



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report

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[Note: The September edition of the UMTRR was issued in two parts due to the aftermath of the Alameda wildfire which just missed the Micro-Trains facility. Those parts have been combined back into one for this “back issue.”]

N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



046 00 470, \$23.90

Reporting Marks: CN 143722.

50 Foot Steel Fishbelly Side Gondola with Drop Ends, Canadian National.

Brown with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left, “noodle” herald on right, and simulated reflective “dots” at points along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: after 1960, or 1968 based on reweigh date, to no later than 1992.

This car might look a bit familiar—same idea, different gondola, though. In July 2007 and again in June 2014, Micro-Trains released roughly this same paint scheme on the much less used 048/48000 body style, the 50 foot straight side gondola. (See both at right, the 165553 and 163520, in that order of release.) Sorry, no load this time either.



We turn to the “Canadian Freight Cars” site looked after by Ian Cranstone (www.nakina.net). The 143722 was part of a series of 1500 gondolas built by Eastern Car Company in 1952 with road numbers 143500 to 144999. These would not have been delivered with the “wet noodle” herald since that wasn’t introduced until 1960. In fact, a photo of CN 143866 from the group shows it with the “Canadian National” roadname bang in the center of the car, spanning between the sixth and ninth panels. Micro-Trains has done that car too (Catalog 046 00 390, January 2010). While I’m here, I’ll note that the count of 14 panels is correct but the car as delivered had a lever brake mounted at the end of the car, not a brake wheel on the car side.

The reweigh date on the MTL model is March 1968. Starting about 1969 according to the table in Canadian Freight Cars, these cars were renumbered into other CN series—too many to list, even for me!—so we’ll need to be mindful of that in our lookups in various copies of the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER). Cranstone has the whole group gone no later than the

July 1992 ORER, which helps with our Approximate Time Period. You'll need COTS panels, an ACI Label perhaps, and maybe a U-1 "dot" as well to take things out that far, though.

To the ORER for January 1962 we go somewhat arbitrarily based on the paint scheme date. There were 1489 of the possible 1500 cars at the time, with these dimensions: inside length 52 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 4 feet, outside length 55 feet, extreme height 7 feet 9 inches, and capacity 1996 cubic feet or 155,000 pounds. They had the standard gondola designation GB and a description of "Gondola, Steel, Fixed Sides, Drop Ends, Wood Floor." In the October 1969 Equipment Register, the group was down to 672 cars in the main series plus five more that had been bumped to 160,000 pounds capacity. So that renumbering listed in "Canadian Freight Cars" was certainly taking place! And it kept on going, for in the April 1975 ORER there are just 78 cars in the original series which has been reduced to the road numbers 143518 to 144897. Drop that car count to only 21 as of July 1980 and 17 in April 1985. I think I'll stop looking right there.

Besides, there's a bingo or exact match photo to mention. It was taken in July 1968 and appears on Page 61 of the **Canadian National Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 2**. It's related via the caption that the car has the "standard nine inch lettering." It was being loaded well over the top of the car with logs at the time, with stakes also of rough cut tree limbs holding the logs in position. So there's a prototype load for you.



065 00 046, \$32.95.

Road Number: 105 (will be "SLG&W 105" in website listings).

39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Salt Lake, Garfield and Western.

Gray (including truck frames) with red band bordered by white stripe above and yellow stripe below. Red side ladders.

White roadname and road number outlined in black on left. Black and white "The Saltair Route" on right. Approximate Time Period: at least 1960 or thereabouts and later.

If you were present at the National N Scale Convention in 2018, you might have already heard of the Saltair Route, formally known as the Salt Lake, Garfield and Western. You might have picked up the three boxcar Special Run pack (NSE Number 18-122). Or you might have the caboose Special Run, the prototype for which is quite close to the Harriman Standard CA-1 design that is the basis for the Micro-Trains model. As an addition to this, we now have a regular run tank car.

The bingo photo for this car was cited by Bob Chapparo, writing on the scholarly group "Real Steam Era Freight Cars" on groups.io (formerly on YahooGroups). I'll give you the direct URL: <https://collections.lib.utah.edu/ark:/87278/s6hx1n4h>. The caption reads: "Salt Lake, Garfield and Western tank car #105 in Salt Lake City, November, 1960. This 8,000 gallon tank car was painted in the railroad's orange and gray paint scheme." Just from the caption you'll probably see a delta in that the MTL 065 body style is of a 10,000 gallon tank car. Chapparo

noted in his post that without the usual stenciling “perhaps it was kept on-line”, that is, it wasn’t interchanged. The older-style friction-bearing trucks would have taken it out of other than company service at some point anyway. I’m being very conservative with the Approximate Time Period here with a vague “and later.” If in company service, the most likely thing that would have ended the ATP is scrapping or excessive wear on the paint job. I did not find any other photos of this car so I can’t say much else. In addition, the January 1962 ORER entry for the company includes “Freight cars owned are not employed in Commercial Service.” The listing includes three tank cars, two boxcars, a flat car and seven passenger cars.

The Saltair Route certainly did use those passenger cars for a while. The company’s initial purpose was to transport people to the Saltair Resort on the shore of the Great Salt Lake. According to the company’s history (on its website slgwrailway.com) this resort was so popular that trains of twelve to sixteen passenger cars departed on 45 minute headways. The railroad was electrified in 1919. However, the Great Salt Lake’s recession pulled it away from the resort. Despite the addition of a roller coaster and a half-mile of track to take patrons across the newly created brine flats to water, the Saltair Resort declined steadily. It was closed for World War II; two fires in 1955 and 1957 finished it off with final closure in 1959. From that point to the present the SLG&W has been freight only.

One of the locomotives that the Saltair owned has a history that started back in New York. The company’s D.S. 2, a 44-ton diesel, was originally the 105 for the New York, Ontario and Western Railroad. It was brought back east in late 1997 for service on the Adirondack Railroad, and this byte-slinger briefly operated it (!) while it was in Lake Placid. (That entire story is at www.irwinsjournal.com/ijonline/ijghost.htm.) Restored to NYO&W colors, it next went to the Southern Railroad of New Jersey, but was not maintained. At last word it had been transported to Steamtown for restoration and the hope is to get it back into operating condition.



066 00 130, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: GATX 904.

Three Dome Tank Car, Petri Wine Company.

#8 in the “Grape to Glass” Series (Pre-orders taken September 2019). Aluminum tank, black underframe and trucks. Red “Petri Wine Company” across side. Black lettering

otherwise including reporting marks on left and location cities across side (Escalon, Forestville, San Francisco California). Black end markings. Approximate Time Period: 1940s at least.

How about this: the Wikipedia entry for the Petri Wine Company uses the present tense, as in “is a family-run vineyard.” Founded in 1886, it was the largest domestic wine producer in the United States in 1953, probably helped by its purchase that year of Italian Swiss Colony (see last month’s Grape to Glass car). Petri Wine also helped found the organization Allied Grape Growers and established United Vintners. It’s noted by the Wikipedians that the Petri label was sold to Heublein in 1968, but I’m not sure how the company was re-established from there.

