

# UMTRR

## The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report

IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

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Hello again everyone... and I did close November's bytes by saying, be on the lookout for Black Friday over at the Micro-Trains website. That's what happened...

## BLACK FRIDAY WEEKEND CYBER SPECIAL

PICK ONE 'CYBER CAR' FOR EVERY \$100 DOLLARS YOU PURCHASE



**CYBER #1** - Florida East Coast



**CYBER #2** - ATSF



**CYBER #3** - Pennsylvania RR



**CYBER #4** - New York Central



**CYBER #5** - CP Rail



**CYBER #6** - Northern Pacific



**CYBER #7** - Pennsylvania RR



**CYBER #8** - CB&Q



**CYBER #9** - BC Rail

NOW THROUGH CYBER MONDAY

In a repeat of last year's special, each \$100 purchased on the MTL site allowed the buyer to select a weathered freight car. All of these were previous releases with at least part of the road number "knocked out" and with a small depiction of Santa Claus' face in white somewhere on the car side. Limited quantities were available. I doubt that those quantities were very large! Since these are all weathered versions of recently released "clean" cars with "knocked out" road numbers, I'll simply add them to the UMTRR website listings once I have the details from the folks in Talent.

With that, let's get to the news and views for this final month of 2017...

## N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



020 00 057, \$26.95

Reporting Marks: L&N 16576.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Type Door, Friendship Train (Louisville and Nashville).

Car #11 in the Friendship Train Series. Black with yellow band along bottom of side. Red, white and blue doors with "Friendship

Train" in white and blue. Multicolor "Vive La France" and "Viva L'Italia" to left and right of door in yellow band. Multicolor insignia at top left and multicolor flags of France, the USA and Italy at top right. White reporting marks on left on brown (boxcar red) rectangles. White phrase "From the hearts of the American people - food for our friends" above the "Viva L'Italia" banner on the right. Approximate Time Period: 1947.

Swap the reporting marks and red for black and you've basically got the same style paint scheme as Friendship Car #2, which was a New York Central car under all that special decoration. That car's image is at right for comparison purposes.



We go back to the Facebook page "Friendship Train of 1947" for the prototype photo of this car. It's the first car in a string in a shot dated November 13, 1947 and presumably at Ames, Iowa. Next to it is what I believe to be the New York Central boxcar, however the photo was taken at quite an oblique angle and the black and white print is more than a little washed out at this point. Even so, I can confirm the road number for the L&N car.

And with that, let's check the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for July 1950. The 16576 was part of a group of 1,793 steel boxcars numbered from 15000 to 16799. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3899 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. I'll also note that in the January 1945 ORER, the number series belonged to a set of 36 foot inside length steel underframe ventilated boxcars, so again, the car selected for the train was relatively new. That appears to have been a trend. It makes sense since it would be optimal to carry food donations in clean, undamaged cars. The apparent build date remains a bit too early to be a true PS-1 boxcar, however.



058 00 290, \$28.95

**Reporting Marks: HJH Co. 496.**

**36 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator, Truss Rod Underframe, Vertical Brake Staff, Heinz.**

#4 in the Heinz Series (pre-orders taken April 2017). Brown with black underframe and arch

bar trucks. Lettering is red outlined in white, consisting of very large "57" in center flanked by "Heinz" and "Varieties" either side and reporting marks at bottom right. White end markings. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1910s.

I didn't think I'd be returning to the booklet I cited last month, which is located in the online archives of Michigan State University. But it's there, and we'll answer the question of what the Heinz 57 Varieties were at the time that the brochure was printed. I noted last month that it wasn't dated, however, using a different route to the item, I now see a "circa 1908" reference. I expected that the company had well more than 57 Varieties by that time. I'll drag out Excel, do a bit of transcribing and be right back...

And here they are:

1	Baked Beans with Pork and Tomato Sauce	30	Pickled Walnuts
2	Baked Pork and Beans without Tomato Sauce, Boston Style	31	Queen Olives
3	Baked Beans in Tomato Sauce without Pork (Vegetarian)	32	Manzanilla Olives
4	Baked Red Kidney Beans	33	Stuffed Olives
5	Cream of Tomato Soup	34	Pure Olive Oil
6	Cream of Pea Soup	35	Tomato Ketchup
7	Cream of Celery Soup	36	Tomato Chutney
8	Mince Meat	37	Chili Sauce
9	Plum Pudding	38	Tomato Relish (Oyster Cocktail)
10	Cooked Sauer Kraut with Pork	39	Mushroom Ketchup
11	Peanut Butter	40	Walnut Ketchup
12	Spaghetti (A L'Italiane)	41	Mustard Ketchup
13	Fruit Preserves (Nine Versions)	42	Mustard Dressing
14	Fruit Jellies (Five Versions)	43	Pepper Sauce
15	Apple Butter	44	Mandalay Sauce
16	Peach Butter	45	Worcestershire Sauce
17	Plum Butter	46	Prepared Mustard
18	Grapefruit Marmalade	47	Powdered Mustard
19	Euchred Figs	48	India Relish
20	Cranberry Sauce	49	East Indian Chutney
21	Preserved Sweet Gherkins	50	Evaporated Horseradish
22	Preserved Sweet Mixed Pickles	51	Sweet Red Peppers (Spanish Pimientos)
23	Sour Gherkin Pickles	52	Pure Malt Vinegar
24	Sour Mixed Pickles	53	Pure Cider Vinegar
25	Chow Chow Pickle	54	White Pickling and Table Vinegar
26	Dill Pickles	55	Spiced Salad Vinegar
27	Euchred Pickle (Mixed and Gherkins)	56	Dill Vinegar
28	Pickled Onions (Sweet and Sour)	57	Tarragon Vinegar
29	Stuffed Mangoes		

It's hard to resist comment on some of these, but I will restrain myself! (Okay: #41!?) Note, however, that there are nine items in #13 (Cherry, Red Raspberry, Peach, Damson Plum, Strawberry, Pineapple, Black Raspberry, Blackberry, Mixed Fruit Preserves) and five Fruit Jellies listed under #14 (Currant, Grape, Quince, Crabapple, Elderberry). So that's really at least 69 Varieties, and last month I noted that Sweet and Sour Pickled Onions, #28, were two different things, so that's 70, and finally there are two Euchred Pickles, so that's 71.

The Clover House folks peg this car as Circa 1911, putting the ATP a couple of decades later than the first three cars in the series, and actually later than the circa 1908 printing of the brochure provided by the folks at Michigan State. By the way, if you'd like to peruse more from "The Alan and Shirley Bocker Silver Culinary Collection," please help yourself (pun not intended) at the URL [lib.msu.edu/exhibits/sliker/brandpieces.jsp?key=463](http://lib.msu.edu/exhibits/sliker/brandpieces.jsp?key=463) . I suspect I'll be coming back to this repository as the Heinz Series continues. Meanwhile, though, we still have nothing with respect to ORER data for these cars.



