



IrwinsJournal.com Presents:

The Unofficial Micro-Trains[®] Release Report Issue #317 – May, 2023

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Hello again everyone! The Merry Month of May brings, among other things, both tank cars and tanks, the first in the Norfolk Southern Family Tree series, and the return, however briefly, of Z Scale diesels. Let's have a look...

But first, how about a T-shirt? MTL has pre-orders open this month for two choices for your consideration, each short sleeve in sizes Small to 3X. One is medium gray and features the Mid-20th Century Pullman-Standard logo on the chest and the MTL logo on the left sleeve. The second (at right) is dark green has the Micro-Trains exploded view of the N Scale PS-2 covered hopper. The shirts are 100 percent cotton and will be printed in Oregon. Catalog numbers are by size and design and can be found on the MTL website, in the "Merchandise" category. No "I went to the Micro-Trains website and all I got was a lousy T-Shirt" jokes... let's leave the comedy to the professionals...



N SCALE NEW RELEASE FREIGHT EQUIPMENT:



035 00 340, \$26.90.

Reporting Marks: MKT 47409.

40 Foot Despatch Stock Car, Missouri-Kansas-Texas / Katy.

Yellow with black band at bottom of sides. Black lettering including reporting marks on placard at top left and "The Katy Serves the

Southwest Well" on placard at top right (placards to be installed by modeler). White AAR Designation "SM" at bottom right. Approximate Time Period: as early as 1937 (build date on car) to early 1960s.

I had a feeling that the **Frisco/Katy Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment** might be of some assistance. Okay, actually, I really had my fingers crossed that it would because what I know about Katy stock cars would fit in a thimble... an N Scale thimble...

Page 21 of the **Color Guide** has: "This distant photo was the only one the publisher was able to find, although it was worthy enough to include for more than just the string of Katy stock cars." And a string it is: the 4667, 4703, 47056, and 4714 to be exact, the third of those in the paint scheme that MTL depicts here. It's a sideways three-quarter view of the quartet in a

string of cars in an unnamed yard location as of March 1965. Noted in the caption is that the 47056 has the "Sloan yellow scheme of 1943 to 1945." Would that give us the start of the Approximate Time Period? Well, the Micro-Trains car carries a New date of November 1937, and I found information that some of the Katy's boxcars were painted yellow as early as 1941. No luck on a bingo (exact match) photo for this model. I'm sure that Micro-Trains has one.

Let's go to the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for January 1940. Of the 566 stock cars in the roster, 500 were in the series MKT 47001 to 47500 which would include this car. They were described as "Stock, Steel Underframe" with these dimensions: inside length 40 feet 6 inches, inside width 8 feet 6 7/8 inches, inside height 8 feet 7 1/2 inches, outside length 42 feet 1 inch, extreme height 13 feet 2 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 2980 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds. It turns out that the March 1965 photo in the **Color Guide** shows one of these cars quite late in its service life, at least with a 47000s number: there are 58 cars in the series remaining in the January 1964 ORER but the series is gone by the January 1967 Register.

I see a thread on the STMFC discussion venue on groups.io that the MKT 47001-series stock cars were a single-road prototype that was mostly operated on-line, although there were 500 cars in the class, "with a colorful yellow/black paint scheme on many." The topic of the thread was "Prototype freight cars that are unlikely to be modeled as built." Well, broken record alert: the 035 body style is based on an New York Central car, speaking of single-road prototypes... but you probably knew that already. The real cars had different ends (early 4/4 Dreadnaught, apparently) and a different arrangement of the trusses on the sides.

I mentioned that I didn't find a bingo photo, but I did get a few interesting images. RRPictureArchives has a shot of just the placards for MKT 47517, which I don't think was an actual road number, hung on the inside of someone's garage (!) in Texas. Also unusual but much more useful is a photo shared on the STFMC group by Bob Chapparo, showing MKT 47240 in glorious black and white, being loaded with watermelons. Hey, it works, using a bed of straw as a base, so why not?

Courtesy of the UMTRR Spy Network, we have a shot of the car as it comes from the factory. Adding the placards looks straightforward enough. They are printed on thin wood and can be removed with a sharp knife... as noted in the instructions, George...



045 00 381, \$26.90.

Reporting Marks: D&RGW 21001.

50 Foot Fishbelly Side Flat Car, Denver and Rio Grande Western (Rio Grande).

Black with white lettering including reporting marks left of center, speed lettering roadname right of center, and equipment trust stencil on left. Approximate Time Period: 1959 (build date) to as late as the early 1990s.

Things just got a little more interesting here at UMTRR HQ in terms of keeping track of things (pun not intended). MTL tags this car as being “New” although there has been a Catalog Number 045 00 380, Road Number 21079, which was released in July 2011 (at right). As you can see, the lettering arrangement is quite different which would make this car a “not a reprint” versus that 2011 offering.



The **Rio Grande Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment**, Page 59, has a shot of sister car D&RGW 21091 as it appeared in June 1963, carrying a narrow gauge passenger car — a steel one — for the Rio Grande’s still active three foot lines. It’s noted that the series 21000 to 21099 was built by Bethlehem Steel in 1959. “They had only 14 stake pockets and the top plate of the center sill and bolsters was not covered by the wood decking.” I note that there’s an end brake wheel on the real car and a side mount brake wheel on the model. But the MTL 045 body style **does** have 14 stake pockets per side, so there!

