



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains® Release Report Issue #316 – April, 2023

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Hello again everyone! It's April and you know what that means. We get to the April Fool's Car pretty quickly, with only a Rolling Feather before it. We've also got the PS-2 Covered Hopper for an Eastern Road after three in a row from the West, a pair of tank cars from South of the Border, a virtual two-pack of double door boxcars without running boards, and the latest in the War of the Worlds set.

And there are an astounding number of pre-order announcements, including but not limited to "clean" Conrail and SP trailers, Southern Pacific Maintenance of Way equipment packs, two three-packs of cabooses, and an entire **train** of "MT&L in the '70s and '80s." What's that? And how am I possibly going to get through all of this and still get these bytes out of UMTRR HQ before the end of the month?

Let's find out...

N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



020 00 487, \$28.95.

Reporting Marks: WP 19537.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Western Pacific.

Aluminum with black ends. Black lettering including reporting marks on left. Large orange feather across car with roadname inside it. Yellow, silver and black "Roller

Freight" trademark at top right. Roller bearing trucks. Approximate Time Period: 1952 to no later than the end of the 1950s.

Here's a variation on a boxcar Micro-Trains has done before, as far back as April 1979 in fact. Can you see the difference between this release and the previous ones? Have a look at the top right hand corner.

"Shorter wait with Roller Freight!" is the headline of a 1947 advertisement for the Timken Company, which includes an illustration of the back half of a boxcar and a caboose rolling through a railroad crossing. The caboose, painted red with a silver band, has the same logo that's on this boxcar. "Ever wait at a crossing while a freight train passes by? Then you've probably wondered if the day would ever come when freight trains would travel as fast as passenger trains. Well, the answer's on the way! It's 'Roller Freight' — the next great step in railroading!"

The development of roller bearings goes back further than that. Henry Timken invented them before the turn of the century – the 20th Century! Let's quote from the Timken website: "In [the] 1890s, Henry Timken, a carriage maker in St. Louis, Missouri, recognized that heavy freight wagons had a difficult time making sharp turns. To solve the problem, he applied a tapered roller bearing design that could handle both radial (weight) and thrust (cornering force) loads. The results were encouraging and provided several customer benefits. First, the application ran more smoothly, reducing repair and replacement costs. In some cases, the bearings improved wagon performance so much that fewer mules were required to pull them. Finally, better cornering meant less chance of losing a load of goods." Henry and his sons founded the Timken Roller Bearing and Axle Company in 1899. The fact that I can quote from their website reveals that they remain in business as a publicly traded company, which by the way has paid stock dividends continuously for the past 100 years. They've diversified into other "industrial motion products" but engineered bearings still account for almost a third of the sales. Just over half of their sales were made outside North America. And they still use the same logotype for their name that was part of the 1947 advertisement. My first encounter with the Timken name was via a boxcar in my father's HO Scale train collection that was painted for the company... although I expect it was a "fantasy scheme."

Meanwhile, back at the Western Pacific, the first twenty cars of the WP's 1951 Pullman-Standard order for six hundred PS-1s, equipped with the then-brand new "Compartmentizer" adjustable bulkheads, were so successful that in 1952 the WP had another twenty-two cars back at Pullman to be outfitted with the same equipment. At least one of these cars, the 19537, was also equipped with Timken Roller Bearings. By June 1953 it was posing at Atlantic City, New Jersey, in the paint scheme that Micro-Trains replicates here. That bingo photo is on Frank Brehm's "WP Lives" site (wplives.com/archives/freight/boxcars/boxcars40/19537.php). The three-quarter view shows the black ends and attractive aluminum sides.

The car's Approximate Time Period, "Roller Freight" or not, ends by the end of the 1950s. As Jim Eager described in the **Western Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, "Unfortunately, the flashy silver and orange paint scheme did not weather well and in the late 1950s the Compartmentizer cars were repainted mineral red with yellow lettering, an orange roadname, and a smaller orange feather." A photo in the **Color Guide** of the WP 0232, assigned to company service but formerly WP 15936, shows it in this later paint scheme.

Because the prototype cars are PS-1s and the MTL 020 body style is based on the PS-1, we should have a good match here, and we do. Well, except for the door, which is seven feet on the prototype and six feet on the model, yes, a Door Thing. The other key dimensions from the January 1955 Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) were, without the Compartmentizer devices: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 2 inches, inside height 10 feet 5 inches, outside length 41 feet 10 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 7 feet and capacity 3370 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds.



025 00 267, \$28.95.

Reporting Marks: CNW 716494.

50 Foot Exterior Post Steel Boxcar, Single Youngstown Door, Chicago and North Western (ex-Rock Island/The ROCK).

Blue with (sloppy) light blue overpainting of former "The Rock" reporting marks, lettering and herald and darker blue patch panels. Black lettering including restenciled reporting marks on left and small "North Western" herald on right. White on black COTS panel and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection

"dot" at far bottom right (the "dot" is inside the grab irons). Light to moderate weathering and rust effects. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1980 to at least 1988. This car has a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers. This car is not on Micro-Trains' dealer standing orders.

This year's April Fool's Car is a bit subtle in its foolishness. Did you see it? I'll give you a moment to look....



Okay, here it is (at left). Looks like someone wasn't holding the stencil for the "N" in the correct position. And yes, it's prototypical!

How long the Approximate Time Period for this car lasts depends on how long you think it took for the Chicago and North Western management to catch this mistake... or, perhaps, become sufficiently interested to have it fixed. Apparently that was "a while" as the bingo photo for this car, on RRPictureArchives, is dated March 1988! That's almost eight years from the point at which this car, the former ROCK 300440, could have been conveyed to the C&NW following the Rock Island's official end of operations on March 31, 1980. Keep in mind that after the January 1980 ORER, the Rock Island simply disappeared from Equipment Registers, so it's not always known for certain exactly when rolling stock was moved over to other railroads including the North Western. On the other hand, this also provides a perfect excuse to deploy Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") if you're modeling 1980 or later.

Speaking of "or later," it could have been a while after that the bingo photo that the car had the backwards "N." A photo of the same car painted in plain old brown with minimal lettering is dated January 1, 2002. It's noted that the car is now BKTU 156426.

The car was built for the Rock Island—well, The Rock—by FMC in 1978, part of the series 300200 to 300499. These were 5295 cubic foot cars, a bit larger than the 5077 cubic foot version that is the prototype for the MTL 025 body style. However, at least the ends, sides, bottom sill and use of grab irons on the sides align between prototype and model, so we have a generally good match here. Railcar Photos has the entire group going over from The Rock to the North

Western. Photos of other cars in the series show that in some cases the C&NW didn't paint over the roadname and stylized "R" herald before restenciling the reporting marks.



068 00 551 and 068 00 552, \$28.95 each.

Reporting Marks: UP 519708 and 519711.

40 Foot Steel Boxcar, Double Youngstown Door, No Running Board, Full Side Ladders, Short End Ladders, Union Pacific.

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on left and arched roadname on right. Small black, white and red monad herald on left above reporting marks. Multicolor ACI Label at far right. Approximate Time Period: early 1970s to no later than 1981. These cars have a lowered underframe and body mounted couplers.

This virtual two-pack represents this pair of Union Pacific Class A-50-19 cars later in their service life. They were built in late 1947 by American Car and Foundry. They were the first UP auto cars to receive all yellow Union Pacific lettering including the "Serves All The West" slogan on at least one slide. Sorry, there's only one reference photo of UP 475350 "as delivered" on Page 73 of the book **Union Pacific Freight Cars 1936-1951**, so I can't tell you if the other side of the car had the "Road of the Streamliners" slogan. At any rate, that's not the paint scheme MTL modeled. These cars had "an unusual rivet pattern on the side, a combination of Twin Alternating Rivets and Alternating Center Rivets." I'm not going to try to explain that! But the use of rivets is a delta, however small when reduced to 1/160th actual size, to the MTL model. The prototypes also had a Murphy roof and Improved Dreadnaught ends. A dimensional drawing shows a door opening of 14 feet. There are other photos of cars in this class in the same book, but in the "Be Specific" paint scheme – still pre-dating the one on the Micro-Trains cars – and in a different number series, 176000 to 176499.

