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Page 04. **Karl Andraschko** is back with a great article on how he modeled a flat car load.

Page 16. **George Hollwedel** shares how he preps new rolling stock. Note how great looking the car is that is ancient tooling.

Page 21. **New Products**.

Page 20: **Bryan Busséy** really likes the Broadway Limited's Cryogenic Tank Car but wanted to add new trucks and body mounted couplers.

Page 28: **Al Lowe** shares the clever way sets up modules to work on the bottom of his modules.

Page 31: From NSR 001 we wanted to show that N is the right choice for any size of layout. **Kim Knight** shares thoughts about the advantages of building a smaller layout. In Observations I share some additional thoughts on large and small layouts.

Page 40. **NCalendar, NHorizons, and Observations.**
Responding to an illustration, the Canadian National “Transcontinental” train includes two of the most striking cars that the railway used in its long distance trains - the ex-Milwaukee Super Dome and Skytop lounge. The lounge car comes equipped out of the box with interior lighting for the rear seating area!

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- Ex-Union Pacific ACF Diner #1350
- Ex-Milwaukee Road Pullman 10-6 Sleeper #2144 “Vermillion River”
- Ex-Milwaukee Road Lounge Observation #1903 “Trinity”

In the 1960’s, in direct competition with the Canadian Pacific, the Canadian National introduced a number of “Continental” trains, designed to service the Montreal to Vancouver route, a more than 2900 mile trip that ran without changing locomotives thanks to the all-diesel power servicing these trains. Built up using equipment from other railroads, including the striking Skytop Lounge and Super Dome cars acquired from the Milwaukee road, these trains allowed riders to traverse the full length of North America in style - a true “Transcontinental” route. This set from Kato USA includes an assortment of prototypical cars that were used on many of these trains, set to operate as-is or in conjunction with your existing CN cars. Order yours from your local hobby store today!

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Modeling a Wrecked Locomotive Load

by Karl Andraschko/ Images by author

It is possible to model so many unique loads in N Scale. A while back I was watching the rail cams at Horseshoe Curve in Altoona, PA. A train carrying three wrecked locomotives was being taken to the Norfolk Southern Juniata Shops for rebuild. The locomotives were too damaged to ride their own wheels for the distance, so they were loaded onto heavy duty flat-cars to transportation. I decided I wanted to try to recreate one of these wrecked loads. The project ended up being much easier than I thought it would be. Follow along as I take you through this quick and easy build.

Above. ES44AC gets a ride on QTTX 131379 through Afton Canyon on Union Pacific’s Cima Subdivision. The engine is probably headed for repairs back at NS’s home shops.

I started with an N Scale Kits (NScaleKits.com) 70 foot 8-axle flatcar.

These kits come with the main components needed to build the car. You do need to supply your own trucks and couplers.
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Image 03. The casting may have some small imperfections, these can be filled with some putty.

Image 04. Next this should be sanded smooth.

Image 05. Next, glue the etched stirrups to the end platforms.

Image 06. At this point the car is ready for paint. I like to start with a coat of Tamiya Fine Grey Primer.
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Image 07. I paint the body TTX Yellow, and painted the hand brakes with some BNSF Orange.

Image 08. Per prototype photos I painted the top of the end platforms and the sides of the main body black and sealed the paint with some clearcoat.

Image 09. Then the car was ready for decals and another coat of clear.

Image 10. I glued on Micro-Trains #905 couplers. Tangent cut levers also add a nice detail to the end platforms. BLMA 100 ton trucks give the car the means to roll down the tracks. With the mechanical parts on, a little weathering. The weathering I use is a combination of an airbrushed brown wash, Tamiya Panel Accent, and Pan Pastels. At this point the car would be ready for service, but empty flat cars are not as fun as ones with loads.
Image 11. Using some .0416” x .0416” basswood I made the cribbing the locomotive will sit on.

Image 12. I weathered the cribbing with my brown wash so it wouldn’t look too new.

Image 13. Then I glued the cribbing to the deck of the flatcar.

Image 14. For the load itself I used a the shell from a Fox Valley Models Norfolk Southern ES44AC.
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As this was all for looks, I also swapped the couplers for Micro-Trains True Scale couplers, added TrainWorx wipers, and hit the locomotive with the Tamiya Panel Accent Fluid to start the build up of grime.

Image 15. These are beautiful locomotives, and it did hurt a little to relegate this one to life as a load. Feel free to use whatever shell you may have sitting in your parts box. I added the details that come with the FVM locomotive (grab irons and cab shades) as well as a spare fuel tank I had from a Kato ES44.

