I meant “deck stumps” or “doc stamps” when I tried to find something, so I think that miracle cure might be a concoction, if you will, of our friends in Oregon.



**NARROW GAUGE RELEASES (Nn3, HOn3):** The Nn3 (N Scale narrow gauge) refrigerator cars that were open for pre-orders in September and were covered in that month's UMTRR are now available:



**803 00 001, \$22.70**

**Reporting Marks: None.**

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

Yellow sides, brown roof and ends. Brown Arch Bar 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**

**Reporting Marks: C&S 1102.**

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

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



**803 00 020, \$23.50**

**Reporting Marks: RGS 2102.**

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

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

## **Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:**



**500 00 781 and 500 00 782, \$24.95 each**

**Reporting Marks: BN 124345 and 124340.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Youngstown Door, Burlington Northern.**

Green with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large herald on right. Black and white double panel consolidated stencils below herald. White simulated reflective stripes along bottom of car. Roof hatches included to be installed by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1980s as configured with hatches.

These might be among the only Burlington Northern boxcars to have retained their running boards, since they're of practical use when trying to open and close hatches. And if the car is used for hide loading, you'd want to get away from those hatches as quickly as possible—blecch! From the **Great Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** comes an explanation of the less than wonderful task of hide loading: "Spotted on a siding at a slaughter house, a conveyor would dump the hides through the roof hatches into the car. When full, the cars would be consigned to a tannery."

Meanwhile, just inside the **Burlington Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, on Page 4, there is not only a bingo on BN 124345 as of April 1984, but an overhead shot showing the four large roof hatches. That will be most helpful to the Z Scaler who will need to install them. Add a bit of weathering to simulate, um, hide residue. Yuk. It's also noted in the Color Guide that the series BN 123500 to 124999 was originally the CB&Q (Burlington) series 62500 to 63999 series which was built in 1957. There are side sill differences and the real cars had riveted sides... hard to see in Z. But like the prototype, the model has a six foot door opening so no "door thing" here.

Given the date of the photo in the Color Guide, I went to the ORER for April 1981, where I found a very large series, BN 121100 to 125799, none of which were called out for hide loading. But moving over to the April 1984 Register, that same series was entirely designated for hide loading. However, that series, which could hold 4700 cars, had only thirty cars in it at the time. They were, as MTL points out in its car copy, AAR Designation LC, even though they're described as "Box, Truck Centers 30 Feet 9 Inches (Stenciled Hide Loading Only)." The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 3 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 3898 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. The small group with the large number span was down to a single car in the July 1989 Equipment Register, which is where I stopped looking.



**511 00 221 and 511 00 222, \$29.90 each**

**Reporting Marks: ATSF 151923 and 151951.**

**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door, Santa Fe (AT&SF).**

Red sides, black ends, aluminum roof. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large circle cross herald on right. Yellow and

white "Super Shock Control" slogan on left. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s to early 1990s at least.

You've got to go pretty far into the book **Santa Fe Freight in Color Volume 1**, also called "the Priest book" around here, to find photos of the prototype series. It's on Page 146 of the book that we see ATSF 151917, a Santa Fe class Bx-182, as lensed in 1977 in its original paint scheme. Other decorations would follow, as we'll see below. The match between prototype and model is pretty good in terms of the MTL 511 body style. One quibble is that the MTL car has a more peaked roof than the real car. The rib count is right and the ends are close as

well. It's noted with respect to the prototype that its ACI Label was placed "almost out of the acceptable scanning area" to the left of the plug door. It should have been on the lower half of the car, to the right of the door.

The lack of a listing for these cars in the ORER for April 1976 makes me wonder whether the 1975 build date quoted in the Priest book isn't right, and the "New 3-77" stencil on the Micro-Trains car and the photo of the 151917 is actually more accurate. The January 1978 ORER does have the cars in the group 151900 to 152099, with these dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 11 inches, outside length 59 feet 1 inch, extreme height 15 feet 3 inches, door opening 12 feet, capacity 5151 cubic feet or 187,000 pounds.

