



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

## The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report Issue #284 – August, 2020

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Hello again everyone! Well, last month's offer of a Zoom Meeting among UMTRR Gang Members generated a few responses. I'm not sure it's enough to try one just yet, but meanwhile there is plenty to report on right here in these bytes.

Let's start with an interruption of the usual order of things and lead off with the expected mid-month release of the first set of the long-awaited and highly anticipated **60 Foot Double Plug Door Boxcar**. That first set (993 01 840, \$119.95, at right) is painted in "Version 1" of the TTX scheme as shown. The catalog and road numbers are 123 51 010, 665118; 123 52 010, 665138; and 123 53 010, 665141. We also have updated expected release dates for the other three announced three packs: The CSX set (993 01 860) in September, the TTX Version 2 set (993 01 850, with red TTX logo) in October and the CN set (993 01 860, with DWC reporting marks) in November. Given the number of prototype cars with, ahem, additional decoration, I would not be surprised to see at least one Weathered/Graffiti release in the mix in addition to these four three packs. UMTRR coverage for these sets was in the April 2019 edition, available as a Back Issue on the website.



Now let's return to the usual sequence for the remainder of our look behind the red and yellow sign.

### N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



047 00 440, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: CDLX 279.

40 Foot Double Sheathed Wood Refrigerator Car, California Dispatch/Italian Swiss Colony.

#7 in the "Grape to Glass" Series (Pre-orders taken September 2019). Yellow

sides, brown roof, ends and side sills. Black and brown hardware details. Black lettering including reporting marks at top left. Red "Italian Swiss Colony" and black "Asti, Calif." on

left. Black and red “Tipo Red and White Finest California Table Wines” at right. Multicolor depiction of a wine bottle right of door. White end markings. Approximate Time Period: 1933 (based on rebuild date on car) to late 1930s.

If you’re of a certain age, you might remember television advertisements for Italian Swiss Colony wine, some of which featured the voice of actor Jim Backus as “the little old winemaker.” Although there were Italian Swiss people involved in the original “colony” at Asti, California, the company was essentially an Italian-American enterprise founded in 1881. Over the years, a variety of different wines were offered by the company, including “Tipo” featured on this car. In order to sidestep various laws, these were labeled as “in the French style” or “in the German style” since they were all made in California. Even the Tipo brand was sold in chianti-style bottles to disguise that this wasn’t really Italian wine.

The Italian Swiss Colony brand and operations were owned by a number of different companies including National Distillers, Petri Wine, United Vintners, Heublien, Allied Growers and Erly Industries. The original Asti winery became a unit of an Australian company before being sold to E & J Gallo, another well-known California-based winery.

I noted in my commentary on Grape to Glass Series Car #4, the Bear Creek Winery Refrigerator, that California Dispatch Line purchased cars from the Pacific Fruit Express and refitted them with wine tanks, essentially making them tank cars inside refrigerator car bodies. The resulting CDLX series 277 to 317 includes this car numbered 279. Freight car scholar Tony Thompson doesn’t think the lettering on this car would been allowed after the ban on billboard refrigerator cars, and I can’t argue with that. My search for a prototype photo of this wine car came up dry (pun intended). However, there have been plenty of previous models offered in multiple scales, and the decoration is largely identical to what Micro-Trains has on its car. So they’re either all right or all wrong. I’d shade toward the former here.



065 00 056, \$27.70.

**Reporting Marks: MEC 710.**

**39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Maine Central.**

Black with orange lettering including reporting marks on left and small rounded rectangle “Pine Tree” herald on right.

Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1953 into the 1970s (a guess).

Last year at this time, Colleen and I were “camped out” a bit west of Bangor, Maine at a location called Camp Etna. (We actually stayed at a guest cottage.) At the back of the property sits the former Maine Central main line into Bangor, now part of Pan Am Railways (I almost typed “Guilford Transportation”). Traffic here is relatively light on the single track line. We saw and/or heard no trains at all during the five-plus days we were there. We traveled a fair amount around the Pine Tree State during our visit, including to Calais where an MEC branch once terminated, and along “Coastal” US 1 from there back down, er, southwest toward

Ellsworth and thence the Bangor. Traces of the old Maine Central still remain. Much of the right of way there is a rail trail. When we returned to UMTRR HQ, I showed Colleen a little bit about the history of the company, including that they did have a passenger station not far from Camp Etna.

It's noted on Page 120 of the **Northern New England Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** that the Maine Central had a small set of tank cars for company service, numbered 700 to 712. The 710 as of 1972 is pictured on that page. The cars were bought second hand and dated mostly to the 1920s. I suspect that means that they did not all look the same. MEC 710 was formerly AMDX 1391 constructed in July 1923 according to the **Color Guide**.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for October 1972 shows just two tank cars numbered 715 and 716 with an end note explaining that they were not for interchange service except within New England. No mention is made of the other cars, however I believe that's because the road didn't list its company service rolling stock in the Equipment Register. The rectangular "Pine Tree Route" herald was introduced around 1953 so the ATP for this car wouldn't be any earlier than that in any case. My Approximate Time Period for this tanker is very much a guess.

It looks like the MEC picked up other newer tank cars for company service. At least one of these sported a Guilford "Big G" and another, the 731, was restenciled so simply that the original reporting marks SCHX 45105 remain on the frame!



073 00 270, \$28.95.

**Reporting Marks: CP 410010.**

**40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Full Ladders, CP Rail.**

Brown with white lettering including CP Rail roadname and reporting marks on left. White on black COTS panel on right. This item comes with a laser-cut roof icebreaker to

be painted, assembled and installed by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: 1984 (date given by MTL) to as late as the present. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

I can confirm the date provided by Micro-Trains for the conversion of a revenue service boxcar, specifically CP 265050, into this unusual but necessary car. That's via the bingo photo of the car, found on the Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery ([canadianfreightcargallery.ca](http://canadianfreightcargallery.ca), no "www," look under "Company Service" in the Canadian Pacific page, scrolling about 90 percent of the way down). The 410010 was found in Thunder Bay, Ontario in May 2003. The running board removal, high mounted brake wheel, full ladders and six foot door are also aligned between model and prototype. The car was originally built by National Steel Car in 1952 and had riveted sides. Since the icebreaker must be assembled and painted by the modeler, I'd suggest

yellow for the flat panels and the parts of the device that extend down the sides. That's how those parts are colored in the prototype photo, making for better visibility.

I already know that there is no ORER data available for CP's company service equipment. An ATP starting at the 1984 conversion and stretching to the 2003 photo is certainly good. These cars appear to be popular subjects for railfans, as there are another six on RailcarPhotos.com taken in 2004 and 2007. One of these cars, CP 410012, formerly CP 58561, retained the stepped Canadian Pacific Railway roadname! A trio of CP Rail icebreaker cars was found in Calgary in 2012, with the same design, same paint and, well, graffiti. (Including on the yellow panels of the icebreakers? Oh, come on.) That photo is on George Elwood's "Fallen Flags" site. So we can take the ATP out to at least 2012. I don't think I'm going too far out on a limb to add the "as late as the present" here.

In addition, I'll point out that the lettering on this car is so simple that it would be a relatively easy project to reletter this car for another railroad, perhaps yours if you have the same issue with tunnels in which icicles form. Oops, one more thing: note the "gross weight" of the car after its conversion, 131,000 pounds! Right next to this is stenciled: "Car contains ballast / Do not remove."



104 00 070, \$32.95.

