

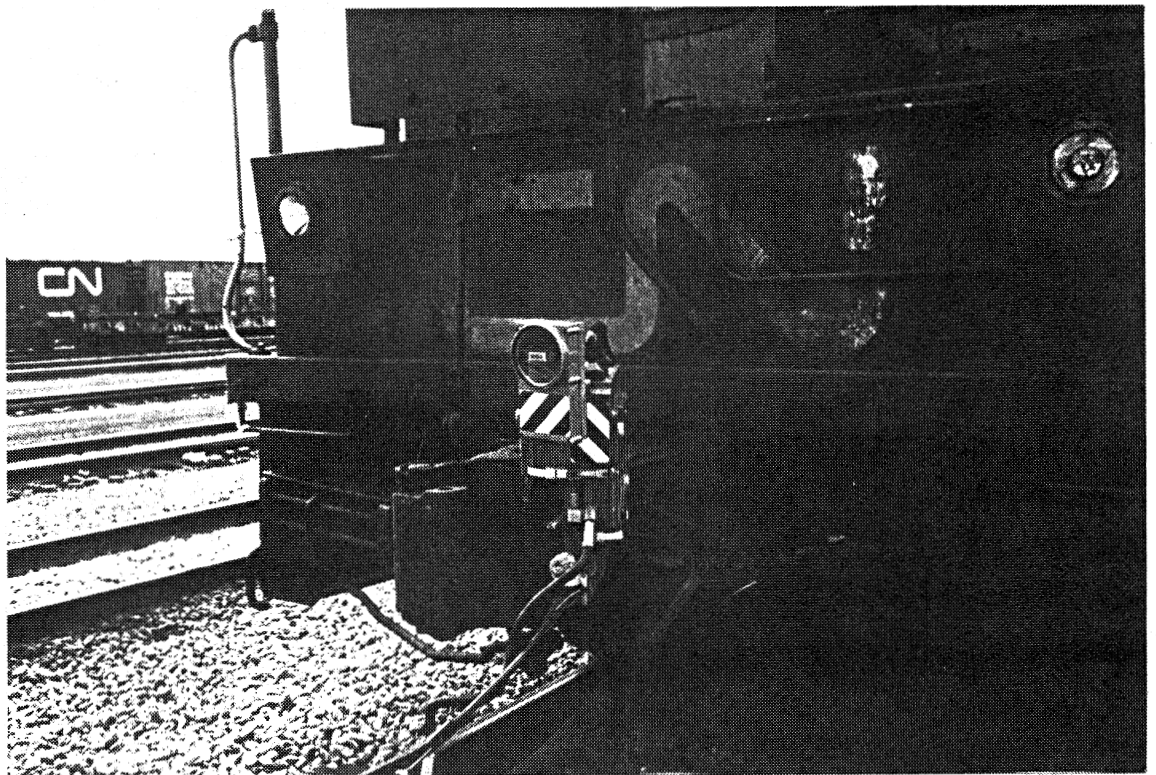
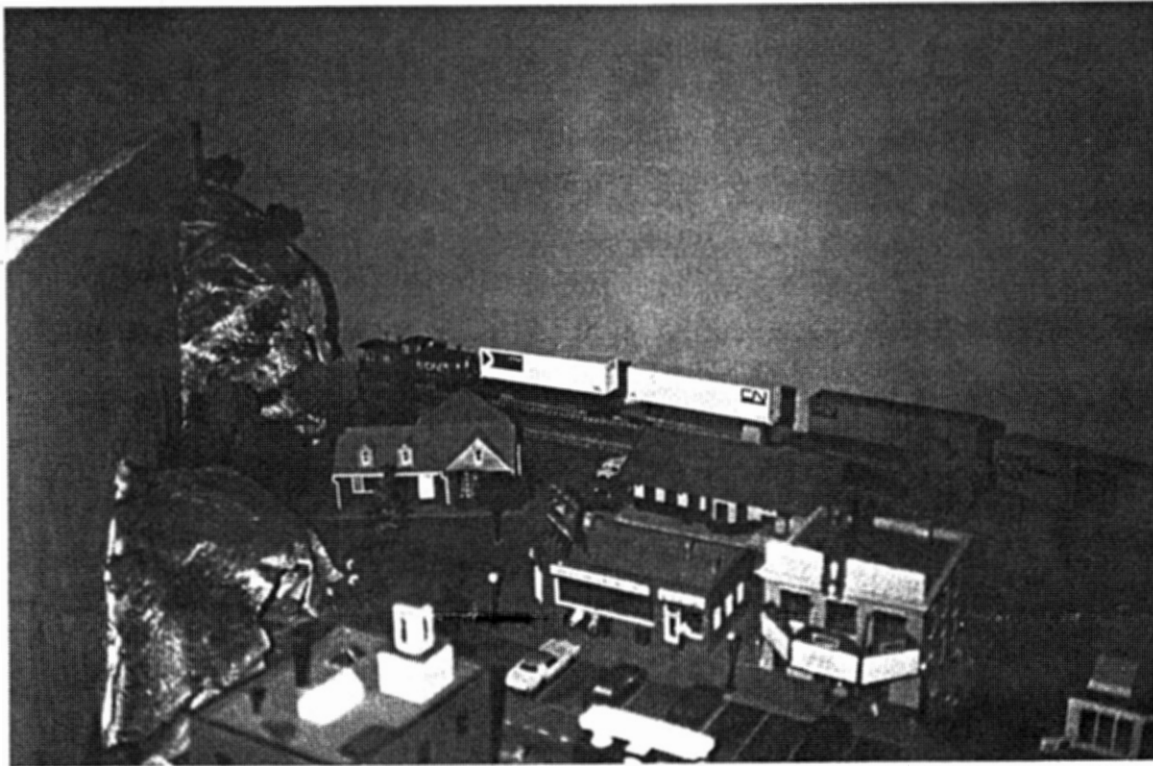