096 00 160, \$25.95 each.

**Reporting Marks: B&O 602904.**

**3 Bay High Side Covered Hopper,  
Baltimore and Ohio.**

Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left and small Capitol Dome herald on right.

Approximate Time Period: 1970 (build date given by MTL) into at least the 1990s.

The **B&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 53, has a near bingo on this car, with a mid-1981 photo of B&O 602904. The car has both an ACI Label and double-panel COTS stencils, so those may be details to add for 1980s-era modelers. As noted in MTL's car copy, this car was built in 1970 by Pullman-Standard, part of the short series 602900 to 602935. One detail that is not obvious from the Color Guide photo is the use of six round hatches instead of the usual trough hatches which are part of the 096 body style. Also of interest, and not something I'd expect other than as an aftermarket detail part, are large shock absorbers. The length of this car matched up with joints in non-welded rail to set up "harmonic roll" which led to derailments; the shock absorbers helped to dampen this action. I still think I would have preferred to step away from the tracks if one of these hundred ton cars came rocking along!

The ORER for October 1972 has the group of 36 cars with a capacity of 4427 cubic feet, inside length of 49 feet 9 inches, outside length 54 feet 5 inches, and extreme height of 15 feet. Given the mid-1981 photo date, I next went to the April 1981 Equipment Register where 35 cars remained on the roster. The car count was a total of 21 in the October 1991 book under the CSX Transportation roster. By then these cars could have been repainted into Chessie System colors, or might yet have been in their as-delivered gray. Eighteen cars in the B&O series were left as of October 1996 and seventeen in April 1999.

Amazingly, to me, anyway, five of these cars were still listed in the ORER for January 2011, making them among the last B&O lettered cars in the CSXT listing. I wonder if their unusual round hatches kept them in captive service or whether these cars went to company service, or even out of service, without anyone telling the ORER folks. At any rate, I think I'll be a bit more conservative with the Approximate Time Period, with the "at least" caveat.

Backing that up is a shot of B&O 602901, in badly worn Chessie paint, as of January 2010, and a view of B&O 602904, in somewhat less poor paint condition as of October 2009, both at Curtis Bay, Maryland. These images are on the Fallen Flags site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ) and the latter of them would make a very impressive future Weathered/Faded release for Micro-Trains. Perhaps they're already ahead of me on that. Rob Pisani found the 602903 and the 602922 in New Jersey in 2007 and 2006, both in worn-out Ches-C colors; they're over on the RailcarPhotos.com site.





**108 00 371 and 108 00 372, \$25.30 each**  
**Reporting Marks: BNSF 615546 and 615587.**  
**100 Ton Three-Bay Open Hoppers, BNSF**  
**(Burlington Northern Santa Fe).**

Brown (mineral red) with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and “wedge” or “swoosh” herald on right. White on black COTS stencil at bottom right. Yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes along bottom of side. Simulated coal load included. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 2005 (given herald and stripes) to as late as the present.

Let’s start with a bingo on the second of this virtual two-pack: on RRPictureArchives.net there’s a January 2013 image of BNSF 615587. Micro-Trains notes that it and the 615546 are part of the series 615521 to 651998. RRPictureArchives has a bunch of photos of cars in this group. Some of these are in black with the “wedge” or “swoosh” herald so that’s an immediate and easy possibility for MTL. (Note to Talent: BNSF 615908.) The lineage of these cars is also described in a few captions, for example BNSF 615762 was previously BN 551274 and before that SL-SF 88867, built in March 1978. Importantly to the ATP, it was repainted in January 2012 and it was photographed in July 2016.

The **Burlington Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 90, has a shot of BN 551103 in just reporting marks along with information that BN 551000 to 551520 was a consolidation of several BN groups of hoppers which were in turn taken from the Frisco-built series ranging in road numbers from 87800 to 88899. These cars were constructed between 1976 and 1978. The outside length of these cars is 48 feet 9 inches, extreme height 12 feet 4 inches and capacity 3433 cubic feet. The cars’ twelve panels (thirteen ribs) and three bays match the MTL 108 body style.

I’m still working on getting that more up-to-date edition of an ORER, so the October 2014 issue will have to do. At that time, there were 116 cars in the 615521 to 651998 series. Between that and the 2016 photos, I think a “to present” ATP will work here.

Back in July 2006, Micro-Trains released a three-bay hopper in what I called the “Disco Frisco” scheme (at right, Catalog Number 108 00 170). The road number on that car, 88470, aligns with the series from which these BNSF hoppers came, so perhaps this is a direct successor paint scheme for that very car.





180 00 060, \$27.60

Reporting Marks: RDG 19807.

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Sliding Superior Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Reading.

Green with yellow band which has large green roadname across car (including door).

Yellow reporting marks and dimensional data. White "Share in Freedom / Buy U.S. Savings Bonds" either side of door. Red, white and blue stylized eagle on door. Multicolor ACI Label below "Share," green on yellow "DF<sub>2</sub>" device below "in" and white on black double-panel COTS stencil at far right. Approximate Time Period: 1968 ("new" date on car) to mid-1980s.

If you are a little kid looking for Instant Gratification on a special event, possibly the **worst** gift you can receive is a Savings Bond. What do you mean, this doesn't mature for *years*?!? I'm only eight years old, why do I have to start planning for my future? (The preceding is based on actual events.)

Later in life, the advantages of Savings Bonds are a bit more, let us say, appropriate. Especially if one was prudent enough to purchase the ones that carried fixed interest rates; four percent was no big deal at the time, but after rates crashed for just about everything else, that four percent started to look pretty good. The Federal Government did change the yield to mirror prevailing rates of return back in 1995 (I checked) and so they became No Big Deal again.

The finer points of buying and holding Savings Bonds were not the point of this car, however. It was a rolling advertisement for the securities. The **Reading Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 85, includes a bingo for this car as of October 1977, a year-plus into Conrail's takeover of the Reading. This was one of one hundred class XMLg boxcars built by the railroad, ninety of which had DF<sub>2</sub> equipment as noted by Color Guide author Craig T. Bossler. Four consecutive cars, 19805 to 19808, have been documented as wearing the patriotic message. The other cars were also painted with the "billboard" Reading across the car. There are two deltas I see between prototype and model: the former has riveted sides and a straight side sill, while the 180 body style has welded sides and a graduated side sill. Online, there's a photo of the 19807 on the Conrail Historical Society website ([conrailphotos.thechrs.org](http://conrailphotos.thechrs.org)), then "Freight Cars," "Boxcars" and "50' Boxcars," the second page). It's noted there that it would be strange that while the Reading was closely associated with Philadelphia, this was the closest to a Bicentennial Boxcar that the railroad would get.

