



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report

Issue #263 – November, 2018

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Hello again everyone! We've got a lot to cover, so let's get right to it...

N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



035 00 281 and 035 00 282, \$27.60 each

Reporting Marks: CNW 14303 and 14307.

40 Foot Despatch Stock Cars, Chicago and North Western.

Yellow and green sides, green ends and roof.

Yellow roadname on green placard at top left.

Yellow reporting marks on green placard at center left. Yellow dimensional data along bottom of side. Andrews trucks. Approximate Time Period: 1954 to the late 1960s.

Way in the back of the **C&NW Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two**, on Page 127 of 128 in fact, is the bingo photo for the first of this virtual two-pack. It's among several shots of some of the more colorful stock cars to ride American rails. According to the **Color Guide**, some of two series of the North Western's boxcars, the 54000 to 59998 and 70400 to 70996 groups (even numbers) were rebuilt to stock cars in 1954 and 1955. Ownership of some of these cars was retained by the C&NW, others were sold to and leased back from International Railway Car and still more, including the group 14300 to 14498 went to United States Railway Equipment.

Contrasting prototype to model... well, yes, the MTL 035 series is based on a New York Central prototype. (Cue broken record.) The signature roadname letterboard is a spotting feature, but otherwise the car is basically a stand in. The trusses go in the opposite direction on the real C&NW cars and the ends are different as well. According to information I have, Andrews Trucks lasted in revenue service into the 1950s so we're okay there.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for January 1955 shows the North Western rostering a total of 2030 stock cars. Among these was the series 14201 to 14999, odd numbers only. The dimensional data was as follows: inside length 40 feet 4 inches, inside width 8 feet 4 inches, inside height 8 feet 1 inch, outside length 42 feet 1 inch, extreme height 13 feet 3 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 2853 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. We know from the photo of the real 14303 that these were single deck only cars – it said so right in the dimensional data. All 400 possible cars were in the series at that time. By the January 1967 ORER, that count was all the way down to 59 among a total that had dropped to 622 overall – indicative of the huge decline in livestock traffic from the 1950s to the 1960s. In the April 1970 Register, the series with which we're concerned had just two cars remaining.



051 00 320, \$32.90

Reporting Marks: NYC 18096.

34 Foot Wood Sheathed Caboose, Straight Cupola, New York Central.

Green sides, black roof and underframe, yellow end rails, ladders and details. White stripe across car. White lettering including roadname at top center and reporting marks at bottom center. Green lettering in white

stripe including "Safety Wherever," NYC System oval herald, legend "Life is like a baseball game. It is the number of times you get home safe that counts" and "Safety First Always." (The order of these varies by side.) Green and white "Green Cross For Safety" circle logo at bottom left and right. Approximate Time Period: mid-1950s (a guess) to no later than 1966.

The bingo photo for this car is on Page 97 of the **New York Central Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. It was taken in August 1963 and shows a rather worn out looking wooden car. It is a so-called "standard" caboose for the Central, but that "standard" varied. Perhaps a key spotting feature—and the key delta to the MTL 051 body style—is the short cupola with running boards completely around it. This particular car also had angle braces stretching from the body bolsters diagonally across the sides of the car.

MTL's car copy notes the 1960s as the time for this "Safety Caboose" however I think we can stretch that backwards a bit. According to Terry Link's "Canada Southern" website, the NYC gothic style "system" oval herald used on this car was introduced in August 1955 and lasted until it was supplanted by the "cigar band" herald in May 1959. The ratty looking appearance of the 18096 as of 1963 reinforces this idea. I checked through my semi-expansive pile of NYC research material but could not narrow this down any farther.

My estimate for the end of the ATP comes from the reuse of the road number 18096 as part of a series of transfer cabooses converted from NYC boxcars in 1966 by Despatch Shops. All that having been noted, this will likely appeal to those who like cool looking cars, and Rule #1 ("It's Your Railroad") will certainly be applied.



058 00 420, \$29.95

Reporting Marks: HJHCo. 440.

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

Third release in the Heinz Yellow Series (pre-orders taken April 2018). Yellow sides,

brown roof and ends, black underframe and details. Arch bar trucks. Green and white Heinz pickle trademark on left. Red with white outline lettering including "57 Varieties" on left and "India Relish" on right. White end markings. Approximate Time Period: Decade of the 1900s into the 1920s.

India Relish gets a second car; it was also Car #7 in the “Brown” series, released in March (058 00 320 in N Scale, 518 00 520 in Z Scale). I think I’ve already written enough about India Relish and relish in general so I’ll refer you to the March 2018 UMTRR for that commentary. Meanwhile, it’s this yellow car for which Clover House has dry transfers, down to the same road number. They place that car as circa 1907.



105 00 230, \$26.90

Reporting Marks: NS 191339.

50 Foot Steel 14 Panel Gondola, Fixed Ends, Norfolk Southern.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and “speed” NS initials in center. Advisory “Coil Steel

Loading Only” above NS initials. White on black COTS panel on right. Vertical conspicuity stripes at six points along side. Simulated coil steel load included. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 2005 (given conspicuity stripes) to early 2010s.

We go to RRPictureArchives.net for the bingo on this car. It’s in the NS class G12E and is noted as being the former Norfolk and Western 98272. All four photos of this car in the paint modeled by MTL were taken during 2008, three of which were shot in Elkhart, Indiana. Checking the **Norfolk and Western Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, we find that the G12 class, series N&W 98000 to 98999, was built by the railroad at the Roanoke Shops in 1965. These were “mill gondolas” with a 59 foot 1 inch length; in other words **apparently** a fair bit longer than the MTL 105 body style. Interestingly, though, they had fourteen panels and fishbelly sides, as does the Micro-Trains car.

The ORER for October 2007 is as close as I can get to the 2008 photo dates. At that time the NS 191339 was in the series 191200 to 191499, with 181 cars with end of car cushioning and another 57 without. It looks like the 191339 had the end of car cushioning; one way to simulate that is to switch to the medium extended MTL trucks, or do what I do and body mount couplers outboard of the underframe. The dimensions show that the 105 body style actually isn’t quite that far off as the N&W Color Guide implied: inside length 52 feet 6 inches, outside length 58 feet 7 inches, inside height 3 feet 11 inches, and extreme height 8 feet. These cars were listed at 1980 cubic foot capacity and a gross rail weight (car plus lading) of 263,000 pounds. There is no mention made of “Coil Steel Loading Only” but the AAR Designation GBS indicates equipment for loading a particular commodity. The gondolas don’t quite make it to The Present as they are in the October 2014 Register (204 cars with end of car cushioning and just nine without), but they are not in the January 2018 Register.



110 00 400, \$33.80

Reporting Marks: GATX 27349.

54 Foot General Service Tank Car, Ozone Waters.

White with blue-green stripe across sides interrupted by "ozone waters" (in lower case) on right and company "sun" logo in

red, orange, green and white on left. Black reporting marks on left; black dimensional data across car. White on black double COTS panel on right. Approximate Time Period: 1972 and thereabouts, based on service date on car.