All one hundred cars are shown in the ORER for January 1962, with 14 of the 100 were specially equipped for handling automobile frames — the 21001 was not one of those. These cars had an “inside length” of 53 feet 6 inches and “outside length” of 54 feet 3 inches, with a 562 square foot area for loading and capacity of 100,000 pounds. The car count was 89 in July 1974 and then 38 in the July 1992 ORER, but just one remains as of October 1996. It’s possible that some of these went into the maintenance of way roster following their careers in revenue service. I note that the lettering would have changed over time as well, for example the addition of ACI Labels starting in the late 1960s and the addition of COTS Panels starting in the 1970s. Eventually the car would have looked more like the July 2011 release pictured above, so the ATP here is a fair bit wider than what would be “strictly speaking.”



065 00 306, \$28.95.

Road Number: 295601 (will be “GN 295601” in UMTRR Website Listings)

39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Great Northern.

Black with white lettering including roadname on left and road number on right.

Arch bar trucks. Approximate Time Period: 1913 through mid-1920s given road number.

The bingo photo for this car is on Page 55 of the book **American Car and Foundry Company 1899-1999**. It was built in March 1913 at AC&F’s Milton, Pennsylvania plant as part of Lot 6997-B. Interestingly, there is also a photo of Great Northern 295589, just twelve road numbers away, on Page 86 of the book **Tank Cars American Car and Foundry Company, 1865 to 1955**, with the note that it’s got the same build date and lot number. (You can guess which book I checked first, can’t you?) The image shows a car with an extra vent in the dome. It’s also a 12,000 gallon car, a bit larger than the GATX 10,000 gallon car which is the basis for the MTL 065 body style.

Okay, so the start of the Approximate Time Period is well established, but where do we go from here? Well, perhaps the ORER for October 1919, which isn't terribly helpful. The "Recapitulation of Car Equipment" shows 121 "Tanks, Oil" but nothing else. Fortunately, the August 1924 Equipment Register is a bit more forthcoming, showing 40 cars in the series GN 295575 to 295614, described as "Oil Tank, Steel, Company Service" with capacity of 12,000 gallons.

I thought I would have had to speculate quite a bit from there. Perhaps that would have been by citing the discontinuance of Arch Bar Trucks, although that would have resulted in a wide span for the end of the ATP, since the deadline for pulling cars with those trucks out of interchange service moved out several times. Or perhaps there would have been a fruitless search for another bingo photo. Nope! All that's needed is a look at the next ORER in the Research Accumulation, from April 1928. By then, all but one series of tank cars had been renumbered to X970 through X1334, and changing of that last series was well underway. So that gives us the mid-1920s for the end of the ATP, which is earlier than I would have expected.



065 00 316, \$28.95.

Reporting Marks: CN 990870.

39 Foot Single Dome Tank Car, Canadian National.

Black with white lettering including reporting marks on left, roadname on right, and instruction "Air Pressure Not To Be Used In Unloading" on dome. Bettendorf trucks.

Approximate Time Period: 1930 (build date) into the 1960s (a guess).

Might Ian Cranstone be covering these company service cars on his extensive "Canadian Freight Cars" site (www.nakina.net)? Why, yes, and there's even the bingo photo as well. The three-quarter view lets us see the end lettering, which indicates a 10,060 U.S. gallon capacity, 8381 Imperial Gallons capacity, and a "special heater" – all faithfully reproduced on the end of the MTL car. The side lettering has the February 1930 build date. Cranstone has ORER listings lasting only from 1930 to 1932, after which I presume the CN stopped including these cars in their Equipment Register data.

The cars were built by Canadian Car and Foundry – no relation to American Car and Foundry of which I'm aware. There are some detail differences to note between prototype and model, like the diameter and height of the dome, but overall the general idea is there. Service dates would have changed over time, so the lettering would have been updated, but I'm thinking... okay, guessing... that the ATP for this car would have run into the 1960s.



095 00 042, \$45.95.

Reporting Marks: B&O 631542.

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.

Please see the April 2023 UMTRR for coverage of the previous road number (631513).



105 00 461 and 105 00 462, \$29.95 each.

Reporting Marks: NS 168205 and 168209.

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

Brown with mostly white lettering including reporting marks on left. White

on black COTS panel on right. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes at eight points along side. Roller bearing trucks with extended draft gear. Includes multi-media kit for removable color (some assembly required, with modeler-applied decals). Only the 168205 is shown here. Approximate Time Period: after 2005 given conspicuity stripes to mid-decade of the 2010s.

You can find photos of both of these cars without conspicuity stripes, but it’s the ones on RRPictureArchives that show the cars with them that are closer Bingos. The 168205 was spotted in March 2016 with covers that look like the ones coming from MTL. The 168209 was found in December 2006, after an image from June 2006 had the car without the stripes and with a different type of cover.

The ORER for January 2006 has the series NS 168200 to 168224, with eight cars of a possible 25. Curiously, they are marked as exceeding Plate F dimensions, I’m not sure how: inside length 52 feet 6 inches, inside width 9 feet 6 inches, inside height 4 feet 6 inches, outside length 64 feet 5 inches, outside width 10 feet 7 inches, extreme height 10 feet 9 inches, capacity 2244 cubic feet, and gross rail weight 263,000 pounds. While I’m in the ORER pile, the last one I have in which these can be seen is January 2016, with six cars; the series is out sometime between then and the October 2020 Register.

According to RailcarPhotos.com, these cars came from the Southern Railway series 62740 to 62764, which was built by Pullman-Standard in 1970. Comparing prototype to model, there is a match to the number of panels-- fourteen – which to me is the main spotting feature. There are some detail differences otherwise. Micro-Trains mounted extended draft gear trucks to the car but the draft gear on the prototype, well, extends, even farther. The coil covers for the car look like a good match. Besides the instructions which accompany the model, the bingo photos will be helpful for placement of decals, which are also included.

In addition to the above, the second number of the Canadian Pacific “TBOX” boxcar (123 00 072, \$59.95, Reporting Marks CP 218312) is shown on the MTL website as available. UMTRR Coverage was in the October 2022 issue during the pre-order window.