The ORER for October 1969 shows the series RDG 19800 to 19899 as "Box, Steel" with AAR Designation XL. The inside length was 50 feet 9 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 56 feet 7 inches, extreme height 14 feet 9 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 4980 cubic feet or 152,000 pounds. All 100 cars were in service at the time. An end note calls out the first ninety cars with 9 Belt DF-2 loaders, the rest with four bulkheads and all one hundred with cushion underframes. That would nominally call out the use of medium extended trucks with the MTL car. (I'd body mount the coupler boxes outboard of the frame to simulate this.)

The Conrail entry for April 1976 split the series by loaders versus bulkheads. We'll stick with that first set, of which 89 of the possible 90 were still in service, five with just "pallets" and another eight specifically with "36 pallets." By the April 1984 ORER that was down to 42, and it's possible that some, including the 19807, had the DF-2 equipment removed. Just one car remained in the October 1986 book, which is where I stopped looking. On the Conrail Historical Society site it's mentioned that the 19807 became CR 231456.



**182 00 030, \$28.80**

**Reporting Marks: SP 232648.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Sliding Youngstown Doors, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Southern Pacific.**

Brown (including trucks and couplers) with mostly white lettering including reporting

marks on left and large roadname on right. Yellow simulated reflective striping on bottom of doors. Multicolor ACI Label, white on black double-panel COTS stencils and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" on right. Simulated wood load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s, or strictly speaking, 1978 given U-1 dot, through mid-1980s.

Lee Gautreaux, through his "Railgoat" website ( [www.railgoat.railfan.net](http://www.railgoat.railfan.net) ), comes through with a very nice summary for our Approximate Time Period: "The Southern Pacific renumbered nearly 4000 existing 50 foot double door box cars into the 230xxx series from the early to the mid-1970s. All cars in the number series were vacated by the mid to late 1980s." Among these are the group SP 232137 to 232736, a mixture of 4982, 4899, 4885 and 4814 cubic foot cars, all with 110,000 pounds capacity and 16 foot doors.

The ORER for July 1974, however, shows that these were combination plug and sliding door boxcars at that time, not double door boxcars. Not to worry: by the April 1975 Register, every one of the 581 cars in the group was listed as "Box, Steel, Sliding Staggered Doors." The inside length of these cars was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 15 feet 10 inch (a two inch "door thing"? George? Really?), and capacity 4982 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. The entire series is down to a mere three cars as of the April 1984 ORER, just as Lee Gautreaux noted on his site.

The number series was vacated by these cars to be sure; a check of RRPictureArchives shows cars in the 232000s mostly being reclaimed Golden West Service x-post boxcars, so the "next generation" so to speak. The one exception on the site is SP 232623 which is clearly not going anywhere as of October 2006 at DeQueen, Arkansas, rusted, tagged and with almost looks like blue paint on the sills.

The wood load is certainly appropriate for cars of this type and specifically for the SP, which had plenty of this type of traffic originating from Oregon and Northern California. The coming of the Centerbeam flat car likely made this use of boxcars obsolete, which probably hastened their demise.



**182 00 040, \$28.80**

**Reporting Marks: SSW 10074.**

**50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Sliding Youngstown Doors, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Cotton Belt (St. Louis Southwestern).**

Brown (including trucks and couplers) with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname on right. Yellow simulated reflective striping on bottom of doors. Multicolor ACI Label, white on black double-panel COTS stencils and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" on right. Simulated "man on hay bale" load included. Approximate Time Period: 1973/1974, or strictly speaking, 1978 given U-1 dot, through early 1980s at most.

He's baaaaaaaaaaaaack! The Man on the Hay Bale, last seen inside the Northern Pacific double sheathed boxcar released in May 2014 (Catalog 042 00 140, Road Number 13325), has taken to the rails again. As before, Micro-Trains is being polite here; I'm sure the Railroad Police would be using another term to refer to this individual. (And it's not "passenger.")

Returning to Lee Gautreaux, and the "Railgoat" website, we find that the Cotton Belt series 10000 to 10299 was renumbered from the group SSW 47975 to 48274 during late 1973 and early 1974. There's a photo of the 10226 as of June 1976 on the site with the running board gone but the full ladder still in place. "Some [of] these cars received a second sliding door in place of the plug door," Gautreaux reported. Those cars were built by Pullman-Standard in 1960 and lettered with the "Blue Streak" herald and large Cotton Belt roadname. Aha! That series of combination door boxcars has already been represented by Kadee Micro-Trains three separate times, as Catalog Number 33060/033 00 060 with Road Numbers 48075, 48079 and 48071, in 1975, 1991 and 1998. (Alas, too early for me to have any digital images in the Research Accumulation.)

Just to prove the point that only some of the cars in this series were flipped from combination door to double door cars, there's exactly one (!) of each remaining in the April 1984 ORER. The dimensions were close to but not exactly the same as parent Southern Pacific's cars: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 16 feet, and capacity 4900 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. Yet the ORERs from July 1974 through April 1981 describe all of these cars as having plug and sliding doors. What's up with that?

In this case photo evidence overrules the Official Railway Equipment Register. A bingo on the 10074 from March 1979 posted on RRPictureArchives clearly shows two sliding doors. It also shows why one, and only one, of the side ladders remained full-height: the brake wheel wasn't lowered. The other side ladder opposite the brake wheel is cut down. Ditto for SSW 10214, found in August 1980 in Klamath Falls, Oregon. This "half-and-half" configuration is going to drive MTL nuts, I would suspect, as it might also apply to the above SP car, and definitely to the Boston and Maine "bicentennial" car from last month (180 00 050). Why couldn't those prototype railroads finish the job of "modernizing" these boxcars? Humph!





**469 00 111 and 469 00 112, \$16.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: SWRU 950446 and 949588.**

**53 Foot Corrugated Containers, Swift Intermodal.**

White with blue over yellow and black company name on sides, nose and tail. Approximate Time Period: the current decade (2010s). These items are not on MTL Standing Orders.

MTL provides a single line in its copy about the company for which it's issued these two containers: "Swift Transportation began in 1966 in Los Angeles and has since grown to a \$4 billion company." Let's see if we can Increment that Information.

Ah, here's a fun fact from the company's website ( [www.swifttrans.com](http://www.swifttrans.com) ): "Operating authority was purchased from a descendant of the Swift Meat Packing family, hence, today's name of Swift Transportation." The initial purpose of the company, founded with the name Common Market, was to take imported steel from Los Angeles ports to Arizona and Arizona cotton back to California for export. That's an interesting "backhaul" concept. The company, still privately-held, stretches from Mexico to Canada. It operates more than forty full-service terminals in twenty-four of the US States and three Mexican states.

OK, so RRPictureArchives has more than a thousand (!) images of Swift Intermodal items; as you'd expect, they're loaded into well cars. Might they have either of these containers...

