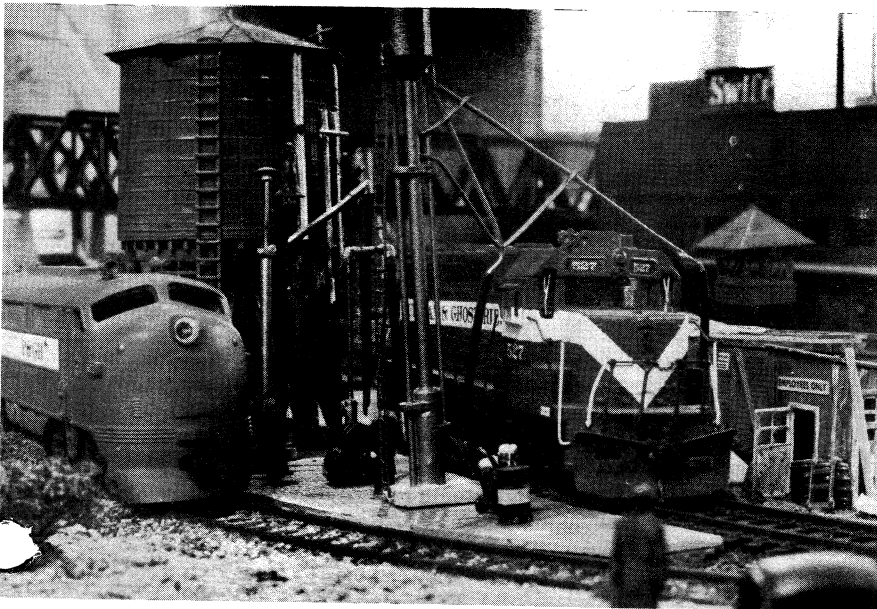


# HOTBOX

"the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"  
No. 200

June 1984





# HOTBOX

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • Tamr Association of Model Railroaders

Issued eleven times a year (June through April) with a special mailing of a Directory of Membership in May.

Annual dues are as follows:

REGULAR (under 21) \$10.00  
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OVERSEAS (outside N. Amer.) \$15.00  
SUSTAINING (Regular & Associate) \$15.00

Please address all renewals, membership applications, address changes and complaints of non-receipt of the TAMR HOTBOX to the TAMR Secretary.

**TAMR SECRETARY:** Dee Gilbert  
Box 132  
Harrison, AR  
72602-0132

All other TAMR HOTBOX business, except where specifically noted, is handled by the Editor. Please address all comments to the Editor.

**HOTBOX EDITOR:** Mark Kaszniak  
4818 W. George St.  
Chicago, IL 60641

The TAMR HOTBOX welcomes articles, photographs (B&W only, please), artwork and cartoons pertaining to model and/or prototype railroad subjects. All items for publication must be submitted 30 days before the month of publication. The TAMR HOTBOX assumes that all items are submitted for the mutual benefit and enjoyment of the hobby by our members and thus no payment will be made upon publication.

## Front Cover:

(Top) Diesel meets Steam! - Modern P&GR motive power rumbles past a Mikado just outside of Shamrock. No's 527 and 405 are rushing perishable citrus to Pullman. (Bottom, left) Engines 527, a super-detailed Athearn GP35 and 603, a modified Varney F3, bask in the afternoon sunlight awaiting their next assignments. (Bottom, right) It's 7:32 AM and traffic is jumping as commuter #4 slides into the town of Pullman on the advertised.

All photos by Dennis Brandt

## EXTRA BOARD

All the news that fits, we print:

**Membership:** By Dee Gilbert

Total TAMR Membership (6-1-84): 125

Breakdown as follows:

Region	Number	Percentage
Canadian	6	4.8%
Central	40	32.0%
International	2	1.6%
Northeastern	43	34.4%
Southern	17	13.6%
Western	17	13.6%

**Checks & Balances** By Claude Morelli

April 1, 1984 Balance	+\$ 119.23
Income	+ 283.05
Expenses	- 215.25
May 22, 1984 Balance	+\$ 187.03
Trans. 2-yr. member fund	- 10.00
Trans. to AR bank fund*	- 30.00
Trans. to EOA fund**	- 20.00
Operating Balance	+\$ 127.03
Savings Balance ***	+ 120.00
Total Available Funds	+\$ 247.03

\* Funds used by Dee Gilbert to open a new centralized TAMR checking account in Arkansas. Such an account will eliminate the need for transfer of funds between outgoing and incoming officers, also transfer of funds from Secretary to TAMR Treasury will be much quicker.