**Reporting Marks: NW 602020.**

**60 Foot Excess Height Single Door Boxcar, Rivet Sides, Norfolk Southern.**

Brown with mostly white lettering including speed lettering Norfolk Southern

herald and Norfolk and Western reporting marks on left. White on black COTS panel on right. White bands at top of ends marking excess height. Approximate Time Period: early 1990s to mid-decade of the 2000s.

I was a bit surprised to find that the "as delivered" paint scheme for this series of boxcars was blue with white lettering including a large N&W "circle" or "hamburger" herald and large roadname. But there is the 602015, another of the Class B-125 cars, on Page 47 of the **Norfolk and Western Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. Photographed in 1983, it was still in its original paint and "has completely escaped the black 'NW' scheme of 1971". These cars were built by Berwick in January 1970. The MTL 104 series is close, with differences in the ends between prototype and model.

The ORER for October 1972 has the series NW 602000 to 602028 with all 29 cars. The description was "Box, Steel, Nailable Steel Floor" with these key dimensions: inside length 60 feet 8 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 12 feet 10 inches, outside length 68 feet 4 inches, extreme height 16 feet 10 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 7400 cubic feet. End notes call out bulkheads, Evans air-pack load dividers and 20 inch travel cushion underframes. Jumping to the July 1992 Equipment Register and the Norfolk Southern registration, there were 25 cars remaining, divided into subsets with as little as one car based on small differences in weight capacity. In the January 2000 ORER the 24 cars still in service



were back in one set listed at 128,000 pounds capacity and still equipped with bulkheads, cushion underframe and Evans load dividers. There were 12 cars left as of the October 2007 ORER but they were all gone no later than the next Register I have in the Research Accumulation, January 2011.

We go to RailcarPhotos.com for the bingo on this car, shot from below track level in August 1993. The paint looks relatively new and is not accompanied by any, ahem, additional decoration other than a large “E” chalk mark with an arrow. Another car which “escaped the ‘NW’ scheme” is NW 602021, found in 1987 and also on RailcarPhotos. In addition, RRPictureArchives has photos of 602010, 602013, 602022, 602023 and 602026 all from the same prototype series. The first two have the N&W “Claytor” scheme (a possible future release?) while the last three have the same scheme that MTL used.



**105 00 311 and 105 00 312, \$26.90 each.**

**Reporting Marks: D&RGW 55544 and 55549.**

**50 Foot Steel 14 Panel Gondolas, Fishbelly Sides, Rio Grande (Denver and Rio Grande Western).**

Black with mostly white lettering including large reporting marks on left and speed lettering herald with “The Action Road” slogan right of center. Multicolored ACI

Label in center and white on black single COTS panel at far right. Each car includes a simulated scrap steel I-beam load. Approximate Time Period: 1968 (build date) to the early decade of the 2000s.

The **Rio Grande Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 73, includes the bingo photo for the first car in this virtual two pack. The 55544 and 55549 were part of the series 55500 to 55549, delivered from Bethlehem Steel in 1968. This was the year after the company adapted the roadname and “the Action Road” slogan as depicted on the Micro-Trains models. I think that, plus the appearance of the ACI Label, means that this is the “as delivered” paint scheme for these cars. It was noted on the RPI website that the Rio Grande changed from black to orange for their gondolas around 1971. However, the bingo photo in the **Color Guide** was taken in 1976. The 55544 looked to be in pretty good shape considering it was already eight years old. The prototype cars were 14 panels wide and had reinforced Dreadnaught fixed ends and fishbelly sides, so we have alignment to the MTL 105 body style there.

The ORER for October 1969 shows the series listed as “Gondola, Steel, Flat Bottom, Solid Ends” with inside length 52 feet, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 3 feet 6 inches, outside length 57 feet even, extreme height 7 feet 1 inch and capacity 1746 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. Sometime between the October 1972 and July 1974 Equipment Registers, cars 55455 to 55449 were listed as equipped with cradles for coil steel. The other 45 cars stayed in the main series including the 55444. It looks like those cradles were removed between the April 1985 and October 1986 ORER listings. Jumping to the Union Pacific registration in the April 1999 ORER,

there were a total of 24 of these cars in several subsets by slightly different weight capacities. The 55449 is specifically called out in one of these subsets. Where your railroad's timeframe fits into this Approximate Time Period would affect the lettering. I'd probably remove the ACI Label by the end of the 1980s, switch to a double COTS panel at some point, and don't forget that U-1 wheel inspection "dot" which was required in 1978.

Just one car remained in revenue service as of the October 2004 Register. However, the first car in this series, D&RGW 55000, was still around, perhaps in company service, as of November 2018. In a picture posted to Fallen Flags, it looks quite the worse for wear. The reporting marks have been restenciled but there's still a little bit of the original "Action Road" roadname to be seen if you look carefully. Also from this series, RailcarPhotos.com has the 55503 as of December 1978—still with the ACI Label but with the "dot" and double COTS panel. There's also the 55506 as of 2013, confirmed in MOW service, and the 55538 also in company service as of July 2015.



130 00 290, \$36.95.

**Reporting Marks: UP 24528.**

**Bay Window Caboose, Windowless Sides, without Battery Box, Union Pacific.**

Yellow with aluminum roof and red details.

Large red roadname outlined in black across top of side. UP shield herald at left center.

Large red reporting marks outlined in black

at bottom left. Black safety slogan "U Ppermost in Safety" at bottom right. Additional red lettering including "P" for Pool service on bay window. White on black double COTS panel at far bottom right. Approximate Time Period: early 1980s to at least 2008 for this specific car, or mid to late 1980s in general for the prototype series.

The story of this UP class CA-13 caboose is larger than I thought. Page 181 of the book **Caboose of the Union Pacific Railroad** has that tale: "During the time that Union Pacific and Rock Island were planning their merger, the two companies cooperated on many administrative and operational matters. UP purchased several groups of locomotives, cars, and cabooses, which it then leased to the Rock Island." Included in that arrangement were 130 steel bay window cabooses. When the Rock Island quit operations on April 1, 1980 (yes, more than 40 years ago now!) all but three of those cabooses came back to the UP. They varied in color from the original brown to the blue or white of "The Rock." The book has a number of photos of these cars, some of which were simply restenciled and others which received full repainting, such as the 24528. Safety slogans were part of this repainting in some cases. The 24528 was initially Rock Island 17110. It was renumbered in April 1980. As of the 2002 copyright year of the book, it hadn't yet been retired. Overall, the CA-13s left the UP roster by 1990, though most were stricken in 1985. Many of these cars were donated to various sites along the Union Pacific system.

The 24528 appears in two bingo photos on RRPictureArchives. The later of these is from May 2008; it's parked next to another UP bay window caboose in what might be a lineup of company service equipment in Eugene, Oregon. From the three-quarter view we can observe a key delta

between the real car and the MTL 130 body style: the prototype 24528 had a couple of small windows on the sides, whereas the Micro-Trains model has no side windows. The bay window has framing for screens as well, which can be addressed by the modeler.

Two other data points: Over on RailcarPhotos.com there's a shot of sister car UP 24565, "stuffed and mounted" at an entrance to the company's North Little Rock facility. And in the N Scale world, the old Atlas First Generation tooling for their bay window caboose was used for a small production of cars imported by E-R Models in the 1980s. That included two in the "Route Rock" paint scheme that was used on a few of these cars before they went to the UP.



