

the Hotbox

October 1995

Issue #306

The official Publication
of the Teen Association
of Model Railroaders



A Conrail GP40-2 and three other diesel locomotives from EMD and GE pull an auto rack train out of Dayton, OH last summer. *Mike Riley, photo*

i n t h i s i s s u e :

Paints and adhesives

The Prime Mover returns

TAMR Member Focus: John Reichel

My Town: Brandon Hughett

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Submissions

Submissions to the Hotbox will be accepted in any form, written or typed. Typed material is preferred, but not required. If you use a Macintosh with PageMaker or Quark X-Press, material on Mac-formatted 3.5" disks will be gladly accepted.

Articles should be model or train related. Model features need not be about trains, but anything that could be modeled.

Articles should be accompanied by photos or drawings or both. Drawings should be in dark black ink. The editor will draw artwork if you are unable to produce quality work. Photos should be prints, any size, slides will not be accepted. Photos should be accompanied by a description, name of the photographer, date and location of photo and any other information. They should have very good contrast, be more light than dark, be in focus, and have good composition. Write your description on the back of the photo, please.

Product Reviews should be accompanied by photos of the product, a brief description, steps of construction, any tips for construction or use, and the good

and bad points of the product.

Train Places need to be accompanied by a map of the area, directions to reach the site, a photo or two, a description of the area, approx. train frequency, good access locations, etc. For more information see the "Hot Spots" sections in *Trains* magazine.

A very welcome feature article is layout tours. Tours should be accompanied with a track plan, photos, a description of the layout, and any other information. If you want any material returned, include a self addressed envelope with proper postage.

About the TAMR

The Hotbox is published every month by the Teen Association of Model Railroaders. Membership to the TAMR includes a subscription to the Hotbox, an invite to all of the numerous conventions and outings we hold, and the opportunity to meet many new people and travel many new places.

Regular (21 & under).....\$15.00
Associate (over 21).....\$18.00
Sustaining.....\$20.00+
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From the Editor

Boy, I got alot of coments on how good the Hotbox looked last month. I am very glad you like it. Now that I am on a fairly normal schedule with school and other activities, I am quite sure the Hotbox will arrive on time from now on.

Did you see the November issue of Model Railroader? TAMR member and Student Fare interpolator Rick Selby did an excellent job with his write-up on our national convention held last June. In it was the group photo, a photo of Peter M.'s module, a photo of Ole Bye's award-winning scratchbuilt bridge, a photo of some of the group standing around the Hoosier Railcar's speeder, and a shot of your's truly applying Campbell Road dry transfers to a hopper car under the instruction of Mr. Campbell. Rick deserves a round of applause for his wonderful efforts.

Last month, on the cover, I wrote "A new feature: Train Places". I appologise, but I forgot to include it! It will premier in next issue. Probably next month I will start my command control series.

Did any body see photos of the newly formed Burlington Northern & Santa Fe's first locomotive? It was an ex-BN SD70MAC with the BN's executive paint scheme adapted to the ATSF Warbonnet shape: UGLY! The majority of the unit is a tannish-white color, with dark green in the shape of the warbonnet. Luckily, BNSF officials said this was a one-time only paint scheme that was designed to commemorate the newly formed roads. They say they are still working on a permanent paint scheme. If you have a photo of this engine send it to me and I will publish it.

Speaking of mergers, did you hear that the Southern Pacific and the Chicago Northwestern no longer exist? They both got absorbed into Union Pacific, which I am beginning to dislike! This will make Union Pacific the largest common carrier in the world, far exceeding the new BNSF, which was the largest.

Brandon Hughett, the Southern region representative has resigned, so nominations are being accepted for a new rep. So far, Ritchie Roesch and Bryan Bingham hvae been nominated. If no more are recieved by the last day of November, the election will be held between them. Central Rep. John Wilson and TAMR Auditor David Hadley have switched positions.

Railroadingly yours,

Focus on John Reichel

Mike Riley, the editor of the world's finest youth model railroading magazine, the TAMR Hotbox, asked me to write a few paragraphs about myself. The Hotbox could use similar contributions from other TAMR members, so fire up that computer and let's hear from you!

