



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report Issue #231 – March, 2016

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Hello again everyone! MTL delivers a surprise, at least to this reviewer, by splitting the N and Z Scale Per Diem Series, offering different releases in 1:160 and 1:220 proportions. We'll check that out, and everything else, starting right now...

N SCALE NEW RELEASES:



030 00 260, \$27.95

Reporting Marks: SERA 5009.

50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Double Door, Sierra Railroad.

#2 in the MTL N Scale Per Diem Boxcar Series.

White with orange side sill and single orange stripe across car near bottom. Mostly orange lettering including herald and reporting marks on left. Double panel consolidated stencils and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" at lower right. Approximate Time Period: 1979 ("new" date on car) to 1985 or 1986.

The bingo, or exact match, for this car wasn't hard to find: it's a November 1980 photo over on RRPictureArchives.net. A key spotting feature of x-post double door cars is whether they are centered on the car or offset. On the 5009, they're offset, which aligns with the MTL 030 body style. The side sill is good and so are the number of posts either side of the door (four and seven, respectively). A shot of sister car 5036 shows the builder, FMC, and the new date in 1979, along with the verbiage to the right of the door "Leased from Brae Corporation."

Before covering the Sierra Railroad itself, let's check the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for July 1980. The series 5000 to 5049 of fifty cars was exactly one-third of its fleet at the time. The cars were described as "Box, Steel, Nailable Steel Floors, Cushion Underframe, Offset Double Doors" with AAR Designation XM. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 7 inches, outside length 57 feet 3 inches, extreme height 14 feet 10 inches, door opening 16 feet, and capacity 5077 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds. These cars left the Sierra Railroad roster sometime between the ORERs of April 1985 and October 1986, so again we have a pretty tight end of the Approximate Time Period.

Going back to that July 1980 ORER, though, there's a fun fact in the header: "Locomotives (diesel-electric, 3; oil burning, 2), total, 5." Those oil-burners—steam locomotives—were television and movie stars. The railroad had the foresight to not let go of these steamers when they dieselized in 1955. Their #3, a 4-6-0, appeared in features including **High Noon** and **Back to the Future Part III**, as well as the TV Series **Petticoat Junction** and **Wild Wild**

West. It was completely restored and placed back in operation in 2010 thanks to the efforts of many including actor/director Clint Eastwood.

The #3 resides at the Railtown 1897 State Historic Park in Jamestown, California, the direct successor to the “Railtown 1897” that’s part of the herald on the boxcar. The Sierra Railway and Railtown are now units of the California Park System. However, much of the trackage of the original Sierra Railroad from Oakdale to Tolumne remains in operation for freight service under the auspices of a separate corporation, the Sierra Industrial Group. The 1897 in “Railtown 1897” is a reference to the founding of the original railroad in that year.



085 00 080, \$24.95

Reporting Marks: PRR 250000.

33 Foot Panel Side Hopper, Flat Ends, Pennsylvania Railroad.

Black with white lettering including roadname and road number on left and circle keystone

on right. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: 1935 to 1951.

Peter Vanvliet’s site “Peter’s Model Railroading” (www.pmrr.org) provides a nice summary of this unique car. It was originally a GLa hopper which had a panel side replacement and height increased by eight inches, all to augment its capacity. “The earliest known photo is when the car was in the Altoona shops in February 1935, and it appears to have been removed from the roster in July 1951.” And there’s your Approximate Time Period as well. Vanvliet scanned and posted a photo of the car, possibly that earliest known photo, in fact. He adds that the book Pennsylvania Railroad Steel Hopper Cars includes a full description of the car with two photos.

Meanwhile, “Rob’s Pennsy Page” (pr.railfan.net) has a photo of this car with a service date of April 1941, along with a drawing. Reference is made to the Hagley Museum’s collection of online images, which includes an end view of this car. There’s a delta between the prototype, which had a vertical brake staff, and the 085 body style, which has a horizontal brake wheel mount. The Pennsy’s own 2D-F8 trucks are reasonably close to but not exactly like the Bettendorf trucks MTL supplies with the car.

A single ORER lookup should do. The January 1943 issue is handy, so it’ll play. We already know that the car was its own series. The inside length was 35 feet even, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, outside length 32 feet 3 inches, height to top of sides 10 feet 8 inches, extreme height 11 feet (counting the brake wheel), and capacity 1973 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The GLa hopper on which the prototype was based is a bit smaller than the general hopper body on which Micro-Trains bases its cars; the degree to which this makes this car a “stand in” I’ll leave up to the modeler. The idea of a plain black and white hopper being a unique car is certainly rather unusual, but it’s accurate.



111 00 180, \$44.95

Reporting Marks: TTGX 255795.

89 Foot Tri-Level Closed Autorack, Trailer Train/Baltimore & Ohio-Chessie System.

Flat car is yellow with white reporting marks on black panel on left, black "TT" in center and white "Trailer Train" on black panel on right. Rack is brighter yellow with aluminum roof and black lettering. Blue "B&O" on panel on left, and Chessie System herald on panel on right. Approximate Time Period: 1985 (based on road number) through the rest of the 1980s at least. MTL notes that the image is of a pre-production version of this release, however the actual product looks about the same to me.

The bingo for this car is on Page 46 of the **Chessie System Color Guide to Freight Equipment**. TTGX 255795 was lensed in Point of Rocks, Maryland, a famous location on the Baltimore and Ohio, in 1985. The slightly angled view reveals a delta between prototype and model. The end doors on the real car were the "RAVE" (Rack Anti-Vandalism Enclosure) door which resembles a picket fence, while the MTL 111 body style has the more recent two-panel door.

It's also noted by **Color Guide** author Randall K. Fields that "the racks and the platforms were not 'color-coordinated.'" The flat car was Trailer Train's yellow and the racking was Chessie's "Signal Yellow" – definitely not the same shades. MTL captures this distinction with its model.

Also noticeable in the photo, though, is that the car was actually a bi-level auto rack; the vehicles under all of that protection are just visible. According to the Wikipedia page on autoracks, the TTGX reporting marks were used from 1977 onward to designate fully enclosed bi-level cars. However, the road number 255795 doesn't appear in the ORERs I have until the January 1985 issue. Up until the April 1984 Register, all of the TTGX cars are numbered in the 900000s. Surprise! We have a "strictly speaking" ATP here. Anyway, the car is part of the general series TTGX 253886 to 256187, which consists of four subsets totaling 336 cars. The major dimensions are the same: inside length 89 feet 4 inches, outside length 93 feet 8 inches, extreme height 18 feet 10 inches, capacity 119,000 pounds. The groups differ in terms of either the extreme width or the height from rail at which that extreme width occurs, and how's that for specifics. (For the 255795 this appears to be 10 feet 3 inches and 5 feet 7 inches since it's not called out in any of the subsets, putting it in the main series.)

Going much farther than that in terms of an Approximate Time Period is chancy, since as we already know racking was shifted from car to car. Chessie yielded to CSX Transportation in

1986 but the “Ches-C” herald remained for some years after that, so with the application of Rule #1 (It’s Your Railroad), you should be good for a few years after that at least.



115 00 051 and 115 00 052, \$27.30 each
Reporting Marks: CP 305601 and 305603.
65 Foot 100 Ton Log Cars, CP Rail.

Action red with mostly white lettering including reporting marks in center and roadname right of center. Black and white double panel consolidated stencils on right. Simulated log loads included. Approximate Time Period: 1968 to 2012 for the cars, based

on online information, but see text regarding the paint scheme.

