



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report

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Hello again everyone! Let's take this month's look behind the red and yellow sign...

N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



054 00 270, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: CP 304903.

61 Foot Bulkhead Flat Car, CP Rail.

White with red CP Rail roadname left of center and black lettering including reporting marks in center. White on black double COTS panel right of center. Yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes at points along side. Simulated lumber load included. Approximate Time Period: 1996, or strictly speaking, after 2005 given conspicuity stripes, to at least 2017.

Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" site (www.nakina.net) has forty cars in the series CP 304900 to 304939, starting with the January 1996 Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER). He notes that these could be former Milwaukee Road cars. That would be a two-step process: what was left of the Milwaukee Road was absorbed by CP subsidiary Soo Line on January 1, 1996, and the Soo Line has been gradually subsumed into its parent ever since, though there remains plenty of equipment in SOO reporting marks for financial purposes.

There are three bingo photos of this car on the website RRPictureArchives.net; in fact it's the only car in the prototype series available there. The earliest photo was taken in July 2012 in Streetsville, Ontario. That white paint is looking surprisingly good considering the general wear and tear freight cars take. The second photo was provided by our friend and long-time UMTRR Gang Member Ed Weisensel, who caught it in September 2017 in Dubuque, Iowa. He remarked, "Surprising color on this CP bulkhead." I agree! It is looking more gray than white by this time, and since there is a limited "canvas" on which to operate on the sides, taggers went for the inside of the bulkheads instead. I guess that's creative... Finally, the third photo is from about a month later with the car in Saint Paul, Minnesota. We've got an ATP out at least that far. The ORER for January 2018 shows just five cars remaining of the original group of forty, but one of them is the 304903. While we're here, I'll note that the car has an inside length of 56 feet 8 inches and an outside length of 68 feet 4 inches. That outside length is over the couplers so the car might not be that far off the MTL 054 body style. However, the extreme height is 16 feet 9 inches which is taller than the Micro-Trains model. The general arrangement of the bulkheads is relatively close but not exact in my opinion.

I was curious about the car's origin so I checked further. Ian Cranstone believed that this CP series was originally the Milwaukee Road 67200 series. A check of the ORER for January 1985 does in fact show a series 67200 to 67249 of flat cars with "permanent end bulkheads" and the same dimensions. There were 49 cars in that group at that time. There's a shot of MILW 67237 from that group on George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" site (www.rr-fallenflags.org).



066 00 120, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: NATX 7501.

Three Dome (Three Compartment) Tank Car, Ambrose Wine Company.

#5 in the "Grape to Glass" Series (Pre-orders taken September 2019). Aluminum with black underframe, bottom of tank and handrail. Red "Ambrose Wine Co."

shadowed in black across car. Black lettering including reporting marks on left and legend "Special Winer Equipment" across top. White "Kansas City Mo." in center of lower black portion of tank. Black end markings. Approximate Time Period: at least the 1940s.

Look up "Ambrose Wine" in your search engine of choice and you get either links to Ambrose Wine Limited, an importer based in Thailand, or citations of other models of Ambrose Wine Company freight cars, including those unusual six dome tank cars... okay, six compartment tank cars, to be more precise. And of course there are what I might call "circular references" to this Micro-Trains release, complete with car copy which calls the firm a reseller of other vineyard's wines.

It wasn't until Page Three of my search that I got a match, and what do you know, it's a court case. For a little variety, it's a dispute with the Internal Revenue Service. The case has a 1956 date but the facts begin in 1943, when "Petitioner Jay L. Ambrose, manager and virtually sole stockholder of Ambrose and Company, a Colorado corporation, negotiated an agreement on behalf of the corporation with Italian Vineyard Company for the sale and delivery of 250,000 gallons of bulk wine during 1943 to Ambrose and Company." Italian was a substitute for Roma Wine Company, which had been sold in 1942 and was no longer available as a source of product. (And Roma Wine was the subject of last month's Grape to Glass car as well.) The tax issue centers around the "fair market value" of the wine, which was delayed... due to a shortage of tank cars in which to ship it! Ambrose claimed that the delay caused a drop in the wine's value. The tax court put a cork in that idea (pun intended) and Jay Ambrose and his wife, who had in the meantime shifted Ambrose Wine from being a corporation to a limited partnership, were found to be "deficient" in income tax by the amount of more than fifty thousand dollars each for their fiscal year 1944. Ouch! That's a lot of wine.

On "Gene's P48" blog, which is about scale modeling in 1/4 inch to the foot proportion (direct URL myp48.wordpress.com/2015/04/02/wine-a-different-type-of-industry/), I found a bingo photo for the car MTL has depicted here. Three-compartment (three dome) tank cars are usually relatively small, but this may be an exception. I can make out the capacity of two of the three compartments from the lettering on the middle and right hand domes: 4244 and

2025 gallons respectively. If the left hand and right hand compartments are identical in size that results in a more than 8000 gallon tank car. That's larger than the MTL 066 body style.

The build date painted on the model is in 1926, however I don't think the ATP starts there. The North American Tank Car entry in the April 1928 ORER has a unhelpful span of NATX cars numbered from 1194 to 16882. The 7501 is not among the individual groups of cars by capacity within that gigantic set. In the July 1935 Equipment Register, a series from 7250 to 7999 is shown with no car count; in the January 1943 edition that same group is listed with 432 cars. Lacking any other information I'm going to stick the guess of at least the 1940s for the Approximate Time Period which I've been using with other Grape to Glass releases.



093 00 170, \$29.80.

Reporting Marks: WP 11921.

Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers with Round Hatches, Western Pacific.

Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname on right. Multicolor ACI Label

and white on black double COTS panel on right. Approximate Time Period: 1974 (build date on car) to no later than 2007.

How many different style variations on the large roadname were there on Western Pacific Center Flows? I'm not sure, but here's another one. Page 84 of the book **Western Pacific Locomotives and Cars** (Volume One) has a shot of sister car WP 11927. It and the car MTL selected were from the group WP 11901 to 11965, built in 1974. This isn't quite Courier New font here, but it's definitely not Arial. (Comic Sans? Let's not go there.) I think that in a throwback to earlier days, this stenciling was custom designed; in my opinion, that "W" in "Western" doesn't look like it does anywhere else on the WP's rolling stock roster. Also notice how close together the "P" and "A" in "Pacific" are. OK, I'll admit being a typeface geek. As if I could deny it at this point...

But I digress. The series in question appears in the ORER for April 1975, with a tag indicating "change from previous issue." All 65 cars were present, with these key dimensions: inside length 49 feet 9 inches, outside length 54 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15 feet, capacity 197,000 pounds or 4750 cubic feet. That's a bit different from the CF4650 design which is the basis for the MTL 093 body style. The Union Pacific registration in the October 1996 Equipment Register has 47 cars in the WP series out of the original 65. There were 23 in the January 2006 ORER which were gone no later than the July 2007 ORER. So we have a pretty tight end to the Approximate Time Period this time.

In addition to a bingo for the WP 11921 as of June 1976, RailcarPhotos.com also has shots of WP 11914 as found in August 1980 and WP 11920 captured in August 1986. It's noted that the cars were built by American Car and Foundry in September and October 1974. The small lettering on the car and the Micro-Trains model refers to a lining installed when the cars were constructed.



111 00 381 and 111 00 382, \$55.90 each.