I'm John Reichel, and I've been TAMR's Pivot Pin for the past five years. What is this "Pivot Pin" you ask? I'm an adult supervisor for the group, not someone who does *for* the kids in TAMR but who at least makes sure things get done. I also answer letters from people interested in joining the TAMR. I send each person an application/brochure and a list of modeling tips. I follow up on membership problems and make sure the appropriate TAMR officers get the information they need to take care of the problem.

When I'm not working on trains, I work for a large Health Maintenance Organization, writing about a variety of subjects for the inside the company to read. I'm 35 years old, live in an apartment, and have two cats, Billy and Allison. I've lived in Oakland, CA almost all of my life. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California. I lived in Boston for one year and I've spent time in England and Spain too. I've traveled across the U.S. several times by Amtrak and highly recommend the experience!

I've had HO trains since I was two years old, and a few of my Tyco cars are still intact, couplers and all. When I was four, I got an Athearn HO train set for Christmas (yes, an Athearn train set! Back then, they even manufactured steam engines, but they've been diesel-only for some time). My dad made me a 4x8 figure-eight layout. When I was about 12, I started building my own permanent layout.

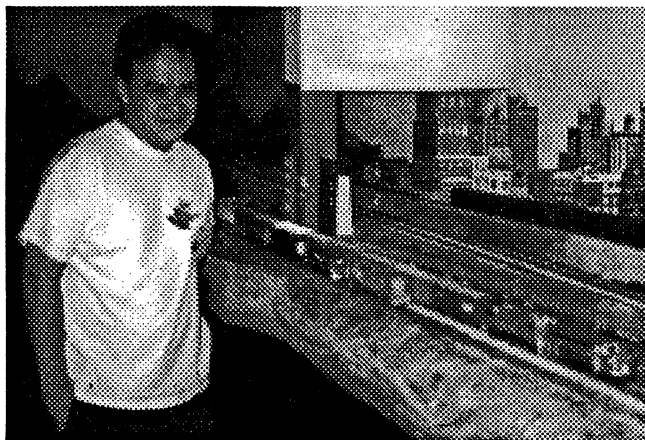
I built small layouts in college and afterwards, but the fun really started when I moved about five years ago into a place with a good-sized basement. My friend, Richard and I started building a new layout almost right away, and it's getting bigger and more complete all of the time. Some of the steps in designing and building the layout have been published in the Hotbox.

My layout depicts my favorite roads, Western Pacific and Southern Pacific. My fictitious LaPorte & Nevada Railroad is a bridge route that connects the WP and the SP in the Sierra Nevada mountains. I see it as part of a network called the Central Pacific System, which includes many of the western shotlines. The current paint scheme is black with gold trim. I've been making decals using a photocopier and Walther's blank decal sheets, after making masters on a PC.

I like trains from every era, so I am planning a rail museum on the layout. That way, I can run or display anything I want! Mostly, I'm a fan of contemporary railroading, but I have a strong affection for steam, also. I enjoy photographing the UP and SP where I live, and now that the two are going to merge, Burlington Northern & Santa Fe will be allowed access to Oakland.

Besides trains, I like listening to music (mostly "alternative" and classic rock) and using the PC (especially playing Doom II). I also like comic books, mostly the Batman related titles. I don't like broccoli or mushrooms.

OK, that's enough from me! Let Mike hear from the rest of you. Happy railroading!



Here's John Reichel at the control of his LaPorte & Nevada Railroad layout. John is the Focus this month.

In The News

Southern Region

We have recieved two nominations for office of Southern Region Representative, Ritchie Roesch and Bryan Bingham. If there are any more nominations they must be recieved by November 20 to become eligible. Please include a few paragraphs about why you would be right for this job and send them to the editor.