The online information for the Approximate Time Period is a highly trusted source in my opinion: Ian Cranstone’s “Canadian Freight Cars” site (www.nakina.net). Cranstone notes that the series of fifty skeleton flat cars, CP 305560-305609 was constructed by National Steel Car in 1968. The cars had eight permanent side stakes and four chain binders, and were in pole service. At 62 feet 9 inches inside length, they were in the ballpark of the MTL 115 body style. The ORER for April 1970 gives an inside width of 9 feet, inside height of 9 feet 8 inches, outside length of 65 feet 8 inches, extreme height of 14 feet 4 inches, and capacity of 170,000 pounds.

I would have thought that the 1968 build date would make the CP Rail paint “as delivered,” but not so! The Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery (canadianfreightcargallery.ca) has images of ten of the fifty cars, however only one of them, the 305601, is in Action Red. The other nine are in what I am pretty sure is black with white block lettering roadname and reporting marks dead center of the car. (This just screams “follow-on release” to me.) The two paint schemes were definitely contemporaneous; both the 305601 and sister car CP 305583 were caught on the same day, June 12, 2007, by prolific photographer Chris vanderHeide (who is also the site’s webmaster). All but one of the photos on the site were taken in Guelph or Campbellville, Ontario, both of which are relatively close to Toronto; with a possibly important exception taken in Sudbury, which is not relatively close to Toronto. I suspect that these cars were in captive service, which to me is a logical reason why so many of them appeared to escape the Action Red even though it could have been applied from the first year of the cars’ existence. The consolidated stencils would have been added later, and believe it or not, the 305601 wore at least one conspicuity stripe when photographed in 2007.

There are enough images out there, then, to afford a comparison of prototype to model. I wouldn’t have expected an exact match to the MTL 115 body style, but the alignment isn’t bad in my opinion. The National Steel Cars are even more of a “skeleton” than the Micro-Trains model, with smaller “platforms” under which the trucks sit. The details differ, and there’s one that caught my eye in a close-up shot of sister car CP 305583: an equipment trust plate referencing Bankers Trust Company, a Financial Fallen Flag, if you will (after a serious scandal, it was acquired by Germany’s Deutsche Bank in 1998). Lest anyone be concerned

about the log load, I'll point out that the Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery calls these "Skeleton Log / Pole Cars."



141 00 070, \$29.95

Car Name: Lake Scott (will be "SP Lake Scott" in website listings).
Heavyweight 10-1-2 Sleeping Car,
Southern Pacific (Pullman).

Green (called "Pullman Green" by MTL but more likely the "Olive Green" matching previous releases) with black roof, ends and underframe. Gold lettering including "Pullman" in center of letterboard and car name at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: as wide as 1925 to 1960, but probably a fair bit shorter.

A search on the phrase "Pullman Lake Scott" returns citations to vacation property in Michigan, so obviously your reviewer is going to have to work a little harder here... Fortunately there Tom Madden's extensive "Pullman Project" from which I can confirm the use of Plan 3585A, the 10-1-2 configuration and the use of Pullman's standard paint. The Pullman Project data file has a service date of August 1925 and the addition of air conditioning April 1935. Interestingly, it wasn't sold until December 1960 to Kaplan, which was probably a scrap dealer but I can't confirm that. A page on espee.railfan.net indicates that "prior to 1937 all SP passenger cars were heavyweight cars and almost all were painted dark olive green (similar to Pullman Green). Some cars retained this color into the early 1960s."

From there we go to Jerry Laboda's Passenger Car Photo Index (passcarphotos.info) where there is a bingo to the Lake Scott, in the "Pullman" pages, not the "Southern Pacific" pages. The photo Jerry cites is housed in the archives of the Canada Science and Technology Museum, a long way from where the Southern Pacific operated. I probably shouldn't speculate about the location of this black and white photo, but I will anyway: either Toronto (isn't that the Royal York Hotel in the background?) or Montreal (might that be the Canadian Pacific headquarters in the background?). The car is a good general match to the MTL 141 body style, though it appears that it was on different six-wheel trucks than Micro-Trains used and I see differences in the underframe detail. The window arrangement is good between prototype and model. The lettering arrangement is spot on; since it's a black and white photo I can't discern the exact shade of paint utilized.

Then things get muddled for me, even with the help of data points located on the site modelingthesp.com . The SP largely utilized Pullman-lettered sleepers until the 1948 divestiture of the Pullman fleet to various railroads. The SP's 10-1-2 cars were officially numbered 8150 to 8206 in company but rarely had these numbers applied. Definitive reference to the Espee's passenger fleet exists across a couple of books not in the UMTRR Research Accumulation, including **Southern Pacific Passenger Cars Volume 2: Sleepers and Baggage-Dorms**. The Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment for January 1953 has a list of "Lake" cars but "Lake Scott" isn't one of them.



147 00 130, \$29.95

Reporting Marks: NYC 8601.

**70 Foot Heavyweight Baggage Car,
New York Central.**

Pullman Green sides; black ends, roof,

underframe and details. White lettering including roadname in letterboard and reporting marks at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: See text.

When the New York Central Horse Car was released in January, there were two main observations which carry over to this Baggage Car. First, on its Pullman Green cars, the NYC used yellow or imitation gold lettering, not white. (Weathering will obscure this difference.) Second, there was already a group of 100 cars numbered 8600 to 8734 and called simply "Baggage" in the Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment for March 1943; we know this included the Horse Cars that came over from the Michigan Central. It's noted on the "Canada Southern" website that Pullman Green was utilized on head end cars starting in 1939 and that some cars were never repainted into anything else, which isn't much help in terms of our Approximate Time Period. Unlike with the Horse Car, on which the ATP was a wild guess anyway, I'm going with that pesky "see text" given the lettering color disparity.

With that, we turn to Mike Kmetz for some additional guest commentary which goes beyond just this single release in NYC lettering, for which many thanks:

"By far the most numerous NYC baggage cars were 60 feet long on 4-wheel trucks. They were everywhere on every railroad in the system. Every NYC passenger or Mail and Express train included one or more. They lasted well into the 1960s and there are photos of them in two-tone gray.

"There were a good number of 70 foot cars on 6-wheel trucks, too. It is possible some may have been painted two-tone gray, but I have not been able to find a photo of one. There is a photo of car #9016 which unfortunately suffered severe color shift (it looks blue). This car appears to be painted gray with aluminum gray (white) lettering with an upper stripe; however, it is not possible to discern a lighter gray band or lower stripe. Then there is an undated photo of car #9025 in a consist headed by lightning stripe diesels indicating it was likely in the 1950s. The right half of the car is seen and appears to be freshly painted in solid dark gray with aluminum gray lettering and numbering and no striping.

"By far, most 70 foot baggage cars were Pullman (or Pacemaker) green with imitation gold (yellow) lettering like the photo of car #9050. Some had been purpose built in the 1920s, typically by American Car and Foundry, but most were rebuilt from coaches in 1940, 1942 and 1948 in many different lot numbers. Alvin Stauffer's book **Thoroughbreds**, Pages 264-265, has a detailed photo of Baggage Car #318, one of twenty built by AC&F in 1928 for the Big Four. It later was renumbered NYC 8670 lot 2086 and lasted until 1968.

"So just how close is the MTL car to NYC prototypes? Most of the NYC 70 foot cars are depicted by the G-75 or G-77 mechanical drawings. These correspond closely to the MTL car

which is an Erie Railroad prototype. They both have the larger door (with 5 windows) to the left and smaller door (with 4 windows) to the right as viewed from either side. The only significant differences are the type of trucks and larger door being 8 foot and with double doors versus a 7 foot single door on the MTL car. It is close enough for me."

