



Teen Association of Model Railroaders

HOTBOX

December, 1992

Issue #276



FROM THE DESK OF

Phil Michaels, Editor/HOTBOX

As I type these words into the computer, the air outside is cold, the ground is white, and the first major snowfall of the year graces the landscape of southeastern Michigan. An hour or so ago I watched a westbound loaded coal train bound for West Olive, Michigan go rumbling past my house. The two SD40-2's and the U23B slowly moved by due to a speed restriction. It may be a lot colder out, but railroading is still a great thing! (Especially when you're in a warm house).

I encourage everyone to both get out and railfan and get down in your basement (or wherever your trains may be at) and do some serious modeling. If you're not sure where to begin, turn to page four and start renovating some of your buildings. Or put up some billboards along your roads. Take out some older HOTBOXes and look for some simple, inexpensive ideas of what to do to improve your model railroad. Or just sit down for a nice switching session. There's lots of things you can do. So, after you finish reading the HOTBOX, go try one of the above things. Enjoy yourself!

It was a year ago this month that I took over the job of TAMR Editor. This is my twelfth publication for the TAMR. I just want everyone to know that I have had a great time doing this and I'm very glad that I decided to speak up a year ago when I did. This is a great organization and I am really impressed with its progress. Sure, we still have our problems, but I think we have overcome many of them. One of the major things we have done is overcome the old article plea problem. Now and then I throw in a word reminding people to write something for TAMR, but for the most part, thanks to ALL of you who have helped, we have had a steady stream of material coming in. But that doesn't mean stop now! Believe me, we need you to keep

them coming. Now I want to take the following space to recognize all those who have served as TAMR officers or have written articles for the HOTBOX in the last year. They are:

John Reichel, Jason Eminian, Chuck Janda, Lone Eagle Payne, John Rossi III, Roger Balwinski, Andy Crow, Chris Strauss, Matt Heiman, Matt Caldwell, Brett Lucas, Bryan Shoop, Paul Appel, Matt Bedford, Tom Matthews, Cui Yi Jiong, Chris Filtz, Scott Perreault, Steve Schwenk, Beth Wolstenholme, Mike Yan, David Coon, Darin Smith, Zachary Gooch, Mike Thidemann, Jeremy Amundsen, Wilbert Vossen, Adolfo Leyva Alvizo, Richard C. Wagle, Jennifer Dooley, Aaron Marcavitch, Randy Broadwater, Mr. Joel Bacon, Newton Vezina, Eric Boone, Peter Maurath, Brad Beaubien, Shane Ishii, Sam Watkins, George Barna, Chris Wagner, and Matt Kirchner.

Wow! That list took longer than I thought! If I missed anyone just remind me, I'll print your name next month. Give yourselves all a big hand, you've been a great help to TAMR!

Another thing I'd like to say to you is that I know many of you haven't participated in "All Aboard In '92", but others have done a great job. It cost us quite a bit to send out the promotional flyers to you, so you could at least help us cover the expenses by passing them out when you're out at railfan events or hobby shops. If any new members would like to help pass out promo. flyers, please contact the Promo. Dept.

In the coming months I hope to keep improving the HOTBOX. Drop me a line and let me know if you approve or disapprove of the HOTBOX. What could make it better? There isn't an idea that I haven't given attention to when it's been brought up to me.

I'll try harder to keep editorials more like last month's, a real editorial. There's just always so many things I want to say. Welcome aboard to all the new members. With that, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and don't forget the Reason for the season. See you in 1993!!!



December, 1992

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On the Cover:

TOP: No, this isn't the head end of a Conrail coal drag, it's the rear end. (I wish they had these kind of moves around where I live!) Five big six-axle locomotives, (SD40-2's and SD45-2's) lean into the rear of Conrail train UBT-56 at Cresson, Pennsylvania on March 3rd, 1990. (Photo by: Randy Broadwater)

BOTTOM: This locomotive, although lettered for the Janesville and Southern, actually belongs to the Wisconsin and Calumet Railroad. It is an old BL2, the "BL" standing for "branch line" service, what EMD originally marketed them for. It's at Janesville, WI. in July 1991 (Photo by: Chuck Janda).