I found the bingo photo for this car in a rather unusual place: the webpage describing the Lionel O Gauge semi-scale model of it! I'm quite sure that Micro-Trains has a better photo as this one's rather blurry, however it's good enough to show that the prototype GATX 904 had a larger center dome than either of the other two. This is often a clue that the car was converted from a single compartment to a three compartment car. ("Three compartment" is a more correct name than "three dome.") The photo is undated which doesn't help. However, from the **Tank Cars AC&F** book we know that Petri leased six-compartment tank cars in 1940 which were also aluminum with black lettering though not the same with respect to that lettering. In neither case would these be considered "billboard" cars so a 1940s Approximate Time Period would be appropriate... and, yes, a guess on my part.



100 00 470, \$31.95

Reporting Marks: ATSF 999229.

36 Foot Steel Offset Cupola Caboose, Santa Fe (AT&SF).

Red with white side grab irons. Yellow stripe across car. Large yellow circle cross herald below cupola. White reporting marks at bottom center. White "Work For Safety 1868 -

1976" logo on left. Multicolor ACI Label in center. White on black COTS stencil right of reporting marks. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960s, or strictly speaking, 1976, given Safety Logo, to as late as the 1990s.

The Santa Fe's CE-1 class of waycars (that's the railroad's term for cabooses) had a long history, but for this review, we'll start at the rebuilding of these cars which took place between 1966 and 1968, resulting in the series 999000 to 999314. When this work was done, the number and type of windows were changed. Cushion underframes were also added, and to designate this the paint color was changed from the traditional mineral red (i.e. brown) to a much brighter red. These cars were also in pool service, as opposed to each crew having an assigned caboose. MTL's car copy giving a 1988 rebuild date is also on track (pun intended) as these cars had further revisions done. The MTL 100 body style is based on a Missouri Pacific/Texas and Pacific prototype so there are some differences, the window count and arrangement being the most notable.

The rebuild of this group of cars starts the Approximate Time Period, though the safety slogan with a 1976 date gets us "strictly speaking." In addition, I can actually read the lettering on the COTS panel on the full-size version of the official Micro-Trains image, and there are "77"s in there. The end of the ATP might be best summarized by S. Roger Kirpatrick, writing for a page on atsf.railfan.net: "Santa Fe's fleet of waycars shrank from hundreds of cars in a dozen classes in the mid-1980s to less than one hundred in only two classes (CE-8 and CE-11) at the time of the BNSF merger a decade later."



109 00 171 and 109 00 172, \$29.95 each.

Reporting Marks: NS 185403 and 185404.

Heavyweight Depressed Center Flat Cars, Norfolk Southern.

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left of depressed section of car. White on black double COTS panel on right of depressed section. Gray decking.

Orange conspicuity stripes at four points along car. Approximate Time Period: 1995, or strictly speaking, 2005 (given conspicuity stripes) to no later than 2014.

Bingo photos for both cars are on RRPictureArchives.net. First, we have an overhead shot of NS 185403, formerly N&W 70096, was found on the first day of December 2008 in Altoona, Pennsylvania. From that image we can see that the gray floors have a fair amount of rust on them, particularly in the depressed section. There are any number of ways to weather appropriately. It's also easy to pick out the vertically mounted brake wheel at each end of the car, which aligns with the MTL 109 body style. NS 185404, which was N&W 70097, is represented with three shots, one each from April 2005, November 2007 and May 2008. In each case there's a large transformer load mounted on the car which definitely needs the extra clearance afforded by the depressed part of the flat car. In the first and third images there are rusted metal boxes being carried on the outboard non-depressed parts of the car as well. I would imagine these are additional parts for the transformer. (Speaking of transformer loads, see "MTL Announcements" below.)

I'll start with the current end of my ORER Accumulation: the January 2018 edition does not have these cars in either the main Norfolk Southern registration or the "Heavy Capacity and Special Type Flat Cars" section in the back of the book. And so much for a "to present" Approximate Time Period. Alright then, backwards in time we go, to the April 2013 Register where both cars are present. Let's start with the Gross Rail Weight: 394,000 pounds. These cars had an "inside length" of 57 feet 9 inches, "outside length" of 62 feet 10 inches, and a load carrying platform (the depressed part) 21 feet long, 9 feet wide, and 2 feet above the rail. That last data point is probably without a load; I would not be surprised if with a full load the platform sagged just a bit. The capacity of each car was 260,000 pounds and it had two trucks of six wheels each with axles spaced 4 feet 6 inches apart. These cars are not in the October 2014 ORER so we have a relatively tight end to the ATP. Moving backwards from there, the first Equipment Register I have in which these cars appear is April 1995. I don't see them in the October 1993 ORER, my previous one chronologically, which makes sense because the two cars are listed in the N&W series 70096 to 70098. Yes, I know that fits three cars, but...

N&W 70097 was modeled by Micro-Trains, released as Catalog Number 109 00 240 in September 2011. Here's the official image of that release (at right).





111 00 390, \$55.90

Reporting Marks: SSW 80638.
89 Foot Enclosed Autorack,
Cotton Belt (St. Louis
Southwestern).

Flat car and rack are both brown. Flat car has white reporting marks left of center, yellow "Cushion Car" in center, and mostly white lettering otherwise. Black on yellow "This Car Excess Height" at far left and far right. Orange conspicuity stripes at points along car. Rack has white lettering including "Cotton Belt" roadname on brown placard on right, aluminum vandal panels, and white and aluminum roof. Approximate Time Period: 2016 and later (see text). Micro-Trains artwork shown; actual product may vary.

You've seen the heavily weathered version, now meet the "clean" version. And could it be the **same** car?!?

What kind of a question is that, George? The April 2019 release of the weathered Cotton Belt autorack (111 44 320) carried Road Number 89638, not 80638. But despite there being a prototype photo from September 2008 of a car that appeared to carry SSW 89638 on RRPictureArchives, I could not find that road number anywhere in my ORER accumulation. That search went all the way back to the given 1979 build date. In addition, a check of Lee Gautreaux's "Railgoat" website found no SSW car with that road number either. I speculated at the time that the car was actually numbered 80638, not 89638, but it was not possible to tell from the online photo.

Back to "Railgoat" (www.railgoat.railfan.net) for a moment, then. In 1976, Pullman built the series SSW 80500 to 80799, in the class F-70-77. Quoting Gautreaux, "They were originally equipped with enclosed, tri-level, Pullman-built (lot #9911A) auto racks with mesh doors. They were later rebuilt with radial clamshell doors. Many were later repainted into the SP's Speed Lettering scheme, while retaining their SSW reporting marks and number." Photos of this series accompanying the description have most of the cars in this paint scheme especially in later years, going out to 2018. Returning to RRPictureArchives, the 80638 has the SP speed herald instead of the Cotton Belt lettering as of August 2013. This seems to blow up my "to present" thought from the Weathered Release even though there are a total of 234 cars in the SSW series 80500 to 80799 listed under the Union Pacific registration in the January 2018 ORER. I already knew that some cars got the full UP paint treatment as well, though retaining SSW reporting marks and road number.

But wait! RailcarPhotos.com has the 80638 **freshly painted** for the Cotton Belt in 2016! According to photographer John Rus who contributed the image, "This car was released from a Kansas City area railcar repair shop decorated in a nearly identical paint scheme the car received when built 40 years ago. Only difference is the Cotton Belt lettering and reporting marks which are a slightly different and lighter font than the original." That slightly different and lighter font is what's shown in the MTL artwork. Could this be someone's idea of a "heritage scheme"? Whether deliberately or not, this may be a one of a kind car. Two years

later in December 2018, it was still on the rails, although with a fair amount of, ahem, additional decoration, completely unauthorized. Given UP's ban on graffiti on models of its equipment, including all predecessor railroads, you will not be seeing that version depicted by Micro-Trains.