Reporting Marks: TTGX 711001 and 711010.

89 Foot Enclosed Autoracks, TTX (Trailer Train).

Flat car is yellow with black lettering. White reporting marks on black panel on left and red post-2008 TTX logo on right. Racking is the same yellow with aluminum panels, white roof and black lettering. Red

TTX logo on third panel from left. End doors are yellow with black lettering and white top to mark excess height. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes at points along flat car. Approximate Time Period: starting no earlier than 2018.

There's a handy feature on the RRPictureArchives.net site when dealing with a lot of cars with the same reporting marks. "TTGX" is an example with over 23,000 (!) photos available. One can narrow that down into groups of 100 road numbers, in this case, 711000 to 711099. And guess what? There are exactly two photos that fall into that group, one for each of these cars. Bingo and bingo.

Our own Graffiti Special Correspondent David Grothe caught the first of these, TTGX 711001, in Castle Rock, Colorado in February 2019. The 711010 was found in Syracuse, New York in August 2019. Just as they are modeled by Micro-Trains, these cars are clean! (Maybe I should say "!!!".) They also do have conspicuity stripes, as they should, but it's not easy to pick them out as they are just a few shades darker than the rest of the car. Try to the left of the reporting marks to see one. I had to look carefully at the official image of Micro-Trains car to confirm that they are on those as well.

If these cars were photographed in 2019, and they remained untagged, then how old could they be? Well, one data point is that the series doesn't exist in the most recent version of the ORER I own, January 2018. There's a space between TTGX 707836 and 711836 in the TTX registration in that issue. That leads me to an Approximate Time Period starting sometime after that. Just to be sure, I checked the next earlier ORER as well: in January 2014, the gap runs from TTGX 705160 to 711836. So TTX seems to be filling in with new cars of number groups in between those two.

Even though I don't have any references for these specific cars, I suspect that the typical dimensions of present-day fully enclosed autoracks apply here: inside length 89 feet or so, outside length a bit over 93 feet, and extreme height 19 feet, the tallest generally allowed on North American railroads.



180 00 171 and 180 00 172, \$26.90 each.

Reporting Marks: SP 651485 and 651489.

50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single 10 Foot Door, No Running Board, Short Ladders, Southern Pacific.

Brown (including trucks and couplers) with white lettering including reporting marks on left and large gothic style roadname on right. Black and yellow “DF / Hydra-Cushion Underframe” “wing” logo left of door. Two white on black COTS panels and multicolor ACI Label at bottom right. Small

yellow horizontal stripes on bottom of door. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s to early 1980s. These cars have a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

These cars belong to the Southern Pacific car class B-50-47, which were originally built in 1957 by the railroad itself via its SP Equipment Company. When constructed, they had running boards, eight foot doors, and Hydra-Cushion underframes, among the first to be equipped with that feature. Sister car SP 651663 is shown on Page 12 of the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume One**, freshly painted. On Page 13 of that book it’s noted that the DF “wing” on the cars as painted by MTL is the early version which is “solid,” not split into two parts.

We need something more indicative of the cars as MTL decorated them. And we have it, a bingo on the first of this virtual two-pack on Page 29 of the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two**. SP 651485 is definitely not “freshly painted” in October 1980! The SP series was 651400 to 651673. There was also a set of cars assigned to SP subsidiary Texas and New Orleans, numbered 70100 to 70175, which were taken back into the SP roster as the group 651674 to 651746. From the photo we can tell that the side sills are completely straight going across from left to right; that’s a delta to the MTL 180 body style which can be addressed (I’ve done it) but be advised that the shell might not stay on the underframe without help if you attempt this change.

The ORER doesn’t help us with respect to running board removal and shortening of ladders. But we can get the usual dimensions, which we’ll do from the April 1970 edition. The cars had AAR Designation XL and the description “Box, All Steel, DF Loaders, Hydra-Cushion, Underframe.” The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 53 feet 3 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, capacity 4895 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds, and door opening 8 feet. That’s a “door thing” of a different type than usual, as the MTL 180 body style has a ten foot door. There were 244 cars in service at the time. By the April 1980 Equipment Register that was all the way down to 42 cars, and down again to 35 cars in the April 1981 ORER. The cars were all off the roster no later than the April 1984 Register.

N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS:



160 00 330, \$29.95

Road Number: 1055 (will be "SOU 1055" in website listings).

Heavyweight Single Window Coach, Southern Railway.

Pullman Green with black roof, underframe and six-wheel trucks. Yellow lettering including widely spaced roadname in center of letterboard and road number at bottom center. Yellow stripe along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 1948 to at least the early 1960s.

In April 2019 Micro-Trains released the paired-window coach in this same Southern Railway paint scheme, and I was able to narrow down the Approximate Time Period start to 1948 based on a rebuild and renumbering done that year. How about this model?

Well, yes! And, well, oops. Page 21 of the **Southern Railway Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** gives us not one, not two, but three examples of the railroad's series 1050 to 1064 of passenger coaches. That includes a bingo on Micro-Trains' previous release, road number 1057, as of July 1962. However, that previous model was a paired-window coach, not a single-window coach, and I noted that there were ten paired-window sets on the side we could see in the photo. I also declared that there was a pretty good alignment with the MTL 145 body style. Here is that 145 body style as produced in April 2019 (at right). However, the 160 body style is a **better** match to the cars in the **Color Guide**. A September 1966 photo of the 1055 on RRPictureArchives lets you see this for yourself. So, oops on my part from two years ago, and the fact that the MTL single-window coach didn't yet exist is not an excuse.



Anyway, again quoting the **Color Guide**, these cars were rebuilt in 1948 at the railroad's shops in Chattanooga and Hayne. They included 48 reclining seats. "With the exception of air conditioning they remained more or less as original," So the 1948 ATP start holds. The 1055 was originally numbered 1656. Also noted in the **Color Guide**: "by the late 1960's these cars began to be relegated to excursion service and were refitted with Dutch doors." That would end the Strictly Speaking ATP but I'll append an "at least" here. The online image of the 1055 shows regular doors, not Dutch doors, installed on the car as of that time.



160 00 380, \$32.90

Road Number: 6818 (will be "NH 6818" in website listings).

Heavyweight Single Window Coach, New Haven (New York, New Haven and Hartford).

Black, including underframe and four-wheel trucks, with red letterboard. White lettering including roadname in center of letterboard, McGuinness style "N over H" herald at bottom left and right and road number at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1955 into the 1960s, or 1959 for this particular car.

The caption accompanying the bingo photo for this car, on Page 76 of the **NH Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, answers a few questions but raises one. The 6818 was found in Plymouth, Massachusetts in June 1956. "Painted black with a red letterboard, #6818 remained in service until the end of Old Colony passenger service." The use of four-wheel trucks is also called out. The photo shows a car with 22 windows, same as the MTL 160 body style. The "McGinnis" paint scheme was introduced just the year before, in 1955, by then-NH president Patrick McGinnis who wanted to bring a new image to the New Haven. As you're probably already aware, the "N over H" herald is a lot bigger on freight cars than it is here on this "smoker" passenger car. So we have a good fix on the start of the Approximate Time Period.

Now, when did the Old Colony passenger service end? For that matter, what was the Old Colony?