N SCALE REPRINTS:



035 00 221, \$23.90.

Reporting Marks: MILW 110433.

40 Foot Despatch Stock Car, Milwaukee Road (Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific).

Brown with white lettering including reporting marks on far center left and

roadname on far center right. Approximate Time Period: 1929 or 1930 (build dates) or a bit later (see text) to early 1970s. Previous Release: Road Number 110301, October 2014.

As with the first run of this car, the prototype is sufficiently old that I thought I would spell out the entire formal name of The Milwaukee Road for a change of pace. The “and Pacific” was added only in 1928, following a reorganization after bankruptcy, which had been at least partially brought on by what amounted to be a suboptimal decision to build the Pacific Extension.

The group of cars numbered 110150 to 110299 was built by Standard Steel Car in the next year, 1929, and the group of cars including the road number Micro-Trains selected, 110300 to 110799, was constructed in 1930 by General American. It’s interesting that the Milwaukee would commit to an order of four hundred cars when the Great Depression was very much underway, but perhaps they were needed for livestock traffic, economic downturn or not. As we’ll see, though, there’s one detail that might keep the Approximate Time Period from beginning at the build year. Some of you may already know what that is. If not... read on just a bit.

There is a bingo for the previous run of this car on Page 77 of the **Milwaukee Road Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment Volume Two**. The car itself is not a close match to the 035 body style, and at the risk of being the usual broken record that’s because the model is based on a distinctive New York Central prototype. The Milwaukee car had a vertical brake staff and steel braced wood ends, neither of which are on the MTL model, and the number of “panels” (if you will) left and right of the door differ as well. The chances of getting a reasonably close match to this particular car – absent craftsman kits or 3-D printing – are rather small in my estimation, so “stand in” it is with respect to this release.

These cars not only had the stepped “The Milwaukee Road” lettering for their entire lives, but that life was rather long as well. The Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) for February

1931 shows both build series together in the group 110150 to 110799, listed with all 650 cars present and accounted for. They were described as “Stock, Double Deck, Steel Underframe and Composite Superstructure” with MCB Designation SF. The inside length was 40 feet 6 inches, inside height 8 feet 7 inches, outside length 41 feet 10 inches, extreme height 13 feet 10 3/8 inches, door opening 6 feet, and capacity 2955 cubic feet or 80,000 pounds. Now here’s the exception: the reporting marks on these cars were not yet “MILW,” but “C.M.St.P.&P.” At least that’s what it says in the ORER, although Al Westerfield is quoted in the RPI roadname information that this change in reporting marks started in 1928. So it’s possible that as delivered, the MILW reporting marks were included. However, Westerfield produced – you guessed it – a craftsman kit for this very car, in HO Scale, and there’s a photo of a finished product with the C. M. St.P. & P. reporting marks. Here’s a fun fact: the cars had four emergency doors in the floor. Drop bottom stock cars? Perhaps!

At any rate, certainly by the January 1940 ORER, mention is made of the MILW reporting marks, although the actual registration pages stay with the C. M. St.P.& P. initials. In January 1945 there was just one less than the original 650 cars, and in April 1952, just seven less. A bit over ten years later in July 1963, there were 413 cars remaining, and the ORER was clearly behind the times noting that the cars were still marked “C. M. St.P. & P.”!

Clearly you’re going to need a lot of weathering and wear and tear on a car to show how it looked more than four decades after being built, but that photo in the **Color Guide**? It was taken in 1970! Sure enough, there were still 174 cars in service as of the October 1972 Equipment Register. The group wasn’t completely off the roster until between 1975 and 1976.

Although I didn’t see any photos of stock cars, there are hundreds of Milwaukee Road images posted by the Cascade Rail Foundation. There are several collections available to browse at research.milwelectric.org/SitePages/Photos.aspx . Have fun!



N SCALE NEW RELEASE PASSENGER CARS: The single **United States Department of the Interior - Bureau of Mines Heavyweight 12-1 Sleeper (142 00 510, \$34.95)** is scheduled for release mid-month. UMTRR coverage was in the November 2022 issue. There’s a companion two-pack that I’ll note in N Scale Multi-Packs. Also see N Scale Multi-Packs for the “Wabash Cannonball” set. There are no regular releases or pre-order announcements in this category this month.

N SCALE WEATHERED RELEASES:



076 44 160, \$33.95.

Reporting Marks: NW 517835 MW (formerly ACY 2285).

50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Combination Plug and Sliding Door, No Running Board, Full Side Ladders, Norfolk and Western / former Akron, Canton and Youngstown.

#1 in the Norfolk Southern Family Tree Series (pre-orders taken December 2022). Yellow with black ends. Mostly black lettering including "Serving Ohio and the Nation"

slogan and restenciled reporting marks (the latter on gray patch panel) on left and large "ACY / Road of Service" on right. Also on right: white on black COTS panel, remains of ACI Label, and faded U-1 Wheel Inspection "dot." Cushion underframe with body mounted couplers. Moderate to heavy weathering. Includes wheel-operated door opener to be installed by the modeler. Approximate Time Period: 1987 through at least 2004 based on photo evidence. Previous Releases: None.

Micro-Trains kicks off the Norfolk Southern Family Tree Series with a car for which I can cite a longer ATP than I usually can for Maintenance of Way Equipment. Images of this car as depicted by MTL are dated sometime in 1992 and October 2004. Since the service date on the car as modeled is September 1987 – the date visible on the car in the 1992 photo – we can safely state the Approximate Time Period from then to at least 2004. Sometime between then and 2013, the car was redone in plain Norfolk Southern gray with black lettering. And then sometime before September 2020 it was redone again with a rollup door replacing the combination door and a Breast Cancer Awareness paint scheme added. Not bad for a car that originated on a relatively obscure railroad. All of these photos are on RRPictureArchives.net.