*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 **September 30**.*



Expected Delivery February 2021:

020 00 247, \$27.95

Road Number: 90600 (will be "SP 90600" in website listings).

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door with added hatches and hoppers, Southern Pacific.

Brown with white lettering including roadname and road number on left. Black and white circular "Southern Pacific Lines" herald on right. Black on white sideboard "For Bulk Sugar Loading Only/When Empty Return to Carlton" left of door. Includes painted cast resin hatches and hoppers to be installed by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: 1953 (based on reweigh date on car) to no later than 1958. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. This car should have a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

This model is a depiction of what may be one of just two of a kind. It's an interesting story, though! SP 90600 is not listed in the ORER for January 1953, but it and 90601 are in the January 1955 Equipment Register, under the "Hoppers" section of the Southern Pacific's registration. (At the time, the SP was still grouping cars by type as opposed to listing them consecutively by road number.) The end note accompanying these cars reads, "[Cars] are equipped with 11 roof filling hatches 1 foot 2 inch inside diameter and 1 roof filling hatch 1 foot 6 inch inside diameter and 3 bottom outlet valves, on longitudinal center line, 1 foot 6 inch inside diameter." The inside length was 34 feet 10 inches, inside width 9 feet 5 inches, outside width 41 feet 10 inches, extreme height 14 feet 6 inches, and capacity 2345 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. Nowhere does it say, however, that these two were converted boxcars! The description is simply "Covered Hopper, All Steel" and the AAR Designation is LO. I'll wrap up the ORER checks with the next one I have chronologically, January 1958, which does not show these cars. So we've got a maximum of a five year long Approximate Time Period here. We've also got, based on the MTL artwork, a relatively early class for Southern Pacific hoppers: H-50-7. (So only -1 to -6 would have preceded these two cars, at most, for 50 ton cars.)

I went over to Real Steam Era Freight Cars at groups.io to see what else I could find. I'm combining information from Tony Thompson and Garth Groff here, both of whom are active on that scholarly discussion list. Groff wrote that the Western Pacific "converted two of their 1945 AAR boxcars into hoppers converted two 1945 steel AAR boxcars into full covered hoppers with bottom gates, sloped floors (maple plywood, no less) and roof hatches. The door space was filled with a solid panel. These were leased to the SP and used in sugar service out

of the Spreckels [Sugar] plant at Dyer near Santa Ana.” The 1945 AAR boxcar predates the PS-1 prototype for the MTL 020 body style. Thompson picks up from there: “Yes, SP had a request from Spreckels for cars. My understanding is that this lease was short-term, in large part so SP could examine performance of the WP conversion. In a matter of months, the cars were returned to WP, because SP’s own conversions of sugar box cars were complete. They did follow most of what WP had done. It was all covered in a Railway Age article at the time (early 1950s). There were of course covered hoppers then, but nearly all were used for cement, not for things like sugar and flour that would shortly be accommodated by the new Airslide design.” If you’re wondering about the location of Dyer, mentioned above, and Carlton, stenciled on the car, online mapping tells us they are now part of Santa Ana and Yorba Linda in Southern California. They’re about 15 miles apart.



Expected Delivery February 2021:

020 00 257, \$27.95

Road Number: 26922 (will be “SOU 26922” in website listings).

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Superior Door with added hatches and hoppers, Southern Railway.

Brown with yellow door. White lettering including large “Southern Serves The South” and road number on left. Black lettering on door: “Roof hatch car for clay loading only / Return promptly when empty to Sou. Ry. or C. of G. Ry. at any junction point for loading.” Includes painted cast resin hatches and hoppers to be installed by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: mid-1960s to mid-1980s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. This car should have a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

We go from bulk sugar to kaolin for this pre-order item. The previous road number, 26921, was captured in September 1969 at a location with which I’m quite familiar: Rochester Junction on the Lehigh Valley mainline. (The LV main passed south of Rochester and a branch was used to reach downtown. A small piece of it survives as a spur for the Livonia, Avon and Lakeville while most of the rest is a rail trail.) There are four hatches visible in the photo. All are on the camera side of the running board (roofwalk) so I presume there are four more on the other side as well. The car has a thin to moderate coating of kaolin especially at the door. That door is sufficiently filthy to make the lettering hard to read but I believe it’s the same as on the MTL artwork. Comments with the photo confirm it’s carrying kaolin, and provide its destination: Pinco Insulator in Lima, New York. (That’s via another branch that came off the LV main at Rochester Junction.)

From Page 40 of the **Southern Railway Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** we get a March 1977 view of another car on the roster, 26957, which was part of the series SOU 26950 to 26999. One data point from the caption: the car could be used to backhaul “rough freight” since it was a converted boxcar. That car had the both the “Southern Gives a Green Light to Innovation” and “Southern Serves the South” slogans, on the left and right sides of the door respectively. Perhaps a follow on release?

Let's go to the ORERs. These cars are not in the January 1964 edition, but are in the January 1967 edition, described as "Box, Roof Hatches" with AAR Designation LC. There are 79 cars in the group 26920 to 26999, a full compliment. The inside length was 40 feet 7 inches, inside width 9 feet 3 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 7 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 8 feet (hmm, a "door thing" vs. the 020 body style having a 6 foot door opening) and capacity of 4037 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. As of the July 1980 ORER there were 41 cars in the group SOU 26895 to 26999. Ten cars were left in the January 1985 ORER listing, but just two remained in the July 1987 Equipment Register.



Expected Delivery Starting February 2021:
Sweet Liquid Tank Car Series, \$29.95 each.
 Scheduled to consist of twelve single dome tank cars (065 series in N Scale, 530 series in Z Scale). Each car will be decorated in a prototypical paint scheme related to a "sweet" commodity, for example corn syrup. Micro-Trains artwork is preliminary; actual products may vary.

As with the Farm to Table and Grape to Glass series, I'll hold coverage of the individual cars to their actual release and restrict myself to some brief remarks on the overall series. I suspect I'll be depending on several printed sources for research on these cars. The first place I'll likely go is the **Tank Car Color Guide Volume 1** by James Kincaid. This book covers full center sill cars which would align with the 065 series underframes. In fact, Page 12 has the bingo for the Hubinger "OK Brand Corn Syrup" car, and I see other candidates for this series in the book... but let's not get ahead of ourselves here!

Since these are likely to be leased cars, I'll caution in advance that the Approximate Time Periods might be "plus or minus" the year of photographic evidence, although I distinctly recall seeing an "OK Corn Syrup" car rolling on the Conrail ex-Pennsylvania "Northeast Corridor" mainline in Rahway, New Jersey, in the late 1970s back when freight trains were still part of the traffic on that line. In general, the ATPs will be in the 1960s and 1970s "at least," noting that these paint schemes were not subject to the Interstate Commerce Commission ban that removed Billboard Refrigerator Cars from the scene in the 1930s.

A number of tank cars that fit the category have railings and platforms around the expansion domes, for example a bingo online for the "Bee Hive Corn Syrup" tank car over on tracksidetreasure.blogspot.ca shows this feature. Will it be included in the Micro-Trains models, or will an enterprising 3-D printer (person, not machine) offer an aftermarket part for this? We'll all find out together starting in February.

N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS: No releases this month.

N SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: Runner Pack #169 (993 00 169, \$99.95), of four Norfolk Southern 3 Bay Open Hoppers with loads, is now available. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the March 2020 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 108 51 280, 145444; 108 52 280, 145495; 108 53 280, 145550; and 108 54 280, 145551. These are the first through fourth releases for this item. This pack was released “out of sequence” as Runner Pack #170 was issued last month.



There are some delays to tell you about. The CSX Transportation three-pack of 60 foot excess height double door boxcars (993 01 860, \$119.95) has been pushed to October from the September target date that MTL provided last month. The two eight-packs of DRPX “Deep-Rock” 54 foot tank cars (993 00 821 and 822, \$269.95 each) have slid to October as well.



*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 **September 30**.*

Expected Delivery February 2021:
993 00 175, \$84.95.

Reporting Marks: PFE 20043, 20047, 20051 and 20056.

Runner Pack #175, quantity four of MTL 0595 Series 40 Foot Steel Ice Refrigerator Cars, Pacific Fruit Express.

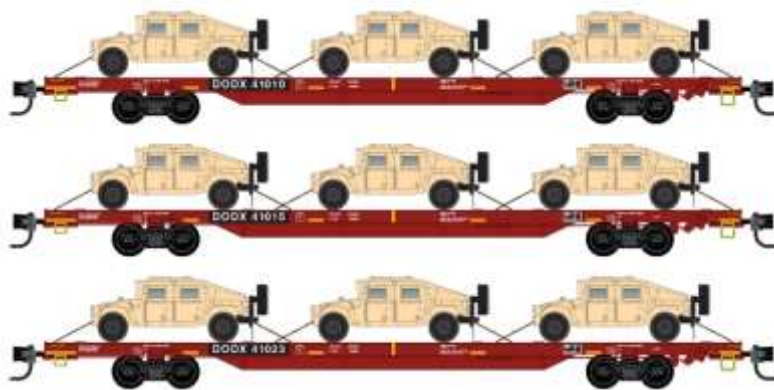
Orange with aluminum roof and black ends. Black lettering including Southern Pacific

and Union Pacific heralds and reporting marks on left, and stepped lettering “Pacific Fruit Express” roadname on right. Approximate Time Period: 1961 (based on paint scheme) to early 1970s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Catalog and road numbers will be confirmed upon release.

The Micro-Trains artwork for these cars shows the Pacific Fruit Express Class R-40-23 and a reweigh date of April 1961. That date aligns well with the 1961 adoption of the paint scheme also depicted in the artwork. In fact, there’s a black and white bingo photo of PFE 20043, one

of this forthcoming quartet, on Page 179 of the book **Pacific Fruit Express** (Second Edition). The R-40-23 was a successor of sorts to the R-40-10 which is the basis for the Micro-Trains 059 body style. Both designs were made in large numbers, but the 5000 R-40-23s, allocated among five different builders (American Car & Foundry, Pullman-Standard, Pacific Car & Foundry, General American and Mount Vernon Car Company), was the largest single class of steel refrigerator car. These cars were delivered starting in January 1947. There is a lot more about this car class in **Pacific Fruit Express** including a list of modifications and renumberings. Of the 5000 cars built, 445 remained in 1972 when the PFE discontinued ice service refrigerator cars. It's also noted that though many cars were repainted into the later "gothic" scheme that is represented in the Micro-Trains artwork, PFE didn't repaint cars that often in 1960s and so some remained in the as delivered 1952 scheme which included color heralds right of the door and the roadname left of the door. MTL has done plenty of these on its 047 body style.

The ORER for January 1962 doesn't tell us how the cars were painted, but it does tell us that there were 903 cars in the series PFE 20002 to 21001. The inside length was 36 feet 6 inches, inside width 8 feet 5 inches, inside height 7 feet 5 5/8 inches, outside length 41 feet 8 3/4 inches, extreme height 14 feet 11 inches, door opening 4 feet wide by 7 feet 6 1/4 inches high, capacity from 7400 to 8200 pounds of ice depending on type (chunk, coarse or crushed) and 8000 pounds of lading. These cars all had some sort of air circulating devices, called out in an end note. The four road numbers chosen by MTL had Preco Model NA-2 fans. These are shown in the MTL artwork; look below and to the left of the reporting marks. The October 1972 ORER showed just 82 cars in this series, which had dropped to only five as of April 1976.



Expected Delivery February 2021:

993 01 621, \$134.95.

Reporting Marks: DODX 41010, 41015, and 41023.

Red DODX Three Pack with Humvee Vehicles.

Set consists of three 137 series DODX Heavy Duty Flat Cars with four wheel trucks. Each car is red with white reporting marks on a black panel on left. Mostly white

lettering otherwise, white on black double COTS panel on right and orange conspicuity stripes at points along car. Each car will include three undecorated and unassembled Humvees. Approximate Time Period: 1995 (build date) or strictly speaking, after 2005 given conspicuity stripes, to present. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 41006, 41018, and 41025, September 2018, as part of DODX Red Three Pack 993 01 620. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

When this body style was initially announced for pre-orders in July 2017, I wonder if anyone guessed how popular it would become. I think "exceeded expectations" is a reasonable conclusion! At the rate things are going, Micro-Trains will wind up producing models of every prototype DODX flat car.

The story of these red cars differs from most of the DODX cars already produced by the folks in Talent. Specifically, the cars numbered 41000 to 41082 were built by AMF Technotransport in Montreal between December 1994 and January 1995 according to a caption for the 41018 over on RailcarPhotos.com. These cars have bridge plates to allow connections between cars, just as the 89 foot TOFC and COFC flat cars Micro-Trains already offers. In the April 1995 ORER they are shown as just "Flat" with a 68 foot inside length, 72 foot 6 inch outside length, and capacity of "only" 180,000 pounds. There were 93 total cars in service at that time. Jumping to the January 2018 ORER, the series had expanded by then to DODX 41000 to 41256, with 231 cars. They're described as "Flat, Chain Tiedown, COFC (Condense/Collapse)" with some exceptions that don't include "COFC" in the description.

Bingo photos are on RRPictureArchives: the 41015 as of October 2012, the 41023 in September 2009 with no load and April 2009 with a tank that I will not attempt to further identify (!), and the left half of the 41010 in August 2007, notable for a lack of conspicuity stripes. You can also find an August 2019 shot of the 41023 on RailcarPhotos, with a "mixed load" of military equipment. That image shows very well how the tiedown chains are utilized.

N SCALE WEATHERED/GRAFFITI RELEASES: *The following was announced on the Micro-Trains website on September 21.*



025 45 562, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: RBOX 33095.

