



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains[®] Release Report Issue #309 – September, 2022

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Hello again everyone! There's a lot to cover this month. For starters, the "BNSF Family Tree" Series kicks off with another impressive "fadeaway" paint scheme. In addition, we've got a blast from the past in the form of...

WE INTERRUPT THIS BROADCAST TO BRING YOU A SPECIAL BULLETIN FROM NATIONAL RADIO NEWS. MARTIANS HAVE INVADED THE EARTH!

"We take you live to Talent, Oregon, where our reporter John Weathers is at the scene of an alien spacecraft landing. John, what can you tell us?"

"It appears that the Martians have landed here in Talent in a large metal cylinder of some kind. There is not yet any activity coming from this cylinder. Armed forces are on high alert. We are standing by."

"Thank you. More news as it happens. We now return you to your regular programming, already in progress."

...and the Railroad Magazine "Years Gone By" series continues in both N and Z Scale. For mid-month, we are expecting the "Wicked Night Flyer" Halloween Train Set in N Scale, and...

We interrupt this broadcast for an update on the Martian Invasion from National Radio News! We take you back to Southern Oregon, and our reporter John Weathers...

"Thank you! We have with us a Mr. Eric Smith of Micro-Trains Line Company, headquartered here in Talent, Oregon. Mr. Smith, thank you for joining us. The strange cylinder has still not opened, but Mr. Smith, you're aware of something vitally important. What can you tell us?"

"Thank you, John, and I just want to assure everyone that all is well. Yes, the Martians are here, but they come in peace. They are here to pre-order our new series of War of the Worlds Victory Day Celebration Special Edition freight cars, coming in 2023 in both N and Z Scales."

"We didn't know Martians had model trains, Mr. Smith."

"Neither did we."

"Well, I guess that wraps things up. Back to you in the studio..."

...so, let's get right to the news and views for this month, shall we?

N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



024 00 520, \$28.90.

Reporting Marks: PC 252455.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Short Side and End Ladders, Penn Central.

Green (the PC's "Deepwater Green") with white lettering including roadname and

reporting marks on left. "Red P/White C" herald on right. Multicolor ACI Label below herald. Approximate Time Period: 1968 (service date on car) to no later than 1980. This item has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

The "Red P/White C" herald was a brief experiment at the start of the Penn Central's short lifespan. I presume it was meant to symbolize the predecessor railroads: the Red P, for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the White C, for the New York Central. This herald quickly gave way to the all white version, which then shrunk from the large version to tiny variations as the fortunes of the PC quickly sank. There is some documentation available regarding just how long the Red P/White C was used, in fact. It varies by shop, but it's not very long.

The **Penn Central Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** (Volume One) includes the bingo photo of PC 252455 on Page 46. It's from the PC series 252425 to 252924, which came from the Pennsylvania Railroad series PRR 605350 to 606249. The car was painted in PC colors in June 1968 at the railroad's shops in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania. It's noted the car was rebuilt in May 1959, "one of the last classes of sliding door 40 foot boxcars rebuilt by the PRR."

But check out the car class still on the car in PC garb: X29g. This car goes back a long way, to the original production of the X29s between 1924 and 1934. According to "Rob's Pennsy Page" (pr.railfan.net), the company rebuilt 900 of these cars in 1959, essentially putting a new body on an old underframe. That new body is not quite a match to the MTL car; the ends are different and the sides are riveted, not welded. In my opinion, the key change to make is to the bottom sill, which is straight on the prototype, but when doing that, it's difficult to keep the model's shell on the underframe. Ask me how I know this...

It's noted that PC 252455 was formerly PRR 605873. There are a number of photos available online and in print of X29g cars in PRR paint, but the bingo in the **Color Guide** is the only one cited on Rob's page in PC colors. Yes, the PRR and PC versions co-existed.

The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for April 1970 shows the series PC 252425 to 252924 with 50 cars. The key dimensions were as follows: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 9 inches, extreme height 15 feet 2 inches, door opening 8 feet (a "door thing" versus the 6 foot door on the 024 body style), and capacity 3970 cubic feet or 110,000 pounds. As of the first listing of Conrail in the April 1976 ORER, there were 88 cars in the series, showing that Penn Central did continue to repaint PRR boxcars—although likely not with the Red P/White C. At that time the cars

were given the AAR Designation XL and it was noted in the description that they had racks and were used to carry household appliances. Although 30 cars remained in the series in the July 1980 ORER, they were gone by the April 1981 Equipment Register.



024 00 530, \$28.90.

Reporting Marks: B&O 463529.

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

Oxide red with white lettering including reporting marks on left and small Capitol

Dome herald on right. Approximate Time Period: decade of the 1970s (1970 service date on car).

In May 2021, MTL released this car (at right, Catalog 073 00 290, Road Number 464874), which looks an awful lot like this month's release. There are two major differences: this new car has a lowered brake wheel and half height ladders, and doesn't have black ends. But there is a key similarity: the paint scheme, which is about as simple as it got on the Baltimore and Ohio.



And there's another similarity: both cars were previously owned by someone else and rebuilt for the B&O. In the case of the 463529, the previous owner was the Pennsylvania Railroad and the rebuilder was the Chicago Freight Car Company, which did this work between 1968 and 1970, and then leased the cars to the B&O. This is according to the **B&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, which has a bingo photo on Page 75. The donor series, if you will, was PRR 600000 to 603499, their class X43, which were variously built by Pressed Steel Car Company and Greenville in 1950 and 1951 (not Pullman-Standard, which means some differences to the MTL 024 body style, although the prototype and model look pretty close to me). The Pennsy also leased these boxcars from Chicago Freight Car.

The service date on the car, which matches the bingo photo, is October 1970 (the "CFC" next to it stands for... yes, "Chicago Freight Car"), so let's start with the closest ORER in the Research Accumulation following then, which would be October 1972. The 463259 belonged to the series B&O 463200 to 463589, which had 388 cars at the time. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 6 inches, outside length 44 feet 3 inches, extreme height not given (???) but something over 14 feet 5 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 3898 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. An end note tells us that the last 100 road numbers in the series have fixed end bulkheads and loading band anchors for loading pipe. Were you sure about that, ORER folks? That information seems to be more suitable for flat cars than boxcars. Hey, just transcribing what's in the Equipment Register here.

The B&O entry was subtitled “Chessie System” in the ORER for January 1978, but I don’t think any of these cars received Chessie paint. The car count was also down to 72, and there was no mention of any pipe loading. By the April 1981 Register there were just three cars left in the series. That’s where I stopped looking.



025 00 226 and 024 00 227, \$29.95 each.

Reporting Marks: BKTY 151068 and 151172. 50 Foot Steel Exterior Post Boxcars, Single Door, GATX/BKTY.