\*\* The ExtraOrdinary Activities fund is a portion of the TAMR savings that has been set aside to cover expected costs resulting from higher postal rates next year, a large 21st anniversary HOTBOX and/or any other costs resulting from the TAMR's 21st Anniversary celebration  
\*\*\* Includes regular and EOA savings funds.

## Thank You

The HOTBOX wishes to formally thank the following outgoing officers for the time and hard work they have spent over the past two years to help the TAMR:

Dan Carroll, outgoing Auditor  
Don Leitch, outgoing Canadian Region Rep.  
Paul Michelson, outgoing Central Reg. Rep.  
Andy Taylor, outgoing Northeastern Region Rep.

Hope you enjoy your retirement fellows!

## Amendments

As you have probably already guessed, amendments numbers 1 and 3 passed with majorities of 86 and 84 percent, respectively. Amendment 2, however, was defeated as it did not meet the 2/3rd's majority necessary for it to be adopted. Thus the DIRECTORY has already been integrated and new dues are effective for Associates with this issue.

# CRUMMY NEWS



BY MARK KASZNAK, EDITOR

## ROAD TO ENJOYMENT

Every railfan has a favorite spot where he/she likes to watch trains. In most cases, this spot is probably on a busy mainline or at a crossing of mainlines where there is always some action. If a railfan visits that spot often enough, sooner or later he/she will encounter a track gang. Now as modelers, let's pause a moment to reflect on why that track gang is there. Certainly the members of the gang are not out in the hot mid-day sun so they can achieve the perfect tan! Nor are they out there bending rail to build up their muscles to enter the Mr. Universe competition. These people are charged with one duty, to make sure that the railroad's track is kept in tip-top condition. For without good track, a railroad loses its competitive edge.

Now I have been a TAMR member for a good number of years now and in that time period, I have been able to visit a fair number of our members' pikes. I have noticed that the one item that sets apart a good pike from a bad pike is the quality of the trackwork. As an N scaler, perhaps I am more conscious of trackwork than my HO counterparts. This is probably due to the fact that N scale equipment doesn't run reliably on bad track. However, some of the liberties that you HOers take with your trackwork cause me to throw up my hands in dismay. Really now, how can you expect good operation when I can plainly see quarter inch gaps between tracks, insufficient power routing, cars that pick the points at track switches and triple S-curves which would certainly cause your HO passengers to be thrown in the aisles?

I realize that HO trackwork is more forgiving of slight flaws than that used in N scale. So maybe your train

won't derail every time it crosses a bad joint. Let's say that it will derail every 10th time. Not often enough to require immediate attention, but often enough to be quite a little nuisance. If you take a little time out of your busy operating schedule to mend that joint, your train may now derail every 100th or 1000th time it passes over it. That extra minute you spend fixing it will literally provide hours of trouble free reliable operation.

So what can you do to make your trackwork better? Here are a few suggestions: First, leave no more than one sixteenth of an inch gap between any rail joint. In fact, butt up most joints as close as you can, a few moments with a file will solve most of your problems. File the insides of the rail on every joint and run your finger over it to assure that there is a smooth transition from one track to the next. This will keep the wheels of your cars from picking these joints and causing derailments.

Make sure that each block on your railroad is adequately powered. If a train slows down on the far end of your pike, run some additional feeders. Use 18 AWG wire to avoid voltage losses.

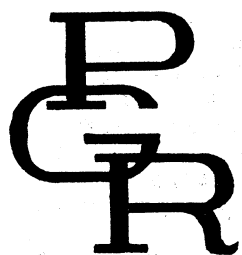
File down those catch points on track switches. Locomotives and cars always seem to be picking the points on switches, a slight bevel made with a file on the switches will correct this problem.

Use insulated rail joiners instead instead of cutting the rail (those pretty Atlas orange ones stand out like sore thumbs and let your engineers know the exact location of the block separations). If you must cut the rail, fill the resulting hole with some glue to prevent the rails from closing again and shorting out your blocks.

Avoid S-curves like the plague. Unless you know what you are doing and can lay out proper transition curves (see Armstrong's book: Trackplanning for Realistic Operation by Kalmbach books for a discussion of transition curves), they aren't worth the bother.