No! But they do have plenty of containers numbered in the 949's and 950's. The photos I sampled were taken mostly in the earlier part of this decade, so I'll stay Approximate and call this decade as the ATP. (I think I just came up with a new ATP description, "the current decade.") The "Matt's Place" site seems to confirm that with information that the containers in the 948 and 949 series were built by Singamas in 2011. Singamas Group is headquartered in Hong Kong but its manufacturing facilities are in the PRC- the People's Republic of China. They make these 53 foot containers as well as refrigerated containers that are just ten feet long—just the thing for food and beverage storage for your next very large party, perhaps?

### **N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS:**



**143 00 160, \$34.90**

**Car Number: 985 (will be "D&RGW 985" in website listings).**

**Heavyweight 28-1 Parlor Car, Denver & Rio Grande Western.**

Silver and gold sides with black striping. Silver roof, underframe and trucks (including couplers). Gray ends. Black lettering including Rio Grande "speed lettering" roadname in center of letterboard and car number at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: 1950s (based on paint scheme) into the 1960s.

Page 24 of the **Rio Grande Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** includes the bingo for this car. It was one of fifty 84-seat coaches built in 1910 by Pullman for the Denver and Rio Grande (no “Western” yet in the roadname) and the Western Pacific. By 1926 they were all on the Rio Grande’s roster, numbered 900 to 950. Of the original fifty, thirty-one were remodeled and placed into series which included 980 to 985. The prototype photo was taken in July 1957 in Pueblo, Colorado.

The roofline of the actual 957 differs quite a bit from the MTL 143 body style. I’m going to guess that the addition of air conditioning is part of the reason for the prototype roof looking the way that it did. The delta which caught my attention first was the presence of arched windows at each end—for the lavatories, perhaps? In between, there were ten sets of two windows versus nine on the model. The MTL 145 series paired window coach has ten sets of windows, but they’ve already released one of those in Rio Grande paint.



**144 00 730, \$32.90**  
**Car Number: 300, Car Name**  
**“Roanoke.” Heavyweight**  
**Observation/ Business Car,**  
**Norfolk and Western.**

Maroon (Tuscan Red) sides; black ends, roof, underframe, doors and details. Gold striping. Gold lettering including roadname centered in letterboard, car name at bottom center and car number at bottom left and right. Approximate Time Period: early 1980s to at least 1987, but no later than 2002.

I hit the **Norfolk and Western Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** fully expecting a non-bingo. Fortunately, I was wrong on that. The 300/Roanoke appears on Page 26 as of May 1983, and on Page 25 in a November 1965 view when it had the name “The Exporter.” (That name later went to the N&W’s business car number 400.) Interestingly, though, that photo was taken in Roanoke! It’s noted, as in MTL’s car copy, that it was initially built in 1917 and extensively remodeled in 1955.

The two photos give us looks at both sides of the prototype car. The window arrangements are different from the 144700 version body style, but the overall “look and feel” isn’t bad. I had to look at several photos to confirm that the car continued to ride on six-wheel trucks.

The caption accompanying a 1987 photo of the car found on RRPictureArchives appears to be the exact source of MTL’s car copy. It’s not clear whether the car ever received Norfolk Southern #5 as its road number. This either happened for a brief time before the car was sold to a private owner who then painted it back to the scheme shown here, or it didn’t happen at all. It’s noted that the car was eventually painted blue and named “Ocean,” no later than 2002 based on a photo cited on Jerry Laboda’s Passenger Car Photo Index. That would mark the end of the Approximate Time Period, well, approximately. But we also don’t have a good handle on the start of the ATP either. Photos on both Fallen Flags and RRPictureArchives date to 1983, as does the photo in the **Color Guide**. We know the car was “The Exporter” in 1965.

We also know from a Jerry Laboda scan that while the “Roanoke” it had a block lettering arrangement. That image, found on RRPictureArchives, is dated 1978, and the car has an ACI Label which means it’s definitely post-1968. The image is in glorious black and white and might actually show the car in Wabash blue! I see elsewhere in the **Color Guide** references to the red with gold stripe paint being applied by the N&W in the early 1980s, so perhaps that decade is the best guess available for the ATP.

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

**N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: Runner Pack**

**#135** (993 00 135, \$79.95), four Pennsylvania Railroad 50 foot flat cars with fishbelly sides, has been released. UMTRR coverage was in the July 2017 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 045 51 470, 480071; 045 52 470, 480072; 045 53 470, 480075; 045 54 470, 480078. These are the first through fourth road numbers for this car, which hasn’t been previously released.

The “weathered freight car” loads are included as well, but we don’t get to see which load goes with which car, with the exception of the 480078 which has one of the two

hoppers. I doubt that the loads are permanently attached so that won’t matter.



Also, the **Baltimore and Ohio Heavyweight Five-Pack** (993 01 600, \$149.95) is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the August 2017 issue. The individual cars are as follows:

- Paired Window Coaches with Road Numbers 5009, 5012 and 5014, Catalog Numbers 145 51 093, 145 52 094 and 145 53 095.

- Heavyweight Diner, Road Number 1035, Catalog Number 146 54 091.

- Heavyweight Baggage Car, Road Number 633, Catalog Number 147 55 091. Note that this version has the roadname between the two baggage doors, unlike the previous run which spread the roadname set against the right-hand side of the car (Road Number 490, Catalog Number 147 00 090, November 2015).







Finally among the new releases... surprise! The three **BNSF Fuselage Two-Packs** (\$84.95 each) initially scheduled for release in January 2018 are going to be available the middle of this month, just in time for last-minute Christmas gifts. (And for Festivus as well. Is one allowed to buy gifts for Festivus? Or is it the point that you're not supposed to do that?)

MTL supplied only the photo of one of these sets on its website, but we have the three sets cataloged for you:

- Set #1, 993 01 561, 89 Foot Flat Car BNSF 800113, Catalog Number 071 51 821, and 57 Foot Flat Car BNSF 800048, Catalog Number 064 52 821.
- Set #2, 993 01 562, 89 Foot Flat Car BNSF 800122, Catalog Number 071 53 821, and 57 Foot Flat Car BNSF 800056, Catalog Number 064 54 821.
- Set #3, 993 01 563, 89 Foot Flat Car BNSF 800125, Catalog Number 071 55 821, and 57 Foot Flat Car BNSF 800062, Catalog Number 064 56 821.

*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 December 31.*



**Scheduled Delivery May 2018:**  
993 00 140, \$89.95.

**Reporting Marks:** D&RGW  
46404, 46409, 46445 and  
46490.

**Quantity four of 40 Foot  
Drop Bottom Gondolas,  
Denver and Rio Grande  
Western.**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and "speed lettering" roadname on right. Simulated wood loads included. Approximate Time Period: 1948 (build date) to early 1970s; exact service date of 1964 will shorten the "strictly speaking" ATP. Previous Release: Road Number 46400, November 2008. Individual catalog numbers are expected to be 083 5x 060 which will be confirmed upon release.



Back in 2008 when a single of this car was released, David Carnell provided research for this this car, for which many thanks, and I'll once again start with his findings and mostly reprint myself from 2008 otherwise as well.