In the April 1981 Equipment Register, the group is split into two adjoining series, numbered 151900 to 151999 and from 152000 to 152099. Dimensionally they are the same: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 11 inches, outside length 59 feet 1 inch, extreme height 15 feet 3 inches, door opening 12 feet, capacity 5151 cubic feet or 187,000 pounds. The two series are also described the same except for the lading carried, both are called "Box, Shock Control, Roller Bearing, Plug Door, Lading Anchors, 50K." The first group is shown as being for copper, with 100 cars, and the second for paper with 97.

The Priest book shows a modified red and white paint scheme with just the words "Shock Control" (no more "Super" in yellow) and Helvetica font reporting marks, in a photo of ATSF 151904 from 1987. Then there's a picture of ATSF 152002 in brown with small circle cross and small "Q" herald as of 1993. Online, the "Fallen Flags" site has a shot of ATSF 151900 in plain brown with reporting marks only as of 1994, but also the 151935 in the original paint with the full "Super Shock Control" slogan, found in 1995. So it appears that multiple schemes existed all at once, and so what else is new there. I think it's safe to call the ATP into "at least" the nineties given the general number of large circle cross cars I continued to see at that point. The ORER for July 1992 shows plenty of cars in both groups. The 151900 to 151999 has a total of 93 in place from the original 100, repurposed to fiberboard loading, while the 152000 to 152099 series has 93 cars still carrying paper. I jumped to the January 2000 Register from there, where under the Burlington Northern Santa Fe listing there are 70 and 81 cars respectively in each group. Just one car from each of the sets remained as of January 2011.



**530 00 406, \$23.95**

**Reporting Marks: GRCX 5010.**

**39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Gulf Oil Corporation.**

Blue tank and underframe, black trucks. White lettering including company name and reporting marks on left. Gulf logo in white, blue and orange

on right. White lettering on ends. Approximate Time Period: late 1950s, but see text. Release #6 of an expected twelve in the Tank Car Series.

Micro-Trains has gone “off the board” again, releasing a paint scheme in the Z Scale Tank Car Series that was not in the N Scale Tank Car Series. But this one brings back memories, specifically of the HO Scale version of this car produced by Varney and then by Life-Like that I ran on my late father’s layout. Sometimes the stories I tell in these bytes really are personal.

The current incarnation of Gulf Oil is a long way, and numerous corporate transactions, beyond the Gulf Oil Corporation that operated this car. There’s a short history on the official company site ( [www.gulfoil.com](http://www.gulfoil.com) ) and sources elsewhere, but I’ll condense that further. The original Gulf Oil started in 1901 with the discovery of oil at Spindletop and eventually became a “vertically integrated” company (exploration through refining to marketing) that was known as one of the “Seven Sisters” in the business. That’s about the way things stayed until the early 1980s, when a series of corporate maneuvers led to Gulf being bought out by Standard Oil of California as a response to a takeover attempt by T. Boone Pickens. Gulf’s new parent slowly integrated the operations, rebranding service stations to Chevron, shuttering operations in Gulf’s long time Pittsburgh home office, and generally heading towards making the orange and white logo a “fallen flag.” But then Cumberland Farms, the northeast convenience store chain, purchased the brand name and went into a limited partnership to bring back the gas stations. Since then, it’s moving to expand the name back out of the Cumberland Farms’ northeast base, but that’s far beyond the Approximate Time Period of this tank car.

Page 60 of the book **Classic Freight Cars Volume 2** provides the bingo for this car. It’s shown in an undated photo at an unknown location... well, at least it is the same car, and it is a color photo (from the famous “Bob’s Photos”). While the car was built in 1923, the “9-35” next to the dimensional data may, or may not, as we’ll see, be a hint toward the Approximate Time Period. The MTL model has “10-35” there but you get the idea. While the MTL 530 body style is not a match to the prototype car (most prominent deltas are the length of the side ladder and the size and height of the dome) that’s not what the “see text” references this time. Read on...