With some help from the Wikipedians, we have the answer to both questions. The Old Colony Railroad was the result of an amalgamation of several different lines reaching generally south and east of Boston, but also getting as far as Fitchburg and Lowell which are both northwest of Boston. The original line was between Boston and Plymouth; through acquired subsidiaries, the company also served Providence, Rhode Island, New Bedford, Massachusetts, Cape Cod all the way out and around to Provincetown, and even Martha's Vineyard through ferry service and a short-lived six mile line on the island itself. The Old Colony was leased for 99 years by the New York, New Haven and Hartford starting in 1893. The Boston to Providence line is still in use as part of the Northeast Corridor. However, passenger service on the remainder of the NH's Old Colony Division ended in 1959. Assuming the caption is correct, that would indicate a short ATP for this particular car. I'll extend it "in general" into the next decade, though.

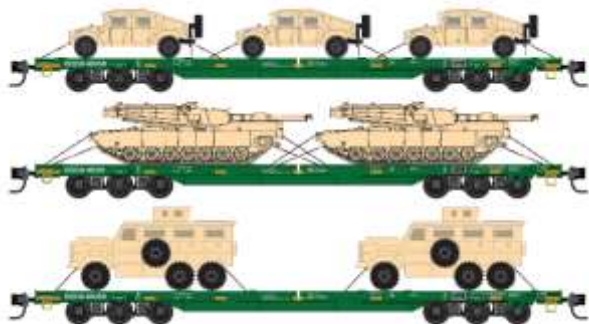
Besides the critical Boston to Providence section, other pieces of the Old Colony remain in service. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has even revived some commuter trains on former OC tracks into Boston. There is some freight service provided by CSX Transportation and a few short lines. Other parts of the system are now trails. The intersection of the Old Colony Rail Trail and the Cape Cod Rail Trail, both based on former OC right of way, has a “bike rotary” –yes, what this New Jersey native would call a traffic circle for bicycles!

Want more New Haven passenger cars? See below for a pre-order opportunity...

N SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: *All of the following are scheduled for mid-month release and should be at MTL dealers as you read this.*

Runner Pack #167 (993 00 167, \$119.95), consists of four Santa Fe 51 Foot Rivet Side Mechanical Refrigerator Cars. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the January 2020 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 069 51 250, 2040; 069 52 250, 2046; 069 53 250, 2051; and 069 54 250, 2059. These are the first through fourth releases for this item.



The Cascade Green DODX Three Pack with Military Vehicles (993 01 613, \$134.95) was covered in the February 2020 UMTRR. The individual catalog and road numbers for these DODX flat cars are: 137 51 070, 40058; 137 52 070, 40081; and 137 53 070, 40083. These are the seventh through ninth releases for this item. Unassembled load kits include three Humvee Vehicles, two M1 Abrams Tanks and two Armored Personnel Carriers.

The NASA Weathered Three Pack (993 02 020, \$109.95) was covered in the December 2019 UMTRR. The three cars in this set are as follows:

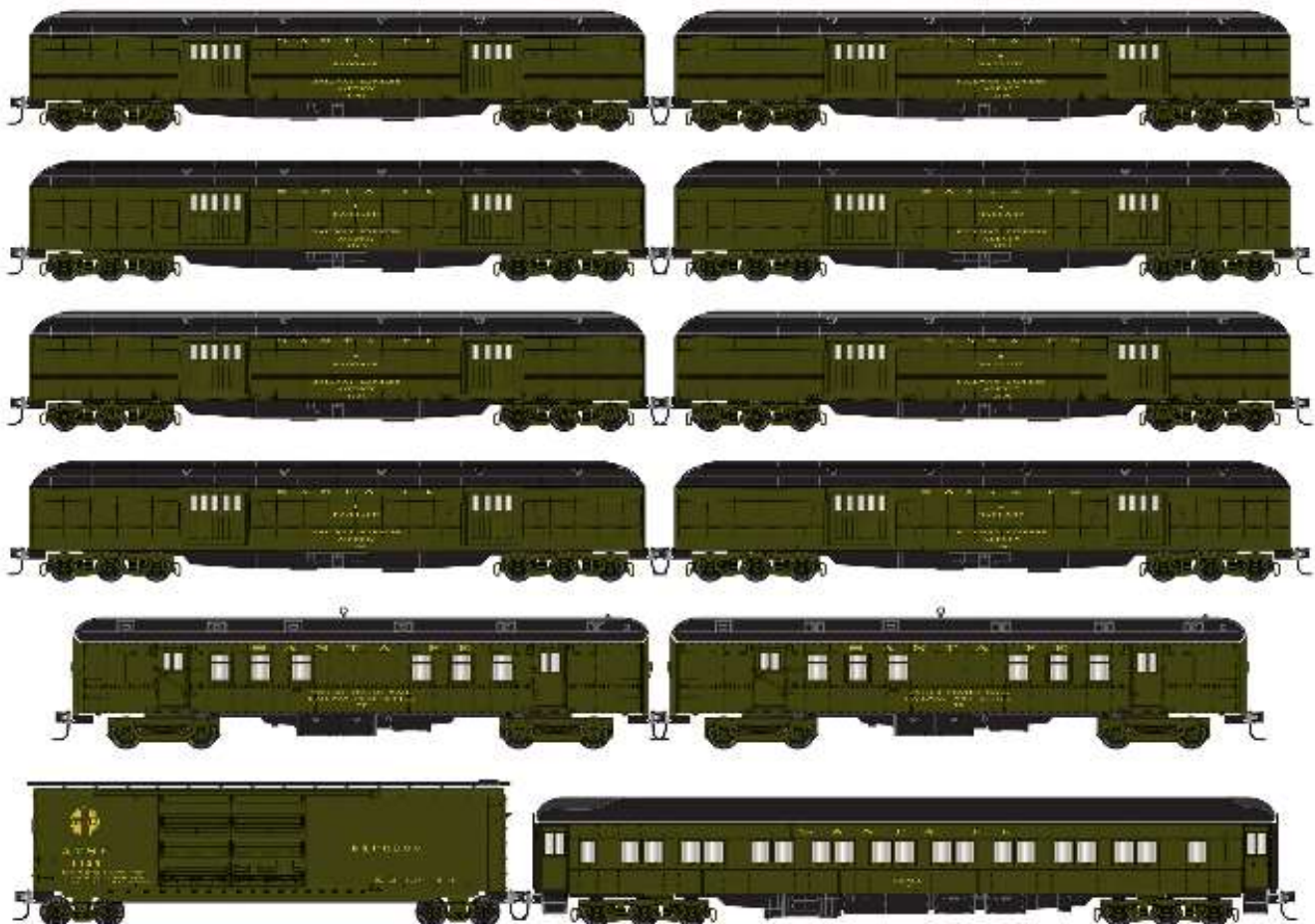
- **110 51 265, 54 Foot General Service Tank Car, NLAX 890.** Technically this is the first release under this catalog number, however NASA Series #4 (110 00 260, December 2016) is similar.



- **064 52 160, 57 Foot TOFC Flat Car, NLAX 160.** This car includes a simulated pipe load. It's technically the second release of this item; the first was NASA Series #2 (064 00 160, Road Number 041, October 2016).



- **071 53 830, 89 Foot Flat Car, NLAX 163.** This car has a weathered deck. Technically this is the second release of this car; the first run was Road Number 162, Catalog 073 00 830, August 2017, issued after the initial NASA Series ended.