Teen Association of Model Railroaders

HOTBOX

September, 1992

Issue #273



FROM THE DESK OF

Phil Michaels, Editor/HOTBOX

Well, before I begin, there's a few last minute items I need to throw in that didn't make the TAMR News column. First off, we've just received a new member, our only one in the last month. That should change quickly when the results of "ALL ABOARD IN '92" come in. Anyway, our new member, from the Canadian/International Region is:

Michael Blusson
470 W. 37th Ave.
Vancouver, B.C.
Canada V5Y 2N3

Also, I just received the name of the winner of the Layout Letter Contest. And the winner is.....

David Thompson!!!

David will receive a railroad car in his scale of his choice. David wrote a nice letter, but more impressive was the article he wrote to go along with it

about a Northern California Shortline that he designed. The track plan was good, it was well thought-out, and it gave enough information for someone to build it. Also, his description of how to switch the cars gave a real sense of completeness to the article. The fact that this layout is designed for operation, not just running trains, was also a factor in its selection.

Now that that is out of the way, I would like to say another big thank-you to all who are supporting TAMR in many different, but all well-appreciated, ways. Keep working at it, you've been great so far!

As everyone's aware, school is back in. It was a major accomplishment for me to get this issue out, I thank God I was able to find the time this last weekend to get it done. It's been difficult, but don't worry, I'll continue to get your Hotbox to you on-time, and

hopefully each month I can make it even better.

I really hope that TAMR can grow and continue to be what it is. We have so much potential, but unfortunately due to some bad leadership in the past, and people who just didn't plan ahead for what might happen, we have been severely set-back. I believe the next six to eight months will determine the future of the TAMR, so let's all pitch-in and have fun. Write articles, pass out flyers, go to train shows and set-up tables or pass out TAMR literature (or both), volunteer to help with a position, get active in your region and help promote TAMR locally. That's just a small portion of the little, everyday things you can do to help out. It makes TAMR great for everyone. Believe me, I have tons of fun doing the HOTBOX every month, and even with my busy schedule I find time, so certainly YOU (Yes, YOU) can do one little thing such as I listed. Try it!!

Pittsburgh, Marietta, & Ironton Railroad



"Hauling big loads for big industry."