The 1923 build date is noted in the **Classic Freight Cars** caption and in MTL’s car copy. The ORER for August 1924 shows 2802 cars in the Gulf Refining Company registration, the highest numbered of which are GRCX 5000 to 5199, two hundred cars of 10,000 gallons capacity. These stay in the roster for a while—194 cars in the January 1943 ORER, 183 cars in the April 1952 ORER, and 180 in the January 1959 ORER. However, in the July 1963 Register, the GRCX reporting marks are gone completely; in fact, so is the entire registration for the Gulf Oil Corporation. Where did these cars go? Perhaps to Gulf’s subsidiary Warren Petroleum, which Gulf acquired in 1953? If so, they were renumbered as well as relettered. Or perhaps they were sold off, to Shippers Car Line which had already been supplying lease cars to Gulf to supplement Gulf’s own GRCX-lettered fleet. But based on reporting marks alone, the end of the ATP for this car is sometime between 1959 and 1963, which might have been about the time that the HO Scale models which I fondly recall started appearing.



I didn't find a prototype photo of or reference to this paint scheme anywhere else I looked so I wondered whether this it was unusual or an exception within Gulf's fleet. An image on the "Historic Pittsburgh" site from 1929 shows silver (or aluminum) tank cars with "That Good Gulf Gasoline" slogan on the left and the earlier Gulf circle trademark on the right (that car's been done in varying fidelity numerous times in most scales). The large orange "Gulf" on a black tank car appears to be a later scheme than the one MTL did, with service dates I've seen in the 1950s and 1960s, and also WRNX reporting marks that came over from Gulf's purchase of Warren Petroleum. Perhaps the blue came in between the "Good Gulf" and the orange on black? Helping this a little bit here is a 2001 HO Scale special run for TrainQuest tank car in the same scheme that MTL has done, that has what looks like a service date in the 1940s.

Just as I was about to declare that the best I could do is guess, a search through the Steam Era Freight Cars YahooGroup resulted in a question about that TrainQuest car, to which there was a response from the late Richard Hendrickson: "[T]he earliest photographic evidence I have for the blue scheme is 1959; it was pretty much a 1960s scheme and definitely wasn't in use in 1950 to 1955... All the photos I have of Gulf cars in the early to mid-1950s show them to have been black with 'plain Jane' white GRCX reporting marks and numbers." What about what appears to be the service dates? Well, another thread discusses how the rules might be different for how often service needed to occur for private owner cars, which might result in the dates shown in the photos I have available being misleading with respect to the ATP. And that may be as definitive an answer as we can get at the moment. As with the other Tank Car Series releases, I suspect that Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") will be invoked early and often.



**980 01 361 and 980 01 362, \$129.95 each**  
**980 02 361 and 980 02 362, \$109.95 each**  
**Road Numbers: 2201A and 2201B (A units) and 2203C and 2204C (B units).**  
**F7 Powered A and B Units, Soo Line.**  
 Each unit is white with a red stripe along the bottom; on the A units, this extends to a red nose with white roadname in front and white stripes on nose. Black lettering including large "SOO" in center and small road number at rear.  
 Approximate Time Period: 1964 to 1979 or 1980.

For those of us who are interested in such things, the typeface or font in which the large "SOO" is rendered is Venus Bold Extended. Starting about 1964, this large single name replaced the maroon and gold that had been the standard for the Soo Line for most of the diesel era (a plainer maroon format was used on a few units in between). I'm going with white as the body color though it's noted on the site [sooline.railfan.net](http://sooline.railfan.net) that it could be "a very light gray, depending on who you ask." A GP9, the 550, was the first diesel to be painted in this scheme.

The specific F7A units brought to you by MTL this month were built in May 1949. The 2201A was retired in July 1986 and the 2201B was traded in for a GP38-2 in December 1979. Both were painted into the red and white scheme in January 1964. The F7B units were delivered a month after the F7As, in June 1949. The 2203B and 2204B were both traded in on GP38-2s, in January 1980 and March 1979 respectively. This is all from the [sooline.dieselrosters.com](http://sooline.dieselrosters.com) which compiles information and photos of 888 (!) of the Soo's fleet (and it's noted that the compilation isn't complete!). Images of all four of the units released are available there. As usual, there are some minor detail differences, but overall it's a pretty close alignment.

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

**Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** As with the N Scale items above, before the usual mid-month releases, we'll note the Z Scale portion of that Black Friday promotion that Micro-Trains had on their website.