Image 16. These are beautiful locomotives, and it did hurt a little to relegate this one to life as a load. Feel free to use whatever shell you may have sitting in your parts box. I added the details that come with the FVM locomotive (grab irons and cab shades) as well as a spare fuel tank I had from a Kato ES44.
NEW 17 Post NSC well cars -Scheduled 4Q 2020 – Reserve Now...

Distributor/Dealer reservations for this production run is through August 5th. There are 4 individual packs and a Two-pack. Single cars msrp $44.95 and 2-packs msrp $88.95

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JTC # 772013- 17-Post 53’ well car – TTX Car number 655117 Silver conspicuity 3-stripes

JTC # 772022- 17-Post 53’ well car – CP Rail Car number 527578 CP RAIL

JTC # 772020- 17-Post 53’ well car – TTX Car number 656573 Yellow conspicuity 3-stripes

National Steel Car (NSC) is the largest manufacturer of rolling stock in Canada, based in Hamilton, Ontario.

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- This model is designed to accept other brands of containers; We have test fit the following: All JTC products of course; These 53’ containers; Atlas, Deluxe, KATO, Micro-Trains, Scale Trains. Also 48 footers by; Deluxe, Micro-Trains, Walthers.

- The Interior has ‘PIN’ location holes for proper fit of the JTC 20’ and 40’ containers, for easy placement/alignment of the containers on top of these.

- The Design of the interior ‘PIN’ holes at 40’ locations are oval shaped to accept a proper fit in the well, of the other brands.

- Engineered for the 9-post NSC versions to come with 100T trucks, and M-T couplers -body mounted at the Factory in a unique method to have the smallest coupler box profile.

- Precise painting & decorating as per prototype photos.

- JTC suggested minimum radius is 18” for the length of car. However, on the Test layout, they constantly traversed 15” curves, and ‘s’ switches loaded and empty, push or pull, in model Intermodal trains connected to various other brands of intermodal cars.

Also New 53’ 8-55-8 containers Due 4Q 2020; including JTC# 537005: XFEU FLORIDA EAST COAST $33.95 set of 2
This project was easily finished in a weekend. A little work and you have a unique load that can add some spice to your layout or ops sessions. It is also a great way to get some of those spare shells you have lying around back onto the layout!

Image 17. I laid down a heavy coat of brown wash (1 part brown paint to 10 parts 70% isopropyl alcohol) before gluing the locomotive to the cribbing.

Image 18. Some black EZ Line from Berkshire Junction would replicate tie downs well. At this point the car is ready to haul this load back to its home shops for repair.
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Quick Layout Prep for Rolling Stock
by George Hollwedel/ Images by author

Image 01. Here is a stock Atlas 42’ gondola with a container load, Rapido truck mounted couplers, and plastic wheels.

Image 02. The first thing I did was get rid of the container load. It just doesn’t look very real to me.

Image 03. Next I shoot a coat of Tamiya Flat Clear on the car. I don’t do much heavy weathering but I do like to get rid of the gloss finish.
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Figure 03. Now I cut the Rapido couplers off of the trucks. I use a jeweler’s saw. It takes less time to do it than it took me to type this text.

Image 04. Now I cut the Rapido couplers off of the trucks. I use a jeweler’s saw. It takes less time to do it than it took me to type this text.

Image 05. I use metal wheels. The Intermountain 60070 wheels fit the Atlas trucks.

Image 06. I installed Micro-Trains 1015 couplers. The car looks much better than when I started!

Image 07. Last step was installing a load. These coils are heavy, so four per car placed over the trucks is the way to go.
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Upgrading the BLI Cryogenic Tank Car
Adding body-mounted couplers and 100-ton trucks

by Bryan Busséy/ Images by author

The cryogenic tank car first built in the early 1960s is one of my favorite prototypes, and I was very pleased when Broadway Limited announced they would be offering one in N scale. When the model was released, I was happy with the overall appearance. The free-standing detail is more delicate than usual on N scale rolling stock, but the model can be handled without fear of breaking something. I was surprised to see that the model had truck-mounted couplers. Even more surprising was the presence of the undersized trucks. Given that the BLI HO model is equipped with body-mounted couplers and 100-ton trucks, I had expected the N scale model to be similarly equipped. I set out to remedy the situation on the two models I had purchased, and it ended up taking less effort than expected.