September, 1992

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On the Cover:

TOP: The rear end of CN Extra 5544 North arrives in Midlunnoware on Mike Yan's CN Downt Falls and Midlunnoware Division layout. The TOFC cars are from Front Range and the caboose was scratchbuilt as described in the January 1990 HOTBOX. (Photo by: Mike Yan)

BOTTOM: Taking the place of cabooses, or in this case running on the rear of one, are rear-end devices that communicate to the locomotive all the information that normally would come by the conductor on the cab. This CN FRED is at Calder Yards in Edmonton in June of 1990. FRED's have virtually eliminated cabs on Class 1 railroads. (Photo by: Mike Yan)

TAMR HOTBOX

Official Publication of the
Teen Association of
Model Railroaders

The HOTBOX is issued monthly, for twelve issues per year, with a special mailing of the TAMR Directory of Members in May.

Dues for membership in the TAMR are as follows:

Regular(21 and under).....	\$15.00
Associate(Over 21).....	\$18.00
Overseas(Outside N.Amer.).....	\$20.00
Sustaining(Peg. or Assoc.).....	\$20.00

Please address all renewals, membership applications, and address changes to the TAMR Secretary.

Addresses:

TAMR President & Treasurer Jeremy Amundsen 1418 Grand Ave. Wausau, WI. 54401	TAMR Secretary David Thompson Box 126 A Bavon, VA. 23013
TAMR Editor Phil Michaels 522 S. Tompkins St. Howell, MI. 48843-2050	TAMR Auditor Eric Boone 7258 Walnut Ave. Jenison, MI. 49428
TAMR Pivot Pin John Reichel 1800 E. 38th St. Oakland, CA. 94602-1720	Canadian Reg. Rep. Mike Yan 6127 137th Ave. Edmonton, Alberta CANADA T5A 0P2
Central Reg. Rep. Zachary Gooch 1042 Maple Ave. Bellaire, OH. 43906	Northeast Reg. Rep. Mike Thidemann 312 Adams Rd. Greenfield, MA. 01301
Southern Reg. Rep. Matt Caldwell 111 Dorie Rd. Belmont, NC. 28012	Western Reg. Rep. Jennifer Dooley 133 Osgood St. Long Beach, CA. 90805
TAMR Advisor John Rossi III 6 Beech Ct. College Point, NY. 13586	Promotion Depart. Newton Vezina 54 Boardman Lane S. Attleboro, MA. 02703

Guidelines for Submissions:

Style, content- Your own writing style is fine with us; remember, you are among friends. Do you have grammar trouble? Let the editors worry about that. The ideas of what you write are what is important. As for content, we will accept almost anything on modeling, painting, scenery, electronics, layouts, and the prototype. Just make sure that it will be of interest to a majority of readers.

Typing- Typing is not required, as most everything we receive is retyped into a computer. But it will save the eyes of the editors, so please do so if you can.

Artwork- All drawings and artwork are preferred to be done in black ink, but it is not required. Please send two copies if possible.

Photos- Black and white photos generally work best, but color prints will come out fine also. Photos taken in low light just don't print well, so try to send brighter photos. Also, make sure that they have good contrast. Please send caption material with your photos. Caption material should include the location, date, and any other essential information.

Next Month:

If all goes as planned, the contest winners will be printed next month. A report on the progress of "ALL ABOARD IN '92" will be given. TAMR Clinic, TAMR News, The Traction Motor, and Train Orders will all be back as usual. We hope you are enjoying these regular features. There will be product reviews and modeling tips, and next month we also will introduce the latest from the TAMR Promotion Department, the Video Exchange Program. Let's all continue to promote the TAMR and get "ALL ABOARD IN '92"!!!!

Submissions

The TAMR HOTBOX depends almost entirely on its readers for its material. If you have articles for publication or want to respond to one of our columns, send them to the following people:

Modeling Tips.....	Mike Yan
TAMR Clinic.....	John Reichel
The Traction Motor.....	Zachary Gooch
All other submissions.....	Phil Michaels



TAMR CLINIC

by John Reichel

This column is a revival of the column started by Pete Schierloh and Roger Balwinski back when Pete was the *Hotbox* editor. I'll take questions from members (or prospective members) and try to answer as well as I can. Some of you are likely to have ideas I haven't thought of, or maybe you disagree with my advice. So let me know! I'll work your ideas into a future edition of the **TAMR Clinic**.

I should add that I was really pleased that *Hotbox* readers responded to Chris Strauss' question about how to model a frozen lake. The answers were very creative and helpful.