The October 1972 ORER is darn close to the service date on the car of May 1972. And here we have a listing where the exceptions outnumber the rule. How's that again? Well, the main series was GATX 27000 to 21999, but it had only 84 cars of 100,000 pounds capacity. (Gallons capacity isn't given, but see below.) GATX 27349 was called out as being in the subset 27347 to 27349, which was listed with several other subsets with 200,000 pounds capacity, for a total of 247 cars with AAR Designation TM. I was able to follow this trio of tank cars as far out as the April 1981 Register, but they are not listed in the next ORER I have in the Research Accumulation, April 1984. Note that this does not mean that the three cars were leased to Ozone Waters for that entire time.

March 1973 is given as the approximate date for the bingo photo of GATX 27349, found on RRPictureArchives.net. Sister car 27348, barely in the shot to the right, is nonetheless present. They were "being loaded from a local aquifer along the Southern Railway at Pearl River, Louisiana. The water will be bottled by Ozone Waters in New Orleans, just 35 miles away."

At the time, Ozone Waters was apparently in the midst of a bit of a boom in bottled water being sold in New Orleans, triggered by studies that showed that the tap water there wasn't safe. "New Orleans Remains Stoic Over Report of Unsafe Water" was the headline of a **New York Times** article dated November 17, 1974. "Ozone Waters reported new customers signing up 15 times faster than usual," quoth the **Times**. That water would be carried only 35 miles—a short haul for a tank truck, never mind a tank car—makes a little more sense in that context. That's also far away from the former reputation of the Northshore of New Orleans being renowned for its ozone waters, as noted on the website theneworleans100.com .

The only online citation I could find for the actual company other than that news article was that its successor company, OWSC, Incorporated, was voluntarily made inactive and then dissolved in July 1988. It was founded in 1971.

Water weighs about 8.34 pounds per United States gallon (or about 3.78 kilograms), so the 200,000 pound capacity of the car as stenciled equates to about 23,980 gallons. Interestingly, the capacity is marked on the end of both the prototype and model as just 20,708 gallons. That might be because water decreases in volume until it reaches 4 degrees Celsius; the 8.34 pound number is at about 17 degrees Celsius. You didn't think I'd get into thermodynamics in this column? Neither did I...



182 00 090, \$24.85

Reporting Marks: GTW 599835.

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Youngstown Doors, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Grand Trunk Western.

Blue with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and

large “wet noodle” GT herald with “the Good Track road” slogan on right. White on black COTS panel and ACI label at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: as early as the early 1970s or strictly speaking, 1980 given service date on car, through the decade of the 1980s.

It’s been a while since MTL has released a car with the Grand Trunk’s 1970s era slogan, “The Good Track Road.” A post from 2010 by “aussiehinz” on Trainorders.com is an insider’s view: “When a significant portion of Michigan’s (not to mention the whole Northeast’s) railroad network was in tatters, Canadian National subsidiary Grand Trunk Western’s U.S. based management decided to emphasize the carrier’s long standing tradition of high track maintenance standards. As boxcars and other selected car types were shopped and repainted, ‘The Good Track Road’ slogan was added, usually placed immediately below the ‘wet noodle’ GT monogram... GTW, with a personality distinctly different from parent CN, was an intriguing railroad to observe, photograph, and, in my own case, work for, during the turbulent 70’s.”

According to the Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery site, the Grand Trunk Western acquired from Pullman-Standard in 1963 a set of 50 foot double door boxcars numbered GTW 599812 to 599942. There are two images of cars in this set on that site but they’re a builder’s photo of GTW and a 1973 look at GTW 599898 in the “as delivered” brown paint and with a running board and full ladders.

But then we go over to the Fallen Flags site (www.rr-fallenflags.org) and get a near-bingo. The previous car in the series, GTW 599834, was found advertising “the Good Track road” in November 1983 and was captured in glorious black and white. We’ll take it! The configuration matches the MTL 182 body style with respect to removed running board, shortened ladders and lowered brake wheel. The side sill is a little different and the sides are riveted on the prototype. The largest delta is probably a “door thing”: a pair of eight foot doors on the Micro-Trains offering versus an 8+7 foot double door arrangement on the real car.

The service date of 1980 which MTL painted onto the model is also on the 599834 as found on Fallen Flags. That’s as good an excuse as any to begin the ORER lookups with the July 1980 issue. There we find the main series, GTW 599812 to 599942... with zero cars in it. However, there are eleven subseries that add up to 112 cars, anywhere from just one to 41 cars based on the cubic foot or pounds capacity, or whether the car was specially equipped or assigned to certain lading. Where does the 599835 fit into this, ahem, array? Fortunately, it’s in the largest subset of 41 cars, described as “Box, Steel, DF Loaders, 50K” with an AAR Designation XL. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches,

outside length 54 feet 5 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 15 feet, and capacity 4952 cubic feet or 145,000 pounds.

The January 1985 Register has things a bit more rationalized. In that issue, there is a main series of 67 cars described as “Box, Steel, 19 DF-1, 50K” with another 15 cars split among, well, “only” nine subsets. Just twelve total cars are left as of the July 1989 Equipment Register, and only two remain in the October 1993 book, which is where I stopped looking.



468 00 141 and 468 00 142, \$16.95 each.

Reporting Marks: HUBU 280865 and 280877. 48 Foot Rib Side Containers, Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

Both containers are aluminum and white with red accents at lift points. Black reporting marks and blue, white and green BNSF circle cross herald on sides, nose and tail. Red Great Dane logo on nose and tail (see image



of tail at right) and red and white Great Dane name on sides. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1996 into the early decade of the 2000s. Only the 141 release is shown here.

The manufacturer of this container is obvious: it's Great Dane, which began back in the year 1900 as the Savannah Blow Pipe Company and switched industries several times. The Great Dane name was taken in 1958. The company entered the piggyback market back in 1961 and was a pioneer in refrigerated trailers. The company has an almost eleven minute video describing its history available on its website (www.greatdane.com , as you might have guessed).

The Matt's Place website, Part 3 (www.matts-place.com/intermodal/part3/48foot.htm) includes a bingo photo of HUBU 280865, the first of this virtual two-pack. Unfortunately this photo is undated, but we know that the BNSF came into existence in 1996 so the ATP can't be any earlier than that. It also appears that it can't be any later than the NACS pool agreement ended in the early part of the decade of the 2000s, either. Or maybe not: a June 2009 article I found on joc.com (website for The Journal of Commerce) described how Hub Group, the registrant for the HUBU reporting marks, had shifted most of its business to Union Pacific from BNSF. An explanation given online for this was that BNSF stopped supplying intermodal equipment and became “bring your own box,” which didn't appeal to Hub Group. All this shows is how little I know about the intermodal business...

*In addition to the above items, the **Southern Pacific Impact Boxcar (031 00 490, \$59.95)** was initially scheduled to be available mid-month. However, the MTL website now shows delivery*



in December. Pre-orders for this were taken in in May 2018, which is when I covered this in the UMTRR. I'll add the actual product photos to the UMTRR Website when they become available.