TAMR HOTBOX

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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(Reg. or Assoc.).....	\$20.00

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

Addresses:

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Western Reg. Rep. No Current Representative	Shortline Dept. Aaron Marcavitch 275 Crago Ave. Waynesburg, PA. 15370
TAMR Advisor John Rossi III 6 Beech Ct. College Point, NY. 11356	Promotion Dept. 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:

Keep sending in all those great articles! We've got several features headed your way in the next few months, but we're not yet sure which will come first. They include: Mike Thidemann's Northern New England, David Thompson's PC & S Railroad, prototype on the LS&I, modeling the LS&I, and a lot more. So be ready. And as always, Train Orders, The Traction Motor, and TAMR News will return. Also, look forward to the new cover design coming in January 1993!!!!

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

Making Better Buildings

Whenever I go to a model railroad open house, the layouts are usually quite impressive. The scenery is overwhelmingly superb, the trackwork is so good that derailments are unheard of, and the electronics would require a degree in electronic engineering to understand. The only problem is that the buildings often look hideous. Since almost every model railroad has one or more buildings, it would make sense to build them to look good. Most model railroaders already own the basic tools needed to build plastic model kits. These include:

- 1.) Razor saw
- 2.) X-acto knife
- 3.) Testors liquid cement
- 4.) Testors Dullcote
- 5.) Floquil Polly-S paint
- 6.) Masking tape

Here are some sample tips that will help you build an excellent model:

---Use liquid cement--- The best adhesive for joining walls and other parts is liquid, not plastic cement. Liquid cement comes in a bottle and is brushed onto both surfaces that are to be joined.

---Use plexiglass for windows--- Before you say, "WHAT?!?", listen. Plexiglass adds a lot of strength to buildings and looks better than ordinary window material. Simply cut it to the right size and glue it to the inside of the building with liquid cement.

---Use tape for shades--- Masking tape makes great window shades on the inside of model buildings. Just tape to the inside of the window.

---Use Dullcote--- Nothing will make a building look more realistic than a shot of dullcote given to the entire exterior.

---Use yellow lights--- Yellow lights make interior lighting more of a dull, realistic glow. Also, they almost eliminate the need to paint the inside of a building black because of the light shining through too much.

---Mortar---

1.) Rub-off method-- Paint a small portion of the building with a dark color of paint. While it is still wet, rub the paint off the surface of the brick. Make sure that the paint does not dry before you rub it off.

2.) Two paint method-- Paint the entire wall a light gray color and let it dry thoroughly. Then dry-brush the top of the brick the color that you want the building to be.

---Use tape before cutting--- If you want to cut a wall, put a strip of masking tape along the place you want to cut and cut against the tape with a razor.

---Use sandpaper for a roof--- If you have a flat roof, cut strips of fine sandpaper about 1/4-inch wide and glue them onto the roof.

---Have patience--- The most important thing for you to remember in making buildings is to take your time. Always say this to yourself: "I know that I could put this building together in five minutes, but I want it to look really good."

Happy building!

---Matt Kirchner

If anyone else has some tips on making better buildings, let us know here at the HOTBOX and we will be sure to print them right away.

Building a Layout On a Shoestring
Budget: A Series by: Peter Maurath

Hello, I'm back with this month's article on how to create those professional signs at no cost to you. Now, don't think I'm knocking decals, they're great, but when they don't carry the logo you need (which occurs quite frequently), or if it is out of stock, etc., that is where these signs will come in handy.