That relatively obscure railroad, the Akron, Canton and Youngstown, is certainly the smallest line we've seen yet included in any of the Family Tree Series of cars. However, it's big enough to have its own historical society (acyhs.org, no "www") to which I'll refer you for more about this 171 mile line that served Akron but never did make it to Canton or Youngstown. The AC&Y was technically merged into the Norfolk and Western in 1964 but was operated independently. Some former AC&Y trackage is now part of the "new" Wheeling and Lake Erie.

The original reporting marks bleeding through the restencil on the car on the MTL model, and in the photo from 2004, are ACY 2285. That puts this car originally in the series ACY 2200 to 2499. There's a photo of ACY 2283, brand new in a builder's photo, on Page 7 of the **Pullman-Standard Color Guide to Freight Equipment**. It's noted in the caption that the AC&Y was "heavily involved with the rubber and tire trade that originated at Akron. To support this traffic, the ACY turned to Pullman-Standard in 1966 for 300 cars to be placed into this service... [and] featured the Pullman-Standard designed Hydroframe-40 cushion underframe system

which incorporated 20 inches of travel.” When moved to the N&W, these became the class B32 with road numbers 702200 to 702499, presumably by just dropping a “70” in front of the existing number. These cars have a slight “door thing” with a nine foot sliding door on the prototype versus an eight foot door on the MTL 076 body style. Based on the builder’s photo it appears that these cars were constructed without running boards.

In addition to the above, the following was announced on the Micro-Trains website and via the “E-Line” newsletter on May 15.



111 44 460, \$69.95.

**Reporting Marks: ETTX 800838.
89 Foot Enclosed Auto Rack,
Trailer Train/Norfolk and
Western.**

Flat car is yellow with white reporting marks on black panel on left, black “TT” in center, and white “Trailer Train” on black panel on right, white on black COTS panel on far right, and mostly black lettering otherwise. Racking is black with aluminum panels and mostly aluminum roof (black at ends only), with white lettering including runtogether “NW” and roadname on black panels at top left. Black excess height warning on white band at top of ends. Light to moderate weathering and rusting effects. Approximate Time Period: 1979 into the decade of the 1980s. Previous Releases: Technically none, but Catalog Number 111 00 330 with Reporting Marks ETTX 800795, June 2019, is close (see below).

Hmm, aluminum doesn’t really “rust,” does it? Doesn’t it corrode? Online sources tend to be a bit confusing on this point. One site says it can’t rust because rust is iron oxide, one site says it just rusts in a different way, and a third says that “aluminum alloys contain almost no iron, and without iron, the metal will not rust, but it will oxidize.” Okay, then, I’m so glad I wandered into that...

Anyway, there are differences between the paint scheme on this release, regardless of what to call the weathering effects, and the “clean” car issued in June 2019 (official MTL image at right). A key difference is that the ends of the roof are black on the current Weathered Release, which would have made it no more than a “not a reprint” versus the 2019 offering.



And back in June 2019, I lamented the fact that I could not get a bingo photo of ETTX 800795; the best I could do was... guess what... **this month’s car**, the 800838. Well, how about that. It was lensed in 1992 and is still available on RailcarPhotos.com. The “Equipment Notes” accompanying the photo include that the flat car is from Trailer Train Class PLH10W of low-level bowl-deck flats, which were rebuilt circa 1979 with new wide-body side sills. The rack was NW 4705, a Whitehead and Kales type 2 trilevel rack with extended doors, the railroad’s class FT-53.

As I also noted then, this is an older example of a tri-level autorack that is decorated in, as readers know, one of my less favorite paint schemes. (My opinion has not affected sales.) In 1971, the “hamburger herald” which had only debuted in 1964, was replaced with the jammed-together NW initials with “Norfolk and Western” roadname displayed with only the first letters capitalized. This would have been the scheme used on this car as of 1979 when, according to MTL (in its June 2019 car copy) and confirmed via RailcarPhotos, the flat car was rebuilt and fitted with a Whitehead and Kales enclosed autorack. This also would have been among the final uses of the “NW” as it was soon replaced by what’s called the “Claytor” lettering after then-N&W President Graham Claytor. And Trailer Train became TTX in 1991, along with a switch of the “TT” logo (speaking of run-together!) to the TTX logo soon afterwards.

The ORER for July 1980 is not more than a minor touchpoint for the story of this car, other than to validate that ETTX 800838 is an AAR Designation FA with inside length of 89 feet 4 inches and outside length of 93 feet 6 inches. Advancing all the way to the January 2018 ORER, it’s quite possible that the 800838 was somewhere within the extant series ETTX 800730 to 801048, which had 78 cars in the main series and a bunch of subsets. But odds are good that it would not be carrying an “NW” autorack anymore. I’m going to call the Approximate Time Period at some time in the 1980s, though a liberal application of Rule #1 (“It’s your railroad”) is certainly not out of the question.



983 05 041, \$107.95, with Jewel Boxes.

993 05 041, \$95.95, with Foam Nest packaging.

Conrail Weathered Three Pack.

Consists of the following items, all of which have lowered underframes and body mounted couplers:

- 180 44 390, Reporting Marks CR 160005, 50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Single 10 Foot Door, No Running Board (Roofwalk), Low Brake Wheel. Green with white lettering including restenciled reporting marks on left. Bleed-through Penn Central roadname on left and herald on right. White on black COTS panel and yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection “dot” at bottom right. One side of car has brown door. Very heavy weathering including

dirt and mud effects. Approximate Time Period: 1978 and somewhat later given photo evidence and U-1 “dot.” Previous Releases: None.