And the **Genesee and Wyoming Industries SW1500 Locomotive (986 00 160, \$174.95)** was expected to be available mid-last month but was actually released this month. UMTRR coverage was in the January 2017 issue (Part 2). As previously noted, this unit is a little different as it comes painted in the standard GWI colors only.



Decals for a number of GWI-owned railroads are included (below) along with appropriate road numbers. The railroad choices are: Genesee and Wyoming Railroad



Company, Buffalo & Pittsburgh RR, Commonwealth Railway, Corpus Christi Terminal RR, Portland & Western Railroad, Rail Link, Inc., Tomahawk Railway, Tazewell & Peoria RR, and Quebec Gatineau Railway. I briefly described each of these shortlines in the January 2017 (Part 2) UMTRR, available on the Back Issues page of the UMTRR Website.

N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS:



145 00 320, \$34.90

Road Number: 1359 (will be "NP 1359" in website listings).

Heavyweight Paired Window Coach, Northern Pacific.

Two-tone green with white stripes, black roof, ends and underframe. White lettering including roadname in center of letterboard and road number at bottom left and right. Red, black and white monad herald (without roadname) at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1952 to the early 1960s.

We welcome the Route of the Vista-Dome North Coast Limited into the MTL N Scale passenger car roster with this release. They've already done NP passenger cars in Z Scale, but those were streamlined lightweight cars. However, Todd Sullivan wrote in the **NP Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, "In addition to all this sleek lightweight equipment, the Northern Pacific had a delightful assemblage of older heavyweight cars. The 1350 series of coaches were built by Pullman-Standard in 1915 with such touches of elegance as arched windows and doors. The 1350 to 1359 were rebuilt by the NP in 1935, treated to air conditioning, and sent out to serve on the North Coast Limited."

The bingo photo of the 1359 accompanying this, on Page 24 of the **Color Guide**, clearly shows the outline of the arched windows, so we have a delta here to the MTL 145 body style. The vestibule door openings are still arched as well. It's also noted in the Color Guide that the cars were painted in what's called the "Loewy Scheme" toward the end of their service lives. The 1359 is shown as of 1962 in that scheme, and sister car 1366 is shown in the same paint as of 1964. That scheme, developed by designer Raymond Loewy (of the Pennsylvania Railroad's GG-1) was introduced in 1952, which gives us the earliest possible start of the ATP.

N SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: **Runner Pack #147** (993 00 147, \$99.95), **four three CTCX 54 Foot General Service Tank Cars**, is expected to be available mid-month and should be at MTL dealers as you read this. UMTRR coverage was in the June 2018 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 110 67 320, 730833; 110 68 320, 730848; 100 69 320, 730872. These are the seventeenth through nineteenth road numbers for this car, which was previously released in the CTCX 16-Pack in August 2017. Note that the middle two digits of the catalog numbers pick up at 17 to follow along with the 16-pack.



The **DODX 'Mixed' Three-Pack** (993 01 620, \$109.95) was pushed back from last month to mid-this month. UMTRR coverage was in the July 2017 issue (part of the overall coverage of this body style). These cars have six-wheel trucks. Each car comes with an M1 Abrams Tank load, assembled but unpainted (decals included). The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: 137 51 011, 40059 (Cascade Green); 137 52 021, 40093 (Dark Olive Green); and 137 53 031, 40096 (Light Olive Green).



And also scheduled for delivery mid-month is the **Penn Central Heavyweight Five-Pack (993 01 750, \$124.95)**. UMTRR coverage of this item was in the June 2018 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are as follows: Heavyweight Baggage Car, 147 51 340, Road Number 7630, then four Heavyweight Paired Window Coaches: 145 52 340, 1676; 145 53 340, 1690; 145 54 340, 1707; and 145 55 340, 1730.

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 November 30.



Scheduled Delivery April 2019:

993 00 152, \$99.95.

Reporting Marks: UP 161039, 161098, 161125 and 161195.

Runner Pack #151, Quantity Four of 50 Foot Double Door Boxcars with End Doors, Union Pacific.

Brown with yellow lettering including large roadname and reporting marks on left and "Be Specific - Ship Union Pacific" slogan on right. Approximate Time Period: 1956 (based on paint scheme) to mid-1960s. Previous

Releases: None. Individual catalog numbers (in the 078 series) will be confirmed upon release. These will be the first through fourth releases for this car. MTL artwork is preliminary and actual product may vary.

These UP Class A-50-15 boxcars will be released in the circa-1956 paint scheme as depicted in the preliminary artwork. The spotting feature for this scheme is the familiar 20 inch high roadname. These cars were built in 1937 and originally wore the "Serves All The West/Road of the Streamliners" decoration which has been done by MTL in May 1997 and April 2009 (Catalog 78030/078 00 030, 2009 release at right). There were 100 cars in this particular build but the UP had other cars of the same class in different number series. Terry Metcalfe's book **Union Pacific Freight Cars 1936-1951** has comprehensive coverage of the A-50-15s including official drawings and photos of both the exterior and interior of these cars. It's quite the treat to view images of the inside



of these cars with the end doors open. Among other things, they were wood-lined inside, roof, ends, and side, and had wood floors. Metcalf notes that this was to prevent damage to the lading and to prevent condensation from getting the load wet. Also noted in the image of UP 161100 is that the inside of the doors had the reporting marks stenciled in small print.

I'll be lazy here and reprint from my 2009 coverage my lookup in the January 1940 ORER, even though it's 16 years before the paint scheme on these cars was introduced. The series 161000 to 161199 is described as "U.P., Automobile, Steel, Staggered Doors, Z-Bar." The inside length of these cars was 50 feet 6 inches, inside height 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 52 feet 2 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, side door opening 15 feet, end door opening in an arch from 9 feet at the top to 9 feet 4 inches at the widest point, and 9 feet 2 inches to 10 feet 1 inch at the highest point. Capacity was 4961 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds and there were 198 cars out of the possible 200 in the series. But there were only 87 cars listed in the January 1945 Register – the reason for which is below. There were 26 cars in the January 1964 ORER with the end doors still shown. Just four cars remained as of the January 1967 Register. Given that, I'm going to guess that this was the last paint scheme the cars received. There is a "door thing" in that the MTL model has two 8 foot doors while the prototype has a door opening of 15 feet.