The Hotbox

The Hotbox now sells ad space at the following price (prices are for one ad only):

One-fourth page ad (1/4) \$25.00

One-half page ad (1/2) \$35.00

Full page ad \$45.00

TAMR members recieve a discount of \$5.00 for all ads. If you have an ad for anything (a service, something you wish to get rid of or sell, etc.) please send typed or neatly drawn ads on a full sheet of paper. They will be resized and redrawn to fit the allotted space. Please include a check for the appropriate price made out to the Teen Association of Model Railroaders and send the material to the editor. Also include the number of months in a row you want the ad to appear and make it very clear what size ad you want. Classified ads will also be sold at ten (10) cents per word. Numbers (telephone numbers, addresses, zip codes, quantities, etc.) count as one word. Words with a hyphen (-) or two words joined together with a hyphen count as seperate words (except for phone numbers, addresses, and zip codes). Symbols (! @ # \$ % & * () + = V : ' " ;) don't count as words. For example:

For sale: 1 Athearn GP40-2 f/p SP= \$30.00, 2 Con-Cor GP40 (high-hoods) f/p NS= \$60.00 each. Call or write John Doe, 1234 Any St., Anytown, OH, 12345-6789, (123) 456-7890

This example would cost \$3.00. 'GP40-2' is one word, 'Con-Cor' is 2 words, 'high-hoods' is 2 words, '(123) 456-7890' is one word, '12345-6789' is one word. Minimum price is \$3.00.

What's happening in the T.A.M.R.?

Train Orders

miscellaneous items of interest

After reading last month's reply to Chris Martone's letter, Central region member Bryan Malone pointed out to me that Athearn doesn't make a GP38-2 painted for Norfolk Southern. I pointed out that Athearn makes a GP60 painted for NS's Southern's 100th anniversary GP59 scheme. Along with the NS SOU GP59, Athearn also paints the GP60 for NS Operation Lifesaver number 7140, the only GP60 in the scheme, NS# 7150 and NS #7102, both in the standard paint, and NS #4634, one of several GP59s painted in the Operation Lifesaver scheme.

Bachmann Spectrum has finally released it's Dash 8-40CW after a long delay because it's plant burned down. The unit has been extensively improved since it's predecessor, the Dash 8-40C (standard cab). New features include new truck side-frames with separate cylinders and even plumbing, crisper, better defined details, MU hoses on the rear pilot, ditch lights, a firecracker antenna on the roof, and three styles of cabs; one with high numberboards, one with low numberboards, and one with Santa Fe's "Gull-Wing" notched angled portion. Cabs are appropriately matched to their correct prototype, and all three are included in the undecorated version. The motor has been redone too; now it's extremely smooth and quiet, although a bit on the fast side. The retail price is \$59.95, but many hobby shops have them on sale for around \$50.00. Oh, by the way, those ads in the Walthers catalogs for the model are not the actual one you can just pick up off the hobbyshop shelf. Well, actually you can, the photo is of an Overland brass import so don't expect it to look as good, but I must say it looks pretty darn close!

Remember you guys and gals, this column is for you and your letters, comments, photos, drawings, etc. Send in a photo of your favorite model or draw us a picture. It'll all be published. If you have a question about anything, ask it.

Athearn has announced the release of it's GE Dash 9-44CW which is due in late October. I have already seen one and they look excellent. I heard they worked exclusively with General electric to produce a totally accurate locomotive. It is available with all of the features offered on the prototype (external only). It doesn't have grab irons or other details like that however. Target price is somewhere near \$55.00. There are going to be a lot of Dash 9 models out there, so far three: the Athearn model, the Railpower shell/chassis, and, get this, the Kato model. That's right folks, Kato has announced they will produce a 9 series unit too. The price will be the highest ever for a plastic diesel locomotive at \$130.00, but for a good reason. Kato's motors are the motor to outperform in the model railroad industry, and so far, not one single manufacturer has done it. On a scale of one to ten, here's my opinionated rating of some of the commercial motors available, ten being the best:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| -Kato | 10 |
| -Sagami | 8.5 |
| -Mabuchi | 8 |
| -Roco (Atlas, Walthers) | 7 |
| -Stewart (Kato) | 10 |
| -Stewart (Athearn) | 5 |
| -Athearn | 5 |
| -Proto 2000 (Life-like) | 8 |
| -Bachman Spectrum | 5, CW40-8= 6 |
| -Bachman Plus | 5 |
| -Hobbytown | 7 (very strong but very very loud) |

So there you have it, the way other motors match up to Katos. The only one that matches Katos are the Stewart-Kato powered units which have drives manufactured specially by Kato. Sagami motors, which come closer to the Kato motors than any other, (sold by North West Short Line) are the choice of most modelers for replacement motors. Sagamis are can motors and are very quiet, strong, and draw very little amperage.