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and GATX on right. White on black COTS panel on right. Yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes at six points along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: mid-decade of the 2010s to as late as the present (strictly speaking, before 2020 for

the 151172). These items have a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

RailcarPhotos has bingo photos and information for both of these cars. First, let’s note that the BKTY reporting marks are “heritage” Union Pacific in a sense. They were first used by the Missouri-Kansas-Texas, or Katy, to designate cars leased from Bankers Leasing (thus the “B” in front of the “KTY”). Those cars were long gone before the Union Pacific, which merged the Katy in 1988, revived the reporting mark for some of its leased cars. And these are leased cars, from General American Marks Company, a corporate entity of GATX. In 2015 it was noted on a thread on the Trains.com discussion board that General American Marks bought the boxcar lease fleet of General Electric Rail Services, which included a large quantity of former Incentive Per Diem boxcars from the 1970s. These two were included. I’ll presume that these cars carry BKTY reporting marks in order to keep them distinct from the rest of the UP’s vast freight car fleet. They are, however, listed under the UP’s registration.

Specifically, the 151068 and 151172 show up in different lines of the UP’s listing in the ORER. That’s because they have different capacities: the 151068 is a 5347 cubic foot car while the 151172 is a 5295 cubic foot car. The dimensions differ very slightly between the two cars. Do you really want to know? OK... The 151068: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet 1 inch, outside length 57 feet 3 inches, extreme height 15 feet 6 inches. The 151172: inside length 50 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 11 feet only, outside length 57 feet 3 inches, extreme height 15 feet 6 inches. So if you’re keeping score, the inside height is one inch less on the 151172 than the 151068. Both cars have a gross rail weight (car plus lading) of 220,000 pounds and a 10 foot door opening. Both cars were constructed by FMC in 1977. The MTL 025 body style is based on an FMC car as well, but the model is of a slightly smaller 5077 cubic foot car. At 1/160 proportion, that difference scales to... oh, never mind.

It’s noted on RailcarPhotos that the 151068 was originally on the roster of the Hartford and Slocomb Railroad, one of the early adopters to the Incentive Per Diem leasing arrangement, as

its HS 5576, then went to the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad as NOPB 4366. The 151172 was first on lease to the Sabine River and Northern, SRN 5282.

The ORER data for these two cars is part of a maddening series of entries for the BKTY reporting marks under the Union Pacific registration, which makes it a bit of a task to sort out an ATP. The bingo photo of the 151068 is from August 2021, and the car is listed in the January 2020 Equipment Register, the latest one I have, so I think “to present” will work there. On the other hand, the 151172 was photographed in April 2015, and the car is present in the January 2018 but not the January 2020 ORER, so the ATP for that car doesn’t seem to make it all the way to The Present. Looking back for a start to the ATP, neither car is in the October 2014 ORER, though there are some BKTY cars in the UP listing in the 151000s. We should also consider that when given BKTY reporting marks the cars may not have been repainted but just patched; there is plenty of evidence of that in online photos. Rule #1 (“It’s your railroad”) certainly applies, but I’ll call the ATP at late last decade to around now. I’ll also point out that the photo of the 151068 shows it with plenty of graffiti. It’s not clear to me whether the BKTY reporting marks are covered under the Union Pacific’s not allowing graffiti on its models. I think that the folks in Talent decided against testing this restriction here, even though, yes, they’ve done BKTY boxcars with, ahem, additional decoration, in September 2021. One of the road numbers in that BKTY Weathered Four Pack (993 05 950) is 151173, with just patching from the previous scheme, just one number off the cleanly painted 151172.



041 00 070, \$23.95.

Reporting Marks: NP 100431.

40 Foot Double Sheathed Wood Boxcar, 1 ½ Doors, Fishbelly Underframe, Northern Pacific.

Brown with white lettering including arched roadname and road number on left and

reporting marks at bottom right. “N.P.R.” initials on both doors. Andrews Trucks. Approximate Time Period: 1912 (build date on car) to early 1930s.

“Is this the first automobile boxcar?” Colleen asked when watching over my shoulder as I hit the Research Accumulation. She has a point: I don’t know for certain whether this product of American Car and Foundry was the first boxcar to include the “Automobile” lettering, but given that it was built in 1912, it’s certainly among the first. The Model T was introduced in 1908 so that’s a data point. Other than that, I’ll need to leave this to the reader.

The 100431 was among 300 cars built by AC&F at its Detroit plant—and how’s that for a connection to the auto industry. There’s a bingo, probably the builder’s photo, on Page 164 of the book **American Car and Foundry Company 1899-1999** by Edward S. Kaminski. In contrast to the MTL 041 body style, the real car had wood ends, a combination truss rod and Fishbelly underframe, and—hmm, how can I describe this—rectangular framing that both served to mount the doors and as stops to prevent them from opening too far. Yes, that’s a lot of differences, but consistency of construction, like for example the Pullman-Standard PS-1 boxcar, was still a ways off. The first two of these three deltas would require major surgery in

my opinion; trading steel ends for wood ends is a bit non-trivial. But I think it's possible for the enterprising modeler to make modifications to the car to add truss rods and the door framing. The left-hand vertical component of this rectangle would drop between the "P" and "A" in "PACIFIC" and the 3 and the 1 in the road number. The right-hand vertical component would drop just left of the word "Automobile." Another interesting data point is that the car had not the Andrews trucks that MTL provides on the model, but what looks more like early Bettendorf trucks, which were introduced in 1903. That's a simple changeout if desired, though the MTL version is a fair bit more modern than what you'd see on a 1912-built boxcar.

The closest ORER I have to that 1912 build date is a soft copy from October 1919. The 100341 belonged to the series NP 100100 to 100349, which was already down to 211 cars from the initial 300 just seven years after the group was delivered. They were given MCB Designation XA (MCB, or Master Car Builders' Association, was the predecessor to AAR, the Association of American Railroads) and the description "Box, Automobile." The key dimensions were: inside length 40 feet 4 ¾ inches, inside width 8 feet 6 1/8 inches, inside height 10 feet even, outside length 41 feet and ¾ inch, extreme height 15 feet 4 inches, door opening 10 feet, and capacity 3450 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds. For the decade of the 1910s these were relatively large cars. One more thing to do if changing out the ends: add an end door, 2 feet by 8 inches.

In the August 1924 Equipment Register, the car count has dropped again, to 177 cars, but it's down just one to 176 in the April 1928 ORER. By the February 1931 Register, though, the series is down to only 48 cars, and the group is all gone no later than the July 1935 ORER. I'll note as a bit of speculation that the July 1935 ORER also has fifty-foot boxcars described as being for automobiles, which were perhaps the replacements for these 40 foot cars as automobiles got larger.



050 00 240, \$33.95.

Road Number: 319 (will be "SP 319" in UMTRR Website listings).

Caboose with Slant Cupola, Southern Pacific.

Brown (including truck frames) with orange ends and white side grab irons. White lettering including gothic style roadname

and roman style road number below cupola. Approximate Time Period: 1955 to early 1960s.

