



#131 APRIL 2021

SCALE RAILROADING

THE BEST OF 1:160 SINCE 2000

John Corky Whitlock

- Modeling Picket Fences
- Modeling a Trolley Diner Scene

Mike Pagano

- Part 2: Z21 DCC System
- Kato Unitram Freight Depot

Kim Saign

- Enhancing A BLI Stock Car

Keith Lyons

- A Multipurpose

Monster Helix +

N SCALE RAILROADING WELCOME!

There are a lot of helices in the model RR world because we often want to change elevation efficiently. Otherwise there would be more ramps. Keith Lyon's monster helix serves multiple levels of track and is part of a "service railroad" where trains can enter and exit the sceniced railroad and re-appear when and where he wants them to appear. And it is built over a stairwell so it takes no space away from the RR.

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∞
AND SEE WHAT
HAPPENS!**

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Page 16. **Mike Pagano** shares part two of his experiences with the new Fleischmann Z21 DCC system.

Page 18. Modeling a factory floor with imbedded track was looking like a major project until **Mike Pagano** discovered the Kato Unitram Freight Depot.

Page 20. **John Corky Whitlock** models a Trolley Diner. Disneyland started as an update of a trolley park.

Page 24. **Kim Saign** pondered how one can add to a BLI stock car with factory sounds...

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Page 35. **NCalendar and Observations.** More economies of N scale. Will we see 3D print chassis for new projects? ▶

**N SCALE
RAILROADING**

April
2021
ISSUE 131

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EMD SD40-2 and MAXI-I Well Cars

As a prototype, the SD40-2 was the most popular second-generation diesel with sales of over 3000 in the U.S. and more than 700 in Canada. There were many variations of this popular diesel because of the long production run, with Mid Production units depicting their post 1990 appearance with deck mounted ditch lights and various railroad-requested modifications, like cab air conditioners and rear mounted airhorns.

Kato USA is releasing a new run of N Scale SD40-2 locomotives this April in BN and Santa Fe paint, along

with new releases of the popular Gunderson MAXI-I 5-unit articulated intermodal cars in TTX and BNSF road names, featuring new "Ocean Network Express" (ONE) containers.

This new release of SD40-2 locomotives is available in **standard Analog variations**, as well as with Kato-installed **Ready-to-Run DCC** and even **DCC and Sound via Special Order** (contact your preferred hobby retailer to order)!



The latest run of Gunderson MAXI-I Well Cars come with brand-new fully licensed "Ocean Network Express" (ONE) Containers - BNSF Well Cars include Magenta ONE containers while TTX well cars include Gray ONE containers.

Item #	Description	MSRP
#176-4960	N EMD SD40-2 Mid BN Standard #6792	\$120
#176-4961	N EMD SD40-2 Mid BN Standard #7036	\$120
#176-8209	N EMD SD40-2 Mid AT&SF #5072	\$120
#176-8210	N EMD SD40-2 Mid AT&SF #5088	\$120

SD40-2 Locomotives also available with Pre-Installed Digitrax DCC!

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#176-8209-DCC	N EMD SD40-2 Mid AT&SF #5072 w/ DCC	\$200
#176-8210-DCC	N EMD SD40-2 Mid AT&SF #5088 w/ DCC	\$200

SD40-2 Locomotives also available with Special-order ESU LokSound DCC!

#176-4960-LS	N EMD SD40-2 BN Standard #6792 w/ ESU LokSound	\$320
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#176-8210-LS	N EMD SD40-2 AT&SF #5088 w/ ESU LokSound	\$320

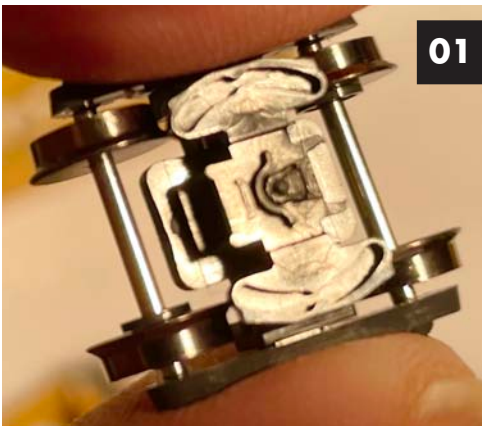
Recently released new run Gunderson MAXI-I well cars are a perfect pairing with these locos!

#106-6194	N MAXI-I 5-Unit Car - BNSF "Swoosh" #238615	\$150
#106-6195	N MAXI-I 5-Unit Car - BNSF "Swoosh" #238693	\$150
#106-6196	N MAXI-I 5-Unit Car - TTX "New Logo" #759324	\$150
#106-6197	N MAXI-I 5-Unit Car - TTX "New Logo" #759350	\$150

N SCALE RAILROADING NEW PRODUCTS



Above. TTX #759324 Gunderson Maxi-1 5 unit double stack with ONE (Ocean Network Express) containers is Kato #106-6196.



01

Image 01. I have to retrain myself on how these work. First make sure you can identify the pointer thingee in the center of the truck. This needs to be pointed at the large pin on each body shell. The center unit has 2 large pins.



03

Image 03. The long pins are semi-permanent. Insert into the hole at an angle with the outer pins set on top of the grooves. Be gentle but it works!



02

Image 02. The unit on the left has a large pin. Find the piece with two large pins. This is the center unit.



04

Image 04. Attach trucks to both sides of the center unit.



Once one slides down the learning curve: Easy operation with free rolling trucks, containers secured with magnetics, etc.



05

Image 05. While the big pins connect at an angle, the small pins are a bit my artsy. The small pin unit drops on top of the truck attached to the long pin. To disconnect, left the unit in opposite sequence. One can store in the packaging with the long pin still attached to the trucks.



Above. BNSF Swoosh 238615 Gunderson Maxi-1 with ONE containers is Kato #106-6194. I set the last unit down... and it was coupled.

Arriving This Spring from



Atlas Trainman[®]N 85' Trash Flat Cars & Containers

In the past decade there has been a significant increase in moving municipal solid waste (MSW) on railroads. Flat cars with open decks and 100 ton trucks carrying trash containers are commonly used for this purpose. Atlas' recent release of our Trainman Trash Flats & Containers are offered in sets containing both the trash flat car and a set of four removable containers (also available for separate sale), making it a snap to get started in simulating this industry on your layout. They are available in six road name combinations that are so colorful you'll want to collect them all.



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N SCALE RAILROADING NEW PRODUCTS



Jacksonville Terminal has released three pairs of 53-6-42-6 corrugated side containers in their JTC Visionary Series that are a tribute to some of the famous freelance railroads. Above is a Virginian & Ohio container. A pair is JTC 535086.



A pair of Allegheny Midland containers is JTC 535087.



The post merger version of the V&O and AM is the Virginia Midland. JTC 535088 is a pair of VM containers.