The process is actually very simple. All you need are some ads from a newspaper (Sunday papers will work best due to the large number and diversity of ads), a small container, and scissors. What you are looking for is the miniaturized logos and products in the ads. All you have to do is cut out the logos or other useful symbols from the paper and put them in a container for storage until you find a good place to put them. Also, before you go chopping away, make sure to check and see if it is O.K. to use the paper you're taking them from (unfortunately, I had to learn this the hard way).

The small logos and products can be found in most ads, and they can be used in a variety of scales. It doesn't take long at all until you have a few hundred of them. I myself started around a year ago and have several thousand of every company on the planet! They are most useful for that bare storefront or can be used on a great location for a billboard.

Well, that's all for this month. Next month we'll apply these signs to your layout in the form of billboards. I will gladly take all questions and suggestions, my address is listed below.

3119 W. 100th
Cleveland, OH.
44111

Book Review

Short Notes On Shortlines

Kadee Or Not Kadee By: Mike Van

Model Railroads: The Complete Guide to Designing, Building, and Operating a Model Railroad. By Cyril J. Freezer, 1991, Ounitet Publishing, Ltd., London. 96 pages. \$12.98. Distributed in US by Punning Press (1-800-345-5359).

---Reviewed by John Reichel

This is an excellent book for someone who's just starting out in model railroading. Not that there isn't useful information for the rest of us---there is---but it seems perfect for someone who's interested in the hobby but doesn't know where to start.

We already know about the nice books put out by American publishers like Kalmbach and Carstens that help people get started in American-style model railroading. But what about modelers who like European trains, or don't know yet what country they want to model? This book is for them.

There's a careful balance between American and European trains. Neither is presented as being superior to the other. Many fine layouts from around the world are featured. A few terms, like "shunting" instead of "switching", reveal this to be the product of British writers, but there was hardly any information that wouldn't be useful anywhere.

The book features plenty of color; just about every page has color photos and drawings. There's also some clever track plans that can be used in very small rooms. Europeans are creative in track planning because they usually do not have much room. There's also useful information about reverse-loop and block wiring, scenery, and other subjects. With its attractive design and countless color photos, it's a great gift for anyone who's been admiring your trains. And what could be a better gift than to get someone started in this great hobby?

Hi, my name is Aaron A. Marcavitch. You may have seen my article on the Hampshire Railway Co. Well, now I'm the head of the Shortline Dept. and I want to meet all you railroaders out there.

I know that a good percentage of all model railroaders model divisions of prototype railroads. But there is a group of us that model small, out-of-the-way railroads that no one has ever heard of. There's also a few of us who model railways with fictitious names, like me. My job is for the last two categories.

I have in my possession the American Shortline Railway Guide from Kalmbach. This book is an extremely good reference tool for all modelers. I know that many modelers don't have this book, so to solve this I'll open mine to you.

If anyone has a question on a local or state, or old shortline, I may have an answer. I will try to answer you as completely as possible. But, if you do need more information, please feel free to write me personally.

O.K., let's take an example of a letter. Johnny O. Public writes me and wants to know about railroads in his own area of Birmingham, Alabama. I'll look up the obvious railroads, in this case Birmingham Southern. Then I'll list information like this:

Name - Birmingham Southern
Address - 6200 Flint Ridge Rd., Fairfield, AL. 35064
History - opened in 1899, owned by Transstar, Inc.
General Info. - 84 miles of track, 36 locomotives, 639 freight cars
Connections - BN, CSX, NS
C-more - a sign telling you that there's more info., so you could write to me.

Write with any questions to the Shortline Dept. at the address on page 3.

This is the question that most modelers must face at some time. Whether to stick with factory supplied horn-hook plastic couplers or switch over to Kadees is an interesting dilemma. As with all major decisions, one must weigh the advantages with the disadvantages.

