The S Resource for S Scale

NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE

December/January 2016
Vol. 2 # 2

St. Louis S Fest
Finishing Up Projects
The Minnesota Heartland
A Quonset Style Building
Some Thoughts On Weathering
Who Says We Can't Mix Scales?
And Much More...

THE S RESOURCE
NEWS, REVIEWS, INFORMATION TO USE
SCALE

Published Bi Monthly

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December/January 2016
Vol 2 No. 2

Welcome to the online *S Scale Resource* magazine. The magazine is presented in an easy to use format. The blue bar above the magazine has commands for previewing all the pages, advancing the pages forward or back, searching to go to a specific page, enlarging pages, printing pages, enlarging the view to full screen, and downloading a copy to your computer.

Front Cover Photo

Minnesota Heartland Railway's Number 5 pulls a string of cars on Ken Zieska's beautiful layout. We paid Ken a visit this past July.

Rear Cover Photo

Another view of Ken Zieska's layout and attention to detail.

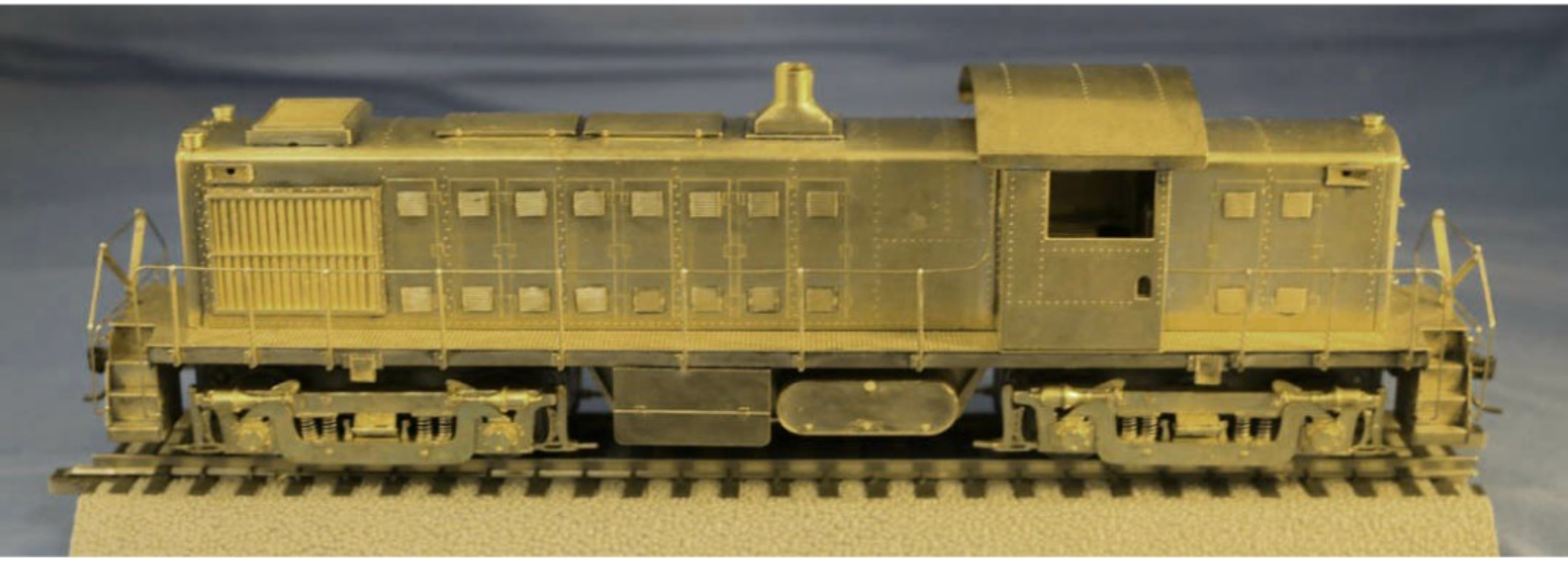
Bill Of Lading

The Model Railroad Resource LLC publishes *THE O SCALE RESOURCE* and *THE S SCALE RESOURCE*. Be sure to look at both of our magazines. There are many articles in our magazines that are not scale specific and will be of interest to you. Click the magazine title in this announcement to see the magazine.

Des Plaines Hobbies
S Scale America

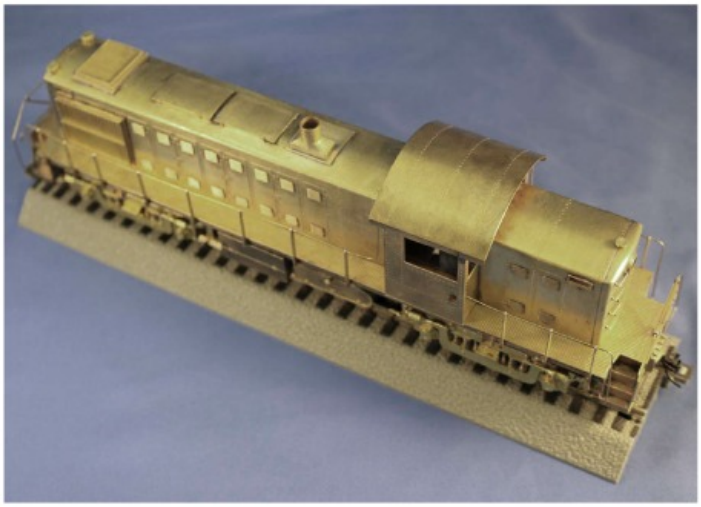
S Scale RS1 Update

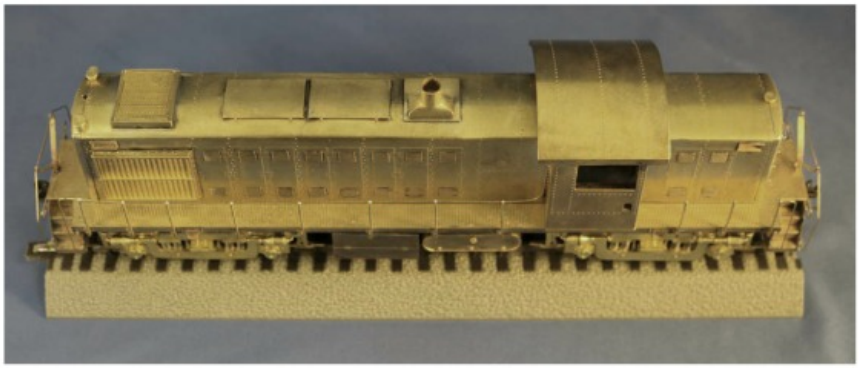
Available late December



All new brass RS1 body kit.

All new details, lost wax castings, and photoetchings with preformed hood.
Complete, illustrated photo instructions.
Designed to utilize American Models diecast trucks (not included).
Brass sideframes and Pittman motor available separately.





Body kit only: $335.00
Brass sideframes: $20.00 when purchased with kit
Pittman motor: $40.00 only when purchased with kit

Available directly from

Des Plaines Hobbies/S Scale America 1524 Lee Street Des Plaines, Illinois
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Master Card, Visa, Discover, American Express

From the Publisher's Desk

Thanksgiving is here, and the holiday season is upon us. Now is the time to take a look at our lives and what we are thankful for. One of those things is probably the people in your lives, not only family, but all of the wonderful people we have met thoughout our lives and modeling endeavors. As Charles Dickens taught Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol" about his life, we can apply the same principles to modeling and reflect upon projects past, projects current, and projects future. Take a look at projects that never got finished, and be thankful for those that have. Are there some that have been negelected? Are there current ones that you just can't seem to finish? Are there ones in your future that long to be started? With those principles in mind, I would like to highlight the future of *The S Scale Resource*, and a few minor changes that have recently taken place.

The first of these is an organizational change. The Model Railroad Resource LLC is now soley owned by me, with Dan continuing on as Managing Editor and Advertising Executive. Glenn has stepped down as editor and co-owner, but you will still see articles from him in both *The O Scale Resource* and *The S Scale Resource.* Click here to see the letter from him in the October/November issue of *The S Scale Resource*.

The second change is cosmetic - the "News and Reviews" section has been retitled "News You Can Use". We don't do reviews, mainly because we prefer to be impartial; however, we want to keep our readers informed. If your're a manufacturer, send us a note about any new or upcoming items. If you're a reader and have some newsworthy S scale information you'd like to share with the modeling community, let us know.

The third change is the addition of "On the Workbench". This area will feature modelers' current projects. Send us a picture of what you're working on. Who knows, maybe you'll inspire someone! Or, if you're a modeler and have put together a kit or scratch built something, why not write an article? We are always looking for great projects and experiences by modelers that can be shared with our readers. Not an author, don't worry – we can help with that too. If you've got the basics written down and have some photos, we can work with you, add some polish, and make you and author. Feel free to contact me or Dan via email:

amy@modelrailroadresource.com or daniel@modelrailroadresource.com

This issue features some great articles, including Ken Zieska's Minnesota Heartland layout. This layout is a great example of how railroads converge into large cities. Coinciding with that article, we visit with Tony Dixon to build a Quonset hut. We also have an update from Jim Kindraka on projects from previous issues of *The S Scale Resource*. That article, along with one on weathering and one on 1-2-3 blocks, rounds out this issue. So sit back and enjoy reading this issue.

Dan and I will be on the road in January, and can't wait to meet our readers and make new friends on our first trip to the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show January 30-31, 2016. We are looking at the new year like Scrooge, and so should you. Learn from your past, make the most of the present, and embrace the future! Make some lists, start a new project, go back to an old one, or finish an ongoing one; but above all, remember to be thankful for everything and everyone in your lives, and share your talents and friendship.

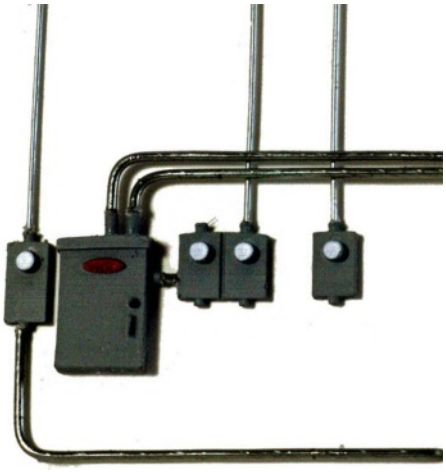
Happy Reading & Happy Modeling,

Amy Dawdy

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Here are the latest detailing additions for S Scale Modelers from our friends at Model Tech Studios LLC.

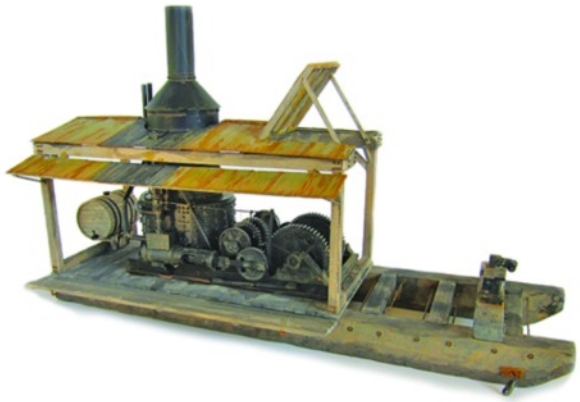
Building Electrical, Modular S Scale Detail Pack: Bring power detailing to your structures. Detailing includes, Single, Double and Triple Power Meters, Junction Box and Power Heads, plus Conduit. 12 Piece Set in S scale to create any configuration you need...completely modular for easy use! Also available in O and HO scale. Comes Pre-Finished and Layout Ready.



Steel JIB LOADING CRANE, comes fully assembled and layout ready. Great loading dock transfer crane, on a pier, coal loading, logging scenes and more. Also available in HO and O scale.

Tom Dempsey of Clover House sent us a note about some items that are now back in stock. Part number 3248 .025" Straightened Spring Temper Brass Wire and part number 3252 .040" Straightened Spring Temper Brass Wire are back in stock. Also, part numbers 9600-11, 9600-21, and 9600-31 Dry Transfer White Railroad Roman Condensed Bold Alphabet lettering sets are back in stock.

KMP Models has brought out a new kit, the Yarder Boiler, which has been popular in O and HO. Scale lumber, custom resin and white metal castings. 3 " x 9 3/4" x 5 3/4"H



Jeff Schwank, of TractorFab, is pleased to announce the immediate availablity of their new 1/64 Scale Road Sign Kits. Each kit includes two printed cards of signs, all ready to cut out. The signs are printed in accurate colors, with the correct “Highway Gothic” font. The back of each sign is precolored “silver” and includes a small anti-theft warning label, just like the real thing! Simply cut them out, and glue to the post of your choice.

Kit #324, titled “Rural America”, includes many common signs found throughout rural North America, along with some obsolete signs from times past. This kit is perfect for the typical farm display.

Kit #325, titled “Suburban and Multi-Lane”, includes signs found more often in heavy traffic areas – perfect for displays depicting busy areas or heavy truck traffic.