Alrighty, then, let's look at this paint scheme. The service date on the cars, July 1973, is a few years after the UP adopted this particular type of decoration, but we need to be mindful of the COTS panel and the removal of the running board, and the fact that these two cars are in a different number series than as delivered.

The bingo photo for the 519711 was taken in September 1977. The car has the July 1973 service date. Other than the weathering and door scrapes, I believe this is the reference photo MTL used. The rivet pattern cited in the **Union Pacific Freight Cars 1936-1951** book shows well in the bright sunlight. I'll note that UP 519717 was spotted the next year, in August 1978, and while shorn of its running board, it still carried the "Be Specific" paint scheme. Both images were lensed by Ron Hawkins and are posted to RailcarPhotos.com.

That you can't always trust ORER data is evidenced by the door opening given in the October 1972 edition for this series, UP 519700 to 519765. It's shown as only nine feet, which doesn't

make a lot of sense. Even if one of the doors were welded shut for example, the resulting opening would be seven feet, not nine feet. Anyway, the rest of the usual dimensions were: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 7 inches, outside length 44 feet 6 inches, extreme height 15 feet 1 inch, and capacity 4086 cubic feet or 100,000 pounds. An end note calls out 17 belt DF-2 loaders, which helps explain the AAR Designation of XL. There were 42 cars in the series at the time out of a possible 66. That was down to just nine cars in the April 1981 Register, and they were gone no later than the next ORER in the Research Accumulation, April 1982.



095 00 041, \$45.95.

Reporting Marks: B&O 631513.

PS-2 Covered Hopper, Baltimore and Ohio.

Gray with black lettering including small roadname at top center, large "B&O" in center and road number at bottom center. Metal wheels and body mounted couplers.

Approximate Time Period: 1957 (build date) into the 1980s as painted.

After three roadnames from the western half of the country, Micro-Trains comes east for an example of the B&O's N-43 class of covered hoppers. This one is in the "as delivered" scheme fresh from Pullman-Standard in September 1957. According to Craig T. Bossler, writing in the **B&O Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 58, the group B&O 631100 to 631679 were constructed between 1955 and 1957. The N-43 class later became the HC-7 class. A photo of sister car B&O 631644 from September 1983 shows that car in its original paint with the roadname below the eaves, the "dual height" B&O (so named given that the ampersand "&" is smaller and set lower than the "B" and "O") and the road number only in place of standard reporting marks. This is an important data point for the Approximate Time Period, since the B&O followed this paint scheme with ones that contained less lettering with each iteration, up until the Chessie System came along that is. Given the ATP "as painted" assumes that the modeler might want to add an ACI Label, COTS panel and the U-1 wheel inspection "dot" as appropriate. And said modeler would probably want to change the reweigh (service) date on the car as well. Oh, wait, don't forget weathering.

A quick check of the ORER for January 1958 shows a somewhat larger series, 631100 to 631699, with a total of 571 cars of 2003 cubic foot or 100,000 pound capacity. These had an inside length of 29 feet 3 inches and outside length of 35 feet 3 inches, with extreme height of 13 feet 2 inches. All but four of the 273 cars remaining in the April 1984 ORER show a weight capacity raised to 140,000 pounds, probably via a change of trucks from 50 ton to 70 ton design. (The other four: one at 154,000 pounds and three at 168,000 pounds.) It's noted in the **Chessie System Color Guide to Freight Equipment** that all of these cars were off the revenue roster by 1987, though some were assigned to company service. And yes, some H-7s, formerly N-43s, got Chessie paint complete with the Ches-C symbol. So we might see one or two from Micro-Trains in that decoration down the line.



105 00 430, \$32.95.

Reporting Marks: NS 996105.

50 Foot 14 Panel Gondola, Fixed Ends, Norfolk Southern.

Black with white ends. Mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and “Do Not Hump” advisory in center. White on black COTS panel on right. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes at six points along side. Roller bearing trucks. Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes to as late as the present.

Micro-Trains does some of the heavy lifting for us via its car copy. This 14 panel gondola was built for the Southern Railway, its number 66308. The car went into company service for successor Norfolk Southern, assigned to hauling combo traction motors and set off for that work via white painted ends.

The bingo photo for this car is on RRPictureArchives, from October 2010. It was important to get the exact car this time. The 996105 is indeed a fourteen panel gondola. However, just two numbers before, the 996103, previously Southern Railway 66542, is a sixteen panel gondola. I counted this multiple times, from two different photographs! And the next number up, NS 996106, is also a sixteen panel gondola. By the way, if you’re wondering why MTL didn’t include a load with this car, that would be evident from the images of the 996103 and 996106: to the trackside observer, it’s just “something” with a tarp tightly fastened over it. No peeking!

Norfolk Southern doesn’t list company service equipment in the Equipment Registers; in fact, there are zero lines for cars numbered in the 900000s in the January 2011 ORER, for example. So an ATP will need to be cobbled together based on photograph dates. Ignoring the number of panels on the particular gondola, that gives us a range of at least 2007 to... how about that, 2021, in the case of NS 996104 (which is a 14 panel gondola). The conspicuity stripes give us no earlier than 2005 as well. We’ll stretch that a bit more to the “as late as the present.”



110 00 550, Reporting Marks NdeM 124025, \$34.95.

110 00 570, Reporting Marks NdeM 126040, \$34.95.

54 Foot General Service Tank Cars, National Railways of Mexico (Ferrocarriles Nacionales de Mexico).



Both cars are black with white lettering. The 124025 has white ladders, tank platform and hardware. The 124025 has NdeM herald and reporting marks on left, NdeM eagle herald left of the center ladder, large slogan “Unir Servir” and “Hecho de Mexico” logo on

right. The 126040 has NdeM herald and reporting marks on left, and eagle herald and small

“Unir Servir” slogan on right. Approximate Time Period: 1985 build date for the 124025 and 1982 build date for the 126040, to at least 2014, but see text.

Well, my first crack at the Approximate Time Period for this not-really-virtual two-pack was quickly proven wrong with the bingo photos for these cars on RRPictureArchives... sort of. Both the 124025 and the 126040 were found in a line with other cars in Tlalnepantla, a municipality north of Mexico City, on the last day of 2014. That’s well after the privatization and dissolution of the National Railways of Mexico, which took place in 1998, and the subsequent relettering of that company’s cars, for example to Ferromex, as we saw in a February Weathered Two-Pack. That the cars are in a group with other tankers on a track and also rather significantly covered with graffiti and rust suggests to me that they’re in a dead line, and thus the “see text” in the ATP. I think Micro-Trains wisely chose to model these in new condition.

Let’s see what the ORERs can tell us. In two words: Not Much. Despite what looks like a 1982 build date on the 126040 and a 1985 build date for the 124025, neither of these cars is in the October 1986 Equipment Register; in fact, the highest numbered tank car shown is 54432. Ditto for the July 1987 ORER, although there is a gap in the general freight car listing that would allow for tank cars in the 120000s. And the same is true all the way through the January 2000 Register, the last one in which there is a listing for Ferrocarriles de Mexico. Nothing, or perhaps I should say *nada*.

Although there’s nothing on either car that indicates that it’s in company service, in its copy for each car, Micro-Trains notes that it “was placarded for Diesel Fuel service.” So if these tank cars were exclusively utilized by the railroad, they wouldn’t need to be listed in the Equipment Register. That might also explain how they were still in NdeM paint years after the breakup of the company.

In addition to the above, there are several pre-order items to mention. The second **Pullman-Standard Milestone Car (020 00 307, \$31.95, Reporting Marks SSW 75000)**, originally scheduled to be available mid-January, is now expected to be available in May according to an update on the MTL website as of April 6.