In this case, the advantages of Kadee couplers is overwhelming. First, there is appearance. Although slightly out of proportion, the Kadee coupler is a very faithful representation of the prototype. Certainly, they are a hundred times more realistic than horn-hooks. Secondly, there is the reliable performance. If there height is properly adjusted and they are functioning correctly, accidental uncouplings are virtually impossible. In addition, the fact that Kadees are magnetically uncoupled makes switching a completely "hands-off" operation. The instruction booklet that comes with each package fully explains delayed uncoupling. Last, but not least, Kadee couplers are very versatile. For example, the Kadee #5 coupler's draft gear box can be modified to fit almost any engine or car. If it can't be modified, there's many other types that will do the job, with longer and shorter shafts, higher knuckles, etc. There's some for every scale.

However, there is one major disadvantage: price. A package of four couplers, enough for two cars, costs five to six dollars Canadian. There's many methods of cutting down the costs of Kadee conversion. If a string of cars usually runs together, convert only the two end cars. Some other, less expensive brands mate with horn-hooks and Kadees. They allow you to convert gradually. Kadees are cheaper by mail order.

In my opinion, converting to Kadees is worth the cost since it eliminates unwanted uncouplings and improves looks, increasing one's enjoyment of the hobby.

T.A.M.R.

News

From the Desk of the TAMR Secretary, David Thompson:

TAMR received three renewals and ELEVEN new members in November. The renewals came from Jennifer Dooley, Mike Thidemann, and Matthew Donaldson. New members are John Wilson, Scott Dawson, Andy Dorn, Sam Friedman, Joe Harnish, Jared Hoffman, Peter Onan, Andy Potts, Paul Stacey, Allan Streng, and Jon Ames. Regional reps: Add these names to your mailing lists. The Central Region has taken a commanding lead in the "All Aboard in '92" campaign with ten new members, bringing its total to fourteen. The Northeastern region gained one member, tying it with the Canadian/International and Western Regions at two members each. The Southern Region has not gained any new members in November.

New TAMR Members:

Jon Ames 8 Higate Road Chelmsford, MA. 01824	Joe Harnish 1121 Northland Dr. Madison, WI. 53704
John Wilson 735 W. 3rd St. Anderson, IN. 46016	Jared Hoffman 434 Lori Lane Cottage Grove, WI. 53527
Allan Streng 901 Caswell Pt. Atkinson, WI. 53538	Peter Onan 1936 University Ave. Madison, WI. 53705
Scott Dawson 4213 Somerset Ln. Madison, WI. 53711	Andy Potts 2523 Valley Forge Dr. Madison, WI. 53719
Andy Dorn 5711 Modernaire St. Madison, WI. 53711	Paul Stacey 4718 Maher Ave. Madison, WI. 53716
Sam Friedman 18 Chippeva Ct. Madison, WI. 53711	

All Aboard In '92 Update:

Hello everyone! As many of you are already aware, the Promotion Department has been sponsoring an all TAMR national and international promotional effort known as "All Aboard in '92", since mid-summer 1992. Overall, progress has been favorable and impressive to say the very least. As this contest comes to a close on December 31st, 1992, I encourage the continued support from all who have participated and made "All Aboard in '92" a success. Prizes will be awarded as soon as results are printed in January.

Plans are now in the making to kick off another major promotion in 1993. If anybody has any ideas or suggestions, feel free to contact the Promotional Department or contact any of the assistant managers listed at the end of this update.

The second announcement this month is that the position of Promotion Department Manager is now open to any teen member who is interested in coordinating promotion of the TAMR and the hobby of model railroading in all five regions. I've enjoyed the position of Promo. Department Manager and will remain active in future promotion efforts as Promo. Department Advisor, under the direction of the new manager. Now, as an adult TAMR member, I feel that this department should be controlled by a teen. Depending on the number of candidates interested, I plan to ask the TAMR officers to possibly include this position on the 1993 election ballot if necessary. Until a successor is in place, I'll continue to "act" as Promo. Dept. Manager and keep everyone informed on future developments.

Overall, 1992 has been an awesome year for TAMR. Let's all continue to team-up and keep the momentum going as we head into 1993. Highball! Plug into

your leaders. Support the Editor and keep sending in all those interesting articles. Keep Phil busy! To all the TAMR, have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 1993. Happy Railroading!!!