*In addition to the above*, the seven Scale Test Cars originally slated for release in mid-July slid a little bit to this month. Three of the cars were released at the beginning of August: **121 00 110, \$16.95, CSXT 914240, CSX Transportation; 121 00 120, \$16.95, C&O ST-1, Chesapeake & Ohio/Chessie System; and 121 00 130, \$17.95, MILW 980238, Milwaukee Road.**

Having the actual photos of the models certainly helps; I can tell you that the Chessie car has the "Ches-C" on the top, which wasn't obvious from the MTL preliminary artwork. (See, actual product **may** vary!) Also, I'm able to confirm that the reporting marks on the Milwaukee Road car are on the ends, which I'd guessed from prototype photos.

Meanwhile, the other four Scale Test Cars were rescheduled to release in Mid-August. These are: **121 00 140, \$15.95, Reporting Marks: CP 420939, CP Rail; 121 00 150, \$14.95, Road Number: 490387, Pennsylvania Railroad; 121 00 160, \$14.95, Reporting Marks: UP 903145, Union Pacific; and 121 00 170, \$14.95, Reporting Marks: D&RGW X-450, Rio Grande (Denver and Rio Grande Western).** At "Press Time" I did not have product images. Hopefully MTL will make those photos available, if so, I'll include them in the UMTRR website listings.

## **N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS:** Just one this month...



**144 00 810, \$29.95.**

**Car Name: Ogden Canon**  
(website listing TBD).

**Heavyweight Modernized  
Business Car, Denver and Rio  
Grande Western.**

Pullman Green with black roof, underframe and six-wheel trucks. Gold lettering including roadname in center of letterboard and car name at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: as early as the 1930s to 1952.

Well, I couldn't cheat on a website search: the phrase "Rio Grande Ogden Canon" returned to me the information about an actual Ogden *Canyon*, "in the Wasatch Range in eastern Weber County, Utah, United States, just east of Ogden" (thank you, Wikipedians).

I got more on topic with the site drgw.net which offers two views from 1952 of this car. In both views, the car was at the end of the Rio Grande's train "The Prospector." Checking an Official Guide of the Railways from May 1954, we find that train covered the Moffat Tunnel route between Denver and Salt Lake City. Westbound, it left Denver at 6PM and covered the 570 miles to Salt Lake in 14 hours 30 minutes, arriving at 8:30 AM. It was a "night train" eastbound as well, leaving Salt Lake at 5:30 PM and arriving in Denver at eight the next morning. Right in the schedule the train was advertised as "Streamlined." We'll come back to that.

Referring back to the bingo photo, the side we can see is the same as the side in the MTL photo. The window arrangement differs, and there's also some additional equipment attached to the underframe at about dead center of the car. The drumhead of "The Prospector" is a nice touch hanging from the rear railing – you'll need to obtain one of those on your own, however. In the second photo, the Ogden Canon is coupled to what I believe to be a Missouri Pacific passenger car, and that car is in turn attached to a set of Rio Grande cars in their sharp orange, silver and black paint scheme. Both images are in glorious black and white.

The late Jerry Laboda's website has a citation for the above photos with the additional note that the Ogden Canon previously carried road number 986, and before that was the Western Pacific's 807. It was a lounge observation rebuilt but Laboda didn't have details.

Now, let's see what we can do about an Approximate Time Period. The Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment (ORPTE) for March 1943 shows the Ogden Canon. It and "Ruby Canon" were called out as Lounge cars that seated 45 people, were 70 feet 2 in and had ice-based air conditioning. Fun fact: In this ORPTE, "The Prospector" was listed as two sets of "Diesel-Electric Stainless Steel" two-unit trains, each with a Motor-Control-Luggage-Coach that seated 44 and a Sleeper-Buffer-Lounge that slept 18.

The ORPTE for January 1953 does not list any of the "Canon" lounge cars, so it's fortunate that someone grabbed a photo of the Ogden Canon in 1952! That could have been one of the last trips for that car on "The Prospector" or anywhere else for that matter. I guess the note about that train being "Streamlined" in the May 1954 was accurate.

Fortunately, we can move backwards from the ORPTE of March 1943, as the D&RGW was among the railroads that listed passenger equipment in the ORER before the ORPTE was introduced. So, the January 1940 ORER has a set of lounge cars which included the "Ogden Canon," as does the July 1935 Register. It's also in the February 1931 ORER, but not the April 1928 Equipment Register. I think I'd be a bit careful here, though, as there could have been some rebuilding between its first appearance in the ORERs and perhaps the last photo taken of it in 1952.



Finally, I checked the Pullman Project database. I didn't find an "Ogden Canon" but I did find an "Ogden Canyon" **with** the "y" which was built in 1929 and was in service for the Pennsylvania Railroad before it was sold to the PRR and leased back. This isn't the same car.

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

**N SCALE MULTI-PACKS:** **Runner Pack #170 (993 00 170, \$109.95)**, of four Missouri Pacific 2 Bay Center Flows, is expected to be available mid-month and should be at MTL dealers as you read this. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the April 2020 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 092 51 030, 705738; 092 52 030, 705837; 092 53 030, 705899; and 092 54 030, 705952. These are the second through fifth releases for this item.



This set is being released "out of sequence." Runner Pack #169 of four Norfolk Southern Open Hoppers appears to have been moved to September. It's also possible, but **not confirmed**, that Runner Pack #168, the four Pennsylvania Railroad gondolas with cable reel loads, slipped a bit from mid-last month.

I've already noted the first three pack of the 60 Foot Ribside (Exterior Post) Boxcars at the top of the column.

*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 **August 31**.*



**Expected Delivery January 2021:**

**993 00 174, \$84.95.**

**Reporting Marks: NYC 28059, 28133, 28152, 28369.**

**Runner Pack #174, quantity four of MTL 035 Series 40 Foot Despatch Stock Cars, New York Central.**

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and small oval New York Central System herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1947 (build date on car) to mid-1960s. Previous Releases: As Catalog Number 35040, Road Number 28497, February 1974; Road Number 28490, May 1974; Road Number

28022, October 1996; then as Catalog Number 035 00 040, Road Number 28028, September 2010. (Also released with Catalog Number 35040 was Road Number 28463 in jade green paint in March 1988, which is not prototypical.) MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release.

Secure from Broken Record Alert: The prototype New York Central car is the basis for the MTL 035 body style. So this is the only time I do not need to report that the model is somewhere between a little bit and a lot of a stand in for a given Micro-Trains release of this type. The NYC's Lot 757-S was rebuilt from single sheathed boxcars in 1947, and was numbered from 28000 to 28499.

The ORER for July 1950 shows all 500 possible cars in the series. The description is "Stock, Steel Underframe, Adjustable Deck" with AAR Designation SC. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 8 feet 6 inches, and inside height variable based on to where the adjustable deck was, well, adjusted. The outside length was 42 feet 2 inches, extreme height 13 feet 7 inches, and door opening 6 feet by whatever height was needed based on the adjustable deck. Capacity was 2670 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds. End notes further discussed the inside height: when the deck is raised, it was 7 feet 9 inches and when it's lowered there were two partitions, the top one being 4 feet 3 inches and the bottom 3 feet 11 inches. At the time the Central had 1,675 stock cars on its roster, more than I would have guessed.

And you might have guessed by now that the number of stock cars was in for a "big drop" as my son used to say when he was little. In January 1955 there were 498 cars in the series, still pretty much intact, and in the January 1959 ORER we were down just a bit more to 490. But the next Equipment Register I have is January 1964 and the group has plummeted to 52 cars in that listing, among what looks like just 108 total stock cars of all types. Only five cars in the 28000 series were shown in the January 1967 ORER, and these don't appear to have survived to the time of the Penn Central merger.