And the **DODX flat car with “Mystery Balloon Load” (071 00 610, \$49.95)** is scheduled to be available mid-month, in a very quick turnaround from the pre-order window, which ran until March 5. MTL added the photo of the actual model

late in the month, and we have it (above). MTL notes in its car copy that there could have been an Oops on the prototype, with the probable Load Limit of 157,400 pounds stenciled instead as the Light Weight (LT WT). Well, balloons don’t weigh very much, do they?



The first number of the 60 Foot High-Cube Exterior Post Double Plug Door Boxcar (aka "TBOX Boxcar") painted for the Canadian Pacific (123 00 071, \$59.95, **Reporting Marks CP 218224**) was originally expected to be available

mid-March and is now available. Courtesy of the UMTRR Spy Network we have this grab shot of that car.

And the second number of this car (123 00 072, \$59.95, **Reporting Marks CP 218312**) is also shown on the MTL website as being available during mid-this month. UMTRR Coverage was in the October 2022 issue during the pre-order window.



N SCALE REPRINTS: No releases this month.

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

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES: In addition to the below, please see N Scale Multi-Packs for pre-order information on two forthcoming Weathered Packs. Meanwhile, here are the releases for this month...



092 44 283, \$33.95.

Reporting Marks: BNSF 405551.

Two Bay Center Flow, BNSF Railway.

#8 in the BNSF Family Tree Series (pre-orders taken March 2022). Gray with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left. Orange and black "wedge" herald on right. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes at five points along bottom of side. Light to moderate weathering. Scrawl and multi-color graffiti on both sides of car. Approximate Time Period: 2005 to mid-decade of the 2010s. Previous Releases: Unweathered, Road Numbers 405426 and

405430, September 2012; then Runner Pack #146 with Road Numbers 405114, 405416, 405436, and 405442, October 2018; Weathered, Road Number 405492, May 2013 and Road Number 405436, April 2016. This is the ninth road number for this release.

The ATP can start as early as 2005 for two reasons: First, the requirement for conspicuity stripes began in that year. Second, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe gave up both its historic name in favor of BNSF Railway and adopted the herald seen on these cars. It's commonly called the "swoosh" or the "wedge," but being that it supplanted the venerable circle cross I have other names for it... which are not necessarily suitable for a family publication.

We go the ORER for January 2006 and find the series BNSF 405353 to 405571 with 106 "Covered Hoppers," AAR Designation LO. No inside dimensions are given but the outside length is 41 feet 11 inches, extreme height is 14 feet 10 inches, capacity 2971 cubic feet and gross rail weight (car plus lading) of 263,000 pounds. That odd number cubic footage is a clue to the fidelity of the MTL 092 body style to the real cars. The American Car & Foundry "2971" was the successor to the 2970 cubic foot model that is the actual prototype for the Micro-Trains release. So I'd expect some differences, for example, the shape of the ends of each side. The degree to which this is a stand-in is left to the modeler here.

Skipping straight to the January 2011 Register, we find an increase to 126 cars. However, back when the one of the initial releases, the 405430, was issued in September 2012, one of our readers with access to the BNSF internal database wrote in to say that the 405430 is no longer on the BNSF roster. "As these cars are approaching 40 years of age, I'd expect fewer to be around," our helper writes. "I don't see them around anymore having been replaced in most service by newer, larger, private cars. As was typical when in BN paint, these BNSF cars are in sand service, though many BN cars were also assigned to cement service." Sure enough, the January 2018 edition shows only nine cars and the January 2020 has eight. "To present?" Probably not any more. The October 2014 Register had 119 cars, so a mid-decade call on the ATP seems a fair bit more realistic.

The bingo photo for this car was taken in February 2012 in Bend, Oregon on the BNSF's Oregon Trunk Division, and it's posted to RRPictureArchives.net.

In addition to the above, the following was announced on the Micro-Trains website and via the "E-Line" newsletter on April 13.



983 05 047, \$85.95, with Jewel Boxes.

993 05 047, \$76.95, with Foam Nest packaging.

Reporting Marks: SOO 74181 and 74289.

Soo Line Weathered Two Pack.

Consists of two MTL 094 series Three Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers with Trough Hatches. Base car is gray with large green roadname across car, black reporting marks on left, and yellow and black wheat leaf on right; and multicolor ACI label and white on black COTS panel at far right. The 74181 has

restenciled "SOO" on new gray patch panel, heavy weathering, multicolor graffiti on one side,

and yellow horizontal conspicuity stripes at six points along bottom of side. The 74289 has, on one side, repainted left with "SOO" smaller than "LINE" in the roadname, and heavy weathering on the right; and on the other side, moderate to heavy weathering; and on both sides, yellow vertical conspicuity stripes at six points along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 2009, plus or minus, for the 74181; 2010, plus or minus, for the 74289 (both based on photo evidence). Previous Releases: None; MTL has released other Soo Line Center Flows but not in this exact paint scheme. The individual catalog numbers are: 094 44 830, 74181; 094 45 830, 74289.

Our Graffiti Special Correspondent David Grothe did the legwork here and found bingos for both of these cars on RRPictureArchives. The ATP dates around which I put the "plus or minus" are based on the photo dates. Ignoring those-- Rule #1, you know-- I wouldn't go back before 2005 since both cars have conspicuity stripes.

The two cars come from different prototype series. SOO 74181 is from the group 74150 to 74233 built by American Car and Foundry in 1974. These 4650 cubic foot cars align with the MTL 094 body style. SOO 74289 is from the group 74234 to 74333 which was built by AC&F in 1975. This second set, though, was of 4600 cubic foot cars. Page 123 of the book **Soo Line Freight Equipment and Cabooses** has shots of sample cars from each of these series; it's noted that the 4650s are shorter length and taller height than the 4600s. The Colormark logo, which appears on other Soo Line cars modeled by MTL, was dropped on these cars, and the reporting marks were switched to one line from two... and without the "Line."

The October 2020 ORER shows that the series containing the 74181 had just two cars remaining and the series with the 74289 only eight, so "to present" is not very likely even if I removed the "plus or minus" from the ATP. That contrasts... well, not all that much, with the car count in January 2006 of 15 for the group with the 74181, though there were 65 cars in the group with the 74289 at that time.



983 05 048, \$106.95, with Jewel Boxes.

993 05 048, \$94.95, with Foam Nest packaging.

Reporting Marks: BNSF 714028, 714235, and 714243.

BNSF (Burlington Northern Santa Fe) Weathered Three Pack.

Consists of three MTL 027 series 50 Foot Exterior Post Boxcars with Plug Door. Cars are brown (mineral red) with white lettering including reporting marks on left, small BNSF circle cross herald at top right, and simulated reflective blocks at six points

along bottom of side. All cars have assorted graffiti (scrawl and multicolor) on both sides. One side of the 714235 has a black door. Approximate Time Period: in general, no earlier than 1996 into the decade of the 2010s. Previous Release (Unweathered): Road Number 714083, January

2008, although these three cars are “not a reprints” of that initial run. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 027 44 300, 714028; 027 45 300, 714235; 027 46 300, 714243.

“Not a reprint” is the operative phrase for this not-really-weathered, but graffitied, three pack. Here’s the January 2008 release (at right), on which it’s easy to see the little circle cross on the left above the reporting marks, not on the right as on this trio. Also note that on the three pack, graffiti obscures where the COTS panel would be if, well, the graffiti wasn’t there.



The presence of the Cooper Black font for the reporting marks (not the road number, though) pegs this car as being more toward the start of the BNSF in 1995 than later in its history. The sadly small herald was being left off completely for a while, and then replaced with the “swoosh” or “wedge” logo (I hesitate to call it a “herald”) when the official name of the line became “BNSF Railway” – and most readers know what I think about that change. Also, get off my lawn.