First off, we have several questions from a prospective member named Jasper Nettles, who lives in Bella Vista, Arkansas. Jasper is a 15-year-old N scale modeler. I model in HO, so I hope my answers are not too far off for N scale.

How does a remote uncoupler work?

In N scale, there are two kinds of couplers: Kadee and Rapido-type. The Rapido-type is plastic, really big, and kind of unrealistic-looking, but it comes on a lot of cars and engines. Kadee couplers have an L-shaped piece of metal hanging down that looks like a brake hose.

For uncoupling, a Rapido-type uncoupler presses up on the plastic pins underneath the couplers, and the cars separate.

With Kadee couplers, a magnet (permanent magnet for yard trackage or electromagnet for mainlines) causes the couplers to open up. As you pull one car away, the couplers swing away from each other. Then, when you push the cars back together (as long as you start out over the uncoupler), you can keep pushing without the couplers locking. That way, you can push the cars as far as you want and leave them there. It's a very nice feature (which Kadee calls "Magne-Matic") and is great for switching.

T.A.M.R. News

Also, your trains will run better with body-mounted Kadee couplers than with truck-mounted Rapido-type couplers.

Which is better: snap track or flexible track?

I recommend snap track for beginners (and even for more advanced modelers) because you don't have to cut the track. Flex track is great because you can curve it to any radius you want, but the inside rail always has to be cut.

Later on, try some flex track for long straightaways. When you find that you need to cut it, use a razor saw (a fine-toothed saw that's available in hobby shops), rail nippers (like wire cutters), or a Dremel moto-tool (with a cutting disk like "The Good Ones" brand).

There's nothing wrong with using snap track and flexible track on the same layout. They're the same height. If someone offers you some of the old-style flex track with fiber ties, beware that it is not as high as new (plastic tie) track and needs to be shimmed up to proper height. Also, because the fiber ties warp when they're wet, paint them with shellac to protect them when you do your ballasting and scenery.

What's a ground throw?

A ground throw is a device used to manually throw a switch (turnout). Ground throws are smaller and more realistic than most built-in switch machines. Caboose Industries makes a wide variety of ground throws (and switch stands, which are similar). I prefer the ones with a built-in spring. You can buy ones with a little indicator, shaped like a weather vane, that moves to show which way the switch is thrown.

Well, that's all for now. Look for more questions and answers in an upcoming column.

From the desk of David Thompson,
TAMR Secretary:

This report will be the first report of the TAMR Secretary in quite a while. In this and future monthly reports I will document TAMR renewals and new members so that the membership has a better idea of just how the organization is doing. I will also report on the progress of promotional campaigns such as "ALL ABOARD III '92" as they pertain to membership.

In the month of August, TAMR received one new member and had nine members renew. Eight members received their last *Hotbox* in August. I have received on renewal from these members, Marty Iftody. For four of you, this will be your last *Hotbox*. I urge all of you to renew. Lastly, I also urge you to try to get some new members for TAMR, as we are losing many older members. If you have any suggestions on how we can combat this trend, please write to me or Phil Michaels (Addresses on page three).

The TAMR News column will expand next month, but this month there just wasn't enough room. Here are some recent address changes, the new addresses are listed: John Rossi III has a new zip code, it is 11356; Jerald Anderson, CMAA Box 22A, Subase Hlond, Groton, CT., 06340 (Still Northeast Region).

In regards to the *Hotbox*, things are going smoothly, but the laser-print thing may not happen. I'm still waiting to find out. Phase II of "ALL ABOARD III '92" is the new promotional flyer that is enclosed. Follow the instructions from last month's *Hotbox*. TAMR now has a new Auditor, Eric Boone, his address is on page three. If anyone wants a copy of the newly revised TAMR Constitution & By-laws, write to your Regional Rep. Lastly, let's get some regional things going NOW. More news next month.

Kadee

Products

By Tom Matthews

The last thing I have to mention about Kadee products is the trucks and draft gear extensions. Kadee trucks come assembled with springs in their wheels (non-magnetic). They make a talgo type with couplers but you have to mount the couplers yourself. Kadee also makes draft gear extensions for use on passenger cars which is quite handy as most of us are not using 150" radius curves and body mounted couplers will just not work.

While you're out there busting your hobby budget, here is a little thing to get that will not cost much. RIX PRODUCTS makes a hand uncoupler that really works great.