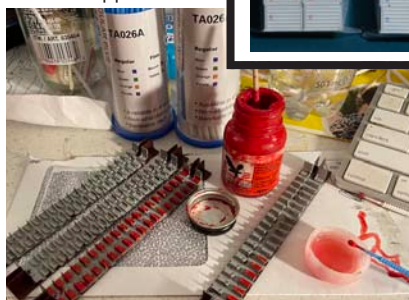
The graphics of great freelance roads tend to look very prototype. The sides look corporate and the ends look like they comply with regulations.



A view of the magnets and steel pieces that help secure the JTC containers. Packaging and a JTC coffee cup. Which makes a great holder of tools.



After last issue I was concerned that I would run out of micro brushes (lower left). Then I saw these brushes at **N Scale Supply** for 5 cents each. I still like brushes but these are superior for some applications. The blue handle is "Regular", which is "Super Fine". The package is also a dispenser.



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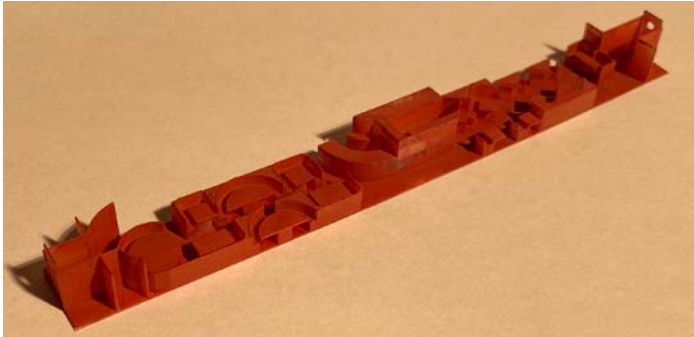


PENNSY P70 CARS

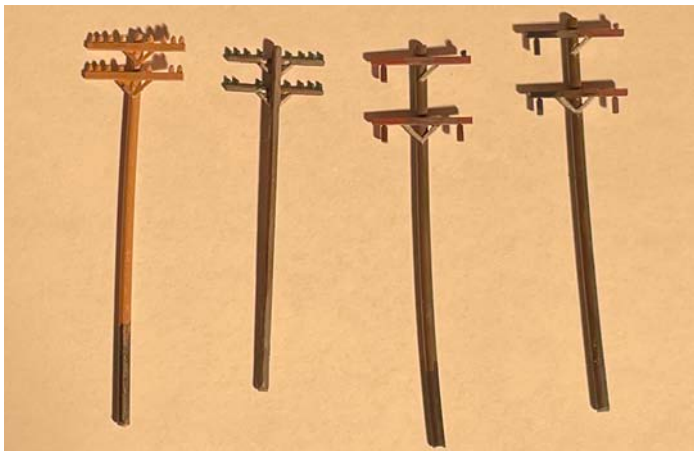
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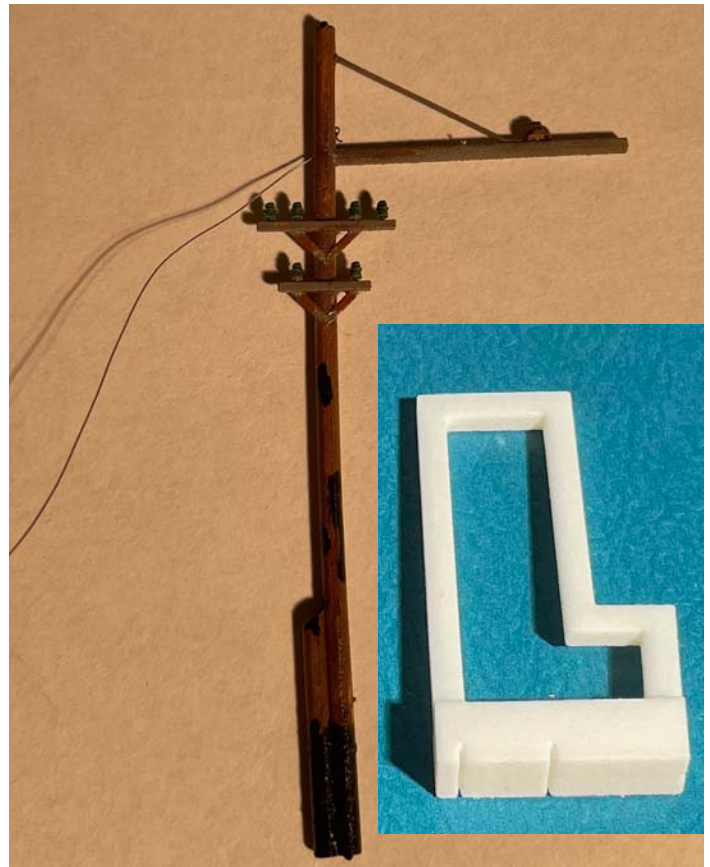
I got a box of treasures from nscaletrainparts.com. se are superior for some applications. Some of these are not on the website yet. To see what is available, visit (click for hyperlinks): <https://nscaletrainparts.com>



This is the interior for a Milwaukee Road 1947 Tap car. The whole car is available on the website.



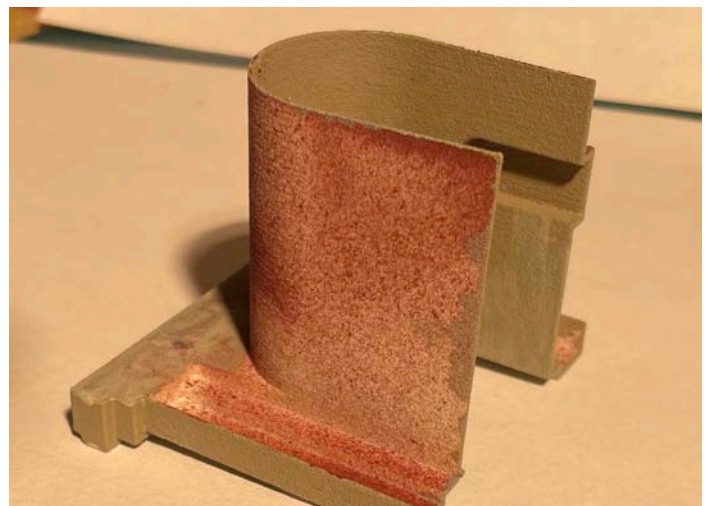
Communication and power line poles.



Here is a preproduction sample of a Milwaukee Road catenary pole. The white device is a template to space and place the poles next to the track.



Here is a one-piece tunnel portal for Tunnel #11 Pipestone Pass. Notice that the interior set back is modeled. Tunnel #12 will also be available.



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KATO has announced a new run of Amtrak P42 Locomotives including the 50th Anniversary edition shown here. All three road numbers will be available as DC, DCC or with ESU LokSound. We are taking pre-order reservations now for delivery in August/September 2021. See our website for more details and our discount pricing.