I'm not sure why MTL went with preliminary artwork for this set, as stock cars in this paint scheme have been previously done in both N and Z Scales. At right is my unofficial photo of the most recent N Scale MTL reprint (Road Number 28028, September 2010), to augment the Official MTL image. That release included a cattle chute kit (mine is around here someplace!) and the official photo (at right) showed that accessory, somewhat obscuring the car.





*Expected Delivery January 2021:*  
993 00 820, \$219.95.

**Reporting Marks:** GN 44414, 44416, 44419, 44422, 44427, 44429, 44432, and 44439.

**Eight Pack of 40 Foot Steel Boxcars with Youngstown Doors, Great Northern.**

Orange with Pullman Green trim and black roof and ends. Pullman Green lettering

including roadname and reporting marks on left. White and Pullman Green “See America First – Glacier National Park” side facing goat herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1944 (build date) into the 1950s at least. Previous Releases: None. This will be the first through eighth releases of this item. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release.

This is one of the few GN paint schemes of which I’m aware which has not been previously modeled as a regular run by the folks in Talent. By the way, since it was hard for me to tell the difference between the Pullman Green trim on the sides and the black ends and roof, I did confirm this with the folks at MTL. The 2004 N Scale Collector Author Car (which I have!) and the 2005 N Scale Collector Special Run car on which it was based had the same paint choices with different lettering. (Each year’s Author Car is awarded in the next calendar year.)

Page 22 of the **Great Northern Equipment Color Pictorial Volume One – Box Cars and Stock Cars** describes two groups of cars built in 1944. The first was numbered 44025 to 44399 and the second was 44400 to 44999. The first set of cars had “riveted steel panel roof, eight plywood side panels, dreadnaught ends, six foot wide Camel door, Universal handbrake and friction bearing trucks. The second set was virtually identical with an exception to which I’ll return.

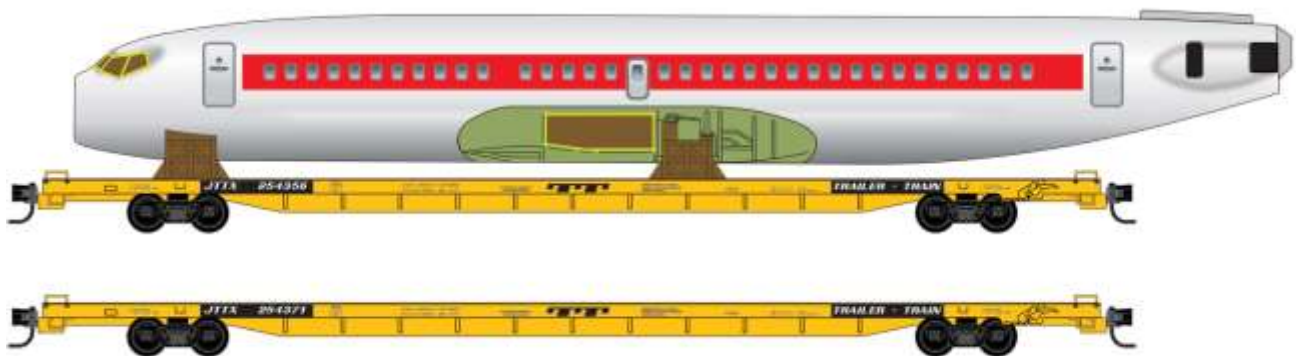
However, photos of GN 44264 and 44467 in the book show them both painted in a later scheme of brown with white lettering and the large “Great Northern Railway” goat herald which replaced the “See America First...” insignia in 1948. On the “Boxcars and Freight Cars of North America” website looked after by Ken Harstine ([www.boxcars.us](http://www.boxcars.us)) there’s a 1986 shot of GN 44862 in that same later paint scheme. I’m thinking that we’re good on the “as delivered” orange paint scheme at least into the 1950s; with an application of Rule #1 (It’s Your Railroad) you could stretch that a bit more. Add plenty of weathering.

Off to the ORER for January 1945. The series GN 44025 to 44999 was tagged with a “denotes additions” marker and is described as “Box, Steel Frame.” The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet even, outside length 41 feet 9 inches, extreme height 14 feet 8 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3727 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. There were 825 cars in the group at that time. By the July 1950 Equipment Register that car count was at 970, just five less than the maximum possible. It’s noted in the **Color Pictorial** that most plywood sided cars were off the roster by the 1960s though 267 remained



in revenue service as of 1969. So we'll advance to the Burlington Northern listing from the April 1970 ORER, where we find 235 total cars. The Equipment Register for July 1974 has just 33 total cars, of which three were demoted to the dreaded "tankage" service. (Don't ask!) I stopped looking there.

I've noted before that representing of plywood sided cars with steel sided models at 1:160 proportion doesn't seem to be that much of an offense. It's also true that the PS-1 boxcar which is the basis for the MTL 020 body style isn't the same as these cars, which more resemble a 1937 AAR prototype than the PS-1 which was still a few years in the future when these cars were built. There's one other interesting detail on at least some of the real cars, though: a distinctive combination plywood and steel door, that's shown on the photo of the 44467 in the Color Pictorial and the 44862 online. A phenomenally good Proto:48 model of GN 44998, in the original color scheme to boot, also has a door that looks like it's all plywood. (Proto:48 is the fine scale version of 1/4 inch to the foot modeling, what's nominally "O Scale.") A shot of that model is at <https://myp48.wordpress.com/2016/01/14/opm-lee-turners-latest-models/> , and also has an image of a weathering treatment applied to the roof for your reference.



***Expected Delivery December 2020:***

**993 02 120, \$99.95.**

**Reporting Marks: JTTX 254356 and 254371.**

**TTX (Trailer Train) Fuselage Two-Pack.**

Expected to consist of two 071 body style 89 foot flat cars plus plastic injection molded aircraft fuselage. Flat cars are yellow with white reporting marks in black panel on left, black "TT" in center, white "Trailer Train" in black panel on right, and black lettering otherwise. Aircraft fuselage is white with red band. Decals included to be applied by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: late 1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release.

The choice of the older "TT" symbol for the flat cars in this set denotes an older Approximate Time Period for it than previously run sets of this type. The "TT" was replaced with "TTX" starting in 1991. So we've a bit of a throwback here.

I've completely wiped out on bingo photos for anything near the JTTX road numbers. In fact it appears from the JTTX car photos I did find that TTX restenciled cars with other reporting marks into JTTX initials. So, we're going to have to determine the ATP the hard way: through



ORERs. There's also the somewhat helpful timeline item from the TTX website that the yellow paint was introduced in 1970. The first Equipment Register I have after that, October 1972, has 89 foot flat cars with JTTX markings, but not in the number series shown on the MTL artwork. It is noted at the end of the Trailer Train registration that the JTTX markings are for "flat cars, specially modified or equipped by member railroads with miscellaneous devices for special services." Certainly the transport of aircraft fuselages would count as a special service!

It's not until the April 1985 Equipment Register that I pick up any JTTX cars in the 254000s. I have the previous issue as well, January 1985, and those cars aren't listed in that edition. The two numbers MTL chose, 254356 and 254371, are not among the individual car listings in April 1985. The next ORER I have is from October 1986, where a large series, JTTX 253892 to 256196, is listed, with a small car count, 49. These cars had an 89 foot 4 inch "inside length" and 93 foot 8 inch "outside length." The description of JTTX cars has changed only slightly, to "flat cars, specially modified or equipped by participant railroads with miscellaneous devices for special services."

By the very next ORER in the UMTRR Research Accumulation, July 1987, this series is down from 49 cars to just 20. In the July 1989 Equipment Register, there are just two! Unless those two happen to carry the road numbers MTL selected, we've got a very short Approximate Time Period indeed. No wonder I couldn't find any photos online! I would recommend liberal use of Rule #1 (It's Your Railroad) here, or perhaps a change in the reporting marks to extend the ATP beyond just those few years.