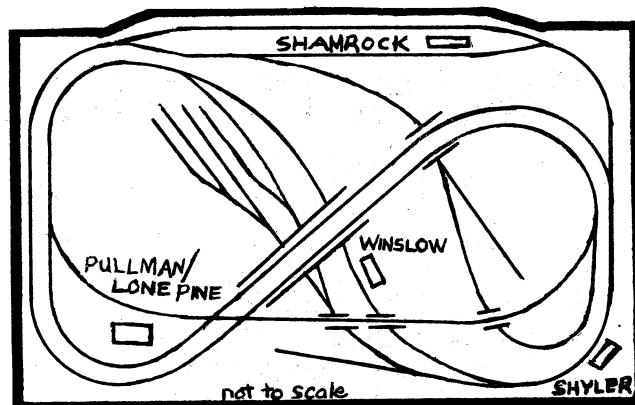
If you follow these guidelines, you'll be on your way to the road of enjoyment with trouble-free operation. Then if I decide to pop by for a visit, you can show me your operating pike instead of a collection of static models.

By Dennis Brandt



## PULLMAN & GHOST RIDGE RAILROAD

"YOUR BUSINESS IS OUR PLEASURE"



The P&GR began as the enterprise of one Amos T. Abernathy in 1880. Amos was already a powerful person in Arizona those days, having discovered and claimed several rich silver deposits. Yet mining was just a start for our hero--he wanted more! Then came that fateful summer of 1880. The Southern Pacific RR Co. had been in the region for two years and now controlled all the ore traffic--including Amos's--since it was the only railroad. Needless to say, the SP freight rates were on the high (read mountainous) side, and customers were getting fed up! Clearly something had to be done. At a rather frantic town meeting that fateful summer day, Amos realized his chance had come and rose to speak: "Gentlemen, this great country of ours was built on a bed-rock of freedom and surely nobody here loves freedom and American enterprise as much as I. The key word here is competition; we must fight fire with fire. Yes, we must build our own railroad! My assets alone will not be enough, but all of the mine companies and ranches combined should generate enough money to build a railroad from here to the SP in Winslow!" Utter chaos ensued with mine and ranch owners arguing the financial risks involved, manpower needs and the need of a certain ambitious man to see a psychiatrist. Once again above the roar, Amos spoke up: "Of course, the alternative would be for me to sell out to my good friend Leland Stanford (President of the SP) and then come back and buy you all out for the SP." As you might guess, matters were settled in a hurry and construction began immediately. The railroad carried on pretty well over the years hauling the ore cars from the silver mines in and around Pullman to the processing plants in Winslow. However, in the early 1930's, the depression and sudden depletion of the mines forced the P&GR to turn to other business. First, quarrying and glass manufacturing presented themselves. At the same time,

irrigation came to the region. The result turned the easy-going shortline into a vibrant industrial and agricultural carrier. World War II brought the P&GR even more industrial growth. Today, the railroad has embarked on a program to bring more tourism to the area, via train. The P&GR is a profitable line that aggressively meets new challenges and comes out winning.

There you have it, the history of the Pullman & Ghost Ridge RR, my 5x9 HO layout. Rumor has it that my Dad was once interested in model railroading. He built the benchwork and trackwork for the current P&GR. He built scenery for it once too, but several moves across the country took care of that. I've added some trackage to make the layout more operational and, of course, redid all the scenery. The pike is set in the forested rocky countryside of northern Arizona. The theme is that of a prosperous shortline and the time is roughly 1949--diesels dominate, but steam still lives. Even though the setting is Arizona, the impression of the layout is fairly urban simply because I like my railroad to have lots of customers. Many of the structures are scratchbuilt, some kit-bashed, but most are commercial. Many are also interlinked. For example, the limestone quarry supplies a glass factory with raw materials. An orange grove gets iced reefers from an ice plant, loads them and then sends them to a produce market.

The roster includes some detailed Mantua steamers and all EMD diesels--to lessen the parts inventory and to take advantage of Athearn's excellent units. The dominating freight car is the old twin hopper, not surprising as the dominating industry is the quarry. Passenger train abound--remember it's 1949--first class limiteds, fast mail and express trains, commuter runs and a streamlined vistadome run fill the timetable. A 5x9 pike is small you say? Not around here! (cont'd next page)

## Pullman & Ghost Ridge (cont'd)

Yes, operations do take place on the P&GR, but they are not as involved as I would like. A card order system is used for freight car forwarding along with a 9 to 1 fast clock. This gives a 24 hour period in two hours and forty minutes. I am still trying to integrate the freight operations with the passenger operations during an operating session.