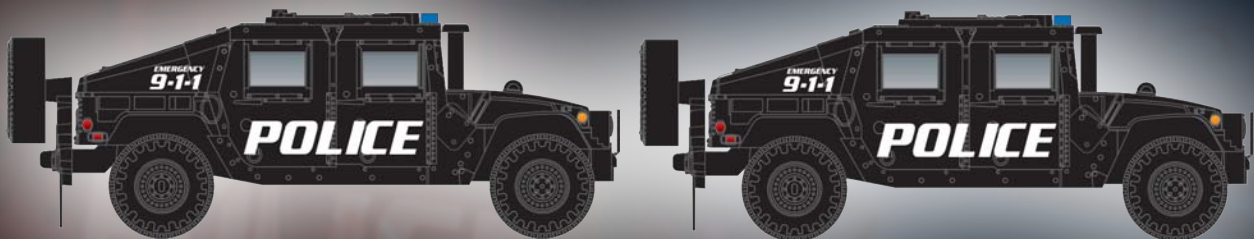


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A PFAT PFINGERED PHFRENZY PHROJECT!

PICKET FENCES

by John Corky Whitlock/ Images by Author

I've been adding finishing details to my new 18" x 36" amusement park module. Sections of picket fencing seem to offer visual variety to the module as well as to help lead the eye into the scenes.

A current search for fencing led me to a number of manufacturers and I wanted to experiment with all of them. Two manufacturers Bar, Mills and Monroe Models, offer up kits that are a bit more craftsman oriented. Others such as Woodland Scenics

and Model Power won't require a lot of your modeling time regarding assembly and finishing.

The Monroe Models "MiniTales" kit is attractively packaged and includes fencing sections that require removal of the laser cut sections between pickets. I'm not sure what the composition of the material is, but it's fairly durable. The sections are a sort of peel and stick process from their backing material. There is a learning curve involved with working on these, but the results are good. It's labeled "Straight Picket Fence #9307".



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Actual N-Scale GE DASH 9 and Multi-Max™ models shown

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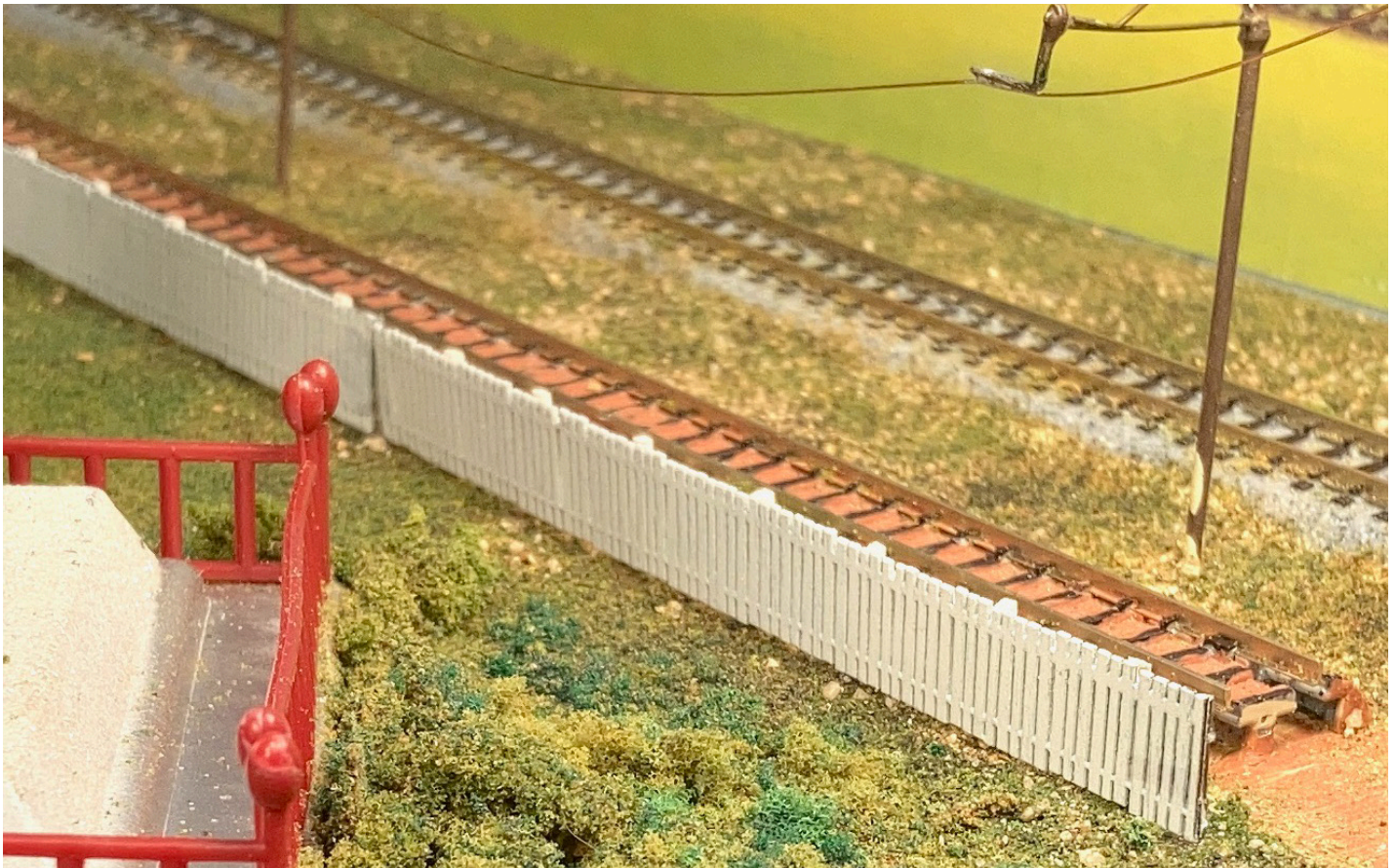
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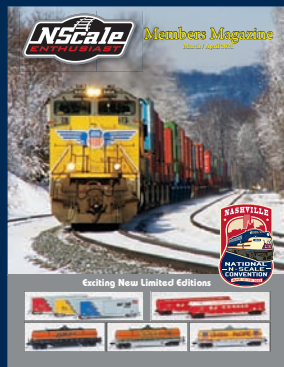


The Bar Mills “Insta-Fence” kit also has attractive packaging and consists of wooden picket sections which also require removal of the laser cut pieces between the pickets. Laser cut strip wood that you’ll need to cut and glue to the picket sections to simulate posts and rails are also comes in the kit.



Paint the Monroe and Bar Mills sections carefully as it’s much too easy to clog up the openings between the pickets with paint. Light, quick passes with a spray bomb seem to work best.

As mentioned I also used some long leftover and forgotten plastic fence sections I had in storage and I’m not sure of the manufacturer. Some of it appears to be Model Power and other sections seem to fit the Heljan bill.