Speaking of throwback... how about the paint scheme on the fuselage? My first thought was that this plane was destined for the roster of TWA, or Trans World Airlines, which had white aircraft with varying sized red stripes. I'm not an airline expert, so there could be other choices. TWA was founded as Transcontinental and Western Airlines in 1930 and was acquired by American Airlines in 2001. The TWA Terminal at Kennedy Airport is a landmark designed by Eero Saarinen, opened in 1962. It's now the TWA Hotel, featuring rooms with runway views.

**N SCALE WEATHERED/GRAFFITI RELEASES:** *The following was announced on the Micro-Trains website on August 17.*



**025 45 013, \$29.95.**

**Reporting Marks: RBOX 38432.**

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

#8 in the "Year in Railbox 2020" series, "Tell A Joke Day." Base car is yellow with black door and aluminum roof. Mostly black lettering including original Railbox name and reporting marks on left. Black, red and blue original large version "Next Load/Any Road" logo on right. White on black double COTS panel on far right. Featured side of the

car has multi-color graffiti across most of the side (including on door) reading "Joke" and tags at top left ("Intrepid Images") and top right ("TIO Squad"). Opposite side of the car has multicolored graffiti on across bottom of side (including door), paint wear effects on door and moderate to heavy weathering. Roof has heavy weathering. This item does not have conspicuity stripes. Approximate Time Period: 2013 and 2014, plus or minus, based on featured side of the car. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

According to the website [daysoftheyear.com](http://daysoftheyear.com), "Tell A Joke Day" was on Sunday, August 16 this year. The page describing this day on that site quotes linguist Robert Hetzron for an operational definition of the term: "A joke is a short humorous piece of oral literature in which the funniness culminates in the final sentence, called the punchline... In fact, the main condition is that the tension should reach its highest level at the very end." I don't think we know who told the first joke, or when, but since then jokes have been developed, recounted, passed down, and stolen by one comedian from another. (I'll leave further research on this to the reader.) It does take a certain type of person to tell a joke well, and though the scene in the 1982 film **My Favorite Year** in which Benjy Stone unsuccessfully tries to teach K.C. Downing how to do it is fictional, it's true to life. The recounting of my single experience performing stand-up comedy has yet to appear on the "Irwin's Journal Online" website, but it will at some point, if only to confirm that I survived.

Meanwhile, RBOX 38432 was part of the series 37750-38749 built by FMC as their Lot 18025, from April to November 1980 and June 1981. You might recognize that as the same prototype series from which Year in Railbox #5, "Slug," was selected (RBOX 38068, Catalog 025 45 011, May), as well as Year in Railbox #4, "National Garlic Day" (RBOX 38461, Catalog 025 44 569, April). 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. As of January 2018 there were 531 cars remaining from the original thousand built. It's the company's class XFF20.

Now, for photos. I was able to find two bingos on Flickr for the featured side of the car. A search on "Railbox Joke" will get those for you. The first of these is an "action shot" grabbed in 2013 and the second is from 2014, which together yield our "plus or minus" ATP. There are no visible conspicuity stripes on the car so MTL is being faithful here by not including them. The other side of the car remains a mystery. None of my usual go-to sites have the 38432 which is a bit of a surprise.



993 05 720, \$109.95.

**Reporting Marks: ADMX 53077, 53094, 53100.**

### **ADM Graffiti Three Pack.**

Consists of three MTL 098 series 50 Foot Airslide Covered Hoppers. Base of each car is gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Each car has a different ADM identification mostly in blue in center. Approximate Time Period for the set is the decade of the 2010's, plus or minus, though individual car ATPs could vary a bit. The individual cars are as follows: **Catalog Number 098 51 110, ADMX 53077**, has the "Molecule" logo with ADM initials. **Catalog Number 098 52 100, ADMX 53094**, has the "Leaf" logo with ADM initials.

There were two unweathered releases of this scheme in January 2020 (Road Numbers 53152 and 53185, Catalog Number 098 00 10x). **Catalog Number 098 53 120, ADMX 53100**, has the "Molecule" logo with ADM initials and "ADM Milling Company" to the right of the logo. All cars have multicolor graffiti on both sides of the car. The 53100 has moderate rusting effects and restenciled reporting marks.

From the RailcarPhotos.com site we learn that these three cars all came from the group of fifty built by General American in June and July 1981, numbered 53051 to 53100. We can see what the "ADM Milling" version of the car looks like without graffiti, in the form of ADMX 53025 as found in April 2006. But there are no bingos on the three road numbers MTL selected.

No worries though. Over on RRPictureArchives it's almost all covered for us. There are three shots of the featured side of ADMX 53077, from July 2012, September 2013 and May 2017 respectively. The I'm-not-sure-what-it-is face on ADMX 53094's featured side was photographed in October 2010, June 2012 and September 2012, all in various points in Indiana. And, bonus, there's also an image of the opposite side of the 53094 with the, ahem, additional decoration MTL used, as of June 2008. That leaves the 53100, with restenciled reporting marks. The featured side was found in April 2009 and February 2014, and the opposite side in May 2019. So what I think is the oldest of the three paint schemes has the newest photograph, go figure. Add conspicuity stripes to that car if you're modeling The Present.

I'm calling the start of the Approximate Time Period for the entire set in the decade of the 2010's based on the photo evidence. The "leaf" logo was introduced in 2001 and versions of the "molecule" logo go back to 1962. While both have been replaced by a new trademark as of early this year, I doubt that affects the ATP at this point. I also don't think that any repainting has occurred either, though I can't verify that of course. Given the span of years in which these cars with their, ahem, extra paint, have existed, my thought is that you're safe into The Present. Technically we're still in the 2010s, since that decade is 2011 to 2020, not 2010 to 2019, using the

same logic as exist for 2001 being the first year of the millennium... but I don't bother to have that argument in public any more.



993 05 730, \$59.95.

**Reporting Marks: BAR 10036 and 10456.**

**Bangor and Aroostook (BAR) Weathered Two Pack.**

Consists of two 031 series 50 Foot Steel Boxcars with Single Youngstown Doors, as follows:

**031 51 470, BAR 10036.** Blue ends and roof. Blue, white and red sides with white lettering "State of Maine" across blue band and "Products" across red band. Blue reporting marks, roadname and "Serving

Northern Maine" herald across white band. White dimensional data. Multicolor ACI Label between "R" and "O" in "Products" left of door. Moderate to heavy weathering including rust effects. Restenciled dimensional data on patch panel at bottom left. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s into the 1970s. Previous Releases (unweathered): Road Numbers 10027 and 10038, March 2015.

**031 52 560, BAR 10456.** Brown with mostly white lettering including "Serving Northern Maine" herald and reporting marks on left and large reporting marks on right. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. One side of the car has replacement door with "State of Maine" scheme, other side has brown door. Previous Releases: None. Approximate Time Period: around 1975 into the 1990s at least.

"Ah, it's the old replace the door with a non-matching one trick", as Agent 86, Maxwell Smart, might say. (Look it up, kids.) This pair of Bangor and Aroostook boxcars are both in the "somewhat worse for wear" category. My usual question about the ATP being concurrent for these cars is a little tricky this time, as we'll see shortly.