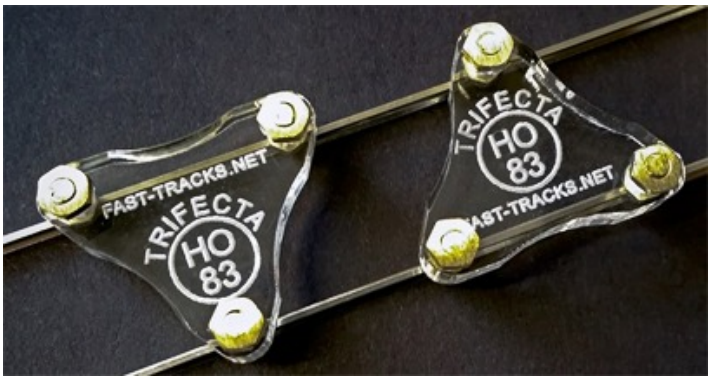
TractorFab is also announcing a new addition to their Livestock Trailer Series - the 36 foot Wilson Foreman gooseneck trailer. The trailer is a tri-axle configuration, and is available in two different side panel configurations. The model is fully licensed to TractorFab by Wilson Trailer, of Sioux City, Iowa, and has been designed directly from Wilson's build diagrams. The trailer is similar in nature to their previously released 24 foot tandem Ranch Hand, with several improvements and added details. The trailer is available in kit form, or assembled. See their Website for more details.

Wilson 36' Foreman Trailer by TractorFab. 36' is the floor length – overall trailer length is 44'.

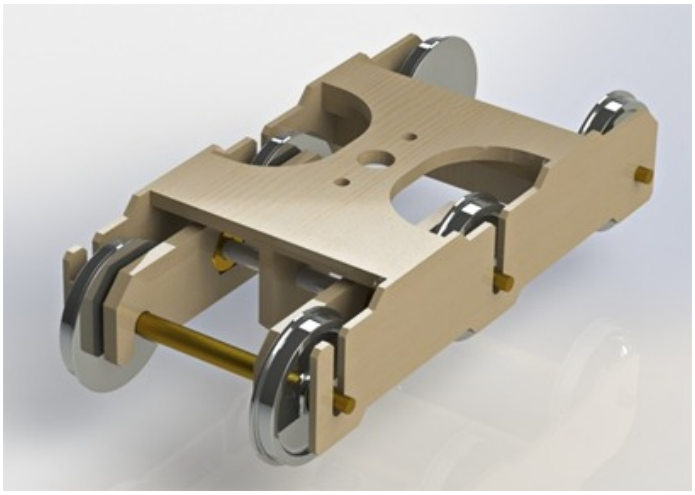
As part of Wilson's 125th anniversary, Wilson is installing special mediallions on all of their trailers for 2015. A special decal is included in TractorFab's kit, shown here adjacent to the nose door.

The Foreman Trailer is available in two slightly different side panel configurations: The “D” punch is shown on top, and “K” punch is shown on the bottom.

There are a couple new S scale products from the Fast Tracks folks at handlaidtrack.com.
They are making a three point track gauge for laying S scale track. Use the three point track gauges when hand laying track work for precise gauging. A three point track gauge is the most effective way to hold rail while building any type of track work.



They also have rigid beam compensation frame kits for American Models Heavyweight Passenger car trucks. This laser cut kit builds up into an elegant solution for improved tracking through uneven track with 6 wheel trucks. Originally designed for Trevor Marshall's Port Rowan S scale layout, they are now available to all S scale modelers as an easily built kit.



BPH Enterprises - home of the incomparable SceniKing Roll Outs Backdrop System will end production and distribution of SceniKing Backdrop Kits and Roll Outs before the end of 2015. They will continue to fill wholesale and retail orders until remaining inventory is exhausted, but no later than December 18, 2015.

Questions or comments?

E-mail us here.

Attention manufacturers, importers, distributors and the like!

Send us your news items for publication in the next *S Scale Resource*! For information contact Daniel Dawdy, daniel@sscaleresource.com.

2015 S FEST
ST. LOUIS, MO

Pictures and captions by Bob Nicholson

The 2015 S Fest was in St. Louis this past October 30th through November 1st. Amy and I were unable to attend as we were previously scheduled into the Cleveland O Scale Show that same weekend. Bob Nicholson to shot some photos and passed on captions for us. Bob, we both thank you very much. I think you did an outstanding job for us.

S Fest Chairman, Mo Berk.

Ron Bashista points out a feature on one of his new ALCO RS-11's

Don Heimburger makes change for a purchaser.

Jeff Madden talks to a modeler while Roy Meisner looks on.

Long-time S Fest attendee and dealer, Chris Thoms from Cedar Rapids, IA, was present and accounted for.

Chris Thoms is an interesting fellow, although blind, he is a zealous AF collector and trader, going entirely by feeling with his fingers, and he has a good time. Tom Lindsay helps him, and they are generally inseparable.

The only operating layout was by the local S Gauge Club.

Roy Meisner also had a display of his S scale trucks on display.

The AF dealers were displaying their wares en masse.

A pair of American Models T&P GP-9's looking for a new home.

Classic EL colors adorn this pair of AM E8's

This little gem was hiding among the piles of AF largess

Nothing says Santa Fe like a classic red and silver Warbonnet.

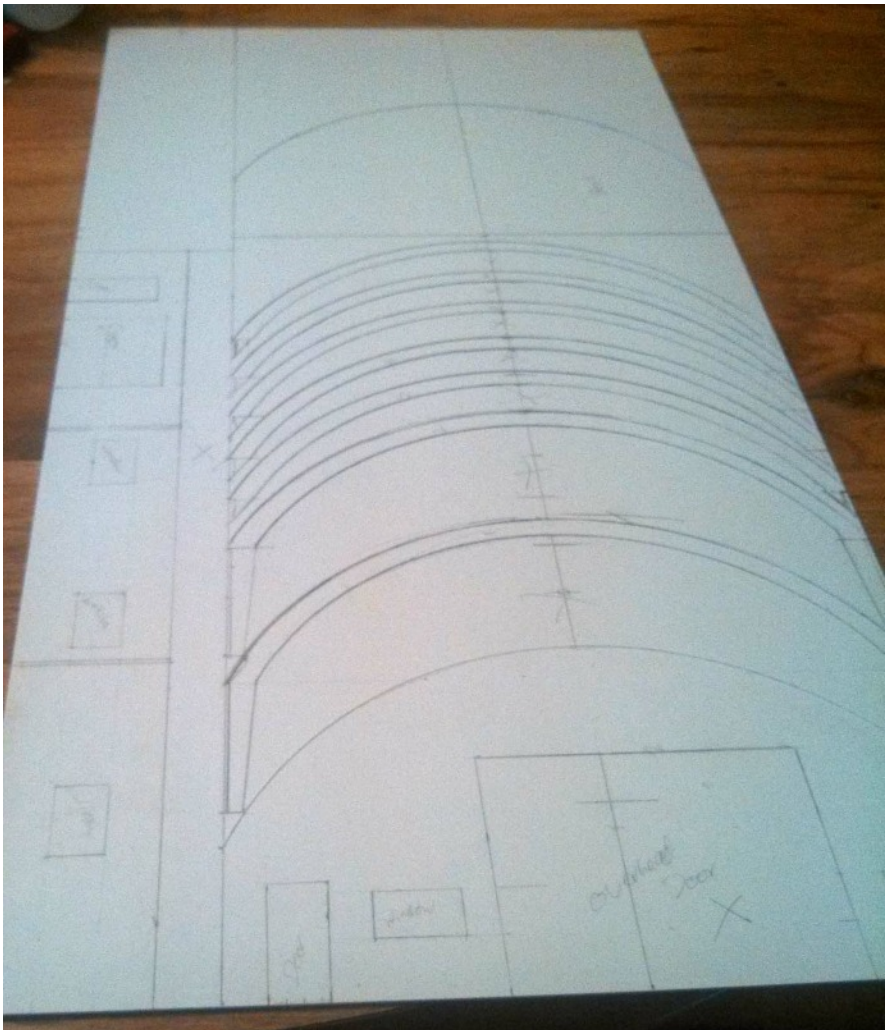
This MKT Texas Special looks pretty nice, too.

A Quonset Style Building

By Glenn Guerra Photos by Tony Dixon

In the August/September issue of *The S Scale Resource*, we saw a farm co-op module built by Tony Dixon in Iowa. He works as a millwright on full size grain elevators as a profession. Tony had an HO scale model railroad at one time, but has taken it down. There is a lot of modeling in 3/16" to the foot in farm miniatures and Tony likes to model some of the farm co-op items he works with as a profession. This is leading him back to model railroading and S Scale in particular. Along with our model trains, we build layouts that have buildings on them we need to model. Tony uses kits, but he also scratch builds many of the buildings on his modules. All of these buildings are adaptable to scenes on our layouts. When Tony was telling me all of this, I thought we should do an article on how he made the Quonset Hut type of building because it is distinctive. Tony sent me a lot of photos so here we go.

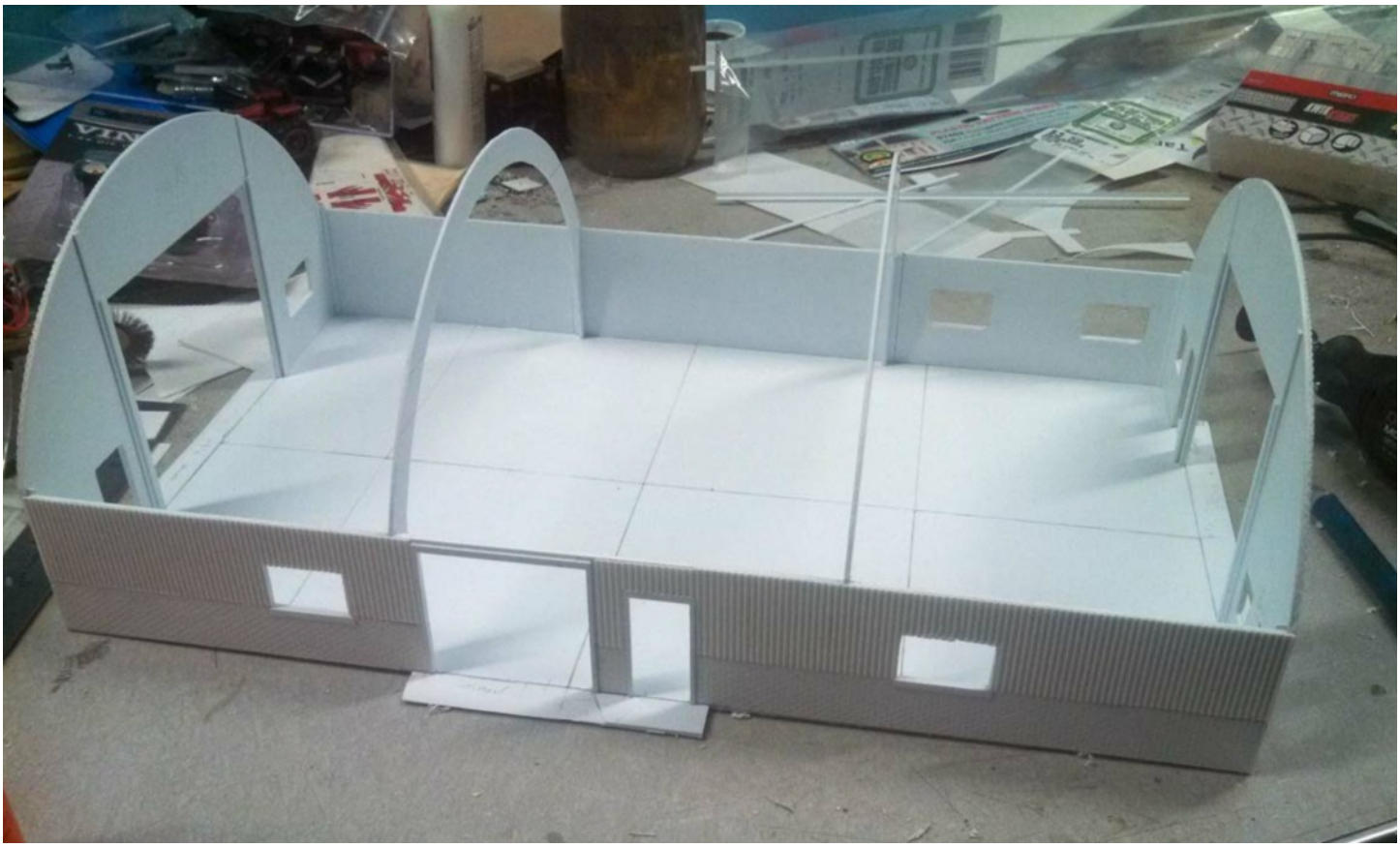
To start with, Tony doesn't necessarily model a specific building, but tries to capture the look and style of a building. He said that he has seen a number of these types of buildings around co-ops and farms. When he designs the model, he tries to think about where it will be on the module. This will determine where doors and windows will be located. When real buildings are designed, they are made to fit the location also. This is a little backwards from the way we normally do things on a layout. Many times we make the scene fit the buildings we have, and it does not always work well. Tony has built three of these buildings already and no two are the same. Each one was designed for the location it would be. On Tony's module, the building would be up against the wall and the back side would not show, so he left doors and windows off of the back side. The other two buildings were made for other people who would use them in different locations so the door and window details changed. These are good points to consider when designing or modifying buildings for your layout.



Here are some of the panels for the Quonset Hut laid out on a sheet of .060" styrene. Notice that Tony was able to nest some of the parts to save styrene. He drew two lines parallel to the right side of the sheet. One line represents the other side of the building, while the other line is a center line. Next, he found the center of all the arcs. He did this with a square, working off of the right side of the sheet. By doing it this way, he minimized the error in the drawings and all the parts came out correct. When he drew the arks, he used a compass with two steel points. The second steel point scribed the line for the arc providing the break line for the styrene.