For more information about motors and model railroad electronics, see Mike Hood's column "Wiring Made Easy" which begins this month with the basics. -Mike

Trains 101

Conducted by Mike Riley

Last month I discussed the tools you will need when building your models, and this month the focus is on adhesives. The first adhesive I wish to discuss is styrene glue. If you are unfamiliar with styrene, or polystyrene, it is the plastic most often used in model railroad kits. The kits that are made of styrene are Walthers, Athearn, MDC/Roundhouse, Bachmann, Lifelike, ConCor, Model Power, Kato, Atlas, and the list goes on and on.

There are many, many kinds of glues you can use on styrene, so I will only describe the best and worst ones. First off are the tube glues. I really don't recommend you use them. They are very hard to apply because the tubes "nozzles" are too big. You usually end up with a stringy, sticky mess when using tube glues.

Liquid plastic cement is by far the best cement to use on styrene and other plastics. This type comes in bottles and is like water. Liquid cement doesn't dry and form a hard "hand that holds things together", but rather dissolves the top layer of plastic and welds them together, making a bond that is just as strong as the plastic itself. It is fairly easy to use, too. Some brands, like Testors and Plastruct have a brush built into the lid. Most brands, however, require the purchase of a brush. All liquid cement must be applied with a brush, however. I recommend you buy a 000 or very small brush with a wooden handle, as the plastic brushes often dissolve in the glue. I use a glue called Tenax 7R, and it is the best glue I have ever seen (and I have seen a lot of different glues). It dries rock hard in about ten seconds, is fairly inexpensive compared to other types, and is the easiest to apply.

To apply liquid cement, get plenty on the brush, and then touch it to a few points along the joint. You don't need to brush the glue down the joint; capillary action (that means the glue will be drawn into the joint) pulls the glue around. Hold the joint together for about five seconds, and you're done. For large joints, like the corners of buildings, brush a lot of glue onto the joint, since the area you are covering is very large and a little glue usually won't get it.

The next type of glue is ACC or CA, which stands for Alphacyanoacrylate. Quite a name, huh! This is the only glue suitable for attaching metal or wood parts to your models. There is a common misconception among beginners that the tube type plastic glue is an all-purpose glue that will bond anything. Actually, nothing can be farther from the truth. It hardly holds plastic! CA or ACC is just about the only kind of glue you can or should use. It will bond anything (including skin, hair, lips, eyes, tools, and hands to workbenches) in just seconds, so take care not to get any on you. It is not easy to remove it once it is there, and in some places like eyes, surgery might be required to. This should make it quite clear that this glue is strong. ACC or CA is available in many thicknesses. Thin is best for wood, and thick is best for plastic.

One neat product that is sold to go with ACC or CA is called accelerator. When applied to wet glue, it instantly causes a chemical reaction that hardens it. The chemical reaction produces heat, enough that it melts plastic, so keep your hands away if possible.

to improve your models

The bottles of accelerator I have seen all had a spray nozzle on them. The spray created by them is way too wide, so I unscrew the cap and drip the liquid onto the glue from the end of the tube.

Two-part epoxy is a good adhesive, but is somewhat expensive. It is also not very easy to use. It consists of a tube of the epoxy and a tube of hardener which must be mixed 50/50 and then applied to the model. Don't mix too much at a time, a little goes a long way.

While I am on the subject of stuff in bottles, I might as well go ahead and cover the topic of paints. There are hundreds of colors to choose from, and about 25 different brands intended for models alone! There are three ways to apply paint: brush, airbrush, and spray can.

Using a spray can is the easiest and fastest way to paint a model, but is next to impossible to control. The number one worst thing about spray paints is the fact that you simply can't mix colors. Testors makes a wide variety of paints in cans that are ideal for train and plastic models because they are plastic compatible. If you buy a can somewhere other than the hobby shop, read the labels very carefully to see if it is plastic compatible. If it isn't, it will literally melt your model! A company called Plasticote makes about three-hundred plastic compatible flat and gloss colors intended for automobile touch-up work. I use these for most of my structures and a few cars and locomotives. One bad thing about Plasticote is that some of its primers dry with a slight grain to them. It's nothing serious and if you intend to paint over them with another color you can't tell. Spraying from a can takes a bit of practice. The best way to do it is push the button with short second-long bursts. This prevents the paint from going on too thick, which will happen if you don't move the can around and spray very lightly. Hold the can about 16" from the model for best results. Don't expect the model to be completely covered after one, two, or even three coats of paint, as it usually takes at least four. I prefer to use six light coats of paint.

