



*IrwinsJournal.com Presents:*

## **The Unofficial Micro-Trains<sup>®</sup> Release Report Issue #308 – August, 2022**

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Hello again everyone! This month marks the return of a body style I appreciate. There is something to plain boxcars with simple lettering... well, to me, anyway. That and more in this month's edition, including the next round of Z Scale pre-orders. Let's get right to it...

### **N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:**



**028 00 260, \$23.95.**

**Reporting Marks: ATSF 40381.**

**40 Foot Single Sheathed Wood Boxcar,  
Single Door, Santa Fe (Atchison, Topeka  
and Santa Fe).**

Brown (including truck frames) with white lettering including reporting marks on left.

Black and white circle cross herald in black square at top left. Andrews Trucks. Approximate Time Period: 1951 (as modeled by MTL, see text) to late 1960s.

Okay, so it hasn't been that long since an 028/28000 series car was last released, relatively speaking; the most recent offering was in April 2019. However, this car offers quite the challenge for your faithful byte-slinger, as when originally built it didn't look like anything commercially available in N Scale. But that's when originally built. We'll come back to that.

I had a pleasant journey online looking for information on the Bx-6 class of Santa Fe's boxcars, but as it turns out it's neatly laid out on the website of Rich Yoder Models, which offers O Scale items including brass freight cars: [www.richyodermodels.com/santafe\\_history.htm](http://www.richyodermodels.com/santafe_history.htm) . In summary, after 4000 Bx-3 cars were built by American Car and Foundry, Pullman and Standard Steel Car Company in 1924, the Santa Fe went back to Pullman for 1000 more Bx-6 cars in 1925, which were visually identical. These were "sectional sheathed" cars of a distinctive design. A photo of what these cars looked like when delivered is available at the above cited webpage.

The late Richard Hendrickson noted on the Steam Era Freight Cars Group that it was under the lead of John Purcell that these and other mid-1920s composite cars were developed. These were so well designed that "when they became obsolete as box cars in the 1950s, hundreds of Bx-3s and Bx-6s were converted to stock cars and in that role many of them were still running reliably in revenue service through the 1960s." In 1951 and 1952, 45 cars were converted for bulk salt service, equipped with refrigerator car doors (!), and renumbered 40050-40094. (Salt service is as rough on cars as hide service, and also disqualifies them from other lading.)

And then there's the part of the Bx-6 story that gets us to this Micro-Trains release. In 1951, 250 of these cars were stripped of their outer sheathing, renumbered into the 40250 to 40499 series, and placed in zinc concentrate service. There's an example of this group on Page 6 of the book **Santa Fe Freight Cars In Color Volume 1**, and it happens to be a bingo for ATSF 40381. When photographed in 1961 it was looking quite worn. There are also differences between the prototype and the MTL 028 body style, the largest of which is probably the use of a steel door versus the wood door on the model. I've successfully changed out the door on one of these cars using Micro-Trains parts, so that can be done. Matching the paint will be needed but if modeling a weathered car that's less of an issue. Speaking of paint, this is an uncommon case in which Micro-Trains makes a compromise, moving the herald to the left versus where it is on the prototype (at least as shown in the bingo photo) given the difference in the steel side framing pattern. The MTL car is based on the United States Railway Administration plan 1001-B, and the Santa Fe Bx-6, well, wasn't, even without its exterior sheathing.

In keeping with the 1951 conversion date in the book noted above, The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for July 1950 doesn't show these cars. The April 1952 ORER does... sort of. There is the series ATSF 40250 to 40449, not 40499, and it's described as "Box, Double Sheathed, not single sheathed. Well, they **were** double sheathed before the outer layer was removed. Did no one tell the ORER folks? Anyway, the dimensions were as follows: inside length 40 feet 7 inches, inside width 8 feet 4 inches, inside height 8 feet 5 inches, outside length 40 feet 9 inches, extreme height 14 feet 10 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 2852 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds. There were 198 cars in the series at the time. Given the 1971 photo date I next went to the January 1962 Equipment Register to find the series down to 136 cars. By October 1972 there were only two remaining on the roster. That is long enough for these cars to have received an ACI Label!



028 00 270, \$23.95.

**Reporting Marks: CB&Q 25776.**

**40 Foot Single Sheathed Wood Boxcar, Single Door, Chicago, Burlington and Quincy.**

Light boxcar red (red oxide) with white lettering including reporting marks on left

and "Burlington Route" herald on door. Approximate Time Period: 1936 (build date on car) to as late as the early 1970s.

According to the **CB&Q Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, the CB&Q constructed 500 single sheathed boxcars, the railroad's class XM-29, in 1936. They were numbered 25500 to 25999 and had, for the time, a taller than usual inside height for this type of car of 9 feet 4 inches. (All-steel boxcars were already taller.) This necessitated the use of a 4/5 Bettendorf end, which I bring up since that's not the end that is on the MTL 028 body style. (The model has more of a 5/5/4 "corrugated" end – that's not really the technical term but it'll do.) The side truss pattern is in alignment with the Micro-Trains car, as is the use of grab irons on the side instead of ladders. The photographic example in the book is CB&Q 25779, just three numbers away, as it appeared in November 1970. The door is a steel Youngstown type

and has the “Burlington Route” herald on a placard. And, yes, there’s an ACI Label. Meanwhile, online we have CB&Q 25773, just three numbers away in the other direction, on Ken Harstine’s site boxcars.us. That photo is dated July 1970. Both photos were taken after the merger of the CB&Q into the Burlington Northern. Then, finally, on the website of the Burlington Route Historical Society, we have the bingo we want, with the 25776 in what might be a builder’s photo taken at the railroad’s Havelock, Nebraska shops where the cars were built. It looks like the cars had steel doors as delivered, which would be a fixable delta to the MTL 028 body style. Use a white on black “Burlington Route” herald closer to the center of the car if you’re going to make that modification as that’s what is on the real car on the photo. (Note to self: Must find decal stash.) Also, for some reason the tack board is placed above the herald—who is going to be able to reach that? I wish I could read the lettering that’s just left of the door at the bottom of the side. Whatever it is, Micro-Trains has reproduced it on the car... and I can’t read that either! Project for later: Photograph the model and greatly enlarge the image...

I can almost read the dimensional data in the car photo, but just to be sure, let’s go to the January 1940 ORER instead. The cars were described as “Box, Steel Underframe, Steel Frame,” series CB&Q 25500 to 25999 with 496 cars in service out of the original 500. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 9 feet 4 inches, outside length 41 feet 11 inches, extreme height 14 feet 10 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 2926 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. How many cars from this group survived to the coming of the Burlington Northern? The answer from the April 1970 Equipment Register: Sixteen, of which two had roof hatches and four were assigned to hide or tankage (yecch) loading.



**032 00 580, \$30.90.**

**Reporting Marks: C&O 22763.**

**50 Foot Plug Door Boxcar, Chesapeake and Ohio/Chessie System.**

Yellow with dark blue ends, bottom sill and door. Aluminum roof. Dark blue lettering including reporting marks on left and small “Chessie System” roadname at top right. Yellow “Ches-C” herald on door. Multicolor ACI Label on far right. Red door hardware. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1972 into 1980s.

This car is an update of sorts to the special run commissioned by the N Scale Collector in 2004. And, just to keep things interesting, this regular release has the same road number as the NSC-commissioned car (NSC Number 04-10). Fortunately, the “Author Car,” the extra-special run given to contributors to the magazine, doesn’t, as it’s C&O 22804. (I don’t know whether this should count as a brag, but I have been writing for the NSC/NSE Magazine for so long that I am among few contributors who have every one of the Author Cars.) There are at least three paint detail differences between the two cars: the new one has the all red door hardware, the ACI Label was added, and there is lettering at the top left hand corner of the side that I can’t quite make out from the official photo.

Gee, now if I'd only been reviewing Special Runs at the same time I did regular releases, I could just copy and paste my previous coverage from 2004. And given the quantity of these Special Runs, I probably would have given up on that enterprise a long time ago as well. Oh, well...

The Chesapeake and Ohio series 22650 to 22849 was built by the railroad's Raceland, Kentucky shops in February 1965. These were the C&O's Class B-62 and were originally given the AAR Designation XMLI. The site RailcarPhotos.com, which has this information, also has a shot of C&O 22742 from the series as it appeared in C&O paint: yellow with a blue plug door and blue lettering. Sometime after Chessie came along in 1972, the car would have been repainted into the scheme modeled by Micro-Trains this month. I don't see a specific date for this on the model, however, just the February 1962 build date.

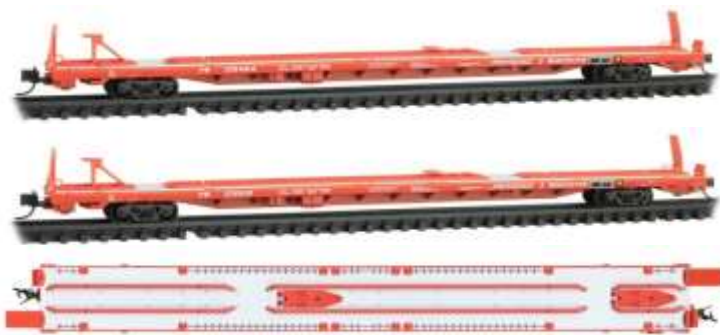
Later, perhaps after the running board was removed and the ladders cut down, these may have been repainted into the simpler scheme which Micro-Trains modeled just last November (181 00 200, at right). The cars were also



reclassified to RBLs, nominal "refrigerator" cars given their insulation. All three schemes likely co-existed, as the RailcarPhotos image of a car in the original C&O paint is from June 1980.

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 car.

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. I can't tell whether the 22763 was among the trio that were still in revenue service at that time.



**071 00 591 and 071 00 592, \$37.95 each.**  
**Reporting Marks: PW 105464 and 105519.**

**89 Foot TOFC Flat Cars, Providence and Worcester.**

Red with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and roadname on right. Black on white double COTS panel and yellow on black

U-1 wheel inspection "dot" on far right. Deck is painted white and red, see above top-down view. Approximate Time Period: 1978 to 1981. This is a "Regional Railroad" release that is not part of MTL Dealer standing orders.