"I cannot find photo evidence of NYC 8601. There was a Lot 965 of 10 cars numbered 8600 to 8609, but they were built by AC&F in 1924, not Barney and Smith in 1910. The mechanical drawing for Lot 965 shows a 70 foot car with 6-wheel trucks."

I'll add to Mike's notes the data point from the "Canada Southern" website that NYC 8600 to 8609 were originally Big Four Route (CCC&StL) numbers 175 to 184. The drawing of Lot 965 is also on that site (www.canadasouthern.com). The overall timeframe given for these cars runs all the way to 1968, but again, the paint scheme might—or might not—limit that later boundary.



451 00 301 and 451 00 302, \$26.25 each

Road Numbers: 1003 and 1070.

45 Foot Trailers, Navajo Freight Lines.

Aluminum with red "Navajo" with black shadow on sides. "Navajo" in yellow and trailer number

on nose. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1970s. Note: I'm showing one example here since the difference between trailer numbers isn't really detectable. Micro-Trains announced that these items are not on dealer standing order.

I don't know all that much about freight cars compared to others I've met, I know far less about passenger cars, and I know just about nothing about trucking companies. This has once again been illustrated by my attempt to gather information about this pair of 45 foot trailers.

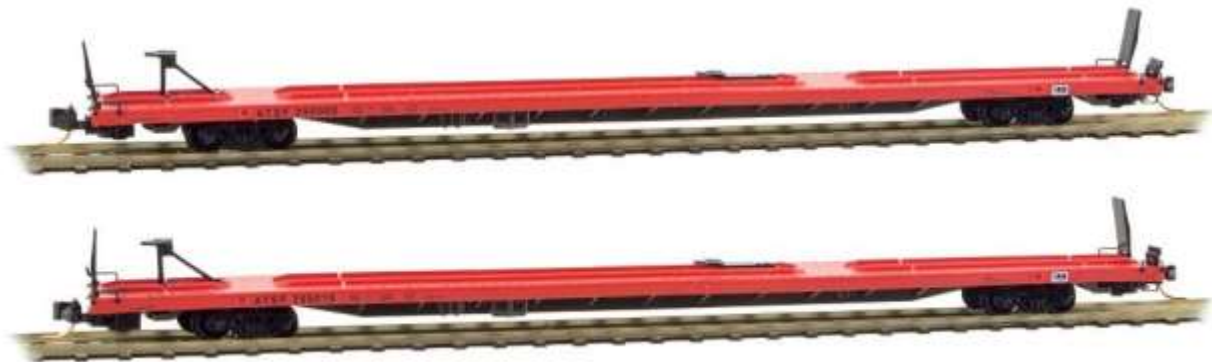
To begin with, I'm not sure that the Navajo Freight Lines for which this trailer is decorated is the same as the current Navajo Express Incorporated. The former was acquired by ABF (now part of ArcBest Corporation) in 1978. The latter is presently in operation with 48-state refrigerated trailer service, regional dry van service, and accompanying logistics... and a different depiction of a Navajo, said by at least one blogger to not be a Native American at all, but that's another story entirely.

The paint scheme with the depicted Native American dates back into the 1950s based on some photos I found online. But the prototype for the MTL 451 body style does not. One reference I found online from the Department of Transportation pegs the introduction of 45 foot trailers as being in 1970, so by stretching things just a bit from the sale of Navajo to ABF, I can call out the decade of the 1970s as a reasonable ATP guess.



In addition to the above, the **Royal American Shows Three-Pack (993 01 380, \$124.95)** has been released. It consists of three 70 foot Warren Circus Flat Cars (New Body Style) and four Circus Wagons. Individual catalog numbers and road numbers are: 139 51 010, 47; 139 52 010, 68; and 139 53 010, 73. (Road numbers will be prefaced with "RAS" in website listings.) Given the presence of double-panel consolidated stencils on these flat cars, the Approximate Time Period would begin in the early to mid-1970s, but removing these stencils would allow for an ATP for several decades before that. I suspect that the typical purchaser of this set won't be terribly worried about this detail.

N SCALE REPRINTS:



071 00 051 and 071 00 052, \$29.95 each.

Reporting Marks: ATSF 295005 and 295019.

89 Foot TOFC Flat Cars, Santa Fe (AT&SF).

Red with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left. Double panel consolidated stencils on far right. Approximate Time Period: 1977 (build date) to no later than 1998. Previous Release (as catalog number 71050): Road Number 295009, September 1997.

Given how long it's been since the first run of this car, and that the UMTRR was not nearly as comprehensive in its second year as it is here in its twentieth (which hopefully is a good thing!) this coverage is pretty much from scratch.

And so we head over to the QStation website to learn that the series ATSF 295000 to 295299 was built in 1977 (not 1997 as stated in the Micro-News) by Bethlehem Steel. These were the Santa Fe's Class FT-91. Jim Eager lensed 295281 at an unspecified location; the photo is copyrighted 1983. The car looks quite close to the MTL 071 body style. The 295281 did wear "Dual 45" lettering in black on a yellow panel, just a bit off dead center of the side of the car. The Helvetica typeface reporting marks are consistent with Santa Fe practices after 1982. The direct link is www.qstation.org/Intermodal_ATSF/Ft_Flat_Cars/ for this and other Jim Eager photos of Santa Fe TOFCs and trailers. And just to illustrate that these cars carried containers as well as trailers, there's ATSF 295222 in glorious black and white as of April 1994, over on the Fallen Flags site (www.rr-fallenflags.org).

The ORER for January 1978 shows the group at its full complement of 300 cars with a rather long description: "Flat, TOFC-COFC, Roller Bearings, Shock Control, No Bridge Plates, Load from or to Stations with Overhead Lifting Facilities Only, Axle Spacing 5 Feet 8 Inches, Truck Centers 66 Feet." That middle part of the verbiage implies a bit of restriction in terms of usefulness—or more correctly, it did at the time when not every facility had overhead lifting facilities. The dimensions were mostly typical: 89 foot 4 inch inside length, 9 foot inside width, 94 foot 8 inch outside length, 3 foot 9 inch height to top of sides and capacity 149,000 pounds. The outside length is a bit more than usual given the "Shock Control," also known as a cushion underframe. Making the model more accurate by changing to extended draft gear to simulate this would be an interesting project, and might it lead to body mounted couplers and the wide radius that might then be required?

Anyway, breezing through Equipment Registers from there, we find 293 cars in the October 1986 edition, with the description shortened to "Flat, TOFC, Shock Control" with the axle and truck spacing; then 291 cars as of October 1991; only 78 as of October 1996 and 66 in the July 1998 Register under the Burlington Northern Santa Fe listing. Between then and the ORER for April 1999 the entire series is off the roster, making for a pretty sharp cutoff of the ATP. There is one other consideration, though, and that's a possible repaint into yellow from the original orange. Page 66 of the **ATSF Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** shows TOFC flat 296530 in that yellow scheme with black lettering. Again, this is only speculation on my part which I've not tried to validate one way or the other... though that 296530 doesn't look too far off of the MTL 071 body style either...

Come to think of it, though, with a little bit of creative license and perhaps a small application of Rule #1 ("It's your railroad"), those Navajo trailers are a reasonable match for these flat cars. Of course, the Santa Fe's own trailers would be as well, including MTL's releases of the version in white with the Santa Fe "wing" herald and United States Flag (66100, June 2000) and in silver without the flag (67010, several releases).

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following was announced mid-month via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line," all on or about March 15.*



030 44 290, \$29.95

Reporting Marks: BPRR 16070.

50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Double Door, Buffalo and Pittsburgh Railroad.

Base car is brown with aluminum roof and mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and small reporting marks at top of doors. One side has extensive graffiti (MTL calls it "Shoe Gum" on its Facebook page). Approximate Time Period: at least 2012. Previous Releases: None.