The red, white and blue State of Maine car is the weathered version of a previously released virtual two-pack, so I have information on that car. The series BAR 10000 to 10349 was built by American Car & Foundry in 1957, the largest by far of four orders for 50 foot 6 inch inside length boxcars (the other three: 10350 to 10399 also in 1957, 10400 to 10407 in 1962-63 and 10410 to 10418 in 1965). Since the MTL 031 series is modeled after the Pullman-Standard PS-1, the AC&F prototype isn't an exact match to the car. (Pullman did deliver PS-1 50 foot State of Maine boxcars to the BAR in 1962, road numbers 6000 to 6059 in two orders, and again in 1963, series 6100 to 6224, all with cushion underframes.)

From the ORER for January 1958, we also discover a small "door thing" since the real cars had a nine foot door opening versus an eight foot door on the Micro-Trains 031 body style. The



other key dimensions were: inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 51 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet, and capacity 4918 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. These were your basic XM designation boxcars. Twenty years later in the January 1978 ORER there were 126 cars of the original 350 still in service. A very beat up looking BAR 10338 still in red, white and blue is on the Fallen Flags site as caught in December 2003.

According to the “Maine Rail Photos” site of Larry Goss, about half of the “State of Maine” cars were repainted into the “Large BAR” scheme in the 1960s. That scheme was introduced in 1966. Beginning that year, the road’s new box cars were delivered in that “Large BAR” scheme.

There were two other points I made in my March 2015 review of the unweathered State of Maine boxcars. First, the “as delivered” paint scheme included smaller reporting marks. Second, the shades of blue and red seemed to be darker than what Micro-Trains used on the “clean” models, based on prototype photos. This time, I think both points are moot. First, the ACI Label addition puts the ATP out past the delivery date by ten years, plus or minus; second, weathering fades colors, and the 10036 is definitely weathered! Running board (roofwalk) removal probably ends the ATP for these cars sometime in the 1970s.

The brown and white car, BAR 10456, was more of a challenge to research than I thought it would be. For starters, I did not find any bingo photos. (I expect MTL has one.) The car doesn’t show up until at least the April 1975 ORER. There’s an interesting detail in the description of the group BAR 10456 to 10470: “Two Roof Hatches (Bulk Grain).” There were several boxcars converted to this service and their AAR designation changed from XM to LC. The BAR numbered these converted boxcars starting with 10450. They had either two or four roof hatches. The key dimensions match those of the State of Maine cars 10000 to 10349, which means it’s possible that series was the source for these cars. I’ll also point out that there was no car count in the April 1975 ORER, meaning this could have been a “coming soon” group. All 15 possible cars are shown in the April 1976 Equipment Register, and jumping way ahead, eight of these cars are still on the roster as of the January 2000 ORER.

Adding hatches would probably not be an issue if we knew what they looked like on this particular car. In many cases, they were close to those used on center flows, including Micro-Trains’ own models, but without a photo, I can’t say. Unloading of this bulk grain would have been through the sliding doors. Because access to the roof hatches was required, these cars were exempt from running board removal, as is true with more traditional covered hoppers.

With the brown large BAR car not hitting the rails with the 10456 number until probably sometime in 1975 and the running board removal possibly have been completed by then on the red, white and blue State of Maine car, I’d estimate that the concurrent Approximate Time Period for this car isn’t very long. Use your own discretion, of course.

**N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:** Car #4 in the **Solar System Series**, for the planet Earth, has been released in both pre-ordered varieties. UMTRR coverage was in the December 2018 issue.



Catalog 102 00 833, \$36.95 (at left) has the interior light and magnetic wand activator.



Catalog 102 02 833, \$27.95 (at right) does not have the interior light.

Meanwhile, the **Thomas Kinkadee Painter of Light FT-A Diesel (987 01 808, \$124.95)** is now expected to be available in early August. The previously provided delivery date was mid-July.



*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 **August 31**.*



**Expected Delivery December 2020:**

**987 01 810, \$114.95**

**FT-A Powered Diesel Locomotive, "Our Solar System."**

Companion to the Solar System Series. Black with white "Our Solar System" across top of



sides. Full color representation of each planet in order from the sun Mercury to Neptune (sorry, Pluto) from nose to tail. Full color representation of The Sun on nose (at left). No reporting marks or road number. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

In addition, the pre-order window for the "Santa's Off The Rails" train set (993 21 340, \$229.95, MTL artwork for one side of loco at right) has been extended to **August 31** from the original July 31 deadline. I suspect that means MTL would like more pre-orders. I previously missed in their information that the boxcars are red and silver; I'm guessing that the roof is the silver part.



## Z SCALE NEW RELEASES:



**Chesapeake and Ohio Cameo Car #6 (505 00 426, \$34.95, Reporting Marks C&O 21494)** has been released. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the October 2019 issue. This completes the C&O Cameo Car series.

**Also, all seven of the cabooses announced for pre-order in March are scheduled for release mid-month.** I don't yet have official images of these cars so we'll need to repeat the MTL artwork. As always, if images of the actual cars become available I'll post them to the "2020 Month by Month" page on the UMTRR website. Here are the seven cars:



**535 00 420, \$32.95, Reporting Marks: CSXT 903180.**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, CSX Transportation.**

Lilac one side, green other side with aluminum roof, black underframe and yellow details. Black reporting marks directly below cupola. Black CSX herald at lower left. Blue and yellow Chesapeake and Ohio safety herald at lower right.

Black lettering on white band at top "At Work And Play / Be Safe Every Day." Black lettering in white rectangle outlined in red: "Safety Cabooses 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1973-1993." White on black double COTS panel at far right. Approximate Time Period: 1993 to at least 2010.



**535 00 430, \$24.80, Reporting Marks: ATSF 1735.**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, Santa Fe (AT&SF).**

Red with black underframe and smokejack, and white grab irons. Small white circle cross herald off-center left below cupola. Multicolor ACI Label off-center right below cupola. White COTS panel on right. White simulated reflective stripes along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s.



**535 00 440, \$29.95, Reporting Marks: NS 555006.**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, Norfolk Southern.**

Red with aluminum roof, black underframe and smokejack, and orange side grab irons. White lettering including "horsehead" herald and roadname below cupola and reporting marks at bottom center. Yellow and blue heritage

circa 1964 circular Norfolk and Western herald right of reporting marks. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. Orange conspicuity stripes along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: As painted, 2014 through at least 2018.



**535 00 450, \$29.95, Road Number: X66 (will be "GN X66" in website listings).**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, Great Northern.**

Red with black roof, underframe, end railings and smokejack, and red and white striped side grab irons. White lettering including road number at bottom left and right, "Radio Equipped" at left center, and slogan "Taking Chances Takes Lives" at bottom center. Black and white side facing goat herald below cupola. White simulated reflective stripes along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 1963 (build date) to 1971 (relettering date).



**535 00 460, \$29.95, Road Number: 90020 (will be "C&O 90020" in website listings).**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, Chesapeake and Ohio.**

Yellow with gray roof, end railings and smokejack, and black underframe. White striped side grab irons. Blue lettering including "C&O for Progress" herald and road number below cupola. Red stripe along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1956 to no later than 1968 for this particular car, but 1970s in general.



**535 00 470, \$32.95, Reporting Marks: NP 10401.**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, Northern Pacific.**

Green sides with yellow stripe and triangle. Aluminum roof and smokejack. Black underframe. Yellow end railings and side grab irons. White reporting marks at bottom left. Black, red and white monad herald centered below cupola. Multicolor ACI label off-center below cupola. Approximate Time Period: 1969 to early 1970s.