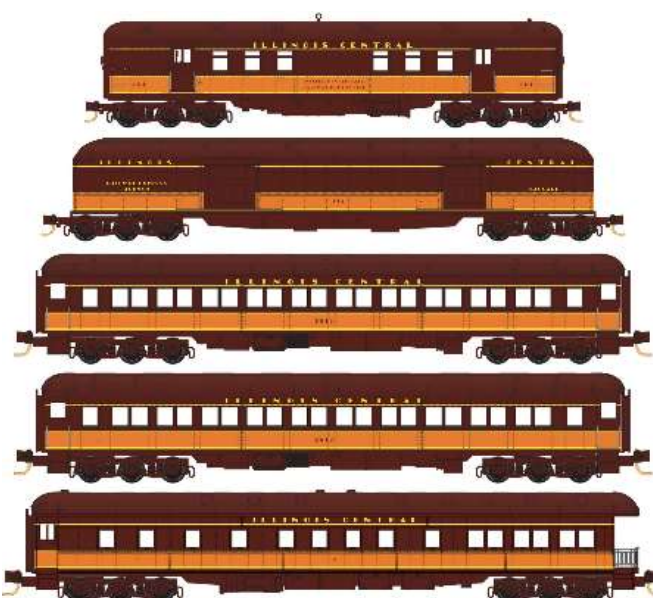
Page of **Union Pacific Freight Cars 1936-1951** includes a photo of UP 161195 in the paint scheme MTL will use here, giving us a bingo to the fourth road number in this forthcoming Runner Pack. I mentioned back in 2009 that some of these cars were rebuilt in 1942 with extended roofs and placed in service to transport aircraft parts from Boeing's Kansas factories to their Seattle area assembly plants. There are example photos of cars with this modification as well. These cars had to be routed carefully as 1940s rail clearances weren't what they are today. For example, they would not fit under the umbrella platform at the Cheyenne, Wyoming passenger station.

Scheduled Delivery April 2019:

993 01 790, \$149.95

Illinois Central Heavyweight Five-Pack.

Scheduled to consist of one 140 series Railway Post Office, Road Number 103; one 147 series baggage car, Road Number 794; two 145 series paired window coaches, Road Numbers 2813 and 2819; and one 144 7x series Business Car, Road Number 6. Each car will be brown and orange with gold striping, gold roadname in center of letterboard and additional brown lettering on the orange bands. Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release. Approximate Time Period: 1940s to late 1960s (varies by car). MTL artwork is preliminary and actual product may vary.



There have been train and railroad songs galore since the early days of recorded music. But as far as I know there's been only one song named for a train that has ever hit the Billboard Top 40 Pop Chart, and that's "City of New Orleans" by Arlo Guthrie. Written by Steve Goodman and recorded by Guthrie in 1971, the song got as high as #18 on the Pop Chart and #4 on the Adult Contemporary Chart in 1972. By that time, the Illinois Central had given way to Amtrak for the running of the "name train" and most if not all of the IC's heavyweight passenger equipment was either scrapped or headed that way.

It's noted by author James Kincaid in the **IC/GM&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** that the Illinois Central extensively rebuilt its older passenger equipment rather than buying new, which "would cause the road to continue to operate a predominantly heavyweight fleet in a lightweight era." And that led to Amtrak disposing of the IC equipment that it inherited when it took over intercity passenger service. Even before then, the railroad itself was paring down its roster as its passenger train count shrunk.

The **Color Guide** is also a one-stop shop for reference photos for this forthcoming N Scale set, as there are images of all five cars provided. Page 4 has the bingo for RPO 103. It's shown in a heavily modified configuration including new windows and a round roof—not really a match for the MTL 140 body style. However, it's noted that when built in 1914 by Pullman, it had six windows per side in a split arrangement, and only later were the windows changed to put them near one end of the car. In early 1961, all but two of the original series 95 to 104 remained and they were rebuilt to the appearance in the photo.

Page 7 of the **Color Guide** shows Baggage Car 794, one of a short series of five numbered 790 to 794. It was built by American Car and Foundry in 1926. Perhaps the key delta to the MTL 147 body style is the presence of two different width doors, one eight feet wide and one four feet ten inches wide. All of these cars were off the IC roster by 1968.

Coaches 2813 and 2819 appear on Page 13 of the **Color Guide**. The window arrangements on these cars are just slightly different than the MTL 145 body style. I note that the 2813 and 2819 differed from each other as photographed in 1970 and 1969 respectively. The 2813 has a round roof while the 2819 kept its clerestory roof with some modifications. The 2813 seated 64 while the 2819 seated 60 passengers.

Finally, we have Business Car 6 on Page 25 of the **Color Guide**. It was found in Chicago in 1970, assigned to the Vice President of Operations. It was constructed by AC&F in 1915 and was a business car from the beginning. The view is of the other side of the car than the one shown in the MTL artwork, however I'd expect some differences in the window arrangements between prototype and model. It seems that if you've seen one Business Car, you've seen... well, one Business Car.

The end of the Approximate Time Period is a bit of a mixed bag, then, ranging from the late 1960s to around 1970 or 1971, with the possible exception of the Business Car which could have been retained by the Illinois Central post-Amtrak. The final question here then is the start of the ATP, which is of course driven by the paint scheme. (Prior to the introduction of the brown,

orange, and yellow, the IC used a relatively standard Pullman Green and gold decoration, an example of which is also in the **Color Guide**, Page 6.) N Scale passenger train expert (and UMTRR Gang Member) Fred Klein has an online page on the IC's Panama Limited in which he notes that the "E7 diesels introduced in 1946 are appropriate and prototypical for this era train" – and they're in the brown and orange paint. A query to the NScaleVarnish group on groups.io resulted in a reply from Tom Davis with some additional data points: "I think the paint scheme actually first came into use in 1942. IC managed to get a couple of streamlined car sets approved by the War Production board and built so they could re-equip the Panama LTD in 1942 (with E6s, if I recall correctly). In 1943, they repainted the City of Miami to match. I can't find a date for when the paint scheme began to be painted onto heavyweight equipment, but I do know that ACL (per Larry Goolsby in **ACL Passenger Service- the Postwar Years**) began painting some of their streamlined equipment to match IC brown and orange in 1949, so it was clearly in wide use by that time. In addition, while Goolsby does not have a date for first ACL heavyweight painted in those colors, by the mid-1950s, there were several. And I think fair to assume that IC was painting their heavyweights that way well before ACL."

So "1940s" it is. Thanks, Tom!

Scheduled Delivery April 2019:

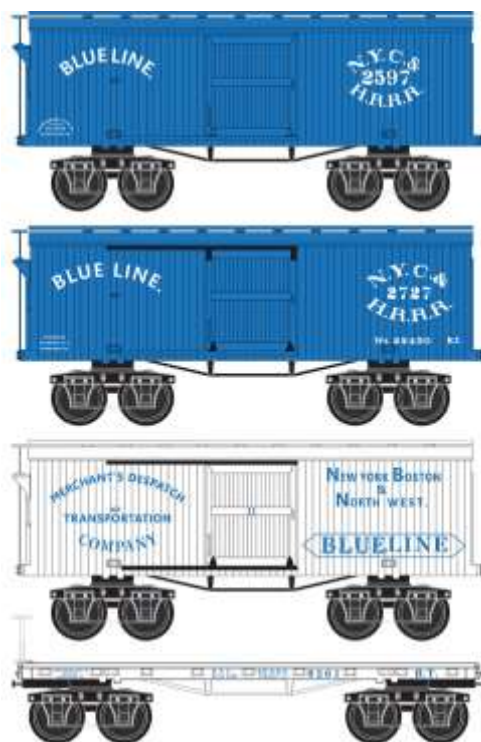
993 01 800, \$89.95

Civil War Era "Blue Line" Four-Pack.