Well, anyway, the ORER from July 1998 is the first in the Research Accumulation in which I see a not very full series numbered 713955 to 704315. Just 36 cars are in place out of a possible 360. They are described as “Box, Steel, 50K, 20 Inch Travel, Nailable Steel Floors, Movable Bulkheads” with AAR Classification XL and AAR Type Code A435. First, that “20 Inch Travel” doesn’t refer to how far it can go! It’s most likely a reference to the Cushion Underframe, so get out those extended draft gear trucks. The XL refers to Loader Equipped and the A435 decrypts to, character by character, equipped box car; 49 to under 59 feet inside length, cushion draft gear or underframe; Class XL; and plug door 9 feet to under 11 feet wide. Who needs the dimensions after that? We do! Here they are: inside length, 50 feet 7 inches, inside height 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 10 feet 7 inches, outside length 58 feet 4 inches, extreme height 15 feet, door opening 10 feet, capacity 4973 cubic feet or 148,000 pounds. There were 93 cars in the January 2000 ORER and then 150 cars in the group in the January 2002 Register, but I’m not sure that the group reached its potential count as it was back down to 55 cars in the January 2006 ORER. The expanded series BNSF 713931 to 714340 was just six cars as of the January 2011 Equipment Register, which is where I stopped looking.

When I reviewed the first run of this car in 2008, I remarked that MTL’s 027 series body style more or less follows the FMC 5077 cubic foot x-post boxcar, so this might not be a match, but I couldn’t get any farther than that. It’s RailcarPhotos to the rescue this time, as captions for cars in the series indicate that these were from the Burlington Northern series 321600 to 322099 built by American Car and Foundry in early 1975. Perhaps I shouldn’t have stopped looking in the January 2011 ORER since there’s a shot of the 714370 dated April 2019. It’s also the best image we have to compare prototype to model, and there we see differences in the ends and the number of exterior posts (fourteen on the real car, twelve on the model).

Once again, David Grothe checked RRPictureArchives and found bingos for all three cars in this pack: the 714038 from April 2006, the 714235 from December 2005, and the 714243 in shots

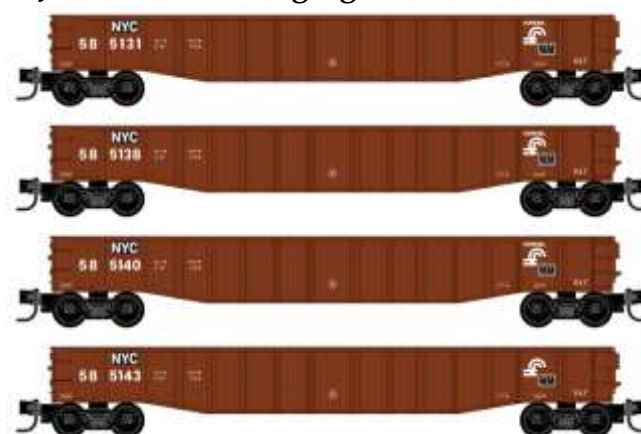
from 2000, 2005 and 2006. With these cars, I think you're free to use your application of Rule #1 ("It's Your Railroad") for your Approximate Time Period within the general range I've given – or perhaps later.

N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: First, I'll note that both **Runner Pack #199** of four Golden West Service Center Flows (993 00 199, \$129.95, in Foam Nest Packaging; 983 00 199, \$144.95, with Jewel Boxes) and the **Canadian Pacific Weathered Camp Car Four Pack** (993 02 219, \$134.95, in Foam Nest Packaging; 983 02 219, \$149.95, with Jewel Boxes), which were scheduled to be available mid-March, have arrived at your Authorized Micro-Trains Dealer. And we've got official MTL photos of both sets (at right, and also on the UMTRR Website in the "Month by Month" listing once I get caught up).

I questioned whether the boxcar in the Canadian Pacific Set was going to have a high brake wheel based on the preliminary artwork, and the answer to that question is no, it's got the low brake wheel that has been present on all previous releases in the 180 body style.

On to this month's items...well, mostly...

First, **Runner Pack #200** (983 00 200, \$119.95, with Jewel Case Packaging; 993 00 200, \$109.95, with Foam Nest Packaging) which consists of four Conrail/NYC (CSX) restenciled 50 foot 15 panel fixed end gondolas, has apparently been pushed to May based on an update to the MTL website. UMTRR coverage was in the November 2022 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 105 51 610, 585131; 105 52 610, 585138; 105 53 610, 585140; 105 54 610, 585143. These are the first through fourth road numbers for this item, which hasn't been previously released.



But out mid-month as announced is **Runner Pack #211 (983 00 211, \$136.95, Jewel Case Packaging only)** of three Pemex 54 foot general service tank cars. UMTRR coverage was in the December 2022 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 110 51 560, TILX 258701; 110 52 560, TILX 258703; 110 53 560, TILX 258705. These are the first through third road numbers for this item.



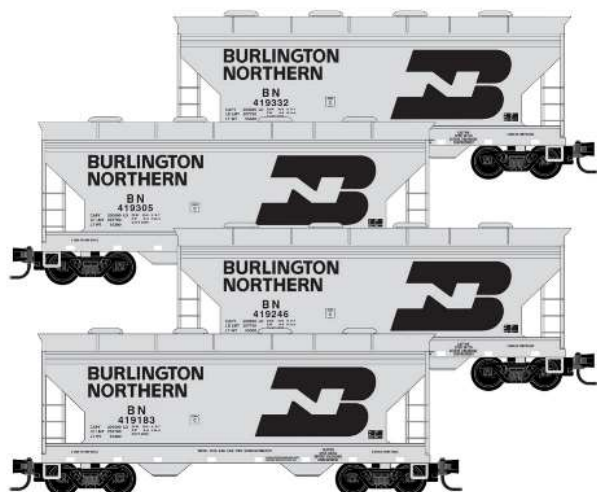
WITH JEWEL CASES

Also out mid-month is the **DODX Three Pack with Abrams Tank Load (983 02 214, \$131.95, with Jewel Case Packaging; 993 02 214, \$119.95, with Foam Nest Packaging)** of three heavy duty DODX flat cars with Abrams tank loads (undecorated multi-media kits with tiedowns). UMTRR coverage was in the December 2022 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 137 51 042, 41012; 137 52 042, 41027; 137 53 042, 41042. These are the seventh through ninth road numbers for this release.



And now, here come the pre-orders... lots of them...again, please note that I've grouped Weathered and Clean multi-packs together in this category.

*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 **April 30**.*



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

993 00 215, \$129.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.

983 00 215, \$144.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.

Reporting Marks: BN 419183, 419246, 419305, 419332.

Burlington Northern Four Pack (Runner Pack #215).

Scheduled to consist of four MTL 092 series Two Bay Center Flow Covered Hoppers. Cars are gray with mostly black lettering including roadname and reporting marks on left and large BN herald on right. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: no

earlier than 1981 to around 2005; or add conspicuity stripes and go out to the early decade of the 2010s. Previous Releases: None. Micro-Trains artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

RailcarPhotos.com has the key data for us: these cars belonged to the series BN series 419100 to 419349, which were built for the Frisco (SLSF) as series 78500 to 78749, by American Car and Foundry during January and February 1975. They are listed as having a capacity of 2971 cubic feet which would make them the design successor to the 2970 cubic foot model that is the actual prototype for the Micro-Trains release, and a bit different from the MTL 092 body style. For me the spotting difference is a curvilinear edge to the ends of the sides instead of an angled edge. Bingo photos will show this much more easily than I can describe it.

The bingo photo for the 419183 is from April 2010 and shows a car in quite good shape considering that the latest service date on the car is January 1987. The car had eight somewhat unevenly spaced horizontal orange conspicuity stripes applied to the bottom of the car by then. The same car was photographed again in October 2012. I do need to remind myself that this was more than ten years ago. And how about one more time, in March 2014? This time, there's been some, ahem, unauthorized decoration added to the side we can see in the photo. And there's also some snow on the roof... now, that's a detail you don't see on N Scale cars. Would you believe one more image of the 419183, in August 2015? Meanwhile, there is one shot of the 419305, taken in September 2014, which would have made an excellent candidate for one of the "fade through" cars for MTL, as the "FRISCO" roadname is beginning to show from underneath the gray Burlington Northern paint. The 419332 is also exhibiting some "FRISCO" bleed-through as of September 2012. That leaves just BN 419246, for which we go over to RRPictureArchives for a close-to-the-track oblique three-quarter view from April 2007 and a nearly straight-on more distant view from December 2008. Both shots are of the same side, unless the graffiti shown in that image is identical on both sides that is!