Trains are run using commercial transistorized walkaround throttles with standard block wiring. Two trains can be operated independently--useless with just one operator, but great for public shows.

With the clock on, the room lighting is set to automatically dim with the evening hours and brighten up in the morning. Building lights and streetlights come on after "nightfall," the effect is impressive and adds a lot to the session.

In summary, all these facets--history, scenery, structures, rolling stock and operation help the P&GR simulate a real railroad company. Guess that's what ole Abernathy and me had in mind all along! Incidentally, the P&GR will be one of the featured layouts during the Desert Rails '84 PNR regional convention on June 27 to July 1. Stop by and say hello if you are in the area.

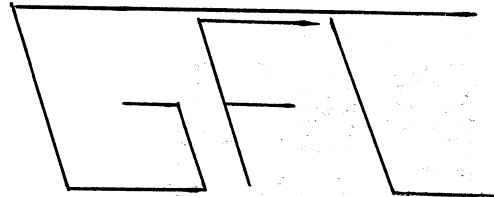
The TAZEWELL, VERMILION & WESTERN announces the transfer of offices from suburban Chicago to Philadelphia, PA and new construction in central Illinois. Due to a change in track gauge, the TV&W is selling rolling stock, motive power and structures (HO). Structures currently available: Wayfreight Models Plymouth freight house (unassembled) for \$4.00 and a Campbell Models Skull Valley station (unassembled, several pieces painted) for \$5.00. Send SSAE for copy of kit plans. Motive power and rolling stock will be available in June--including Athearn power in L&N, GTW, CN and rolling stock in southern and midwest roads (some decaled). REPLY: Gary Tempco, TV&W, P.O. Box 40231, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

# RRS

President  
Dave Chapman  
P.O. Box 265  
Grant Park, IL  
60940

Passes nearly Traded

The Railroad System is moving! We sold all the rail trackage between the MoPac and the ICG and we are moving out west! We aren't sure yet, but it will probably be where we were before, joining



## LEANING OVER BACKWARD FOR YOU

1984 sees the emergence of a new railroad coming out of the old L&D Railroad (affectionately known as "Ole Lump 'n Dump"). The name is changed with a new logo to be added reflecting the new image and along with the routing will be both rebuilt, and in some cases, re-located.

Amtrak's Amtraker I will continue to run on time, with full service. GFL passenger trains will continue to run both on high speed schedules and excursion schedules.

GFL freight service will continue to be amongst the fastest between Chicago and Seattle in the country. GFL will continue in the footsteps of the old L&D as being the liveliest route in the country for railfanning by operating steamers and older generation diesels.

Beginning February 1, 1984, the GFL proudly announces the beginning run of NP's North Coast Limited, using old F3's and the last of streamlined domes, refurbished and repainted to the two tone greens it carried. One round trip weekly, beginning from Chicago, Feb. 1, 1984, 9 AM central time. Every other trip of the NCL will be headed up with the last of NP's great Northern steamers, a 4-8-4, with NP logo and number.

All railfans welcome on the premises, but you must check in with yardmasters, station agents and tower operators. So don't forget the name:

## GILBERT FAMILY LINES

Dee Gilbert, President  
Linda Gilbert, VP

the Southern Pacific and the BN. Our roster is improving, we got an old FP45 from the BN and a UP shell for our SW1500 freshly painted for the UP! That makes a total of 4 SD40-2's, one SW1500 and an FP45. We also bought two container trailers, one forty foot, the other twenty foot. The passes will be coming in about three weeks time. We will keep you posted on our movement.



Do you have any helpful hints for making your model railroad look more realistic that don't take a lot of time or money? If you do, consider submitting them to the HELPERS column. All items are to be sent to the HOTBOX Editor.

### WINDOWS

Want to put plastic windows in your caboose or building, but don't feel like cutting out plastic and gluing it behind the frame, or worse yet, trying to fit it into the small holes? Well, Micro-Scale has a product called Kristal-Kleer. It is not new, but is not very well known about. This product comes in a little tube just like Solva-Set and is used to make windows in small openings. All you do is put a drop on a toothpick or the end of a paintbrush and then transfer this drop to the area in which you wish to make the window. Start in one corner and work slowly going to all corners and then working toward the center. This will provide a semi-clear type of window that really makes you models stand out. It is not supposed to be used for large windows like on a diesel, but is perfect for those small openings that are really noticeable. Ask for this at any store that carries Micro-Scale products.