Scheduled to consist of:

- Two 151 series 26 foot boxcars, Reporting Marks NYC&HR 2597 and 2727. All blue with white lettering including arched "Blue Line" on left and arched reporting marks with road number inside on right.
- One 151 series 26 foot boxcar, no reporting marks, possible Road Number 11. White with blue lettering including "Merchant's Despatch Transportation Company" on left and "New York Boston and North West" and "Blueline" on right.
- One 153 series 26 foot flat car, Reporting Marks NYC&HR 9261. White with blue lettering including reporting marks and "Blue Line Transit Company" in center and road number right of center.

Approximate Time Period: 1876 and thereabouts. MTL artwork is preliminary and actual product may vary. Please note that these cars have link and pin, not Magne-Matic, couplers.



Now where did I put that citation that I needed to remember for this pre-order announcement?

Ah, here it is: libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/1646 , taken at the Harrisburg Car Company's exhibit at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. There are four boxcars on display under a roof, lettered for the Red, White and Blue Lines with a Merchants Despatch

car rounding out the quartet. The number on the Blue Line car, 2727, provides what has to be the oldest bingo ever in these bytes: 1876. There is also a closer-in three-quarter view of the same display, which reveals that there are two rows of cars on exhibit. And yes, these cars require link and pin couplers. Check libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/1647 for that photo. Although tagged for Harrisburg Car Company, a sign atop the exhibit reads, "New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company / Freight Taken From The Atlantic To The Pacific Without Transfer."

You might recall that I found the above two citations as part of a thread on the "Real Steam Era Freight Cars Group" on groups.io (the successor to STFMC on YahooGroups). Also from that thread was a link to a series of Harrisburg Car Company photos. This includes another shot of NYC&HR 2727, this time by itself. There is also a somewhat faded but still quite discernable photo of the Merchant's Despatch boxcar in all white, with what might or might not be a number 11 on the door. And there's an image of NYC&HR 2597 in (I presume) blue and white as well. We're just missing the flat car here, but three out of four isn't bad. Check out the URL www.library.upenn.edu/collections/rbm/photos/harrisburgcar/ for the complete set of photos, which also includes bingos to previous New York Central and Merchants Despatch Civil War Era offerings from MTL.

There was no ORER that far back, but there is the June 1885 **Railway Equipment and Mileage Guide**, a digital version of which is in the Research Accumulation. The entry for the "Blue Line and Canada Southern Line," General Offices, Rochester, New York (hey!) showed equipment lettered for a number of different railroads. The two blue boxcars are in the group 2000 to 2727, 29 feet long and with 20,000 pounds capacity. While the New York Central and Hudson River entry also has some Blue Line equipment included, I didn't see a flat car. Nor was there an entry for Merchants Despatch. All that means, however, is that those cars weren't around as of 1885.

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 after November 14.*



025 44 126, \$28.95

Reporting Marks: CSXT 141986.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, CSX Transportation (ex-Railbox).

Base car is yellow with black door and aluminum roof. Black lettering including reporting marks (with patched road number) and large "Railbox" name on left. Large red, blue and black "Next Load/Any Road" symbol and slogan on right. Extensive fading of original paint scheme. Lower portion of sides is repainted dark blue with

yellow lettering including CSXT reporting marks on left, and yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes along bottom of sides. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 2005 given conspicuity stripes to possibly as late as the present, but see text.

When the Incentive Per Diem boxcar bubble burst, the need for “Next Load/Any Road” Railbox cars also declined rather dramatically as well. This resulted in Railbox cars being acquired by some of the member roads of Trailer Train/TTX, the parent company of Railbox. One of the larger participants in this distribution was CSXT, or should I say its predecessors. Over on RRPictureArchives.net, we have a bingo—sort of, as I’ll explain shortly—to CSXT 141986. It’s described as originally being RBOX 17919, then C&O 400986. RailcarPhotos.com has numerous photos of CSXT cars numbered from 141000 to 141999. Some went right from C&O reporting marks to CSXT reporting marks, others were SBD (Seaboard System) first. The specific current overall series is 141767 to 141999 according to RailcarPhotos.

Most of these cars were fully repainted into the standard CSX dark blue with yellow lettering, and many of them were photographed with plenty of tagging—some extensively so. (One of these was done by “ICHABOD” who was the feature of an MTL three-pack a while back.) A few cars, despite at least two reporting marks changes, were never actually painted out of the Railbox scheme and were caught that way as late as 2014... the 141948, for example.

And the 141986, the car MTL depicts, is that same way as of July 2010 when its picture was taken. There’s more than a little bit of, ahem, extra decoration, across the bottom third of the car. That would have been simple to depict by MTL, except that CSX Transportation does not allow graffiti on models of its equipment, just as Union Pacific doesn’t. So, try a “paint out” instead, right? I think CSX would have painted the entire car, leading to my “see text,” but it’s also hard to prove the absence of something.

The prototype series in which this car falls is alive and well in the January 2018 ORER, and so a “to present” ATP for this exact road number is possible. If you can navigate through all the subsets, that is... grumble. The main group 141000 to 141999 had 128 cars at the time, but then there are thirteen subsets. It all adds up to 473 cars, all with 220,000 Gross Rail Weight but with small differences in dimensions and cubic foot capacity. Hey, there’s the 141986 after all, a 5077 cubic foot car, which aligns with the MTL 025 body style.



025 44 330, \$29.95

Reporting Marks: SOU 526306.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Southern Railway.

Base car is brown with white lettering including “Southern Gives A Green Light To Innovations” and road number on left and “Southern Serves The South” on right. “A” or

featured side is covered with graffiti including the word "SANTA" across car with figure of Santa Claus holding a glass of milk on door, and black restenciled reporting marks on left. "B" side has extensive weathering and fading effects, faded graffiti on lower sections of side, and orange horizontal conspicuity stripes along bottom of side and on door. Approximate Time Period: 2016 for "A" side of car, plus or minus. Previous Release (Unweathered): Road Number 38000, January 1986.

Let's turn things over to our Graffiti Special Correspondent David Grothe: "In looking at the Southern 'Santa' graffiti car, several shots are posted on rrpicturearchives.net. However, there are some differences between the prototype and the Micro-Trains release. The most obvious difference is the large letters on the side of the prototype car were changed to Santa on the Micro-Trains release. Also, if you look closely you will notice that on the prototype car Santa is holding a can of spray paint, as opposed to the Micro-Trains release in which Santa is holding a glass of milk. Lastly, I noticed the words 'Happy New Year' that are on the MTL model don't appear on the prototype car.

On rrpicturearchives.net there are photos of both sides of the car dated July 4, 2013 but neither side is the Santa graffiti. So, it looks like the ATP at least for the Santa side of the car is after July 4, 2013. The reverse side graffiti on the prototype and Micro-Trains model seem to match up pretty well so an ATP of at least July 4, 2013 works for that side of the car."

Thanks, David! Further on in the sequence of photos are three, all dated May 2016, that show the "A" side of the car, with whatever writing that is that was substituted with "SANTA" for the Micro-Trains release. (Even with three views, and the lettering covering nearly the entire side, I still can't figure it out.) So we have a split ATP here.