The Frisco went into the Burlington Northern in November 1980 but as always rolling stock isn't repainted overnight. The first ORER in which I see the BN series 419100 to 419349 is April 1982, with just four cars, while 238 remained in SLSF markings. But that's enough for a dimensional data recap: inside length 37 feet 11 inches, outside length 45 feet 7 inches, extreme height 14 feet 9 inches, and capacity 200,000 pounds or, as previously noted, 2971 cubic feet.

Jumping to October 2004, the last ORER before the start of conspicuity stripes, the BN series had a car count of 120 in the BNSF listing. Since there's photo evidence out to 2015, I checked the October 2014 Register, where 30 cars remained. But that's down to just two as of the January 2018 ORER, which is where I stopped looking.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

993 02 227, \$104.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.

983 02 227, \$119.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.

Reporting Marks: CRZ 235035, 235249, 235301, and 235354.

Conrail 45 Foot Box Trailer Four Pack.

Scheduled to consist of four 451 (formerly 67000) series 45 foot box trailers. Trailers are white and aluminum with mostly blue lettering including "Trailvan" at rear end (at varying positions) and Conrail roadname and "wheel on rail" herald at nose end. Reporting marks (or below herald.

Approximate Time Period: late 1970s through mid-

1980s at least. Previous Release (unweathered): Catalog Number 67070, Road Number 253651, March 1992, although the Weathered Four Pack announced last month will also precede this release. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Did you miss us? We're back... Unlike last month's Weathered Pack, it's relatively easy to read the road numbers on the MTL artwork, since they're not covered with, well, weathering. So I have high confidence that the road numbers I am reading are in fact the ones in the illustration. As I noted last month, Page 122 of the **Conrail Color Guide to Freight Equipment** has a short passage on the company's experience with Trailvans, as they called their trailers. There are a couple of takeaways: first, the 45 foot trailers were purchased some time after 1977, to supplement and replace 40 foot trailers. Second, and I quote, "Trailers seldom have a prime-condition service life of more than eight years." That answers a question I have had for some time! There are no photos of the 45 foot version of the trailers, but there are a few shots of similarly painted 40 foot versions. I'll note that the side you can't see in the MTL artwork has the "wheel on rail" reversed so that the roadname can be farther away from the nose. A shot of CRZ 235035 on RRPictureArchives will help, well, illustrate this – and that would be a bingo to one of this forthcoming four pack. The prototype series was numbered from 235000 to 235449, with CRZ reporting marks.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

993 02 228, \$104.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.

983 02 228, \$119.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.

Reporting Marks: SPLZ 250072, 250098, 250134, and 250176.

Southern Pacific 45 Foot Box Trailer Four Pack.

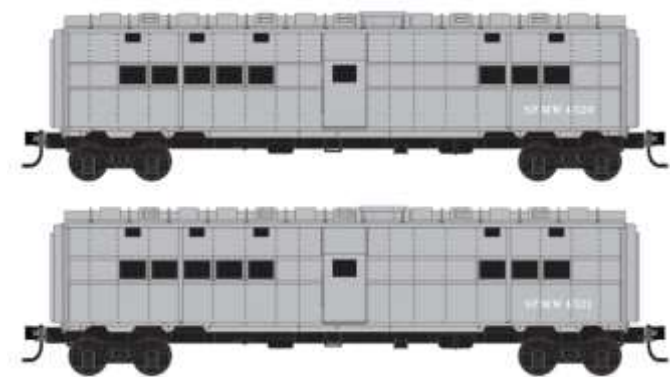
Scheduled to consist of four 451 (formerly 67000) series 45 foot box trailers. Trailers are white and aluminum with orange stripe at bottom. Black reporting marks at nose end. Multicolor "Southern Pacific Golden Pig Service" herald in center. Approximate Time Period: 1981 through 1980s at least. Previous Releases: None, although the

Weathered Four Pack announced last month will also precede this release. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

As noted last month, the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Three** includes the information that this group were Freuhauf Z-Vans in the series 250000 to 250299 built in 1981 or 1982. Both the roof and hardware are aluminum in color according to the **Color Guide**.

Also as noted last month with the pre-order coverage of the Weathered Pack, it's noted in an online post now credited to "anonymous" that the Golden Pig Service was originally with dedicated trains, but "after awhile however the operating department didn't want to run the trains every day if loadings were light to save money." The service went into a downward spiral and "the trailers started to be just put in regular piggyback service and the logo became just a marketing gimmick." The Union Pacific, which took over the SP in 1996, wasn't interested in continuing the Golden Pig Service.

The quick announcement of "clean" packs to accompany the Weathered Packs in both Conrail and SP leads me to two observations. First, the MSRP difference isn't as much as I thought it would be, just five dollars to be specific or a dollar and twenty-five cents per item. I credit that to the current decorating process used by the folks in Talent, which apparently doesn't add that much incremental work to add weathering. (Design, however, might still be a fair more intricate.) Second, although the pre-order windows didn't overlap, it would be interesting to know whether the "Clean" or Weathered sets are better received by the marketplace. Do you do your own weathering or let Micro-Trains do it for you? Or both? Since we will never know sales figures, the best we can do is unofficially speculate.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

993 02 229, \$61.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.

983 02 229, \$70.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.

Reporting Marks: SPMW 4520 and 4521.

Southern Pacific MOW Camp Car Two Pack.

Scheduled to consist of two 118 series Troop Kitchen Cars. Gray (the SP's "MOW Gray")

with white reporting marks at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1958 based on paint scheme, through the early 1970s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Here's another example of surplus military cars being dispositioned to railroads. The troop sleepers built by Pullman and troop kitchens built by American Car and Foundry did not really serve that long for the Department of Defense, and were perfectly good lightly used cars made mostly surplus with the end of World War II. (Well, except for the Allied Full Cushion trucks on which they rode, which weren't so good.) This time, it's the Southern Pacific, which

according to MTL's car copy, "owned two ex-WW2 Troop Kitchen Cars that were used for boarding dormitory service and as Rail Fissure Detector cars." It's wasn't clear to me whether SP owned only two of these cars or that just these two cars among more than that bought by the SP. Based on my read of posts in the "Espee" discussion group on groups.io, it appears to be the former: just two of these cars went to the SP.

There is a bingo photo of sorts on Page 101 of the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 3**. SPMW 4520 is there alright, but wasn't the main focus of the photographer-- that would be Fissure Detector Car Tender 646, a converted diner which served as the living quarters for the Fissure Detector crew. Behind it and mostly hidden by Detector Car SP-O-1001 (which appeared quite a bit like a bus on rails and was quite spiffy looking in the SP's Daylight paint scheme) was the 4520. The photo was taken in 1957 and shows the car, described as a dormitory car, in the SP's Two Tone Gray paint.

That helped with a question I had with respect to the Approximate Time Period for these cars, namely, when did the SP start using just plain gray for their Maintenance of Way equipment? The answer was also available on the Espee at groups.io group. Freight car scholar and SP expert Tony Thompson commented on a photo of a water car which was posted to that group: "I note that the 7584 car is freshly painted in 'smoke gray' in this September 1958 photo, giving us a date marker on the introduction of this color for MOW equipment."

MTL says that these cars "reportedly remained in service until the early 1970's." Still another post on the Espee groups.io venue has "MW 4520 was terminated in 1973, MW 4521 in 1969." The SPMW 4521, was spotted at Emigrant Gap, California on the famous Donner Pass route, used as a tool shed. It was there for a number of years. The cars were originally 8735 and 8738 when employed by the Department of Defense.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:
993 02 230, \$94.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.

983 02 230, \$106.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.

Reporting Marks: See Below.