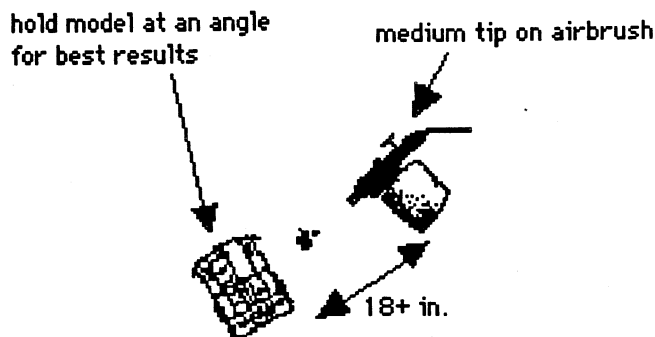
Brush painting is another method. Don't brush any cars or locomotives because you can see the streaks left by the brush. Besides, brush painting an HO engine could take several days to put on just three coats! Brush painting works best on small plastic and any size wooden structures. If the building is plastic to represent wood, brushing's streaks

present a convincing wood grain; remember to brush in the direction the grain would go in. One technique used by thousands and thousands of modelers for weathering and highlighting details is called drybrushing. Drybrushing simply means that you brush the surface with a brush that has had most of the paint removed from it. Here's how you do it:

First, get a little bit of your color on the brush (Floquil Poly S paints work the best by far) and then stroke the brush back and forth on a paper towel until you don't see any paint coming from the brush. Now dab the brush on the model so that any remaining paint comes off. You may have to press a little bit. Make sure there is very little paint on the brush because any amount will come out and show up very heavily. Ideal drybrushing colors include Polly S Grimy Black, white, Engine Black, Concrete, and UP Harbour Mist Grey. Don't drybrush with bright colors like green, yellow, or purple because the technique is meant to be subtle.

The third and final technique is airbrushing. You all know what an airbrush is, so I won't go into that. Airbrushing is the most popular and chosen method of painting among more experienced modelers because of the ability to control the flow of paint to a fine mist or pencil-point spray area. I paint most of my equipment with an airbrush because of the control factor. The color I use on my engines isn't available in a bottle, so I spray it from a can into an airbrush bottle and then airbrush it on. This technique works for most spray paints and is an easy way to obtain pre-mixed paint. Which brings me to another point about the airbrush. You must mix all of the paint with so many parts of thinner and so many parts of paint because the paint must be very thin to flow through the small nozzle on airbrushes. For more techniques with airbrushing, see below.

Next month I will discuss how to create a good model-making environment. See ya' then!



The Dieing History of Robbins and New River

by Brandon Hughett

photos by the author

the story of my town

The history of Robbins, Tennessee is almost forgotten. Sure, the Robbins Tunnel still exists, but half of the people don't know about it. Just up the road the



This is the old New River Bridge. In the foreground is part of the lot where the New River saw mill used to sit. *Brandon Hughett, photo*

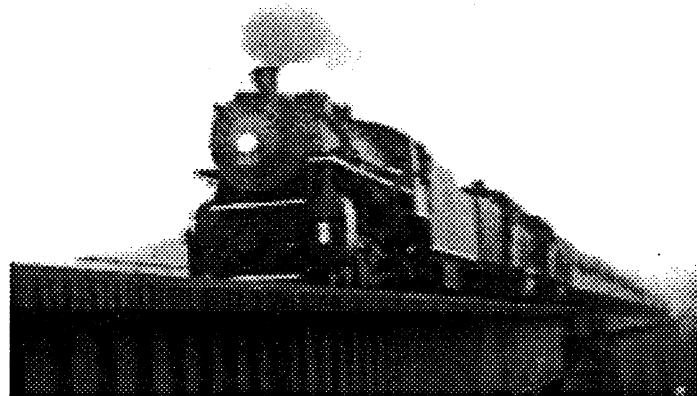
Old River bridge is still standing. Below the bridge everything is gone. At one time, there used to be a town called New River. It was a logging town with a logging mill, a hotel, a general store, and many houses. The old Shay steam engines number 35 and 36 used to bring logs down out of the mountains to be sawed up for lumber. Now the tracks have been recently taken up.