We also have, clearly, a "not a reprint" from the original 1986 release, which of course did not have any weathering or graffiti. Even if this were a "clean" car I would be tempted to call the "not a reprint" anyway, as the prototype series are not even close in terms of number sequence. This month's 526306 was in the Southern Railway's Class BS-166 built in 1973, a 5277 cubic foot boxcar. The original run carried road number 38000, which was the first of five hundred 5219 cubic foot boxcars built in 1969. (Detail photos of sister cars 38017 and 38081 are available on [Fallen Flags](http://FallenFlags.com).) And finally, though very faded (and realistically so!) the base paint on this new run differs from that of the 1986 release. Neither car is an exact match to the MTL 025 body style; for starters, the ends are different. Both cars were built by Pullman-Standard while an FMC car is the basis for the Micro-Trains model.

A quick check of the Norfolk Southern's listing in the ORER for January 2018 shows the SOU series 525600 to 526464 with a total of 153 cars still in service. There is a bit of an odd note: "Maximum Load from End of Car to Bolster 77,000 Pounds."



025 44 567, \$28.95

Reporting Marks: RBOX 38295.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Railbox.

Car #11 in the "A Year of Railbox" series. Base car is yellow with black door and weathered/rusted roof. Black lettering including reporting marks (with patched road number) and "Railbox" name on left. Small red, blue and black "Next Load/Any Road" symbol and slogan on right. A side has "Sorrow" graffiti across entire side of car.

B side has graffiti bottom left and far right. Approximate Time Period: 2014, plus or minus (using the A or "featured" side of the car). Previous Releases: A three-pack (Catalog Number 25562) with Road Numbers 31558, 31562 and 31574, January 1997, and Weathered Releases "A Year in Railbox" #1 through #5, January through May 2018 (Catalog Numbers 025 44 560 through 025 44 564), #8, August 2018 (Catalog Number 025 44 565), and #10, October 2018 (Catalog Number 025 44 566).

Micro-Trains has taken a bit of turn towards health in their last two "Year of Railbox" releases. Last month, we had a plug for World Vegetarian Day and this month they're referencing the Great American Smokeout. That event, held on the third Thursday of November – this year, it was November 15 – is held under the auspices of the American Cancer Society. It began in 1970 in Massachusetts with one Arthur Mullaney challenged people to stop smoking for one day and donate what they would have spent on cigarettes to a scholarship fund. The first official Smokeout took place in California in 1976. The American Cancer Society took it nationwide in 1977 according to their website. "The Great American Smokeout event challenges people to stop smoking and helps people learn about the many tools they can use to help them quit and stay quit."

And now back to David Grothe: "Bingo photos for the Railbox 'Great Smokeout' release can be found on rrpicturearchives.net. A photo for the 'Sorrow' side of the car is dated June 3, 2014 and the graffiti on the MTL release seems to match up pretty well to the prototype. A photo for the reverse side of the car is dated May 28, 2011. The graffiti on that side of the car also matches up well to the MTL model except the lettering behind the open door on the photo on rrpicturearchives.net, which is absent on the MTL model. I was able to find a photo on Flickr of that side of the car with the door closed. The word Risk is painted on the car behind the open door: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/quiet-silence/14403311381/in/photolist-nV2oN3-nWLJER/>."

The 38295 is a 5277 cubic foot boxcar, part of the series 37750 to 38749 built by FMC in April to November 1980 and June 1981 according to RailcarPhotos.com. This was the Railbox Class XFF20. (Sister car, RBOX 38288, is somewhat of a "Holiday Car" but not one I think you'll see from Micro-Trains; check RailcarPhotos for why!) The January 2018 ORER shows 531 of these cars in service. I doubt that even a one doesn't have some sort of graffiti at this point.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:



Car #10 in the Union Pacific World War II Poster Series (118 00 200, \$25.95) has been released. Reporting Marks for this Troop Sleeper are USAX 19420. UMTRR coverage was in



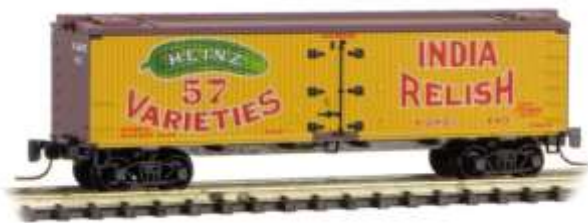
the September 2017 issue. At right is the poster on which the car artwork is based.



Also, the **Custom Christmas Car** (101 00 804, \$39.95) which was available via pre-order only should be shipping mid-month.

There are no pre-order announcements for Special Edition Releases this month.

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



518 00 650, \$29.95

Reporting Marks: HJHCo. 440.

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

Third release in the Heinz Yellow Series (pre-orders taken April 2018). Yellow sides, brown roof and ends, black underframe and details.

Arch bar trucks. Green and white Heinz pickle trademark on left. Red with white outline lettering including "57 Varieties" on left and "India Relish" on right. White end markings. Approximate Time Period: Decade of the 1900s into the 1920s.

Please see the coverage of the N Scale Release above (058 00 420), 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.

Speaking of N and Z Scale cars, for how many months have I had the wrong body style description down here in the Z Scale section? Let's not count. Oops...



515 00 201 and 515 00 202, \$23.80 each.

Reporting Marks: MWR 1022 and 1026.

40 Foot Wood Double Sheathed Boxcar, Single Door, Muncie and Western.

Yellow with black lettering including reporting marks and large "Ball Glass Jars" on left and "Ball" with roadname on

right. Black and white depiction of a Ball Glass Jar on door. Approximate Time Period: mid to late 1920s, but see text.

First, let's note that the Muncie and Western was a terminal and switching road in Muncie, Indiana, about fifty miles northeast of Indianapolis. It existed mostly to serve the Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing Company, which existed mostly to produce Ball Jars, also known as mason jars. Prior to the days of canned fruit and vegetables, this was the way to keep produce from spoiling, assuming it was prepared for those jars correctly. The MWR connected with the four railroads that ran through Muncie (PRR, NYC, NKP and C&O) and existed as an independent operation until 1995, when it was formally abandoned. Norfolk Southern now handles what switching remains. The Ball company doesn't make Ball Jars any more either.

Two types of boxcars come up most frequently when searching for roster information: the Mather Patent car, a single sheathed (also called "outside braced" rather incorrectly) car with unusual ends which are its key spotting feature, and steel sheathed cars which are noted as post-World War II rebuilds of wood-sided cars. An example of the former by venerable photographer Jack Delano is available in several places around cyberspace, including on the Shorpy site: www.shorpy.com/node/1605?size=_original. (It's just one car in a Chicago's Proviso Yard... not my fault if you get lost in this image for a while!) I'll also note that the August 2010 issue of Railroad Model Craftsman has an article on the "Ball Line" boxcars.