Given that Trailer Train is the major owner of flat cars for intermodal service, it's somewhat unusual to see these types of cars lettered for other railroads. And it's very unusual to have TOFC cars lettered for a line as small as the Providence and Worcester.

The P&W is unusual itself in that it is a line which regained independence from its one time lessor. (It's also unusual among railroads in that it actually connects the two places in its name, Providence, Rhode Island and Worcester, Massachusetts.) The New York, Providence and Boston had leased the line starting in 1888. Unlike what occurred with a number of other railroads, the lease did not turn into direct ownership since the NYP&B held very little of the P&W's stock. That situation continued as the NYP&B was merged into the New Haven, and the New Haven was "force fed" into the Penn Central. The PC refused to accept the terms of the P&W lease and sought to abandon the line. A group of P&W shareholders had already been working to break away, and after a series of court battles, the company became independent once again in 1973. The P&W got in on the Incentive Per Diem program with a set of x-post boxcars, two of which were offered as part of the "Super Six Pack" of 25000 / 025 body style cars by Kadee Micro-Trains back in July 1981. Lesser known – at least to me-- are the flat cars that were leased by the company and put into service, but apparently for a rather short time.

Both the PW 105464 and 105519 belonged to the group 105401 to 105600, built by Pullman-Standard in 1978 and 1979 according to the information posted with a bingo photo of the 105464 on Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery ( [canadianfreightcargallery.ca](http://canadianfreightcargallery.ca) ). The car is captioned as a "container flat car." It's also noted that the group was relettered for the Southern Pacific with the same numbers. For more on that we jump over to RailcarPhotos, which has a shot of SP 105778 as of March 1981. No, that's not from the same number series, but the same thing happened: it was also moved to the SP. The Southern Pacific did as little as possible here, painting out the "Providence and Worcester" roadname and covering the "PW" reporting marks with "SP" without changing the road number. RailcarPhotos also has a photo of PW 105519, found a long way from home in February 1979 in San Bernadino, California. It's also noted that the flat cars were leased from ITEL, the same company that leased a lot of Incentive Per Diem boxcars, including to the P&W.

To bring this all together, then, these cars didn't last long in P&W paint. The ORER for July 1980 has a total of 400 of these cars numbered from 105301 to 105600 and from 105701 to 105800, with the 105301 tagged with the "Notes Addition" symbol. By the April 1982 Equipment Register, the P&W's car count is down to 10. I traced 209 of them to the Southern Pacific's roster. What happened to the other 181? Some of them ended up on the Detroit, Toledo and Ironton, which numbered them in the 90000s. RRPictureArchives has a shot of DT&I 90086, formerly PW 105724 (again, not the same series) and later Iowa Interstate (IAIS) 90086, as of January 1983. It's also red with what looks like minimal lettering changes. So with a bit of decaling, you can get potentially get a three for one special out of this virtual two-pack.



098 00 140, \$34.90.

**Reporting Marks: GTW 316024.**

**50 Foot Two Bay Airslide Covered Hopper, Grand Trunk Western.**

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

large GT herald on right. White on black double COTS panel and multicolor ACI label on bottom right. Approximate Time Period: 1978 (build date on car) into the decade of the 2000s.

We'll jump right into the Equipment Registers here: the July 1980 ORER shows a series of just seven cars of this type, GTW 316021 to 316027. Although there are other cars in adjacent series which are also described as "Covered Hopper, Airslide," these are the only ones of 4180 cubic foot capacity. The cars' inside length was given at 48 feet 11 inches and outside length 54 feet 1 inch, along with the extreme height of 14 feet 6 inches and weight capacity of 200,000 pounds. The last ORER in the Research Accumulation in which I see any of these cars is July 2017, where two of the original seven remained. They're gone by January 2010. The GTW's overall fleet was dropping off as well; in the July 2017 ORER it was down to 3691 total cars despite having been given the rolling stock of the Detroit, Toledo and Ironton and the Detroit and Toledo Shore Line by parent Canadian National by then.

We get the bingo photo for this car in a somewhat unusual place: the webpage advertising a sold out HO Scale version of this very car. The photo was taken in 1979. The MTL lettering appears to match the photo... and there is a lot of lettering. Although ACI Labels were officially discontinued by the time the car was built, I guess the GTW played it safe and included one anyway. I like this photo since it gives a nice perspective on the overall height of the car. It's not quite as tall as the Canadian National boxcar next to it, and it's definitely less tall than the stacked motor vehicle frames that are atop what looks like a Trailer Train flat car. In the bright sunlight which illuminates this photo, the car looks very, very blue. Meanwhile, the only image I found checking my "big five" sites was a shot on Fallen Flags of GTW 316026 in glorious black and white in October 1984, north of the border in Agincourt, Ontario.



103 00 170, \$28.90.

**Reporting Marks: NYC 223113.**

**60 Foot Excess Height Boxcar, Double Doors, Waffle Sides, CSX Transportation (NYC Reporting Marks).**

Dark blue with mostly yellow lettering

including reporting marks and "Plate G" box on left and CSX initials at top right. Yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes at seven points along bottom sill. Black reporting marks and excess height warning on white panel at top of ends. This car does not have a COTS panel. Approximate Time Period: 2018 (based on photo evidence) to as late as the present.

This is another example of the "Why did CSX have to pick these reporting marks?" question that is frequently confusing to railfans. No, the New York Central Railroad was not suddenly brought back to life, only the name, for the CSX portion of the 1998 split of Conrail rolling stock

with the Norfolk Southern. (Conrail locomotives that went to CSX kept the Conrail designation while the locos that went to NS were given PRR reporting marks.)

This car is not quite the same as the previous CSXT/NYC reporting marks car done in July 2016 (103 00 120, at right); that car has the later “boxcar” CSX herald and some differences in decoration details. The earlier release is from the same prototype series, though, and that’s a nice excuse to copy and paste from the July 2016 UMTRR.



According to the website of the Conrail Historical Society, Conrail’s Class B63A was constructed by Berwick Forge and Fabricating in December 1977, the series CR 223001 to 223122. This is not the same group as the one that MTL has been using for their Conrail boxcars of this body style, including the most recent Runner Pack #181 from last September. Those cars were part of Conrail’s Class B63B, built by Berwick in 1978. Some of these also went to CSXT and received NYC reporting marks. The two classes are pretty close dimensionally though they are different visually, with the five sets of “waffles” more evenly spaced on the B63A cars – which would be a difference between the prototype and this month’s release.

But I digress. The Conrail series was flipped to NYC reporting marks without renumbering, which makes things relatively easy to trace. As of the January 2000 ORER, 49 of the former Conrail cars in the series had been relettered but almost certainly not repainted – though of course that’s not mentioned in the Equipment Register. What we do have are the key dimensions: inside length 60 feet 9 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 12 feet 9 inches, extreme height 17 feet, door opening 16 feet and capacity 7100 cubic feet or 165,000 pounds. Norfolk Southern kept the other 77 B63As which were still in service at the time. Jumping all the way to the October 2014 ORER, 45 cars transferred to CSXT remained on the roster, and remained in NYC reporting marks.

The bingo photo for NYC 223113 was taken in October 2018 in Fostoria, Ohio and posted to RRPictureArchives. It looks freshly painted! Although conspicuity stripes date to 2005 and later, I think the ATP for this car as painted begins well after that. In fact, I’m calling the start of the ATP at 2018. Since there remain a total of 33 cars in the series in the October 2020 ORER, I’ll go “as late as the present” as well. Feel free to invoke Rule #1 (“It’s your railroad”) to go outside those dates.

I tried one other way to narrow down the ATP for this car: the presence of the “Plate G” marking left of the door. As you may know, the Association of American Railroads publishes in their Manual of Standards and Recommended Practices sets of dimensions called “plates” which are used to determine where a given car can and cannot go. Plate B is the least restrictive; those cars can go anywhere. Plate C is pretty common. As cars got bigger, “plates” were added to comprehend the increases in size, and so we currently have E, F, H, J and K. Wait, no Plate G? Apparently not, not officially. In a 2012 post to the Modern Freight Cars List (MFCL at Groups.io) by Dick Dawson, “Plate G” is an UMLER (Universal Machine Language Equipment Register) code, not an official “plate,” and refers to “for any car that does not fit

within any of the published clearance plates.” The October 2020 ORER doesn’t have a drawing for Plate G either; the last diagrams adopted were Plates J and K in 2005. That obviously doesn’t stop CSX, and others I might add, from stenciling “Plate G” on their cars!



Also, the first number of the TTX “TBOX” Boxcar (60 Foot Excess Height Double Plug Door Boxcar 123 52 011, TBOX 665130, \$44.98) is expected to be available mid-month. This is the second car of three from

the originally pre-ordered three pack which is now being made available on an individual car basis. UMTRR coverage was in the January 2021 issue.

**N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS:** No releases this month, but see the Multi-Packs section for a new pre-order announcement.

**N SCALE REPRINTS:** One this month...



104 00 031, \$33.95.

**Reporting Marks: UP 960997.**

**60 Foot Excess Height Boxcar, Single Door, Union Pacific.**

Brown (the UP’s “Synthetic Red”) including truck frames, with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left.

Small red, white and blue shield herald on right. Small white simulated reflective stripes at seven points along bottom sill. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: early 1990s to as late as the present. Previous Release: Road Number 960958, May 1999.

How about this: I found the bingo photo for this car the month **before** it was released! What?

While compiling the review of last month’s Union Pacific Weathered Release, 104 44 051 (at right) which is from the same prototype series, 960956 to 960999. I’d been trying to figure out whether the bright yellow scheme (well, it **was** bright yellow initially) with large lettering and herald had completely yielded to the much less interesting brown with reporting marks only and small herald “spartan” decoration that UP had adopted. During that research, I came across UP 960997 as of April 2007 over on RRPictureArchives. Bingo, a month early!

I’ll repeat myself from last month: the series is listed in the April 1981 ORER as “Box, Steel, Cushion Underframe, 22 Belt DF Loaders” and is in Class F+ with AAR designation XL. The stats: 60 foot 9 inch inside length, 13 feet 2 inch inside height, 68 foot 1 inch outside length, 17 feet 2 inch extreme height, 10 foot door opening, 7373 cubic feet or 167,000 pounds capacity. There were 43 cars of the original 50 that were built in 1977. As of the July 1998 ORER there were 25 cars left in the main series, plus 15 more, including the previous road number 960971, had been changed from XL to XP. We’ve got 39 total cars in the January 2006 edition, but just six in the January 2011 issue and three from April 2013 all the way to the October 2020 Register.