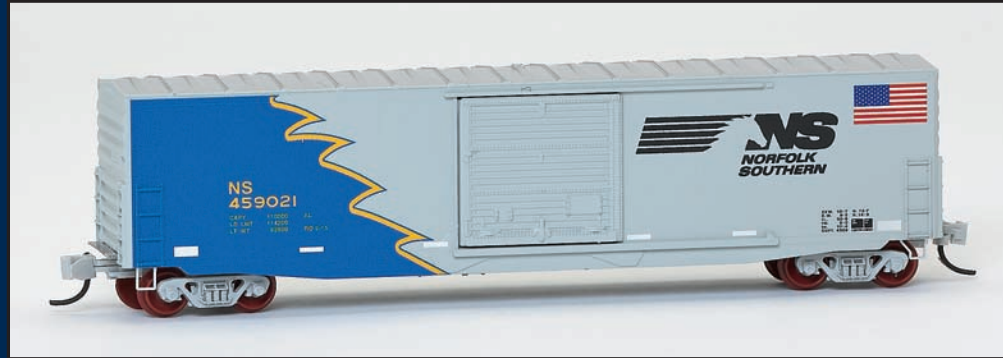


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Woodland Scenics sections are also pleasing and come in a small package. I'm not sure of the material, but most likely injection molded plastic. This kit is labeled "A2994 -Picket Fence".



While Woodland Scenics and Model Power sections are pre-colored, Bar Mills and Monroe Models both require painting during the assembly and finishing process.

The biggest drawback to most fencing seems to be short sections of fence. If you have a long run that needs fence you'll need to glue sections together. Not a particularly easy task in N scale for phfat phfingers!. The attachment points at which fence sections must be joined together are really miniscule, and my glue always seems to leave the glue container in gobs!

Attaching fence sections to the tabletop is another matter entirely, especially if your ground cover is thick. My cheat method is to glue a section of 1/32" brass rod onto the backside, (non-viewing side) of a few fence posts on a section. It's then a simple task to drill #65 holes into / through the train board to install those fence sections.

As regards working with the Model Power type plastic fence sections I've grown fond of the new \$2.97 mini-glue gun I bought. My old glue gun was hard to handle for N scale projects. You'll still get whisps of hot glue threads with the mini, but it'll be easier to clean up after it!

At any rate, kudos to the manufacturers for having stuff like this available to us as their products really enhance our models and modeling. ▶

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THE WLAN-MULTIMAUS THROTTLE CONTROLLER FLEISCHMANN

Z21

Model train control
PART 2

by Mike Pagano/ Images by Author



The WLANmaus from Roco/Fleishmann is a great addition to any Z21 system that utilizes a WiFi network for smart devices.



The WLANmaus is a lightweight wireless controller working through a WiFi signal that packs a lot of control to operate trains and accessories. The large LCD backlit screen with a rotary knob are some of the noticeable features on the face of the controller.

Contact your North America Roco/ Fleischmann Dealer for the availability of the Z21 system and any other Roco/Fleischmann products.

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This month's article is going to check out the Roco/ Fleischmann WLANmaus wireless throttle controller. In the last article, we touched on the Z21 Start system and hooked up the WiFi router to the command station. As stated in the last article, any smart device with the Z21 APP can communicate to the command station using the WiFi signal just like a laptop connects to the Internet through a router. This is also true when using the WiFi Roco/Fleischmann hand held throttle version that is named the WLANmaus.

Starting up the WLAN-Multimaus Controller

My WLANmaus # 10813 controller came packaged together with a multi-language instruction booklet to help get me familiar with the features. The Multimaus can be programmed to display in a few different languages. The controller uses three AAA batteries (not included) to be installed into the back of the throttle. Press the "OK" key to turn on the controller. To turn off the controller, press the "OK" & "MENU" key together. Before I started pressing buttons, I reviewed all the symbols of the display screen that is illustrated in Chapter 1.3 of the manual. Some of the great display features that I noticed on the LED display are the battery warning symbol, short circuit symbol, and an emergency stop symbol. The three levels of operation are: "LOCO, PROGRAM, SETTINGS" The first order of business is connecting to the Z21 WiFi Router through a couple of easy steps that are found in Part-1 Basic section of the manual. This is a one time setup. To start, hold down the "MENU" for a couple of seconds (or hit shift and menu buttons together) and the display will change to "LOCO". Use one of the two directional arrow keys to toggle over to "SETTINGS" and press "OK". Now toggle to "WiFi" and press "OK". The controller needs to connect to your router. I followed the directions by hitting "OK" to start a search for the correct router in my environment. As I continued with the instruction steps, I now needed to enter the WLAN Password, which is located on the bottom of my router. The telephone style keypad will change from letter to number by toggling the designated button. If you make a mistake, push the top left arrow button to delete the previous entry. Return to the main screen (hitting STOP) once this task is completed. Now take a look at the WiFi antenna in the top right hand corner. It should have bars along side of it. If not, shut off the Multimaus and then turn it back on. If the controller is flashing the WiFi sign, check the IP address. All the Roco WiFi Routers use an IP address of "192.168.111" I had to correct my IP address setting on my throttle by reading chapter 3.6 under WIFI in the manual. This step was very easy and my throttle instantly connected up to the command station once I had the IP address corrected. After the WiFi is communicating with your controller, it's time to run a train on your new Multimaus. The WLANmaus easily toggles from loco control to stationary decoder mode with one button. One nice feature is that the locomotive can be displayed as a custom entry of your locomotive description (Library) or the CV Address (Road #). I had my display read the locomotive model and road name abbreviated as "GP38CR" short for GP-38 Conrail. You have the option to use up to 12 characters in the field. Pressing the "Shift" key and "OK" at the same time allows you change the locomotive address by using the numeric function keys. Consisting can also be done with the Multimaus through CV-19. A locomotive consist is given a unique number when programmed with a consist. The locomotive direction of any unit in the consist can be reversed when needed by using the CV-29 programmer in the PROGRAM level.