The next step is to create the plans for the building. Tony starts with some quick sketches to see how the building will look. One of the considerations is the footprint of the building. The first building Tony built was to replace an existing building on his module. This determined the length and width of the building. Use a similar idea on your layout buildings. Determine what the width and length of your building will be based on the size of the space you have. The building does not need to be square or symmetric. If your size would dictate a pie shaped building or a rounded corner, design it into your building. Another consideration would be whether the whole building will be on the layout. Look in the Jeff Lang's layout in the September/October issue of *The O Scale Resource*. He has a freight house mock up where only half the building will be built on the layout.

In this view of the end of the building, you can see that Tony is applying the siding and trim to the part while it is still flat and easy to handle.



Here the building is starting to take shape. Tony had two full ribs and three partial ones, not shown. He scribed the styrene floor to look like concrete. Note the strips around the end doors. These are to locate the end doors.

Tony then starts to make scale drawings. He has a simple drawing board with a square and some triangles for drawing aids. If you are using commercial doors and windows you will need to measure them and draw them on your plan to see how they will look. Think about trim and how it will be on the finished building. Also, think about how you will do the corners. If you are making a building like Tony did with corrugated siding, think about how you will make the joint at the corner. There are a lot of different techniques to hide the corner. Tony used trim at the corner and was then able to just cut the siding and overlap it. On a brick building, you will need to make a miter joint at the corner. Another consideration is the thickness of the siding material. The material Tony was using was thin so he decided to make a core for the building. He usually uses .060" thick styrene for the core. The core the end wall and side wall will overlap and that joint will affect the length of the wall. Take this into account when you are dimensioning your drawing. When you make your drawings, put dimensions on them and do not try to transfer from drawing to styrene to cut. Use the dimensions.

Note the styrene angle glued between the wall and the roof rib. This gives the joint a lot more strength.

Tony was making this building for a friend and he wanted to have the roof look like it was repaired, so Tony overlaid some different style roofing material over the old roof material. Tony said gluing the roof on was a bit tricky. He used rubber bands wrapped around the building to hold the roof in place. The trick was to get the right tension so as not to distort the roof.

In this view of the finished building, you can see how the roof has a patched look. This is an interesting way to make the patched roof by actually re-roofing the model. Tony primes the styrene with Krylon primer made for plastics, and then paints the building with Rust-Oleum silver aluminum He likes the silver aluminum even thought it is a bit shinny when new. When you weather the building, it tones down and looks like a galvanized roof material. Tony said the paint made to be galvanizing was too gray.

Tony likes to use chalks for weathering. Normally he grinds artist chalk on some sand paper as in the bottom photo, but he has used the commercial chalks like the Tamiya brand shown in the top photo. When you make your own, some people say it will not stick well to smooth surfaces. I asked Tony about that and he said that was right, but he over sprays the model with matte finish and that binds everything. He feels that the commercial weathering powder seems a little greasy because it has a binder in it. The message is to try things and see how they work for you. Do they give you the results you want?

These views show the finished building after Tony weathered it. On the end of the roof, you can see the two layers of roofing material and that adds to the overall effect of a building that has been re-roofed.

Tony has made three of these building so far. The building in this article was built for a friend who installed it on a module of an Oklahoma farm scene. It would look good on your layout don't you think?

Once Tony has some basic drawings of his building, he begins to lay it out on a sheet of styrene. He uses a fine tip mechanical pencil to make the drawing on the styrene. Even the fine tip can be too wide of a line for accurate cutting, so many times Tony said he will work with a scriber. The scribed lines are not as easy to see in the styrene, but are much more accurate than the pencil line. Most people cut styrene by scribing and breaking it and that is what Tony does also. When he was telling me about this, Tony mentioned that when he makes the arc for the curved roof, he uses a compass with the lead removed and replaced with another steel point. When he draws the arc, he scribes the styrene at the same time. Do this a few times and you have a nice line to break on. Once the basic walls are cut, Tony cleans the edges with a file or sand paper. Windows and doors are drilled at the corners and cut out a little at a time. They are then filed to clean them up. One last note on the layout. Always work from one edge of the styrene only. Draw all the vertical lines with your square from the base line. Then draw the horizontal lines by measuring from the base line up. Put a mark on each vertical line where the horizontal line will intersect. Then connect the intersections to make the vertical lines. If you are using a drafting table you can draw the horizontal lines, but not for layout work. The reason you can not in layout work is that you can not be sure the two sides you are working from are square. Never assume they are even if they look like they are.

Once the parts are cut, Tony starts assembly on his buildings. I asked how he keeps the walls square during assembly. He said he uses 1-2-3 blocks. These are blocks that machinists use and get their name from the fact they are 1" wide by 2" tall by 3" long. You can get a pair of hobby grade ones from Enco for around $13. The more precision blocks are around $75 a pair, but we don't need that precision for what we are doing. I use mine a lot. They make good weights, and since they are square on all sides, they work well for gluing things up square. I asked Tony about glue. He has tried a lot of glue and said that he still likes styrene cement for styrene the best. Tony said that the ACC glues will work, but you still have different materials between the glue and the styrene. With styrene cement, the glue is actually a solvent that dissolves the styrene, therefore, your joint is all styrene, and there won't be problems with adhesion or temperature change.

Once the core is built Tony starts to add the siding. He uses a variety of different manufacturer's siding materials. Tony said to not be turned away by how they label the product. He has measured a lot of material marked for HO or O scale and found it actually works better for S scale. On the Quonset Building, many of the prototypes are military surplus buildings that have been repaired numerous times over the years. Tony was telling me that the buildings were designed to have the corrugations in the roof run from side to side. This was fine when the buildings were produced in a factory and the panels were rolled curved. When the buildings get repaired, all you can get is flat corrugated sheets. To bend the panels to fit the curved roof they run the corrugations from front to back, allowing the sheets to bend and follow the contour of the roof. Sometimes Tony said they just use flat panels and do the best they can about bending them over the existing roof. They end up with kinks in them because you are trying to bend against the corrugations. Tony wanted his buildings to have a used look, so he modeled the roof as built in areas and repairs in other areas. He also used different types of corrugated material since the repairs were made out of what the local store had, not what was correct. This is a really nice touch in making your buildings. Very few buildings stay the way they were built, and these additions and changes add a lot to your model scene.

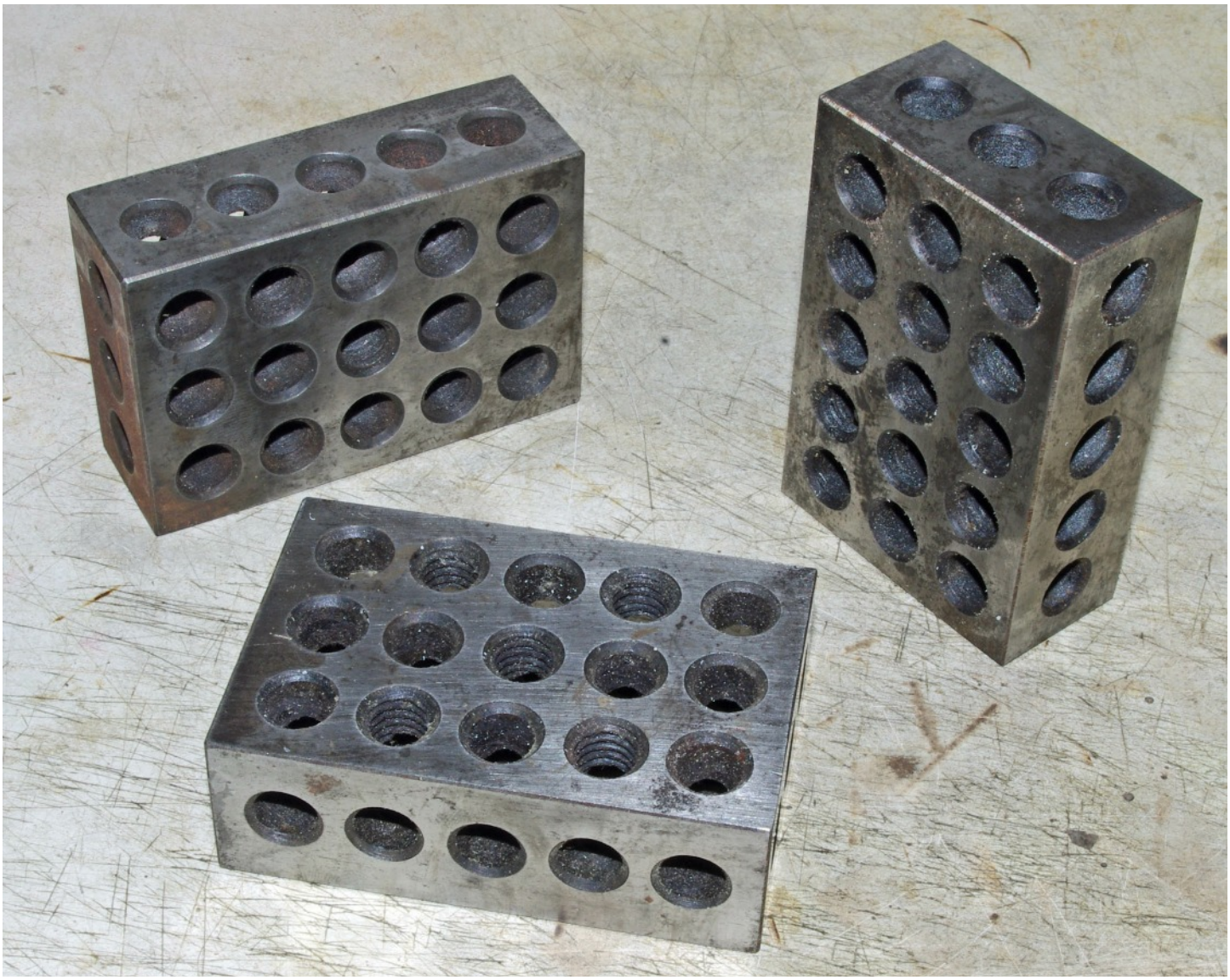
Next comes painting. Tony sprays his styrene buildings with Krylon paint first using a primer for styrene called Fusion. To get the galvanized look, Tony likes Rust-Oleum silver aluminum. He tried some other paints that were made to look like galvanized metal, but he said that they looked to gray to him. For weathering, Tony likes chalks. There are some different views on chalks. Tony uses regular artist chalk and said it works fine. Many people say the down side is that the chalk does not adhere permanently. Tony said he usually over sprays the building with a matte finish anyway so adhesion is not a problem. Another product Tony has used is pre-made weathering powders. These come with binders in them. Tony said they seem a little "greasy" to him, but he likes the results. The message here is to try some different things and see what you like.

These are interesting buildings that could find a home on any post 1945 railroad layout. They are not hard to make and can be made in most any size. The arched roof is very distinctive and would be a nice contrast to normal peeked roofs. The building and weathering techniques could also be applied to other buildings. Try adding a repair to one of the buildings you are making and see how it looks.

The S Scale Resource on the Road

We'll be set up at the Amherst Railroad Hobby Show this January 30th and 31st. Stop by for a free gift, and let us know how much you enjoy *The S Scale Resource.*