If my personal observation is any indication, there is probably no practical limit to the number of graffitied x-post boxcars that MTL could release, and as long as they are making x-post boxcars for the Per Diem Series, why not? That "economies of scale" concept, you know. This month's entry is for the Buffalo and Pittsburgh Railroad, a unit of the Genesee and Wyoming shortline and regional road empire which operates over a major portion of what was once the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh as well as trackage from other lines. According to the Genesee and Wyoming's official website, the line covers 338 miles and reaches Erie, New Castle, DuBois and Bradford, Pennsylvania, as well as Salamanca and Buffalo, New York. But like the original BR&P, it doesn't quite make it into Pittsburgh.

The bingo for this car isn't provided by MTL this time, but it is easily found over on the website RRPictureArchives.net. The photo, complete with sneaker stuck in, well, something sticky, was taken in February 2012 so the ATP is at least then plus a before and after time period which might or might not extend all the way to the present. (Rule #1 applies.) I do note that conspicuity stripes were applied by then just as they are on the MTL version.

The actual car is not a match for the MTL 030 body style, as evidenced by the different ends, flatter roof and number of posts. Based on my check of other close road numbers such as the BPRR 16075, this is a Pacific Car and Foundry 5148 cubic foot boxcar. And by the way, the 16075 was also covered with graffiti in 2012. Besides a shot of that car which can also be found on RRPictureArchives.net, there are "before" and "after" images of the 16075 on the Fallen Flags site, from 2004 and 2012 respectively. This also helps us imagine what the non-graffiti side of the car looks like... think very plain.

The ORER for April 2013 shows BPRR 16075 in its own series of one car and confirms the 5148 cubic foot capacity. The other dimensions: inside length 50 feet 7 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 8 inches, outside length 56 feet 10 inches, extreme height 14 feet 8 inches, door opening 16 feet, and gross rail weight 220,000 pounds. Why the 16075 is in its own series is yet another Equipment Register mystery, since BPRR 16001 to 16070, 16072, 16073, 16074, 16076 to 16102, 16104, 16105 and 16106 to 16111 all have the same dimensions.



094 44 410, \$69.95

Reporting Marks: CNW 180142 and 180332.

CNW/Union Pacific Weathered Two-Pack.

Consists of two Three-bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers with Trough Hatches. Each car is yellow with extensive simulated rust. Mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left. Red, white and blue Union Pacific herald and black "Building America" slogan on left. Yellow simulated conspicuity stripes along bottom of car. Approximate

Time Period: at least 2010 and 2011. Previous Releases: None. Individual catalog numbers are 094 51 410 (the 180142) and 094 52 410 (the 180332).

RRPictureArchives.net provides the bingo photos for the 180142, caught in November 2010 in Massachusetts, and the 180332, found in Indiana in May 2011. In those views there is some relatively minor graffiti on the 180142 and some more significant "additional decoration" on the 180332. However, since the Union Pacific does not permit graffiti of any kind on models of any of its equipment, present or past, per its licensing agreement, you won't see it on these or any other commercially available model rolling stock. (Modeler additions? That's a different story. I won't tell.)

Heading over to the April 2013 ORER, we find the CNW series 180000 to 180499 with 292 cars of a possible 500, described as "Covered Hopper (Malt)." The cars have an outside length of 57 feet even, and have an extreme height of 15 feet 11 inches and capacity of 4600 cubic feet. This makes them slightly different from the MTL 094 body style which is based on a 4650 cubic foot car. There are six more cars in subsets that apparently no longer carry malt. The main series car count dropped to 285 in the October 2014 Register. As usual with weathered cars, though, the ATP could be just a bit longer or a lot longer past the photo date, since the UP could have seen fit to repaint these cars by now. Meanwhile, why, oh, why, can I not keep inside my brain that it was in 2005 that the Federal Railway Administration began to require conspicuity stripes on railroad equipment? (It's possibly along the same lines that I can't believe that 2005 was more than ten years ago.) I did want to check that to confirm that we remain OK with respect to the ATP.

Once again being curious, I went backwards to see when these CNW-lettered cars arrived. It's clearly before the introduction of the UP's "Building America" slogan in 2002, so these models are not in the "as delivered" paint. According to the **C&NW Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**, the group of five hundred malt hoppers was built in September and October 1977 by American Car and Foundry. A photo of CNW 180271 shows it in yellow paint not unlike what's probably under all that rust on the Micro-Trains cars. The Approximate Time Period therefore might not extend to the present given rules around how old freight cars could be before being retired from commercial service or rebuilt. I also checked the MTL database to confirm that the 094 series hasn't previously had a Chicago and North Western release.

993 01 420, \$239.95, Southern Pacific Weathered Cattle Car Set. Consists of the following:



987 51 030, FT-A Powered Diesel, St. Louis Southwestern (Cotton Belt). Road Number 917. "Black Widow" scheme of black with red sill stripe and silver nose with orange stripes. White lettering including "StL S-W" and road number at

center of side. Cotton Belt herald on nose. Yellow grab irons. Light weathering particularly on lower part of unit. Approximate Time Period: early to mid-1950s. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Road Numbers 923 and 913, November 2002, Catalog Numbers 992 00 031 and 032 (A+B sets).



035 52 250, Road Number 73456

and

035 53 250, Road Number 73463

and

035 54 250, Road Number 73522.



40 Foot Despatch Stock Cars, Southern Pacific.

Brown (including trucks) with white lettering including roadname and road number on left. Light weathering. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1947 into the decade of the 1950s (based on paint scheme). Previous Releases: None.



051 55 290, Road Number 643.

34 Foot Wood Sheathed Caboose, Straight

Side Cupola, Southern Pacific. Brown (including trucks) with black roof and white grab irons. White lettering including roadname and road number below cupola. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1946 into the 1950s, based on paint scheme. Previous Releases: Technically none, but George Hollwedel / Proto-N-Models has done a special run with this paint scheme in two separate two-packs, one each straight and slant cupola, with road numbers 205 and 667 on the straight cupola version.



I had been wondering why Micro-Trains elected to announce a Z Scale Runner Pack of Southern Pacific stock cars (see below) and not an N Scale counterpart. Wonder no more, George... and let's start there. Broken record alert: We already know that the MTL 035 body style is a model of a specific New York Central prototype which is not all that close to other

stock cars to one degree or another; it's just a matter of "how much" of a stand-in the car is for other roadnames. (The same is true of all other N Scale stock cars of which I'm aware.)

In this case, the road numbers MTL chose align with the SP's stock car class S-40-5 class, which was built by Ralston in 1916 and 1917 according to Lee Gautreaux on his website (URL www.railgoat.railfan.net) who in turn cites Tony Thompson's **Southern Pacific Freight Cars Volume I: Gondolas and Stock Cars**. Lee has a builder's photo of the SP 77000, and without going into gruesome detail, yes, the Micro-Trains car is a stand in. As delivered, the cars had reporting marks painted in white on a black square placard on the left, three boards tall and centered on the third board from the bottom (by "boards" I mean the horizontal slats that are attached to the steel framing). According to the Westerfield Models site, "Other than upgrading to AB brakes and revising the size of the placard board in the 1940s, the [S-40-5] cars ran into the 1960s virtually unchanged." That revised placard board is in a position similar to where Micro-Trains needs to place the roadname and road number on the 035 body style. In addition to the Westerfield craftsman kit, Red Caboose has done this particular car in HO Scale. Conveniently, the Red Caboose information calls out the roadname scheme as being circa 1947-1948.