My mom, dad and grandfather all tell me about what was in New River. My grandfather tells me about steam

engine number 1 being pushed off the mountains by an overloaded logging train. My mom tells me about how she used to get the mail and how the mail train used to chugg through New River. My dad telle me about some of the daredevil things he did like run through the half-mile long Robbins Tunnel with a train not very far behind.

Now, the trains don't go that way anymore. A new line has been built which has no tunnels and a new three-hundred-foot high New River Bridge. The old Robbins Tunnel is still there but is guarded with a chain-link fence and alot of swampy mud. A new road has been built through New River and all that remains is the two New River Bridges, some houses, and the old spur track into the mountains.

I used to look forward to Autumn because the leaves would turn and it would be time for the Autumn Leaf Special. Now the Norfolk Southern has taken it away. I'm afraid the history in my area is almost gone.



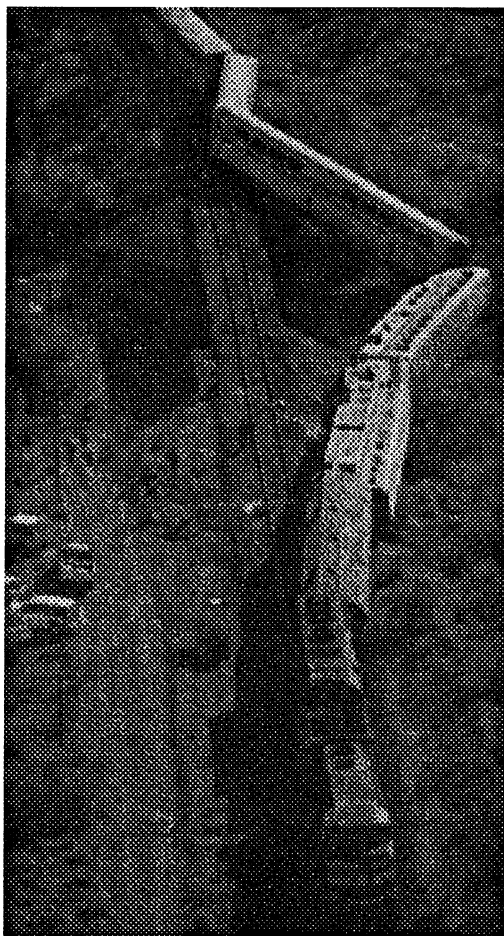
Here's the Norfolk Southern's Autumn Leaf Special train being pulled over the new Old River Bridge by Southern steam locomotive #4501. *Brandon Hughett, photo*

Shadow over the Sunset, Part II

Way back in the October 1993 issue of the Hotbox was an article titled "Shadow Over the Sunset." It was about the horrible Amtrak wreck of the Sunset Limited that plunged into a Mobile River bayou killing 40 people. Now, the Sunset has once again derailed. David Hadley explains below. - *Mike Riley, editor*

Once again Amtrak's Sunset Limited has met tragedy and the cause has not been Amtrak's or the railway's fault. In fact saboteurs left a letter signed the "Sons of Gestapo" upset over the Waco, TX standoff in 1993. It is not certain if this terrorism act is related to the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City. Amtrak's president Thomas Downs said "I find it despicable that anyone would jeopardise the lives of Amtrak passengers, and crew for any purpose and I don't care what the purpose is, this was an act of cowardice."

The terrorist removed 29 spikes and disconnected rail joiners leaving the wires



Amtrak's Sunset Limited lies in tragedy for the second time in recent years. - *Associated Press, photo*

intact that keep the track from short circuiting to warn an oncoming train that there is a broken rail ahead. With the combination of removed spikes and a removed joiner right over a 30-foot high bridge left several cars in a dry creekbed. To make it worse the accident happened near Hyder, AZ, a remote area 30 miles from any real road. Unfortunately two cars ended up on their sides, a Superliner sleeping car and an ex-Santa Fe Hi Level coach/crew dorm car. One other car was half-way in the ravine was the train's dining car which was occupied only by the train's conductor and assistant conductor. One person was killed, an Amtrak sleeping car attendant Mitchell Bates who was 41. Mitchell had worked for Amtrak for 20 years. Seventy people were "officially injured" and sixty-seven of them were taken to Phoenix area hospitals. Twelve were critically injured.