And I repeat myself again from last month: does that mean we have “to present” again? With just three cars left almost two years ago, it’s hard to say. The start of the ATP this time is no earlier than when the Union Pacific adopted their “spartan” scheme. And when was that again? As I noted in the March review of the UP virtual two pack of Airslide Covered Hoppers, there are models with similar lettering that are described as being in service with the plain lettering as early as 1991. On the other hand, a query to the Modern Freight Car List on groups.io resulted in a response that the “standard” lettering was put in place across the UP system around 1997, including for Missouri Pacific, Southern Pacific, and other roads which UP had merged in by then. I called mid-1980s in my comments on the first run of this car (at right) but that now seems like an Oops to me. While I’m here, I’ll note that we also have somewhat of a “Not A Reprint” here given detail differences. On this month’s release, the reporting marks are left-justified, the truck frames are brown and not black, and there are white reflectors along the bottom. I can’t fault a difference there: the concept of conspicuity stripes had not yet been introduced when this car was first run in 1999.



With reference to the CSX Excess Height boxcar above, please note that the UP simply stated “Exceeds Plate F” next to the reporting marks, as opposed to the questionable “Plate G.”

See just below for the other reprint as it’s in the N Scale Weathered Releases as well...

## N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:



**098 44 033, \$32.95.**

**Reporting Marks: CSXT 201486.**

**50 Foot Two Bay Airslide Covered Hopper, CSX Transportation.**

#11 and final release in the CSX Family Tree Series (pre-orders taken June 2021). Tan with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left and herald on right. White on black COTS panel at bottom right below “S” in “CSX.” Both sides of car shown. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than

1989 to no later than 2006. Previous Releases (unweathered): Road Numbers 203420 and 203437, November 2016. Given small detail differences, this is technically a “not a reprint.”

The ATP for the previously released virtual two pack of this car (one of which, Catalog Number 098 00 031, is at right) was “no earlier than 1989 to no later than 2006”, but those two cars, 203420 and 203437, were in a different prototype series. So, how about this latest release, which, by the way, wraps up the CSXT Family Tree Series?



To start, we have a photo on the Fallen Flags site of CSXT 201497 from November 2003, which has restenciled reporting marks on a Seaboard System Airslide. (Perhaps for “CSX Family Tree: The Sequel”?) That leads to the ORER for October 2004 where the series CSXT 201350 to 201548 is present with a modest car count of 23, described as “Covered Hopper, Steel, Airslide” with the typical 4180 cubic foot capacity. Also on Fallen Flags is the 201522 from the same series, also with Seaboard System lettering and just a reporting marks changed from SBD to CSXT. That implies that the cars kept their Seaboard System numbers. I backed up to the CSX listing in the October 1996 ORER and found that yes, there were SBD 4180 cubic foot Airslides across the span from road number 201040 to 201674. And there were CSXT-lettered Airslides in roughly the same range in that same Equipment Register. So far, so good; we know that the modeled car came to CSX from the Seaboard System. Now to bookend this to come up with the ATP. The earliest Equipment Register in which I have CSX cars in the number series which contains the 201486 is July 1989, where there are nine, and the latest is January 2006, where there are 21. They’re all gone by the July 2007 ORER. That means that despite the different number series, the ATP is the same as for Micro-Trains’ previous release on this car.

Since the Chessie System Railroads did not go into the Seaboard System, this car would also not have the heritage of the cars in the November 2016 virtual two-pack, that is, they’re not from the Chesapeake and Ohio class HC-26 which was also the Chessie System class HC-26. My best guess on this is that the cars were originally built for the Louisville and Nashville. The L&N started receiving this car type in 1963 and got their last ones in 1971. It appears that none of the L&N cars are exact matches to the MTL 098 body style, though, as the end bracing is different on the prototype cars. The L&N cars were numbered in the 220000s so they would have been renumbered for inclusion in the Seaboard System roster.

And now, for the usual content that appears in this section: *The following was announced on the Micro-Trains website on August 18.*



**098 44 210, \$35.95.**

**Reporting Marks: GN 71683.**

**50 Foot Two Bay Airslide Covered Hopper, Great Northern.**

Gray with mostly black lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and

large outline goat herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label at bottom center and white on black COTS panel at far right. White partial dimensional data restencil on black patch panel. Heavy weathering including rust effects. Approximate Time Period: 1968 (build date), or early 1970s given COTS panel, to mid 1980s. Previous Releases: None.

Assuming that the information accompanying the bingo photo on Railcarphotos.com is accurate, and I have no reason to believe it isn’t, then we really lucked out on there being a picture of any car in this series. There were just five built for the GN in September 1968, numbered 71679 to 71684. It’s in the as delivered scheme including the final version of the Great Northern’s signature “goat” herald which was adopted in 1967. It’s been a while since I’ve noted that the railroad’s “Rocky” mascot is not really a mountain goat, but an antelope.

Photographer Craig Walker gives the date of this image as August 1983, and it shows what almost fifteen years on the road can do to a car like this. Rust abounds on the car's sides! The image also illustrates why ACI Labels were not successful: that much dirt on it and it became impossible for the Kar-Trak readers to, well, read, the coded information on the car.

We have the build date to start the Approximate Time Period so it's just a matter of locating the end of the ATP, which has to be after August 1983 given the bingo photo date. The April 1984 ORER, though, shows the series GN 71663 to 71696 which would include the 71683, with just nine cars. While we're here: inside length 48 feet 11 inches, outside length 54 feet 1 inch, extreme height 14 feet 6 inches, capacity 190,000 pounds or 4180 cubic feet. The car count is down to five in the April 1985 Register and two in the October 1986 ORER. Just the 71680 is left in the July 1989 Equipment Register, and that's not one of the original five cars in the short series. I'll back off on the ATP to the mid-1980s for that reason.



**993 05 017, \$62.95, with Family Foam Nest packaging.**

**983 05 017, \$71.95, with Jewel Box packaging.**

**Reporting Marks: CN 401439 and 400607.**

**Canadian National Weathered Two Pack.**

Consists of two MTL 181 series 50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Plug Door, No Running Board, Low Brake Wheel. Each car is brown with mostly white lettering including roadname (English one side, French other

side, as illustrated in the official MTL image above), reporting marks and tabular dimensional data on left and large "wet noodle" herald on right. White simulated reflective dots at six points along bottom of side. White on black double COTS panel on right; red, white and black anti-hard coupling warning on bottom right. Both cars have light to moderate weathering and fading effects, particularly on the door. The 400607 has multicolor graffiti on one side and brown patch panels and scrawl graffiti "Box Car Joe" on the other side. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s given COTS panels, or strictly speaking, late 1990s given condition of cars as modeled, to late decade of the 2000s. The individual catalog numbers are 181 44 210, 401439; 181 45 210, 400607.

Strictly speaking, we probably have a split ATP here between these two cars, since one has graffiti and patch panels, presumably to cover the previous iteration of graffiti, and one doesn't. We also have different prototype stories given information on Ian Cranstone's "Canadian Freight Cars" website ( [www.nakina.net](http://www.nakina.net) ). The series 400600 to 400999, which includes the 400607, was built in early 1967 by National Steel Car. The series 401400 to 401482, which includes the 401439, was also built by National Steel Car. According to **Canadian Rail Car Pictorial Volume Four** by Richard Yaremko, this second group was built in 1964, started in the CN series 353400 to 353499 and were renumbered into the 401400 group by July 1966.

Cranstone neatly provides the end of the ATP for us as well; he's got access to an impressive set of Equipment Registers! The last one in which he saw any of the 400600 to 400999 group was October 2010 and the last one for the 401400 to 401482 was July 2008. I'll consolidate these two data points into "late decade of the 2000s" – and isn't a bit unsettling to know that we are already into the "decade of the 2020s."

I'll grab a representative ORER, July 1998, for some dimensions. For the first group, they are: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 11 feet even, outside length 57 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet 5 inches, door opening 9 feet, and capacity 5092 cubic feet or 155,000 pounds. The only difference with the second set of cars on these key metrics is 2000 pounds less capacity.

Cranstone has a photo of CN 400856, from the first series, that was likely taken around the time the car was constructed (the "Built" and "New" dates in the data are both present, and they're the same, March 1967). If that's true, this means that as built this series of cars had low brake wheels and no running boards, which is what I would have guessed. (The mandate to outlaw running boards goes back to 1964.) But another example of the split between the two cars in this pack is that the 401439 **was** built with a running board which was removed later; this again per **Canadian Rail Car Pictorial Volume Four**. Since the MTL 181 body style isn't based on National Steel Car prototypes, I'd expect some differences between model and prototype, and indeed on both prototype cars the ends are different and the sides are riveted and not welded.

Returning to the photo of the 400856, it also has a yellow door, which signifies newsprint service. It appears that both entire groups of cars had yellow doors as delivered. They also had the AAR Designation XP and were equipped with 20 inch travel cushion underframes and sliding sills, which match up with the yellow door. I also thought that was why the doors on both cars as modeled by MTL were lighter in color than the rest of the car: they were once yellow but it either faded away, leaving the original brown, or they were repainted brown to denote that the cars were reassigned to general service. Another explanation in **Canadian Rail Car Pictorial Volume Four** is that "CN was [later] relying on their computer system to assign cars in an appropriate manner" so there was no need for yellow doors. If you say so, CN... certainly the yellow doors are a lot easier for employees to see.

Let's not leave out actual bingo photos here. CN 400607 was found in March 2007, appropriately, in Calgary, Alberta. The 401439 was spotted on the Central Vermont, a CN subsidiary, in Norwich, Connecticut, in April 1990. The lighter shade of brown on the door is evident in this image. Both photos are on RRPictureArchives.





993 05 023, \$95.95, with Family Foam Nest packaging.

983 05 023, \$107.95, with Jewel Box packaging.

Reporting Marks: ATSF 525249, 525255, 525280.