I found that the underside of end walkway of the model already was at the correct height for body-mounting Micro-Trains couplers, so it was simply a matter of drilling and tapping holes for #00-90 screws. Conveniently, there is a mold punch-out mark perfectly placed underneath the walkway, as it is centered side to side and inset the exact distance for the mounting hole of a #1015 coupler box that would position the front of the coupler box flush with the walkway. I used the sharp point of an X-Acto #2 blade to mark the center of the punch-out mark (Image 1), then drilled through the walkway with a #62 bit and threaded the hole with a #00-90 tap (Images 2 and 3). The new holes are just behind the walkways so they are inconspicuous. Since both of my models were painted black, I assembled two sets of brown couplers in black coupler boxes. A #16 blade was twirled in the hole of the box bottom to provide a recess for flathead screws to sit flush. I used 3/16” length brass screws and test-mounted the couplers (Image 4).

The next step was to prepare for upgrading the trucks. Atlas ex-BLMA ASF Ride-Control 100-ton trucks were used to lower the ride height in addition to providing the proper truck. The better-looking wheels also were a factor, as they are very visible on open-frame tank cars. The bushing diameter of the existing BLI bolster pins were too narrow for the new trucks, so the model had to be prepared for new bolster pins. The Micro-Trains bolster pins have the correct bushing diameter for the ex-BLMA trucks. But the pins are fatter than the BLI pins. I opened the bolster pin holes on the model with a #50 bit to accommodate the Micro-Trains pins (Image 5), which now fit snugly in the model (Image 6). With the model now sitting lower, some additional clearance was needed for the outer axles. The top rear edge of the coupler box was beveled at a 45-degree angle, back to edge of the coupler screw head (Image 7). This provided enough clearance for the truck to pivot fully (Images 8 and 9). The model now rides on proper trucks with body-mounted couplers (Image 10) and stands at a better ride height above the rails. It took less than an hour to modify two cars.

The upgraded BLI tanks look extremely good traveling in freight consists.
Ohio Central System 7220, a low nose Alco C420 Phase 2b is Atlas 40 004 007.

Click on New Product images to go to their website.
Image 01. Making the dimple for drilling the coupler screw hole.

Image 02. Drilling the coupler screw hole.
The Texas Special - Albert Martin Mail Baggage Car was produced by Micro-Trains for Lowell Smith Signature Series. This car’s distinctive ‘shadow-line’ paint scheme is stunning. https://lowellsmith.net/product-category/railsmith/the-mkt-the-friscos-texas-special/

Left. 50’ Stock car Wabash 16510 is Atlas 50 004 425


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Image 03. Tapping the coupler screw hole.

Image 04. Micro-Trains #1015 coupler installed.
Image 05. Increasing the clearance of the bolster pin hole.

Image 06. Test fitting the Micro-Trains bolster pin.
Image 07. Adding the bevel to the coupler box to clear the outer axle.

Image 08. The BLMA trucks are installed.
Image 09. Truck has the necessary room to pivot.

Image 10. The model now has proper trucks, body-mounted couplers and stands at a better height above the rail top.

BILL OF LADING
- (1) Broadway Limited #3821 through #3834 Cryogenic Tank Car, assorted
- (2) Micro-Trains #1015 (#001.02.000) Body-mounted couplers, standard short shank
- (2) Atlas #BLMA9005 ASF Ride-Control 100-ton trucks with 36” low profile metal wheels
- (2) Micro-Trains #1086 (#003.12.032) Standard truck bolster pins
- (2) #00-90 3/16” flat head brass screws

Image 11. The finished model on the workbench.
Have a finished module but need to work on the underside? I did. First, I tried clamping the frame to a workbench so the module stood vertically on its back. But that made clamping and gluing wooden blocks impossible. Here’s what to do instead.

Image 02. Clamp the 1x4s to the module’s sides.

Image 03. Raise one end and move that sawhorse until it’s outside the module’s length Ditto the other end.

Above. Place the module on two sawhorses about 3’ apart. Lay an 8’ 1x4 on either side.
Images 04, 05, 06, 07. After the module is suspended between the 1x4s, coerce your daughter and son-in-law to invert the module while you take pictures.
Do your work. When you're done, reverse the steps. Then unclamp the 1x4s and save them for the next time you need to work on the bottom of your module.
Let me begin this article by stating that, like many if not most of you, I have always had dreams of building and operating a large, multi-faceted model railroad empire in a basement, attic, garage, spare room—wherever my wife would have allowed it. From the outset of my re-introduction back into model railroading after an absence of many years of adolescence, college, the start of a career, and marriage, I had hoped to create a modest empire, something akin to Allen McClelland’s Virginian & Ohio Railroad, that would grace some portion of my home. I became mesmerized by a cover of the V&O on a Railroad Model Craftsman at a local newsstand shortly after I got married and somehow convinced my wife that a hobby like scale model railroading would be “good” for us ( . . . unlike golf or tennis which would take me away from home and obligations and siphon much needed funds away from our new home).