After World War II, the Rio Grande ordered 1500 of these 42 foot 10 inch steel drop bottom gondolas from Pressed Steel Car Company. The first batch, numbered 46000 to 46499 were built in 1947 and 1948 and had Duryea underframes and Improved Dreadnaught ends. The second lot was numbered 46500 to 46999 and had Pressed Steel's own four rib ends. Finally the group numbered 47000 to 47499 was built in 1949 with the PSC ends and a conventional non-cushioned underframe. Besides the 42 foot cars, the line also owned a fleet of 46 foot drop bottom gondolas. The Rio Grande and other western roads used these cars in mineral service, including haulage of coal from mines in Utah and Colorado. These cars were retired in large numbers in the 1970's.

The **Rio Grande Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** (Page 76) has a photo of the 47139, from a different series than the 46400 that MTL modeled, but very close nonetheless. The Rio Grande Modeling and Historical Society already had the MTL model duly noted on their website. Their table "Freight Roster 1960-1993" has the Micro-Trains car listed, with the notation "Model slightly short, no Duryea underframe." It does show the car as matching all three of the series listed above by David and also cites the sale of 75 of these cars to the Spokane, Portland and Seattle in 1967. (Where they became extended side woodchip cars, MTL's 084 body style.) Unfortunately, the RGM&HS website no longer has this information available; fortunately, said information hasn't changed.

Let's grab the ORER for July 1950, where we find all 1500 cars listed in a single entry. They were described as "Coal, Dump, Steel" with AAR Classification GS. The inside length was 42 feet 9 inches, inside width 9 feet 10 inches, inside height 5 feet, outside length 45 feet, extreme height 3 feet 3 7/16 inches, and capacity 2100 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. Keeping in mind the attrition that took place in the Seventies, I jumped to the April 1970 ORER. The series is split into groups 46000 to 46999 with 45 foot outside length and 47000 to 47499 with 44 foot outside length, but only one car count for both, 393. By July 1974, they are all gone.



***Scheduled Delivery April 2018:***

**993 01 815, \$179.95.**

**Reporting Marks: SP 352120, 352125, 352133, 352138, 352139, 352141, 352146, and 352152.**

**Eight Pack #15, Southern Pacific Drop Bottom Gondolas with Woodchip Extensions.**

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname on extension. Black and white circular "Southern Pacific Lines" herald on right. Simulated woodchip loads included. Approximate Time Period: at least 1967 to early 1970s for these road numbers, see text. Previous Releases:



Road Numbers 352005 and 352010, August 2008; then Runner Pack #92 with Road Numbers 352006, 352008, 352011, and 352013, May 2014.

David Carnell has back to back appearances this month, as do drop bottom gondolas for that matter. (I'm going "out of sequence" just a bit here in terms of catalog numbers.) When the first two numbers of these cars were released in August 2008, David provided a guest commentary, which I reprinted for Runner Pack #92, and we'll begin with a portion of that, start quote:

"This information is taken from Tony Thompson's **Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Vol. 1: Gondolas and Stock Cars**. The first information on the cars is found in Chapter 7. The G-50-18 class, totally 550 cars numbered from 89854 to 90403, was built in 1946 by Bethlehem Steel. These cars are all steel construction with eight side panels, are approximately 40 feet in length and had a capacity of 50 tons (100,000 pounds). The MTL cars are a good match for the actual gondola without side extensions. In 1956, the G-50-18 cars were renumbered into the series 364025-364724. There were still 550 cars in service by the date of renumbering.

"In the 1950s, SP began assigning GS gondolas to woodchip service. The first cars were converted in the SP Bayshore Shops in 1950. At this time eight G-50-18 gondolas received 9 foot 5 inch side extensions. These cars were assigned to service on the Northwestern Pacific and identified as "mill block" cars. In 1956 all of the GS gondolas in woodchip service were reassigned to the 350000 number series. One group of 13 G-50-18 was assigned the number series 352005-352017. These cars had a capacity of 4885 cu. ft. and had 12 foot 7 inch side extensions. The group of 13 cars remained relatively intact through 1970 when their number was reduced to 12 but most were off the roster by 1975 when only 1 car of the series was still in service. These cars were soon being replaced by larger cars. As an aside, the lumber industry nicknamed these cars 'Jacks.'"

"These cars are a good stand in for the actual SP woodchip cars. They appear to have the later 12 foot 7 inch extensions since there are 4 ladder rungs on the extensions. The paint scheme and road numbers appear to give these cars an ATP of 1956 to 1975."

All good, except for one thing: the cars in this forthcoming Eight Pack don't carry road numbers between 352005 and 352017! However, official SP specification sheets captured on Richard Percy's SP Site ([espee.railfan.net](http://espee.railfan.net), no "www") include not only the short series of cars on which MTL based its previous offerings, but also another set of 55 road numbers from 352118 to 352172. These cars have key dimensions that differ a bit from the other group of cars, though they have the same overall height of 16 feet 11 inches. A quick check of the ORERs doesn't show this particular set in place until sometime between 1964 and 1966; it's also 74 cars numbered from 352118 to 352192 as of January 1967's Equipment Register. Only nine of these were left as of the July 1974 ORER. So the ATP is a bit shorter for these particular cars.



*Scheduled Delivery February 2018:*

**993 01 700, \$129.95**

**Reporting Marks: UP 262064, 262067, 262071, and 262072.**

**Union Pacific Wind Turbine Generator Four-Pack.**

Scheduled to consist of five 054 series 62 foot bulkhead flat cars. Cars are brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname on right, white on black double panel COTS stencil on far right, and yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes across car. Simulated wind turbine generator load included for each car. Approximate Time Period: 2005 (given conspicuity stripes, 1998 otherwise) to present. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary and actual release may vary. Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release.

This is a pretty quick turnaround for a pre-order! A two-month production window is relatively short, particularly when adding in the castings of the wind turbine generators. I checked the archives and these loads are not the same as on the TTX Wind Turbine sets released in 2016.

A bingo from June 2015 on the RailcarPhotos.com site provides both a look at the prototype car and build information. The 262064 was part of an order of 285 cars constructed by Trinity in 1998 for the UP, the road's class F-110-1 with road numbers 262000 to 262285. The inside length is 62 feet, however the outside length is 73 feet 4 inches, thanks mostly to some **really** extended draft gear couplers. The real cars have wood lining inside of the bulkheads, which the MTL 054 series doesn't. The outside of the ends is different as well and in fact the back side of the wood shows through what is essentially just a frame. The use of conspicuity stripes on the cars (or at least the artwork) pulls the start of the ATP up to 2005 or later. The Wikipedians tell us that the market for wind turbines was incited through government policies starting in the 1990s, so in theory these flat cars could have carried generators well before the conspicuity stripes were added.

The ORER for October 2014 (yes, I know I need a newer one...) shows the series at a very healthy 279 cars out of the original 285, so a "to present" ATP seems just fine to me. Other photos of cars in the series show them without a load, or with loads that I find it somewhat difficult to identify. Fortunately, a 2014 image of sister car UP 262258 is captioned, "Car's load is pre-cast concrete shapes." Thank you!