#### **Santa Fe Weathered Three Pack.**

Consists of three MTL 181 series 50 Foot Steel Boxcars, Single Plug Door, No Running Board, Low Brake Wheel. Each car is red with black roof and ends and mostly white lettering including restenciled reporting marks and large circle cross herald on left. Yellow and white "Super Shock Control - A Smoother Ride" slogan on right. Black on yellow panel equipment listing at top left on

the 525249 and 525280 only. White on black double COTS panel on right, directly under "Control" on the 525249 and 525280 and at bottom right on the 525255. Yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" at in various on right on each car. Small white and black simulated reflective circle crosses at four points along bottom of side. Moderate to heavy weathering; scrawl graffiti on one side of the 525249 and the 525255. Previous reporting marks "bleed through" on the 525280. Approximate Time Period: late 1970s through decade of the 1980s. The individual catalog numbers are 181 44 270, 525249; 181 45 270, 525255; 181 46 270, 525280.

Well, George, that's a pretty long description! We have to be thorough here, since there's a lot going on with respect to this trio. A key point, though, is that these were previously marked as "Refrigerator" cars with SFRE lettering. By the time they're depicted here, though, they've been changed to the Bx-90 class and brought into the mainstream ATSF roster. All we have to do is know when that happened and we've got a good start to the ATP. Right?

Ah, perhaps it's not that simple. The book **Santa Fe Freight in Color Volume One**, Page 60, has a bingo photo of ATSF 525249 taken in April 1964... with its running board still in place. It also looks a whole lot cleaner and shinier than as depicted by Micro-Trains! It's noted that the BX-90 class were rebuilds from the Santa Fe's RR-80 class cars. This set is listed as having carried the road numbers 525200 to 525949, which seems like a pretty big series. It was "unknown" how many cars were in said series. The next page of the book has a shot of ATSF 525255 as of April 1987, looking a lot more like the inspiration for the Micro-Trains model of that car. The "Load Divider" box at the top left of the car has been painted out, for example. It's also got about the same amount of dirt and grime as the MTL model.

As long as I have bingo photos on my mind, I'll divert over to RRPictureArchives for a January 1981 shot of ATSF 525280, complete with SFRE lettering bleeding through. The service date in the car is January 1978 and the U-1 "dot" looks pretty fresh. This and the previously cited photo are leading me toward calling an ATP of the late 1970s and 1980s for these cars. We can't leave out that the rather complicated "Super Shock Control" paint scheme was

supplanted by less complex paint starting in the 1970s. An example of this is a November 1987 image of ATSF 525306 which has been repainted to all red, that is, no more black ends and roof, but still includes the large circle cross and "Super Shock Control" slogan. There were overlaps in what you'd see on the rails, of course. I'll note here that the real cars had riveted sides and a straight bottom sill, which are deltas to the MTL 181 body style.

Then, with a posting of the same photo of the 525280 on RailcarPhotos.com, we have the introduction of possibly conflicting information to our story. It's noted in the caption that the original series of cars was SFRE 29300 to 29509, built by Pacific Car and Foundry in 1963 and classified as Refrigerator cars, Santa Fe Class RR-80 and AAR Designation RBL. It's further stated that the cars were rebuilt to Bx-90s in 1977 at the Topeka Shops. But that seems to be contradicted by the photo of the 525249 in **Santa Fe Freight in Color Volume One** which is captioned as taken in 1964 with the reporting marks, class code, and designation (to XMLI) already changed. Something doesn't compute.

Let's try checking the ORERs. The January 1967 Register doesn't show SFRE 29300 to 29509, and does show a group ATSF 525200 to 525384 (which makes more sense than 525200 to 525949), so the relettering **has** been done by then. The cars are also shown with the XMLI designation and the longish description, "Box, Load Dividers, Side Wall Fillers, Insulated, Shock Control" with an end note indicating that they also "are equipped with fork lift truck pallets, platforms, skids or tote bins, considered part of car" — in other words, they're not yours, Mr. Shipper or Mr. Receiver, they are the property of the Santa Fe. I wonder how many pallets have conveniently disappeared over time. Anyway, the inside length was 50 feet 1 inch, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside height 9 feet 10 inches, outside length 57 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 4640 cubic feet or 140,000 pounds.

Given the photo evidence we can jump to the January 1978 ORER where there are a total of 133 cars in a series which has been slightly expanded to ATSF 525200 to 525396. Of these, only 21 are called out as having pallets, which might answer my question about how many times shippers helped themselves to them. Only 37 total cars were left as of the July 1987 Equipment Register, just two of which remained as of the October 1991 ORER. No cars were left in the July 1992 Register. So my initial guess on the ATP looks decent enough.

Perhaps what's noted as a rebuild in 1977 included the removal of running boards. But the brake wheels don't appear to have been lowered, which is another delta to the 181 body style. MTL could have used its own recently introduced 1818 subsidiary body style here, which does have the higher position brake wheel. See the top of the August UMTRR for what I mean here including model photos.



993 05 024, \$71.95, with Family Foam Nest packaging.

983 05 024, \$80.95, with Jewel Box packaging.

Reporting Marks: MILW 109885 and 109945.

**Milwaukee Road Weathered Three Pack.**

Consists of two MTL 098 series 50 Foot Two Bay Airslide Covered Hoppers. The 109985 is yellow fading to gray (see text) and the 109945 is gray. Both cars have black lettering including reporting marks on left and large

roadname across car. Multicolor ACI Label and white on black COTS panels on right (differing positions on each car for COTS panels). Moderate to heavy weathering. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s (1974 for the 109885 and 1973 for the 109945) into the 1990s. The individual catalog numbers are 098 45 220, 109885; 098 46 220, 109945.

The discussion of this type of car in the **Milwaukee Road Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two** includes a focus on their weathering. "For some reason the paint would appear to fade or be burnished by abrasion." The **Color Guide** has on Page 84 an example, MILW 109998, which was only two years old at the time it was photographed. The other four Airslides across Pages 84 and 85 in the book, none of which are bingos I must add, all show this common weathering pattern. It looks like they aged pretty fast, and MTL has captured this effect nicely.

As with the CN Weathered Two Pack above, we have a split in prototype between the two cars, though there is no doubt that they both align with the 098 body style. The series MILW 109925 to 109949 includes the 109945, and was built in 1973 by General American. The group MILW 109882 to 109924, which includes the 109885, was built by General American in 1974 and leased to the Milwaukee Road. And yes, this does seem a bit backwards, but the lower numbered cars **did** come later. I did the first of my double takes for this pair reading that information! We'll get to the second double take in a bit, but first, let's check the ORERs.

The lower numbered series isn't yet present in the January 1975 Register, but the higher numbered group is: MILW 109925 to 109949 has all possible 25 cars and is of the expected dimensions including the 4180 cubic foot capacity. The second series, MILW 109882 to 109924, is in place by the April 1976 ORER; those 43 cars have identical dimensions and 4180 cubic foot capacity, though they are listed at 191,000 pounds capacity, 1000 less than the other group.

What was left of the Milwaukee Road went into the Soo Line on the first day of 1986. The October 1986 ORER has 42 cars from the 109882 group and 22 from the 109925 group with MILW reporting marks in the Soo's listing. In the April 1995 Register, the car counts were 39 and 6 respectively. In the October 1996 ORER, multiple groups are combined into the series MILW 109882 to 109999 which held 66 cars. Of this larger group, 40 cars make it to the January 2000 ORER, 18 of which remain in the January 2006 Register. They don't last through the end

of the decade of the 2000s. I think the ATP is probably not that long, since as I note below there were successor paint schemes for some if not all of these cars.

And now here's my second double take from the **Color Guide**: the 109885 and its group leased from General American had lining, and as such, they were painted yellow, not gray. A high-end HO Scale model of this very same car is, in fact, yellow. I would not have observed this looking only at the prototype photos. A photo of sister car 109922 "shows that the yellow paint fared about as well as the gray" with respect to how badly they weathered. I can't disagree with this! Between the light in which these cars were photographed and the reproduction of the resulting photo, I would have told you that they were gray also, and I would have been wrong. A black and white image online of MILW 109904 from the same series also has the car looking gray. I recall what I first read in San Francisco's Exploratorium back when my kids were much younger: "We don't see colors as they are, we see colors as we are." I'm going to presume that the color I see on the Micro-Trains model of the 109885 is not the gray I see, but a badly faded yellow. Looking carefully at both cars together in the official photo, there is a difference in the base color. And I also see something else: the ORER listings have both series from which MTL selected cars described as "Covered Hopper, Airslide, **Lined**." If both groups were lined, then why weren't they both yellow?

Enough with that: the bingo photo for MILW 109945 is available on George Elwood's Fallen Flags site ( [www.rr-fallenflags.org](http://www.rr-fallenflags.org) ). The car was found in Elmira, New York in November 1989. The image looks like a scanned snapshot to me, but it's plenty good enough. Note that the large roadname is a little offset, starting in the fifth panel from the left, leaving four panels blank, and ending in the fourth panel from the right, leaving three panels open. The lettering below the "M" in "Milwaukee" reads, "Loading Restricted to Food Stuffs For Human Consumption." I did not locate a bingo for MILW 109885 online or in print. I'm quite certain that MTL has reference photos.

Here's something for the Possible Future Release File, or Possible Do It Yourself File: There were cars, MILW 109970, that was painted in the blue scheme with "GATX Airslide" from top to bottom at the far left of the car. See, for example, MILW 109970 on RRPictureArchives and MILW 109911 on Fallen Flags. In addition, I also spotted Milwaukee Airslides in just reporting marks and in reporting marks with a rather small Milwaukee Road "tilted rectangle" herald at the top right. These photos lead me to think that the ATP for this two pack doesn't go all the way to the end of the service life for these cars, but it's possible. Your call!