What's nice about all of this programming is that it is done remotely just like your smart device. The WLANmaus is a great addition to any Z21 system that features an ergonomic shape with a backlit LCD screen to further enjoy running your favorite locomotives. For more information visit: www.z21.eu/en/products/z21-multimaus. ▸



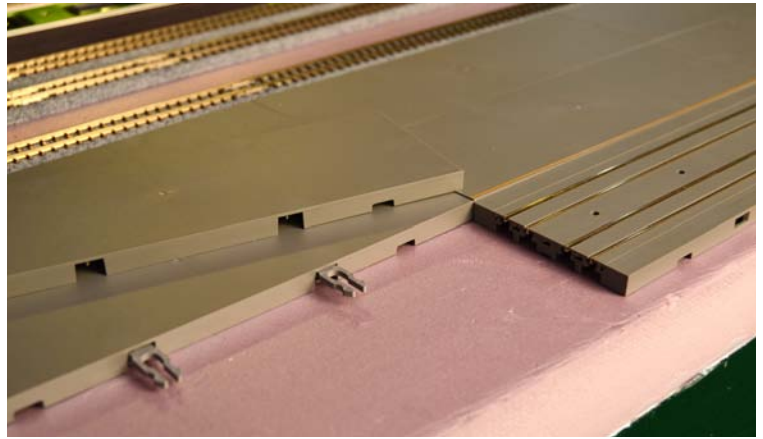
KATO UNITRAM

FREIGHT DEPOT

by Mike Pagano/ Images by Author

Last month I was looking at my options to model rails at grade level for my auto industry and I came across the Kato UNITRAM Freight Depot basic set, p/n #23-142. Don't be deceived by the title of the kit when looking at the box. It's not a structure but a clever expandable interlocking system of molded injected plastic that represents concrete slabs that have two pairs of rails embedded into the top of each piece. Kato suggests using the kit for a container or an auto-rack loading yard. The kit also comes with one auto ramp that needs to be

assembled. The basic set is configured as three sections wide and 41.5" long (1054 mm) You can also purchase any number of expansion sets (p/n #23-143) that are at a length of 56.125" (1426 mm) in order to make your loading operation fit to your yard specifications. You don't need to have a Kato Unitrack layout to interface with the connecting tracks. I recommend using the Snap Track Conversion p/n #20-045 to connect with existing flex track often used on layouts. This product creates great ready to run opportunity in modeling intermodal operations or autorack loading unloading facilities.

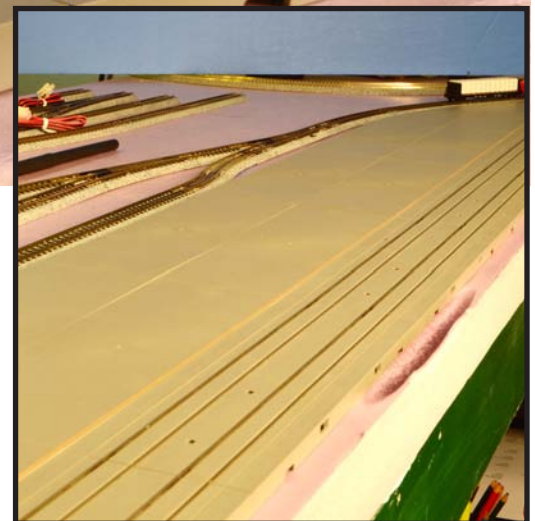


The unique connecting joiners attaches each panel together to build the platform.

The Kato Unitram Freight Depot Set takes minutes to set up due to Kato's unique modular design. The 23-142 kit comes as a basic set to get any intermodal or auto-rack operation started.



The end of the track butts up to a solid panel where a car ramp (kit is included) can be positioned to unload automobiles off autoracks.



The Kato Unitram Freight Depot Set saves a lot of time by giving an alternative from scratchbuilding grade level track. This kit installs quickly and I can use it as a temporary or permanent addition to my industry. I'm planning to weather the surface and make it permanent for the interior cut-a-way view of my Ford Factory. ▶



A PFAT PFINGERED PHFRENZY PHROJECT!

BUILD A TROLLEY DINER

by John Corky Whitlock/ Images by Author

I've been working on a new 18 x 36 module for a few weeks now. It's meant to fit between my pair of 36 x 36 amusement park modules.

I was satisfied with how the project was progressing, but I had this huge open "Plywood & Pacific" section of tabletop towards the front of the module that needed some sort of treatment.

My thoughts were to eventually finish this bare area as a sort of open-air food court using my trolley car diner kit bash as a centerpiece along with the Bachmann ice cream stand and some nifty food trailers from Oxford Diecast.

Early thoughts indicated that placement of all these items for food service would take time and that the scene really couldn't be rushed. So what to do to fill the void with a temporary fix in the meantime? How about some type of "previews of coming attractions scene?"



I spent computer time doing artwork and printing of the first billboard, which helped tie the initial scene together and give the look some purpose. I also painted the 3D printed picnic tables I had ordered from Shapeways and loaded them onto trucks for delivery along with park benches as well.

I thought the final pictures of the finished food court would have to wait until later, but then the urge to complete the scene bit me and I forged on, adding ground cover in the food court area, with yet another billboard announcing the grand opening.

Other items in the teaser scenes include an assortment of vehicles from my storage drawer, (a.k.a. “junque box”), as well as figures and other details.

The photos show what I ended up with. (Yeah, I know: “don’t end a sentence with a preposition.”)





The trolley car diner project started when I discovered a Model Power Birney shell amongst my castoff stuff. A bit of research yielded a b&w photo of a diner for kit bashing inspiration.



I used the shell pretty much in as found condition, adding clear styrene for window glazing. Where the size of smaller window openings couldn't be glazed with styrene I used a toothpick and stretched a thin layer of Sobo craft glue in the opening. Sobo dries clear and looks pretty good when used in this fashion.



Added details and signage followed. I'm certain most N scalers have overabundant supplies of detail parts on hand, and I'm no different. Some of the detail parts I used were purchased years ago and some of those manufacturers have either closed up shop, or sold their product line to other companies, so you may need to search Walthers to see what is currently available.

The roof details I found in my parts supply includes items from CalFreight, Period Miniatures, Cibolo Crossing, Rail Systems, and Current Line. Most of the parts are n-scale, but don't overlook smaller trolley parts in H0 scale.



Tables, chairs, and benches are injection molded plastic as are the figures. I purchase the figures (found on Ebay,) in bulk and repaint most of them. My lone scratch building project was the picnic table that I built from Evergreen strip styrene. It's a bit oversize, but it was no walk in the park constructing it from tiny bits of styrene.

I include food signs, diner sign and awning replica into a blank page on my publishing program, finally loading them on a memory stick for a trip to a local copy shop where they printed color copies for future use on this and future projects.

Signage really sets a model apart, and I've been gleaming images from internet searching. I then pasted those images which

The whole affair was mounted on a piece of scribed wood, and the model now anchors the outdoor food court area at Wobegon Gardens Amusement park. ▽

“BECAUSE NOBODY IS INNOCENT..”

ENHANCING BROADWAY LIMITED STOCK CARS

by Kim Saign/ Image by George Hollwedel



No names were changed because there are no innocents. It all started innocently enough. Our local dealer George H. posted to our club's list that there was a new run of Broadway Limited Imports stock cars with sound, (but no smell) coming soon. Well comments like that don't just slide by without further commentary in our group. You'd think we were all comedians in addition to modelers.

Shortly thereafter Jim H of Richmond Controls fame posted that he could talk to his dogs about a compact solution to the no smell problem. Jim is famously pro DC as opposed to DCC so I wasn't too sure about his solution. So I posted that it had to be DCC controlled. I didn't want any of that analog crap. Pun intended of course.

Jim is of course an innovator as anyone that has seen his lighting solutions can attest to. So he said he would see what he could work out and send me a sample to evaluate.