The basis for the 051/51000 body style is the modified Harriman Common Standard Design (CA/CA-1) caboose used by both the Southern Pacific and the Union Pacific. Based on information compiled by Don Strack for his Utah Rails website, I see that I need to flip the descriptions of the 050 and 051 body style though: the original construction had the slant cupola and some cars were modified to the straight cupola. Quick detour... OK, that's fixed!

Given, however, that MTL has 1929 as the build date for this particular caboose in its car copy, the specific prototype for this car might be a the successor to the Common Standard Design, namely, the SP's Class C-30-3. Returning to Don Strack's notes: "SP's final wooden cabooses

were completed as two classes of 'replacement' cabooses, being numbered into the vacant number slots of previously retired cabooses. The first class, C-30-2, were completed in 1928 by SP's Los Angeles General Shops. The second class, 26 cabooses in the C-30-3 class, were also completed in 1929 and 1930, also at Los Angeles." These cars are generally similar to the CA/CA-1 cabooses which preceded them.

Narrowing down the Approximate Time Period is a matter of placing the paint scheme into its chronology. Tony Thompson's note about the SP's caboose end color, found on modelingthesp.com, is instructive. He wrote: "The caboose end color experiment with aluminum and then Daylight Orange didn't start until March 1954. Each [SP] division was instructed to paint two of its cabooses with aluminum ends, as a test, as vermilion (on the bay window cars) was not perceived as visible enough. This color choice was not impressive to most observers, and a year later, the same two-caboose-per-division experiment was repeated, this time with Daylight Orange. That color succeeded, and became standard on October 12, 1955." The change to gothic from roman lettering happened around the same time. So that's good enough for a start to the ATP. Thompson is also the author of **Southern Pacific Freight Cars Volume 2: Cabooses** among other SP books. It's not in the UMTRR Research Accumulation and could be the source for the prototype photo used by Micro-Trains for this car. That's a less direct way of saying that I did not find a bingo this time.

The end of the ATP is harder to pin down. Some online sources have the use of wood cabooses by the SP ending in the late 1950s, others in the early 1960s. I'll go with the latter this time although in theory one should match up with the exact retirement date of this road number 319. Researching that... might take a while.



093 00 180, \$33.90.

Reporting Marks: WP 11796.

Three Bay Center Flow with Round Hatches, Western Pacific.

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

across car. Multicolor ACI Label below the "PA" in "Pacific"; white on black double COTS panel below the second "I" in "Pacific." Approximate Time Period: 1967 (build date) or strictly speaking, mid-1970s given COTS panel, into the 1980s at least (see text).

Here we have another example of the WP not being able to make up its mind about exactly how it wanted its roadname on its Center Flows. We've already seen one other version from MTL (Catalog Number 093 00 170, Road Number 11921, June 2020, at right).



According to the **Western Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, the 11796 was just one of five cars, 11766 to 11800, which had six round hatches. They were part of an order of fifty 4650 cubic foot Center Flows, the rest of which, 11751 to 11795, had trough

hatches. There's a bingo photo on Page 93 of the **Color Guide** which was taken in March 1984 and shows both the ACI Label and the COTS panel, as well as a fair amount of weathering. Well, it was still in the as delivered paint scheme from early 1967. That photo also shows that the construction of the car is just a bit different from the MTL 093 body style: the ends of the hopper sides are curvilinear and not straight, what I think is called a "teardrop" shape in more scholarly freight car circles.

The ORER for October 1969 doesn't distinguish between the round hatch and trough hatch cars in this group; they're all in one entry for the group WP 11751 to 11800. I presume that the same is true for other ORERs, since the January 1985 Register has one entry as well with 46 total cars. Well, we know that the 11796 lasted until at least 1984! So you'll need to apply Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") to decide whether it got beyond that date, how far, **and** whether it was repainted into Union Pacific lettering—as trough-hatch car 11778 was no later than September 1986. Here are some data points to help: under the Union Pacific registration in the April 1995 ORER, there were still 26 cars in the WP 11752 to 11800 group, 23 of which made it into the January 2000 Register, 15 in the January 2002 Register, 10 in the October 2004 Register, six in the January 2006 Register, and two in the July 2007 Register, their last appearance.



In addition to the above, the third number of the TTX "TBOX" Boxcar (60 Foot Excess Height Double Plug Door Boxcar 123 53 011, TBOX 665148, \$44.98) is expected to be available mid-month. This is the third and

final 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.

N SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: It's time for the start of a new series...



094 44 770, \$36.95.

Reporting Marks: BN 453688.

Three Bay Center Flow with Trough Hatches, Burlington Northern / ex-CB&Q (Burlington).

#1 in the BNSF Family Tree Series (pre-orders taken March 2022). Green with white lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and herald on right. Fading effects showing previous CB&Q paint scheme of gray with large red "Burlington" in center and black, red and white

“Burlington Route” herald on right. Moderate weathering. Both sides of car shown. Approximate Time Period: 2002 to 2006, plus or minus.

Three bingo photos for this car appear on RRPictureArchives. “You can see the Burlington on this one” wrote photographer Keith Belk as the caption for the September 2005 image that he took. Actually, you can see the Burlington in the other two photos which were taken in June 2002 and January 2006. I’ve given the range as being across those photos but you can add a plus or minus to that.

From RailcarPhotos we have the information that the BN series 453600 to 453799, which includes the 453688, is from the CB&Q series 184400 to 184599. The cars were built by American Car and Foundry during March and April 1967. That site has photos of three other cars in the group which have later BN paint schemes. These cars were 4600 cubic feet, just a bit smaller than the 094 body style prototype which is the 4650 cubic foot version. However, the 4650 car is longer (57 feet 4 inches outside length vs. 54 feet) and less wide (8 feet 4 inches vs. 10 feet 8 inches outside width) so it looks “different.” If you had a 4600 and a 4650 next to each other in a lineup, you’d probably see the distinction without reading the dimensional data.

That doesn’t take away – much, anyway – from the “raise the bar” decoration of this car. Thinking about the almost fifty years since the first Kadee Micro-Trains car left the factory, I doubt that anyone imagined that the subtle and not-so-subtle fading effects that depict the remains of one paint scheme over the ghost of another would be possible at all, let alone in 1/160th proportion.

In addition, the following was announced on the Micro-Trains website on September 16.



993 05 027, \$76.95, with Family Foam Nest packaging.

983 05 027, \$85.95, with Jewel Box packaging.

Reporting Marks: CITX 150917 and 150883. CITX Halloween Weathered Two Pack.

Consists of two MTL 094 series Three Bay Center Flows with Trough Hatches. Each car is gray with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left, which are over a gray patch panel. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Yellow

horizontal conspicuity stripes at six points along bottom of side. The 150883 has multicolor graffiti “Spooky” at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: 2008 to early decade of the 2010s. Previous Releases: None. The individual catalog numbers are 094 44 780, 150917; 094 45 780, 150883.

In terms of paint schemes, this is about as plain as it gets, but this does reflect common practice among leasing companies. And besides, he said cynically, why bother with a fancy paint job when it's just going to get covered with, ahem, additional unsolicited decoration anyway?