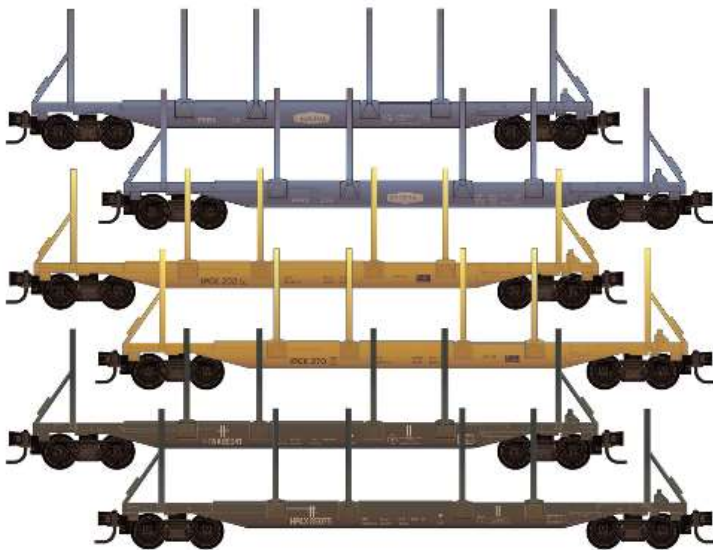
**N SCALE MULTI-PACKS:** First up, there are three items scheduled to be available mid-month:





**Runner Pack #189 of four CSXT Three Bay Hoppers (993 00 189, \$119.95).** This set comes only in the Foam Family Nest. UMTRR Coverage was in the February 2022 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 108 51 480, 830082; 108 52 480, 830463; 108 53 480, 830971; 108 54 480, 831045. I've confirmed that this pack is available using online sale listings.

**The Canadian National "Mosquito" Two Pack (993 02 202, \$69.95).** This set including the multi-media kit load (some assembly required, decal sheet included) is packaged in the Foam Family Nest. UMTRR coverage was in the January 2022 issue. I've seen photos of last month's ATSF Fuselage Two Pack and the foam packaging looks like it works safely for the pack as it comes to the modeler. The individual catalog and road numbers for the 50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Cars are: 045 51 610, 665034; 045 52 610, 665037.

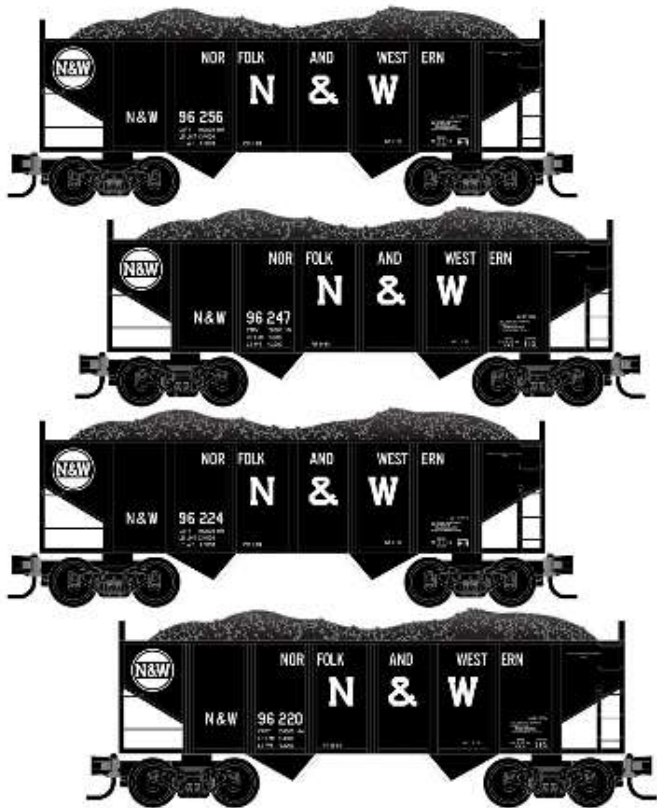


**The Weathered Log Car Six Pack (993 05 019, \$195.95).** UMTRR coverage was in the February 2022 issue. This set is also packaged in the Foam Family Nest. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 115 44 063, HPAX 85041; 115 45 063, HPAX 85705; 115 46 090, IPCX 270; 115 47 090, IPCX 252; 115 48 023, FPBX 135; 115 49 023, FPBX 256.

Meanwhile, I can confirm via online listings that the **Santa Fe Fuselage Two Pack (993 02 181)** was released mid-July and is available from Authorized Micro-Trains Dealers, and the **Missouri Pacific**

**Heavyweight Five Pack (993 02 201, \$199.95)** was also available no later than early August.

*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**.*



**Norfolk and Western Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, it's the ribside peak end version of the two bay hopper.

This makes sense since Eight Pack #1 (MTL photo at right), released in January 2013, was of this body style and was also of N&W hoppers. That set followed two three-packs issued in May 1993 and October 1995. The only other roadname on this body style so far was Baltimore and Ohio (Runner Pack #118, July 2016). The paint scheme on this forthcoming quartet was the replacement for the one on the eight pack. It's noted in the Color Guide that not many hoppers received this particular decoration, relatively speaking of course since the N&W had thousands of hoppers.

The bingo photo is of N&W 96247, taken in September 1964. It was among the series 95000 to 96999, of the railroad's Class H9 hoppers. The H9s were rebuilds — 12,223 of them! — from the N&W's Class HL hoppers which were built between 1936 and 1940 by five different companies including the railroad itself, a total of 12,500 cars altogether. The HL to H9 rebuild took from 1949 to 1952 and was done in house at the shops in Roanoke, Virginia. Between 1962 and 1964, two thousand of these H9s received heavy repairs, and were renumbered into the 95000s and 96000s. The 96247 is an example. But not all of the repaired cars got the 1963 paint scheme; for example, on Page 55 of the **Color Guide** there is N&W 95338 in the previous scheme which

*Targeted Delivery January 2023:*

983 00 195, \$124.95, with Jewel Boxes

993 00 195, \$109.95, with Foam Family Nest Packaging

Reporting Marks: N&W 96220, 96224, 96247, 96256.

**Norfolk and Western Twin Bay Hopper Four Pack (Runner Pack #195).**

Scheduled to consist of four MTL 091 body style Two Bay Ribside Hoppers with Peak End. Cars are black with white lettering including 1963 N&W round ("hamburger") herald at far left, reporting marks on left, and roadname with large "N&W" across car. Simulated coal loads to be included. Approximate Time Period: 1963 (paint scheme) or 1964 (service date on cars) to early 1980s.

Okay, so which body style is this exactly? Based on a bingo photo on Page 56 of the



was modeled by MTL, well, previously. Also on that page is N&W 95918 found in May 1985, but in company service with an “MW” (Maintenance of Way) stenciled near the road number. The ORER for January 1964 shows the 95000 to 96999 series with – well, now this is interesting, just 102 cars. The inside length was 30 feet 11 inches, outside length 32 feet 4 inches, extreme height 12 feet 3 inches, and capacity 2054 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. These dimensions are a bit smaller than the MTL 091 body style. I guess the rebuilding was still going on in 1964 since by the time we get to the January 1967 Equipment Register that series has grown from 102 cars to 1987 cars. That’s more like it. By the January 1978 ORER the car count has eased to 1146. In the April 1984 Register it’s just two.



***Targeted Delivery January 2023:***

**993 00 196, with foam family nest packaging, \$169.95.**

**983 00 196, with jewel case packaging, \$189.95.**

**Road Numbers: 53, 201, 206, 207, and Car Name “Fairhaven” (will be preceded with “VGN” in UMTRR website listings).**

***Virginian Passenger Car Five Pack.***

Scheduled to consist of one MTL 148 body style Heavyweight Mail/Baggage Car (Road Number 53), three MTL 145 body style Heavyweight Paired Window Coaches (Road Numbers 201, 206, 207) and one MTL 1447 body style Heavyweight Business Car (Car Name “Fairhaven”). Each car is Pullman Green with black roof, underframe and trucks. Gold lettering including roadname widely spaced in center of letterboard and road numbers at bottom left and right, except for the business car which has the car name at bottom center. Mail/baggage car has “Railway Express Agency, Inc.” next to the baggage door and “U.S. Mail / Railway Post Office” below windows. Approximate Time Period: at least the 1940s and 1950s, but likely an earlier start than the 1940s.

I am quite intrigued by this choice for the next Heavyweight Five Pack, and not because it’s got a catalog number that aligns with Runner Packs. No, it’s because passenger service of any kind is not something I would think of when considering the Virginian Railway – not at all. The Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment (ORPTE) for March 1943 indicates that the company did have passenger equipment. This quintet represents a little over fifteen percent of their entire roster, which was 33 total cars at the time. And yes, all five of the cars to be modeled by Micro-Trains are listed in the ORPTE entry for March 1943. Raise that to a fifth of the roster shown in the March 1953 ORPTE, which was just twenty cars, one of which is an all wood baggage and express car!

I am quite intrigued by this choice for the next Heavyweight Five Pack, and not because it’s got a catalog number that aligns with Runner Packs. No, it’s because passenger service of any kind is not something I would think of when considering the Virginian Railway – not at all. The Official Register of Passenger Train Equipment (ORPTE) for March 1943 indicates that the company did have passenger equipment. This quintet represents a little over fifteen percent of their entire roster, which was 33 total cars at the time. And yes, all five of the cars to be modeled by Micro-Trains are listed in the ORPTE entry for March 1943. Raise that to a fifth of the roster shown in the March 1953 ORPTE, which was just twenty cars, one of which is an all wood baggage and express car!

I was initially not confident that I would locate prototype photos of even one of the five cars in this forthcoming set, but then I realized that the Norfolk and Western Historical Society



website has a large compendium of images. Would that include those from the Virginian, which the N&W merged with in 1959? Yes! Let's start with a color photo of the Business Car "Fairhaven" in Norfolk, Virginia, in an undated photo. It was October 1954 in Norfolk when another photographer caught the "Fairhaven"; that image is on Fallen Flags. Also on RRPictureArchives is an undated photo from the late Jerry LaBoda's archived scans. That third image gives us the best overall view of the car and shows that the roof is a more traditional clerestory type, not the balloon roof on the MTL business car body style.

Baggage/Mail car #53 is in an photo from July 1958 on the Norfolk and Western Historical Society's site. It's a "5/8" view – not quite three-quarter but more than a half, I guess! The baggage door looks a little less wide on the prototype car than it is on the MTL 148 body style. But it's accurate to say that this Baggage/Mail car is being used as a Railway Post Office – that's just how it's lettered in the photo. The N&W Historical Society also has bingo photos of two of the three paired-window coaches. The 201 is at Princeton, West Virginia in July 1952 while the 206 is in an image with unknown date and place but with a Baggage/Mail car coupled to it. That archive also has a shot of the 208 from December 1959. But we need to go to Northeast Rails for the picture of the 207, which is undated. All of these cars look more like Single Window Coaches than Paired Window Coaches, as the distance between the windows is consistent... and small. There are 24 total windows on the car while there are 22 (ten pair and a single at each end) on the MTL 145 body style. I also note that there are also 22 windows on the Micro-Trains Single Window Coach, so there would have been no particular window count advantage to the folks in Talent using that body style instead.