Southern Pacific MOW Heavyweight Three Pack.

Scheduled to consist of SPMW 1044, an MTL 146 series Heavyweight Diner; SPMW 5984, an MTL 149 series Horse Car; and

SPMW 7183, an MTL 142 series 12-1 Heavyweight Sleeper. All cars are gray (the SP's "MOW Gray") with black reporting marks. The 1044 has some additional information on the door in black. All cars have six wheel trucks. Approximate Time Period: starting no earlier than 1958 based on paint scheme, with likely different end of service lives. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

So from looking into the MOW Camp Cars, we know that 1958 is the earliest possible start for the Approximate Time Period on these three repurposed passenger cars (well, horses are “passengers,” right?) based on their plain gray paint with minimal lettering. The end of the ATP is probably anyone’s guess. I suppose other guesses will be more educated than mine... With nothing doing in the three Morning Sun **Color Guides**, it’s off to the online search—not easy since we really need an exact match.

Well, we know that the 7183 couldn’t have lasted past September 2007, since that number was reused for a bulkhead flat car which was photographed that month... **and** *that* car was spray-painted “Dismantle,” suggesting that it had been in MOW service for a time. On the other hand, it was noted on a post on Trainorders that the 7183 was in an MOW train in 1982 and was then parked on a siding in the Willamette Valley in Oregon as of March 2017. “Parked” doesn’t necessarily mean “still on the roster” however. It was also noted that it was formerly in the SP’s “Clover” series, built to Pullman Plan 4036, an 8 section 5 double bedroom heavyweight sleeper with four sets of double windows followed by more spaced out window pairs—which wouldn’t be a match to the MTL 142 body style. The Clover Blossom was shown as reassigned to the SP MOW roster, the only one of the series to be dispositioned that way.

Again turning to the “Espee” discussion venue on groups.io, we find that author and freight car historian James Kincaid photographed the 5984 in January 1981, and Ken Harrison noted that it was converted to a tool car from SP 4300 but had no other information. And I’ve got nothing on the 1044. I’d really like to know what that small lettering at the far right is.

Of course, MTL has information and at least one prototype photo of each of these cars, as they don’t produce a regular run without photo evidence. There is so much information about the SP in print and online that it’s simply not possible for this byte-slinger to acquire, or store, or remember, all of it! Incremental Information is always welcome.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:
993 02 231, \$61.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.
983 02 231, \$70.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.
Car Names: “Joseph Lister” and “Ephraim McDowell.”
Chicago and North Western Hospital Car Two Pack.

Scheduled to consist of two MTL 142 series 12-1 Heavyweight Sleepers. Cars are Pullman Green with black roof, underframe and six wheel trucks. Delux gold lettering including “Pullman” in center of letterboard and car name at bottom center. Approximate Time Period: 1930 (build date) into the 1960s in operation, but also see below. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

From **The Pullman News**, Chicago, July 1930, this headline: “Special Design of Pullman Sleeping Cars Adds Comfort for Ill Passengers.” Excerpts from the article...

Greater comfort in the placing of invalid passengers on Pullman sleeping cars and their removal when destination is reached, has been provided in the *Ephraim McDowell* and *Joseph Lister*, recently constructed at Pullman Car Works for operation on the Chicago and North Western Railway between Chicago and Rochester, Minn., the home of the famous Mayo Clinic.

The *Ephraim McDowell* and *Joseph Lister* were designed under the supervision of Dr. Thomas B. Crowder, director of the Department of Sanitation and Surgery of the Pullman Company, and he furnishes tabloid sketches of the two notable physicians whose names were selected for the cars, as follows:

Ephraim McDowell is one of the most romantic figures in the history of medicine. He lived and practiced on the outskirts of civilization and there, at Danville, Kentucky, in 1809, he performed successfully the first major abdominal operation ever undertaken, for the removal of an ovarian tumor. There in the backwoods, before the days of anesthetics, without advice or aid, with no facilities beyond the simplest, his boldness and skill pointed the way to life-saving operations that have now become commonplace.

Such brilliant results as are now achieved, however, in the field of surgery first invaded by McDowell, could never have been brought about without that kind of surgical cleanliness first developed and advocated by Joseph Lister, in England, about 1865. Having demonstrated that the entrance of bacteria is responsible for the infection of wounds, he then showed how to keep the bacteria out, and thus laid the foundation for the modern operative surgery that successfully invades all the cavities and organs of the body.

The remainder of the article describes how the car was specially equipped to take its passengers to the Mayo Clinic. Scans of the piece are posted on the discussion forum of Railway Preservation News: www.rypn.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=46493 along with a builder's photo of one side of the *Ephraim McDonnell*. From there we can see that the MTL 142 body style isn't quite a match for the prototype, which among other things has extra doors for the easier entry and exit of patients who might not be able to train and detrain in the usual way.

MTL says that these cars were used more than 30 years, and if they were built in 1930, that gives us an ATP into the 1960s. After that the *Ephraim McDonnell* was used for parts, but the story of the *Joseph Lister* continues to the present day. The National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, Wisconsin, completed a 2 ½ year restoration of the *Joseph Lister* in Spring 2022. It had been in the museum's collection since 1988. The description of the project (presently here: nationalrrmuseum.org/current-restoration-project) includes a number of photos, one of which prompted a response on the above RYPN thread: the car name shouldn't be painted with larger first letters as that wasn't Pullman practice. All of the letters except the "c" in "McDonnell" should be the same height, as we've seen with other named Pullmans. That could still be addressed by Micro-Trains, or it might stay the way it was repainted when restored. By the way, the side of the *Joseph Lister* that we can see in the National Railroad Museum photo is a closer match to the MTL car.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

983 05 054, \$114.95, with Jewel Box Packaging (only).

Road Numbers: 1077, 1084, and 1093.

Southern Pacific Weathered Caboose Three Pack.

Scheduled to consist of three MTL 100 series 36 Foot Riveted Steel Side Caboose. Cars are brown with mostly white lettering including gothic style roadname across top and roman style road number below roadname. White side grab irons. White on

black COTS panel opposite cupola (at least on one side). The 1084 and 1093 have some side windows “blanked out.” The 1077 and 1084 have multicolor ACI labels (placement varies). Light to moderate weathering and patch panels. Approximate Time Period: 1956 (based on paint scheme) into the 1980s. Previous Releases: Maybe, see text. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

We have another “maybe” on the Previous Release, and that would be Catalog Number 100050/100 00 050 from December 1996 and May 2015 respectively, the MTL official image of the latter at right (the UMTRR archives don’t go back as far as the first run). This car’s lettering is slightly different from the MTL artwork for this forthcoming three pack. This “clean”



car also has orange ends. The SP generally did use Daylight Orange ends on their brown cabooses so I would expect to see them on these models as well. SP Freight Car expert Tony Thompson, writing in the **Southern Pacific Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume 1**, gives 1956 as the start of the paint scheme used here. He also notes that for SP Bay Window cabooses built in 1979 “Caboose painting traditions dating from the 1950s, such as Daylight Orange car ends... with white handrails for safety, were still in force.” It looks from the artwork that the white side rails will be on these cars (making them “not a reprint” if in fact the “Previous Releases” count), but the modeler will likely need to touch up the end rails. Try the paint meant for R/C Models for “stickiness” to that Slippery Engineering Plastic from which the end rails are made.

The three cars announced, 1077, 1084, and 1093, all belong to the 215 cars built for the SP and subsidiary Texas and New Orleans under the SP Class C-40-3 in the company shops. These were constructed between 1940 and 1942 and were the last cupola cabooses built for the company. These aren’t an exact match to the MTL 100 body style, which is based on a Missouri Pacific/Texas and Pacific prototype, but the general idea is there.

On Richard Percy’s site espee.railfan.net there’s a bingo photo of the 1084. It’s undated but since there is a U-1 Wheel Inspection “dot” the image would have to have been taken after March 1978. (And that should be considered for the “Strictly Speaking” ATP.) The blanking

out of the windows under the cupola is also evident. Meanwhile, the 1077 was found in March 1976 in West Colton, California and the 1093, marked "Local" under the road number, was in Anaheim, California in September 1975. Both of those photos are on RRPictureArchives.net.