(Editor's note: This is the last of four articles that Tom sent me last January. He's been a big help and I hope everyone has been encouraged to try Kadee couplers. Thank you Tom!!!)

Making

Graffiti

By Mike Yan

Although an eyesore in real-life, graffiti can be a realistic touch to a modern, urban model scene. I have found a method of simulating graffiti that is inexpensive and simple to use. All you need is some typewriter correction tape (not ribbon), available in rolls from most stationers. The tape has paper on one side and white correction material on the other. It works much like carbon paper or dry transfer decals. Place a small piece of the tape white side down on a surface such as a boxcar or the wall of a building. Then, using a sharp pencil, write the desired message on the paper side. The pattern will transfer to the surface neatly and easily. Unfortunately, the material does not come off easily if you make a mistake. An eraser will remove the white material, but tends to leave a smear behind. Make your cities as dirty and vandalized as you want, but remember to keep the real cities clean!

Back

Issues

The offer is still the same as it was in July. If you're interested in TAMR's past, or would just like to have copies of some older Hotboxes, write to the Editor and request what issue numbers you want and how many copies of each issue you would like. They are only \$1.00 per copy, so write now to receive your very own back issues of the TAMR Hotbox! Issues 239-272 are still in stock. For more see page five of the July 1992 Hotbox.

You can now "check-out" back issues from the Editor for .25 cents each. The issues must be returned within a month of the day they are postmarked. You must first write to the Editor to get a liability waiver to sign, and once this is returned you will receive your Hotboxes. Any lost damaged, or late will require a \$1.00 fee. Thank-you.

The Layout Design SIG

If you're a member of the NMRA (National Model Railroad Association), you have probably heard of SIG's. SIG stands for Special Interest Group, and there are a lot of them for just about every category you can think of. There is even a SIG that specializes in Heinz pickle cars!

One SIG has become very popular recently, and it counts some of the top model railroaders, such as John Armstrong and Tony Koester, among its ranks. It's the Layout Design SIG. In addition to short newsletters, they've put out several issues of Layout Design News that are almost as long as some books! These issues are packed with information that contain no ads--just lots of track-planning, drawings, and charts.

LDN is where the latest hi-tech layout designs are proposed and challenged. Because some of the authors enjoy layout design but don't have a layout of their own, they can spend all their time designing track plans. Therefore, you can get the benefit of their expertise without having to learn everything by yourself.

The SIG is kind enough to send the TAMR free issues of LDN, which you can borrow by writing to me. You can find out much about such subjects as the Brandon-style pyramid helix, industrial trackage design, staging yards, double and triple-deck layouts, spiral easements, and cosmetic curves.

Don't worry if you don't have

enough room for a complicated layout. LDN contains plenty of material about small layouts. No room for a layout at all? No problemo, dude. Just curl up in a chair and read LDN, taking notes the whole time so someday you can build that dream layout.

The Layout Design SIG has a generous offer for TAMR members: You can save \$8 on the membership dues. Instead of the regular \$15, send \$7 to:

Richard Steinmann, Circulation/Layout Design, 2412 Myrtle Lane, Reston, Virginia, 22091.

They don't list the dues for youth members outside the U.S., so I suggest asking him. It should be about \$10 U.S.

Teen Association of
Model Railroaders
1800 E. 38th St.
Oakland, CA 94602

Steve Schwenk
TAMR Treasurer
P. O. Box 7
Monroe, OH 45050

TEEN ASSOCIATION OF MODEL RAILROADERS
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
January 1, 1992 - July 20, 1992

SUMMARY

January 1, 1992 Checking Balance	641.57
January 1, 1992 Savings Balance	0
Income January 1 - July 20, 1992	<u>363.88</u>
TOTAL	1005.45
Expenses January 1 - July 20, 1992	<u>-674.99</u>
July 20, 1992 TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS	330.46
July 20, 1992 Checking Balance	330.46
July 20, 1992 Savings Balance	0

ANALYSIS OF INCOME

Dues*	352.00	96.74%
Hotbox Sales	8.75	2.40%
Other	<u>3.13</u>	<u>0.86%</u>
TOTAL	363.88	100.00%