And then there's the Big Set for this month: **The Santa Fe Heavyweight Fast Mail Express Train (993 02 050, \$299.95).** The twelve cars in this set are as follows:

- 147 51 040 through 147 58 040, Heavyweight Baggage Cars. Road Numbers (from the 51 to the 58 releases) are 1756, 1760, 1763, 1771, 1774, 1779, 1781 and 1797. These are the second through ninth releases for this item.

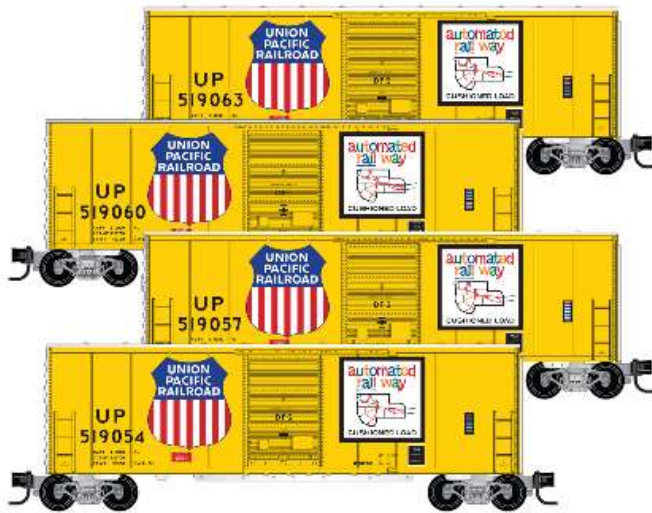
- 140 59 040 and 140 60 040 are Heavyweight Railway Post Office Cars. Road Numbers are 77 (the 59 release) and 79 (the 60 release). These are the third and fourth releases for this item.

- 034 61 410 is a 50 foot steel double door boxcar, Reporting Marks ATSF 4129. This is the third release for this item.

- 143 62 040 is a Heavyweight 28-1 Parlor Car, Road Number 1155. This is the second release for this item.

All of the above releases had only the MTL artwork available to me at “press time.” Should Micro-Trains post product images, I’ll have them posted to the UMTRR Website in the “2020 Month by Month” page.

*In addition to the above, 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 **June 30**.*



Scheduled Delivery November 2020:

993 00 172, \$114.95

Reporting Marks: UP 519054, 519057, 519060, 519063.

Runner Pack #172, quantity four of MTL 073 Series 40 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Union Pacific.

Yellow sides, aluminum roof, ends, underframe, trucks and couplers (but not wheels). Black lettering including reporting marks on left. Large red, white and blue “Union Pacific Railroad” shield herald left of door. Multicolor “Automated RAILway”

herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label at far right. White on black single COTS panel at bottom right. Yellow on red “Appliance” sideboard below herald. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s (1973 service date) on car to early 1980s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

I’ll start this time with a citation of George Elwood’s “Fallen Flags” website for UP 519558, also a Union Pacific Class B-50-50 car. It was photographed in December 1965. The build date on this car is August 1957 and service date is October 1964. The paint scheme is generally the same, however this car has the earlier smaller reporting marks. Ladders on the brake wheel end are still full height. Though it’s hard to see I believe the running board on this car is still

in place, which would make sense in 1965. There is a straight side sill and a row of diagonal rivets either side of the door, both of which are deltas to the MTL 073 series body style.

Let's go from there to a bingo for one of the cars in this forthcoming quartet. RRPictureArchives has an August 1975 image of UP 519075. This time it's obvious that the running board is gone, and the reporting marks are the newer, larger variety as depicted by MTL in their artwork. Add to that bingo another one for UP 519063, caught in February 1978. Details between the two differ, but there's one unusual feature common to both: what I believe to be a door opening assist device, looking somewhat like a brake wheel. It's below and to the right of the "Automated RAILway" artwork. The same two shots are on RailcarPhotos.com. Well, two bingos out of four against a Runner Pack isn't bad.

The service date on the MTL artwork is August 1973. Turning to the ORER for October 1972, the closest I have in the Research Accumulation, we have a short series UP 519050 to 519070, consisting of just 21 total cars divided into a main group of 14 and a subset of the other seven. The main dimensions were the same with one exception: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, capacity 3927 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. The door opening was listed at eight feet, which gives us a "fixable" Door Thing. The difference between the two groups is the outside length: the first 14 were at 44 feet 6 inches and the other seven were at 47 feet 6 inches, suggesting extended draft gear for those. An end note calls out which is which: the cars that are longer over the coupler faces are UP 519054, 519055, 519057, 519058, 519060, 519063 and 519067. So the Runner Pack cars 519054, 519057, 519060 and 519063 all hit that list. While I'm in the end notes, all 21 cars were listed as equipped with 19 belt DF-2 loaders. They also had cushion underframes. The yellow and aluminum paint were already indicators of that feature.

I expected a relatively short ATP for these cars so my next stop was the April 1976 Equipment Register. Twenty of the twenty-one cars remained including all four in the Runner Pack. Those four were still in place as of the April 1981 ORER but the total count was down to 12. The entire short series was off the roster no later than the April 1984 Equipment Register. Considering how few prototype cars were in place, and for how long, it's quite fortunate that even those two photos were available online.

The start of the ATP is an educated guess. The 1973 service date is reasonable but I've hedged a bit to "early 1970s" in case the running board removal for these cars was done earlier than that. ACI Labels began appearing in 1967 but the single COTS stencil is circa 1972. These two data points help bound the Approximate Time Period as well.



Scheduled Delivery November 2020:

993 02 110, \$139.95

Road Numbers: 7929, 7932, 7936, 7939, and 3278 (will be preceded with "NH" in website listings).

New Haven Heavyweight Passenger Car Five-Pack.

Scheduled to consist of four MTL 160 body style heavyweight single window coaches and one MTL 140 body style heavyweight Railway Post Office car (the 3278). All cars are Black, including underframe and four-wheel trucks, with red letterboard. White lettering including roadname in center of letterboard, McGuinness style "N over H" herald at bottom left and right and road

number at bottom center. RPO also has "United States Mail / Railway Post Office" above road number at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1955 into the 1960s.

So as I mentioned in my commentary on the single New Release NH single window coach, "Want more New Haven passenger cars?" These would do! If you're wondering whether the McGuinness scheme co-existed with the previous Pullman Green scheme (example at right), the answer is yes. Turning back to the **NH Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, there's a photo of a green and gold car that worked "to the end." And if you happen to have, say, those "American Flyer" passenger cars, technically and legally known as Osgood-Bradley coaches, you're still good to run them in the same Approximate Time Period although not necessarily in the same train. In any case, that train is likely to be a commuter run over one of the multiple lines the NH served into the 1950s.

Peter Ness models in HO Scale; his Approximate Time Period ends in 1959 for New Haven models. However, that includes the prototype series 7894 to 8085 which includes the four single-window coaches expected to be in this set. He describes them as reconditioned Osgood-Bradley coaches originally built in 1916 and 1917. In 1938, these cars received four-wheel trucks, plus new "walkover" seats, lights, steam heat system, floor covering and interior painting. Peter's website (newhavenrailroad1959.webs.com) has a photo of an HO Scale brass model of sister car 8011. Like most cars in this group, it has ten vents per side, mounted near the top of the car's roof. This is a detail difference from the MTL 160 body style. The real car's sides had 22 windows, as does the Micro-Trains car. The brass model was painted in the Pullman Green scheme, however I did find a black and white photo of a car that was in the McGuinness scheme on a New Haven discussion forum.