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

#9 in the "Year in Railbox 2020" series, "National Hunting Day." Base car is yellow with black door. Mostly black lettering including later Railbox name and reporting marks on left. Black, red and blue later small 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 "HUNT" and tag at top left ("Art by Lecture"). Opposite side of the car has multicolored graffiti on bottom left and right (including "CONS" and "OWL") and single color scrawls on other parts of the side. Orange conspicuity stripes at several points on each side. Approximate Time Period: 2008 to 2010, plus or minus, based on featured side of the car. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

"Be vewwwwy quiet. I'm hunting Wailbox!" So would say Elmer Fudd, taking a break from his fruitless quest to "Kill the Wabbit!" in numerous Warner Brothers cartoons, to seek out this month's Year in Railbox Entry. September's car honors "National Hunting Day" which is held the fourth Saturday of the month. 2020's date would be September 26. Yes, there is a website

with more information, at nhfday.org (no “www”). It’s noted that the official title is “National Hunting and Fishing Day” –I guess if the size of the graffiti letters were smaller one could get both “Hunt” and “Fish” in... but no. Anyway, the day “brings together sportsmen and women to celebrate the rich tradition of hunting, target shooting and fishing with national, state, regional and local organizations hosting related events.” (I’d only shoot my eye out... but you knew that.) “NHF Day’s official home is at the Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri.” Hmm, I think of that location as the site of the former Frisco Shops, but I may be biased, especially since I did a field trip there for work in the decade of the 2000s. While Teddy Roosevelt is well known for his hunting expeditions, it was actually President Richard Nixon who officially proclaimed this day in 1972. He wrote, “I urge all citizens to join with outdoor sportsmen in the wise use of our natural resources and in insuring their proper management for the benefit of future generations.”

I found a bingo for the non-featured side of this car first, taken in June 2011 and posted to RRPictureArchives. At that point, the handy restatement of the road number with an arrow pointing to where it had been previously painted out (see inset at right) was made redundant by a hasty restencil, black over white paint patches. Then it was over to Flickr (using the search phrase “Railbox lecture”) for a bingo on the featured side of the car. That image was taken in January 2010. If it appears that the car is darker than the MTL model, I think that’s a function of the digital image (note that the information includes “flash did not fire” and a 1/640th second exposure). The MTL car’s decoration has been correctly adjusted to account for this, in my opinion. Also noted by our Graffiti Special Correspondent David Grothe is a 2008 date on the tagging, helping further with the “plus or minus” ATP.



RBOX 33095 is among the company’s class XPF20A. It’s in the series 32850 to 33599 built by Pullman-Standard in May and June 1979. The door, roof and ends differ between the prototype and the MTL 025 (and Z Scale 510) body style. The ORER for January 2011, within the “plus or minus” range of the ATP, shows the much larger series 30000 to 37749 with a total of 3644 cars of 5277 and 5290 cubic foot capacity.



993 05 740, \$59.95.

Reporting Marks: C&O 21441 and 22823.

Chessie System Weathered Two Pack.
Consists of:

•180 51 200, C&O 21441, 50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single 10 Foot Door, No Running Board, Short Ladders, Chessie System (Chesapeake and Ohio). Base car is dark blue with yellow lettering including “Chessie System” roadname and reporting marks on left and “Ches-C” herald on right. White on black COTS panel and yellow on

black U-1 wheel inspection “dot” at bottom right. Moderate to heavy weathering including some rust effects. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s to 1980s.

•**181 52 100, C&O 22823, 50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, No Running Board, Short Ladders, Chessie System (Chesapeake and Ohio).** Base car is yellow with aluminum roof. Dark blue lettering including “Chessie System” roadname and reporting marks on left and “Ches-C” herald on right. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. Moderate to heavy weathering including some rust effects. Approximate Time Period: mid-1970s to late 1980s.

In 1956, Pullman-Standard built the series 21000 to 21499, a set of 500 PS-1 fifty foot boxcars. If that road number group seems vaguely familiar, it might be because first, these are the cars that were supposed to go to the New Haven but didn’t, and second, six of these cars were pulled to become the famous “Cameo Cars” that traveled the system in 1957. The other cars had the more typical – and basic-- boxcar red with white lettering with Futura Bold reporting marks on the left and the “C&O For Progress” herald on the right. These became the Chessie’s Class B-35. For evidence that the as delivered and Chessie System schemes co-existed, look no farther than C&O 21157 in C&O paint and C&O 21191 in Chessie paint, both found in December 1980. While I did not locate a bingo to the 21441 which MTL selected for this two-pack – and I’m sure MTL has a photo of it-- I did see sister car 21300 as of November 1985 on RailcarPhotos and 21439 as of March 1996 on RRPictureArchives. And the **Chessie System Color Guide to Freight Equipment** has a shot of C&O 20134 taken in July 1985, and an undated image of C&O 21229, both on Page 48. The cars have weathering patterns similar to the Micro-Trains car.

The April 1975 ORER shows a total of 470 cars of the original 500 in the series. The key dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet even, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 54 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet even, door opening 9 feet, and capacity 4908 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds, with two exceptions at 110,000 pounds. Yes, there’s a small “door thing” as the sliding door on the MTL 180 body style is 10 feet wide. The car count was down to 315 as of the April 1985 ORER, but only 13 were left in the July 1989 Register. That calls into question the March 1996 date posted with the RRPictureArchives image.

Plug door boxcar C&O 22823 was found rolling across a railroad crossing in July 1988, far from home in Cunningham, Washington. The weathering pattern is quite close to what’s on the Micro-Trains car, including somewhat cleaner side panels where the plug door opens to the right. I can’t see the roof at all and not much of the ends. The sides look good between prototype and model. Insulated boxcars like this one were “at least eligible to be painted with yellow sides” as noted in the **Chessie System Color Guide to Freight Equipment**. From RailcarPhotos.com we learn that these cars were built by the company’s own Raceland Shops in February 1965. They became the Chessie System’s class B-62. When delivered they had yellow sides with dark blue doors and lettering including the “Insulated Cushion Underframe” script on the left and the “C&O For Progress” herald on the right. An example of this is on RailcarPhotos: C&O 22742 as of June 1980, meaning this original scheme and the Chessie System paint co-existed.

The ORER for April 1975 has the series C&O 22650 to 22849 broken into 99 cars with pallets (“considered part of car,” i.e. “don’t help yourself to them”) and 92 without pallets, for a total of 191 cars out of a possible 200. The dimensions are the same: inside length 50 feet 1 inch, inside width 9 feet 3 inches, inside height 9 feet 10 inches, outside length 57 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 10 feet 6 inches, and capacity 4593 cubic feet or 135,000 pounds. The description, in keeping with common practice, is “Refrigerator, Steel, Cushion Underframe, Plug Doors, 50K” with AAR Designation RBL. The cushion underframe leads to the couplers being visibly farther outboard than on the MTL 181 body style. I’ve had several people mention to me that this would be a nice addition to the car’s design, but for now that detail is left to the modeler.

Ten years later in the April 1985 ORER, references to pallets had been removed and the total car count stood at 179. Ten years after that in the April 1995 Equipment Register, only three cars remained under the CSXT listing. Two of these had a “heater harness.” I can’t tell whether the 22823 was among the trio that were still in revenue service at that time.

The answer to my usual question about concurrency across items in a pack is a resounding yes this time, from the time that the cars were repainted into Chessie System schemes until into the 1980s. In fact, there’s a period of time in which these cars in both the schemes MTL used and their predecessor decoration can all be run together in a train.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: Car #5 in the **Solar System Series**, for the planet Mars, has been released in both pre-ordered varieties. UMTRR coverage was in the December 2018 issue.



Catalog 102 02 834, \$27.95 (at right) does not have the interior light.

Catalog 102 00 834, \$36.95 (at left) has the interior light and magnetic wand activator.



And in addition, we have a special surprise visitor to the Solar System Series...



102 00 841, \$36.95, with interior light

102 02 841, \$27.95, without interior light.

60 Foot Modified Excess Height Boxcar, Comet C/2020 F3 NEOWISE.

Black with highlights in various shades of blue and white lettering. Panel (backlit on interior light version) with photographic image of the comet. Approximate Time Period: about every 6800 years.