*The following items were available via a special promotional offer via the Micro-Trains website only from Friday, November 28 to Tuesday, December 2:*



995 02 016, \$N/A

**Reporting Marks:** None (will be "NOKL ---" in website listings).

**Husky Stack Well Car, Northwestern Oklahoma, with K-Line Container.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including "48" on left and "Husky-Stack" trade name on right. Moderate to heavy weathering including reporting marks completely obscured. K-Line Container is red with white lettering including roadname in center and Christmas Tree stencil on right. Approximate Time Period: 2000 to present. Previous Releases: As Catalog Number 540 00 08x, Road Numbers 210110 and 210152, March 2009; then as Weathered Releases 540 44 081, Road Number 210110, March 2010 and 540 44 082, Road Number 2101xx (partially obscured), September 2010.



995 02 017, \$N/A

**Reporting Marks:** None (will be "CN ----" in website listings).

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Youngstown Doors, Canadian National.**

Brown with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and "wet noodle" herald on right. Light to moderate weathering; patch panels over reporting marks and half of dimensional data. Simulated interior pipe load included. Approximate Time Period: 1965 (renumber date) to early 1980s, or no later than the year 2000. Previous Releases (unweathered): Catalog Number 506 00 28x, Road Numbers 551009 and 551050, March 2014.



**995 02 018, \$N/A**

**Reporting Marks: CSXT 2254xx (Road Number partially obscured).**

**Two Bay PS-2 Covered Hopper, CSX Transportation.**

Off-white with black lettering including reporting marks on left and CSX monogram on right. Small red and yellow "Ease Up!" advisories at top left and top right. Moderate to heavy weathering and white Christmas Tree stencil in center. Approximate Time Period: late 1980s or early 1990s to present. Previous Release (unweathered): Catalog Number 531 00 200, Road Number 225492, July 2012.

The three Z Scale Promotional Weathered Releases seem to me to be a bit more challenging than the five N Scale items. First, since there was no roadname on the Husky-Stack and the reporting marks were completely "knocked out," I had to comb through the archives to find the source car. Calling 995 02 016 "Northwestern Oklahoma" is a bit of a stretch, I'll admit. Second, the CN boxcar didn't come with a load in its "clean" version, and does this time, although I can't tell you exactly how that long pipe was actually loaded into the car! (Open real wide now...) I suspect but haven't confirmed that if you close one of those double doors, you'll find the Christmas Tree stencil behind it, in white of course to match the other seven releases. The CSXT PS-2 was actually the easiest of all, except that the weathering is sufficiently heavy to make what started as an off-white (or is it beige?) car look rather yellowed. I guess you wouldn't be able to see the Christmas Tree without that heavy weathering behind it.

Considering that, generally speaking, the quantity of Z Scale runs is generally lower than that of N Scale runs, I think that these three special items are probably quite few in number. I don't think it will be long before we see a few of them show up in the aftermarket... and that might be quite interesting.

*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 December 15.*



**548 44 030, \$29.95**

**Reporting Marks: NYMX --- (road number patched out).**

**51 Foot Mechanical Refrigerator Car, Rivet Side, New York Central.**

Yellow sides with blue band. Aluminum roof and ends, black underframe. White lettering in blue band including reporting marks on left and "Mechanical Refrigerator" on right. Blue dimensional data on right. Blue and white "Water Level" "Type 4" herald on right above blue band. Light weathering and bright yellow patch panel covering road number and dimensional data on left. Approximate Time Period: 1956 (build date) to early 1970s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 1025 and 1049, February 2014. Note: It's possible but not confirmed both previously released road numbers were utilized for this release.

Another “knocked out” road number, another complaint from me... Should you want to put a road number back on this car, your choices would at first glance be from 1000 to 1099, but as noted in the February 2014 UMTRR, I’m not sure that all 100 possible cars were actually built. A “for sure” group would be 1000 to 1039, and a mostly likely set would be 1000 to 1049. This confusion comes from the conflict of various sources. The ORER for January 1959 shows under the Merchants Despatch Transit Corporation listing fifty cars, but even it isn’t accurate one hundred percent of the time. The “strictly speaking” ATP ends with the Penn Central’s removal of the uncommon New York Central “water level” herald.

**Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS:** In addition to the below announcements, Runner Pack #72 (994 00 072, \$64.95), four New York Central Two Bay Ribside Open Hoppers with loads, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the July 2014 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 534 51 050, 837965; 534 52 050, 837987; 534 53 050, 838329; 534 54 050, 838350. These are the first through fourth road numbers for this car, which hasn’t been previously released in Z Scale.



*The following items are in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is May 2015. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release of these items in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close December 31.*



**Scheduled May 2015 Release:**

**994 00 078, \$124.95**

**Quantity five of Husky Stack Well Cars, APL (American President Lines). Reporting Marks: APLX 4837 (Units A through E).**

Blue with white lettering including APL “eagle” logo on all cars and reporting marks on Units A and B. Approximate Time Period: 1995 to 2000.

Type “APLX 4837” into my usual search engine and what comes up first? A July 2007 document sent to the Surface Transportation Board which referenced a “Memorandum of Car Renumbering.”

The cars in question were, if I’m reading this right, covering 78 double-stack container cars numbered BRAN 4700 to 4704, etc. etc. and 4829, which were formerly numbered APLX with the same numbers. Does that mean that the Approximate Time Period ended in 2007, or before 2007, for this car? Well, it’s a start.

I happen to have in the Research Accumulation the July 2007 ORER, in which there is a listing for Brandon Railroad LLC, reporting marks BRAN. All 1858 cars in their roster at that time were multi-unit well cars. And among these was BRAN 4837, part of the series 4800 to



4874 which had 73 total cars. The “inside length” was 48 feet, which refers to the size of any one of the five wells, but the “outside length” was 304 feet 6 inches, referencing all five units strung together. The Gross Rail Weight was 801,000 or 802,000 pounds depending on the individual car. Considering the length of all of these cars, I wonder if they were all to be returned to Brandon Railroad LLC, they’d all fit on the line’s trackage, a mere 17.3 miles. But I digress...

The reporting marks APLX were still in the July 2007 ORER, and were registered to “APL Land Transport Services Inc.” but were tagged with the dreaded star denoting “cars bearing these marks are not registered in this issue of the ORER.” Which means they might have had cars, or might not have had cars. I hate when that happens.

However, there is a listing for APL Land Transport Services in the April 1995 Equipment Register, in which there were 75 FCA Classification “Flat” cars numbered 4800 to 4874. This is the first ORER in which I pick up a listing – there’s no APLX in the previous ORER I own, July 1992. Seventy-four of these remained in service as of April 1999. Just nine months later in January 2000, just eight were left... but there is no corresponding entry for Brandon Railroad, which had no cars at all according to its ORER entry. What happened to the cars? Ah, the mysteries of research... at any rate, it appears that an ATP of 1995 to 2000 is about it for these cars with the APLX reporting marks.

The site RRPictureArchives.net confirms that the BRAN cars were ex-APLX cars, and shows plenty of image examples, including BRAN 4837A as found in 2006 with restenciled reporting marks (not the roadnumber though) and patching over the APL “Eagle” logo and perhaps other identifying data. The same site has an example of the APL paint scheme on sister “car” APLX 4828, all five units of it in fact, as found in 1998.

There major delta between prototype and model is possible to fix: the real APLX 4837 was a five-unit set, not five individual cars. On Trainboard.com in the Z Scale section there is a guide on how to replace couplers with drawbars and turn those five cars into one set. I “bumped” that thread, originally posted in 2011, so it should be easy to locate. I’m pretty sure the right sequence of units is B, C, D, E, A; or A, E, D, C, B if looking from the other side.



***Scheduled May 2015 Release:***

**994 00 079, \$69.95**

**Quantity four of 33 Foot Steel Two Bay Hoppers, Offset Side, Flat Ends, Great Northern.**

**Reporting Marks: GN 73215, 73230, 73282, 73327.**

Blue with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and outline goat herald on right. Small white simulated reflective stripes along bottom of side. Simulated coal loads included. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1967 to early 1980s. Previous Releases: None. Catalog Numbers will be provided upon release. Preliminary artwork is shown for illustration purposes and is subject to change.