Given that, we can check the ORER for July 1950. Remembering (fortunately!) that at the time the SP organized its Equipment Register entry by car type, there are a total of 2247 stock cars on the roster – and this is only "Lines West," not counting the Texas and New Orleans or other subsidiaries. Among those are SP 73349 to 73798, in three groups totaling 383 cars. The largest set, with 333 cars, is described as "Stock, Single Deck, Steel Superstructure" and had these dimensions: inside length, 36 feet 6 inches; inside height, 8 feet; outside length, 38 feet 2 inches; extreme height, 13 feet 8 inches (there's a vertical brake wheel – yes, another delta, broken record alert again); door opening, 5 feet; and capacity 2596 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds. There was an exception group of 22 cars with end lining resulting in a two inch shorter inside length, and a second set of 28 more exceptions which were converted to double deck stock cars. One of these was the 74363, one of the road numbers MTL used here.

Lee Gautreaux noted that he found none of these cars still in service as of 1963, and I can confirm that with the July '63 ORER. In fact, there are just 13 cars remaining in the January 1959 Equipment Register, so it seems to me that the decade of the 1950s is a better ATP.

As "stand-in-ish" as the stock cars are, the cabooses is not. Both the MTL 050 and 051 body styles are based on the "Harriman Common Standard" design that was utilized by both the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific. The 050 has the as-built slanted cupola while the 051 has the straight cupola which was present as a later modification on some cabooses. On the SP, these cabooses had Class C-30-1; they were built in 1917 and 1922. According to notes on the "Modeling the SP" page, most of which are from SP historian and author Tony Thompson, the spelled-out Southern Pacific roadname was used on cabooses starting about 1946. The stripes above and below the roadname were discontinued about 1952. It's also noted that the railroad took good care of its wood cabooses through at least 1960, and so repainting may have been fairly constant. Also noted is that black was the paint for the roof into the 1950s.

And that brings us to the front of this short train and an FT-A unit. I'll mostly reprint myself from my November 2002 (that long ago?!) coverage of the original two A-B sets in this paint scheme which Micro-Trains released. It cost just a bit over two and a half million dollars for the Cotton Belt's five ABBA sets of FT locomotives, purchased new in 1941 and 1942. That's about \$125,000 per unit, A or B. When first received from EMD, the Cotton Belt's FTs were painted in a gray and yellow scheme! It wasn't until the early 1950s that the "Black Widow" scheme was adopted, although the original and replacement schemes co-existed for a while. At first, the Black Widow included the "StL.S.W." identification for St. Louis Southwestern, the railroad official name. By about 1955 this was being replaced by "Cotton Belt" on the side of the A units, giving, strictly speaking, a potentially short ATP. The red and gray "bloody nose" scheme which followed the Black Widow does not seem to have made it to the SSW's FT's, which were traded in on GP20s in 1960 and 1961.

Prior to the paint change, there was a numbering change which moved the units from ABBA sets numbered with A-B-C-D suffixes (i.e. 900A,B,C,D) to individually numbered units, A's odd and B's even, i.e. 923 and 922. Yes, that would give the B a lower number than the A-- go figure-- but a shot of the 923 in the book **The Revolutionary Diesel** shows no number on the trailing B at all. The book also reports that the FTs changed over time, including a trade of drawbars for couplers in the mid-1950s. That means drawbars should be appropriate for the MTL models with the "StL.S.W." on the sides. For more online data on these units, check espee.railfan.net.

All in all, then, ignoring the significant "stand-in" status of the stock cars, we have a train that, while short, shares a common Approximate Time Period of the early 1950s. All of the paint schemes are plausible for that time period. The weathering is also appropriate to the period—not too much, as would be the case later in the SP's history, and the less said about that the better—and of course, no graffiti.



In addition to the above, the **Weathered Rock Train Four-Pack (993 05 300, \$139.95)** is scheduled to be available mid-month and should be at dealers as you read this. The individual item list for these Ortner Hoppers, which are all lettered for the Western Rail Road Company (WRRC), is: 125 51 009, Road Number 557; 125 52 019, Road Number 665; 125 53 029, Road Number 405; 125 54 039, Road Number 229.



Also, MTL has provided the detail information and official photo for last month's **UP/SP Weathered Train Set (993 01 270, \$274.95)**. Which is:

- 986 51 039, SW1500 Locomotive, UPY 1176 (former Southern Pacific)
- Plus these 50 foot exterior-post boxcars, single door...
- 025 52 079, WRWK 1701 (Warwick Railroad)
 - 025 53 089, AGR 8233 (Alabama and Gulf Coast)
 - 025 54 099, AERC 5129 (Albany and Eastern)
 - 025 55 109, HLMX 50110 (Helm Leasing)

I saw this set "live and in person" even before Micro-Trains posted the photo. I'm not sure "nice" is the right term here (!) but the set is very well-executed in my opinion.

N SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcement, **Runner Pack #114** (993 00 114, \$124.95), four Scclair Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers with Round Hatches, is scheduled to be available mid-month and should be at dealers as you read this. UMTRR coverage was in the October 2015 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 093 51 040, 46510; 093 52 040, 46515; 093 53 040, 46526; 093 54 040, 46545. These are the fourth through seventh road numbers for this car.



The following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close March 31.



Scheduled August 2016 Release:

993 00 119, \$109.95.

Reporting Marks: FEC 15065, 15093, 15107, 15124.

Quantity four of Ortner Hoppers, Florida East Coast.

Red with white lettering including very large reporting marks in center and "Don't Make Crossings Deadly!" warning left of reporting marks. White on black consolidated stencils below last digit of road number on right. Approximate Time

Period: no earlier than 1989 to at least 2010 (based on paint scheme). Previous Releases: Road Number 15178, January 2005; Road Number 15088, June 2005. Individual catalog numbers are expected to be 125 5x 020.

Amazingly given my lousy filing system, I was able to retrieve an overview of the FEC Ortner hoppers by John Sykes which was initially provided via UMTRR Gang Member Jon Hollahan... back in January 2005! Sykes cautioned up front that his article was no more than "quickly assembled from available sources" but it's more than adequate for our needs.

The Florida East Coast had already purchased 100 of these type of cars in 1972, and went back to Ortner Freight Car and then its successor Trinity Industries for one thousand more between 1979 and 1989. The December 1979 order of 300 cars was numbered 15000 to 15299 and includes the road numbers MTL has selected for the Runner Pack. When delivered, these had very large reporting marks, but in yellow. MTL did that version as a single car release in January 2007, Catalog Number 125 00 060, Road Number 15300.

The ten panel configuration of the MTL model appears to be correct for this number series. Sykes notes that the AAR Classification in the ORER changed from "HT" to "HTS" with the delivery of this 200 car group. As long as we're on that stuff, let's hit the ORER for July 1980 for a few dimensions: inside length 31 feet 3 inches, inside width 9 feet 10 inches, outside length 43 feet 10 inches, extreme height 12 feet 5 inches, capacity 2300 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds.

According to Sykes, sometime after the final set of 200 cars arrived in 1989, "FEC started repainting the cars red with white billboard reporting marks and road numbers. Also, in this same time frame, most of these repaints received the Operation Life Saver deaths-head/crossing gate logo on them." He noted that "currently" - which would have been around 2005, remember-- "it appears that the Ortner cars are being repainted (if not rebuilt) again with "standard" AAR reporting marks and road numbers (e.g., small letters/numbers positioned on the lower left side of each car), without the 'billboard' lettering/numbering." That of course sets up some guesswork on the ATP, as in, can we guess when the last car was repainted with small white reporting marks? If repainted at all, of course.