According to photos on RRPictureArchives and RailcarPhotos, most of the CITX cars in the 150000s are, or were, covered hoppers but not of the center flow variety. For example, CITX 150916, one number away from the 150917 that's in this two pack, is a 4750 cubic foot three bay covered hopper with 18 ribs. But given the haphazard way in which lease equipment has been rostered you've really got to look at individual cars, or at least the specific series in which they are listed. Follow along with me now...

The October 2007 ORER is the first in which I see both cars in the pack. (Previous to this but after the introduction of conspicuity stripes, the October 2006 ORER has no covered hoppers with CITX reporting marks in the CIT Group listing, and the July 2007 ORER has covered hoppers in the 150000s but those stop at 150860.) The small group 150917 to 150922 is of 4650 cubic foot covered hoppers, which is larger than the prototype for the MTL 094 series. CITX 150919 was a three bay center flow type that has as its base paint what MTL has on the 150917, including the patch panel for the reporting marks. A September 2008 photo is on RailcarPhotos.com. Also on RailcarPhotos is the last number in that set, CITX 150922, as of August 2016. It was formerly leased to General Chemical which is obvious since most of that lettering is still present on the car. Some of it is still present in a photo on Fallen Flags which is dated April 2011. Although I didn't get an exact bingo on the 150917, I'll call that close enough. Only one car in of the 150917 to 150922 series is left by the April 2013 ORER, which is where I stopped looking.

The 150883 looks like a different story. The series in which that number lies is CITX 150869 to 150885, which is a set of seventeen 4750 cubic foot covered hoppers with 60 foot outside length. I do hasten to point out that I don't have any bingo photos of the 150883. If it is actually not this kind of covered hopper, a quick renumber to somewhere in the 150917 to 150922 series, other than to 150917, of course. Certainly these cars have been relettered enough.



993 05 028, \$114.95, with Family Foam Nest packaging.

983 05 028, \$129.95, with Jewel Box packaging.

ADM Weathered Four Pack.

Consists of four MTL 099 series Evans Three Bay Covered Hoppers. All of these cars, which differ in details, have not been previously released. I'm going to depart from my usual here and cover each one individually.



- **099 51 330, UELX 30427.** Base car is blue with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Blue ADM “molecule” logo and lettering “ADM” and “ADM Milling Co.” in center. Orange vertical conspicuity stripes at six points along side. Considerable fading effects, moderate to heavy weathering, and multicolor graffiti. Approximate Time Period: After 2005, given conspicuity stripes, to no later than 2014 based on paint scheme, for this particular car.

The first of this quartet is from the prototype series UELX 30372 to 30431, which was built by Evans-SIECO (Southern Iron and Equipment Company) in August and September 1980. Example photos from this series on RailcarPhotos indicate that the cars were originally painted blue. A shot of the previous road number, UELX 30426, that’s on RRPictureArchives, shows how an overcast sky can wash out this blue, especially after the “treatment” depicted on the MTL model. But an image of sister car 30429 clearly shows that it’s blue. That having been said, do the base colors vary? Yes. Some of the ADM covered hoppers with UELX reporting marks were yellow, for example the 30248 as found in April 2010, and others were gray. Fortunately, there’s a post on the Modern Freight Cars List (MFCL) on groups.io that quotes freight car scholar Eric Neubauer’s list of Evans-built ADM cars, and the 30372 to 30431 were in fact painted blue as delivered. We’ll be coming back to this list!

Where I also can go is a bingo photo of sorts to the 30427 as of October 2014. This photo shows the car repainted in the updated scheme with the ADM “Leaf” logo, which replaced the “Molecule” logo circa 2001. There is already a fair amount of dirt and grime on this car, though, so “no later than 2014” as the end of the ATP might be a bit too generous. On the other hand, there are likely still ADM cars out on the rails presently that retain the molecule logo. This would not be one of them, however, as the last ORER in which I see any cars from these group is the January 2018 issue.



- **099 52 330, UELX 65027.** Base car is gray with faded black lettering including reporting marks on left. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes at six points along side. Considerable fading effects, heavy weathering including rusted side panels, and scrawl graffiti. Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes or strictly speaking, mid-decade of the 2010s, to as late as the present.

I checked to be sure I was correct on the road number—it’s that faded! This car is from the UELX series 65000 to 65149 which was built by Evans at its Washington, Indiana plant between June and October 1979. According to the list I cited above, this series was originally painted gray, however as MTL depicts it that paint has long faded away along with just about all of the lettering, which once included the ADM logo and “Tabor Grain Company.” A photo of UELX 65147 from September 2007, posted to RailcarPhotos, shows this with a lot less fading. But the rendition of the 65027 is realistically rusty compared to the bingo photo as of March 2016 posted to RRPictureArchives. Not rusty enough? Try fourteen months later, and as the photographer noted, “barely made out the reporting mark on this car.” There’s still one more image on RRPictureArchives, from January 2020, which has the 65027 in buffer car service at

the end of a tank train. This shot shows a somewhat less bad looking side. Perhaps that's the side that isn't shown in the official MTL image.

I still have the January 2018 Equipment Register on my desk. The 65000 to 65149 series has a relatively healthy car count of 62 in that issue. But that's down to 33 in the January 2020 ORER so "as late as the present" might not be appropriate.



- **099 53 330, UELX 65143.** Base car is blue with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Blue and white ADM molecule logo and blue with white outline lettering "Tabor Grain Co." in center. Orange vertical conspicuity stripes at six points along side. Moderate

weathering including rust effects. Scrawl graffiti on one side of car and scrawl and small multicolor graffiti on other side. Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes or strictly speaking, early decade of the 2010s, to as late as the present.

So just was that you said about the series UELX 65000 to 65149 being painted gray? That's a rather blue shade of gray on the Micro-Trains model, George. And as for "as late as the present," isn't that bingo photo of this car dated February 2022?

Well, perhaps there are exceptions to the rule, and perhaps this is one of them. Although probably not a statistically valid sample, I've looked at enough photos of UELX covered hoppers to observe that there wasn't exactly a standard over time. Over on Fallen Flags, for example, there is at least one other car (UELX 65044) that under lighting conditions looks like it could have been blue, but it also has the "ADM" lettering in addition to the "Tabor Grain Co." lettering. This is probably a good point to throw up my hands and say, alright, I give up. Anyway, the bingo photo of the 65143, found on RRPictureArchives, shows a car that is much more heavily rusted and faded than how MTL depicted it. I'm thinking that the "strictly speaking" ATP is a fair bit earlier than 2022, although it would be bounded by the application of conspicuity stripes.



- **099 54 330, UELX 60220.** Base car is gray with black lettering including reporting marks on left. Blue and white ADM molecule logo and blue with white outline lettering "ADM Milling Co." in center. Orange vertical

conspicuity stripes at six points along side. Moderate weathering including rust effects. Large "Arrow" graffiti and scrawl graffiti on one side of car and large multicolor graffiti on other side (not shown here). Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes or strictly speaking, mid-decade of the 2010s, to as late as the present.