There are plenty of photos of the C-40-3 overall available online, and the photo dates range into the 1980s, leading to the my call on the end of the ATP. An application of Rule #1 ("It's your railroad") can stretch this out to The End of The Caboose, of course. I believe that a few of these cabooses were donated to museums and historical societies. One example is SP 1058 which went to the La Mesa Depot Museum.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

983 05 055, \$114.95, with Jewel Box Packaging (only).

Road Numbers: 11445, 11451, and 11452.

Burlington Northern Weathered Caboose Three Pack.

Scheduled to consist of three MTL 100 series 36 Foot Riveted Steel Side Cabooses. Cars are green with silver roof and smokejack. Mostly white lettering including large BN herald and roadname below cupola and road number opposite cupola. Yellow end rails

and side grab irons. White simulated reflective rectangles at five points along bottom of side. White on black COTS panel, multicolor ACI label, and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection "dot" on side (position and condition varies by car). Two side windows "blanked out." Light to moderate weathering. Approximate Time Period: no earlier than 1970 (BN merger date) or strictly speaking, 1978 given U-1 "dot" into the 1980s. Previous Releases: Maybe, see text. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

And here's another "maybe" for Previous Releases, which would be 100060 / 100 00 061, from April 1998 and December 2020, the latter at right. These three would receive the "not a reprint" classification anyway, since the details differ. The first and second cars were "not a reprints" of each other, to the extent that I named the differences I saw in the December 2020 UMTRR!



And that "back issue" is a place to start for this trio. In December 2020, I noted that according to the website burlingtonroute.org, that caboose release, BN 11458, was previously waycar CB&Q 13513 (what the Burlington called cabooses) and was in Creston, Iowa at the Union County Historical Society on Adams Street. I went back to that same site and found that BN 11445 had been CB&Q 13500. This strongly suggested to me that BN 11451 was CB&Q 13506, and BN 11452 was CB&Q 13507, presuming that the BN renumbered the CB&Q cars in sequence. Based on bingo photo captions, it looks like that presumption is correct. These were all part of the CB&Q's NE-10 class of steel waycars built in 1930, road numbers 13500 to 13524.

All 25 of these were conveyed to the BN. There are detail differences between the prototype and the MTL 100 body style. For example, there is only one window on each side of the cupola.

The 11445 was indeed CB&Q 13500 according to the narrative accompanying the bingo photo on RRPictureArchives. There are images of it in service as of 1976 and 1984, and a shot of it on display at Bandana Square in Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1990. The car was donated by the BN and was at that location until the year 2000, when it went to the Minnesota Transportation Museum. This car isn't just any CB&Q waycar; it's actually the first steel caboose that the Burlington had. Meanwhile, BN 11451 was in Cicero, Illinois, in July 1990, also on RRPictureArchives. I didn't find the 11452 on my usual go-to sites, but wow, there are a lot of BN photo galleries out there and I didn't have time to check them all. Well, as the late Meat Loaf sang, Two out of Three Ain't Bad.



N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: Car #2 in the "War of the Worlds" (039 00 271, \$26.95) has been released. This car, USA 1897, features the graphic "Cylinder Opens, They Emerge." UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the September 2022 issue.

Not enough pre-orders yet? Here are some more...

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 April 30.



Targeted Delivery August 2023:
987 01 812, \$119.95.

Road Number: 1976 (will be "MT&L 1976" in UMTRR website listings).
FT-A Powered Diesel, Medford, Talent and Lakecreek.

Red with yellow stripes and lettering including 1970's MTL herald and roadname across side and road number at rear. Red "Route of the Rogue Valley" slogan inside yellow stripe. State of Oregon seal below cab. MTL herald on nose. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Targeted Delivery August 2023:
100 00 590, \$33.95.

Road Number: 2023 (will be "MT&L 2023" in UMTRR website listings).
34 Foot Riveted Steel Side Caboose, Medford, Talent and Lakecreek.

Red with yellow stripes and lettering including 1970's MTL herald and roadname

across side and road number bottom left of cupola. Red “Route of the Rogue Valley” slogan inside yellow stripe. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

070 00 090, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: SOOC 70452.

51 Foot Rib Side Mechanical Refrigerator Car, Southern Oregon Orchard Co-operative.

Orange with black ends and aluminum roof. Black lettering including MT&L 1970's herald and Southern Pacific herald and reporting marks on left. Multi-color “Southern Oregon Orchard Co-Op” logo on right. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Targeted Delivery September 2023:

100 00 090, \$34.95.

Reporting Marks: MTL 2532.

54 Foot General Service Tank Car, Rogue Valley Wine Company/MT&L.

Gray with purple ends. Black lettering including reporting marks on left and “Wine Loading Only” on far right. Purple company name and “Serving Southern Oregon Wineries Since 1922” slogan across care. Purple and green rendition of a wine glass and grape plant with bunch of grapes at far right. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



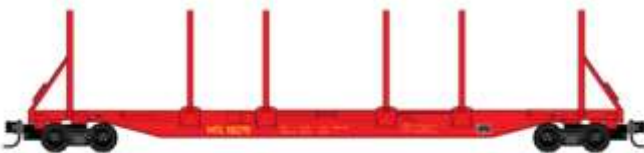
Targeted Delivery October 2023:

108 00 570, \$28.95.

Reporting Marks: MT&L 12243.

Three Bay Open Hopper, Medford, Talent and Lakecreek.

Black with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left and MTL herald and roadname on right. Black “Route of the Rogue Valley” slogan inside white stripe below roadname. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. Simulated gravel load included. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Targeted Delivery October 2023:

115 00 100, \$27.90.

Reporting Marks: MTL 18279.

65 Foot Skeleton Log Car, Medford, Talent and Lakecreek.

Red with mostly yellow lettering including reporting marks on left. White on black double COTS panel at bottom right. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Targeted Delivery November 2023:
102 00 250, \$31.95.

Reporting Marks: MTL 604833.
60 Foot Excess Height Double Plug Door Boxcar, Rivet Sides, Medford, Talent and Lakecreek.

Red with mostly yellow lettering including MTL herald and roadname and reporting marks on left. Red secondary MTL herald and roadname inside yellow map of the State of Oregon on right. Red "Route of the Rogue Valley" slogan inside yellow stripe below roadname on left. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Red return instructions on yellow block left of door. Black lettering on white stripe at top of ends. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.



Targeted Delivery November 2023:
064 00 190, \$39.95.

Reporting Marks: MTL 63213 and MTLZ 982743.
57 Foot Converted TOFC Flat Car with 45 Foot Trailer, Medford, Talent and Lakecreek.

Flat car is black with white lettering including reporting marks on left. Yellow MTL herald and roadname right of center. White on black double COTS panel on right. Trailer (in the 451 series) is aluminum with red reporting marks on left, black and white early Micro-Trains logo, black lettering "Introducing the line of N Scale model trains," red lettering "New for 1972 from" and yellow lettering with red outline "Micro-Trains Line" across trailer side. Multicolor early Micro-Trains "engineer" character at right. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Please indulge me as I'm covering all of these MT&L (or MTL) releases together... well, they do make for a nice train, don't they? In the strictly speaking world of prototype railroading, the Approximate Time Periods of each of these items might not exactly overlap, but this is all for fun. And so Rule #1: "It's your railroad," or perhaps more precisely, "It's their railroad," certainly applies.

The "new" herald that the line must have introduced sometime before 1972 based on the trailer atop the flat car strongly reminds me of the one that the Lake Superior and Ishpeming had (at right, snip from a photo of one of the line's RSD-15 "Alligator" locos on RailroadMichigan.com). Based on my very cursory look at photos, though, the LS&I would have introduced this logo after the MT&L introduced theirs, so who copied from whom here? Okay, I know, the MT&L is a fictional railroad...