*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 **January 31** (a two-month pre-order window).*



**Scheduled Delivery May 2018:**

**993 01 710, \$349.95 and 993 01 715, \$399.95**

**Reporting Marks: TBD, expected to be in the PFE 65000 series, see text.**

**Pacific Fruit Express 16-Car Refrigerator Set.**

Scheduled to consist of sixteen 047 series wood double sheathed ice refrigerator cars, either unweathered (the 710 set) or lightly weathered (the 715 set). Cars have orange sides, brown ends, roof and side sills, black details and black lettering including “Pacific Fruit Express” and reporting marks on left. Black and white Southern Pacific and red, white and blue Union Pacific heralds on right. Approximate Time Period (based on paint scheme): mid-1940s to early 1950s. Previous Releases: Strictly speaking, none, though the 22 cars released from 1976 to 2004 with the general catalog number 47060/047 00 060 have a similar dual-herald paint scheme with a different prototype number series. MTL artwork is preliminary and actual release may vary. Catalog and road numbers will be available upon release.

Will it or will it not be a “not a reprint”? The general layout of the original runs of this car is about the same as the MTL-provided artwork, but there’s more detail on this forthcoming version, particularly the car class, R-30-21. And the number series is different. The original run fits into the large group PFE 15920 to 31249, which as of the July 1950 ORER had just 349 cars in it. My take is that this is a “not a reprint” and it will come with a new catalog number. We’ll find out in May if I am correct.

PFE had a variety of paint schemes over the years, some subtly different from each other. Anthony Thompson is the “go to” expert and via the book **Pacific Fruit Express** he co-wrote we already know that the “dual herald” scheme was introduced in 1946. In 1949, the company stopped painting the door hardware black, and starting in 1950, the Union Pacific shield was rendered in black and white, not red, white and blue. Add to that the PFE practice of frequent repainting and the result is a relatively short Approximate Time Period. I suspect that there will be a liberal application of Rule #1 to get around this.

What will be more difficult to get around is that the R-30-21 cars, which were rebuilds of earlier R-30 classes of PFE equipment, had steel ends and a steel running board, whereas the MTL 047 body style has wood ends and wood running board (aka, roofwalk). The artwork is preliminary, though. So a switch **back** to the number series MTL previously used, the PFE’s classes R-30-12 and R-30-13, might mitigate these deltas.

Should 65100, the road number shown in the MTL artwork, be one of the cars among the sixteen car set, it would be in the series PFE 62501 to 69999, which numbered 529 cars as of the January 1945 ORER. The inside length was 33 feet 2¾ inches, inside width 8 feet 3 inches, inside height 7 feet 3 inches, outside length 41 feet 8½ inches, extreme height 15 feet 2¾ inches,



door opening 4 feet wide by 6 feet 11¼ inches high, and lading capacity either 1988 cubic feet with bulkheads deployed or 2332 cubic feet with bulkheads collapsed, or 70,000 pounds. There was between 11,500 and 12,700 pounds of ice capacity as well. As of the April 1952 ORER, the car count had ballooned to 5907 even with a shorter span of 62500 to 68900. That had dropped back to 1712 in the July 1963 ORER and a mere 23 in January 1967's Register.

**N SCALE WEATHERED/GRAFFITI RELEASES:** *The following was announced via the Micro-Trains website, the MTL Facebook page, and via the e-mail "Micro-Trains E-Line," all on or about December 13.*



098 44 070, \$31.95

**Reporting Marks: D&RGW 15938.**

**50 Foot Airslide Covered Hopper, Rio Grande (Denver and Rio Grande Western).**

Base car is orange with black lettering including reporting marks on left and speed lettering herald with "The Action Road" on right. White on black consolidated stencil at bottom right. Heavy weathering on both sides with "cleaning" of reporting marks area.

Approximate Time Period: 1972 (build

date), or strictly speaking, later than that given the heavy weathering, to mid-decade of the 2000s. Previous Release (unweathered): Road Number 15943, September 2017.

This release provides a good example of what happens when a car is **so** dirty that one cannot read needed information. Quick solution: clean off only the area that needs to be read. This isn't a "patch panel"; it's just "elbow grease," hopefully with some assistance, at least soap and water.

I noted in my review of the "clean" release that although the Rio Grande had two groups of these cars, 15935 to 15939 and 15940 to 15949, only the second of these two appeared in the October 1972 ORER. Strictly speaking, the "New 11-71" would have been changed to a service date by the time the car was this dirty. George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ) has a 1998 image of the 15938 complete with cleaned off reporting marks. We can see the New date is December 1972. There is relatively simple white line graffiti on the side of the car we can see. Union Pacific doesn't allow graffiti on their cars, which is why MTL omitted it, but if you want to add it back, I'm not going to tell them.

Recapping from my September coverage, the October 1996 Register showed a larger series of 53 cars numbered from 15925 to 15987, all 4180 cubic foot Airslides. Following the merger of the Rio Grande's roster into the Union Pacific, that same group was divided into four subsets with differing capacities, adding up to 25 cars in the April 1999 ORER. Just a single car remained from the expanded group in the October 2007 ORER.



108 44 360, \$28.95

**Reporting Marks: UP 36929.**

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

Base car is brown (the UP's "Synthetic Red") including trucks and couplers. White lettering including roadname and reporting marks on black patch panel on left and large roadname in center. Yellow conspicuity stripes across car. Simulated coal load included. Moderate to heavy weathering. No graffiti. Approximate Time Period: 2005 and later (given conspicuity stripes) but see text.

Previous Releases: Eight Pack #14 (994 00 814) with Road Numbers 18405, 18412, 18418, 18420, 18432, 18456, 18487, and 18493, October 2017.

It's the same basic car as in Eight Pack #14 from just two months ago, in a different number series this time. That sends us back to the ORER shelf. Nothing before 2005 is needed, though, given the conspicuity stripes (and I suppose I really need a hotkey for "conspicuity stripes" at this point). And... there is no 36929 in the January 2006 Equipment Register. In fact, the series above from 36519 to 36885 has a single car in it, and the series below from 36938 to 37190 has only six cars in it. Could be that this car was in company service in 2005.

I also checked the October 2014 ORER just to make sure that the UP wasn't placing hoppers **into** this series from someplace else. Nope. And just for completeness, I went backwards in the Equipment Register pile and note that in October 1976 there was a series of hoppers numbered 36900 to 37199, which contained 280 cars of 100 tons capacity each. The dimensions were "roughly right" compared to the MTL 108 body style, for example 49 feet 9 inch outside length and 3565 cubic foot capacity.