**535 00 480, \$29.95, Reporting Marks: UP 25411.**

**30 Foot Steel Center Cupola Caboose, Union Pacific.**

Yellow sides, red roof, end details, smokejack and side grab irons. Black underframe. Yellow end railings and side grab irons. Red roadname directly under cupola and reporting marks bottom center. Black safety slogan "Everyone Gains Where Courtesy Reigns" on white rectangle between roadname and reporting marks. Approximate Time Period: 1959 to 1970 (based on time period for these safety slogan version).

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

**Z SCALE MULTI-PACKS:** A pre-order announcement this month:



*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 **August 31**.*



**Expected Delivery January 2021:**

**994 00 110, \$84.95.**

**Reporting Marks: NYC 28059, 28133, 28152, 28369.**

**Runner Pack #110, quantity four of MTL 520 Series 40 Foot Despatch Stock Cars, New York Central.**

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and small oval New York Central System herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1947 to mid-1960s. Previous Releases: As Catalog Number 13806, Road Number 28022, December 2004. (Also released with Catalog Number 13806 was Road Number 28463 in jade green paint in May 1988, which is not prototypical.) MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release.

Please see the coverage of N Scale Runner Pack #174 above. Note that the MTL artwork is the same for both the N and Z Scale Runner Packs.

**Z SCALE SPECIAL EDITIONS:** No releases or pre-order announcements this month.

**Z SCALE SINGLE RELEASE PREORDERS:** The four virtual two-packs of gondolas announced last month are apparently remaining in pre-order status this month. Here again are those four sets:



**Targeted Delivery December 2020/January 2021:**

**522 00 361 and 522 00 362, \$25.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: WP 6051 and 6055.**

**50 Foot Steel Gondolas, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Western Pacific.**

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left. Yellow roadname in center split by red feather. Black on yellow "when empty" instructions sideboard on far left. Simulated wood tie load included. Approximate Time Period: early 1960s (1962 rebuild date given by MTL) to late 1970s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



*Targeted Delivery December 2020/January 2021:*

522 00 371 and 522 00 372, \$24.95 each.

Road Numbers: 60065 and 60143 (will be preceded by "SOU" in website listings).

50 Foot Steel Gondolas, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Southern Railway.

Brown with white lettering including large roadname and road number in center, accented by green dot inside the "O" in "SOUTHERN." Simulated wood tie load included. Approximate Time Period: late 1960s (based on paint scheme) into the decade of the 2000s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



*Targeted Delivery December 2020/January 2021:*

522 00 381 and 522 00 382, \$24.95 each.

Reporting Marks: UP 229786 and 229791.

50 Foot Steel Gondolas, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Union Pacific.

Brown (including trucks and couplers but not wheels) with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname in center. White on black double COTS panel and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" on right. Simulated wood tie load included. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960s or, strictly speaking, 1979, to early 1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



*Targeted Delivery December 2020/January 2021:*

522 00 391 and 522 00 392, \$25.95 each.

Reporting Marks: PRR 374256 and 374779.

50 Foot Steel Gondolas, Fishbelly Sides, Drop Ends, Pennsylvania Railroad.

Brown (the PRR's "Freight Car Color") with white lettering including reporting marks on left and plain keystone on right. Simulated wood tie load included. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1961 (based on paint scheme) or 1962 (based on paint date on cars) through the decade of the 1970s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

**Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:** *The following was announced on August 17 on the Micro-Trains website.*



**510 45 013, \$29.95.**

**Reporting Marks: RBOX 38432.**

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

#8 in the "Year in Railbox 2020" series, "Tell A Joke Day." Base car is yellow with black door and aluminum roof. Mostly black lettering including original Railbox name and reporting marks on left. Black, red and blue original large version "Next Load/ Any Road" logo on right. White on black double COTS panel on far right. Featured side of the

car has multi-color graffiti across most of the side (including on door) reading "Joke" and tags at top left ("Intrepid Images") and top right ("TIO Squad"). Opposite side of the car has multicolored graffiti on across bottom of side (including door), paint wear effects on door and moderate to heavy weathering. Roof has heavy weathering. This item does not have conspicuity stripes. Approximate Time Period: 2013 and 2014, plus or minus, based on featured side of the car.

Please see the coverage of the N Scale release (025 45 013) above.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The first group of Humvees should be available mid-month. Pre-orders were taken in June for the Tan Two-Pack (499 45 951, \$24.95, below left), the Olive Drab Two-Pack (499 45 952, \$24.95, below right) and the Undecorated Two-Pack Kits (499 45 950, \$17.95, not shown).



**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** The oldest items in the Do It Yourself Bye-Bye Board this time around are from 2016: The second number of the N Scale Southern Pacific 89 Foot Flat Car (071 00 562, September), the last 1:160 freight car to sell out from that year; the second number of the Z Scale BNSF PS-2 covered hopper (531 00 262 September), and the N Scale New Haven 12-1 Heavyweight Sleeper (142 00 100, December).

Moving to 2017, both numbers of the Z Scale Santa Fe wood refrigerator car have left the building (518 00 45x, October). The first number of the Z Scale Northern Pacific stock car has had its last roundup (520 00 231, May). The N Scale Husky Hauler Train Set has rolled away (993 21 290, September).

On to 2018 and N Scale releases: The C&O 40 Foot Plug Door Boxcar is outta here (021 00 600, September). So are the Southern Pacific "Impact" Boxcar (031 00 490, December) and the Western Fruit Express wood refrigerator car (047 00 420, June). Union Pacific WWII Poster Series Cars #2 (Hat's In The Ring) and #3 (Remember Colin Kelley) have rolled out (118 00 130 and 140, April and May respectively). The two-tone gray New York Central Paired-Window Coach has left the station (145 00 131, October). Finally in 1:160, the sellout of the Titan Rocket Booster Three Pack (993 01 680, March) uncovered an Oops in the website listing: I never included the three individual flat cars which make up this set in the table! That has been remedied, including the Dreaded "D" for Discontinued. In Z Scale, the first number of the Northern Pacific 40 Foot Double Door Boxcar is gone (501 00 281, February). So are both numbers of the C&O Plug Door Boxcars (502 00 44x, September) – and in the same month that the N Scale version also sold out. Coincidence? I think... so. The second number of the Muncie and Western / Ball Glass Cars boxcar has been canned (515 00 202, November). We say "Aloha" to the "Hawaii" themed "Year in Railbox #8" x-post boxcar (510 44 226, August), and remember, this is the 2018 set, not the 2020 set here.

We move right along to 2019's N Scale outs, leading off with the Santa Fe "Impact" boxcar (020 00 187, March) and the weathered Milwaukee Road express scheme boxcar (031 44 510, March). The Reading "not a reprint" two bay hopper has emptied out (055 00 221, May), as has the first number of the Hamermill Paper log car (115 00 061, June). The last available Runner Pack from 2019 was #152, a set of four brown Union Pacific boxcars, and it's now out of stock too (993 00 152, April). In Z Scale, the first number of the Southern Pacific 50 Foot Plug Door boxcar is gone (505 00 391, May), and the first number of the CSX SD40-2 has highballed out (970 01 261, April).