According to the Wikipedians, at least one of whom checked copies of the Official Guide of the Railways (OG), the Virginian had exited the passenger business by 1956. Sure enough, the May 1957 Official Guide includes the words "Freight Service Only" with the company's listing. The previous OG chronologically in the UMTRR Research Accumulation is from May 1954. There were just four trains in operation at the time. Number 3 left Norfolk, Virginia, at 8AM daily, and took a leisurely eight hours to reach Roanoke, Virginia, 243 miles away, arriving at 4 PM. The companion train, Number 4, left Roanoke at 8AM and arrived Norfolk at 4PM. Train 3-103 left Roanoke at 7:30 AM daily, and reached Page, West Virginia, at almost the very end of the Virginian's main line, at 2:46PM, five hours plus to go another 184 miles. Train 4-104 left Page at 9:28 AM and arrived at Roanoke at 4:35 PM. The net of it is that if one wanted to travel on the Virginian from Norfolk to Page, or vice versa, one was going to spend the night in Roanoke! The oldest OG I have is from March 1923 – one hundred years old next year! – and it illustrates that the Virginian was not really passenger train heavy then either, with two daily trains between Norfolk and Deepwater plus another pair between Norfolk and Princeton, West Virginia, and some branch line service as well.

What I don't have are good dates for the start of the Approximate Time Period. The Virginian didn't list its passenger equipment in earlier ORERs, only providing totals, for example 66 cars in the August 1924 Register, including 32 coaches, 2 "officers" cars and eight baggage-mail cars. It's entirely possible that these were already all steel cars: as "the richest little railroad in the world" built to very high standards, the Virginian did not scrimp on such things. Some time after 1931 they stopped listing any passenger equipment information at all. The UMTRR



Research Accumulation is quite light on Virginian Railway information, so I'll put an "at least" on the ATP and see if I can find or anyone can provide some Incremental Information (hint).



**Targeted Delivery December 2022:**

**993 02 027, with foam family nest packaging, \$64.95**

**983 02 027, with jewel case packaging, \$73.95.**

**Reporting Marks: SP 260 and 266.**

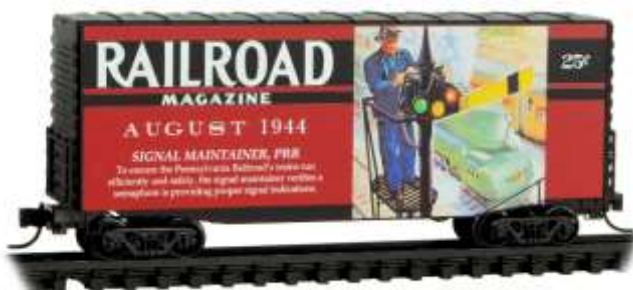
**Southern Pacific Repeater Car Two Pack.**

Scheduled to consist of two 038 series 50 Foot Plug Door Boxcars Without Running Board. Each car is gray with white lettering including reporting marks and "Repeater

Car" on left. Black on yellow warnings on left and right. White on black double COTS panel on right. Additional details such as simulated windows and hardware on roof. Approximate Time Period: mid- and late 1970s. These cars will have a lowered underframe and body mounted trucks. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Richard Percy's "My Espee Modeler's Archive" site has a full page of information on these cars which I had never heard of prior to the MTL pre-order announcement. First off, what do they "repeat"? Air, actually, as in the air used for the train braking system. Percy has transcribed information from the Southern Pacific's Western Region Timetable of October 28, 1979, specifically, "Special Instructions - All Subdivisions - Rule 20. Repeater Air Cars (RAC) SP 260 through 266." Quoting from that transcription: "The repeater air car is utilized to increase efficiency of train air brakes on long trains and during cold weather. The purpose of repeater relay equipment is to accept pneumatic signals from the brake pipe of forward portion of a train, and by relay action, produce a corresponding response in the brake pipe of the rear section of the train." There are specific instructions on how to connect and use the repeater cars (for example, "Place as near to center of train as makeup will permit") as well as a compilation of information from various sources. There's a roll call of freight car scholars here!

It's noted that SP 260 was originally SP 697014, a Class B-70-2, while SP 266 was formerly SP 672429, a B-70-1. These were both "Hydra-Cushion" boxcar built by Pacific Car and Foundry during 1959 and 1960. Photos of both are on the page: [espee.railfan.net/rac.html](http://espee.railfan.net/rac.html) (no "www"). It's thought that no two repeater cars are exactly alike.



**N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES:**

**Car #6 in the "Railroad Magazine Years Gone By Series" (101 00 885, \$27.95) has been released. It features the cover of the August 1944 issue, "Signal Maintainer, PRR." UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the October 2021 issue.**



And the next two items for MTL's freelance railroad, the Medford, Talent and Lakecreek, are expected mid-month. These are the **40 Foot Double Sheathed Refrigerator Car with Vertical Brake Staff and Fishbelly Underframe (049 50 940, \$28.95, SORC 5896)** and the **40 Foot Skeleton Log Car with Load (114 50 170, \$22.95, Reporting Marks MTL 456)**. UMTRR coverage was in the January 2002 edition.



Also, the **VIA 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Modernized Business Car (144 00 770, \$31.45)** is now available. UMTRR coverage was in the December 2021 issue. The road number is 7722, printed in white and located in the top corner on the platform end of the car. Both sides of the car are shown.



The final three cars in the Constellation Zodiac Series are expected to be released mid-month as well: **Leo (102 00 219)**, **Virgo (102 00 220)**, and **Libra (102 00 221)**. Each has the interior lighting and an MSRP of \$38.95. Pre-orders were taken in July 2021.

One more trip through the cosmos to learn a bit more about these constellations. Let's start with Leo the Lion. No, not the long time mascot of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, though I suppose that's how they got their name (there have been several MGM lions over time). This Leo is the one in the sky, that's one of the more easily recognizable constellations out there due to its many bright stars including Regulus and Denebola. It's also one of the largest in size,

at 947 square degrees. You might have heard of the Leonid Meteor Shower, which peaks between November 17 and 18 each year and are visible within that constellation. In Greek mythology, Leo is the lion that Heracles defeated, but the Mesopotamians, Babylonians and Persians also had a Leo-like constellation in their versions of sky views. The "Sickle of Leo" is the group of six bright starts that represent the lion's head.

As for the next constellation in sequence, well, Leo is big, but Virgo is bigger; in fact, it's the largest of the twelve in the Zodiac and the second largest overall, at almost 1295 square degrees. The website [in-the-sky.org](http://in-the-sky.org) tells us that "In Greek mythology, Virgo is often identified as Dike, goddess of justice, who was the daughter of Zeus and Themis. She is often depicted holding the scales of justice, represented by the neighboring constellation Libra." (One moment, there, Libra. You're next.) In another departure between astronomy and astrology, the sun takes 44 days to pass through Virgo, while the astrological sign timespan isn't really any longer than any other one. Also, Virgo now appears highest in the sky around April, not late August and early September. The brightest star in Virgo is Spica, Alpha Vergenis, with an apparent magnitude of 0.98. I'm not even going to try to explain apparent magnitude... I'd better stick to trains. Spica is about 260 light years from Earth. So at Warp 8, it would take... never mind.

And the series of Constellations, and Special Edition cars from MTL, wraps up with Libra, the scales. I guess I do have to explain a little more about magnitude: Libra has no "first magnitude" stars, which in terms that I can understand, means it's relatively faint. However, contained within it is the "Methuselah Star," one of the oldest known objects in the universe — but you can't see it without help.

Perhaps because it's next to Scorpio, it was first identified as "the Scorpion's claws" in Babylonia and Ancient Greece. In Ancient Egypt, it was viewed as a boat. Way back in 730 BC, Libra was positioned on the Equinox, giving that imaginary line the name "First Point of Libra," but because of the Precession of the Equinoxes, that's no longer accurate. In Latin, "libra" means "balance" as in "the Scales." It's easier to see in the Southern Hemisphere but can be viewed in the Northern Hemisphere as well.

With that, we wrap up another Special Edition series. But there are plenty of other objects out there that could appear on future Micro-Trains cars: Alpha Centuri, anyone? Big Dipper? Sirius, the Dog Star? Polaris? The Delta Quadrant? Okay, maybe not that last one...

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

**Z SCALE:** Just one new item this month, and then we'll move to the six pre-order announcements. **Car #6 in the "Railroad Magazine Years Gone By Series" (502 00 644, \$27.95)** which features the cover of the August 1944 issue, "Signal Maintainer, PRR" has been released. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the October 2021 issue.



Now to the next set of pre-orders. All of these 511 body style cars are reprints... well, maybe "not a reprints" in some cases with decoration differences like the addition of ACI Labels, or quite a bit more for the last virtual two pack in sequence here.



*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**.*



**Targeted Delivery October/November 2022:  
511 00 011 and 511 00 012, \$29.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: PRR 112000 and 112210.  
50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug  
Door, Pennsylvania Railroad.**

Brown with white and yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and "Cushioned Car" and plain keystone herald on right. Approximate Time Period: 1965 (build date) through late 1970's, but see text. Previous Release: Road Number 112015, December 2006. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the image of the 011 item is shown here for illustration purposes.

Let's just get this out of the way: the MTL 511 body style is clearly a stand in for the prototype. Specifically, these were the X58 Class, the only series of Pennsylvania Railroad boxcars built to the "modern" exterior post design that is standard today. The cars were built in 1964 and 1965 and varied by subclass. The four numbers in the Runner Pack were part of the unsuffixed X58's numbered 112000 to 112399 and were actually AAR Classification RBL, or technically "refrigerator" cars given their insulation, duly noted on the door. The X58As were Class XPs, X58Bs were XLs and X58Cs were XLs or plain XMs. Equipment inside these cars varied so one might have seen an "SL" (Transco SL-1 loaders) or an "LD" (Equipco Load Divider bulkheads) instead of the "DFB" (Evans Damage Free Bulkheads) above the reporting marks. It all added up to more than 2500 cars of this type as of April 1968; the X58s were 1074 of these. "Rob's Pennsy Page" ([pr.railfan.net](http://pr.railfan.net), no "www") has this information and an on-line equipment diagram, of each of the subclasses, no less. Rob's Pennsy Page also has a couple of links to prototype photos, for example PRR 112596 which is an X58B, which will do to show the deltas between real and model boxcars.