In the above cited post on the Modern Freight Cars List discussion group, the builder of the series of cars into which the 60220 falls, UELX 60184 to 60224, is given as USEX. That appears to translate to United States Railway Equipment Company, which might be better known for its rebuilding of a number of boxcars in the 1970s. There are other references not specific to ADM, where the company is shown as Evans/USEX. The cars were built in October and

November 1980 and carried the Evans Railcar builder's logo. They are shown as originally painted blue.

But blue is not how the car looked in the bingo photo from June 2007, and again, this could be from lighting, from fading, or from yet another exception. At the time the car was much cleaner than how Micro-Trains modeled it, and there was just one little, ahem, additional scrawl. The conspicuity stripes were already in place. Given the more extensive graffiti on the MTL model, I would tag (pun intended) the strictly speaking ATP later than that. The January 2018 ORER has a combined series UELX 60135 to 60243 with 30 cars, of which 10 remain in the January 2020 Equipment Register, so again, we have a shot at "to present."

To wrap up, then, this four pack includes four different ADM paint schemes, and a whole lot of weathering and rust. All four of these can reasonably be in the same train during most of the period 2005 to present, along with repainted ADM cars that are potential future releases on this body style.

N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: Runner Pack #190 of four Milwaukee Road Drop Bottom Gondolas (993 00 190, \$119.95) is now available. This set comes only in the Foam Family Nest. UMTRR Coverage was in the March 2022 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are (note differences in catalog numbers this time): 083 51 111, 93012; 083 52 111, 93045; 084 53 033, 93068; 084 54 080, 93085. I've confirmed that this pack is available using online sale listings.



I can also confirm via online listings that the **Canadian National "Mosquito" Two Pack** (993 02 202, \$69.95) and **Weathered Log Car Six Pack** (993 05 019, \$195.95) were released mid-August.

MTL posted official photos of the "Mosquito" pack after "press time" for the August UMTRR. At right and above right are the two component cars with the aircraft load.



*In addition to the above, the following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **September 30**.*



Targeted Delivery February 2023:

983 00 198, \$124.95, with Jewel Boxes.

993 00 198, \$109.95, with Foam Family Nest Packaging.

Reporting Marks: BNSF 512308, 512311, 512326, 512356.

BNSF Gondola Four Pack (Runner Pack #198).

Scheduled to consist of four fifty foot gondolas (body style TBD). Cars are brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and small circle cross herald on right. White on black double COTS panel below herald on right. White simulated reflective rectangles at eight points along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: late 1990s to mid-decade of the 2010s. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Let's start this time with bingo photos. There are four of the 512308 on RRPictureArchives, the earliest of which was taken in August 2009 in Galesburg, Illinois, and the latest of which dates to May 2019. Also on RRPictureArchives are two of BNSF 512311 in Rochelle, Illinois taken in September 2009 and one of the car in Golden, Colorado taken in July 2011, and also a July 2011 photo of the 512356 as found in Aurora, Illinois. Finishing the quartet there is a long distance shot of the 512326 taken from outside the property line of a grain elevator, we can only see the end of the car. No worries, though, as on RailcarPhotos.com there is another more typical image of the car taken in June 2018. All of these photos show cars with conspicuity stripes added to the white rectangles that will be depicted on the Micro-Trains release. That's an easy addition if desired and the proto photos will help with placement should you be modeling 2005 or later.

Speaking of placement, let's place these cars into their Approximate Time Period. The first ORER in which I have the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe is July 1998 (yes, that's after the official merger date of September 22, 1995, but my next previous Equipment Register, April 1997, still has the BN and ATSF components listed separately). It's possible that at least one of the four cars in this forthcoming Runner Pack was already in service: there is a series BNSF 512311 to 512325 shown, with all of two cars. The dimensions given: inside length 52 feet 6 inches, inside height 4 feet 8 inches, outside length 57 feet 1 inch, extreme height 8 feet 3 inches, and capacity 2328 cubic feet or 199,000 pounds. In the April 1999 ORER the series has four cars numbered from 512308 to 512326, so we could have as many as three of the four road numbers MTL has selected. In the January 2022 Equipment Register, there are again four cars, but this time the series spans between 512308 and 512356. The lowest and highest road numbers of the four cars in the Runner Pack. How about that? The October 2007 ORER has six total cars in this group, one of which, the 512326, is called out for coil steel service, though with no changes in dimensions suggesting appliances or coil steel hoods. The last time I see any of these cars is the January 2018 Equipment Register.

So which body style is this exactly? The MTL rendering (actual product may vary!) shows fifteen panels and straight sides. The only match to that in their current roster is the 048 / 48000 series, but those cars have drop ends. I will unofficially call “TBD” on this and await the actual product. Who knows, maybe there is a new body style being snuck in here. We’ll all find out in February.



Targeted Delivery February 2023:

983 02 210, \$68.95, with Jewel Boxes.

993 02 210, \$59.95, with Foam Family Nest Packaging.

Reporting Marks: B&O 287024 and 287029.

B&O Cement Hopper Two Pack.

Scheduled to consist of two single sheathed single door boxcars (MTL 028 body style) with additional multimedia hatches, chutes and vents (modeler assembly required). Cars are brown with white lettering including

reporting marks on left and roadname on right. Approximate Time Period: 1933 to mid-1940s at least (see paint scheme comments in text). MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

A 2021 thread about cement loading in general on the Steam Era Freight Cars List on groups.io (look for “RealSTFMC” on that site) helps with the story of these two cars. Ed Bommer explained, “B&O rebuilt a number of tis USRA Class M-24 boxcars into cement haulers in the 1930’s. They were used in a number of on-line improvements such as grade crossing elimination work, construction of retaining walls, bridge abutments and railway viaducts. Mixing for concrete work was done on site. The M-24a class 'cement hopper/box cars' were stenciled for return to Pittsburgh when empty. They were still in use into the 1950’s.” An important data point here is that the “ready-mix” trucks that we’re used to seeing hadn’t ye come into general use during this time period.

Given the 1933 service date on these cars, which were built in 1919, I went to the July 1935 ORER. There we see a group of forty cars numbered 287000 to 287039, described as “Box, Steel Underframe (Cement) but given the MCB Designation LO which corresponds to a covered hopper. These were the key dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 8 feet 8 inches, inside height 9 feet, outside length 41 feet 6 inches (later recast to 42 feet 3 inches), extreme height 14 feet 2 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 100,000 pounds but just 1380 cubic feet. Cement is rather dense so it’s possible that the cars were filled to capacity weight-wise well before the load cubed out. An image of the interior of one of these cars would be quite interesting! The January 1940 ORER shows 26 cars in service as do the July 1950 and January 1955 Equipment Registers. Just five remained in the January 1959 ORER; just one remained as of the January 1962 Register, which is where I stopped looking.