As for a bingo, or even something close, I struck out in the usual go-to places online, and a search on the precise reporting marks, which sometimes gets me something, got me real estate listings. Not exactly! But as a sidelight, a photo on Fallen Flags of similar but much cleaner UP 36469 showed an interesting load: sugar beets. At least, I think they're sugar beets. It's certainly not coal.

Also of interest is RPCX 37022, formerly UP 37022, which was at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois as of April 2016. It's nice to see that at least one of these cars is being preserved. RPCX is the set of reporting marks for Railroad Passenger Car Numbering Bureau, Inc. which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Railroad Passenger Car Alliance. Founded in 1982, the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance was created as a resource to owners and operators of privately owned railroad passenger equipment.



993 05 450, \$99.95

### Trailer Train Graffiti Three-Pack.

Consists of three 70 foot well cars as follows: 135 54 060, DTTX 56784; 135 55 060, DTTX 56798, and 135 56 060, DTTX 56801. Base of each car is yellow with reporting marks on left and post-1991 TTX logo on right, both in white on black panel. Mostly black lettering otherwise. All cars are heavily

weathered. The 56784 and 56801 have extensive prototype based graffiti. The 56798 has simulated repainted areas in yellow with black lettering. Approximate Time Period: early 1990s (1992 build date previously given by MTL) through decade of the 2000s. Previous Release (unweathered): Runner Pack #135 with Road Numbers 56811, 56812 and 56816, October 2017.

Some more Economies of Scale from the folks behind the red and yellow sign. Three “clean” and three “dirty” cars means lots of yellow painted die-cast well car bodies produced at 351 Rogue River Parkway... well, at least they all started that way! Recapping from my pre-review of Runner Pack #135, the ORER for October 1996 shows the Trailer Train series DTTX 56775 to 56873 with AAR Classification FC and description “Flat.” The inside length is, as you’d probably guess, 48 feet, the outside length 71 feet 8 inches (notice the round-up from the Gunderson spec) and the capacity is 164,000 pounds. There were 98 cars in the group in October 1996 and 95 in the January 2006 ORER. However, given the movement toward a 53 foot standard for domestic service, the 48 foot containers were on their way out by the start of the present decade, and so were these cars. In the October 2014 Equipment Register just 13 were left. I doubt that they survived to The Present.

We’ll now turn it over to our Graffiti Special Correspondent David Grothe... start quote:

“The first car in the 3-pack, DTTX 56784, has 3 graffiti artists on it, Space, Busy, and Spek. Typing ‘Space Busy Spek’ in the search box on Flickr will yield a graffiti bingo for this car. The prototype car is from a set of 53 foot articulated cars but the road number has been painted over: [www.flickr.com/photos/129272849@N07/23147879073/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/129272849@N07/23147879073/) .

“The third car in the 3-pack, DTTX 56801, has graffiti inspired from two graffiti artists from two different articulated well cars, one a TTX and one a BNSF car. The two graffiti artists on the MTL model are Jaber and Nave.

“Graffiti artist Jaber’s trademark or signature that can be seen on all kinds of railcars is painting only the head and shoulders of his character. Often there will be a colorful design behind the silhouette of Jaber’s character as in the case on the MTL model. It looks like MTL used an image from a BNSF well car done by Elmo and Jaber for its inspiration for this model. Typing ‘Elmo Jaber’ in the search box on Flickr will yield a photo of a BNSF well car that has a graffiti

bingo to the Jaber character including the green background. The BNSF well car road number is also visible in the photo, BNSF 238475 D.

The graffiti letters on this MTL car spell out the name Nave. A prototype photo of this graffiti can be found on Flickr by searching for 'Jaber/Nave' in the search box. That prototype photo includes an almost unobstructed view of the prototype car number for which this graffiti was inspired. Just under the crossing gate arm, the road number for this car appears to be 743166(?). The first four numbers are definitely legible and DTTX 7431.. corresponds to a five car set of articulated well cars."

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

**NARROW GAUGE (Nn3) RELEASES:** No releases this month.

### **Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:**



**503 00 181 and 503 00 182, \$24.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: RI 47414 and 47440.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Superior Door, No Running Board, Short Ladders, Rock Island.**

Green (looks like the Penn Central's "Jade Green") with white lettering including reporting marks on left and slanted roadname on right. White "DF-2" just left of door. Approximate Time Period: 1969 through at least 1980.

I was only in Year Two of what would become the UMTRR when Micro-Trains released the N Scale version of this car in September 1997 (Catalog 24270). It had the road number 47440, same as the second of this virtual two-pack. But I was in Year Fourteen when MTL released a Weathered Version of this same car, with, guess what, road number 47414, the same as the first of this virtual two-pack, in June 2010.

Page 39 of the **Rock Island Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** shows a quite new looking RI 47440 as of September 1969. This car was one of 150 refurbished boxcars leased from United States Railway Equipment that same year — that's their logo to the left of the door. The group RI 47300 to 47449 came in three different series based on inside height and door opening width. The one in which we're most interested ranged from 47402 to 47449, all of which had DF-2 loaders. Comparing photo to model, the prototype car had full side ladders whereas the 503 body style has cut down ladders. On the other hand, RI 47346 also from the USRE lease group shows up on Fallen Flags with cut down ladders and so does another RI green boxcar on "Boxcars and Freight Cars of North America" ( [www.boxcars.us](http://www.boxcars.us) ) although we can't make out the road number. However, there's a "door thing" — an eight foot Superior door on the cars versus the six foot door on the MTL model.



The ORER for April 1970 falls is just after the 1969 refurbish and lease date of these cars given in the **Color Guide**, so we'll use it. The series 47402 to 47449 has all 48 of the possible cars, described as "Box, All Steel" with AAR Classification XL and these key dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 8 feet and capacity 3892 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. An end note calls out the ten belt DF-2 loaders.

The ORER for January 1978 is the latest one I have prior to the demise of the Rock Island on March 31, 1980. It shows three subsets for the group based on the type of DF loaders—21 numbered from 47402 to 47425 with 10 belt loaders, which includes the road number depicted here; then six more numbered 47426 to 47433 with 5 belt loaders; and finally ten more with numbers 47434 to 47449 with 9 belt loaders. Our Approximate Time Period is good to at least then and probably up to the end of the line for the RI, but from there, as we already know, things get impossible to follow. The Rock Island's registration simply disappeared from the ORER and its cars were scattered, stored, or scrapped.



**518 00 490, \$28.95**

**Reporting Marks: HJH Co. 496.**

**40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Refrigerator, Vertical Brake Staff, Heinz.**

#4 in the Heinz Series (pre-orders taken April 2017). Brown with black underframe and arch bar trucks. Lettering is red

outlined in white, consisting of very large "57" in center flanked by "Heinz" and "Varieties" either side and reporting marks at bottom right. White end markings. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1910s.

Please see the coverage of the N Scale Release above (058 00 290), with the caveat that the Z Scale release is on a 40 foot car while the N Scale run is on a 36 foot car.