- 032 45 600, Reporting Marks CR 361038, 50 Foot Steel Plug Door Boxcar. Green (the New York Central’s “Century Green” with black ends and roof. White lettering including restenciled reporting marks on black patch panel on left. Large red, white and black New York

Central “cigar band” herald on right. Multicolor ACI label, yellow on black U-1 wheel inspection “dot” and white on black COTS panel at bottom right. Moderate to heavy weathering including rust effects. Approximate Time Period: 1978 given U-1 “dot” and somewhat later. Previous Releases: Officially none, but a similar paint scheme in unweathered form has been done as Catalog Number 32250, see below.

- 181 46 010, Reporting Marks CR 229938, 50 Foot Steel Boxcar, Plug Door, No Running Board, Short Ladders. Green (the Penn Central’s “Deepwater Green”) including newer patch panels over previous lettering. Mostly white lettering including roadname and road number in Penn Central typeface and restenciled CR reporting marks on left. Multicolor ACI label and white on black COTS panel at bottom right. Cushion underframe and body mounted couplers. Light weathering. Approximate Time Period: 1976 based on photo evidence and somewhat later. Previous Releases: None.

This trio represents the early days of Conrail, when the aim was to restencil as much viable equipment as possible, no matter how sloppily that restencil might be. (I’m thinking that equipment that wasn’t going to be kept around for long didn’t get this “treatment.”) Calling the end of the Approximate Time Period for any of these cars is problematic since I presume eventually these were repainted into something more suitable. Pinpointing exactly when that happened is probably not something we can do, so here’s a great opportunity to invoke Rule #1 (“It’s your railroad”). The 1978 start for two of these cars is based on the presence of the U-1 wheel inspection “dot” which was required starting in March of that year.

We go two for three in bingo photos for this three pack from the archive of the Conrail Historical Society (main URL conrailphotos.thecrhs.org, no “www”). The 160005 was part of Conrail’s 968-B class, formerly the New York Central’s 968-B class. These cars, the NYC series 205000 to 206499, were rebuilt by the NYC from forty foot boxcars of several classes by the company’s Beech Grove Shops from 1965 to 1967, receiving a ten foot door in the process. This means some details differ from the MTL 180 body style; we’ll leave it to the modeler to decide how much of a stand in this means. We catch the 160005 keeping its assigned Penn Central number – as if that is not obvious from the bleed-through lettering – as it appeared on the last day of April 1978.

The 229938 was one of the early “patch job” cars, found as MTL modeled it, in May 1976, only the second month of Conrail’s existence. It’s hard for me to say whether the car went right from New York Central to Conrail without a Penn Central stop in between. What color is that which was patched over: the Central’s “Century Green” or the Penn Central’s “Deepwater Green”? I would have gone with the former, but the patch pattern looks more like what would obscure Penn Central lettering. Maybe it was a patch over a patch. Hey, now that’s an idea! It’s noted with the photo on the CRHS archive site that the boxcar was previously NYC 48146, which would put it in the former NYC series 48000 to 48159, built at the railroad’s own Despatch Shops in East Rochester, New York (not far from UMTRR HQ) in 1964. The New York Central Historical Society’s website has builder photos of the first car in this series, NYC 48000 (direct URL nycshs.omeka.net/items/browse?tags=931-B).

That leaves the 361038, which was no doubt patched—as little as possible-- over the as-delivered New York Central lettering. Assuming that my thread of research is on target, this car started in the series NYC 78800 to 78949 built by Despatch Shops, also in 1964, class 935-B. Kadee Micro-Trains has done four cars in this prototype series in September 1989 with two cars in a six pack. The latest run is from May 1999 (official MTL image at right). The Conrail series numbered 360982 to 361060 holds more cars than that, but only had four in place as of the January 1978 ORER. This total went up from there, for example totaling 91 as of April 1984 across several subsets. I doubt that the NYC “cigar band” herald was still visible on the car by then, but again, we might never know the exact date of a repaint into full Conrail regalia.



I was able to track down a bingo photo... or more accurately, a bingo slide. An original “color transparency” of this car as of August 1978 was offered on eBay some time ago. I found it on one of those “obtain and sell auction results” websites. Micro-Trains’ use of the 032 body style for this car is accurate, as the running board was still in place on the car at the time, and the brake wheel was in the upper position near the roof. A half-height ladder was installed on the prototype versus grab irons on the left of the side, and a full-height ladder is on the right.



983 05 049, \$117.95, with Jewel Boxes.

993 05 049, \$99.95, with Foam Nest packaging.

Reporting Marks: UP 215700, 215708, and 215725.

Union Pacific Weathered Three Pack.

Consists of three 054 series bulkhead flat cars. Each car is yellow with mostly black lettering including reporting marks on left. White on black COTS panel at far right. Moderate to heavy weathering and simulated worn wood grain on floor and

inside of bulkheads. Approximate Time Period: 1980 (build date) to around 2005, or add conspicuity stripes and go out to as late as the present. Previous Releases: None. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 054 44 310, 215700; 054 45 310, 215708; 054 46 310, 215725.

Let’s pause for a moment and take a look at the weathering job on the floors and inside bulkheads of these cars. It’s another “raise the bar” moment for the folks in Talent as they’ve depicted the variation in wear and color of the wood decking and also the way boards are missing from the tops of the bulkheads—as shown clearly in a bingo photo for UP 215725 on Railcar Photos.com.

While we’re on that photo, we can pick up the construction information for this and the rest of the series UP 215700 to 215799. They were built by Portec at its Winder, Georgia plant from June through October 1980, and carried the UP’s Class F-100-14. It’s noted that the cars had an

inside length of 61 feet and an outside length of 70 feet, 6 inches, the latter explained by the extended couplers. The bingo photo is from August 2020 and shows the car with conspicuity stripes, which would be expected fifteen (!) years after the reflectors were first mandated. On RRPictureArchives there are bingos for the 215700 as of August 2012 and the 215708 taken in January 2009, both without conspicuity stripes and some boards at the top of the bulkheads.