As of the January 2006 Register, 297 of the original 300 cars were still in service, not bad considering the beating this type of car takes. And 101 were reported still on the roster as of the October 2014 ORER, the latest available in the Research Accumulation.

Forty-three of the three hundred Ortner hoppers in the 15000 to 15299 group are represented with photos on RRPictureArchives.net alone. Even I'm not crazy enough to go through all of those images! None of the Runner Pack road numbers are hits in that list, though. I did catch FEC 15231, still with the large lettering and Operation Lifesaver logo, in a train that looked to otherwise have cars with the plain reporting marks-only scheme. That exception which proves the rule, so to speak, was found in March 2012, so I think we can call the ATP at 2010—at least.

Just for one more bit of variety, check out FEC 15269 as of 2006 on the same site—upside down, without trucks, on a flatcar with nine other wrecked hoppers! They were on their way to heavy repairs in Dothan, Alabama, and then, we presume, back to work.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



139 00 240, \$32.95

Ringling Brothers Heavyweight Series #7, 70 Foot Circus Flat Car with "Octopus" Wagon.

Red with yellow road number (216) outlined in black at left and right.

Yellow lettering outlined in black in blue panel at center: "Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey."

John Robinson's "Sideshow World" website (www.sideshowworld.com) has at least two photos of an exhibit "Octopus / Devil of the Seas / Terror of all Seagoing Men," but it's not clear whether this was part of the Ringling Brothers sideshow. Let me back up, though: the Sideshow was a secondary attraction apart from the main circus, which usually consisted of from one to ten "acts." The sideshow has largely disappeared though it's not completely gone; one still extant is the "Coney Island Circus Sideshow" which is scheduled to run at its namesake location in Brooklyn, New York from March through September of this year.

As for that "Terror of all Seagoing Men" part, a sideboard in one photo reads "See Mother Octopus and her Babies." Kind of a contradiction there. The National Geographic website has a short description of the common octopus, noting that "the most striking characteristic of the octopus is the wide array of techniques it uses to avoid or thwart attackers." Not exactly a Devil of the Sea! While there is a Giant Pacific Octopus that can grow to 30 feet in size, most of these creatures are far smaller. They're considered to be the most intelligent of all invertebrates.

The following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close March 31.



Scheduled August 2016 Release:

993 01 430, \$239.95.

Napa Valley Wine Train Set.

Expected to consist of one FT-A powered diesel locomotive, two dining cars, one kitchen car and one lounge car. All components are painted in gold with green roof and maroon band. Locomotive has "Napa Valley Wine Train" in gold on maroon band. Passenger cars have "Napa Valley Wine Train" in red on letterboard, road numbers left and right, car name in red within gold oval, and Napa Valley Wine Train herald at one end (both ends on kitchen car). Artwork is preliminary and actual product may differ.

My first decision for this set was whether it belonged as a Regular Run or Special Edition. It could go either way, so call this an "arbitrary" choice.

Anyway, the Napa Valley Wine Train is certainly prototypical, and I would not be surprised to find that a non-trivial number of UMTRR Gang Members have actually taken this excursion. And wow, are there a lot of vineyards along this train's eighteen mile route from Napa, California up to St. Helena (making for a 36-mile round trip). As MTL notes, much of the equipment for the train was originally built for the Northern Pacific's "North Coast Limited" and "Atlantic Express" back in 1915, but other cars include a former Milwaukee Road "Hiawatha" vista dome car, the kitchen car which started as a Pullman in service with the Southern Pacific, and even a converted boxcar that provides constant power to the train. There are two observation cars, both from the NP and both retaining the original famous NP "yin-yang" herald. The entire train has been restored to the opulence harking back to the time of luxury rail travel of the first part of the Twentieth Century. At this writing, you might need to be a bit opulent yourself to ride this train, as fares start at \$209 per person including lunch, dinner and/or stops at one or two wineries along the way.

The forthcoming MTL set has a compromise in that it will utilize the FT-A locomotive, while the real operation has on its roster four ex-Canadian National FPA4 locomotives. (And maybe that does shade my designation toward "Special Edition" after all.) According to the artwork provided, the dining cars will use MTL's 145 series paired window coaches, and the lounge car will be on the 144 series 3-2 Heavyweight Observation. The kitchen car as depicted doesn't look like any of Micro-Trains' current passenger cars so we could be in for a pleasant surprise when this set is released. Considering that the real train has two lounge cars, one at each end, and is ten cars total, it wouldn't be out of the question to get two

complete sets to more closely simulate the actual train. (I was not compensated for this suggestion by either MTL or its dealer network!) Several online pages call out the complete roster including car names; the lounge cars, for example, are “Cabernet Sauvignon” and “Chardonnay.”

NARROW GAUGE (N_n3) RELEASES: No releases this month.

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



507 00 631 and 507 00 632, \$29.30 each.
Reporting Marks: UP 499045 and 499059.
50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Plug Door, Union Pacific.

Yellow/orange sides, aluminum roof, black ends. Black lettering including small roadname and reporting marks on left and “Be Specific- Ship Union Pacific” slogan on right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1950s (1955 build date given by MTL) to early 1960s.

When this car was released in N Scale in March 2005 (at right, Catalog 032 00 390, Road Number 499045, same as one of these Z Scale releases), a bit of, let us say, a discussion ensued as to whether these cars were yellow or more of an orange. I had leaned more toward yellow, but MTL clearly leaned more toward orange with this release!



On further review, namely of Page 18 of the **UP Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**, I have to concede that orange is more appropriate for this car series. The last car in the series, UP 499099, is pictured as of July 1955, the year it was built and painted in the scheme MTL utilized. Between the brown and the “Automated Railway” was this paint scheme for Union Pacific boxcars, at least those that were equipped with Cushioned Underframes according to the RPI website. The use of the small Union Pacific roadname apparently gave way rather quickly to the large two line roadname, if the photo references I’ve dug up are any indication. One of those references is on the same page of the **Color Guide**; UP 499030 as of May 1968. Regardless of color, one definite quibble on the model versus the prototype is that the side sill is straight, a detail that can be fixed if desired.

Also according to the **Color Guide**, these were the first insulated boxcars built by the railroad. As such, they received Class BI-50-1... but hold on there, as the photo of UP 499099

shows the class as B-50-45! How about that... a prototype “oops.” MTL faithfully reproduces that incorrect classification on this model.

I can get six years closer to the build date of this car than I could in 2005 thanks to the expanded Research Accumulation, via the January 1958 ORER. The series 499000 to 499099 carried AAR classification RBL (refrigerator, typical for insulated box cars) and description “Union Pacific Refrigerator, Steel, Plug Doors.” The inside length was 50 feet 1 inch, inside width 9 feet 3 inches, inside height 9 feet 7 inches, outside length 52 feet, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 7 feet 7 inches, capacity 4477 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. A notation showed this group with 9 Belt DF Loaders. This information differs from the January 1964 ORER which was my previous “best reference”; in that book these cars are combined with the next in sequence to yield the series 499000 to 499299, with a total of 295 cars.

In the April 1970 Register there were 282 cars in the group with the same number series. However, in the April 1976 ORER the cars had been redistributed into a series from 490000 to 499199 with 186 total cars and another series from 490200 to 490449, and the description changed to more or less “Refrigerator, Steel.” You'd have to be thinking roofwalk removal by this time in my estimation, and also very much the change in paint scheme. In fact, the April 1970 book is probably past the Approximate Time Period, and so for that matter may be the January 1964 book although I am giving the ATP that much of a span.



510 00 310, \$27.95

Reporting Marks: HSW 1036.

50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcar, Helena Southwestern Railroad.