And that brings us to the present year's N Scale items. From just last month, the Conrail Center Flow (094 00 630) and Northern Pacific boxcar (180 00 180) have left the building. The Central Railroad of New Jersey re-run gondola is gone (105 00 301, March). The Southern "Green Light" boxcar (181 00 110, February) has sped off. Based on their no longer appearing on the MTL website, I conclude that the Year in Railbox Cars #5 and #6, also known as "Slug" and "Poison" are discontinued (025 44 011 and 012, May and June). If you're keeping score, #4 and #7 are left, along with this month's #8 of course. Last month's "Let's Go Camping" Center Flow hit the trail (094 44 650). July's BNSF Weathered/Graffiti Three Pack of hoppers emptied out (993 05 710). I may have missed the previous sellout of the Railgon (GONX) Weathered / Graffiti Four Pack (993 05 660, March) but I've caught it now. More weathered sets gone: the NASA Three Pack (993 02 020, June), the Montana Rail Link Tie Loader Three Pack (993 02 030, February) and the CP Tie Loader Three Pack (993 02 090, July). The DODX Cascade Green Three Pack with Military Vehicles is sold out (993 01 613, June), as is Runner Pack #166, the four ACFX Center Flows with "Reflectors" (conspicuity stripes) (993 00 166, June). And finally, the Civil War Era Union Pacific Log Car Five Pack (993 02 070, July) is gone from the MTL website so I guess I know what that means.

In Z Scale outs from 2020 we have the Montana Rail Link Weathered Boxcar Two Pack (994 05 250, April), Year in Railbox #2 "Bubble Gum" (510 44 229, February), and the first number of the Santa Fe x-post boxcar (511 00 271, June).



## INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:

Micro-Trains released images of the CP Rail Tie Loader Three Pack (993 02 090, at right) and Civil War Era Union Pacific Log Car Five Pack (993 02 070, below) after the July UMTRR went “to press,” though as banner pages for their site. I’ve edited down those pages for these images, which also replace the MTL artwork on the “2020 Month by Month” page of my site. Note that both sets are already sold out.



A page looked after by the Corona (California) Model Railroad Society which contains the photos of Ed Von Nordeck taken from 1945 to 1955 provides three images of interest to us. The direct URL is [www.cmrsclub.com/photography-of-ed-v](http://www.cmrsclub.com/photography-of-ed-v). First, while I’m still hoping to get a shot of the MTL model of the Santa Fe’s “Fast Mail” (help!) there’s mail being pulled into Railway Post Office car #72 in service on the real train. Second, a blast from the past: a Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing double sheathed boxcar, MINX 1039. That’s just one off from the “not a reprint” MTL release 39190 from back in November 1999. The early “3M” trademark isn’t present on the prototype car, however the lettering is about the same otherwise. It’s noted that the car was used to haul roof granules from Corona to Los Angeles on the Santa Fe. Finally, there’s a Pacific Electric single sheathed boxcar in a paint scheme very similar to that on a boxcar in MTL’s Southern Pacific Weathered Four Pack released in February 2014, although its road number, 10067, is from a different prototype series.

“Does this ad have the prototype for the MTL 113 body style?” I asked when looking at an advertisement for a 42 foot “skeleton” log flat car in the May 1963 issue of **Model Railroader** magazine. This model was made by the Kadee Metal Products Company, a name you’ll no doubt recognize. In the ad was a photo of the finished model. Comparing it to the N Scale car first released by Micro-Trains more than 38 years later... no, it’s not a match. However, Kadee noted that their car was “patterned after a prototype originally built by the Magor Car

Company for heavy duty logging in the woods.” This makes me wonder whether the Micro-Trains car shares that heritage. Model Railroader favorably reviewed the Kadee car in the July 1963 “Trade Topics,” stating that “the amount of detail provided in this kit is more than usual-excellent.”

Paul Graf advised with respect to the Erie single-window coach from last month (160 00 140) that some of the 2200 series cars were rebuilt into mainline coaches in the 1000 series, but the 2280 wasn't one of these. The Erie also adopted a two-tone green paint scheme for its air conditioned cars, an example of which is on Page 13 of the **Erie/DL&W Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**. Paul also reminded me that George Elwood's “Fallen Flags” website, in addition to having lots of photographs, also has printed information on the Erie's passenger roster. The direct URL [www.rr-fallenflags.org/el/pax/erie-pax.html](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org/el/pax/erie-pax.html) leads to a transcription of the Erie page from an Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment from 1944. There's also a transcription from a 1963 Erie document at [www.rr-fallenflags.org/el/pax/paxbook.html](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org/el/pax/paxbook.html), which also includes links to some drawings. That's apparently the final time that information even though that was revised, even though the Erie went into the Erie-Lackawanna (with the hyphen at that time) three years before in 1960. I guess the books were kept up to date for a while in separate rosters.

Let's continue this below, however...

**OOPS PATROL:** Unfortunately, I'm not done with the Erie coach just yet. In last month's commentary, I put the 2280 in the series 2070 to 2099, not where it belonged, and so everything in that paragraph is wrong. The above cited links on George Elwood's site don't have the 2280, but there **is** a prototype photo so the car **did** exist. So let's try this again, using the links above, my copy of the March 1943 Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment and earlier ORERs which did have the Erie's passenger equipment listed.

The 2280 is not in the August 1924 ORER. It is in the April 1928 Equipment Register, where it's part of a group of fifteen, numbered 2274 to 2288, capacity listed at 88 passengers. In the January 1940 ORER, it's in a larger group 2250 to 2284, with 35 cars of capacity between 76 and 84, and it's noted that the 2280 was equipped with Safety Carrier Steam Jet Air Conditioning Service. At some point that would have put the car in Erie Two-Tone Green, and possibly into a new road number, but the trail goes cold (pun not intended) right there. The 2280 is not listed in the ORER of January 1943. So my revised ATP for this car is mid-1920s to early 1940s. This is a sufficiently large error that I've revised the July 2020 ORER; that version will be available when I update the Back Issues page of the website.

Copy and Paste Error Department: The N Scale BNSF Hopper Weathered/Graffiti Three Pack has catalog number 993 05 710, not 993 50 700. Mistyping Department: The N Scale New York Central boxcar is 032 00 520, not 570.

**SOMETHING NEW AT THE IJ WEBSITE:** Most of you know that I have other interests besides model trains, and writing about some specific model trains. And then, of course, there's been

my Day Job. I've branched off in my writing to start "George's Lean Six Sigma Notebook," a series of short posts that relate to the practice where I've formally and informally spent most of my career. This new section of the Irwin's Journal website isn't meant for only practitioners of Lean Six Sigma! I think you'll find many of the discussion points applicable, even if you've never touched a regression or interpreted a control chart. In fact, most of what I think I'll be covering are about "soft skills." Find the Notebook at [www.irwinsjournal.com/lss](http://www.irwinsjournal.com/lss).

**FINALLY, THE FIRST COUPLER DEMO:** It was quite a while ago—prior to 1998, in fact—that Micro-Trains made available to dealers a special demonstration display of Magne-Matic couplers. The display might have been better known among N Scale Collectors as having a boxcar, MTL 80, that was packaged only with that display. (The same paint scheme on MTL 80 was used for Micro-Trains 1000<sup>th</sup> car, MTL 1000, catalog number 21220 released in June 1998.) I thought that the demo display was quite an interesting idea. Have a look at the real thing at Trovestar: [www.trovestar.com/generic/zoom.php?id=100428](http://www.trovestar.com/generic/zoom.php?id=100428).

Except now I know that it was a "reprint"—or perhaps more of a "not a reprint." Back in December 1960, the Kadee Metal Products Company of Medford, Oregon, made available to its dealers a "Self-Selling Magne-Matic Uncoupler and Coupler Display." You can see the explanation of how it works in the advertisement at right. Just \$4.18 for the display!

As you probably know, in 1990 the original Kadee split into the "new" Kadee and Micro-Trains Line, allowing each of the two brothers Keith and Dale Edwards to focus on specific scales. So the MTL 80 display has a direct predecessor in Kadee's HO Scale display which also promoted the Magne-Matic Coupler System... nearly sixty years ago.



Until next month, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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