Other than **Star Trek**, I don't follow goings on in outer space that carefully, so I was as surprised as anyone when MTL dropped this addition to the Solar System Series. A web search resulted in a lot of technical information that I frankly don't **understand** (I'm a columnist, not an astrophysicist!) but I can tell you that this "Icy Visitor" came closest to Earth around July 23, 2020, when it passed a mere 103 ½ million kilometers or so from us. It's moving away now; as I write this on September 7th, it's more than 288 ½ million kilometers away, traveling outbound at 37 miles per second. NEOWISE, as it's being called in the mass media, has an elliptical orbit around the Sun that will take it out and back to us around 6800 years from now. Its closest point to the Sun was reached on July 3, 2020 when it got within 27 million miles. That was close enough to make scientists wonder whether the icy ball would make it or simply be melted away. We now know it survived that close call and should be good for another orbit. Look for a reprint car from MTL around the year 8820! (Sorry, no pre-orders yet.)

Z SCALE NEW RELEASES: No releases this month. However, please see below for the next round of pre-order announcements. and the Sweet Tank Car Series as well...

Z SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

Z SCALE MULTI-PACKS: No releases or pre-order announcements this month.

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

Z SCALE SINGLE RELEASE PREORDERS: *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 **October 31**.*



Targeted Delivery February/March 2021:

531 00 073 and 531 00 074, \$25.95 each.

Reporting Marks: ATSF 82657 and 82864.

PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, Santa Fe (AT&SF)

Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Black and white square circle cross herald at top left. Approximate Time Period: 1957 (build date) into the 1990s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 82515 and 82526, November 2007 (as Catalog Number 531 00 07x). MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Since this is a reprint of a car that was issued close to 13 years (!) ago, an update to my original commentary is in order. Let's start with the official MTL image of the two cars in the first run (at right). Note that the trucks and couplers on this pair are gray. The MTL artwork for this rerun does not show that so I'm going to assume that the reprints will have black trucks and couplers—but remember, "actual product may vary!"



Speaking of vary, the prototype series from which these cars were and will be taken, the Santa Fe's class GA-110, is different from the PS-2. The real cars were built by American Car and Foundry, and although I recall they were called "PS-2 Clones" in a reference I can't locate right now, there are at least two spotting differences. First, the sides of the AC&F cars have nine ribs including one in the center, while the PS-2s have eight ribs and a space in the center. Second, and perhaps a nitpick in 1:220 proportion, the PS-2s have a roof overhang while the AC&F cars do not. The **Santa Fe Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 85, has examples of both cars. There is a GA-110 from AC&F, ATSF 82697, in gray, and a GA-105, from Pullman-Standard and a true PS-2, ATSF 82297, in mineral red. Both car classes had a capacity of 2006 cubic feet and 140,000 pounds. It's noted in the **Color Guide**—and I wasn't very clear about this back in 2007—that these cars were delivered in gray, while starting in 1959, some additional covered hoppers were repainted gray.

The ORER for January 1959 shows the series 82500 to 82899 of all 400 possible cars with an inside length of 29 feet 3 inches, inside width of 9 feet 5 inches, outside length of 35 feet 3 inches, and extreme height of 13 feet 4 inches. That last dimension given is the only one cited here in which the real PS-2's differ as they are 2 inches shorter. (That would be 0.009 actual inch in Z Scale.) In January 1970 there were just eight fewer cars in the series than were built. The original 400 had dropped to 207 by the October 1991 ORER. Certainly by then consolidated stencils, ACI Labels and the U-1 wheel inspection "dot" would have come and gone. These cars didn't leave the roster in total until after the Burlington Northern Santa Fe merger. Ten remained in the January 2000 ORER, all gone no later than January 2002.



Targeted Delivery February/March 2021:
531 00 321 and 531 00 322, \$25.95 each.
Reporting Marks: PRR 257912 and 257971.
PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, Pennsylvania Railroad.



Gray with black lettering including shadow keystone herald and roadname at top left across to center and reporting marks on left. Approximate Time Period: 1954 to early 1980s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

I think that “actual product **will** vary” this time since the MTL artwork does not include any dimensional data. No worries, though. Based on the road numbers, we know via lookup on “Rob’s Pennsy Page” (prr.railfan.net) that these Pullman-Standard cars were the PRR Class H34C. The series 257701 to 258100 were delivered in two sets: the first 100 during July and August 1957 and the remaining 300 in April 1958. Rob’s check of ORERs has all 400 in October 1958 and October 1963, and 399 in April 1968 prior to the Penn Central merger. (We’ll get to those PC cars a bit later.) We don’t need the Equipment Register for key dimensions this time as Rob also has an official PRR diagram for this car. How much do you want to know? Here’s a sample: The coupled length was 37 feet 9 inches, inside length was 29 feet 3 inside length, hatch openings were 2 feet 6 inches in diameter, and the angle of the hoppers was 50 degrees.

When these H34c cars were delivered, it was in the “SK2a” paint scheme, which is depicted in the Micro-Trains artwork. The “SK” stands for Shadow Keystone which was still in use at the time these cars were built. The previous paint scheme might be better known and has already been done in four numbers by MTL (the first run from September 2006 at right). Meanwhile, we have a bingo on the first road number of this forthcoming release in the **PRR Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two**, Page 67. PRR 257912 was found in “enemy territory,” the former New York Central’s Selkirk, New York yard, in May 1977, having survived not only the PC merger but also the creation of Conrail with its original paint job intact. At that time the car had a COTS panel and ACI Label. Whether or not Micro-Trains adds these to their car when produced will determine the “strictly speaking” Approximate Time Period.



That 1977 photo tells us we can skip the Penn Central listings in Equipment Registers and go right to the initial Conrail registration in the ORER for April 1976. Of the original 400 cars in the series, 294 were still in PRR reporting marks. Of those, 80 had been upgraded to 154,000 pounds capacity and the rest were at the original 140,000 pounds capacity. There were 68 left as of the April 1981 ORER but just 14 were still on the roster in the April 1985 Equipment Register, which is where I stopped looking.



Targeted Delivery February/March 2021:

531 00 331 and 531 00 332, \$25.95 each.

Reporting Marks: CSXT 226539 and 226482.

PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, CSX Transportation/Chessie System Restencil.



Yellow with blue lettering including "Ches-C" herald in center and "Chessie System" roadname at top right. Black restenciled reporting marks in lighter yellow patch panel on left. White on black double COTS panel on right. Approximate Time Period: late 1990s into the decade of the 2010s.

Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

We'll start with the information from RailcarPhotos.com that CSXT series 226392 to 226573 is comprised of cars from the Chesapeake and Ohio series 604000 to 604099 and the Baltimore and Ohio series 604100 to 604199, both built by Pullman-Standard in May and June 1968 and both carrying the C&O/B&O Class HC-25. Besides the bingo photo of CSXT 226539 from April 2007, there are also shots of cars with the original C&O and B&O paint restenciled with CSX reporting marks. On the other hand, there are photos of these cars in full CSXT paint as well.

Then there are cars which were repainted from the gray C&O and B&O schemes into Chessie System yellow and blue. MTL presented a quartet of the C&O cars as its Runner Pack #14 back in February 2010 (at right), although they're not from the same prototype series. But you can see that the MTL artwork draws (pun not intended) directly from the Chessie version of these cars, with the new reporting marks covering the C&O or B&O.