But how about this car? Well, the line doesn't have its own entry in the June 1917 ORER, though it's noted in the table of connections for the Chesapeake & Ohio. In the August 1924 Register, there is an entry, but with the note, "Freight Cars Owned: None." And that brings us back to the April 1928 ORER which I cited back in January 2000. The series MWR 1000 to 1048 comes in with a 36 foot inside length and a 37 foot 7 inch outside length, which is shorter than the model by more than a bit. Furthermore, the inside height is a relatively low 7 feet 5 inches, and the extreme height, 13 feet 10 inches, is a foot more than the height to the top of the running board, suggesting to me a vertical brake staff was in place on these cars. There was a five foot door opening and capacity of 2225 cubic feet or 60,000 pounds. In short (pun not intended), this was a pint-sized boxcar carrying jars (pun intended), and definitely a "stand in" just based on the ORER data.

In addition to not being very tall boxcars, they also had a rather short ATP, since the entire series is gone by the February 1931 Equipment Register. This is all despite the build date of February 1917 on the model. I had no luck tracing that back to a previous owner, or finding any photos online or in print. There have been a large number of Muncie and Western "Ball

Line” models out there, for decades in fact, although the Mather Patent design, not yet available in Z Scale, is most likely the closest actual match we have to a real “Ball Line” boxcar.



556 00 070, \$29.95

Reporting Marks: SP 106.

Modernized Heavyweight Business Car, Southern Pacific.

Two-tone gray with black roof, ends and underframe. White striping

between shades of gray. White lettering including roadname in center of letterboard and reporting marks and car name “Oregon” at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: 1964 to no later than 1973.

There are four photos and one and one-half pages of coverage of this single car in the Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 3. This car had quite the history! It was the observation car “Central Plains” for the New York Central, then was the observation car for the 1947 Freedom Train. The Southern Pacific purchased it and rebuilt it to a business car in 1954, receiving Dark Olive paint and gold lettering and the name Shasta for the SP division to which it was assigned. By June 1958 according to the Color Guide, it had been repainted into the two-tone gray scheme modeled by MTL. The car’s name was changed to “Oregon” in late 1964, as noted in the Micro-Trains car copy. The next of the four photos shows the car in the Simulated Stainless Steel paint in May 1973. And there’s your Approximate Time Period. The car itself has a differing window arrangement from the MTL 556 body style.

Picking up from there, a photo of this car located on RRPictureArchives is in black and white, but still clearly shows Amtrak-style red, white and blue stripes across most of the center band between windows. The image closely matches one in the Color Guide that’s dated July 1977. But as of 1988 the car had lost its name and was back to silver and orange “Daylight” colors, with the car name in a “Daylight” variation. RRPictureArchives also has a series of views of the car as of its 1996 outshopping from Railcar Restoration Inc. in 1996 following extensive repairs. Note that the photos are dated August 2009 but that appears to be when the photos were uploaded, not when they were taken. Finally, there are several photo citations in the “Business Car Photo Index” originally compiled by the late Jerry Laboda (URL passcarphotos.rypn.org/Indices/BC12b.htm , then scroll down a bit).

In addition to the above, the **VIA F7B Powered Diesel (980 02 450, Road Number 6604, \$109.95)** is scheduled to be available mid-month and should be at MTL dealers as you read this. UMTRR coverage of this item was in the May 2018 issue.



Z SCALE REPRINTS: The Santa Fe SD40-2 Diesel Locomotives (970 01 091, Road Number 5036, 970 01 092, Road Number 5039, \$225.95 each) are scheduled to be available mid-month and should be at MTL dealers as you read this. UMTRR coverage of these was in the June 2017 issue. I'll add product images to the UMTRR website when they become available.



Z SCALE MULTI-PACKS: The Railbox Eight-Pack (994 00 811, \$239.95) of Railbox/ABOX 50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcars with Combination Doors originally scheduled for release in October is now expected to be available mid-this month and should be at MTL dealers as you read this. UMTRR coverage was in the May 2018 issue. The individual catalog numbers and road numbers for these items are as follows: 512 51 040, 50445; 512 52 040, 50467; 512 53 040, 50523; 512 54 040, 50532; 512 55 040, 50654; 512 56 040, 50676; 512 57 040, 50898; 512 58 040, 50910. These are the second through ninth releases for this car, which was previously released in February 2018.

Also, the VIA Four-Pack #2 (994 01 220, \$119.95) is scheduled to be available mid-month and should be at MTL dealers as you read this. UMTRR coverage was in the May 2018 issue. Included in the four-pack are three 550 series Streamlined Sleepers (Elderbank, Excelsior, Elizabeth) and one 553 series Baggage Car (Road # TBD). Catalog Numbers will be added to the UMTRR Website tables when available.



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 November 30.

Scheduled Delivery April 2019:

994 00 108, \$79.95

Reporting Marks: UP 51120, 51127, 51131, 51135.

Runner Pack #108, Quantity Four of 40 Foot Flat Cars, Union Pacific.

Brown (the UP's "Synthetic Red") with white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname in center. Each car

will include a load consisting of a locomotive prime mover and covered generator. Approximate Time Period: 1974 (based on paint scheme) to early 1990s. Previous Releases: None. Catalog Numbers (in the 525 series) will be confirmed upon release. Micro-Trains artwork is preliminary and actual product may vary.



The MTL artwork clearly shows the UP Class F-50-15 so let's start there. The series 51000 to 51500 was built in 1950. If you're interested, a set of railroad drawings is available from the site livesteamlocomotives.com. We don't need to go quite that far. Exactrail, which did this car in HO Scale, calls it the UP's "signature" flat car. They were constructed from General Steel Casting "kits" sold to the railroad. At first general service flat cars, some were configured for trailer on flat car service later. Conveniently, Exactrail also tags this paint scheme to 1974, replacing the "as delivered" version which had lettering largely the same but in yellow. (A future MTL release?) Some cars were moved to Maintenance of Way service and sported black lettering over green. (Another future MTL release?)

The "class car" or first in the series can be found on George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" site ([URL www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org)) in the scheme MTL used as of December 1991. There are two additions: first, an ACI Label placard which hangs a bit below the car, and second, a yellow U-1 wheel inspection "dot" placed unceremoniously right over the first "N" in "UNION." Well, they had to put it somewhere! The car also has wooden stakes, additional wood planking for a load, and some sort of cabling draped along the outside of the body. Now that's a little strange. The F-50-15s did have end mounted brake staffs, unlike the side mounted brake wheels on the MTL 525 series.

We'll check the ORER for July 1974, coinciding with the paint scheme date. The series 51000 to 51500 had 314 cars, described simply as "Flat" with the AAR Designation FM. The inside length was 42 feet 6 inches, outside length 45 feet 9 inches, and capacity 100,000 pounds – more than sufficient for the prime mover and generator load Micro-Trains will supply with these cars. Almost ten years later in the April 1984 Register, there were 79 cars in the main series and another 58 called out as having tie-downs for assigned service. The four road numbers in the forthcoming Runner Pack would have remained in the main series, assuming they were still in revenue service. By October 1993, the main series was down to 36 cars noted as being

in log service, and five exceptions were plain flat cars. That seems to be a reasonable place to call the ATP.