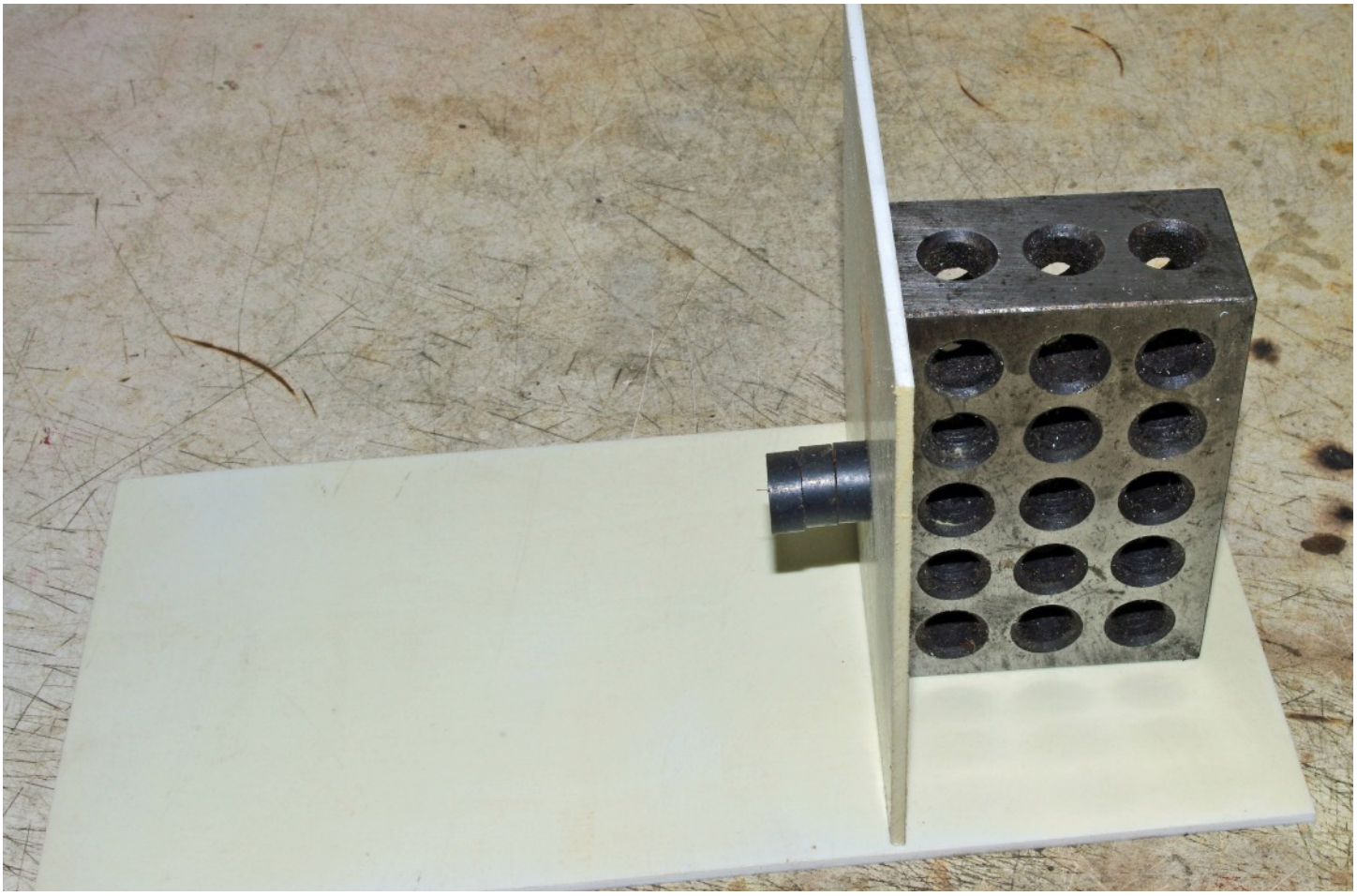
1-2-3 Blocks



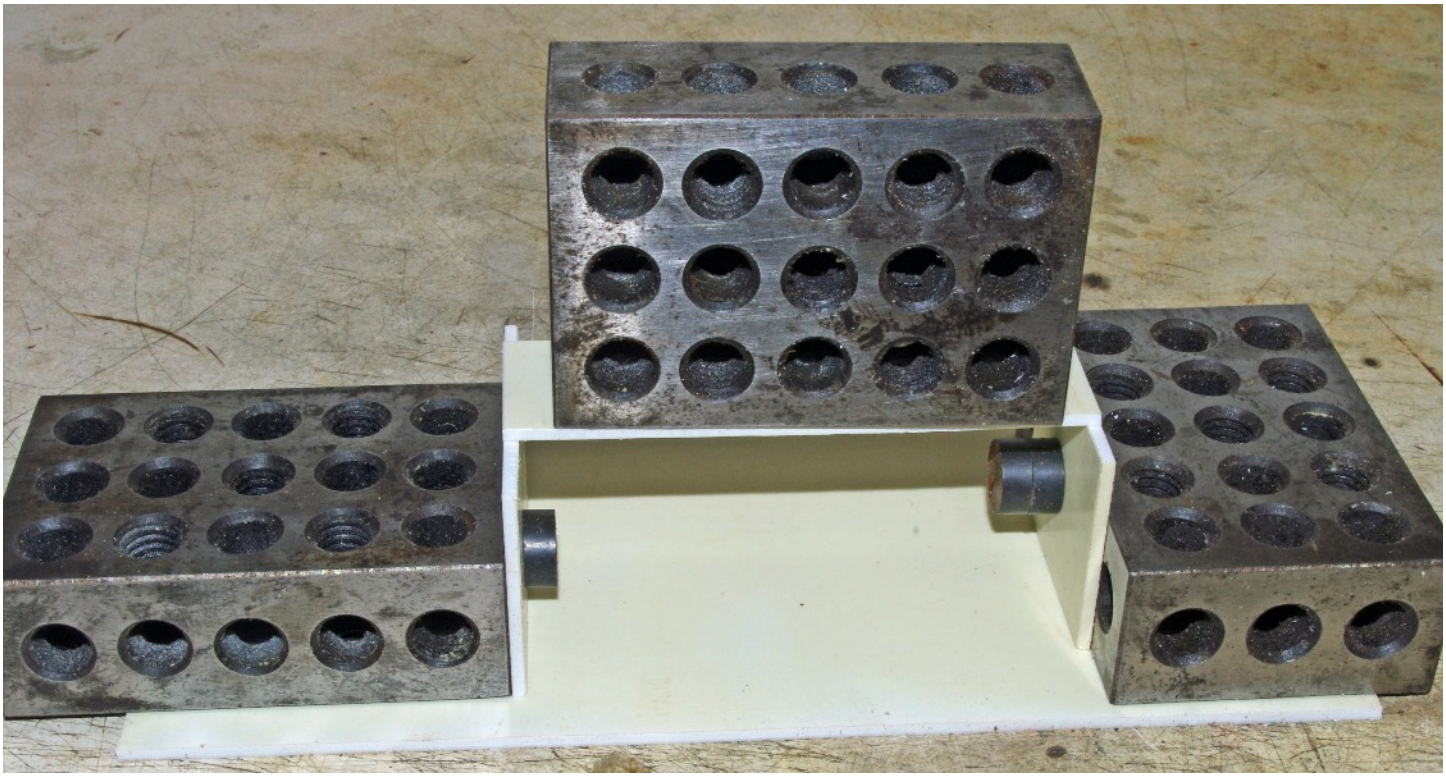
By Glenn Guerra

Tony Dixon tells us how he made a Quonset style building in this issue. In that article, Tony talks about using 1-2-3 Blocks. These are very handy machinists' set up blocks for use in model work. They get their name from being 1" x 2" x 3" in dimension, and come in a variety of grades ranging from around $12 per pair to over $70 per pair. The blocks are ground to size and all corners are square. The price difference comes is a result of how finely ground and finished the blocks are. For our purposes in modeling, the cheap ones are just fine. I bought mine from Enco. They carry a few different grades so be sure to look for the cheap ones.

These blocks are handy for holding things square while you glue or solder, and for providing weight when assembling things. Some strong magnets are good in combination with these when using the blocks to hold things. On the next page, I show a few quick samples of how you can use them. I would recommend getting a pair or two to add to your modeling workbench.



Here is an example of how to hold something square with a 1-2-3 Block. Use some strong magnets to hold the wall in place and apply glue to the joint.



In this example, I am using two blocks to hold the vertical pieces in place and a third block as a weight to hold the top piece in place. As you use them, you will find more combinations and uses.

Who Says We Can't Mix Scales?

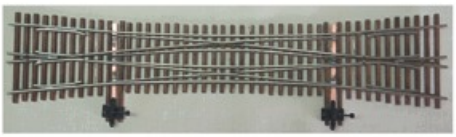
By Tom Lennon and Ken Zieska, Milepost 169

American Model Builders, Inc. / HO Scale 1:87 Scale #206 Structural Flat Car Load w/Blocking (Laser-Cut Wood, Wire & Plastic Kit) -- 7-3/4 x 1 x 1-1/8" 19.6 x 2.5 x 2.8cm. The laser-cut kit features Peel & Stick assembly and includes all of the parts for the load, plus all the blocking, tie-down rods, and nut and washer detail. Designed for HO Scale, it can also be used in S and O scales as a smaller load. Assembled load measures: 7-3/4 x 1 x 1-1/8" 19.6 x 2.5 x 2.8cm.

As you can see from the photos, this hunk of structural steel fills a forty foot, s scale flat car nicely. You might want to buy two kits and double the laminations to produce a beefier look to the "steel plate", but I think it's fine as is.

I used Alene's Tacky Glue for the non-peel and stick items. I pre-painted most of the parts, using Scalecoat NP Light Green, and washed a bit of brown and rust around to kill the “just painted” look. I really like the final appearance.

I paid about $18.00 including shipping for the kit, and it took me three evenings to build. If you have never built a laser cut kit, this would be a good first kit to learn on.



FINISHING UP PROJECTS

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JIM KINDRAKA

In earlier issues of *The S Scale Resource*, Glenn and I talked about projects we were working on as part of overall articles on soldering and resin kit construction techniques. In both cases, construction on the kits I started continued and now have reached the point of completion. I thought I would share both the results and some things I learned along the way...

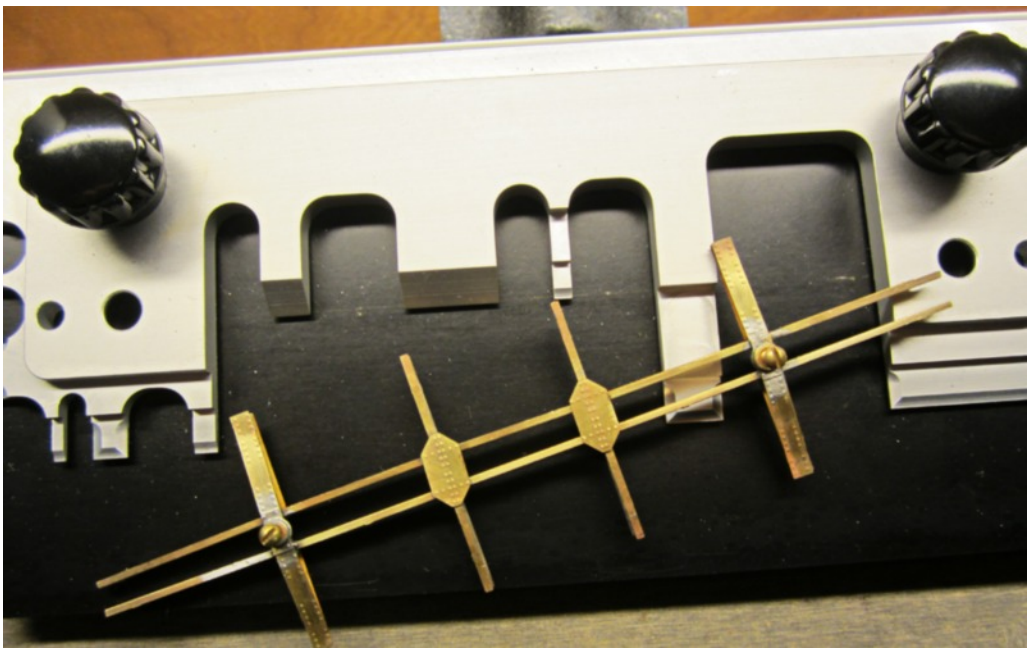


Photo 1: Here is the basic frame for the Mullet River Big Four caboose. It is lying on the bending and folding tool I used, but you can bend the pre-scored parts buy hand if you wish. The frame consists of 20 separate pieces soldered together with a 60-watt iron, but only four of them require bending. I used pre-threaded 2-56 turnings, not in the kit, soldered in place for the bolster mounts.

In the February/ March 2015 issue Glenn talked about techniques for soldering. At the time, I was starting construction of a Mullet River NYC "Big Four" caboose kit. The steps and frame come as flat etchings which need to be folded into shape by hand or using a bending tool and then soldered. Photo 1 shows one of the frames under construction, along with the bending tool used for forming the otherwise flat etched parts. Photo 2 shows the completed frame under the finished model with other details added.

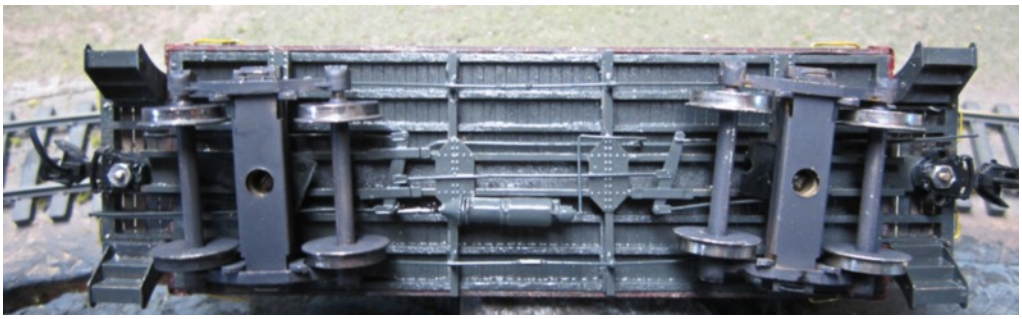


Photo 2: This is the brass frame attached to the caboose floor with trucks, K-brake and other underbody detail added. The level of brake detail is left up to the modeler. The underbody is painted a dark gray to simulate a more weathered appearance.

The frame, steps and end railings are the only areas that require soldering; all the work can be accomplished with the 60 watt iron. We fashioned a jig to help with the ladder construction, and the rest of the railing was done from wire on a flat surface. Again, refer to the earlier *S Scale Resource* article for techniques. The remainder of the kit is laser cut wood and its construction is relatively straight forward. I followed the directions carefully and worked deliberately so each step was done in an order that would not impede future construction.

The kit is designed so the windows will open and close and the roof section can be lifted off to reveal the complete interior detail in the kit. The kit does not include all the detail parts you might add, so here are a couple general tips and suggestions for those parts:

- Detail Parts: I used HO 10" Queen Posts (# 3074) and S Scale turn buckles (#3504), both from Tichy. The brake wheels are supposed to be 16" diameter so I upgraded with Grandt Line part #4059. There was no 100% accurate Smoke Jack, but I found a good facsimile on the parts rack at Des Plaines Hobbies, where I purchased all the previously mentioned parts.
- I purchased Marker Lamp Brackets and Marker Lamps from BTS, part numbers 02441 and 02308 respectively.
- As you go through construction, save all the leftover wood pieces. Glenn pointed out to me how some can be inserted in the window frames so you can paint the model's exterior and not have paint go through to the interior that has already been painted a different color.