The Approximate Time Period for these cars may have ended sooner, though, as they could have been repainted into a later B&O scheme. With his post to the Steam Era Freight Cars List,

Ed Bommer shared a photo of his O Scale model of B&O 287015 in red oxide paint and a small Capitol Dome herald at the far left. Red oxide use on the B&O dates to around 1945 while the herald dates back to 1937. Bommer also shared an undated black and white prototype photo of one of these cars, sufficiently weathered such that I could not confirm its road number although I think it's also 287015. But we can do better than that with a page on the "O Scale Kings" website showing in more detail how Bommer built the car and including a photo of B&O 287039 from the same series as of 1933-- in the "as-delivered" paint scheme that appears on the MTL artwork. Hey, that's a bingo! Bommer notes that the side hatches—the white circles on the side in the MTL rendering— "were removed within a year, leaving just the four aluminum painted roof hatches. A bit hard to see, they are the short, bright strips at the roof line" in the photo. The writeup and photo can be found at oscalekings.org/WP/ed-bommer-bo-class-m-24a-cement-hopper-boxcar/ .

The photo and others available of M-24 class cars show a match to the MTL 028 body style in terms of the ends, use of grab irons instead of ladders and the arrangement of the side trusses and corner reinforcements. This makes sense since the M-24s were "USRA designs" and the United States Railway Administration assigned 500 of these to the B&O. The Micro-Trains model generally matches this USRA design. There is one exception: the 028 body style has an end-mounted brake wheel while the prototype cars had a vertical brake staff. While several other MTL models of single and double sheathed wood boxcars have been made available with both horizontal brake wheels and vertical brake staffs, the single sheathed single door boxcar isn't one of them. Well, at least not yet...



Targeted Delivery February 2023:

993 02 208, \$109.95, Gray Paint.

983 02 209, \$109.95, Black Paint.

CSXT Ortner Hopper Weathered Three Packs.

Reporting Marks TBD (both sets).

Each set is scheduled to consist of three MTL 125 body style Ortner Three Bay Rapid Discharge Hoppers. The 208 set is gray, the 209 set is black. Both sets have mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left and CSX herald on right. The 208 set's cars have white on black double COTS panels below the "C" in "CSX" on right plus yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes at the

ends and three points along the bottom of side. The 209 set's cars have the same COTS panels plus yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes at left, right and four points along bottom of side. Both sets will come with simulated loads for each car. Approximate Time Period: mid-1990s (black cars) or late 1990s (gray cars) or after 2005 given conspicuity stripes to as late as the present. Previous Releases, Gray Paint (unweathered): Catalog Number 125 00 100, Road Number 291847, April 2011, then Catalog Number 125 00 10x, Road Numbers 291824 and 291840, July 2019; Previous Releases, Black Paint (unweathered): Catalog Number 125 00 070,

Road Number 292336, November 2008, then Runner Pack #110 with Catalog Numbers 125 5x 070, Road Numbers 292308, 292316, 292333, and 292350, November 2015. The new sets are technical “Not a Reprint” as the previous runs didn’t have conspicuity stripes. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

While we don’t have the three road numbers available at this time for either of these forthcoming weathered sets, we do have one road number for each and we have images of the previous releases, so that’s something to work with. Let’s answer a key question first: yes, these two paint schemes were contemporaneous. Feel free to run both of these sets together in a train during their largely overlapping Approximate Time Period. With that, let’s update what we know from previous releases of both cars.

The road number we do know from the MTL artwork of the gray set is CSXT 292055. That fits into the same series as the previous runs. There was no shortage of hoppers of this type on the CSX roster. The October 2007 ORER shows the series 291600 to 292149 with 540 of them. There isn’t much in the way of vital statistics to pass along: outside length 46 feet, extreme height 11 feet 11 inches, capacity 2197 cubic feet and gross rail weight 286,000 pounds. By going backwards from the October 2007 ORER I was able to place the start of the ATP at between October 1996, when the series isn’t listed, and July 1998, when it is. Given that we now know that these cars were renumbered from a different series, that makes sense. Checking my proxy for “the present,” the January 2020 ORER, there are 405 total cars in the series. We’re good.

RRPictureArchives has three bingo photos of CSXT 292055, all taken in 2011. The car is noted as being the former CSXT 348613 and before that, Clinchfield 58595. In two of the three photos the car has a ballast load. At this point the car also has conspicuity stripes. This car has nine panels while the MTL 125 body style has ten. Of the 100 road numbers from 292000 to 292099, RRPictureArchives has photos of 41, not bad!

As long as we’re on that site, let’s check for CSX 292387, the one number out of the three we do know for the black set. This car is captioned as having started as L&N 550080, then became Seaboard System SBD 348798, then CSXT 348798 before getting the road number in the bingo. This view was taken in August 2011. The MTL rendering matches the paint scheme including the “extra” conspicuity stripes on the first and ninth panels – again, nine panels per side versus ten on the MTL model.

The ORER for January 2000 shows the series CSXT 292150 to 292399 with all 250 possible cars, with the simple description of “Hopper, Steel,” AAR Classification of HTS and a few dimensions: outside length 46 feet, extreme height 11 feet 11 inches, and capacity 2197 cubic feet or 226,000 pounds. The January 2011 ORER showed 246 in service; the car count in the January 2020 Register was 216, so I think “the present” is still good.

N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: Car #7 in the “Railroad Magazine Years Gone By Series” (101 00 886, \$27.95) has been released. It features the cover of the September 1938 issue, “The Old One Spot.” UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the October 2021 issue.



And expected mid-month is the **Medford, Talent and Lakecreek Refrigerator Four Pack** (993 21 384, \$115.95). UMTRR coverage was in the January 2002 edition. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 049 51 950, 5875 (Piggy Pears); 049 52 950, 5888 (Foothills); 049 53 950, 5897 (Oregon Orchard); 049 52 950, 5898 (Maltese Cross).



And finally, also expected mid-month is the **Wicked Night Flyer Train Set** (993 21 385, \$229.95). This set comes in Foam Family Nest packaging. UMTRR coverage was in the May 2022 issue. The individual items are as follows (no reporting marks or road numbers): 987 51 697, FT-A Powered Diesel; 045 52 830, 50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Car with Glowing Witch's Cauldron multimedia load kit (includes cauldron with LED bulb); 140 53 700, modified Heavyweight Railway Post Office Car; 101 54 893, modified 40 Foot Hy-Cube Boxcar; and 100 55 590, modified 36 Foot Riveted Steel Side Caboose.

And speaking of Halloween and scary things...

*In addition to the above, the following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **September 30**.*



Targeted Delivery Starting March 2023:

H.G. Wells “The War of the Worlds” Victory Celebration Day Series.

\$26.95 to \$28.95 each.

Scheduled to consist of six wood double sheathed boxcars and three flat cars with loads. The six boxcars are green with white lettering including “United States Army,” insignia and reporting marks on left, red on white cross on door, and illustration from **The War of the Worlds** on right. Flat cars are green with white lettering including reporting marks on left and “Army Transport Service” on right, and include loads (cannons, tanks and presumed wreckage of Martian weapons).