What we need next is when the restenciling occurred in order to get a start for the Approximate Time Period. CSX Transportation dates back to July 1, 1986 but that's too early. The first ORER in which I have a CSX registration is July 1989, and there are a total of 47 cars already in CSXT reporting marks numbered between 226394 and 226573 in that edition. Jumping to the October 1996 Equipment Register, there are 110 total cars, with 14 left in the original B&O series and 18 in the original C&O series. So there had been some attrition out of the groups as well. In the January 2000 ORER, there are 108 CSXT cars. That's down to 28 in the January 2011 Register and 21 in the October 2014 Register. Fifteen remain in the January 2018 ORER but I don't think I'll take the ATP all the way out to The Present.

On RRPictureArchives there are seven (!) shots of CSXT 226482, ranging from 2005 to July 2013, and we learn that the car is the former B&O 604197. Conspicuity stripes had been added sometime between 2005 and 2010. The 226539 isn't on RRPictureArchives, but by extrapolating what is there it looks like that car was the former C&O 604060.



Targeted Delivery February/March 2021:
531 00 341 and 531 00 342, \$25.95 each.
Reporting Marks: SL-SF 85238 and 85266.
PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, Frisco (St. Louis-San Francisco).



Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left and large "FRISCO" in center. White on black COTS panel on right." Approximate Time Period: 1966 (build date) or, strictly speaking, mid 1970s given COTS panel, to early 1990s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

These cars carry a New date of February 1966 however the presence of COTS panels put the "strictly speaking" ATP a fair bit later. Page 99 of the **Frisco/Katy Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** has a bingo photo of the 85238 as of the last day of November 1980. There's not only the COTS stencil but an ACI Label, just under the "O" in the large "FRISCO." The series SL-SF 85150 to 85299 was the third set of Pullman-Standard covered hoppers bought by the railroad; the first two sets were purchased in 1958 and 1959. The paint scheme in the MTL artwork is the original one with the serif-style reporting marks.

The ORER for January 1967 is as good a place as any to get the dimensions, but wait, these cars are larger than the typical PS-2s: inside length 36 feet 11 inches, outside length 45 feet, extreme height 14 feet 4 inches, capacity 3010 cubic feet or 200,000 pounds.

According to Page 42 of the **Burlington Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, this SL-SF series became the BN series 420750 to 420899. There's a photo of BN 420834 as of August 1989 in the "logoless" BN scheme. Nine cars were left in Frisco reporting marks as of the October 1993 ORER, which were gone by the next Register I have, April 1995.



Targeted Delivery February/March 2021:

531 00 351 and 531 00 352, \$25.95 each.

Reporting Marks: PC 877145 and 877242.

PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, Penn Central.

Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left and herald with roadname in center. White on black double COTS panel at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: late 1968 to at least 1980. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

These aren't from the same series or class as the PRR covered hoppers above. The PC class, same as the Pennsy's, is H34B, not H34C, and the PRR series was 257301 to 257700 cars. They were built by Pullman-Standard in November and December 1955. On the Penn Central these cars were in the series PC 876962 to 877356. According to the Penn Central Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment, Page 97, this particular paint scheme was the one used by the PC's Hollidaysburg (Pennsylvania) Shops from August to the end of December 1968, early on in the Penn Central's short history. A bingo photo of the 877242 appears on that page; the picture was taken in January 1980 and shows the paint scheme "in remarkably good shape."

It looks like all but five of the original 400 cars in this group were transferred from the Pennsylvania Railroad to the Penn Central. By the October 1969 ORER, however, only nine cars had been repainted into PC paint. The dimensional data was typical PS-2: inside length 29 feet 3 inches, outside length 37 feet 9 inches, extreme height 13 feet 3 inches, and capacity 2003 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds.

Calling the ATP gets interesting for these two cars, though. The photo evidence shows that the 877242 was still around in January 1980. However, the caption for that photo evidence coupled (pun not intended) with the small car count of October 1969 suggests to me that I can't use the general ORER information to determining the end of the Approximate Time Period. What if those nine cars listed in that ORER were the only ones painted that way? For the record, in the July 1980 Equipment Register, under the Conrail registration there were just 32 cars in the Penn Central—and 77 with PRR reporting marks. Conrail didn't pay attention to whether PS-2s from the Pennsy via the PC were H34A, B, C or D when it relettered them, so I'm not going to try to untangle that transfer.



Targeted Delivery February/March 2021:

531 00 361 and 531 00 362, \$25.95 each.

Reporting Marks: MILW 99619 and 99633.

PS-2 Two Bay Covered Hopper, Milwaukee Road.

Gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left and large roadname across top. Approximate Time Period: as early as 1958 (based on paint scheme) but more likely mid-1960s, to late 1980s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

According to the **Milwaukee Road Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two**, when delivered in 1954 these cars had a different paint scheme than what's on the MTL artwork; namely, railroad roman reporting marks on the left and a small red and white "tilted rectangle" Milwaukee Road herald at the top right. Page 79 of the **Color Guide** shows sister car MILW 99635 in that scheme as of October 1989. That same page has a bingo photo for the 99619, found in January 1968. That photo shows a match to the MTL artwork and the "billboard" style roadname. That scheme was introduced by the Milwaukee in late 1958, but I don't think you'd see cars painted that way until they were shopped. In this example, that was in July 1965. The "MS" stands for Milwaukee Shops. And then in the 1970s, the road switched back to a far more modest scheme: gothic reporting marks and a small black outline herald at the top right. Sister car 99661 was in that scheme as of September 1977, and that photo is also on Page 79 of the **Color Guide**. I think it's safe to say that all three schemes co-existed.

The ORER for January 1955 shows the series MILW 99575 to 99674. The inside length was 29 feet 3 inches, outside length 35 feet 3 inches, extreme height 13 feet 3 inches, and capacity 2003 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds. There were 90 cars in the main series and 10 exceptions which were equipped for handling bulk food commodities. Neither of the two cars MTL will produce

were among those ten. Another end note called out the eight 2 foot 6 inch diameter hatch openings in the roof present on all 100 cars. As of the January 1964 Equipment Register there was no distinction among the 98 cars on the roster. In the July 1974 ORER the original group was combined with another series, 99675 to 99774, built by Pullman-Standard in 1956 resulting in the set MILW 99575 to 99774 of 194 cars with capacity raised to 154,000 pounds. The car count of that combined set stood at 114 in the April 1984 ORER.

The Soo Line assumed what was left of the Milwaukee Road on January 1, 1986. That included 74 of the covered hoppers in which we're interested according to the October 1986 Equipment Register. That was all the way down to seven cars in the October 1993 ORER, and just one was left in the April 1995 Register.

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 September 30.



Expected Delivery Starting February 2021: Sweet Liquid Tank Car Series, \$29.95 each. Scheduled to consist of twelve single dome tank cars (065 series in N Scale, 530 series in Z Scale). Each car will be decorated in a prototypical paint scheme related to a "sweet" commodity, for example corn syrup. Micro-Trains artwork is preliminary; actual products may vary.

Please see the coverage in the N Scale New Releases section above.

Z SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: *The following was announced on the Micro-Trains website on September 21.*



510 45 222, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: RBOX 33095.