Though a new paint scheme, it's on a series of prototype cars that has already been covered in these bytes. In June 2012 MTL released Catalog Numbers 533 00 04x with road numbers 73237 and 73363, which were brown with white lettering and carried the "side facing goat" herald with the "Great Northern Railway" legend. This Runner Pack shows the cars, built back in 1931 by the Standard Steel Car Company, in the last of the Great Northern paint schemes prior to the Burlington Northern merger. The ATP isn't any earlier than 1967 when this "big sky blue" was introduced, but I hasten to add that the "outline goat" was also painted on all black Great Northern cars of this type—probably a fair bit more practical a color for open hoppers! As noted in 2012, the real car differs in size, rivets and seams from the MTL 534 body style.

The January 1967 ORER showed the series 73200 to 73369, which consisted of 480 of the possible 500 cars at the time. They were your basic "Hopper, Steel" with AAR Designation HM. The inside length was 34 feet 9 inches, inside width 10 feet 1 inch, inside height 7 feet 7 inches, outside length 36 feet, extreme height 10 feet 9 inches, and capacity 2160 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. In the April 1970 ORER for the Burlington Northern listing, we find quite the healthy quantity of 465 cars still remaining in this GN series. We're still at 376 cars in April 1976, later than I would have expected for cars built in 1931. By April 1981, the next Equipment Register I have, that's down to only 81 cars; but then again, they were fifty years old at that point. They're all gone by April 1984.

**Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:** No releases this month.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** An MTL print advertisement in N Scale Railroading formally announces what most of us have already known: the next in the Heavyweight Passenger Car body styles will be a 70 foot baggage car. Based on the Erie Railroad's Class C-18 prototype built by Standard Steel Car Company in 1928, this car should also be "close enough" for other paint schemes as well. Features include a newly tooled underframe, roof and six-wheel trucks, and two different size doors, six and eight feet wide respectively. Delivery is "Spring 2015" which, yes, is a rather wide range. Though other baggage cars have been done in N Scale, this one is different. N Scale Railroading proprietor (and UMTRR Gang Member) Kirk Reddie notes that this car was likely to be carrying mail and express packages as baggage.

The just-released Soo Line F7 is already part of a Z Scale Train Set: Catalog x is \$y. In N Scale, there's a pair of Army Bulldozer loads (499 43 917, \$9.95). To expand your circus or carnival display, perhaps, MTL now has in N Scale undecorated closed wagons (470 00 000, \$19.95) and cage wagons (471 00 000, \$19.95).

**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** There is just one Z Scale item which has left the building: the Weathered Chesapeake & Ohio open hopper (533 44 070, January). So moving quickly to N Scale, the second number of the Santa Fe car of the 60 foot double door boxcar is out of stock (122 00 062, December 2013), with the first number already gone. Both the 2011 and 2012 Holiday Cars, featuring Micro-Mouse, are gone (101 00 720, November 2012 and 101 00 730, October 2013 respectively). October's GATX general service tank car has rolled on (110 00

170), as has the TTX 89 foot flat car with Stryker load (071 00 120, March). Tank Car Series #6, for Skelly Oil, is out of gas (065 00 780, March). The fourth number of the Ringling Brothers 50 foot flat car has left town (045 00 404, May 2012). Speaking of fours, there are five of them in road number the Soo Line reprint boxcar (020 00 900, July) but they've all been discontinued. Finally, the only Weathered Release to be outta here this time around is the CN "Zombies" boxcar (027 44 410, September).

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** I have the official catalog and road numbers for the Z Scale Soo Line Christmas Two-Pack. They are: 511 55 180, 15753, which is the car with the Christmas artwork, and 511 56 180, 15822, which is the weathered only car. Neither of these road numbers were previously released, which means we can confirm that the components of Runner Pack #55 were not used here.

**OOPS PATROL:** Another in the long running though not particularly popular Copy and Paste Follies: The road numbers of last month's Z Scale Runner Pack #71, the C&NW Boxcars, are actually 155314, 155333, 155350, and 155393, not what I had which was—you guessed it—a copy and paste from the N Scale Runner Pack #98. Meanwhile, I called the lettering on the PRR Diner (146 00 050) "delux" gold when it's probably "dulux" gold. At least I'm consistently inconsistent on that point...

**JUST ENOUGH ROOM LEFT TO SAY:** Have a festive and safe Holiday Season, whatever and however you are celebrating. And please remember those who might not be able to enjoy this time of year as much as they might like. Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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