That brings us to the RPO. A color photo bingo for New Haven 3278 is available on Northeast Photos (direct URL www.northeast.railfan.net/images/nh3278.jpg), cited in the late Jerry Laboda's "Passenger Car Photo Index." The side we can see of this car has four windows, while one MTL 140 body style has six and the other, five. The side with six windows (shown

in the preliminary artwork above) could have the two on the left plated over to more resemble the real car. The photo is undated and not specifically located, but based on the catenary in the photo I'll where it was: the Pennsylvania Railroad's Sunnyside Yard, in Queens just east of Penn Station. The New Haven and Pennsylvania ran through trains from Washington to Boston (today's "Northeast Corridor"), so an NH Railway Post Office in the Pennsy's yard wouldn't be out of place.

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 June 17.*



025 45 012, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: RBOX 37241.

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

#6 in the "Year in Railbox 2020" series. Base car is yellow with black door and aluminum roof. Mostly black lettering including original version Railbox name and reporting marks on left. Black, red and blue original large version "Next Load/Any Road" logo on right. All of the above lettering is "ghosted" (see product images). White on

black double COTS panel on far right (obscured on one side). Featured side of the car has multi-color graffiti across bottom third of the side (including on door). Opposite side of the car has multicolored graffiti on left and right bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 2019, plus or minus (using the featured side of the car). This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

We start with Graffiti Special Correspondent David Grothe, who reports the only bingo to the featured side of the car to be on RailcarPhotos.net this time around. The image is from 2019, and yes, the graffiti does go right over the restenciled reporting marks. So much for that. David identifies the markings as "CERA" and "MAPLE" – I am back to not being able to figure them out. And so what else is new.

The non-featured side of the car, technically the "A" side based on its orientation with the brake wheel end, uses the, ahem, decoration from RBOX 43222. A photo on Flickr appears to, uh, credit, "Diar" and "Gime." The "Gime" is easy to pick out left of the door. The Flickr photo is dated December 2011 and is captioned by Benny Diar as "one of my last fr8s" – "freight cars," I presume.

We'll go with the featured side of the car for our prototype check. RBOX 37241 is part of the group built by Pullman-Standard in March and April 1980, the series numbered 36750 to 37749 and classed XPF20B by Railbox. The MTL 025 body style (and 510 body style in Z Scale) is based on the FMC 5077 cubic foot boxcar, while this is a larger 5277 cubic foot car. The ends

and door differ from that of the Micro-Trains model; the door in particular looks like a distant cousin of the “PS-1 door” that appeared on some Pullman-Standard boxcars of that type.

In the January 2018 ORER, this group was lumped together with others in the overall series RBOX 30000 to 37749. There were 2938 cars in the main series, and another 602 in three subsets, for a total of 3540 boxcars. Remember, these are under the TTX Company listing.

It's not obvious to me at “press time” what this Year in Railbox Car commemorates. Given the artwork on the door, perhaps it's the 1983 Duran Duran hit “Union of the Snake” (coverage of the video clip for this number is at morganrichter.net/blog/durananalysis-union-snake/ ; said commentary is tongue in cheek... I think). There's probably a better explanation, though, which we'll likely have in next month's Incremental Information.



993 05 690, \$64.95, CP/Soo “Picnic” Two Pack. Consists of the following:

- **094 51 093, Reporting Marks SOO 115605, Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hopper with Trough Hatches, CP Rail (Soo Line reporting marks).** Base car is gray with black lettering and large red “CP Rail” roadname at left; alternating red and orange stripe along the bottom of the car. Featured side of the car has multicolor cartoonish graffiti depicting a hamburger with ketchup, cheese, onions, lettuce, tomato and mustard along with a can of soda. Both sides of the car have fading and rust effects. Approximate Time Period: 2012, plus or minus (based on featured side of the car). Previous unweathered releases: Road Number 116960, October 1997; then Eight Pack #3 with Road Numbers 115655, 116273, 116491, 116804, 116952, 116966, 116998 and 117047, September 2013. Previous weathered releases: Road Number 115--- (last three digits obscured), December 2013; then a four pack (993 05 340) with Road Numbers 113802, 113921, 115000 and 113810, July 2016; then the “CP/Soo ‘Tower’ Two Pack” (094 44 092) with Road Numbers 116892 and 116723, October 2016.



- **027 52 060, Reporting Marks SOO 18752, 50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Soo Line.** Base car is brown with aluminum roof. Mostly white lettering including large roadname across top and reporting marks on left. White on black double panel COTS stencil at far right. Orange

vertical conspicuity stripes at points along side. Featured side of the car has, left of door, multicolored depiction of a hot dog with multiple toppings left of door with legend "Chicago's Original Pose..." and tagger initials; right of door, tagger handle. Opposite side of the car has tagger handles on both sides of door. Approximate Time Period: 2009 to 2011, plus or minus. Previous Releases: Unweathered, Road Number 17495, May 1984; Road Number 17159, March 1988; Road Number 17490, February 2010. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

With the official start of Summer in the Northern Hemisphere a picnic should be in order. With Proper Social Distancing Guidelines followed, I would expect.

Let's start with the Soo Line boxcar, which has a rendition of a Chicago Dog. This depiction appears to match the definition of this Windy City tradition as found on its Wikipedia page. Notable is that unlike many versions of the hot dog, ketchup is not included — it's considered unacceptable! The poppy seed bun, mustard, onions, pickle relish, tomato, peppers and celery salt are all represented. There are variations on this theme... just don't ask for ketchup. Or the nutrition label...

Four bingo photos of the car can be found on RRPictureArchives, three of the featured side and another of the side with two taggers whose handles I cannot completely read. I think the right hand tag on that side is "JOHSTE." The hot dog appears in shots from 2009 and 2011 so our "plus or minus" ATP includes that span.

The road number on this boxcar does not match up with the prototype series of the previous MTL runs... good thing since that entire group, 17100 to 17498, was off the Soo's roster before 1990, likely sold off to the Wisconsin Central. So no help for me from previous UMTRR issues! This car, the 18752, was part of the group 18640 to 19046. These cars were described in the January 2011 ORER as "Box, Steel, 15 Inch Freightmaster Cushioning Devices, 10 Foot Plug Doors, 50K" with AAR Designation XP. The inside length was 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 10 feet 7 inches, outside length 56 feet 8 inches, extreme height 14 feet 11 inches, and capacity 5038 cubic feet or 220,000 pounds. There were 49 cars on the roster at that time. Just one car from the group remained in the January 2018 Equipment Register, so the plus or minus Approximate Time Period does not include The Present. I see invocations of Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") here.

According to the book **Soo Line Freight Equipment and Cabooses**, the series named in the ORER is a combination of two groups built in 1973 and 1974 in the company's own shops. Like other Soo "Fond Du Lac" x-post cars, these had a distinctive eight panel (seven post) side, diagonal panel roof, end of car cushioning and Youngstown plug doors, whereas the MTL 027 body style has six posts or seven panels either side of the door.