This did get me to thinking it would be possible to have a DCC controlled smell. Here is how we'll do it:

Fortunately the BLI stock cars with sound have power pickup so we won't need to install that. We're just going to hook up a basic 1 amp decoder to the rail pickups. Then we'll use a Lionel

smoke element with smoke wick (on ebay 10 for \$12.99 plus shipping) across the motor output wires to generate the smell. These smoke elements are 27 ohm so they should not draw more than 0.5 amps at max.

While Jim's offer for authentic fresh squeezed dog crap was generous, it just wouldn't have the correct aroma for a stock car. Only cow manure has the right smell. To get your very own just head to your local cow pasture. Find a cow patty and collect a small sample. A little goes a long way. When you get your sample home place a small piece in warm water. Then place the smoke wick in the water so it can soak up the particulate. After the smoke wick is thoroughly soaked let it dry on a piece of foil. After it has dried slide it over the smoke element then solder to the orange and grey wires of your decoder. Solder the red and black wires of your decoder to the power pickups in the stock car. Program your decoder to the road number of your stock car and you are ready for the realism only smell can bring to go along with sight and sound.

The way to use it will be to dial up the address of the decoder and increase the "speed" of that address. The warmer the smoke element gets, the more aroma will waft out of the slats on the stock car. Another problem solved with DCC! ▀



A MULTI PURPOSE

MONSTER HELIX

by Keith Lyons/ Images by Author

The Northern Pacific Tacoma Division layout I wanted to build had to fit into a 24' x 48' space. To maximize the scenery, I decided that the east-west transcontinental line would be on a high deck and the north south line to Canada would be on a waist high level.

The Auburn Yard was always the hub of freight operations and in a sense, the layout is a multiple out-and-back design. I decided to have a third level below the waist high deck to act as an active staging railroad to where trains could be moved, stored, and brought back onto the layout when needed.

The first part of the railroad I built was the 12' x 24' "crew lounge" which contained a work desk, a mini-fridge, and two helices. I later realized I could put the small town of Enumclaw along the wall that separates the lounge from the 36' x 12' scened layout.

I decided I could join these layers with a single multi purpose

helix. As I could build the lounge before the actual layout, a loop of track was built just below the ceiling (affectionately named "Heaven") so trains could run right away. The big helix was located above the stairway that led to the room that gave access to the inside of the helix. A smaller helix would be built on the other side of the room that allowed the east end of the railroad to link to the upper loop... and therefore joining the two helices. Before construction I realized I could run a line along the narrow shelf outside the stairwell that fed into the main helix to give access for visitors to put on their trains. Each level of the helix has four 90-degree sections (outside radius is 21 1/2", inside is 20") and a pair of tangent pieces about 12" long. Eight 8' 2x2s had 1/2" grooves offset at 3" intervals so the sections could be inserted into the grooves. This is a modified Richard Weyand design. These are strong enough that interior bracing is not necessary and allows for easy track cleaning and train access.

Friend Wayne Gilberts helped design and construct the pieces. Wayne suggested offsetting the access hatch so one has room to sit or stand comfortably on the floor away from the trap door after climbing up the removable ladder. Closing and standing on the trap door locks the ladder in place so it can't be moved while someone is in the helix (who would do such a thing?).

The dimensions were tested before mass production was started. Each piece was carefully traced around a template and carefully cut from 1/2" plywood. Before installation each vertical and horizontal component was painted a white primer (Kilz primer) for cleanliness, visibility, and aesthetics.

Construction started at the floor. Peco code 80 flextrack and

their foam roadbed was added and tested before covered by the next level. Special sections for tracks entering and departing the helix were added as needed. All turnouts were powered by Fulgarex switch machines (probably being replaced by servos in the future). The location of the tracks leaving and entering the helix help determine the height of the various tracks on the main layout. Tunnel liners are vinyl rain downspouts cut flush with the walls.

The Helix was started about 1996 and the upper level's mainline was running by 2004. I would do this again as, fortunately, careful track work has paid off and derailments are due to operator errors... *which of course never happens thanks to JNRI (NSR Issue 106 Mar/ Apr 2018 Page 57 JNRI Today: Prototype Tomorrow).*



Above. As one walks up the stairs to enter the layout, there is a stub siding at floor level that feeds the bottom of the main helix. This is H-E-double hockey sticks on the layout. It may have started as a joke to justify a floor to ceiling helix but the plan is to use this as part of operations. In theory this is the interface with the rest of the world.