Once I gained her approval, I began in earnest to design a layout that might fit in one of the two spare bedrooms that graced our first house. Unfortunately, my wife had other plans for the rooms and, two daughters later, I was forced to shelve my empire while carting my two charges to periodic afterschool and weekend activities. I did join a local NTRAK club that had recently formed near me and enjoyed the benefits of learning skills and techniques from knowledgeable and helpful fellow members that I knew would be invaluable while I built a pair of NTRAK modules, and once we moved into a larger home on a quieter street.

As my children came into adolescence and we secured our current residence (this one with four bedrooms and a three-car garage! . . . but still just the two daughters) I felt that my dreams were about to come true. Imagine my surprise when my wife calmly claimed imminent domain on our older daughter’s bedroom as her craft room, told me the office was to remain inviolate and when the younger daughter moved out her room was to become the “guest room” . . . I was officially relegated to the garage to try and build a layout there while still keeping the cars (at least her car) permanently domiciled within. She softened the blow by providing funds to drywall and insulate the garage, put in a room air conditioner, and purchase a workbench and numerous cabinets in which to store equipment, tools, and “train stuff”.

So, now twenty years after returning to the hobby, I realized that the vast railroad empire I had initially envisioned wasn’t likely going to materialize.
But in the interim a rather curious thing happened.

I had started, as a compromise, a much smaller layout (5’ X 8’) with the help of a train buddy. We got track and DC electronics installed, and the basic scenery completed. Over many years it remained in limbo, suspended in the rafters of my garage with a boat trailer winch and pulleys while I devoted time to my NTRAK club and our daughters grew up and left the nest.

While I still dreamed of a larger layout, I recognized that the commitment of time, finances, and expertise to such an enterprise was no longer a viable option for me, but the desire for a home layout remained. So, I lowered the small layout and placed it on “my” side of the garage and started working on it in earnest . . . again. One of my NTRAK club members volunteered many hours of his time to help me re-lay new track, install new DCC electronics, and get the resurrected layout up and running. Then, in a matter of a few more months (thanks to the pandemic), I had it completely scenicked, operational, and running smoothly with 30-car trains.

And I discovered an important lesson . . .

Small layouts can be very much a viable option to their larger counterparts, and I became one of their major fans. For me, once reality set in regarding what I could realistically accomplish with all of the other personal and professional commitments I had and what little “real estate” I could commandeer in my own home, it started to make serious sense to build something I could actually complete (well, we all know layouts are never “finished” . . .) and enjoy while still keeping some peace in the family.

Small layouts have some notable advantages:

- They take minimal space
- You could spend significantly less money on track, electronics, locomotives, cars, buildings, scenery
- It takes significantly less time to get trains up and running, troubleshoot problems, and maintain/clean track

Image 02. This pair of truss bridges are modified Kato units. Micro Engineering Code 70 bridge track replaced the original Kato track with guard rails added. New end supports at the top of each bridge entrance were made with styrene to accommodate intermodal traffic.
These two scenes show the layout (8’ X 5’) pretty much in its entirety. There is a two-track mainline loop with two reverse loops—a Mountain Line and a Valley Line—that stretch the layout’s mainline by a factor of two additional sections. It takes close to four minutes to traverse the two loops and a significant portion of the attached mainline at scale speed. (It’s not the V&O, but this works for me, and I get to park both cars in the garage!)