--Tom Gasior

### WHAT'S IN A NAME

Many privately owned railroad cars are owned by companies with unusual names like Mid-West Mud Co. or the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District (try lettering that one with a dry transfer alphabet set!) Yet the most unusually named company, in my opinion, is the Head-On Collision Line of Chicago. The Head-On Collision Line is a lessor of tank cars. These cars carry the reporting marks H.O.C.X., data and a number, but no name or logo on them. All of the firm's sixty cars are general purpose, coiled cars, un-insulated and painted black although a few have yellow ends. A molasses company has the same owner as the firm and uses a few cars. Other ladings for the cars are by-products of meat packing, like tallow, while others carry hydrocarbons of the petroleum family. A few are in corn syrup service and have a

special lining and stainless steel valves. The name arose because the Association of American Railroads (otherwise known by its acronym AAR) tries to have car initials (i.e. reporting marks) describe the company name, if possible. This company wanted letters which are easy to understand over the phone. This in itself eliminated many letters, but H,O and C were easily understandable. So they began with the letters and went backwards to the name. They also wanted to show the railroads that the firm thought the railroads operated in a slovenly manner much of the time. The railroads obliged by smashing two cars into junk on their first trip ever made from the factory.



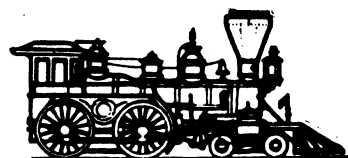
### Getting To Know You

Any member, new or veteran, who has not already had his/her life story poured out to the world through these pages is invited to send an autobiography of about three paragraphs for publication. This is a reader oriented section which depends on you for support. We hope to include this column as often as there is material for it.

Hi, fellow TAMK members! My name is John Beyer and I joined the TAMK in June of 1983. I am also a member of the NR. I am sixteen years old and live in Buffalo, NY. I model in HO scale and have approximately eleven locomotives and about ten cars.

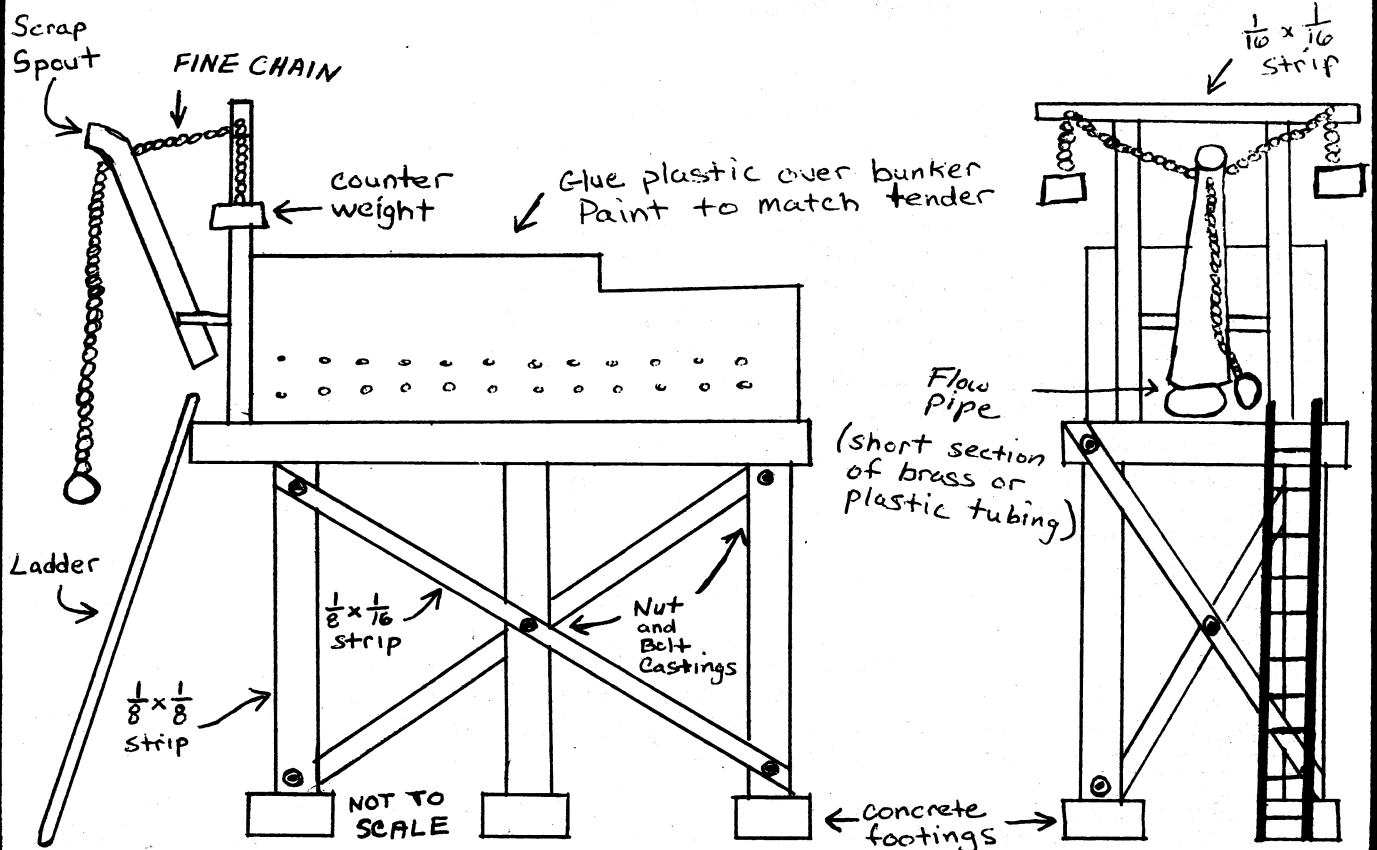
I am currently planning my model railroad empire which will be built when I decide on a trackplan. I will keep you informed on my progress. My favorite railroad is the Chessie System.