---The TAMR Promo. Dept.

Newton Vezina (Acting Mgr.)
Mike Thidemann (NER Asst.Mgr.)
Mike Yan (Can./Int. Asst.Mgr.)
Matt Bedford (SP Asst. Mgr.)
Randy Broadwater (Publications Director)

NER News: ...we had our first convention at the Conway Scenic Railway Railfans Day in September. Our next get together will be at the large train show at the Big E in West Springfield, MA. A display table has been just about secured. Two editions of the Northeastern's new newsletter, "Northeastern Notes", have been published, one in the summer, and one in the fall.

---Mike Thidemann
NER Representative

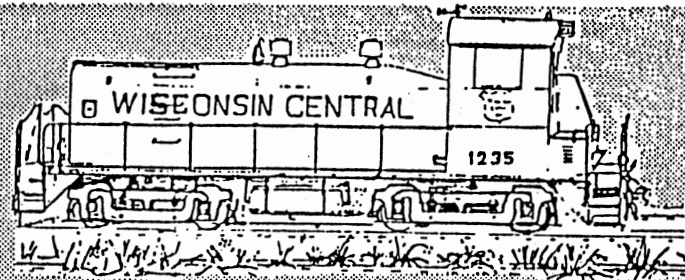
CR News: The "Wayfreight", our newsletter, has been temporarily sidetracked due to the selling of our Packard-Bell 386SX computer, but with a new computer on order due by Christmas. As soon as the new PC is up and running, a trial issue will be sent out to get members interested. Ideas for car pools to the 1993 Convention are being talked about, if anyone has ideas send them in. Look for the Wayfreight sometime around January.

---Zachary Gooch
CR Representative

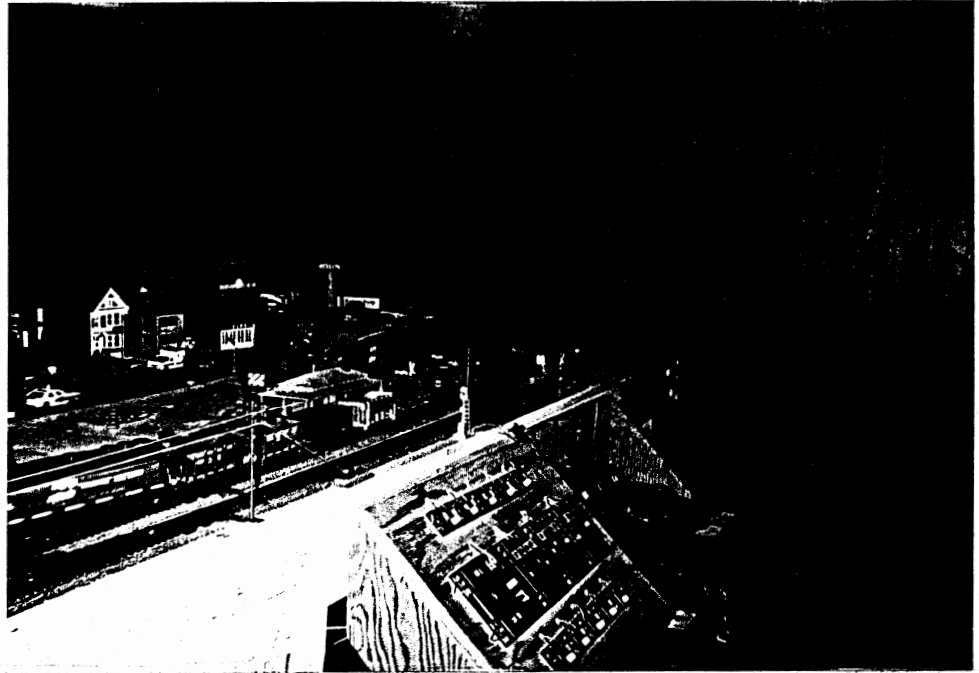
That's all for December. We'll have more regional news and TAMR updates next month. Happy New Year!