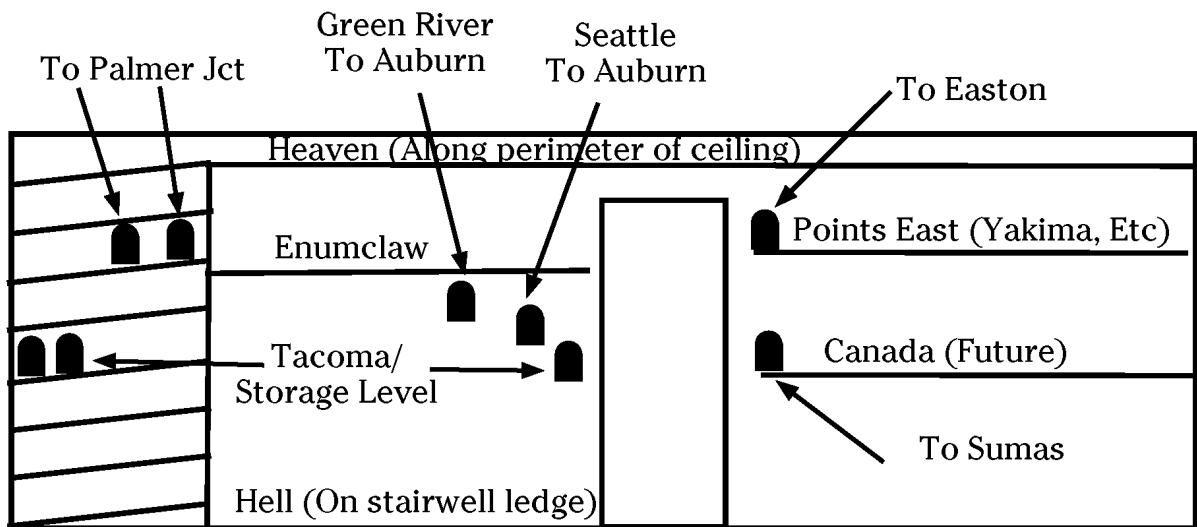
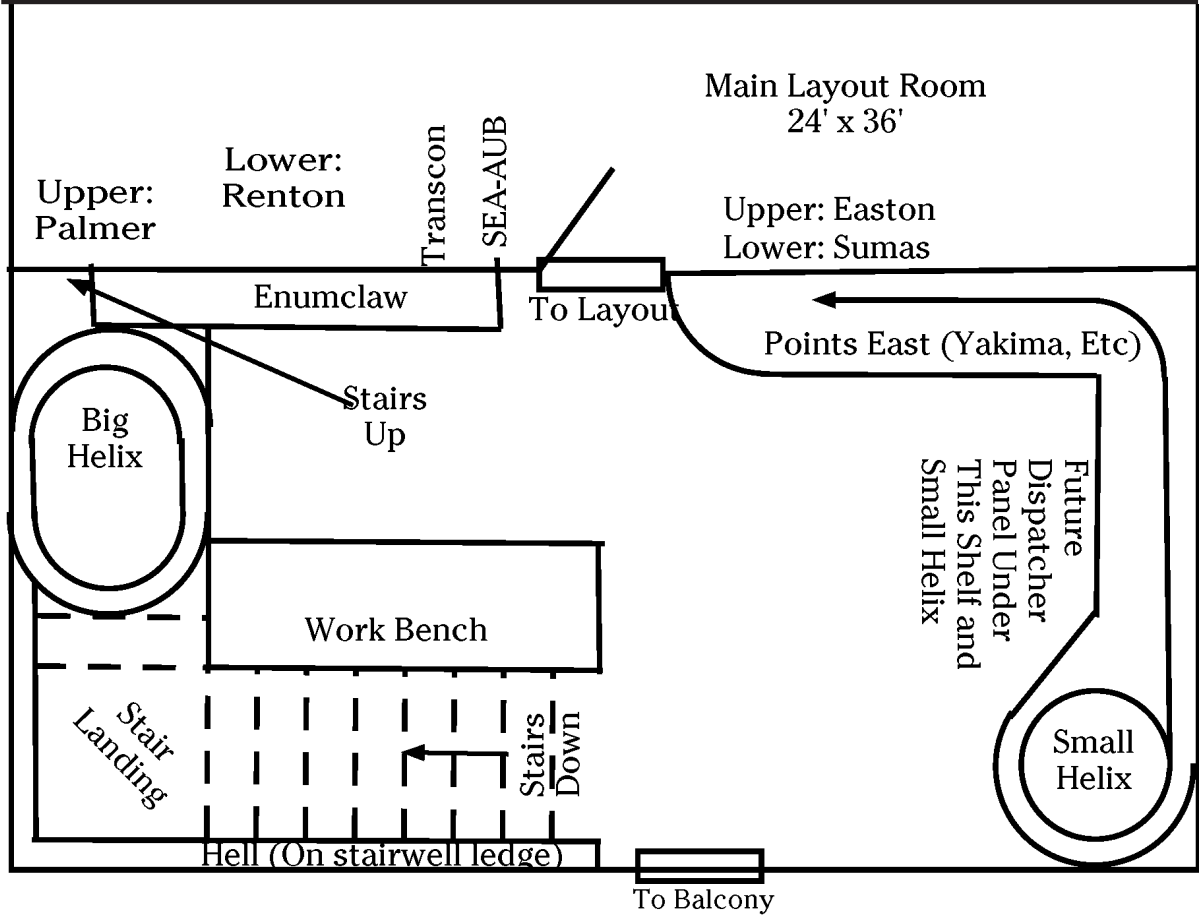
Above. The interior of the helix did not need any bracing as the outside bracing is enough. The helix is designed for double track but for operational purposes there are some sections of single track.



Above. Access to the inside of the helix is reached via a trap door above the stairwell. The hole is off-center to allow standing or sitting on the helix floor to allow closing of the door. Usually the access door is closed when someone is working inside the helix. This was used a lot during construction but thanks to careful trackwork and the running of track cleaning trains, we don't have to use it very often now.

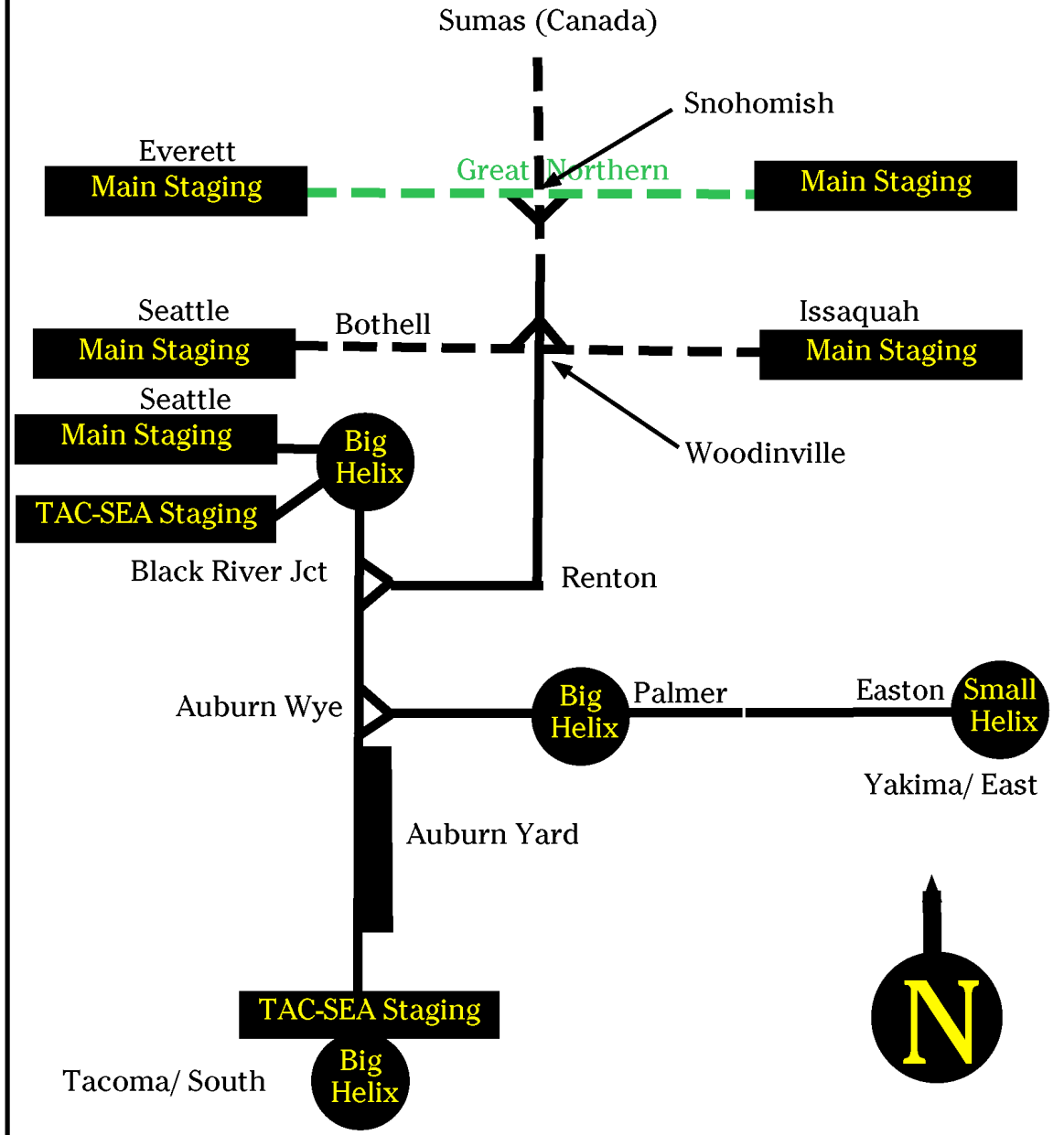
Previous Articles on the Northern Pacific Tacoma Division