Photo 3: A side view of the finished caboose. The view shows the underbody turn buckle, truss rod and more K-brake details. Handrails and grab irons are all hand made. I used an old Floquil paint bottle as a form to bend the curved handrails on each of the caboose's four corners.

Speaking of painting, I used a very light gray on the interior. Information from the NYCSHS indicated the prototypes were either a very pale green or light gray. I opted for the gray and used a light spray of MOW Gray on the interior surface. I painted the roof, floor and underbody a very dark gray to give it a bit of a "pre-weathered" look. For the exterior, I opted for straight Scalecoat Caboose Red. I felt the wood soaked up enough of the paint to darken it a little, giving it the effect I wanted.

Photo 4: A little different view of the finished caboose showing the end platform detail. The ladder stiles and end railing tops are provided in the kit's etchings, the modeler is left to form the rest. The ladder's "curly-Q" top is a very distinctive feature of the Big Four caboose. The caboose can be correctly lettered with or without the NYC oval herald centered on the side below the cupola. Additionally, the herald can be used with or without the black background. It is best to look at photos of the prototype to decide the lettering scheme you wish to model.

Information from other NYC modelers indicated many add Freight Car Brown to Caboose Red in varying amounts, up to 50% for steel body cabooses. Since I think color has a lot to do with lighting and the eye of the beholder, I'm comfortable with straight Caboose Red. Besides, I haven't seen color photos of many prototype cabooses that were exactly the same color anyway. For lettering, I used CDS Dry Transfer set #S530. Whether or not you use an NYC oval herald is a matter of preference and what era you are modeling. I'm modeling an era when generally they were not used on cabooses. Photos 3 and 4 show the finished model ready to roll.

While building into a very nice caboose model, this is not a "shake the box" or even a beginner kit. The entire line of Mullet River caboose body kits all build to excellent models, but are designed for the more accomplished modeler. For a modeler who is willing to be very deliberate and thoughtful during construction, the results will be quite gratifying. I attempted to keep track of my time while working on the model and feel I have invested about 24 hours in the construction. The entire line of S Scale Mullet River models is now owned and produced by Des Plaines Hobbies. The line includes wood caboose body kits for the NYC "19000 series", CCC&StL "Big Four" and Boston & Albany; Soo Line; 30' CB&Q; CN; CP; GN - plywood sides and tongue and groove; C&NW and B&O.

The second project was the 4-bay ERIE "Dunmore" hopper, a resin kit. This was discussed in the August/ September 2015 issue of *The S Scale Resource* as part of a three part series on resin kit construction techniques. A little background... I originally bought this S Scale kit when it was part of the West Shore Line of resin kits; sold exclusively by Central Hobby Supply in East Syracuse, NY. That line is no longer maintained by Central Hobby, but the kit's original manufacturer, Funaro & Camerlengo, still produce four resin kits in S scale including this one. All four kits can be purchased at local full service hobby shops. Construction of three of the F&C kits was discussed in that three part Resin Construction article series starting in the April/May 2015 issue of *The S Scale Resource.*

When I started construction of the car, I thought lettering it ERIE was my only option. I later discovered through fellow S Scale modeler, Bud Rindfleisch, that both DL&W and NKP had duplicates of this large covered hopper. Through Bud, I was able to obtain some prototype photos to begin researching other lettering opportunities. My eventual decision was to letter the car for the NKP. Construction of the "Dunmore" car was

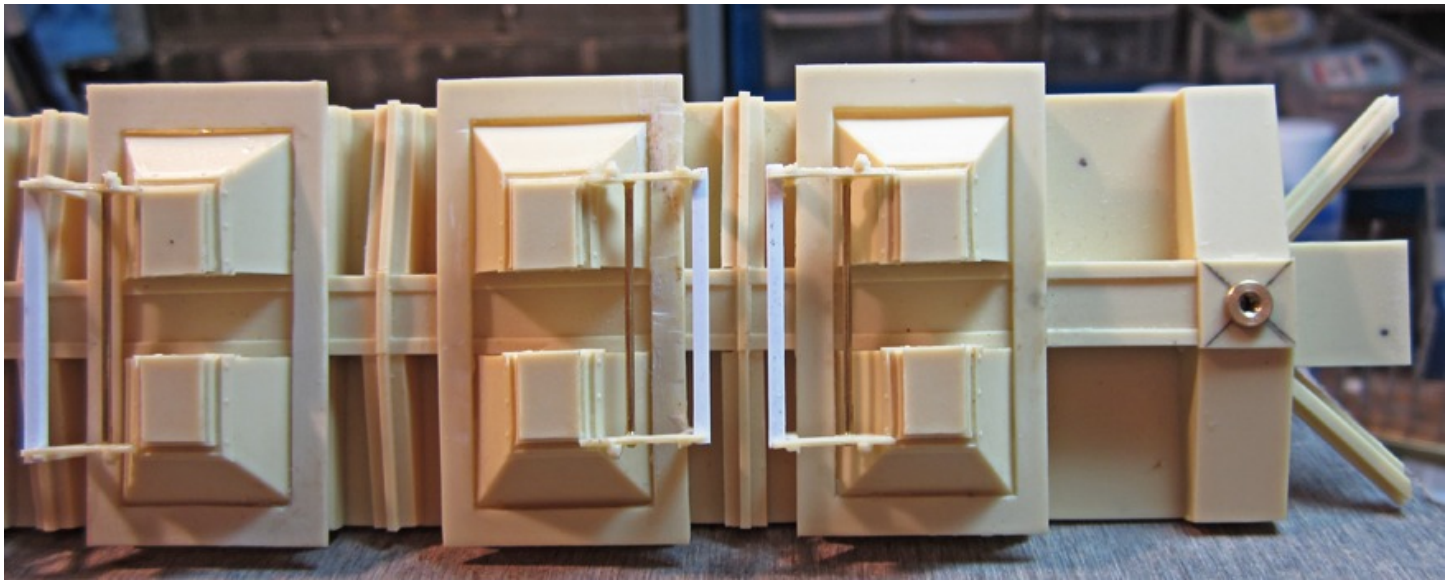


Photo 5: This is a view of the underbody of the 4-bay covered hopper during construction. You can see the added detail of a brass rod and styrene angle. The brass rod is 0.032"; I predrilled the brackets and then inserted the rod after the bracket had been attached to the underbody. Then, pieces of 0.060" styrene angle stock were added. The effect is two-fold, adding detail to the hopper chutes and strengthening the fragile bracket mounts.

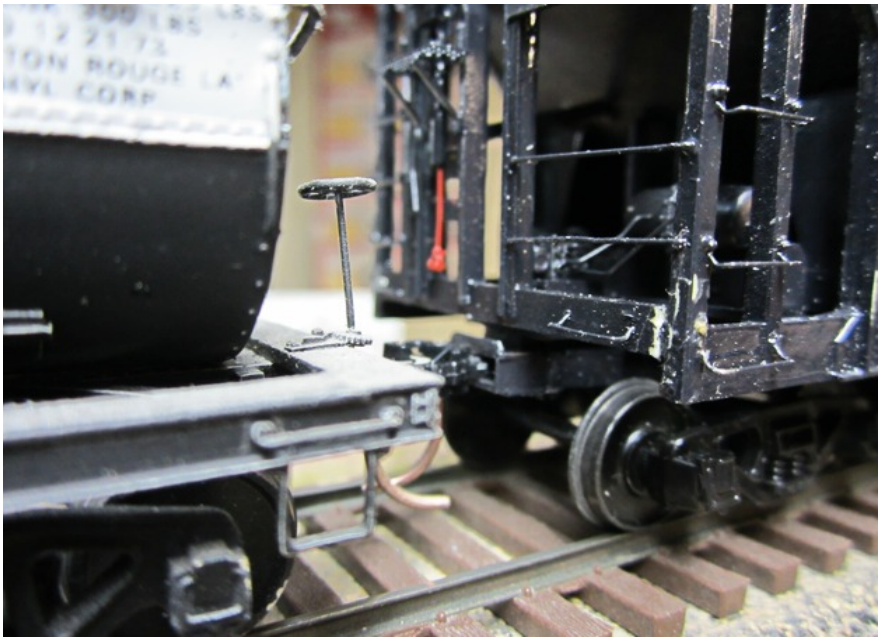


Photo 6: A potential weak spot is the glued attachment of the lower side sill with the end beam. I used a #71 wire drill and carefully hand drilled through the side sill and into the end beam at least ¼". I then inserted a 0.025" brass rod through the side sill into the end beam. The end of the rod is just visible above the lowest grab iron. A lot of dust from drilling the resin adheres to the model making for a dirty looking photo!

straight forward. I followed the directions and used the techniques that Glenn discussed in the resin article series. Since my kit was at least 20 years old before I started building it, some extra care was necessary as the resin can be a bit brittle. I did make some "custom" modifications both to increase the strength of the finished model and also to hopefully improve the appearance.

The hopper chute door support mechanisms are small and rather fragile pieces. Photo 5 details some additional steps I took to strengthen the support and add some detail to improve its appearance. I also found the attachment point of the lower end beam and lower side sills to be weak and an area that could potentially break during later handling. Photo 6 shows my fix to address that issue.

All three prototype railroads use Morton Roof Walks on their cars. The resin version in the kit was very thick, and rather than spend time sanding it thinner, I purchased two of Des Plaines Hobby part number DPS-645, Morton Roof Walks. These stainless steel etched roof walks are for a 40' car and this covered hopper is a 50' car so two were necessary. Photo 7 shows the results and discusses the mounting in more detail.

The final model was washed and painted black. While my decision was to letter my model for the Nickel Plate Road; you can paint and letter the car for ERIE, DL&W, E-L or Conrail and be equally accurate. The kit's instructions include drawings for the E-L and Conrail schemes. I did not research availability of S scale lettering for the latter two, but CDS has the exact dry transfers with correct data for the ERIE, #S-384; DL&W, #S-372 and NKP, #S-422. The NKP had 50 of these 4-bay hoppers, #90000 – 90049. The finished model is a nice addition to any consist on a 1950's or later railroad.

Photo 7: Here is the car with the Morton Roof Walk installed. I used short pieces of 0.010" x 0.040" styrene under the roof walk to help with mounting. The mounting points on the etching corresponded very well with the mounts cast in the resin covered hopper roof. One other tip - paint the roof walk assembly and roof separately and then attach the roof walk. Otherwise it is hard to paint the area under the roof walk without risking filling in many of the delicate holes in the high quality etching.

Photo 8: The completed 4-bay covered hopper sits in a consist ready to roll on Chuck West's DPV layout. The NKP used many of these cars to transport soda ash, a material used in the manufacture of glass. In the 1940's and 50's, several large glass manufacturers were located along the Nickel Plate's lines in Ohio and Indiana. They would have been prime customers for soda ash by the hopper load.

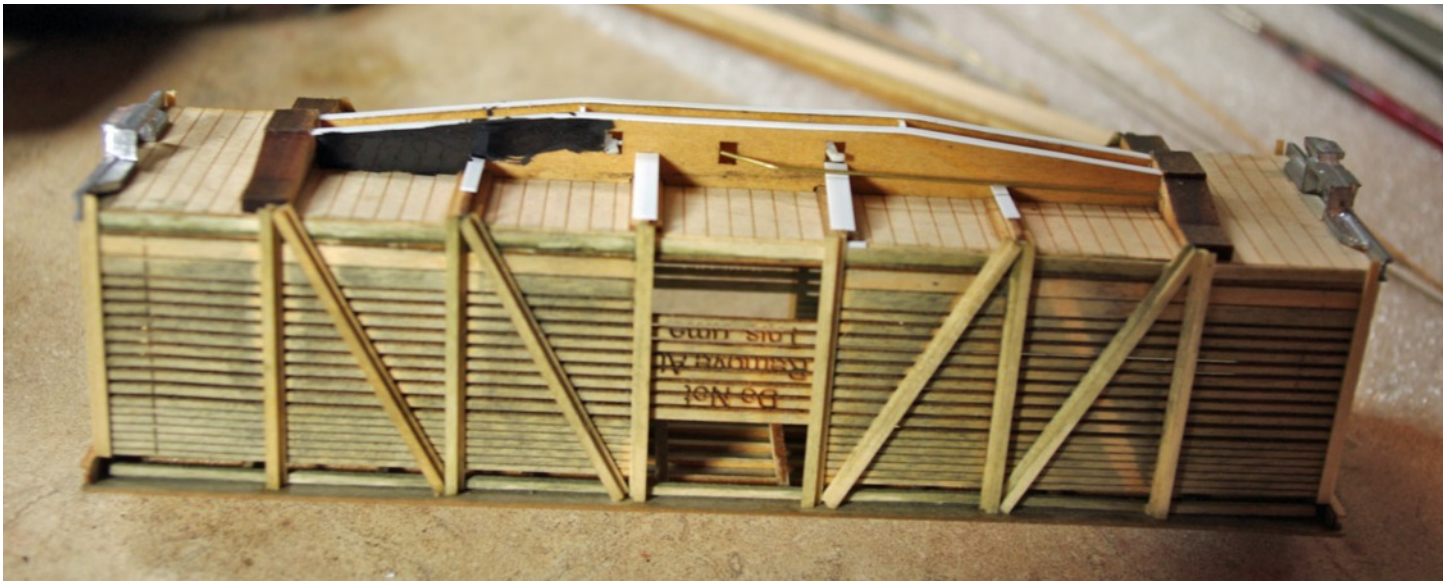
Some Thoughts On Weathering

An East West Rail Service SOO Line stock car kit that I tried some weathering ideas on.