Anyway, the assortment of cars certainly fits with the modernization and enlargement of rolling stock that took place in the 1970s and 1980s, which is the theme for this set of six cars. The FT-A diesel was almost completely gone from American Railroads by the 1970s, with the

exception being, of course, shortlines, so there you go. Whether it would have made it into the 1980s is debatable, but again, it's a freelance line, so again, see Rule #1.

Even if you were to pre-order and receive this entire train, you'd still be missing something. Wait, what? Yes! For the 2023 Membership Car for the N Scale Enthusiast Society is, in fact, another "MT&L in the 70s and 80s" car. It's a three bay covered hopper from the MTL 099 series (preliminary artwork at right). MTL CEO Eric Smith announced this as the NSE Membership Car prior to these selection of pre-orders were disclosed, and I was very much looking forward to the covered hopper as an NSE member and contributor to the society's magazine. (And call the previous statement the Usual Disclaimer). The cost of a yearly membership is not much more than the MSRP of most of these other items and hey, you get a free MT&L car that you won't be able to have otherwise. (And call the previous a Crummy Commercial, I guess.)



Z SCALE: The next three passenger cars announced for pre-orders in November 2022 are now available. The official MTL images are available for these 83 Foot Lightweight Coaches:



552 00 011, \$30.95, is Union Pacific Road Number 5484.

552 00 061, \$29.95, is Pennsylvania Railroad Road Number 4231.



552 00 240, \$29.95, is Norfolk and Western Road Number 1834.



In addition, Car #2 in the "War of the Worlds" (518 00 841, \$26.95) has been released. This car, USA 1897, features the graphic "Cylinder Opens, They Emerge." UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the September 2022 issue.

There were no Weathered Releases in Z Scale this month, and there were no pre-orders.

MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Still in the “not sure where to put this” category is the Union Pacific “Arrowedge” (499 00 102, \$24.95) tapered housing for the lead car in a well car train. (Or as it’s known around here, “interesting double-stack train.”) MTL has this item release slated for mid-month. The reporting marks are UPRU 948001.



Straight from the UMTRR Spy Network we have a photo of the test shots of the forthcoming 65 foot mill gondola, which was at the MTL table at the Rocky Mountain Train Show earlier this month (at right). There’s no official release date yet, but as you can see, MTL is getting closer.



DISCONTINUED ALERT: Well, at least this time I was able to get the March items into the 2023 Release Table (but not the other tables on the UMTRR Website, still working on that) prior to affixing the Dreaded “D” to some of them. Key among them would be the Burlington Northern Weathered Three Pack (983/993 05 048), which was outta here faster than you can say Center Flows. Perhaps on the bye-bye board already given its absence from the MTL Freight Cars page is the Burlington Northern double door boxcar (068 00 570). The first number of the Norfolk Southern Ortner Hopper (125 00 151) has emptied out, with the second number still available at this writing. The Foam Nest packaged version of the Golden West Four Pack, aka Runner Pack #199 (993 00 199), is shown as gone on the MTL website. Somewhat surprisingly, the Norfolk and Western plug door boxcar is discontinued already (181 00 260). Closing out last month’s items that are already gone is the Z Scale version of War of the Worlds Car #1 (518 00 840). I wonder what the production quantities of this was in 1:220; my suspicion is “not much.”

Now for the first two months of 2023. The MT&L hopper has emptied out (055 50 620, February), and the Canadian Pacific/CPAA Auto Rack (111 00 440) has rolled away. It looks like the CSX Business Car (144 00 850) has left the building since I don’t see it anywhere on the MTL website. Both the Gray and Black versions of the CSX Ortner Hopper Weathered Three Pack are gone (983 02 208 and 983 02 209). The Jewel Case version of Runner Pack #198 (983 00 198), with four BNSF Gondolas, is gone, but the Foam Nest version remains in stock. The Ferromex/ex-NdeM Weathered Two Pack (está agotado (has sold out), at least the version in the Foam Nest (993 05 038). (Remember, I don’t mark the individual cars gone until both pack versions have sold out.) And there’s a reversal: the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio bulkhead flat car from February (054 00 290) was marked as sold out last month, but the “Contact Dealer” banner has been removed, for now, anyway.

Backing up to 2022 N Scale releases, these have sold out: the Santa Fe single sheathed boxcar (028 00 260, August), Burlington Northern boxcar (073 00 330, July), Norfolk Southern three

bay hopper (108 00 271, December), and the second and third numbers of the TBOX boxcar (111 52 and 53 011, August and September). That's all for 1:160 items.

Turning back to Z Scale, the second number of the Pennsylvania Railroad PS-2 covered hopper (531 00 322, February 2021) is gone. It's probably time to put the Dreaded 'D' on three virtual two-packs of exterior post boxcars: the Norfolk Southern with SOU reporting marks (511 00 04x), the Burlington Northern (511 00 12x), and the Union Pacific (511 00 16x), all from December 2022. On the other hand, the Dreaded 'D' may need to come off several stock cars from 2022, and I went ahead and did that: both of the Great Northern (520 00 12x, May), both Baltimore and Ohio (520 00 20x, April), and one of the Katy (MKT) (520 00 264, May). But there's no ambiguity about the CSX Weathered Gondola (522 44 400, February).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: Courtesy of the UMTRR Spy Network, we have confirmation of the catalog numbers for the Burlington Northern Weathered Three Pack from last month (993/983 05 033), which turns out to be exactly the way they were implied from the images of the individual cars on the MTL website. Catalog 094 44 810 is BN 481297; Catalog Number 094 45 810 is BN 458640; and Catalog Number 094 46 311, BN 481170. That's from top to bottom in the official MTL image at right. As I mentioned last month this doesn't really line up with the paint schemes or the previous release of the 94310/094 00 310, but as Walter Cronkite was fond to say, "That's the way it is." (Look him up, kids.)



From UMTRR Gang Member Roger Beckett we have this with respect to the DODX Depressed Center Flat Cars which were announced for pre-order last month (109 00 27x): "Commenting on the upcoming DODX flat. I worked at a Navy base for quite awhile and saw many of these cars come and go with the spent fuel casks. All were in the typical Navy grey. Not to say someone didn't find a silver one but it was very unusual. These cars and casks were phased out as replaced by the heavy duty cars and casks. Mostly gone from that work in the early nineties, by observation."

OOPS PATROL: Still not quite done with last month's BN Weathered Three Pack. Once again I reversed the pricing for the two packaging options. This is the correct pricing: 993 05 033, \$114.95, with Foam Nest packaging; 983 05 033, \$123.95, with Jewel Boxes.

FINALLY, FIXING BLURRY PICTURES: An addition to the Oops Patrol, in a sense. The January and February issues made it to most users – and thanks again to those who positively responded to my request to confirm this – but there was a problem. I should have realized this myself when I noticed that the PDF files for the January and February issues were far smaller than usual, and far smaller than they should have been. Fortunately, one reader noted that while the issue was received, it had blurry photos.

And that was because I'd sent the wrong version of the PDF out: the "Minimum Size" one not the "Standard" for publishing and printing. So the PDF was not the usual one that I send, instead a compressed version that wasn't as easy to read, in other words, Oops.

I have addressed this in what I think is a reasonable way... well, I hope so. Instead of resending the January and February issues to everyone, and perhaps causing confusion (and potentially incurring the wrath of the faceless, nameless, and apparently staff-less ISP which has recently replaced all online help and its call center with a lame "knowledge base") I have instead posted them on the "Back Issues" page of the UMTRR Website (www.irwinsjournal.com/umtrr). This page is reachable right after the links to the various "Month by Month" tables, a little more than halfway down the page. These are the full size versions, and they'll remain there possibly as long as January 2024 when I will replace them with the usual "Minimum Size" versions as is my practice for that page. Note that the content isn't any different, just the format. I also put the March 2023 issue out there even though I did send the correct PDF version out to subscribers.

So download away, loyal readers, and thanks once again for your understanding.

Until next time, do the best you can.

Cheers,
George

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