The ORER for October 2020 shows 65 cars out of the original 100 still in service for the Union Pacific at the time. That might or might not allow an ATP out to “to present” since the cars were 40 years old in 2020, but some freight car service limits are at the 50 year mark now. The description explains the noticeable difference between inside and outside lengths: “Flat, Cushion Underframe, Bulkheads, Load Binders, Stake Pockets (Packaged Lumber).” Well, maybe “Packaged Lumber” is part of the description but photos of cars in the series show other cargo loaded onto these cars. The Gross Rail Weight is listed at 263,000 pounds. Bouncing back to the April 1981 Register, we’ve got a capacity of 180,000 pounds.



N SCALE MULTI-PACKS: 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, is now available, having been pushed out from the originally scheduled release in mid-April. 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.

The following items are scheduled to be released mid-month:



The **Wabash Cannonball Five Pack (983 02 211, \$180.95, with Jewel Case Packaging; 993 02 211, \$159.95, with Foam Nest Packaging)**. UMTRR coverage was in the October 2022 issue. The individual catalog numbers and items are as follows: 140 51 490, Railway Post Office 179; 144 52 490, 3-2 Observation Car “City of Lafayette”; 145 43 490, Paired Window Coach 1402; 146 54 490, Diner 1568; 147 55 490, Baggage Car 362. This is the first release of each of the items in this set.



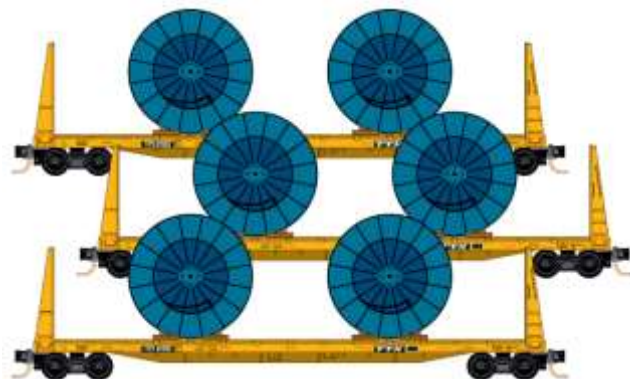
number sequence has these as the second and third releases after the single car shown in the “N Scale New Release Passenger Cars” section above, but these two are not identical to that car.

The **United States Department of the Interior – Bureau of Mines Two Pack** (983 02 213, \$79.95, with Jewel Case Packaging; 993 02 213, \$70.95, with Foam Nest Packaging) of 12-1 Heavyweight Sleepers. UMTRR coverage was in the November 2022 issue. The individual items are 142 51 510, Road Number 7 and 142 52 510, Road Number 10. MTL’s catalog



The **Pennsylvania Railroad Three Pack with Sherman Tank Load** (983 02 217, \$121.95, with Jewel Case Packaging; 993 02 217, \$109.95, with Foam Nest Packaging). UMTRR coverage was in the January 2023 issue. The individual catalog and road numbers are: 045 51 142, 470104; 045 52 142, 470117; 045 53 142, 470132. These are the twelfth through fourteenth releases of this item. The Sherman Tanks are unassembled, undecorated multi-media kits.

*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 **May 31**.*



Targeted Delivery October 2023:
983 00 216, \$121.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.
993 00 216, \$109.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.
Reporting Marks: TTPX 811062, 811085, and 811113.
TTPX Three Pack with Cable Reel Load (Runner Pack #216).

Scheduled to consist of three MTL 054 series 62 Foot Bulkhead Flat Cars. Cars are yellow with white reporting marks on black panel on left and white TTX logo on black panel on right. Black dimensional data and other lettering. White on black COTS panel on right. Orange horizontal conspicuity stripes at nine points along side including at end grab irons. Cable reel loads included (unassembled, undecorated multimedia

kits). Approximate Time Period: 2005 (build date) to as late as the present. Previous Releases: None. Micro-Trains artwork is preliminary; actual product may vary.

Two road numbers, “and TBD”? Well, the Micro-Trains artwork shows the middle car’s reporting marks hidden by the cable reel load on the bottom car. A quick check with MTL got me the third road number. I’ll speculate that these cars had conspicuity stripes either upon delivery to TTX or soon afterward, so I’m going with the build date as the start of the ATP.

According to RailcarPhotos.com, the series TTPX 811000 to 811299 was built by National Steel Car Company during the period April to July 2005. This is the company’s Class NSH72. The prototype cars have an inside length of 62 feet and an outside length of 73 feet 6 inches, the latter of which is noticeably longer than the MTL 054 body style but could be mitigated with a switch to extended draft gear trucks. The ORER for January 2006 shows an extreme height of 15 feet 5 inches and Gross Rail Weight (car plus lading) of 286,000 pounds with, as expected, all 300 cars in the roster at that time. “To present” would be pretty easy given that 293 of those 300 are shown in the October 2020 Equipment Register, but there is the matter of the change of TTX logos to the “heritage” Tuscan Red in 2008.

On RRPictureArchives there is a bingo photo of the 811062 as of September 2006. It’s easy to see that the inside of the bulkheads are lined with wood, which is already looking kind of worn only a year or so after the car was built. The 811085 was found in March 2008. It looks like the floor has missing boards from the deck... nah, those gaps look too regularly spaced, so perhaps this is on purpose. The decking is painted the same yellow color as the rest of the car. I’ll also note that while I didn’t see any cable reel loads on these particular class of cars in other photos I checked, it was hardly an exhaustive search on my part.



Targeted Delivery October 2023:

983 00 826, \$254.95, with Jewel Box Packaging.