Moving to Center Flow SOO 115605, there's no concern about The Present. It's from the series 115000 to 117149, built December 1995 by National Steel Car Company, probably in Hamilton, Ontario. I've noted before that these cars were likely assigned to Canadian Pacific subsidiary Soo Line for financial purposes. As of October 1996, this was a group of 1925 cars described as

“Covered Hopper, 4850 Cubic Foot Capacity.” The cars’ key dimensions are 55 feet 8 inch outside length, 15 feet 5 inch extreme height, and 224,000 pounds capacity. The January 2011 Equipment Register had a car count of 2106 and the January 2018 ORER showed a slight dip to 2077 cars. While there is the question of relettering from “CP Rail” to “Canadian Pacific,” to which the company reverted in 1996, we’ve probably all seen covered hoppers in “as delivered” paint schemes that were built well before 1995.

The bingo for the, ahem, additionally decorated side of the car is from October 2012 as posted on Flickr. David Grothe pointed this out as well as the word “Tower” embedded in the middle of the three (!) hamburger patties. Really, if I **were** to have a triple burger, it would include **three** slices of cheese, in other words, the In-And-Out 3x3 (a registered trademark and available on their “Not So Secret Menu,” and, no, I have not braved this selection). As with the Chicago Dog, I would not enquire too quickly about the nutritional information. The photo is captioned “Tower with a shout-out to Keep6 and CapitalQ” and all three names appear on the car. This isn’t the first appearance of “Tower” on a Micro-Trains car, or even a CP/SOO Center Flow; the “Tower” two pack from October 2016 (at right) holds that distinction.



While I’m here, I’ll mention what you might already suspect: the prototype car is not an exact match to the 094 body style, particularly with respect to the ends. As usual, the degree to which the term “stand in” is applied is up to the modeler.

Oh, one other thing: Micro-Trains has snuck in a “not a reprint” here. On the sixteen previous runs of this car, the simulated reflective stripe was done in red and white. This time, it’s red and orange, matching the bingo photo.



993 05 700, \$54.95, BN/BNFE Weathered Two Pack. Consists of the following:

- **038 51 163, Reporting Marks BNFE 704, 50 Foot Steel Plug Door Boxcar, No Running Board, Full Height Ladders.** Base car is yellow with mostly black lettering including Burlington Northern roadname and restenciled reporting marks on left, and large BN herald with legend “Western Fruit Express” on right. Multicolor ACI Label left of door, white on black double COTS panel and faded yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection “dot” at bottom right. Weathering and rust effects across car; white “ghost” Northern Pacific Railway herald beneath BN herald on right. Approximate Time Period: about 1978 (given U-1 “dot”) to no later than

1986. Previous Unweathered Releases: BN 745482, October 1989; BN 745461, September 1997; BN 745452 and 745455, May 2008. Previous Weathered Releases: BN 745452 and 745455 (same road numbers as May 2008 unweathered releases), December 2008. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.



• **181 52 110, Reporting Marks BN 745208, 50 Foot Steel Plug Door Boxcar, No Running Board, Short Ladders.** Base car is green with yellow band set off with black stripes. Black "Burlington Refrigerator Express" on left and black, red and white "Burlington Route" herald on right. White restenciled reporting marks with mostly black lettering including Burlington Northern roadname and restenciled reporting marks on green patch panel on left. Multicolor ACI Label left of door, white on black double COTS panel and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" at bottom right. Moderate to heavy weathering. Approximate Time Period: about 1978 (given U-1 "dot") to no later than the mid-1980s. Previous Releases: None. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

Well, this duo was interesting to unpack. Let's start with the "not a reprint" yellow plug door boxcar, which I see was also called a "passive refrigerator" by David Casdorph in the **Burlington Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. I'm surprised I don't remember reading insulated boxcars being given that term, but it makes sense. My "not a reprint" designation comes from the use of BNFE reporting marks and an entirely different road number versus the other Micro-Trains cars released to this point under the 38160/038 xx 16x catalog numbers.

BNFE 704's first appearance in my ORER accumulation is in the April 1975 issue, after having not been in the July 1974 Register. The AAR Designation was RPB, and how's this for a description: "Refrigerator, Convertible, Bulk or Conventional, Cubic Capacity: Bulk-2764 Cubic Feet, Conventional-2789 Cubic Feet". This description raises more questions than it answers, although not within the scope of my usual Weathered Release coverage. There were 48 cars in the group BNFE 703 to 752, with inside length 44 feet 5 inches, outside length 55 feet 2 inches, and weight capacity 132,000 pounds. Before going forward through the ORERs, I made note of the Northern Pacific "ghost" herald and checked the January 1967 Equipment Register for the NP. Nothing close to that car description was present in that edition.

Anyway, the BNFE group in question was pretty stable until dropping to 13 cars in the January 1985 ORER and being gone completely from the October 1986 Register. Given the amount of weathering I would put the more strictly speaking ATP in the 1980s, and don't forget the presence of the U-1 wheel inspection "dot" puts this model at 1978 or later.

The Burlington Refrigerator Express scheme reproduced on the second half of this two pack has been done before by MTL, back in April 1999, with Catalog Number 32370 and Reporting Marks RBBX 79468 (at right). That scheme was discontinued in 1966 by CB&Q executives in favor of the less expensive all



green sided car with "BREM" replacing the name but keeping the "Burlington Route" herald, at least for a while. That's more background than anything else, though, as the ATP is driven by the restencil to Burlington Northern reporting marks and, strictly speaking, by the presence of the U-1 wheel inspection "dot." Also note that the slogans "Everywhere West" and "Way of the Zephyrs" were gone as well, as were the various Zephyr passenger trains by then.

I'm going out on a limb here and speculating that BN 745000 to 745299 was from the RBBX series 79000-79299 built by CB&Q's Havelock Car Shops. A photo I found online (searcharchives.vancouver.ca/c-b-and-q-rly-refer-exp-burlington-refrigerator-express-boxcar-r-b-b-x-79186) has the build date of August 1958 for RBBX 79186 which would have been moved to that BN series — if I'm right.

What I have no doubt about is the bingo photo for this car. BN 745208 was found in Cicero, Illinois in October 1979. I'm pretty sure this was the inspiration for the Micro-Trains car. This is a shot from over the top of the car, revealing that the brake wheel was left in the high position, a delta to the MTL 181 body style, though the running board is gone and the side ladders have been cut down. The prototype also had straight side sills. I find this restencil to be unusual for the BN, but then again, the integration of their former refrigerator line cars was a bit unusual as well.

As late as the April 1975 ORER, RBL designated boxcars numbered 79000 to 79299 were listed under the Western Fruit Express registration, under reporting marks RBBX and RBWX. There were 287 total cars at that time out of a possible 300. In the April 1976 Equipment Register, the RBBX cars had no car counts but the RBWX cars were still listed under the WFE. But 107 cars were in the "Refrigerator Equipment" section of the BN's listing, with road numbers 745000 to 745299. By the January 1978 ORER the 745000 to 745299 set was at 282 total cars and the Western Fruit Express listing showed just three cars in what I believe to be that predecessor series. In my mind this accounts for the quick restencil as opposed to an overall repaint.