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

#9 in the "Year in Railbox 2020" series, "National Hunting Day." Base car is yellow with black door. Mostly black lettering including later Railbox name and reporting marks on left. Black, red and blue later small 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 "HUNT" and tag at top left ("Art by Lecture"). Opposite side of the car has multicolored graffiti on bottom left and right

(including “CONS” and “OWL”) and single color scrawls on other parts of the side. Orange conspicuity stripes at several points on each side. Approximate Time Period: 2010, plus or minus, based on featured side of the car.

Please see the coverage of the N Scale release of this car above (025 45 013). Note that the N Scale images were used by MTL and by me here to represent the Z Scale release.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Direct from Micro-Trains via their website is word that some of the N Scale Union Pacific bay window cabooses (130 00 290) had a small issue: one of the trucks was put on backwards. MTL has already stepped up with instructions on how to fix this, available on their site.

To go with those N Scale Norfolk Southern depressed center flat cars discussed above, how about a transformer load? MTL has you covered with this pair, Catalog Number 499 45 911, which has an MSRP of \$11.95. Assembly and painting are required.



This isn't really an announcement, however MTL did post product photos of three of the Z Scale cabooses released last month. Here they are: 535 00 440, Norfolk Southern; 535 00 460, Chesapeake and Ohio; and 535 00 470, Northern Pacific.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: We begin this month's Do It Yourself Bye-Bye Board with several N Scale sellouts from just last month. Both the ADM Airslide Covered Hopper Weathered/Graffiti Three Pack (993 05 720) and the BAR Weathered Boxcar Two Pack (993 05 730) have left the building. So is the CP Rail boxcar with icebreaker (073 00 270), and in a hurry: I missed it. The Norfolk Southern 60 Foot Boxcar is gone (104 00 070) as are both of the Rio Grande gondolas (105 00 31x) and the Union Pacific bay window caboose (130 00 290). Four of the seven Scale Test Cars have already rolled away: CSX (121 00 110), Chessie System/C&O (121 00 120), Milwaukee Road (121 00 130) and Pennsylvania Railroad (121 00 150). Rats, I don't even have official photos of the PRR yet! Among the rest of the 2020 releases, these are outta here: the Conrail Center Flow (094 00 630, July); the Thomas Kinkade “Painter of Light” caboose (100 00 450, February); the “ROCX” open hopper (108 00 400, July); the Northern

Pacific 50 foot boxcar (180 00 180, July); the Year in Railbox #4 “National Garlic Day” (025 44 569, April); and Runner Pack #168 of Pennsylvania Railroad Gondolas (993 00 168, July). In Z Scale, I’m a little confused as to whether or not *all seven* of the cabooses released last month are already sold out and discontinued. Stay tuned for a clarification.

Backward to N Scale from 2019: the Northern Pacific single sheathed boxcar is sold out (028 00 250, March). The first number of the Santa Fe covered hopper is emptied out (096 00 211, November). The Baltimore and Ohio open auto rack is gone (112 00 090, July). Three 2019 Z Scale items are discontinued: the second number of the Z Scale CSX x-post boxcar (510 00 432, March) and the second number of the Baltimore and Ohio tank car (530 00 062, August), and the first number of the Chesapeake and Ohio open hopper (534 00 101, January).

There were no N Scale sellouts among 2018 releases since last check. Three of the 2018 “Year in Railbox” Z Scale boxcars did sell out: “Cowboy” (510 44 014, August), “Ozone” (510 44 015, September), and “Pearl Harbor” (510 44 016, December), also known as Numbers 7, 9 and 12 in that series. If you’re keeping score, Numbers 5, 10 and 11 are still available. The only item gone from the 2017 lineup is the Z Scale Great Northern “Circus Car” boxcar #7 in red and white (500 00 950, August)... and that is as far back as we need to go this time around.

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: My account of the Kadee HO Scale coupler demonstration at the end of last month’s UMTRR elicited two comments with respect to “our” version of Magne-Matic couplers, or perhaps I should say the 1:160 version in which we’re most interested here...

First, UMTRR Gang Member and Nn3 modeler extraordinaire Tom Knapp related that he still had one of the original packages of Kadee N Scale couplers! Tom also recalls Jim Fitzgerald, an N Scale pioneer and the driving force behind N-Trak. “In the 1970s or early 1980s, Jim built an N-scale automated display version of something like the John Allen Timesaver switching layout, with structures, and yard/street lights over photo electric cells in the track, all to demonstrate Kadee’s N scale magnetic couplers. It was in the foyer of a hobby shop in San Francisco for some time, merrily running on its own and shunting cars back and forth to different sidings.”

Second, Alex Postpischil is working on an interesting project: reconstructing the Micro-Trains display. He’s got the unit and a power supply. The last piece he needs is the modified locomotive to make it all work. “I’m looking for an original engine. My understanding is that they were dummy units and modified somehow to work with the unit (lever from underneath moved the engine). If someone has one to part with let me know. I’ll add that I believe the unpowered loco in question was a Bachmann “Plus” F-unit, in one of several paint schemes. Contact Alex directly at albabe63@gmail.com if you can help.

Claus Schlund checked his copy of the December 1930 ORER and found the D&RGW lounge car “Ogden Canon” which MTL released last month (144 00 810). That data point pushes back

the start of the Approximate Time Period from my February 1931 Equipment Register. Every little bit helps!

Bryan Busséy tells us – aha! -- that he provided Micro-Trains with the prototype photo of BAR 10456, the brown and white boxcar in last month's BAR Weathered Two Pack (993 05 730). The shot is from the 1980s and the running board is in place. It looks like one of the roof hatches is above and a bit to the right of the BAR "Serving Northern Maine" herald, and it looks like it's a square hatch. Off you go, detailers!

I may have been just a bit misleading with my comment on the pre-review of the New York Central Stock Car Runner Packs coming in N and Z Scales. The reference to the NYC being the only prototype for the MTL car referenced only that body style, not the entire line of rolling stock! When I come across, trip over or are otherwise told about a prototype for an MTL body style, I add it to my Body Style table on the UMTRR website. The latest "trip over" is the double window cupola version of the Nn3 wood caboose, also known as the 15700/810 body style. There were plans for this car in the January 1964 Model Railroader. You might already know that Kadee bought the Nn3 tooling from Nelson Gray. In a rare burst of efficiency, I've already added the new "TBOX" x-post double door car (123 body style) to that table, since we know it's a National Steel Car prototype.

OOPS PATROL: David Grothe noticed that I had a previous release of that same New York Central despatch stock car as being released in **1076**, not **1976**. Fat finger time again... or perhaps there were models of trains *before* there were trains? I guess not.

FINALLY, A DEPOT DOWN IN THE LONE STAR STATE: Long time UMTRR Gang Member Bob Batson has a new avocation. He and his wife Jan are looking after the Hearne Depot Railroad and History Museum in Hearne, Texas. That's a bit northeast of the Austin Metropolitan Area and just northwest of College Station. (And around 1500 miles southwest of UMTRR HQ, but I digress.) Built in 1901, the station was at the crossing of the Houston and Texas Central and the International-Great Northern, which became parts of the Southern Pacific and Missouri Pacific respectively. Of course the Union Pacific ended up owning all of that, and the station, and in the 1980s it was donated and relocated off UP property. The station has been restored and hosts local history exhibits and an N Scale Model Railroad. I'm proud to note that a car for my own model railroad, the Wilmington and New York, was "interchanged" to that layout! And I have two of Bob's Texas Central cars as well. More information on this destination and the area is at hearnedepot.org and on their Facebook page.

Until next month, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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