By Glenn Guerra

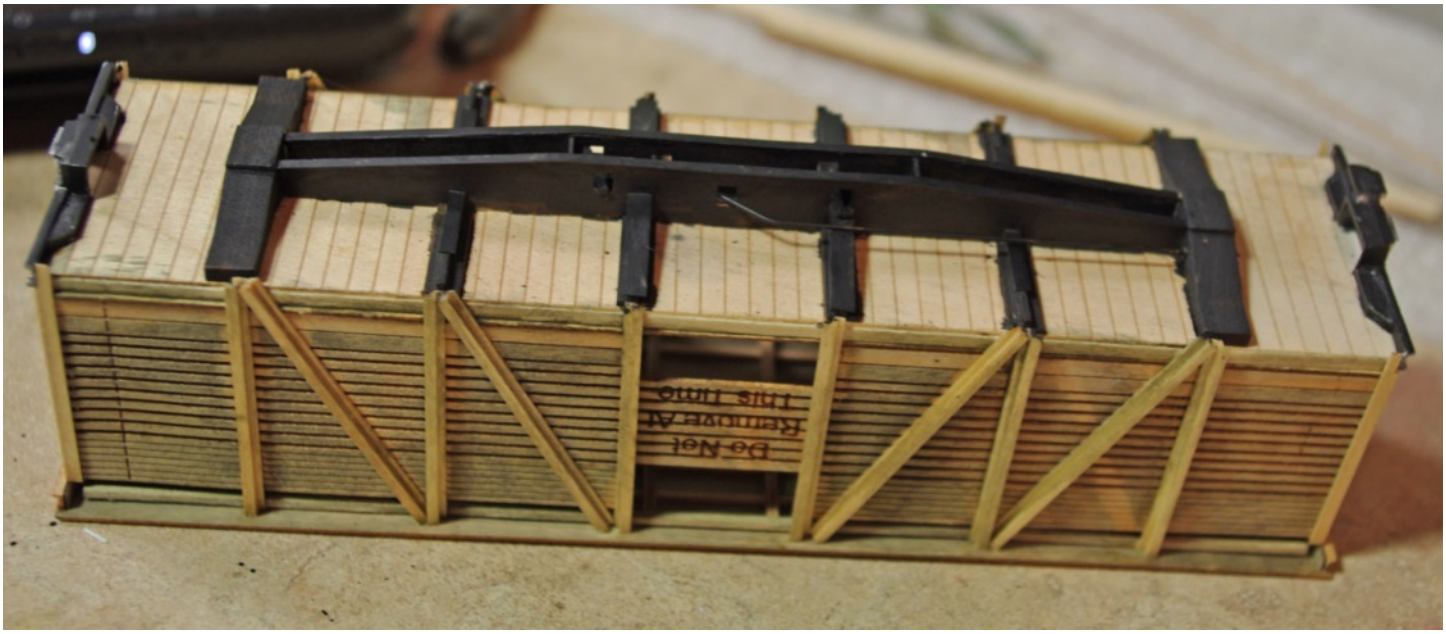
When railroad cars age and weather, there are two things going on. One is the accumulation of dirt; and the other is the failing of the paint. When we weather our models, we apply "dirt" over the new paint job. This satisfies the accumulation of dirt issue, but not the failing paint issue. When the paint fails, it fails in a few ways. The color shifts or fades; it falls off; or it wears off. Paint is made from a binder and solid pigment. The binders are attacked by ultraviolet light causing the to fail. When they fail, the pigment falls out of the film exposing more binders to ultraviolet light. This process is called chalking. Basically, the paint gets thinner and thinner until it is gone. I have been interested in the failure of paint on real cars and have been wondering how to model some of that. Another thing that happens is that the lettering holds up while the wood around it is bare. This is because the lettering paint is thicker and makes the body color more durable. So, the effect on the car is good sharp lettering with bare wood all around it. With our applied weathering over a painted and lettered model, we obscure the lettering.

I like older cars with a lot of wood in them and on them. Wood cars seem to be more prone to paint failing than steel cars. As soon as there is any opening in the paint film on a piece of wood, moisture gets into the wood attacking it. This causes the paint loses it's grip on the wood and it peels or falls off. We are then left with bare wood that will weather to a dark gray color. Typically, we would try to apply a dark gray color to our finished model to make it look like the bare wood. I have been experimenting with painting the car a dark gray color first and then putting the finish color over it. Then, I try to remove the finish color to expose the dark gray underneath. I did this on an O Scale resin car and now on one of the S Scale East West Rail Service SOO Line stock car kits. I don't think I have this perfected yet, but I want to throw the ideas out there so you can experiment with this. In my opinion, the wood kit turned out better than the resin kit with this technique. I think there are some possibilities with this, and some of you may have some additional ideas.



In this photo, you can see some of the underframe of the car. I used some white styrene for flanges because I would not need to seal them, and they seemed a little stronger than the wood flange. I am starting to paint the frame grimy black with a small brush but do not want to paint the wood flooring.

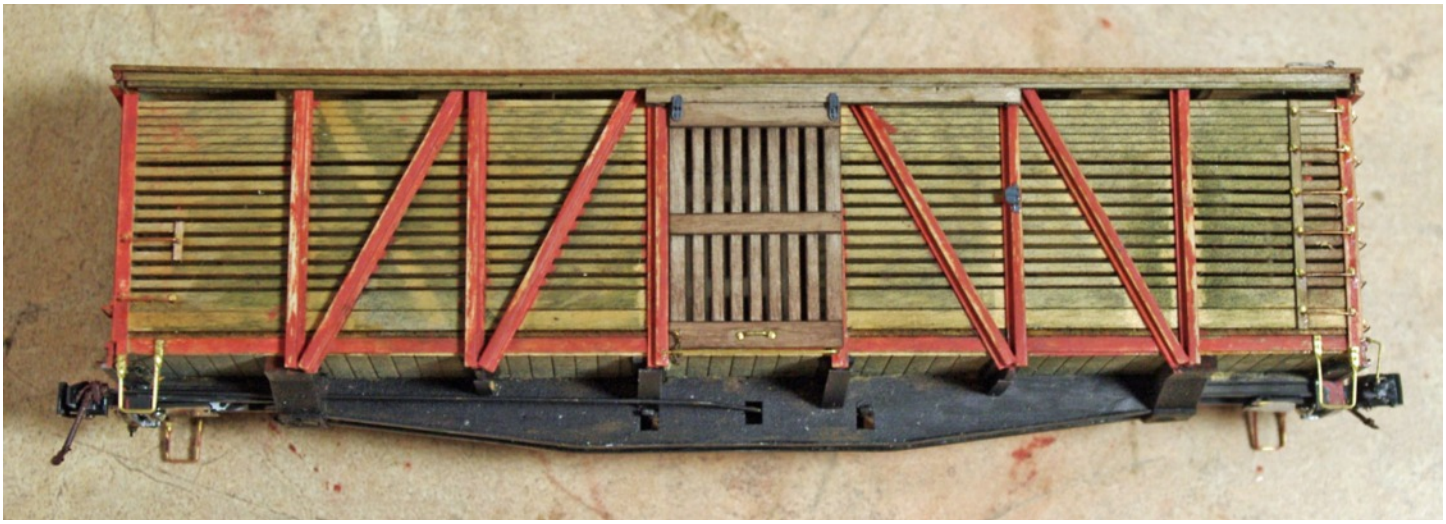
The East West Rail Service SOO Line stock car is a predominantly wood kit. The actual car is made with a steel frame and wood siding. On stock cars of this type, the paint holds up well on the steel, but falls off of the wood rather quickly. These cars get hosed with water to not only clean them, but also to cool the animals, and it is not uncommon to see the wood almost bare. So, as the car weathers, we end up with painted steel parts and bare wood. This is a tough thing to do with an air brush or weathering powders. Since this is also a mostly wood kit, the parts of the car that should be steel are wood and will look like it when painted. Typically when you build a wood kit of a steel car, you seal the wood and sand it so it looks like steel when painted. I needed to develop a plan that would make my "steel" parts look like metal and the wood parts look like wood. Here is what my plan was for this kit.



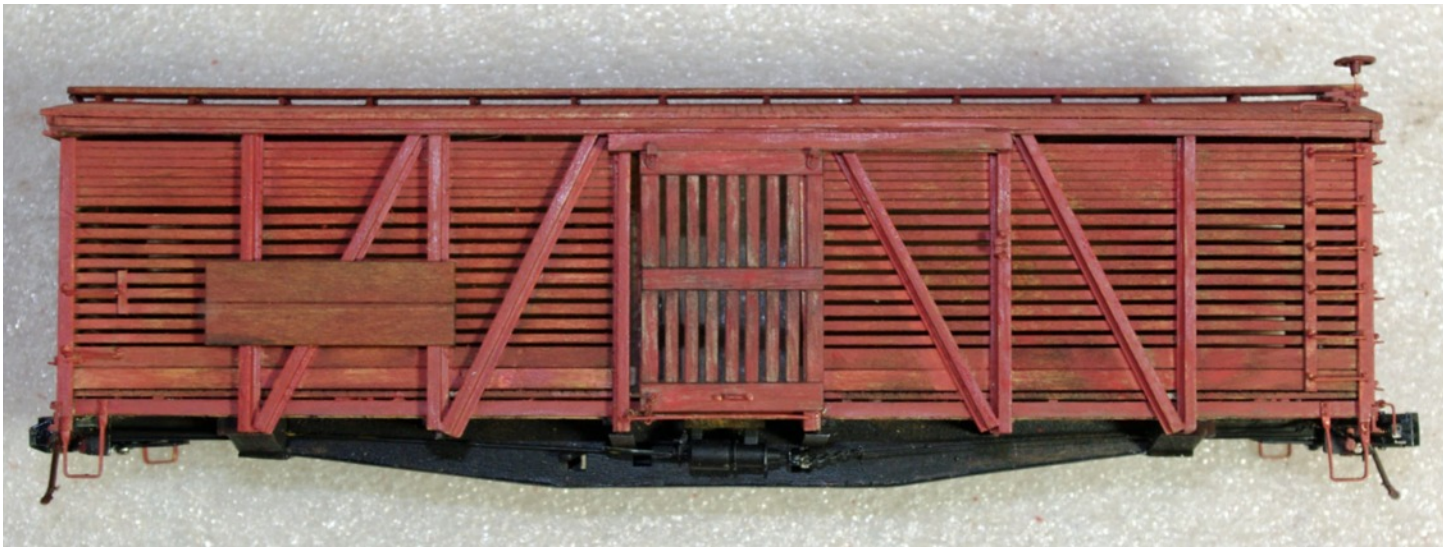
Here, I have the "steel" parts of the frame painted grimy black. I decided to paint the frame before I installed the brake details since it would be easier to get into all the corners with the brush.

Here is the body with the "steel" framing painted with a brush. See the diagonal stripe in the wood on the left side of the car. When I was gluing on the diagonal bracing, I goofed up and set it on the car the wrong way. As soon as the glue hits the car it will seal the wood. I was using ACC glue and tried to wash this area with acetone to thin the glue out. You can see how the glue sealed the wood and now it will not take the thin wash of India ink I applied. This goof came back to haunt me. Be neat and careful when you are working like this.

I decided to seal the parts of the car that were supposed to be steel before I assembled the kit. This meant that all the small wood "Z" bracing was sealed first. For the first coat, I used shellac and that was a disaster. The shellac did not dry hard and made a mess when I tried to sand it. After I washed all that mess off with alcohol, I started again. I needed something I could brush on that would be fairly thin and dry hard. What I found was brushing lacquer from the hardware store. They also make sanding sealers, but make sure they are not shellac based. If they are, they may not dry hard enough to sand smooth. You can find these items in the paint section of the hardware store. The brushing lacquer worked and I painted all the "steel" parts of the car first. The brushing lacquer I had was a little thick and you may want to thin it a little. Your first coat will seal the wood, but it will not be smooth. You need to sand the part and put a second coat of sealer on. I used 320 grit wet dry sandpaper rather than steel wool. Steel wool will round off the sharp edges and we don't want that. Next, I followed the instructions and assembled the car.