#2 in the MTL Z Scale Per Diem Boxcar Series. Red with yellow stripe, yellow

doors, and aluminum roof. Black lettering including reporting marks on left. Yellow roadname on left. Double panel consolidated stencils and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection “dot” at lower right. Approximate Time Period: 1979 (build date on car) to about 1987.

And so much for the “please see the coverage of the N Scale release” loophole! Well, sort of, since there was an N Scale version of this car released back in September 2003. And I wrote quite a bit, which I will cheerfully “reprint” and update...

First up, let's note that we're not talking about Helena, Montana for this railroad, but Helena, Arkansas, a town about 65 miles south of Memphis on the Mississippi River. Counting West Helena, it's home to less than 20,000 people, but it's known around the music world as the location of the “King Biscuit Blues Fest.” (The 2016 edition, the 31st in the series, takes place in early October; see www.kingbiscuitfestival.com .) The local paper is the **Helena Daily World**.

Like many shortlines which leased rolling stock during the Incentive Per Diem period of the 1970s, the HSW had been in business long before it ever had its name on boxcars. Buried on Page 1202 of the November 1946 Official Guide to the Railways is its short citation. It operated "Restricted Freight Service" a distance of 196 miles from North Somerset, Louisiana to West Helena, Arkansas, via trackage rights on 192 of those 196 miles! Connection was with the Missouri Pacific, Missouri and Arkansas and Illinois Central, all at West Helena. I'm going to guess that the MP provided the trackage rights, but since I can't find North Somerset, Louisiana on any maps or on the web, I can't be sure.

I was able to tease out of the 'net a few other facts about the HSW, though: First, it once owned a Shay steam locomotive. Second, it was once owned by the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company. That fits the listing of a Chicago Office in the HSW's entry in the Official Guide. Third, it was sold in January 1984 to the American Box Company. Fourth, based on a Railroad Retirement Board document the line last operated in 1986. That leads me to the conclusion that this road was based on the lumber and/or paper businesses, or something related to wood. Any incremental information would be welcomed.

The prototype for this car was built by FMC, and the MTL 25000 series is based on the FMC Plate B 5077 cubic foot design, but the real cars were within the larger Plate C profile and a bit taller to enable a 5347 cubic foot capacity. (In fact there's a "Plate C" stencil on the model.) The difference is five scale inches, so it's up to the reader to decide whether that's an issue, especially in 1:220 proportion. The ORER for April 1981 shows the series 1001 to 1050 with AAR Classification XP and description "Box, Steel, End of Car Cushioning" with dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet 2 inches, outside length 57 feet 3 inches, extreme height 15 feet 6 inches, door opening 10 feet. All fifty cars were present and accounted for. The address for car hire and mileage reports was in San Francisco, consistent with the stencil "Leased from Brae Corporation" that appears on the model just right of the door. That's where repair reports were to be sent as well. In the January 1985 ORER, the group is split into two subseries based on the number and position of lading anchors—that's too esoteric even for me!-- and the total population has slipped one to 49. The July 1987 ORER shows the group back together again under one listing but it's of only 22 cars. And that's the last we hear of the HSW.

Back in 2003, long-time UMTRR Gang Member Joe Levitzky sent a reference to David Hoge's "Trains Through Arkansas" site (URL www.trainweb.org/arkansastrains) which at the time showed some very tired looking former HSW boxcars, largely in their as delivered paint, but restenciled for the Little Rock and Western, reporting marks LRWN. However, that specific page now "404s" out, though the rest of the site looks accessible. I did see 2010 and 2012 shots of a former HSW boxcar, still mostly in its original paint, restenciled for the Green Mountain Railway, reporting marks GMRC 7158.

Hey, what about a photo in the original paint scheme and reporting marks, George? Almost forgot... but there is exactly one on RRPictureArchives.net, of sister car HSW 1045. It was taken in May 1980 and shows the September 1979 build date and the FMC logo quite well.

In addition to the above, the **Baltimore and Ohio Passenger Cars** which were originally scheduled for mid-February release are now available... and so are their official photos, which we gladly provide here:



550 00 130, \$32.90
Lightweight Sleeper, "Opequon."



551 00 130, \$32.90
Lightweight Dome Car, Road Number 5551.



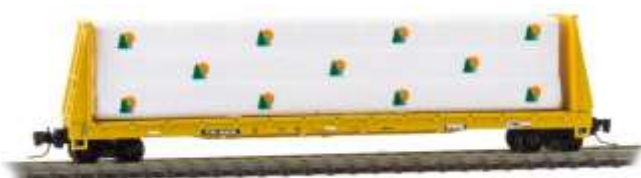
552 00 130, \$32.90
Lightweight Coach, Road Number 5506.



553 00 130, \$32.90
Lightweight Baggage Car, Road Number 763.

Meanwhile, however, Micro-Trains has announced that the **Canadian National Passenger Cars (55x 00 140)** originally scheduled for delivery this month have been delayed until April.

Z SCALE REPRINTS:



527 00 081 and 527 00 082, \$25.95 each.

Reporting Marks: TTPX 804630 and 804605.

60 Foot Bulkhead Flat Cars, TTX (Trailer Train).

Yellow with mostly black lettering. White reporting marks in black box on left. White TTX logo in black box on right. Black and white double panel consolidated stencils on far right. Simulated covered lumber load included. Approximate Time Period: 2001 (build date given by MTL) to present. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 804610 and 804605, February 2011.

It was in 1991 that Trailer Train became TTX. Given the 2001 build date of these cars given by MTL I expect that the paint scheme MTL used for these cars was "as delivered" with the

TTX logo. I checked the Fallen Flags site and found sister cars in this same paint scheme as late as March 2015.

The ORER for January 2002 shows the series TTPX 804400 to 804699 with all 300 possible cars, described simply as “Flat” with AAR Mechanical Designation “FB” and a Gross Rail Weight of 286,000 pounds. The inside length is 62 feet, a bit more than the MTL model but closer than I thought it would be (ouch). The outside length is 72 feet 7 inches; that counts the bulkheads and the distance over the couplers, which are extended on the prototype. The model does fall a bit short on that dimension. The extreme height is 15 feet 5 inches. In the October 2014 ORER the roster is down just four cars to 296 of the original 300.

George Elwood’s Fallen Flags website (www.rr-fallenflags.org) has a number of images of cars in this series including a bingo on the 804630 as of March 2015 with a pipe load. I can’t resist pointing out that there are a 2007 shots of sister car 804414 carrying pre-fabricated jail cells! (One of these is listed as TTPX 804386.) RailcarPhotos.com has a bingo on the previously run TTPX 804610, complete with pipe load and a fair amount of graffiti considering how little square footage there is on which scrawls can be spray-painted. Certainly the covered lumber loads MTL has supplied with these cars—a first for them on a regular release, I believe—are common for these cars as well.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following was announced mid-month via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail “Micro-Trains E-Line,” all on or about March 15.*



533 44 120, \$21.85

Road Number: 285602 (will be “SOU 285602” in website listings).

33 Foot Two Bay Open Hopper, Rib Sides, Southern Railway.

Brown with white lettering including large roadname and road number in center.

Simulated coal load included. Light weathering and white graffiti “Bad Road” and triangle symbol “Man with a gun” at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1950s into the 1960s as painted. Previous Releases (in unweathered form): Runner Pack #84 (994 00 084), October 2015, with Road Numbers 285539, 285544, 285595, and 285602. Note: It’s possible but not confirmed that any of the four Runner Pack cars could have been utilized for this Weathered Release.