ANALYSIS OF EXPENSES

Hotbox Printing/Postage	439.57	65.12%
Promotional Printing/Post.	105.97	15.70%
1992 Directory	85.45	12.66%
Dues Returned Unpaid	<u>44.00</u>	<u>6.52%</u>
TOTAL	674.99	100.00%

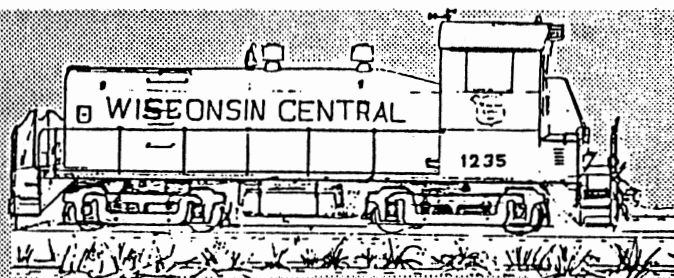
*20 Memberships Paid since 1-1-92 (Regular, Associate & Sustaining)

All figures are true and correct signed

Steve Schwenk
TAMR Treasurer

Train

Orders



A Message from the Treasurer:

Dear TAMP members,

I want to thank everyone for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your treasurer over the past six years. Some things change over such a time period, others don't. Many TAMP officers have come and gone and postage rates have increased, but the TAMP remains committed to promoting model railroading among teens and young adults. The unique aspect of the operation of the TAMP is that it is governed by teens entirely. Thus I feel it is my duty to turn the throttle over to someone who still falls into this category.

I also wish to pass on a special thank you to all persons who were instrumental in the TAMP's reorganization. John Reichel is doing a great job as Pivot Pin with prospectus for new members and has spent countless hours organizing this year's convention. Phil continues to do an excellent job in publishing the HOTBOX---our #1 priority. His issues are always fine-looking and on-time!---a new TAMP concept! -Ha ha. [Honest everyone, I didn't pay him for that line!---ed.] To all members who have written articles and letters to the HOTBOX---your active participation is greatly appreciated, keep them coming! A final thank you to all those who voted in the election, and to the new officers who have volunteered their services for the coming years.

As far as recommendations go, I suggest that TAMP officials spend wisely and invest in things which promote the TAMP. Increasing our membership is a high priority now that the HOTBOX is back in publication. Finally, I recommend that the TAMP Constitution/By-laws will be used as a guide for officers, and that provisions will be made for all members to receive a copy if they wish.

Before I leave the mainline, I wish to say that I will still remain a member of the TAMP, and I hopefully will have some time in the future to make contributions to the HOTBOX. My address until January 1993 will be:

2450 Sycamore Ln. Apt. 2-B
West Lafayette, IN. 47906
(317) 497-4573

Please note this change.

Truly yours,
Steve Schwenk
TAMP Treasurer

Steve Schwenk has been a great help to the TAMP, and as I have suggested before, it would be nice if you drop him a line to tell him how much he is appreciated. Next is a letter from Mike Yan, Canadian Region Representative:

I was thumbing through the TAMP Directory the other day when I noticed that the Canadian Region's logo is nothing more than a simple and rather vague maple leaf. I think that the Canadian Region should adopt a new logo that better represents Canadian railroading. If you Canadian members out there have any ideas, write to me. [Address on page 3.]

The last letter this month is one addressed to me from Peter Maurath of Cleveland, Ohio. He writes:

I thought since I'm a recent new member that I'd write about my railroad pike. It all started 2 years ago when I received my first layout (N-scale) from a thrift shop. For twenty dollars I got a 10'x22 1/2' N-scale layout half-assembled and with lots of extras like scenery and details, etc. I have since finished and expanded to include a large addition

the size of a normal door, which is still under construction.

The layout I have is called the Sterling Lake RR and is soon to change to the Sterling Heights and Lakeport which eventually will be a medium-sized switching operation. I'm excited to complete it. The layout includes many details, such as window washers and a scratch-built McDonalds, gas station, ravine, and mountains.

Since I'm on a shoe-string budget I often cut corners to save money. Like most of the poles on the street lamps, billboards, and highway signs, etc., are dry spaghetti painted. I also do much scratchbuilding as well.

I'm still in the process of getting trains running and have electrical problems to sort out. I hope to have it completed by Christmas. I hope you enjoyed the letter and I am open to any suggestions or questions.