- The amount of scenery you need to install is significantly less, allowing for greater focus on specific scenes/aspects you want to highlight
- It’s easier to throw money at some problems, like buying versus building hundreds of trees in a forest, when the problem is decidedly smaller than a room or garage layout-sized issue
- They can be somewhat portable so working on wiring, switch motors, DCC components may only require turning the layout on its side
- It allows you to learn about construction/electronics/scenery on a smaller, more manageable scale before you may want to tackle say the Shasta Division of the Union Pacific and the intricacies of an eight-switch yard ladder later in life
- They can be winched up into the rafters of a garage allowing automobiles to cohabitate
- The layout can be completed without getting burnt-out or feeling overwhelmed thinking you might never get it finished or even operational

I readily admit that there are numerous concessions that must be made when choosing to “downsize” your dream layout—shortened mainline, little or no yard space, scene compression issues, diminished operations, the list goes on and on. But having a manageable, operational layout in reasonably complete status has made me a magnet for kids and their parents/grandparents who are walking by when I have the garage door up and the trains running (with masks and appropriate social distancing). It has sparked a number of conversations, questions, interest, and an appreciation of the hobby that being buried in a spare room would never have created. Plus, my wife has come to appreciate the Zen of watching trains traverse over my modest depiction of high Sierra railroading and sharing it with others as well.

So, before you commit yourself to that major layout project, consider the option of a small layout and the satisfaction that it can bring to your desire to control your own railroad empire—albeit decidedly smaller but equally satisfying.
Image 05. This is my “storyboard” for the layout. One of my NTRAK club buddies got me hooked on putting up a bulletin board on a wall in my garage where I could place photos and reference pictures of the various scenic points I wanted to include on my layout. This board became a constant reference guide for all aspects of scenery, water feature(s), bridges, trees and foliage. Pictures could change depending on what I was working on at the time.

Image 04. See the previous page for caption 03.
Image 06. A pair of fishermen (Woodland Scenics Fly Fishermen) are testing the river in one of its quieter stretches.

Image 07. A family of deer rest by a California scrub oak tree in a meadow at its east end.
Image 08. I personally placed nearly 900 trees on this “small” layout and still have a few more to add here and there. I decided on Micro Engineering Code 70 weathered flex track and #6 turnouts in order to keep my fleet of hundreds of Microtrain-equipped rolling stock with their original wheels. My only track modification was one left-handed Code 70 Shinohara #4 LH turnout (in the middle of this picture) to accommodate the radius of the entrance curve into the Valley Line. I have been running a variety of freight traffic around the layout in consists of up to 30 cars with minimal disruption (still working on one or two “issues” with some temperamental six-axle locomotives).
One of the tricks I learned with this layout was to keep straight stretches of track to a minimum—something you can see with the left (west) side of the layout. The mountain top at the far right side lifts off for ease of cleaning and the occasional derailment.

This view also shows off some the cabinets my wife provided me for storage and “train stuff”. She has been my biggest fan in the hobby and I am deeply indebted to her for her support and encouragement in getting me to continue work on the layout this past year.
RENO ATTRACTIONS:
- THE DISCOVERY - TERRY LEE WELLS NEVADA DISCOVERY MUSEUM
- NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM
- TRUCKEE RIVER WALK
- RENO RIVER WALK
- RENO AIR ASSOCIATION - STATIC AIRPLANE DISPLAYS
- NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- W.M. KECK EARTH SCIENCE AND MINERAL ENGINEERING MUSEUM
- NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART
- FLEISCHMANN PLANETARIUM
- RENO ARCH
- RENO Aces (AAA Affiliate of MLB Arizona Diamondbacks)

CARSON CITY ATTRACTIONS:
- NEVADA STATE MUSEUM
- NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM
- NEVADA STATE CAPITOL BUILDING
- CARSON CITY MINT MUSEUM
- VIRGINIA AND TRUCKEE RAILWAY

NEVADA MINING CITIES:
- VIRGINIA CITY
- SILVER CITY
- GOLD HILL

NEAR BY HISTORIC PLACES:
- EMIGRANT GAP, CA - SCENIC VISTA
- TRUCKEE, CA - HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AREA
- DONNER PASS - HISTORIC PASS
- DONNER LAKE
- LAKE TAHOE

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Kim Knight’s article praising small layouts hit home with me. Though one of the reasons NSR was created was to show that no matter how much space you have, N should be one’s first choice. This isn’t an option for everyone. I am fortunate to be able to be working on a relatively large layout. But to be practical, one should gain experience with other layouts. I was able to avoid moving. Over the decades I accumulated supplies such as track and wire and so far I haven’t had make any large purchases. My cohorts and I are having a blast. If I ever have to move I plan to continue helping others but I figure I will have T-TRAK modules in the Old N Folks Home. There are ~infinite ways to enjoy N.
See You Next Issue!

Kim Saigh
- Northern Pacific Sand Cars

Al Lowe
- Transportable Module Lighting

Duncan Cabassi
- Locomotive Wheel Cleaning Tool
- ...And More!