Train

Orders

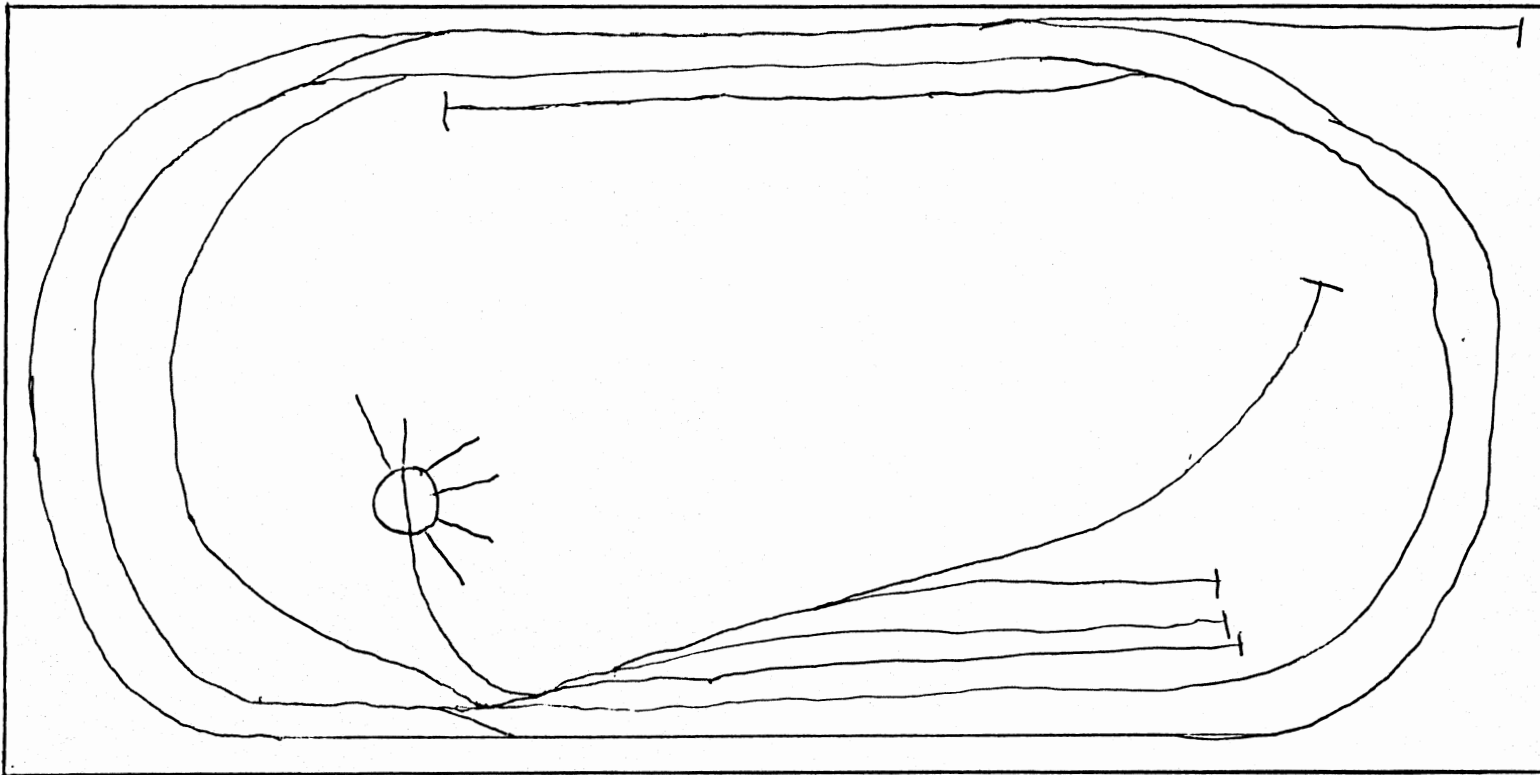


Remember last month when we brought you a pair of letters from new TAMR member Chris Wagner? Well, he was also nice enough to send along some photos and a track plan of his layout, and we thought you'd like to see them.