I've neglected dimensions up to this point: inside length 50 feet even, inside width 9 feet 1 inch, inside height 9 feet 6 inches, outside length 55 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 8 feet 2 inches, and capacity 4373 cubic feet or 139,000 pounds. This is from the January 1985 ORER where 92 cars remained in the BN series. The separate Western Fruit Express listing had been discontinued by this time. The BN series was out of the ORER as well no later than July 1987, with just two cars remaining as of the October 1986 issue. What's questionable is whether this particular car ever received full BN paint or remained in the Burlington Refrigerator Express scheme until it was removed from the roster.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: Car #2 in the **Solar System Series**, for the planet Mercury, has been released in both pre-ordered varieties. UMTRR coverage was in the December 2018 issue.



Catalog 102 02 831, \$27.95 (at right) does not have the interior light.

Catalog 102 00 831, \$36.95 (at left) has the interior light and magnetic wand activator.



Also, the “telescope” magnetic wand which activates the lighted cars is now available as a spare part (**499 45 410, \$7.95**).

And now for the start of the Christmas Season... for Special Edition Pre-Orders that is...

*In addition to the above, 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 **June 30**.*



Scheduled Delivery October 2020:

101 00 831, 101 00 832, and 101 00 833, \$27.95 each
Modified 40 Foot Hy-Cube Boxcars, Thomas Kinkadee Studios Christmas Cars.

Each car is gold with dark gold stripes and frame around rendition of Thomas Kinkadee Christmas-themed painting. Black lettering including Thomas Kinkadee Studios logo on left and painting name and year on right. Paintings are “The Nativity” from 2016 (the 831), “Santa’s Workshop” from 2017 (the 832) and “Dash Away All” from 2018 (the 833). MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

According to the Wikipedians, quoting the Kinkadee Studios website, one in twenty homes has a copy of one of Thomas Kinkadee’s paintings. Could these Christmas-themed cars add to that

total, given the interest in MTL Christmas cars in general? I think so. I particularly like the used of the modified 101 body style here which matches, for example, the Postcard Series released from 2014 through 2016.

However, there's one question I had about the images used on the cars, namely, if Kinkade passed in 2012, how could these paintings be dated 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively?

We have the answer, in a roundabout way. The Kinkade Studios website does indeed show 2016 as the "painted year" for "The Nativity." But there's a distinction between a Thomas Kinkade painting and a "Kinkade Studios" painting. According to an article in the **Daily Mail** (yes, really!), "[A] group of artists who studied under his tutelage are producing paintings which so closely resemble Kinkade's technique that it's nearly impossible to tell them apart from his original work - except that the new paintings are stamped with the word 'studios' beneath his famous signature... Thomas Kinkade Studios 'continues in the path that Thom himself started and developed,' according to the company's website."

A simple enough explanation. The style of the "Painter of Light" may have dimmed (pun not intended) a bit in terms of popularity, but based on the offerings on the Kinkade Studios website, there is still plenty of interest in works in the that style. And note that MTL has correctly used the Kinkade Studios logo here, not the previous Thomas Kinkade trademark that was on the original series of boxcars. So, in two words or less, no worries.

One final note for this section: MTL reports that delivery of the chassis for the Thomas Kinkade Painter of Light FT-A unit (987 01 808) has been delayed, so the release of the diesel is also delayed. The latest estimate is a July release.

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



Chesapeake and Ohio Cameo Car #4 (505 00 424, \$34.95) has been released. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the October 2019 issue.

Also, the first four new release cars following the MTL pre-order only protocol have been released this month. They are two virtual two-packs...



510 00 481 and 510 00 482, \$27.60 each

Reporting Marks: NW 57571 and 57870.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcars, Single Door, Norfolk and Western.

Black with aluminum roof. White lettering including runtogether “NW” and reporting marks on left, and roadname right of door. Black on yellow “XF Food Loading Only” on right. White on black double COTS panel at far right. Approximate Time Period: 1975 (build date) to around 1997. Pre-order coverage was in the January 2020 UMTRR. It wasn’t apparent from the Micro-Trains artwork that these cars had aluminum roofs.



511 00 271 and 511 00 272, \$29.90 each.

Reporting Marks: ATSF 521583 and 521585.

50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcar, Plug Door, Santa Fe (AT&SF).

Red with mostly white lettering including reporting marks and large circle cross on left. Yellow and white “Super Shock Control – A Smoother Ride” on right. Black equipment list on yellow panel at top left. Multicolor ACI Label left of door. Four small black and white circle crosses along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 1969 into the 1970s as painted, strictly speaking, or into the 1990s otherwise. Pre-order coverage was in the January 2020 UMTRR.

Z SCALE REPRINTS, MULTI-PACKS and SPECIAL EDITIONS: No releases this month.

Z SCALE SINGLE RELEASE PREORDERS: As with the two prior pre-order announcements, the below boxcars announced last month are again mentioned on the MTL website and in the Micro-News, and you can still “add to cart” online at MTL. They are as follows; complete coverage was in last month’s UMTRR.



Targeted Delivery October/November 2020:

503 00 201 and 503 00 202, \$24.95 each

Reporting Marks: BN 161805 and 161816.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Burlington Northern.

Green with white lettering including large roadname and reporting marks on left and large herald on right. Small white simulated reflective stripes along bottom sill. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s (1971 service date on car) to early 1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the 201 release artwork is shown here.



Targeted Delivery October/November 2020:

503 00 211 and 503 00 212, \$24.95 each

Reporting Marks: CN 428048 and 428129.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Canadian National.

Brown with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large herald on right. Yellow “wheat sheaf” device left of door. White on black double COTS panel at lower right. Small white simulated reflective stripes along bottom sill. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1970, or strictly speaking 1980 given service date on car, to about 1997. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the 211 release artwork is shown here.



Targeted Delivery October/November 2020:

503 00 221 and 503 00 222, \$24.95 each

Reporting Marks: C&O 460029 and 460184.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Chesapeake and Ohio.

Brown white lettering including reporting marks on left and later version “C&O For Progress” herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label at lower right below herald. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s (1969 service date on car) to early 1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the 221 release artwork is shown here.



Targeted Delivery October/November 2020:

503 00 231 and 503 00 232, \$24.95 each

Reporting Marks: PRR 605360 and 605369.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Pennsylvania Railroad.

Brown with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and shadow keystone herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label at lower right below herald. Black on yellow return instructions sideboard left of door. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s (1968 service date on car) to early 1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the 231 release artwork is shown here.



Targeted Delivery October/November 2020:

503 00 241 and 503 00 242, \$25.95 each

Reporting Marks: SP 191473 and 191825.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Southern Pacific.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname on right. Yellow diagonal stripe on door. Multicolor ACI Label at left of door. White dot and black on white double COTS panel at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: early to mid-1970s (1976 service date on car) to early 1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the 241 release artwork is shown here.



Targeted Delivery October/November 2020:
503 00 250, \$26.95.

Reporting Marks: MP HERB-1.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side Ladders, Missouri Pacific "Herbie."

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left, eagle/buzzsaw herald at top right corner and HERBIE "Help Every Railroader Become Injury Exempt" acronym at right. Multicolor "HERBIE" with palm tree drawing on left. White on black COTS panel and yellow on black U-1 inspection "dot" at far bottom right. Approximate Time Period: 1979 to no later than 1983. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

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 June 17.*



510 45 012, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: RBOX 37241.