The hobo culture was an integral part of the Great Depression and its aftermath in the United States, and it was bound up with railroads. You may have heard of the 1973 film **Emperor of the North**, starring Lee Marvin as “Number 1,” a hobo who matches wits, and violence, with “Shack,” a ruthless train conductor played by Ernest Borgnine. Directed by Robert Aldrich, the movie wasn’t much appreciated upon its release, but has become somewhat of a “cult classic” since then. It’s available on DVD. I saw it the old-fashioned way, in the movies, as part of a double feature with **The Last American Hero**. **Emperor of the North** may have

been rated PG, but it was still pretty intense for a then ten-year-old. Had the rating existed at the time, I think it would have garnered a PG-13.

There are actually two hobo icons presented by MTL on this minimally graffitied car. Based on online lookups of hobo terminology (yes, such pages are out there in quantity!) “Bad Road” is shorthand for “A train line rendered useless by some hobo’s bad action.” I don’t know if the entire Southern Railway System qualified! The triangle with what appears to be its hands raised came up multiple times as “Man with a gun” or more specifically “Man with a gun lives here.” Which means trouble for hobos!

Since freight cars generally moved around, and references to specific places didn’t, you’d be much more likely to find hobo symbols on telephone poles, fences and other fixed objects. That “man with a gun” drawing would be far more useful in front of or near the actual residence of the Man With A Gun, for example.

Back in May 2015 when I provided the pre-review of the Runner Pack which is the source for this Weathered Release, I noted that while the hoppers were constructed for the Southern Railway System’s subsidiary Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific in 1937, they were apparently originally painted black, not brown. Brown wasn’t the Southern’s hopper color until the mid-1950s. That would be mostly out of the Hobo Era, though I hasten to add that Hobo Conventions still take place around the country each year. Strictly speaking, you’ll need to either invoke Rule #1 or assume that chalk marks such as “Bad Road” lasted a rather long time.



994 05 130, \$239.95

Soo Line Weathered Train Set.

Consists of the following items, assuming that the components are consistent across all copies of the set:

- 980 Series Soo Line F7A Powered Diesel (originally released December 2014, Road Numbers 2201A and 2201B, Catalog Number 980 01 36x).
- 511 Series Soo Line Boxcar (originally released November 2015, Road Numbers 19180 and 19252, Catalog Number 511 00 25x).
- 527 Series Soo Line Bulkhead Flat Car with load (originally released June 2015, Road Numbers 5051 and 5069, Catalog Number 527 00 15x).
- 531 Series Conrail PS-2 Covered Hopper (originally released December 2015, Road Numbers 878290 and 878342, Catalog Number 531 00 04x).

- 530 Series 39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Union Tank Car Line (most recent previous release, Eight Pack #3, September 2013).
- 535 Series Maintenance of Way Caboose, Black with White Lettering.

All components are weathered. Soo Line boxcar and Conrail P-S Covered Hopper have graffiti obscuring reporting marks on at least one side. Note: Any of the previous releases (for example, any road number from the UTLX Tank Car Eight Pack) could have been utilized for this set, and I do expect that there will be some degree of variation with respect to the specific road numbers in any given copy. Individual catalog numbers will be added to the UMTRR Website when made available.

Well, this is a different approach to the announcement of a Weathered Set... show it in the box in which it's packed! Unfortunately, that makes things a bit too challenging for this reviewer in terms of describing the individual components, but we'll do the best we can. Reference to the "back issues" for the specific releases in unweathered form is encouraged.

I like to check on the plausibility of a common Approximate Time Period with any of these sets, and so I will. The F7s were around until about 1979 or 1980. The caboose is a "fill-in" scheme so no impact either way by my reckoning. A 1980 date at least makes possible the Conrail covered hopper and the Soo Line boxcar... although one could question whether the graffiti across the side of the Conrail PS-2 would have been appropriate at that time. On the other hand, the Union Tank Car Line tank car's ATP is more like the 1940s to the 1960s at best, and the Soo Line bulkhead flat car's prototype was built in 1984. While that means there's not really an contemporaneous Approximate Time Period for the parts of this set, there is also Rule #1.

Z SCALE RUNNER PACKS: In addition to the below announcement, **Runner Pack #89** (994 00 089, \$74.95), four Western Pacific 40 Foot Single Door Boxcars, is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the October 2015 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers for these are as follows: 500 51 080, 19504; 500 52 080, 19506; 500 53 080, 19512; 500 54 080, 19515. These are the second through fifth road numbers for this car.



The following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close March 31.



Scheduled August 2016 Release:

994 00 094, \$79.95.

Reporting Marks SP 73456, 73463, 73522, 73535.

Quantity four of Forty Foot Despatch Stock Cars, Southern Pacific.

Brown with white lettering including roadname and road number on left. Approximate Time Period: 1990s to mid-decade of the 2000s. Previous Releases: None. Individual Catalog Numbers (in the

520 series) for this Runner Pack will be provided upon release. Preliminary artwork shown; actual release may differ.

For this Runner Pack, please refer back the description of the N Scale version of these cars which are part of the Southern Pacific Weathered Cattle Car Set.

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: No releases this month.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: How have I missed for several months the announcement of N Scale 48 foot and 53 foot corrugated containers? Well, I have, but I'm fixing that. There is a general initial release projection of "Summer 2016" thus far, but no specifics to this point.

MTL has made available a set of three coal loads for their N Scale 33 foot hoppers of various styles (499 43 941, \$13.95). Most if not all of the loads offered so far have been in limited quantities for limited times; it would be useful to N Scalers, I think, that these be more generally available since there's any number of hoppers out there that could use them.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: There are just seven total items on the bye-bye board this month, the lowest number in quite a while. It's going to be tough to fit my usual set of clichés in this time! So, in N Scale, the first number of the Santa Fe gray on gray express scheme boxcar reprint is outta here (034 00 251, August 2015), the Ringling Brothers "Dragons" TOFC Flat and Trailer Two-Pack has left the building (064 00 150, July 2015), the Milwaukee Road paired window coach has departed the station (145 00 120, July 2013) and the Union Pacific Civil War Era Caboose (152 00 080, March 2015) has checked out. In Z Scale, the "30th Anniversary of Z Scale" boxcar (502 00 630, March 2015) is gone, and two cabooses bring up the rear of the sellouts: the Chicago & North Western (535 00 340, February 2012) and the Nose Art version (535 00 370, April 2014).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: There is at least one autorack out there in Burlington Northern paint, similar to January's MTL reprints (111 00 03x) since I saw it recently, rolling along the "West Shore" line not far from UMTRR HQ.

In case you don't have anything else to do, there is now a collection of several hundred builder's photos from American Car and Foundry available online. They are part of the John W. Barriger III National Library. The AC&F photos are at the following URL:
[flickr.com/photos/barrigerlibrary/sets/72157649155982802](https://www.flickr.com/photos/barrigerlibrary/sets/72157649155982802)

OOPS PATROL: With respect to the ATSF Five-Pack announced in February (993 01 410), Jack Haskey wrote in: "Wow, I've spotted what must be a typo! Do I win a prize? In the description of the SF cars: 'These cars had an inside length of 10 feet 6 inches.' Given the outside length was 40+ feet that's a lot of cushioning on the ends!" Well, actually, it's the inside width that was 10 feet 6 inches. And of course, the prize is an additional year's subscription... just remember, free and worth at least that much

FINALLY, UPDATES AND CORRECTIONS: And speaking of corrections, I've been getting them from faithful readers, going back far into the website tables, which tells me two things: first, I have some very sharp readers and website visitors, and second, someone other than I is actually using the website. So I suppose I'd better get moving on addressing these oopses and more importantly getting the 2016 tables and updates out there. With the "publication" of this issue, I'm officially three months behind... so until next time, you can guess what I will be doing! Meanwhile, you do the best you can.

Cheers,
George

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