RIGHT: This photo shows the control panel and my power packs. The MPC Tech II 2500 on top of another controls my lights, while the one underneath controls my automatic switching. A Tech II 2800 that is hardly visible controls the mainlines and the turntable (Photo by: Chris Wagner).

We hope to hear more of your opinions next month. Send us some letters, let us know what you're thinking!



Not to scale.
HO - 4 * 8

The Traction Motor

Conducted By: Zachary Gooch

Greetings, once again, fellow railroaders! I'd like to start off by thanking everyone for their positive comments on this article. I'd also like to thank everyone who has been regularly contributing articles to the HOTBOX. Good job everyone!

I would also like to take this opportunity to answer the question from last month's edition of TAMR Clinic about dynamic brakes on General Electric diesels. After I explain this, distinguishing -2 EMD's should seem easy! As you may have noticed, U-series and -7-series GE locomotives possess a characteristic "see-through" effect where the large grills on either side of the radiator housing become virtually transparent when looked at straight on with a light source behind them. On these engines, the dynamic brake shares this housing with the fan that blows air to the engine, resulting in a partial block of the "see-through" effect. If you can get up-close, you'll see the dynamic brake grids inside the grills on the left side. As for the new Dash-8-series they're a little easier to identify. On the left side of the engine, look for an oblong grid on the side of the large, boxy projection on the roof just behind the cab. The first set of vents is for the equipment blower unit, while the next one denotes dynamic brakes.

With that out of the way, on with this month's topic: Capital Rebuild Programs, or CPP's for short. Under government laws, a locomotive qualifies as a capital rebuild if the cost of the work done to rebuild it exceeds half of its original price. Advantages include a large tax break and a locomotive that can be treated as brand-new and return to regular service.

Most rebuilt diesels exhibit obvious details that give them away as CPP projects. The best thing to look

for is a rectangular box mounted atop the locomotive's hood just behind the cab (or in front of it, depending upon which end is considered forward on the particular railroad's locomotives). These filter boxes suck up a separate air supply for the engine to provide cleaner air for combustion. Another common rebuild improvement is the liberated exhaust system. Like headers on a car, they free-up exhaust flow to increase engine output, which is why many rebuilds receive upgraded horsepower figures. They are identifiable by the addition of more and/or larger exhaust stacks. Other features on rebuilt diesels include the chopping of the nose of a high-nose unit (like NW's), altered access door arrangement, new cooling fans, the "blanking" of dynamic brake grids when they're removed, an air-conditioning box on top of the cab, the addition or removal of a steam generator for passenger train service, and de-turbocharging, in which costly turbos are removed.

From a modeling standpoint, this is a super way to breath new life into

those old, neglected diesels sitting in a box in the basement. If you're modeling a modern-era railroad, there's nothing wrong with putting that old Alco RSD-15 back into service. With some simple modifications, you can call it a rebuild and put it into service in the yard as a switcher just like the real railroads do. If you're modeling a shortline, keep in mind that many rebuilt locomotives end up being sold to shortlines a few years after being rebuilt (just like Santa Fe's CF7 fleet). Plus there's always the option of converting an old model into a slug, but more on that another time.

Next Month: Layout Planning: Loop Virus Vaccination.

BELOW: Burlington Northern recently rebuilt a pair of old F-units for service in their executive fleet. Other railroads, such as Union Pacific, are undergoing similar projects. The BN-1 and BN-2 are seen here through Galesburg, Illinois, in June of 1991. (Photo by: Chuck Janda, LaGrange, Illinois.)