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

#6 in the "Year in Railbox 2020" series. Base car is yellow with black door and aluminum roof. Mostly black lettering including original version Railbox name and reporting marks on left. Black, red and blue original large version "Next Load/Any Road" logo on right. All of the above lettering is "ghosted" (see product images). White on black double

COTS panel on far right (obscured on one side). Featured side of the car has multi-color graffiti across bottom third of the side (including on door). Opposite side of the car has multicolored graffiti on left and right bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 2019, plus or minus (using the featured side of the car).

Please see the coverage of the N Scale release (025 45 012) above.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Having nothing, and in a sense, everything to do with model trains is this, quoted directly: "Talent PPE is a newly formed division of Micro-Trains Line Co., a model train manufacturer located in southern Oregon, dedicated to making high quality disposable Face Shields and Ear Savers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to do our part to help provide personal protective equipment to the medical and business community, as well as individual consumers. While Talent PPE currently only has these two products, we hope to expand our line to include other high quality protective equipment." The Face Shields can be customized with a logo. The venture has its own website, talentppe.com.

In the May/June/July issue of the **N Scale Enthusiast Magazine**, MTL CEO Eric Smith shared pre-production photos of the TBOX 60 Foot Excess Height Boxcar with Double Plug Doors,

which will take the 123 slot in the body style series. Eric noted at press time (which I know was very early May for this issue, since I also write for the NSE) that the first scheduled release had been delayed from June to July. That estimated June release date was pre-COVID-19 so don't bring out the pitchforks if the TBOX cars don't drop next month. (Also, don't shoot this messenger.)

DISCONTINUED ALERT: The Do It Yourself Bye-Bye Board leads off this month with the Weathered Burlington Northern Covered Hopper Three Pack (993 05 680) and the SRN/NOPB single Weathered Boxcar (025 44 186), both from mid-last month. Also already getting The Dreaded "D" from last month: the Pennsylvania Railroad double door boxcar (023 00 330), both numbers of the Santa Fe x-post boxcar (027 00 45x), both numbers of the Southern Pacific "Hydra-Cushion" boxcar (032 00 52x), the Bearcreek Vineyard "Grape to Glass" refrigerator car (049 00 890), both versions of the "The Sun" Solar System Series Car #1 (102 0x 830), and the DODX Three Pack without "reflectors" (993 01 812). Outta here from the earlier months of this year are the Great Northern Caboose Two Pack (993 02 060, April), the Gibson Wine tank car (Grape to Glass #1, 065 00 016, February), Runner Pack #164 of four BNSF/BN Herald well cars (993 00 164, April), and the Montana Rail Link Weathered Four Pack of x-post boxcars (993 05 670, April). All of this is N Scale; no Z Scale 2020 releases have left the building since last month's check.

Backing up to 2019, we have these outs to report. In N Scale, there is the Western Pacific boxcar with large orange feather (032 00 510, November), the Great Northern sky blue caboose (100 00 430, June), the Rio Grande Weathered Two Pack of two bay Center Flows (993 05 590, December). In Z Scale, the second number of the New York Central boxcar (500 00 057, February), the second number of the Pennsylvania Railroad flat car with load (525 00 172, May), and the second number of the Burlington Northern PS-2 covered hopper (530 00 312, December).

Prior to 2019, there are just a few sellouts. The N Scale Pennsylvania Railroad single-sheathed boxcar reprint has shipped out (028 00 131, December 2018), as has the N Scale Norfolk Southern bay window caboose (130 00 240, March 2018). The N Scale Canadian Pacific observation car has left the station (144 00 085, May 2016). The Z Scale "hobo tagged" Santa Fe express scheme boxcar is gone (506 44 340, December 2016).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: I hadn't previously noticed another distinction between the two cars in the Great Northern Caboose Two-Pack. The second car (051 52 350, Road Number X242) with the black roof also has "Radio Equipped" lettering on the side. The first car (051 51 340, Road Number X202) doesn't.

Speaking of cabooses, there's an "almost" bingo photo going back to a September 1987 release on Page 35 of the June 2020 issue of **Railroad Model Craftsman**. The Wabash's caboose number 2640 is pictured in black and white at the bottom right of that page. The paint scheme aligns with the Kadee Micro-Trains release, Catalog 51050, with the road number just three off at 2637. I am reasonably confident that the 2637 and 2640 are from the same group. The Kadee

51000 body style/MTL 051 body style, which is after a UP/SP prototype is in the ballpark for these Wabash cabooses, but there are differences. The same can be said for Kadee/MTL's release of the same car in Rock Island paint. There's a photo of the prototype RI 18096 in the December 1957 issue of **Model Railroader**; the two road numbers done by Kadee/MTL are 18305 (April 1991) and 18308 (March 2009).

Chuck Seeman reports that there is a prototype photo of the Mexene refrigerator car released by MTL last month (047 00 430) in the book **American Refrigerator Transit** (Signature Press, 2018).

The Union Pacific "Impact Car" came up on a recent discussion on the "Real STFMC" list on groups.io. From that I have another photograph to share of the real thing, UP 195220: digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p15037coll3/id/20067/rec/494. When it was photographed, the car was visiting Philadelphia. (Aha! This means that even if you don't model the UP, you can have this car "touring" your pike.) It was also noted in that thread that the Louisville and Nashville built a similar demonstration and training car from a single sheathed wood boxcar. There were also two images of the Southern Pacific impact car shared with permission from a private collection. MTL models of the UP and SP cars were released in August 2018 (020 00 157, at right) and November 2018 (031 00 490). Both are still in stock at this writing. The L&N car would be more of a challenge to pull off.



Here's something also from the "Real STFMC" list and further to the announcement of N Scale Runner Pack #171 of Western Pacific wood refrigerator cars and the "Grape to Glass" series. An unspecified car with the same or similar paint scheme to the MTL model has a banner posted across it reading in part "Solid Car Load Wines and Cordials." Would that banner have lasted long when the car was pulled in a train? Maybe not, but here's where Rule #1 comes into play. The image is at louisianadigitallibrary.org/islandora/object/hnoc-clf%3A7204. While the photo is undated, the reweigh date is February 1932, and as Tony Thompson pointed out on the thread, the photo has to have been taken after Prohibition ended.

OOPS PATROL: It didn't take long to find the first Oops from last month: The CP Rail boxcar carries catalog number 023 00 420, not 330, and an MSRP of \$27.80, not \$26.40. Another copy and paste mistake. Here's a copy and forget to paste mistake: The Bearcreek Vineyard Association refrigerator car (049 00 890) is Grape to Glass Series Car #4. And your basic transposition: the Z Scale "Year in Railbox #5" boxcar has catalog number 510 45 011, not 501 45 011. And your basic wrong color: the base for the N Scale Sabine River & Northern/New Orleans Public Belt Weathered Boxcar (510 44 186) is orange, not yellow. Believe me, I really did proofread last month's issue... three times... which I guess was not the charm.

FINALLY, START BUILDING AGAIN... While the country is slowly opening up again, at least for now (though I am more than a little concerned about a second wave, see "Spanish Flu") I

was able to put some of the lockdown time to some good Model Railroading use. It's not much yet, but my N Scale Wilmington and New York Railroad, Opus 2, is finally under construction. To see the first photos of the staging area check out www.irwinsjournal.com/wny2; as before, it's where I decided to begin.

Until next month, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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