**531 00 271 and 531 00 272, \$25.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: SP 402245 and 402280.**

**PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hoppers, Southern Pacific.**

Gray (including trucks and couplers but not wheels) with yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname on right. Approximate Time Period: early 1960s through the decade of the 1980s.



I've been waiting for the appropriate time to use this phrase: "A good example of a bad idea."

Covered hoppers with yellow lettering? Are you

kidding? I can hardly read the yellow lettering on a clean car, never mind one that's been in service. What were they thinking over at Southern Pacific Headquarters?

Well, perhaps they were thinking that they wanted to distinguish the former Texas and New Orleans PS-2 cars, originally road numbers 3425 to 3674, built in April 1957, from the other cars on the main SP roster. When merged into the SP's roster, they were given road numbers 402048 to 402297. Both sets (the original SP's were 401100 to 401349) carried class H-70-16 on the railroad. This is according to Lee Gautreaux's "Railgoat" site. He's also got links to two images, the 402148 as of 1985 and the 402246 as of 1983, that illustrate quite plainly that you simply cannot easily see the reporting marks and can barely make out the roadname. In the case of the 402246, the reporting marks are restenciled in the much more practical black. I will note that it's hard to tell whether the original lettering was yellow or red. However, there are enough SP fans on the MTL payroll (and at least one is their R&D leader) that I don't doubt that the yellow paint was legitimate. But still ill-advised. Two other cars of this group, the 402177 and the 402198, are shown in all black with larger Southern Pacific block letter roadname. This newer scheme co-existed with the older one, as was rather typical on the SP.

The Approximate Time Period is of greatest interest to me here: when were the cars moved from their T&NO numbers to their SP numbers? In the January 1959 ORER, when the Texas and New Orleans had its own separate subsidiary listing with all 250 possible cars still in those markings. In the July 1963 Register, there were 51 left in the T&NO series and 198 in the SP series. Make that 23 and 226 respectively in the January 1964 ORER, with just one left to reletter, the T&NO 3481, as of January 1967. Moving toward the end of the ATP, there were 170 of the original 250 in service as of July 1980, 92 in October 1996 and just 20 in October 1991.

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

**Z SCALE MULTI-PACKS:** The Kansas City Southern Four-Pack of smoothside passenger cars (994 01 200) originally scheduled for release this month is now scheduled for next month. However, we do have a passenger car pre-order announcement.

*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 December 31.*



**994 00 106, \$119.95**

**Road Numbers: 5501, 5503, 5505 and 5507 (will be preceded with "B&O" in website listings).  
Quantity four of 83 foot Smoothside Coaches, Baltimore and Ohio.**

Gray, blue and yellow sides with black roof and ends, yellow B&O "Capitol Dome" heralds left and right, and car name or road number at bottom center (dome car exception is described below). Approximate Time Period: as early as the early 1960s into the early 1970s. Previous Release: Road Number 5506, February 2016 (pre-ordered October 2015).

I can really get away with a short pre-review this time! In October 2015, MTL announced pre-orders for its four Z Scale smoothside passenger car body styles, one of which was the same coach that will be made available in four more road numbers. I had a lot of guessing to do, fortunately most of it correct!

However, I did get a bingo to the coach, Road Number 5506 that was in the preliminary artwork for the pre-order announcement. It was formerly the B&O's "New Castle" which was built in 1949 for the B&O train "The Columbian" and was part of the series 5500 to 5507. Pictured on Page 15 of the **B&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, it's in the paint scheme that mirrors that of parent Chesapeake and Ohio, which took financial control of the B&O back in 1963. Only the Capitol Dome heralds distinguish this equipment from that of the C&O's. As depicted, the model 5502 has a different window arrangement than the prototype did, but that doesn't surprise me.

Short and sweet... just the way I need it when I'm running behind!

**Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** No releases this month. I'm a bit surprised at this.

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

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The wood load included with the Southern Pacific N Scale double door boxcar this month (182 00 030) is already available separately. Catalog Number 499 43 956 is a set of three of these loads for \$12.95 MSRP. Returning to the Undecorated lineup is the 25000/025 body style, the exterior post single door boxcar. Catalog 025 00 000 has a sticker price of \$13.20.

Unfortunately, all of the remaining N Scale SW1500s and the Weyerhaeuser Logging Train Set have all been delayed with no specific ETA listed. The listing in the December Micro-News actually includes the Southern Pacific reprints and the single NASA unit, which I previously reported as having been released. I'll need to get back to you on that!

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** It's not really Incremental Information, but I had an interesting exchange with one of the UMTRR Gang Members with respect to my comment about how many Magne-Matic couplers have been sold since they were introduced. I also had a separate e-mail discussion about the total quantity of rolling stock sold by Kadec (before 1990) and then Micro-Trains (post-split in 1990). We had some fun speculating based on the number of Authorized Micro-Trains Dealers multiplied by how many cars on average they might take (which depends on whether they get Standing Orders in my opinion), but in the end, it's all just that – speculation.

**OOPS PATROL:** I usually catch Oopsies when I update the release tables for the UMTRR website. However, I haven't yet done that for the November releases (What? Slacker!) so I haven't yet determined how many omissions, mistakes and fat-fingers I self-inflicted last month.

**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** Again, no official bye-bye board this month. And remember my bright idea of doubling back to the Runner Packs to see which ones were outta here? Silly me, I didn't get to that either. I can tell you that based on the December Micro-News, none of the November Weathered Releases have left the building as of yet. Phew, I didn't do any work and I still got in my "big three" clichés...

**SOME FANTASTIC PERSONAL NEWS:** I haven't said much about my family lately, for personal reasons, but I am not going to pass up this announcement. Remember when my daughter Thalia was just a little girl (seen at right in attendance at the N Scale Collector's Convention in 2004)? Well, she is seventeen now, and absolutely blowing the doors off of High School--- as in, High Honor Roll since the day she walked in. After she "lapped" me in her SAT scores—in Sophomore Year, no less!-- she was sought after by numerous colleges including Michigan State. But she had her heart set on Vanderbilt University. I am so proud to report that Thalia's dream has come true! She was accepted to Vanderbilt "Early Decision" and will be off to Nashville in the Fall of 2018. (Add lots of exclamation points here!) Like me, Thalia is a music lover (she plays harp in the school orchestra) and I hope she will have time to walk "Lower Broad" when she's not studying. It's not lost on me that the university is named for New York Central railroad baron Cornelius Vanderbilt, either...



**FINALLY, CELEBRATE YOUR SEASON:** As Year 21(!) of this humble enterprise wraps up, I want to wish everyone out there the happiest and safest, and most peaceful of Holidays. I have no problem with Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, Happy Hanukkah (although that's already past), A Joyous Kwanzaa, and even whatever word goes in front of Festivus (!). But I've found over the years that we all celebrate even our most commonly held holidays in our own way. I've been fortunate to experience a few new holiday customs this year. In traditions and celebrations as well as Model Railroading, Rule #1 always applies. Enjoy!

Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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