NSR Issue 023 May/June 2004 Pages 22-24 Eclectic Benchwork
 NSR Issue 031 Sep/Oct 2005 Pages 32-34 Great Scenes
 NSR Issue 036 Jul/Aug 2006 Pages 52-57 Walthers 130' Turntable & Roundhouse
 NSR Issue 040 Mar/Apr 2007 Pages 36-41 Modeling Eagle Gorge
 NSR Issue 097 Sep/Oct 2016 Pages 28-35 Great Scenes: Touring Northern Pacific's Stampede Pass Crossing
 NSR Issue 126 Nov 2020 Pages 45-49 The Auburn Yard So Far.



Note: Not to scale.
 But if it was it would be 1" = 4' or 1:48.
 Print at 30% to model on your layout.
 © 2021 Keith Lyons and Kirk Reddie

Northern Pacific Tacoma Division Simplified Schematic



Above. Freight service on the Northern Pacific in Puget Sound was primarily focused on the NP's yard at Auburn, Washington. Freight to and from the east were handled at Auburn. From there transfers would bring cuts of cars to Seattle, Tacoma, and south to Portland, Oregon. From those yards, locals would fan out and serve the various industrial branches. The transcontinental line is represented on my upper deck. The lower deck will represent the Auburn Yard to Renton, along the east side of Lake Washington. At Woodinville a near-grand junction connects with branches west to Lake Union and Interbay, east to Issaquah and North Bend, and north to Sumas and the border with Canada. The Tacoma Division uses two helices and two hidden staging yards to get trains in position. The main helix has multiple lines radiating from the helix. The Tac-Sea staging yard is under Auburn and Renton and can stage trains between Tacoma and Seattle, or turn trains in both directions. Under the line to Sumas is double track hidden staging railroad with multiple double ended sidings where full trains can be staged. The main passenger operations are the *North Coast Limited*, *Mainstreeter*, and #5/6 that run between Seattle and Yakima/East. In my era there were also 4 pairs of Seattle-Portland pool trains that run from the wall north of Black River Junction to south of Auburn (though the Milwaukee/UP line is in the aisle) and the Milwaukee's *Olympian Hiawatha* and *Columbian* ran backwards to and from Tacoma.



Above. Depending on the task needed to be accomplished, the track varies between single and double tracks, crossovers, etc. After many years about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Peco foam roadbed has deteriorated. It can easily be replaced.



Above. Here is the junction of the main level to the helix. It represents where trains go to, or return from Seattle, Washington, and the start of the double track Seattle-Portland mainline that leads to Auburn and eventually reaches Portland, Oregon.



Above. The area below Enumclaw, which is to be the only scened area in the lounge area, are three lines that join lines from the main layout room to other levels of the main helix. The upper line is Auburn to the east (Palmer is the next modeled area). The double track line is Auburn to Seattle. The lower right line is a connection from the main staging track level going down the helix to H-E double hocky sticks.. The electronics are power supplies and boosters for the helix, to be tidied up later. All "staging" track (non scened areas) is Peco code 80 and all track in scened areas is code 55 MicroEngineering flextrack with modified ME or Atlas turnouts. Just prior to passing through the wall I transition from the Peco code 80 to MicroEngineering code 55 for all of the "exposed" operational trackage.



The prototype was without tunnels here so no portal. This is the other side of the lounge area. This area is the Tacoma Division's Black River Junction and the diverging track leads to Renton and eventually Sumas on the border with Canada. There were two Black River Junctions. This is south of the surviving BRJ that was built by the Pacific Coast and used by the Milwaukee Road. Below this scene is a set of long double ended sidings that are Tacoma and south staging that can be reversed and run back up to Auburn or go through the wall to the main helix.



Above. This is the other side of the Tacoma Division's mainline east of Auburn that leads to the main Helix. Trains from here reenter the main layout room at Palmer.



Above. The center area is Yakima and points east. The line above this is the "heaven" loop. Below is storage that eventually will be the Canadian side of the border just north of Sumas, Washington.



Above. Six trains can be staged here on double ended sidings and additional trains can be staged above the eastern helix.



Above, top to bottom. The “heaven” loop, the line from the helix to “heaven”, the junction at the east end of the Tacoma Division, and the temporary control panel and wiring.



Above. This is the east end of the Tacoma Division's mainline. Trains can be reversed on the lower track or climb the helix and climb to the "heaven" loop. From there they can switch to the main helix and reappear elsewhere or go into storage. Below this level will be Canada and the north end of the Tacoma Division, as well as the main Dispatcher console.



Above. Here we can see where the east-west mainline leaves the helix for Palmer, where the branch to Enumclaw leads to the area. In theory future dispatchers can work a town when they aren't swamped. Above is the junction in "heaven" where trains can be reversed. And you get to see my temporary wiring here, too. ▶

TRAVEL GUIDE N EVENTS

2021 MAY 15-16 OH Hilliard/ Columbus area.
12th Annual Ohio N-scale Weekend at the
Franklin County Fairgrounds, 4100 Columbia St.,
Hilliard, OH
<http://www.centralohiontrak.org/>

Expected:

2022 JUN ??-?? TN Nashville.
28th Annual National N Scale Convention

2023 JUN ??-?? NV Sparks/ Reno area.
29th Annual National N Scale Convention. ▶

OBSERVATIONS

Thoughts by Kirk Reddie



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Economies of N Scale

The above photo is a Unique Lines wind up train that was a competitor to Marx. Tin snips and brakes: Advantage: Large scales.

Traditional brass has been phased out of US N and really expensive in O and H0. A big part of this is the explosion of high quality plastic rolling stock. This is due to improved software and industrial machine tools. At one time the better N was more expensive than the better quality H0, but that isn't true anymore. H0 locomotives may have more features but they are also really expensive. Factory painting and let-

tering continues to be better than most of us can dream of doing.

Some rolling stock will never get the demand to be offered by traditional volume builders. Are we out of luck?

3D printed shells continue to improve. Hopefully a project has a donor chassis. I would think it just a matter of time when quality chassis can be printed for low quantity batches of high quality projects. Until then I'll be working on my cobbled projects but I suspect N will be early adopters of the next generation of custom exotic locomotives and cars. ▶

THANKS

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SEE YOU NEXT ISSUE!