Topping the list of differences, if you'll pardon the pun, is that the real cars had a running board (roofwalk) and full ladders! The prototype cars had eight ribs on each side of the door while the model has seven. The ends on the real cars are the more "traditional" 4/4 Dreadnaught type (I think that's right) but the MTL model has the more modern squared off end ribs.

The January 1967 ORER shows the series 112000 to 112299 of 300 cars and the series 112300 to 112399 with 100 cars differed only in the cubic foot capacity, 4358 for the former and 4444 for the latter. All other dimensions were the same: inside length 50 feet 2 inches, inside width 9 feet, inside height 10 feet 3 inches, outside length 57 feet 11 inches, extreme height 15 feet 2 inches, and weight capacity 135,000 pounds. I've read—I don't recall where—that these were among the last cars repainted from the Pennsy scheme, although I recall some pretty hideous paint-outs rolling by me in New Jersey. Entering Conrail in the April 1976 ORER, there were still a total of 168 cars with the PRR keystone in place. The Penn Central had repainted some X58s into, for example, the series 361299 to 362372. By April 1981 the end was near for the PRR



paint, with just 14 cars left in this particular group. But Conrail paint, or at least stenciling, was on some X58 cars numbered 361910 to 362009.



***Targeted Delivery October/November 2022:***  
**511 00 041 and 511 00 042, \$29.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: SOU 584877 and 584945.**  
**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door, Norfolk Southern.**

Brown with white lettering including NS 'speed' herald and Southern Railway reporting marks on left. Approximate Time Period: 1981 into the decade of the 2010s. Previous Release: Road Number 584899, April 2007. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the image of the 041 item is shown here for illustration purposes.

MTL stated in previous car copy for this car that that "The NS stenciled individual car assignments on its freight cars for ownership reference." That's a more interesting comment than it might seem at first. While the merger of the Norfolk and Western and Southern Railway systems into the Norfolk Southern took place officially in 1982, the roads continued to be listed separately in the ORER until at least 1989!

And speaking of ORERs... we start in 1981, when these cars were built, and within the Southern Railway System listing we find series 584824 to 584999, of 176 cars: "Box, Insulated, Plug Doors, Cushion Underframe, Pallets" with AAR designation XPI. They're of 52 foot 6 inch inside length and are 60 foot 9 inches over the couplers; the outside length of the model is a bit short but the inside length is right on. Other vital statistics: inside height 10 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15 feet 6 inches, door opening 12 feet (a "door thing"? Harder to tell on plug doors, especially in Z Scale) and capacity 5237 cubic feet or 154,000 pounds. As MTL has previously noted, there were 176 cars built and that's how many are listed in the April 1981 entry. Then it gets really interesting.

In the October 1986 book, still under the Southern, there are no less than 14 separate sublistings for the cars in the 584824 to 584899 series! They are split by AAR designation into the XPI and the RB -- or, refrigerator-- classifications, and within each of those there are the more typical capacity groupings. Repeat this in the July 1989 edition. By July 1992, the Norfolk Southern merger had at least taken hold to the point of a combined ORER listing, but the cars are still under SOU reporting marks. At this point, by the way, there were so many splits of the original 176 car series by type and capacity that I didn't try to count or add the number of cars that were left.

Some semblance of order did return in the October 1996 book. The series was reconsolidated (is that a word?) into two major groupings. There were 56 cars of the RBL class, which were once again described as "Box, Insulated, Plug Doors, Cushion Underframe, Pallets." And there were 54 more cars listed as just "Box, Steel" that kept the XPI code. The 584899 is not listed specifically in either of these groups. In the January 2000 ORER the car count is 55.

While it's simple enough to extend by changing the reporting marks, strictly speaking, the ATP ends when we don't see these cars with SOU markings in the Equipment Register. So let's see: 33 cars in the October 2004 ORER, 26 as of July 2007, 23 in January 2011, and still a single car in the October 2020 Register. So the conservative ATP call I've made in previous coverage of this car is probably a bit too conservative. I've adjusted it. There is the matter of conspicuity stripes after 2005, but that's a relatively simple addition.

By the way, if the cars were flipped to NS reporting marks, they received different road numbers as well, since there is no corresponding NS series with the same 584824 to 584899 numbers. In fact, there were no revenue cars lettered NS and numbered in the 500000s at all.



**Targeted Delivery October/November 2022:**  
**511 00 051 and 511 00 052, \$29.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: GN 138717 and 138796.**  
**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door, Great Northern.**

Sky blue with aluminum roof. White lettering including reporting marks and roadname on left and outline goat herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label left of door (making this a "not a reprint"). Approximate Time Period: 1968 (build date given by MTL) to late 1990s. Previous Release: Road Number 138706, May 2007. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the image of the 051 item is shown here for illustration purposes.

This attractive scheme was the last in the series for Rocky's road, having been the product of a top to bottom image change for the GN begun in 1967. I still haven't quite figured out why the road would bother to do such a thing, considering that the merger talks that would result in the Burlington Northern were well under way. Perhaps this was a contingency plan of some sort, or an admission that the formation of the BN was still going to be a ways off. The deep blue was a nod to the typical color of the sky in the territory in which the Great Northern operated (unless we're talking Seattle). Rocky, the GN's mascot, became a more modernish-icon looking in place of the cartoon-like character that he was in the 1950's. Decades later, I think the scheme still holds up well.

And good thing, for as we already know, the Burlington Northern tended to take its time repainting cars from its predecessor lines. Considering the 1968 built date of these cars, it would probably not surprise you to know that the original series of 150, numbered 138700 to 138849 in the April 1970 ORER, had only dropped to 140 by April 1976 under the BN listing. Of those, 27 had lost their Car-Pak loaders and been demoted to AAR Designation XM from the more specific XL, but they were still there. The vital statistics: inside length 50 feet 8 inches, outside length 57 feet 10 inches, door opening 10 feet, capacity 5,266 cubic feet and 143,000 pounds. A healthy 126 cars were active in April 1981 and 99 in July 1987; we don't see the last of these cars until sometime after 1996!

There's a circa-1992 photo of GN 138742 on Fallen Flags. Rib counters, or should I say exterior post counters, will note that the MTL model is one short on either side of the door versus the

prototype, and car end students will observe that the real GN car had what looks like 4/4 Dreadnaught ends, if I have my terminology correct. The roof design looks OK based on a shot of GN 138777 on the same site. Fallen Flags also has shots of a very washed out looking GN 138739 from July 1995 and GN 138717 from 1972 which shows quite the extended draft gear. This pretty much adds up to a “stand in” for me, though the final decision on this is up to the reader.



**Targeted Delivery October/November 2022:**

**511 00 123 and 511 00 124, \$29.95 each.**

**Reporting Marks: BN 321656 and 321853.**

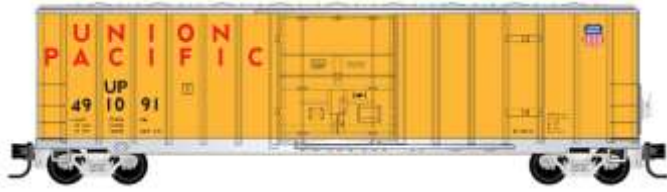
**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door, Burlington Northern.**

Green with mostly white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label and white on black double COTS panel on far right. Small white simulated reflective stripes at eight points along bottom of car. Approximate Time Period: 1975 (build date given by MTL) through the decade of the 2000s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 321625 and 321632, March 2011. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the image of the 123 item is shown here for illustration purposes.

On Page 32 of the **Burlington Northern Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** we have a photo of BN 321625 as found in 1977 in Las Vegas. It and the rest of the series 321600 to 322099 was built in 1975 by ACF in St. Louis. Casdorph notes that “New-built 50 foot 6 inch Plate B loader-equipped cars were uncommon at this time.” The side sills are different and the ends look different to me, but considering that the prototype for the MTL car isn’t an ACF model I don’t think their depiction is too bad. (As always, “your mileage may vary.”)

There are two small “not a reprint” items. First, there’s an ACI Label. Second, the AC&F trademark was to the left of the consolidated stencils on its model; this time, it’s below the bottom grab iron on the right where it appears on the real car.

These cars were new in March 1975. The April 1975 ORER shows the series as a new addition with no car count yet, but with most everything else: description “Box, 50K,” AAR Designation XL, inside length 50 feet 7 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 58 feet 1 inch, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 10 feet, capacity 4973 cubic feet or 151,000 pounds. By the April 1976 Register the count of 500 cars is shown, as is the callout of moveable bulkheads. From there I jumped to the October 1996 ORER where there were 428 cars in the main series and eight more in three subsets. By this time the use of End of Car Cushioning with 20 inch travel was also noted. Also by this time, the BN had switched to less elaborate paint schemes, something to keep in mind for your personal Approximate Time Period. Just 14 cars remain in the series in the BNSF Railway listing of October 2007; that’s down to six in the January 2011 ORER which is where I stopped looking this time. These cars could easily have been repainted for the BNSF; I will leave that exercise to the reader.



*Targeted Delivery October/November 2022:*  
**511 00 163 and 511 00 164, \$30.95 each.**  
**Reporting Marks: UP 491091 and 491112.**  
**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door, Union Pacific.**

Yellow with aluminum roof, ends side sills and truck frames. Black lettering including reporting marks on left. Red roadname on left. Small red, white and blue shield herald at top right. Approximate Time Period: 1971 (build date) to late 1990s. Previous Releases: Road Numbers 491055 and 491059, November 2012. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the image of the 163 item is shown here for illustration purposes.