Z SCALE WEATHERED 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 after October 15.*



510 44 228, \$28.95

Reporting Marks: RBOX 38295.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Railbox.

Car #11 in the "A Year of Railbox" series. Base car is yellow with black door and weathered/rusted roof. Black lettering including reporting marks (with patched road number) and "Railbox" name on left. Small red, blue and black "Next Load/Any Road" symbol and slogan on right. A side has "Sorrow" graffiti across entire side of

car. B side has graffiti bottom left and far right. Approximate Time Period: 2014, plus or minus (using the A or "featured" side of the car). Previous Releases: Eight Pack #4 (994 00 804), May 2014; and Weathered Releases "A Year in Railbox" #2 through #5, February through May 2018 (Catalog Numbers 510 44 222 through 225), #8, August 2018 (Catalog Number 510 44 226), and #10 (Catalog Number 510 44 227), October 2018.

Please see the coverage of the N Scale release above (025 44 567).

Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: No releases this month.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: I don't think I've mentioned this before, but the November Micro-News is advertising that the MTL True-Scale Coupler is available in brown plastic now in addition to the original black. As with the black couplers, the brown ones are available in two-packs and ten-packs, with either short or long shanks... but unassembled in any case. (**Now** we'll see how well my eye surgery went...) Check the MTL website for catalog numbers and prices.

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: None received or tripped over (by me) since last issue.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: Before focusing, as promised last month, on the Z Scale "do it yourself" bye-bye board, let's touch on two N Scale items from last month that we know are outta here: the Weathered Union Pacific/former The Rock covered hopper (096 44 180) and the Railbox "Making Tracks For A Cure" pink x-post boxcar (025 00 106). That latter car, I'm told, blew off the shelves, to the frustration of at least a few UMTRR Gang Members. As long

as I'm looking at last month, the Z Scale Southern Pacific Weathered Two-Pack has left the building also (994 05 200).

Now to the business at hand... catching up with several years of 1:220 sellouts. Despite what has been long speculated as lower production run sizes than with its larger and older brother, Z Scale items sometimes have a habit of hanging around the factory for a while. So we need to begin this look back with the 2011 releases, where, believe it or not, the Katy/MKT caboose is still available (535 00 330), as is the Rock Island black and red F7A powered diesel (980 01 210), the only two items that were not sold out last time I checked. All other Z Scale releases from 2011 have left the building.

On to 2012, where again just two 1:220 items remain, and they're both still here: The Rock Island caboose (535 00 350) and Rock Island maroon F7A powered diesel (980 01 240, but note that the B-unit in the MTL image is gone). No editing of release tables so far!

But that stops with 2013 releases. Only F7 diesels were left, and of those, the Pennsylvania Railroad Brunswick Green reprint of the A unit is gone (980 01 090, June, B unit still available), as is the green and orange Western Pacific F7B unit (980 02 292, December). A and B units are still gettable for Conrail and Missouri Pacific, and B's can be had for the PRR in Brunswick Green, Santa Fe "yellow bonnet" and Southern Pacific gray.

Moving to 2014, the two reprinted United States Army flat cars in yellow and red have marched off (524 00 06x, April). That quickly brings us back to F7s, where the 2014 reprints of PRR's in Brunswick Green have sold out (980 0x 090, June, Road Numbers 9878 and 9878B). The Southern Pacific "bloody nose" F7A and B are gone (980 0x 070, August). The second of two F7Bs in the two-tone "Loewy" Northern Pacific scheme has sold out (980 02 352, October) but the two A units and the other B unit are still in stock.

Next up is 2015. This has probably been true for a while, but the POW/MIA x-post boxcar has sold out (510 44 270, October). Both numbers of the Burlington Northern well car reprint have rolled away, also probably a while ago (540 00 02x, May). The 2015 Christmas Car (548 00 070, November) and the Reindeer Belt Train Set (994 21 060, November) are gone. So is the Santa Fe Weathered Set (994 05 130, December). The first number of the Santa Fe 40 Container has been hauled away (761 00 190, February). And that brings us back to F7 diesels again. Of those, the Rio Grande B-units (980 02 39x, May) are gone, but there are still plenty of choices from that year's fleet of MTL diesels.

Among 2016 releases, the weathered version of the Canadian National 50 foot double door boxcar is outta here (506 44 280, June), as are both numbers of the Baltimore and Ohio car of the same body style (506 00 33x, May). The first number of the Santa Fe 50 foot plug door boxcar with orange door is gone (507 00 651, November). However, in the "Make Up Your Mind!" Department, the Frisco/SL-SF x-post boxcars (510 00 06x, September) are on the MTL website as being in stock. I could swear they'd been previously reported as discontinued. As long as I'm mentioning x-post boxcars, I'll note that Runner Pack #93, four of them in Golden West Service regalia (994 00 093, July) and Runner Pack #98, four in Pan Am Railways garb

(994 00 098, December) are both sold out. Two of three BC Rail x-post combination boxcars are gone: the second “clean” release (511 00 032, October) and the Weathered “Monster #3” run (511 44 030, also October). Eight stock cars have hit the last roundup; by that I mean Eight Pack #9 of, well, eight Union Pacific stock cars (994 00 809, January). Make that nine stock cars as the second number of the Baltimore and Ohio version has rolled out (520 00 202, April). Add to that three gondolas: the first number for Burlington Northern (522 00 281, January) and both numbers of for Union Pacific (522 00 29x, November). And both numbers of the TTX/Trailer Train bulkhead flat car are gone (527 00 08x, March). Runner Pack #95, the four British Columbia tank cars (994 00 095, September) has drained out. (If you’re keeping score, only Runner Pack #96 is left from 2016.) The Pennsylvania Railroad caboose with yellow cupola has cleared (535 00 400, July). The Great Northern Passenger Four-Pack (994 01 0160, September) has departed the station, as the Baltimore & Ohio Baggage Car (553 00 130, March). Finally for the year, I’ll note that the three “Weathered Grab Bags” (West, North and East) can still be grabbed. Next time I’ll attempt to finish the Discontinued Alert for 2017 and 2018 Z Scale items... after which I can start all over again!

OOPS PATROL: So Other than using the wrong body style description for the Z Scale Heinz Refrigerator Cars, I didn’t see anything else.

SPECIAL RUN NEWS ADDENDUM: A correction to the Southern Pacific Class O-50-7 Tank Car is the latest Micro-Trains special run commissioned by George Hollwedel. This car has a rather unusual black and **silver**, not white, end. I guess that’s an oops though it is hard to tell from the image.

FINALLY, THE MYSTERY OF SPFE 464827: Mickey Levine is one of our longest tenured UMTRR Gang Members, and he’s checked in with a mystery car of sorts: A 70000/070 series Micro-Trains mechanical refrigerator car in Pacific Fruit Express/SPFE lettering (below). This car isn’t listed in the Trovestar database (at least not yet!) and in my estimation might be from a third-party decorator. If anyone can help with clues to the origin of this car, please let me know. Responses... if any?!?... next time. Until then, do the best you can!



Cheers,
George

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