I wonder how many of you caught the reference at the top of this issue to the famous, or perhaps infamous, October 30, 1938 radio adaptation of the subject of this month’s Special Edition pre-order announcement. The book **The War of the Worlds** was adopted into a radio drama directed and narrated (but not written) by the then 23-year old Orson Welles as part of the series **The Mercury Theatre of the Air**. Most of the drama was presented as a series of “news bulletins” that broke into a fictional broadcast of a ballroom band playing in New York City. Although Welles’ introduction to the program indicated that this was just a story, apparently some number of listeners joined the show later, were not aware of this and were frightened considerably. At the close of the show, Welles remarked that the show was the equivalent of the **Mercury Theater** “dressing up in a sheet, jumping out of a bush and saying, ‘Boo!’” and added that while they had “annihilated the world and utterly destroyed CBS before your very ears... you will be relieved I hope to hear that both institutions are still open for business.” Newspapers picked up the thread of Widespread Panic and more than twelve thousand stories were published about the event. But more contemporary estimates say that the impact was highly exaggerated, because among other things, the show was aired against NBC’s immensely popular **Chase and Sanborn Hour** and had relatively low ratings. Also, it’s been posited that newspapers wanted to discredit radio – turn back that invasion, so to speak.

In addition, the concept of a show formatted as a series of break-in bulletins wasn't new: Welles himself had done Julius Caesar as a news broadcast the month before, and he was also a regular cast member of the CBS Radio show **The March of Time** which dramatized news events. (The "Time" in **The March of Time** was **Time Magazine**.) Even so, in retrospect it was admitted that it might not have been a good idea to use actual place names in the script. Grover's Mill, New Jersey, where the Martians first landed, was and is a real-life location near Princeton. (And when I built the Railway Design Associates "Easton Mill" structure for my home layout many years ago, I decided to name it "Grover's Mill" to see if anyone got the joke. The count so far: zero.)

The forthcoming Micro-Trains series doesn't reference back to the radio show but to the original science fiction novel by H.G. Wells. Like many works of the time, it was first serialized, in this case by **Pearson's Magazine** in 1897, and then published in hardcover in 1898. The work is an example of "invasion literature": more than sixty books about attacks on Great Britain (where the novel is set) were printed between 1871 and 1914 according to the Wikipedians. The invaders weren't always from another planet: More than 80,000 copies sold of an 1871 work called **The Battle of Dorking** which portrayed a German invasion of England. But **The War of the Worlds** has been the long-term leader in this genre, and it's never gone out of print. It is, however, in the Public Domain as the copyright to the novel has expired. Also in the Public Domain are the illustrations shown on the Micro-Trains cars. They were created by Brazilian artist Henrique Alvim Corrêa, who created them for a French translation of **The War of the Worlds** which was published in 1900. Wells said after Corrêa had died at just age 34, "did more for my work with his brush than I with my pen."

The book draws on a number of ideas besides the concept of "invasion literature." There was not yet much known about Mars. The "canals" had been observed; this led American astronomer Percival Lowell to write **Mars**, a speculation about an arid, dying landscape, whose inhabitants built canals to bring water from the polar caps to irrigate the remaining arable land. Wells may have taken some inspiration from this fanciful depiction. He also used the then-popular concept of space travel via the firing of enormous guns to shoot transports between planets. Wells also explored the idea that there were more intelligent beings than humans somewhere out there, and gives more than a passing reference to the Darwinian concept of "survival of the fittest." It was both interesting and frightening to readers, then and now, to consider that We Are Not Alone. For the record, though, there was no mention in the work as to whether Martians were N Scale Enthusiasts, and lest there be any doubt, there was no landing in Talent, Oregon for the purpose of pre-ordering this series by any alien species. At least, none that we know of...

One last item before we leave the world of science fiction: just before press time, I learned of a 2013 episode of the PBS series **American Experience** called, appropriately, **War of the Worlds**. It focuses on the radio broadcast and its aftermath. I haven't confirmed this but it may be available online for viewing.

Z SCALE: Expected mid-month are three virtual two-packs of Husky-Stack Well Cars which were rescheduled from earlier this year. UMTRR coverage of these items was in June 2021 during the pre-order window. These are:



540 00 023 and 540 00 024, \$29.90 each.

Reporting Marks: BN 64306A and 64306B.

Gunderson Husky-Stack Well Cars, Burlington Northern.

Red with silver details. White lettering including reporting marks on left. Blue, red and white BN herald on right. White on black double COTS panel on far right. White simulated reflective rectangles at five points along sides. Approximate Time Period: 1993 (build date) to mid-decade of the 2000s. Only the 023 release is shown here for illustration purposes. These will be releases 8 and 9 for this item.



540 00 043 and 540 00 044, \$29.90 each.

Reporting Marks: SP 513400A and 513400B.

Gunderson Husky-Stack Well Cars, Southern Pacific.

Red with silver details. White lettering including reporting marks on left and gothic roadname on right. White on black double COTS panel on far right. Approximate Time Period: 1992 (build date) to mid-decade of the 2000s. Only the 043 release is shown here for illustration purposes. These will be releases 4 and 5 for this item.



540 00 061 and 540 00 062, \$29.90 each.

Reporting Marks: BNSF 240709A and 240709B.

Gunderson Husky-Stack Well Cars, Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

Red with silver details. White lettering including circle cross herald on left and reporting marks on right. White on black double COTS panel on far right. White simulated reflective rectangles at eight points on sides. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1996 (BNSF merger) to at least 2007 for this specific car or as late as the present for the series. Previous Release: Road Number 240497, November 2006 (with containers). Only the 061 release is shown here for illustration purposes. These will be releases 2 and 3 for this item, which is a "not a reprint" versus the first release.



Also expected mid-month is the **BNSF/ex-Procor Weathered 4-Pack (994 05 282, \$149.95)** of 60 foot bulkhead flatcars. UMTRR Coverage was in the March 2022 issue. This pack uses the foam family nest and comes with a bonus not mentioned in the pre-order announcement but shown with the pack on the MTL website: a set of printed weathered decking for the floors and inside of ends, to be added by the modeler. The individual catalog and road numbers for this set are: 527 44 240, 545705; 527 45 240, 545707; 527 46 240, 545709; 527 47 240, 545711. These are the first through fourth releases for this item.



Finally, Car #7 in the “**Railroad Magazine Years Gone By Series**” (502 00 646, \$27.95) which features the cover of the September 1938 issue, “The Old One Spot,” has been released. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the October 2021 issue.

*In addition to the above, the following is in pre-order at present and is NOT currently available. Scheduled delivery is as noted below. UMTRR coverage is being provided ahead of the actual release in order to facilitate pre-order decisions; pre-orders close **September 30**.*



Targeted Delivery Starting March 2023:
H.G. Wells “The War of the Worlds”
Victory Celebration Day Series.
\$26.95 to \$28.95 each.