993 00 826, \$224.95, with Foam Nest Packaging.

Reporting Marks: BNSF 619994, 620039, 620072, 620089, 620101, 620112, 620145, and 620153.

BNSF Hopper Eight Pack with Coal Load (Eight Pack #26).

Scheduled to consist of eight MTL 108 series Three Bay 100 Ton Open Hoppers. Cars are black with white lettering including reporting marks on left and “wedge” herald on right. White on black COTS panel at bottom right. Yellow horizontal conspicuity

stripes at six points along bottom of side. Approximate Time Period: 2005 (given paint scheme) to early decade of the 2010s. Previous Releases: None. MTL artwork is preliminary; actual

product may vary. Note: This artwork does not show loads for these cars, but artwork in the May Micro-News **does depict the cars with coal loads** as announced by MTL.

Micro-Trains has done Burlington Northern hopppers before, but not from the specific series which was repainted into these cars. According to RailcarPhotos.com, the group BN 522700 to 522999 was built by Bethlehem Steel in March and April 1971, which would have made them among the earlier cars purchased by the BN after it was created in 1970. This group, after a bit of attrition, became BNSF series 619991 to 620166. The “wedge” paint scheme dates to 2005, as do conspicuity stripes, so there’s the beginning of the Approximate Time Period. But these cars were already around 34 years old by then, so how much longer would they have lasted?

The answer doesn’t appear to be “To Present” since just three cars remained in the shortened series 619995 to 620145 in the October 2020 ORER. Backing up from there, there were five cars in the April 2013 Register, six in the January 2011 Register, and ten in the January 2006 Register, the first one I have after the adoption of the “wedge.” My call on the end of the ATP in the early decade of the 2010s might be pushing it. The modeler could consider the adoption of Rule #1 (“It’s your railroad”) here. Backing up to before the “wedge” logo, there were 15 cars in the group as of January 2000, while the original BN series had a car count of 123. While I’m on this entry, here are the key dimensions: inside length not given, outside length 52 feet 5 inches, extreme height 12 feet 10 inches, capacity 4000 cubic feet or 199,000 pounds.

RailcarPhotos has just one representative image in the paint scheme MTL selected: it’s of BNSF 619994 as of August 2014. The outlet gates have been disabled and it’s in scrap tie service only – it says so right on the car, and so much for a coal load. The car is a fourteen panel hopper but the details differ a bit from the MTL 108 body style, for example the use of grab irons instead of ladders on the right end of the side. RRPictureArchives has a different photo of the 619994, in service in July 2009, not on BNSF rails in Folkston, Georgia. There are also images of 620010 and 620039, but only the latter photo shows a car in the “wedge” scheme, looking freshly painted I might add.



N SCALE SPECIAL EDITION RELEASES: Car #3 in the “War of the Worlds” (139 00 031, \$28.95) has been released. This Warren Circus Flat Car, USA 2465, features a

multimedia artillery gun kit. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the September 2022 issue. If you’re keeping score, this is only the third paint scheme on this body style; the first ones were for Ringling Brothers and Royal American Shows, both of which were prototypical. There’s only so many circuses, though...

*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 **May 31**.*



Targeted Delivery August 2023:

102 00 230, \$29.95.

Reporting Marks: BPRR 8823.

60 Foot Excess Height Boxcar, Double Plug Door, Buffalo and Pittsburgh 35th Anniversary Car.

Orange with black and yellow stripes. Black roof and ends. White reporting marks on left. Large black, orange and yellow Genesee and Wyoming family style herald and 35th Anniversary banner on left. Multicolor system map on right. "Zero Injuries" logo left of map.

Here's a Special Edition release that's likely to be popular in the general area around UMTRR HQ. The Buffalo and Pittsburgh may be marking its 35th year of operation in 2023, but the railroad that pre-pre-preceded it... I think I have that right... would be the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh, which was founded in 1869. The Baltimore and Ohio, finding the BR&P to be a worthy addition to their system, took stock control in 1929 and merged it in 1932. Under the B&O, then the Chessie System, then CSX, the line was slowly pared back and then spun off in two pieces by Chessie and CSX to Genesee and Wyoming Industries: the former Rochester Division in 1986, which became the Rochester and Southern (and the R&S absorbed the original Genesee and Wyoming, making the latter a "paper railroad," but that's another story), then most the rest of the remaining BR&P in 1988 to become the railroad being honored on this boxcar. A nontrivial amount of the original BR&P is gone now; for example, the B&P uses the former Pennsylvania Railroad's Buffalo Line to reach that city now from Machias. On the other hand, the B&P now reaches Erie, Pennsylvania, which the BR&P never did. Like the original BR&P, it didn't and doesn't actually reach Pittsburgh on its own rails.

Also like the original BR&P, the B&P uses what we call "big power" around here. The BR&P needed to get coal over steep grades and purchased used articulated 2-8-8-2 Mallet steam locomotives. The B&P picked up former Conrail SD60 type "Triclops" locomotives (so nicknamed for their three part front cab windows) and painted them in the company scheme of orange, yellow and black that also graces this forthcoming Special Edition boxcar.

Z SCALE: There was a surprise reprint release this month, and the first place it appeared was on the very last page of the Micro-News.



980 01 011 and 980 01 012, \$139.95 each.

Road Numbers: 1426 and 1449.

F7 Powered Diesel Locomotives, Union Pacific.