We have two contests to announce winners of this month. Unfortunately, no one has told me who won the Layout Letter Contest. I believe it was to be judged by John Reichel, but he has not informed me of any winners, but this is understandable as John does a great deal for the TAMP and can become very busy at times (if not all the time). So, we'll just have to wait one more month. Be assured that I will pick a winner if no one else does.

Secondly, and also unfortunate, I have not yet received a list of names from Tom Matthews concerning the winners of his contest, a question that he asked in the July 1992 HOTBOX. However, I am confident that he will send this to me soon, so that we'll know the answer (I don't even know). See you in October.

The Traction Motor

Conducted By: Zachary Gooch

As most all of you railroaders out there know, track arrangement is the heart of any model railroad. It forms the very foundation of a layout, and can make or break operation of model trains if any major flaw exists. From sprawling, traffic-filled yards to open, double-track mainlines to the quaint, lazy shortlines and branchlines winding through rural country, track design is crucial to capturing the proper mood and purpose of the model railroad.

The question that must be asked, then, is this: How can such an integral part of model railroading be so simple, boring, and uncreative?

Yes, railroaders, I'm talking about the infamous loop. Lurking within every boxed trainset at every hobby shop across the nation is a circle of track just dying to send that nice, shiny engine on an endless journey to nowhere. Accomplishing this feat, it then proceeds to infect each and every track plan you will conceive with the inclusion of some type of loop. Its power is demonstrated by the fact that some of the largest, most spectacular layouts in the world have fallen prey to its monotony. Take heart though, for even in its most terminal stage, the loop virus can be cured.

Now I'm not trying to attack those of you who have a loop-based layout. Remember, this article is intended to make you think. Even if you disagree with everything I've said above, consider this:

One of the number one goals that we strive for in this hobby is realism. You may super-detail and modify that Alco until it's a perfect representation of the original down to the very last rivet, you may put a line of perfectly prototypical freight cars behind it, and you but that expensive power-pack so it

all runs at prototypical speeds, but in the end, you're pouring all that realism down the drain by running it around in circles.

Why not a more prototypical layout with a point-to-point design? One big argument that I've heard refers to running the trains for visitors. I don't know about you, but I'd find layout viewing much more interesting with switching operations and realistic traffic movements. It gets mighty boring watching the same train pass by again and again. Besides, if you're like me, you need not worry about a large audience. We should worry about our own idea of railroading, not spectators.

I think manufacturers would find a large market if they included a mix of switches and crossovers in their boxed trainsets. This would also counter-act the effects of the loop-virus, which seems to strike at an early age with that first circle of track.

My advice: Avoid the loop design and opt for a more realistic track arrangement. If you are experiencing a particularly severe loop-virus infection, try and hide that circle with buildings or tunnels.

Well, that's all for now. Next time: Regional Revolution: The Rise of the Class II Railroad.

Notice to All Central Region Members:

Plans are being made to resurrect our regional newsletter, the Wayfreight. Its purpose will be to help promote railroading on a more local level. Of course, this means that I must make what has seemed to become a dreaded request in the TAMR. That's right, we need

ARTICLES. I'm not asking everyone in the region to quit writing articles for the HOTBOX to do them for the Wayfreight. As you are well aware, the TAMR suffers from a shortage of writers. For those of you who don't want to write on the national level, perhaps a more localized publication is the answer. With school back in, I realize its difficult to find time, but many of you seemed to have a similar problem during the summer, despite having all the free time you need. Their will be a small subscription fee, but this is to cover postage for the newsletter and letters to prospective new members. If anyone has any material concerning the original Wayfreight, send it to me.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES:

The Hotbox staff would like for you to submit material for the TAMR News column, so that each month we can print news from the regions. Tell us about what has been happening, we hope there is a lot of regional activity going on!

Also, if you are in need of any assistance at all, write to the Secretary and he will direct you to the person that can best help you. We want to see our regions producing newsletters and holding regional activities, such as railfan trips, meetings, parties, and annual conventions. If regions can become successful, we can then start breaking you down into Divisions, so that members in common states can get together. Keep up the good work!!!

---The Hotbox staff

P.S. - Please inform us about regional promotional efforts as well, and if you have found any Regional Assistant Managers for the "ALL ABOARD IN '92" promotion. Thank you.