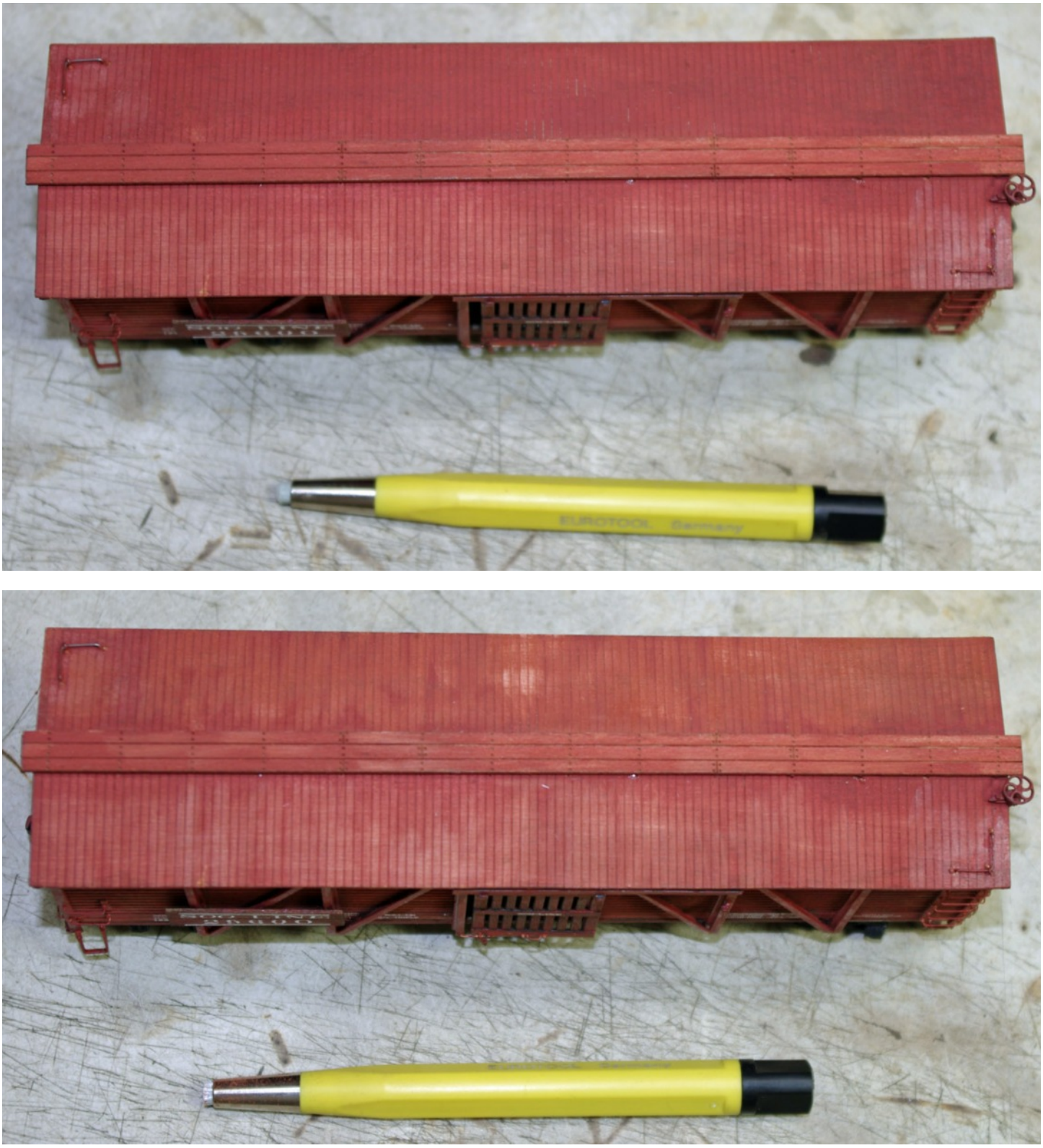
I sanded the "steel" parts one more time. Painting with the brush was hard to get a smooth finish. Then I added the rest of the details and stained the wood darker. Notice my goof on the left is not going away.



When I did paint the car, I made a thin wash of paint. Here you can see that the "steel" parts are covered and some of the dark India ink is showing through the paint on the wood parts of the car.

When I started on the underframe, I wanted to do some different things also. Originally when these cars were built, the steel frame was painted with car cement. This is a black coating similar to the rust proofing you put on your automobile. Then the wood parts were installed. They were not painted at this time, but when the whole car was finished, the sides and roof were painted the body color. To get the look I wanted, I would paint the frame grimy black and stain the wood floor with India ink. After I had the basic underframe put together, I sanded the "steel" parts to smooth them out using 320 grit wet dry sand paper. Fold up small pieces of it and go slow. It worked fine. Using steel wool will round off the sharp edges of your parts. Then I applied another thin coat of lacquer to be sure the wood was sealed. In this kit, you make the flanges of the beams out of wood. The pieces are very thin and fragile. I decided to use some styrene and just used some ACC to glue it all together. The styrene had the advantage of not needing to be sealed; and I used .010" thick styrene which was thinner than the wood. When the underframe was finished, I painted it with a brush, but only the "steel" parts, not the flooring. After the basic frame was painted, I moved on to the sides.

In this view ,the car is painted and ready for decals. You can see how the dark wood shows through in spots and looks like the paint has worn thin and the bare wood is turning gray.



One of the things happening to paint as it ages is ultraviolet light attacking it. This results in what is called chalking of the paint. The ultraviolet light destroys the binder of the paint and the pigment falls out, leaving more binder exposed to the ultraviolet light. The result is that the paint film gets thinner and thinner. I tried to duplicate this by using a fiberglass scratch brush to wear the paint away. In the top photo, you can see the roof of the car before I started. In the bottom photo, you can see the results of the scratching. I tried to scratch from the center of the roof to the edge. This also mimics water running off the roof, and gets the streaks in your scratches going the right direction.

For what it's worth, here is the underframe of my stock car. I have been doing this type of painting for a few years on my models and really like the look. I know that you almost never see this part of the car, but I like to do it anyway.

On the sides of the car, I painted the "steel" parts with a brush and sanded them to be sure they were smooth. Since we will be leaving the wood parts of the car bare you need to be careful with your glue. Any glue will seal the wood and cause it to paint differently than bare wood. I started by using ACC but, ended up using yellow carpenter's glue. The yellow carpenter's glue could be thinned with water and gave me some time to place the part. The glue is much more flexible than the ACC, and it seemed to hold up better while handling the model as I was working on it. After I had the "steel" parts painted, I sanded them again to make sure they were smooth. I was having trouble with dust, dirt, and brush streaks in my painted parts. Once I had the "steel" parts looking the way I thought they should, I started installing the details like grab irons and steps. Then it was time to paint the whole car.

I stained the car first with India ink again to make it darker. I tried to only stain the bare wood. The ink soaked into the bare wood and looked fine, and if I did get any on the "steel" parts, it did not soak into them because they were painted. This is what I wanted. Next, it was time to paint the car. I decided to continue with a brush and made my finish paint very thin. I brushed it on very lightly. In some areas it seemed too thick so I immediately washed it with thinner. The idea was to let the stained wood show through the paint. Since I already had the "steel" parts painted, they took the thin paint well and they had a good coat on them. I tried a similar thing on a resin O Scale car, and I think it works better on the wood model. I like the look, but can see that I need to be more careful with slopping the glue on things.

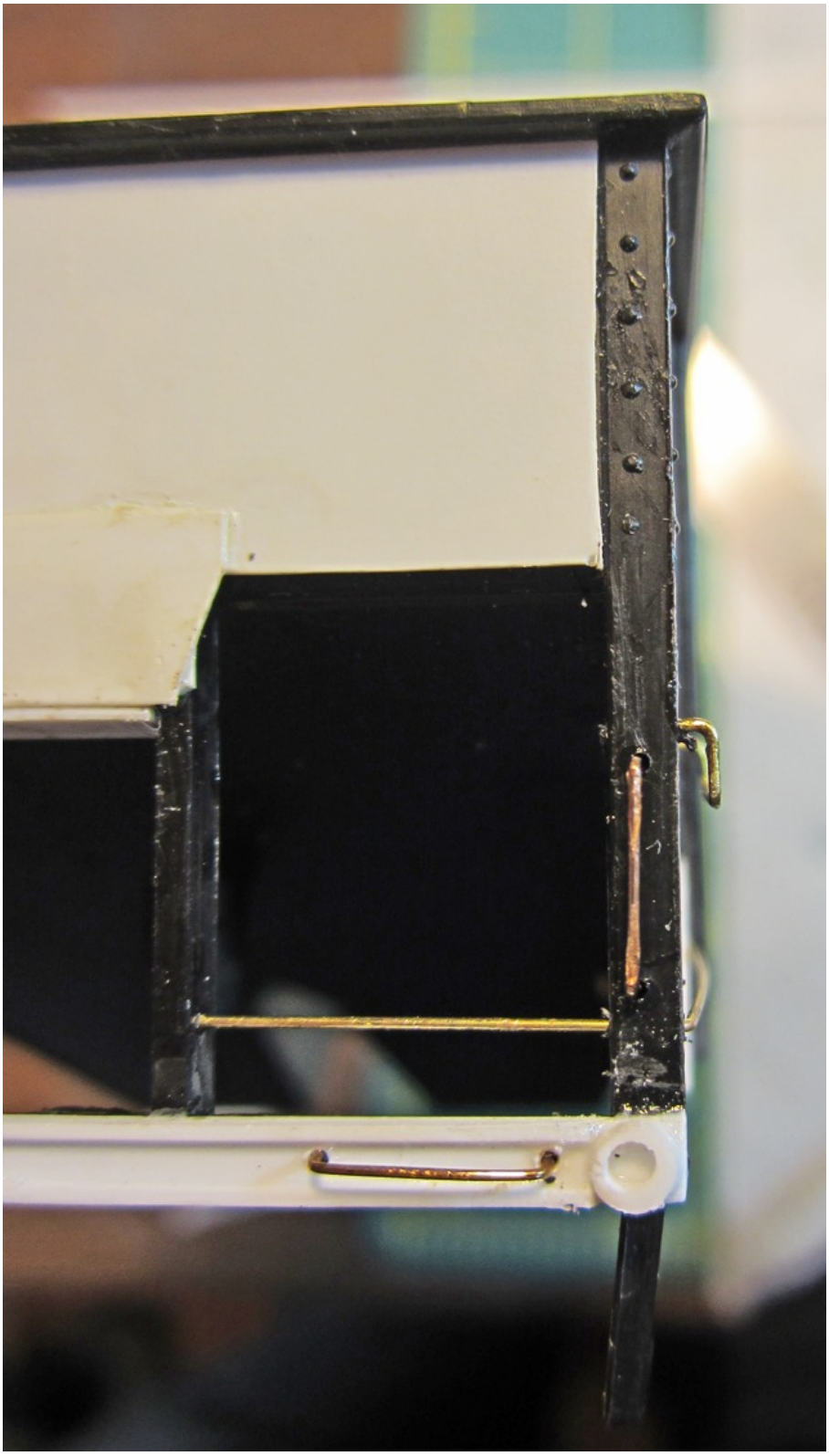
When I had the paint the way I wanted, I applied the decals. I just applied them to the model as it was and used a lot of decal set. After a few applications of decal set, I left it overnight, starting with more decal set the next day. By now the decals were adhered well, but still had a few bubbles and some gloss. I have had some good results by stippling the soft decal with the fiberglass scratch brush. Go light and just tap the decal. It will be forced down tight, and any bubbles will be broken. It will also take most of the gloss off. For final painting, I washed a little white along the bottom boards to simulate washing the cars out with lime. Lastly, I mixed a drop of dust colored paint in some thinner and sprayed the lower part of the car a few times. The paint must be very thin and you should not be able to see it go on. Leave the car sit. When it dries, you will notice it has toned down any gloss on the car.

Here is the finished car. I think this type of painting technique has some possibilities. I like the effect. Now all I need is to be neater during the assemble of the kit.

It was a lot of fun building this kit. I started in model railroading building wood kits when they were more common, and this reminded me of those times. As I mentioned, this is a weathering technique I have been trying lately and I like the results. There is more to learn and each kit teaches you a few more things. Give it a try and see what you think. Also look at *The O Scale Resource* issues 1, 2, and 3 for some information on paint. In issue 3, you can see the resin car I painted. I think the wood kit came out better. Have fun.

What's on your workbench today?

We are starting a new series to show our readers what other modelers are working on, and we need your help to make it successful. All that's needed is a simple snapshot of what your workbench looks like and the project on it. Send us a picture or two along with a short description of what you are working on so we can share it here. If it's a project under construction, send it in. Repair job, send it in. Completed project, send it in. Send your pictures and descriptions to daniel@modelrailroadresource.com



Jim Kindraka starts us off with a look at what's on his workbench.

I've been looking for a poling pocket to go on the fabricated end of one of the hoppers I'm working on. I'm sure there is some part out there but I haven't found it so began thinking about making something myself.

I took a piece of 0.100" styrene rod and carefully drilled out the center, initially with a #72 wire drill and then a #54. I sliced off a thin piece, flattened the end of the 'C' channel end sill on the hopper and glued the round slice on. After the glue set, I filed the cylinder as thin as I wanted and square across the top. Before I paint the car I'll take a knife blade and circle it to clean away the last bits of styrene that adhere from all the initial filing and cutting. A photo is attached, I think once painted it will provide the effect of a poling pocket on the finished model. Now on to some brake detail, what seems like a billion more holes to be drilled for grab irons and adding Archer rivets. I'll get the finished model in a future issue of the S Scale Resource. Enjoy your modeling time...

The MINNESOTA HEARTLAND

This is Centralsota, the end of the Eastern Division of the Minnesota Heartland Railway. In modeling terms, Centralsota is hundreds of miles from the urban buzz that dominates most of the operation. The illusion works because Centralsota is at the end of a 100 foot branch line that is effectively isolated from the larger city scenes. Ken Zieska's Minnesota Heartland Railroad is based on an urban setting around Minneapolis, Minnesota. The layout features many of the railroads that served the Minneapolis area. Here, we are looking down a SOO Line track as it heads towards the city. The track actually ends at the bottom of the photo, but is there to represent the SOO Line and to provide a place for the Minnesota Heartland to interchange with the SOO Line.

By Glenn Guerra **Photos by Daniel Dawdy & Ken Zieska**

We are back in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area visiting with Ken Zieska to look at his layout. Ken is a native of the Minneapolis area and has lived there most of his life. Currently, he lives only a few miles from where he grew up, but he is not someone who has never been more than 50 miles from where he was born. Ken was in the Army, and later, the Army National Guard for 30 years. During the time he was in the Guard, Ken ran a manufacturing business and traveled for that business. So, he has see a lot of the world.