Yellow (the UP's Armour Yellow) with partially gray roof (the UP's Harbor Mist Gray) accented by red striping. Green anti-glare panel on nose in front of cab windows. Aluminum trucks and grilles. Gray lower sills, bottom of ladders, and pilot. Roadname across side and road number

below cab in red with black outline on side of units. Winged UP medallion on nose and white on black numberboards. White on black number boards. Approximate Time Period: 1948 to 1964. Previous Releases: Road Number 1458, March 1986; Road Number 1455, December 1994; Road Number 1467, December 2002; Road Number 1469, April 2005; Road Number 1468, September 2011; and Road Numbers 1426 and 1449, December 2016. The first three releases carried Catalog Number 14001 and were available with either Marklin or Magne-Matic Couplers.

Let's head right over to Don Strack's UtahRails.net, my go to source for the Union Pacific diesel roster, for specifics on these units. I'll note that these units were technically F3s, not F7s, but the UP converted many of these to F7 specifications – and it can be difficult to tell late F3s from F7s anyway without a very trained eye. (Which I don't have, particularly when reduced to 1:220 proportion.) There were "true" F7s on the Union Pacific's roster as well, numbered from 1466 to 1483 and from 1466B and C to 1494 B and C. This includes former EMD demonstrator units. Meanwhile, the F7As 1426 and 1449 were both built in 1948 and traded back to EMD in 1964. That gives us a quick ATP! It does apply to these particular units; others in the roster have somewhat different start and end dates.

If you read the Previous Releases, you'll note that these two road numbers match the road numbers of the most recent release of these units in December 2016. There are several possible explanations for this which would all be speculation on my part but suffice to say that I would take the "Limited Quantities Available" part of the announcement seriously. You've been cautioned...

Meanwhile, the next two passenger cars announced for pre-orders in November 2022 are scheduled to be available mid-month:

553 00 011, \$30.95, is Union Pacific Road Number 5665.



553 00 240, \$29.95, is Norfolk and Western Road Number 1834.



In addition, **Car #3 in the "War of the Worlds" (525 00 181, \$28.95)** has been released. This car, USA 2465, features a multimedia artillery gun kit. UMTRR pre-order coverage was in the September 2022 issue.



MTL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Moo!

Baa! The loads included with some N Scale stock cars are now available separately. Each two pack of loads has an MSRP of \$10.95. The Cattle Load catalog number is 499 45 006 and the Sheep Load catalog number is 499 45 007.



The door opening hardware that's included with this month's N Scale AC&Y boxcar is also available as a detail part. A four pack- that's enough to do four cars- is catalog number 499 45 008 with an MSRP of \$7.95. The MTL photo shows that the brake wheels in this item aren't of any particular color.



The **Grain Storage Hopper Kit (499 45 004, \$25.95)** consisting of a heavily weathered three bay covered hopper shell (no trucks or couplers), simulated concrete bases, a vertical conveyor, and ladders and railings, is now available. Pre-orders were in January 2023.

DISCONTINUED ALERT: Here's something interesting... I don't usually mention when items reappear on the MTL website, but I know that when first released in January 2018 (!) the four N Scale forty foot military boxcars marched out of the factory double time. On May 22, I saw all four – US Air Force (020 00 447), US Army (020 00 457), US Navy (020 00 467) and US Marine Corps (020 00 487) back on the "Freight Cars" page. I'm not sure how long they'll stay before returning to the Bye-Bye Board (and I'm not changing the UMTRR Website Tables), so if you missed any of them the first time, this might be a second chance.

Meanwhile, the outs from just last month include the Western Pacific "Roller Freight" boxcar (020 00 487), the first number of the Union Pacific boxcar (068 00 551), the Pemex Tank Car Three Pack, aka Runner Pack #211 (983 00 211, Jewel Boxes only, as it wasn't released in the Foam Nest option), and the DODX Flat Car with "Mystery Balloon" Load (071 00 610) – the last of which should not really be a surprise considering it had very short pre-order and production windows. From the first three months of 2023, these items, both multi-packs, have left the building: The Ferromex/NdeM Weathered Two Pack with Jewel Boxes (983 05 038, February) which closes that item out since the Foam Nest option was already gone; and the Jewel Box option on Runner Pack #198 of four BNSF gondolas, while the Foam Nest option is still gettable. No Z Scale items from 2023 have sold out since last issue.

What else is outta here in N Scale is as follows. The Texas, Oklahoma and Eastern Weathered Three Pack of bulkhead flat cars has rolled away (993 05 015, April 2022). The SIRX/ex-Louis Dreyfus covered hopper has emptied out (099 44 081, October 2022). The Montana Rail Link

35th Anniversary boxcar has left the station (104 00 100, July 2022). The Southern Pacific Weathered Three Pack of tank cars is gone (993 05 870, January 2022). The Jewel Box option for the Milwaukee Road Weathered Two Pack of Airslide covered hoppers is no longer an option (993 05 024, August 2022). The Northern Pacific Heavyweight Mail/Baggage Car has been delivered (148 00 320, July 2019). The Civil War Era “Blue Line” Four Pack is gone (993 01 800, April 2019). And the Pullman Green New York Central Heavyweight Horse Car has galloped off (149 00 110, January 2016).

Turning to Z Scale, both numbers of the Santa Fe PS-2 Covered Hopper are gone (531 00 07x, February 2021). The second number of the Great Northern 50 foot single door boxcar is gone (505 00 402, September 2019, first number already sold out). The second number of the Swift wood refrigerator car is discontinued (518 00 582, May 2018, first number already gone).

INCREMENTAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: David Grothe reports the following on this year’s “April Fool” car, the Chicago and North Western boxcar (025 44 296): “After I let the ‘factory air’ out of this car and put it on the tracks, I noticed the inside of the jewel case paper insert had the artist rendering of the car which I thought was a nice touch.” He sent along this photo of the artwork inside the box.



OOPS PATROL: There were probably errors and omissions in last month’s bytes but I didn’t find any and none were reported.

AND THAT WRAPS UP MAY. Until next time, do the best you can!

Cheers,
George

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