I also hope to do a lot to help out this fine association in the near future, such as writing some articles. My other hobbies are model automobile building and balsa wood airplanes. If you would like to correspond, please feel free to write, I'm in the 1984 TAMK Directory.



# from the scrapbox...

By Frank kudowski



Mission City and Northern Railroad  
2494 Golf Links Circle  
Santa Clara, CA 95050

## News Release #2:

As reported earlier, the MC&N is still operating under trackage rights on the "Silicon Valley Lines" modular railroad. Home road track consists of twelve feet of module built to Teen Trak specs. Our new logo shown above is used by permission of Mission Transportation Systems, Inc. of San Diego. New decals are being designed incorporating this basic logo. See news release #3 for our updated logo and much more information.

## News from Overseas

### TAMR Members:

I have just recently started up a newsletter which features European railroads. The newsletter will be issued three to four times a year and a subscription costs \$3.00. My English is not so good, but all funds received will go toward promoting the TAMR in Europe. I think there is a good potential for obtaining a number of members here. If at least 20 persons subscribe, I can inform the major hobbyshops in Europe. So please send your dues to TAMR International c/o Hakan Thell, Sunnanangsgatan 20, S-59800, Vimmerby, Sweden and I'll send you the first issue immediately

-- Hakan Thell  
IR Representative





# BACK ISSUES:

Don't miss your chance to get these valuable back issues of the TAMR HOTBOX. All back issues are available for 75¢ each. Order from the HOTBOX Editor and please make checks or money orders payable to the TAMR. Quantities on some issues are very limited.

January 1982 - Modular Concept-4, Photo Contest winners, Midway Northern mRR, Build a Crossing Flasher, columns.

February 1982 - Modular Concept-5, DW&P--International Connection, Peg modeling notes, Peg loco and car roster, columns.

March 1982 - Pass Exchanging, Modular Concept-6, Layout Design, Model railroading by mail, columns.

April 1982 - Pass Contest winners, Gilpin & the Spices, Modular Concept-7, Tankcar Loader, Baltimore & Ohio mRR, columns.

May 1982 - Dioramas, Teen Trak-1, columns.

June 1982 - Teen Trak-2, Great Plains mRR, Stockyard, Motive Power on a budget, columns.

July 1982 - Teen Trak-3, C&NW - Iowa Division mRR, Scale weather, columns.

August 1982 - Railroading Italian Style, Teen Trak-4, Maintenance cards, columns.

September 1982 - Kitbash a Boxcab, Teen Trak-5, Movies, columns.

October 1982 - Northwoods '400' mRR, Teen Trak-6, columns.

November 1982 - Eastern RRing in 8x12, Teen Trak-7, Lichen, columns.

December 1982 - Working with Brass, columns.

LIMITED OFFER - You can get all six issues from 1981 for \$5.00, all 12 issues from 1982 for \$7.00 and all 12 issues from 1983 for \$9.00. Also, the entire Modular Concept/Teen Trak series (14 installments) for \$3.00. Order today, supplies are limited.

**TAMR hotbox**, the "Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"  
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*Issued 7-7-84*

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