Like most of us, he was involved with model trains at an early age. Ken told me his first model train was an American Flyer set that he got when he was eight years old. The train set provided many hours of fun and creating an imaginary world. When Ken left high school and ventured into the world the model trains were set aside, but not forgotten, he met his wife Marilyn and they were off building a family and life together. Ken started thinking about trains again and having a layout. He started looking at what was available for equipment, along with what he was interested in. At the time. HO scale was looking interesting, but so was N scale. Both scales had the potential to put a lot of railroad in a small space, but not much potential for building models and kits. About this time, Ken met Steve Monson who was a local S Scale modeler and owned Sunshine Models at one time. Steve showed Ken what was available in S Scale including kits. The old American Flyer set was

This section of limestone bluffs is on the new section of Ken's layout. The scenery is reminiscent of the bluffs along the Mississippi River around the Minneapolis area. Dave Jasper did much of the rock work in this area.

looked at and it was decided to just stay in S Scale. The larger size made it more fun to build cars and structures. Ken and Marilyn knew they would be moving and a layout was in the future so for the time being Ken would build equipment and ideas.

The next step was what to model. Not far from Minneapolis is the Iron Range north of Duluth, and Ken started looking at modeling some of that. He told me one of the draw backs was that there were no ore car models available at that time. For the time being, Ken started to model a granger railroad (traffic consisting mainly of produce from farmers or grangers) in S Scale. There are a good selection of models and first generation locomotives available in S Scale. About this time, Ken started to become interested in urban archaeology and started looking closer at the local railroad scene in the Minneapolis area. Minneapolis, like all large cities, has a lot of railroads. This could be interesting to model. There are a lot of different railroads so you don't need to concentrate on a particular railroad. Translate that to, if you like the Great Northern, but thought that Chicago Burlington and Quincy paint job was really spiffy, you could have both on your layout.

Around the time that Ken and Marilyn decided to build their own house they met Dave Jasper, another local model railroader. The new house had some room for a layout, and Ken started around 1980 building one. I have mentioned a few other modelers so far and it's time to bring more of them into the story. The local S Scale modelers in the area have a group called the Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop and Ken became involved with them. Ken had a new house and he was off and building a layout. As I mentioned earlier, an iron ore hauling railroad was considered; but the lack of ore cars at the time, along with the space required, would not work and Ken started thinking about modeling the Minneapolis area. Modeling parts of a big city allowed Ken to have a variety of equipment and a lot of track to operate trains on. The industries are close and there is a lot of switching. Also, like most larger cities, Minneapolis has local transfer and switching railroads.

Dave Jasper painted the backdrop in this area. This is a nice way to make the tracks leave the scene without using a tunnel. The weeds growing in the siding look good next to the well kept main line.

This location is known as Lennon's corner as it is Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop member Tom Lennon's inspiration and handy work. Note how the road turns and goes behind the fence and buildings. This is a good way to make roads blend into the backdrop.

So, the idea took shape that Ken could have a layout based on a local transfer railroad that interchanged with all the other railroads. There would be transfer yards and connections, as well as, industries on his layout. One of the members of the group was Ted Larson. It was Ted Larson who came up with the name Minnesota Heartland that Ken uses for his railroad name. Now that we have seen how some of the ideas came together, let's look at the layout.

These two views of the older section of the layout show how model railroads are a work in progress. They also show some of the older scenery and bench work techniques that Ken has used. The top photo was taken by Dan Dawdy in August, 2015. If you look close behind the garage you will see a crossover being constructed. In the photo on the right taken by Ken, we see the crossover finished and new tracks to what will be a power plant. The layout is basically around the walls with a peninsula up the middle. This area is the start of the peninsula.

Ken is modeling the area around Minneapolis where many railroads converge. There are a lot of transfer yards and different railroads going different ways. He has created that effect by making the tracks at slightly different elevations and not parallel to each other. This particular scene is a representation of an industry out in the country, but railroads are starting to converge into the city.

This view of the same area as the photo above shows how the track elevations are working for Ken. The tracks with the caboose on them look like a completely different railroad than the tracks on the far right. In addition, the industry tracks are a little higher and reinforce the idea that the railroad is built on the hillside which you see in the backdrop. The open spaces between the tracks will be weed filled space to look just like the actual location.

These two photos show more of the new bluff section on Ken's layout. The variety of different tree shapes and textures look very realistic. Also, note the dead limbs and other debris at the base of the hill. A nice job on the scenery.

We are looking under a bridge down a creek valley in this view. Notice how the track does not follow the creek shore exactly. The track needs to be a smooth curve, and sometimes it will be right up to the creek, while other times it will be a little away from it. This adds some realism to your scene. Also, look at the ditch on the side of the track next to the hill. The loose rock and vegetation in the ditch are a nice touch.

Ken started building his layout in one room. The photos on this page show some of the oldest part of the layout. There was an adjacent room and Ken started to build into that room. Holes in the walls were required, and that was approved as long as the wall remained in place. Since there were no restrictions on the size of the holes, Ken took full advantage of that. The next expansion was the new addition to the house, and for that, there was no wall between the old room and the new room. Ken built his layout on open frame bench work with plywood on top. The framing has stayed largely the same through all the expansions of the layout. One of his requirements was to be able to walk or sit anywhere on the layout so he uses 3/4" plywood with Homasote board on top. One of the things that caught my eye when looking at the photos was the different track elevations. Ken said this was done by the "cookie cutter" method of bench work. The plywood is cut so it is only under the track or structure; that way it can be elevated in any way. Like all layouts, this is a work in progress. Ken told me that he has modified the track plan and bench work many times already. While we were talking about this, I mentioned these track elevations and how it gave the layout the feel of many different railroads coming through the area. Ken said that was the intent. In areas where railroads converge, they build their own right of way for their own purpose, and not necessarily to be next to the other railroads. They also build to suit their grade and locations. The "cookie cutter" method of bench work has allowed Ken to create this effect and to be able to make modifications if it does not look right to him.

This is why Ken wanted sturdy bench work.

The Sunshine Biscuit Company has covered hopper cars of flour coming in and boxcars of finished goods going out. Notice the different elevations of track again. The Sunshine Biscuit Company is in the West Side Industrial area of Ken's urban switching area. This large structure is only two inches deep and is part of an extensive view block with a very different urban scene on the other side. See the next photo for the other side of the view block.

Ken said he uses Shinohara and Tomalco track products, as well as, hand laid track. He uses a Fast Tracks fixture for filing and making switch components and tells me he feels very comfortable now scratch building switches. For scenery, Ken said he has tried all the different techniques and used them all.

Ken and Marilyn started talking about adding on to the house and the new room would be an extension of the room where the railroad was. The railroad could occupy the walls as long as the center was left open, so Ken started an expansion. If you look at photos, you will notice that the large concrete food plant wraps around a pilaster in the wall of the room. The pilaster is where the new room starts. This section of the layout is one of the newer modifications. Marilyn is artistic and painted some of the backdrops on the layout in this section. Dave Jasper also painted some of the backdrops. In the new section, Dave also built a limestone bluff that wraps around a whole corner of the layout. These types of bluffs are common around the Minneapolis area. Ken worked on the backdrop in this area and painted the sky. The area is very impressive with lots of good details.

One of the things Ken likes to do is operate his trains. This was one of the reasons he decided to do an urban type layout. I asked him if he has regular operating sessions, and he said he did not want to get that committed yet. Ken does work off of a switch list that is generated by hand before a session. This is a little tedious, but it does mean that he can play with the trains and not have to worry about where he leaves them. With most operating schemes, the car location must be known prior to the start of a session. With a card system, the cards are left in the vicinity of where the car is left.

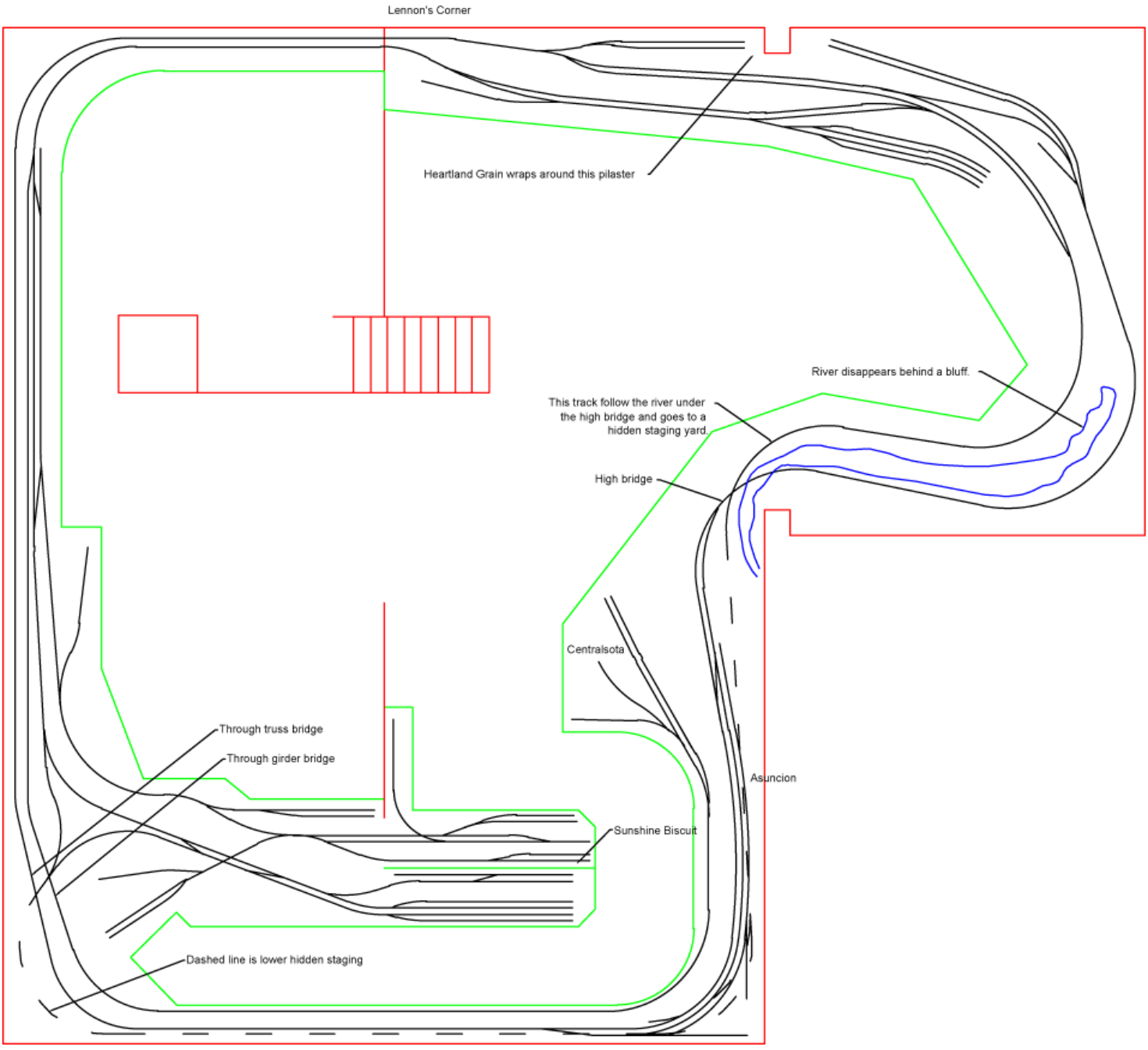
This view is taken from the end of the peninsula on Ken's layout. The blue wall on the right is a view block that runs down the center of the peninsula. On the other side of the view block on our right is the Sunshine Biscuit Company shown in the last photo. This gave Ken two distinct industrial areas to model. While cleaning up one day Ken ran across a bundle of rail so he decided to use it and hand lay some track. The main line in this area is the flex track. The next two tracks to the right are sidings. Notice how Ken spaced the ties wider and irregular on the siding. These ties will show. On the far right and left those tracks will represent industry tracks that are filled with dirt over the ties. Since the ties will not be seen Ken only put a few in to keep the track in gauge. This is some good planning ahead and thinking about how the finished scene will be.

Prior to the next operating session, the cards are changed with new routing for the car. If the car is moved between sessions and the cards are not with the car, then new routing for the car can not be determined. In computer generated systems with switch lists, the location of the cars is still important. Prior to an operating session, the layout must be checked to see that the computer locations of the cars match where they are on the layout. This means no moving cars between sessions or making sure you confirm locations prior to starting. On a layout the size of Ken's, the confirmation process is not that hard. Ken said he is looking at some of the computer operating systems and may do some of that in the future. For now, he hand writes switch lists for whoever may be coming over.

Structures on the layout are all S Scale. We talked about using HO scale structures in the background to force the perspective. Ken said he had some of that in the past, but got rid of most of them since his layout is very narrow. He felt they were too close to the scene to have the forced perspective work. Currently, Ken is working with Monster Model Works developing modifications to their kits. Ken will have a table at the NASG National in Michigan this coming year, and you will be able to sit down and talk with him about some of his building work.

Ken's layout is a good example of how a layout happens and changes over time. They all keep evolving. This is also a very good example of how round robin groups help you and the hobby. It was through the group that Ken re-discovered S Scale; and it is through the group that all the talents come together. The Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop meets every Thursday evening at a member's house. Sometimes they work on the layout, sometimes they run the trains, and sometimes they just visit; but it is all good comradery which makes it all the more enjoyable.

See the track plan on following page.



Basic track plan of Ken Zieska's Minnesota Heartland Railway

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