Scheduled to consist of six wood double sheathed boxcars and three flat cars with loads. Please see the pre-order announcement under “N Scale Special Editions” but note that the specific body

styles will be in Z Scale (of course), probably the MTL 515, wood double sheathed boxcar, and MTL 524, 60 foot flat car.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Via an MTL advertisement in the August/September 2022 issue of N Scale Railroading, we have the second road numbers of both forthcoming N Scale PS-2 covered hoppers, which hadn’t been made available previously. The Great Northern’s second road number will be 71477 and the Western Pacific’s second road number will be 11303. That makes the lineup as follows: Great Northern, Catalog 095 00 011, Road Number 74170, targeted release October and Catalog 095 00 012, Road Number 71477, targeted release November;

Western Pacific, Catalog 095 00 021, Road Number 11301, targeted release December and Catalog 095 00 022, Road Number 11302, targeted release January 2023.

Meanwhile, your faithful byte slinger attended a webcast recently on which MTL CEO Eric Smith was a special guest. After a quick overview of the history of Micro-Trains and description of the factory ("It's all done in house!"), Eric answered some questions about the company. Fun fact: Eric's only exposure to model trains prior to joining Micro-Trains was a friend's father's HO Scale (!) layout. Eric covered the PS-2 Covered Hopper and the 70 Ton 65 Foot Mill Gondola, for which Micro-Trains is already "cutting steel." He also noted the Railroad Magazine series and the just-released Halloween Set. With respect to the PS-2 covered hopper, Eric literally held up to the camera the "exploded parts diagram" for that forthcoming release. Suffice to say, it's got a **lot** of parts! No, I wasn't fast enough to capture that!

DISCONTINUED ALERT: Leading off the Bye-Bye Board for this month in N Scale is last month's Canadian National "Mosquito" Two Pack (993 02 202). Do I say it's been swatted? No, even for me, that's a stretch. Also outta here from last month is what I thought would be a very popular component of the Medford, Talent and Lakecreek Freelance Railroad series: the single Southern Oregon Refrigerator Company refrigerator (049 50 940). Leo the Lion has left the building, that is, his Constellation Car (102 00 219), the first in that series to sell out. The CSX waffle-side boxcar is gone also (103 00 170).

From earlier in the year, three leaves of the CSXT Family Tree have fallen off: #10, the CSXT/Conrail Weathered Gondola (105 44 597, July); #9, the Chessie/CSXT hopper (108 44 440, June), and #5, the SCL/ex-Atlantic Coast Line boxcar (180 44 320, February). Not part of the tree, but related, is the Baltimore and Ohio "Cushion Underframe" boxcar (181 00 220, June). The VIA 45th Anniversary Car has left the station (144 00 770, July). And Runner Pack #180 of three ADM "Molecule" tank cars has emptied out (993 00 180, March).

Moving back to last year, the Union Starch tank car, also known as Sweet Liquid Series #10 is gone (065 00 216, December). From 2020, the single window coaches in Norfolk and Western (160 00 180, July) and Southern Railway (160 00 330, June) have departed the factory. And that's as far back as we need to go for N Scale items.

In Z Scale, Railroad Magazine Years Gone By Series #1, "Rolling to Victory," has rolled away (502 00 640, March). The second number of the Santa Fe "Shock Control" 50 foot boxcar is gone (505 00 432, September 2021). Chesapeake and Ohio Cameo Car #5 has sold out (505 00 425, July 2020), closing out that series. Also discontinued: the Great Northern caboose is gone (535 00 450, August 2020), and both numbers of the BNSF PS-2 covered hopper (531 00 30x, December 2019).

That's all for the alert, but as I was compiling it this month, I realized that I have an administrative decision to make: how to account for sold out multi-packs that are available with both the Foam Family Nest and Jewel Boxes? In theory, the individual items are still gettable until both packaging options for the Multi-Pack in which they are included are sold

out, even though your first choice might not be available. That's how I'll handle the Dreaded D notations on the UMTRR Release Tables, should that situation occur.

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: From John Samples with many thanks, we have more on the N Scale Virginian Railway Heavyweight Five Pack (993 and 983 00 196) announced for pre-orders last month. "The railroad took Trains 3 and 4 off in January 1956 so that would be the end point. The cars were scrapped or used for Maintenance of Way or office space. The locomotives were sold.

"Looking in Lloyd Lewis' **The Virginian Era**, he states the six PA class Pacifics and 10 steel coaches were built for the Virginian ALCOs Richmond plant in 1921 and were the only modernization the company ever undertook of its passenger service. Number 3 and 4 generally ran with three cars, the RPO baggage and two coaches. Power was the PA Pacifics and TA class 4-6-0s (basically related to branch service after the PAs arrived)." So for the coaches at least, we've got 1921 as the earliest start for the Approximate Time Period.

Although I don't usually include this information when relating ORER descriptions of prototype cars, there are the codes "25K," "50K," and "60K" particularly with respect to recent boxcars. I didn't know what these codes stood for, though. A recent post from Dick Dawson in the Modern Freight Cars List (MFCL) on groups.io was enlightening. "The codes refer to the fork truck axle loads for which the floor system is designed and appears in the ORER primarily in boxcar listings... This is important when determining whether a particular car is suitable for being loaded at plants that use heavily loaded fork trucks. The strength of the floor system is determined both by the characteristics of the flooring material itself (wood, flat steel, nailable steel flooring planks, etc.) and by the spacing of the floor stringers beneath the flooring."

OOPS PATROL: The catalog number was right, the ordinal number was wrong: It was the second, not the first, number of the TTX "TBOX" **Boxcar (60 Foot Excess Height Double Plug Door Boxcar 123 52 011, TBOX 665130, \$44.98)** released last month. Later in the text, I state that it was the second of the three cars, so maybe that's only a half-oops.

FINALLY, WHAT'S YOUR MTL MEMORY?: While working on these bytes, I also prepared to interview MTL CEO Eric Smith for the next issue of **The N Scale Enthusiast** magazine, on for the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the release of the first Kadee Micro-Trains freight car. This isn't the first time I've sat down with Eric; I also talked with him on the 25th, 35th and 40th Anniversaries. (I guess I've been doing this for a while.) Part of my question research was to look at those previous issues of the magazine (initially called The N Scale Collector).

I contributed something else for that 25th Anniversary coverage though: a compendium of personal memories from the UMTRR Gang. Twenty-five years later, I think it's worth asking some of the questions again.

Were you in N Scale in 1972? What was your reaction to the first Micro-Trains car you ever saw? What was the first one you bought? What's your favorite car (if you can pick one, that is)? If you owned Micro-Trains, what would you do differently?

While I won't be able to get it into the magazine this time, I'll certainly include your answers in these bytes! Feel free to respond with your thoughts to the usual e-mail address, which is umtrr@irwinsjournal.com . I'll compile what I get in the upcoming November 2022 issue.

Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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