We'll start this coverage, reprinted from the May 2012 coverage of the N Scale releases of this same car, with a near-bingo in Morning Sun's **Union Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment (Volume One)**. This book consists completely of Union Pacific company photos, one of which, on Page 41, is of a brand new UP 491050. It was built in 1971 in the UP's own Omaha shops, part of a group of one hundred RBL cars. These were the railroad's class BI-70-11. The small UP herald and lack of slogan are spot on for this "as delivered" paint scheme. It's noted in the **Color Guide** that "We Can Handle It" would not appear until 1972; a data point I hope I remember next time it is painted on an MTL model.

While the photo is a near bingo, I'm not sure that the 511 series body style is quite as close a match. While there are six ribs each side of the door, these don't reach all the way to the top of the car, and there are also diagonal ribs either side of the door. There were partial ladders installed on the prototype versus grab irons on the MTL car. The photo of the real 491050 is dead straight on, so I can't get a good look at the roof or ends; however, the overall car looks more "squared off" than the Micro-Trains depiction.

The caption in the **Color Guide** also mentions an unusual length of 51 feet 8 inches for this car. From the July 1974 ORER we learn that this was the inside length, to go along with an inside width of 9 feet 2 inches, inside height of 10 feet 1 inch, outside length of 60 feet 1 inch, extreme height of 15 feet 6 inches, door opening of 10 feet 6 inches, and capacity of 4775 cubic feet or 133,000 pounds. The series was numbered 491050 to 491149 and described as "Refrigerator, Steel, Cushion Underframe, Plug Doors, Side Fillers, Load Dividers." Of the original 100 built, there were 99 in service at that time. As of the April 1981 ORER, there were 81 cars in the main series plus 16 more which had 47 fork lift pallets "considered part of car." In the October 1991 Register, there were 32 cars plus a single in the main series and another 24 that were described only as "Refrigerator." We'll call the ATP for this group at the late 1990s even though a single car from the original group was listed in the January 2000 ORER.





*Targeted Delivery October/November 2022:*  
511 00 273 and 511 00 274, \$30.95 each.

**Reporting Marks:** ATSF 152318 and 152396.

**50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Plug Door, Santa Fe (AT&SF).**

Red with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and large circle cross herald on right. Yellow and white "Super Shock Control" slogan on left. Black on white "XF Food Loading Only" lettering on far right. White on black split COTS panel at bottom right. White simulated reflective boxes at six points along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: mid-1979 (build date) through early decade of the 2000s at least based on photo evidence. Previous Releases: 151923 and 151951, December 2014, though they are of different cars, see text. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary. Only the image of the 273 item is shown here for illustration purposes.

I almost committed a Major Oops on this virtual two pack. The previous release's road numbers are in neither the same prototype series nor the Santa Fe's car class as this one. The prior MTL cars were Class Bx-182 while these are Class Bx-196. It says so right on the artwork. What should have been my clue is that the forthcoming releases have the "XF Food Loading Only" lettering while the December 2014 releases (at right) do not.



Page 161 of the book **Santa Fe Freight in Color Volume 1** has ATSF 152321, as lensed in 1981 in its original paint scheme. These cars were built by FMC in 1979 and carried reporting marks ATSF 152300 to 152499. The match between prototype and model is pretty good in terms of the MTL 511 body style, but the actual cars are a bit larger in size. Before I go on, I'll note that the same book has two examples of more spartan schemes, brown and white, from 1986 and 1988. But RailcarPhotos.com has a shot of ATSF 152347 from October 1999, and it's in this paint scheme... although with a bit of a dent in the first panel on the left. Ouch! There are also two shots from 1999 of ATSF 152396, the second of the two cars in this virtual two pack, over on RRPictureArchives.net. And further extending the ATP is ATSF 152327 found in June 2004 and posted to Fallen Flags. Feel free to keep in this in mind for your personal Approximate Time Period.

In November 1997, MTL released an N Scale car with this paint scheme (27250, Road Number 152321) and at the time the folks in Talent wrote that XF equipped cars have a special epoxy coating to keep things clean-- cereal, for instance. Like standard box cars, XF's started out in the 40 foot range-- Buffalo Creek's "flour" cars come to mind-- and have grown substantially. However, whatever their length, they tend not to remain in the XF designation for their entire lives. For example, this group built in 1979 had all been demoted to the XP classification by the October, 1991 ORER even though 181 of the initial 200 in the series remained. What didn't change were the dimensions: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 4 inches, inside

height 10 feet 11 inches, outside length 59 feet 1 inch, extreme height 15 feet 3 inches, door opening 12 feet, and capacity 5151 cubic feet or 180,000 pounds, plus or minus. In the October 1996 Equipment Register there were a total of 180 cars in service. Just seven remained with ATSF reporting marks in the January 2006 listing for BNSF Railway.

**MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Two more loads are available this month:

A two pack of Pressure Vessel Loads (499 45 965, \$14.95),



and an pair of pole loads (499 45 958, \$15.95). Both are undecorated.

The “core-through” versions of the 40 foot and 50 foot steel running boards – okay, roofwalks – are available as spares. There are twelve in a pack for \$8.25 MSRP. The 40 foot package (example of one at right) has Catalog Number 499 55 906 and the 50 foot package has Catalog Number 499 55 911. These might also be referenced with their old part numbers: 1070-C and 1073-C respectively.



In a website announcement, MTL clarified that their HO Scale Sugar Beet Load is made to fit the Walthers Trainline 40 Foot Offset Side Four Bay Open Hopper.

The Rum Runner Prohibition Train Set (993 21 383) has been cancelled. UMTRR coverage was in the February 2022 issue. MTL has previously noted that if there are insufficient pre-orders for an item it is subject to cancellation; perhaps that’s the case here.

**DISCONTINUED ALERT:** Just for a little variety, let’s start the review of the Bye-Bye Board with Z Scale items this time. We have to go back to June 2019 for the only release that’s left the building since last time: the first number of the Rock Island stock car (520 00 251).

In N Scale, though, we need go back only to last month for the first out: the New York Central plug door boxcar (032 00 520), the MT&L flat car with load (045 50 490), the Burlington Northern 40 foot boxcar (073 00 330), the weathered Union Pacific 60 foot boxcar (104 44 051), the Montana Rail Link 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary boxcar (104 00 100), and the Missouri Pacific Heavyweight Five Pack (993 02 201). Also gone from 2022 are the Mangels, Herold Company tank car, also known as Sweet Liquid Series #12 (065 00 236, February), both numbers of the BNSF Center Flow (094 00 76x, June), the weathered Grand Trunk Western auto rack (111 44 430, March), the Chessie System/C&O Ortner Hopper reprint (125 00 053, January), the

Chicago and North Western Modified Observation (144 00 840) the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Heavyweight Five Pack (993 01 792, March). Finally, it appears that the MT&L FT-A Diesel is outta here since it's no longer listed on the MTL website (987 50 695, June).

From 2021, the Pennsylvania Railroad 40 foot boxcar is outta here (024 00 181, December), as is the New York Central 40 foot boxcar (024 00 480, also December). Add to the list of subtractions the Frisco two bay hopper (055 00 610, July). A lot of Sweet Liquid has flowed out of town since last time: seven of the twelve cars in the series are sold out! They are #2, OK Corn Syrup (065 00 146, April); #3, Flo-Sweet (065 00 156, May); #4, Miranda Sugar Company (065 00 166, June); #6, H.J. Gilbert (065 00 186, August); #7, Imperial Sugar (065 00 196, September); #8, Sweet Pure Molasses (065 00 206, October), and #9, W.J. McCahan Sugar (065 00 226, November). If you're keeping score, only #10, Union Starch, remains available. The Rio Grande RPO has been delivered (140 00 390, May), and the Chicago and North Western "Clan Gordon" 10-1-2 Sleeper has left the station (141 00 430, December). Lastly, from 2020, two single window coaches have also sold out: the Great Northern (160 00 020, March) and the Erie Railroad (160 00 140, July).

**INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT:** From the UMTRR Spy Network we've learned that MTL does, of course, have bingo photos for the two GATX Airslides released in N Scale last month (098 00 20x). The photos were dated 1988 and 1992. This would narrow down the strictly speaking ATP to "at least late 1980s to mid-1990s", but Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") always applies.

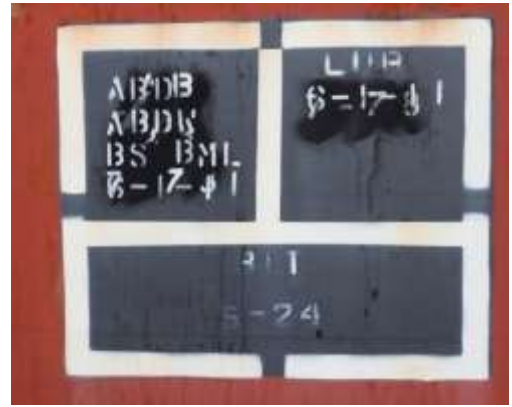
Speaking of Airslides, I just noticed that the second car in the CSXT/ex-Chessie Weathered Two Pack (993 and 983 05 921) carries the restenciled road number 203419. That's the adjacent number to the first of the virtual two pack of a clean car in full CSX paint, which is CSXT 203420 (098 00 031, November 2016).

A UMTRR Gang Member pointed out with respect to the forthcoming Christmas Around the World Cars which were announced for pre-order last month: "Many folks in the UK actually say "Happy Christmas" and not "Merry Christmas." Good point! Considering that I'm a fan of both **Downton Abbey** and **Wallace and Gromit**, I should have picked that up myself!

**OOPS PATROL:** The catalog number 147 51 470 was correct with respect to the Missouri Pacific Heavyweight Five Pack (993 02 201), but the body style is a Heavyweight Baggage Car, not a Railway Post Office.

**FINALLY... WANNA SEE A COTS PANEL?** I frequently mention a COTS panel in these bytes, and of course they are shown in the official MTL images on which they appear, but I've never shown an **actual** COTS panel here. That is, until now.

This isn't the most typical COTS panel you'll ever see, but it was certainly easy enough to grab a photo of it: down at the station in Unity, Maine, home of the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railway tourist operation. The panel is painted on the B&ML's former Maine Central caboose, their number 31. As you can see, the information is rather sparse on this example, though there is a build date of 1924 in the bottom rectangle. It was certainly easy enough to grab a photo of this one, as it was parked right at the platform. It's still used by the B&ML since the one hour tourist ride is a pull/push operation and the caboose is used to protect the backward move back to Unity.



Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,  
George

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