Several people on board said they heard a strange sound coming from the rail, and in less than a second later tragedy struck. None of the locomotives were derailed; they included an EMD F40PH cowl unit and a GE P32-8BH in the lead. Because the train was going around 55mph the train stopped rather quickly when the

engineer put into a "Big Hole" or emergency stop, which means the engines release all of their sand and air to apply the brakes very hard. The speed was fortunately very low since in most cases Amtrak runs at speeds near 100mph in the rural desert. All I can say is the people who did this are fools, completely plain stupid. I hope this doesn't turn into one of the newest after-school fads. - *David Hadley, Central Region Rep.*

Amtrak's Sunset Limited once again derails

The Prime Mover

I'm sorry for not having an article out in such a long time but I've been working on the 1996 national convention all summer long. For new members, or members that have not read the Prime Mover, this is a column about locomotives, from information to how the parts in them work. I normally cover diesels because they go by a standard, while steam (which is my favorite) had an ordinal design that varied from railroad to railroad and to order to order.

I would not expect for most railfans to know what each part of a diesel locomotive looks like, how to identify it, what it's function is, etc.. Below there is a drawing of a Morrison Knudsen MK5000C locomotive with each part numbered. Enclosed with your Hotbox is an answer form for the locomotive. Fill in the blanks for each part and quickly describe what it's main function is.

The entry which has the greatest number of correct answers will win a free registration for the 1996 TAMR National Convention in Anderson, IN next June 20-23, 1996. All entrees must be postmarked by January first, 1996 to qualify. *Hoosier Special Convention Commentee are not eligible.*

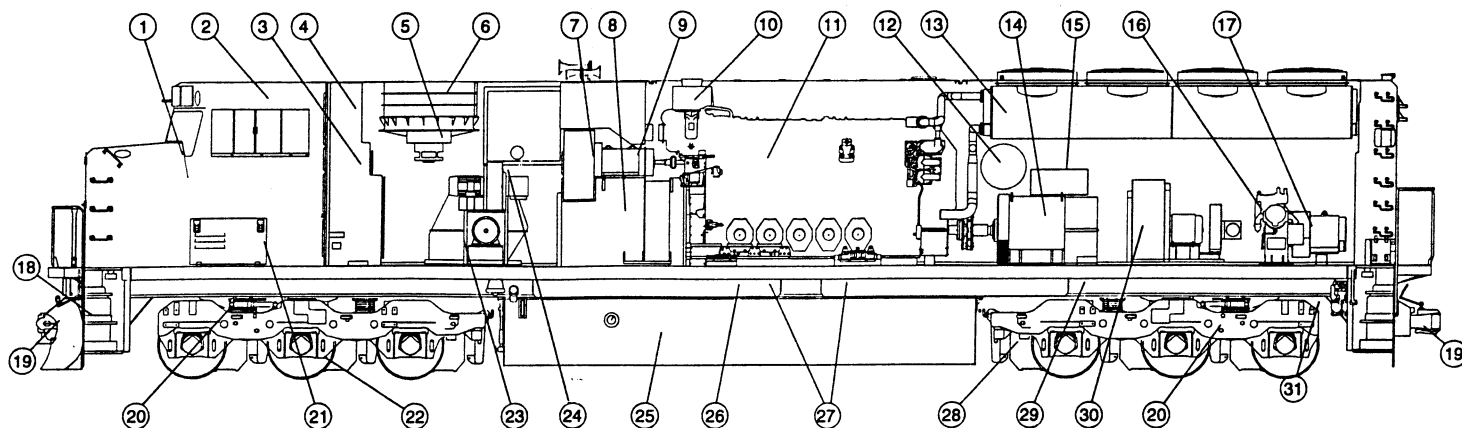
In locomotive news, EMD has released their new SD80MACs. These locomotives are very, very huge. I saw one thinking it was a GE from a distance because of it's large split-cooling system in the back, and for the "box" for the dynamic brake housing.

Two demonstrator units have been built by EMD and are testing on various test tracks around the country. They are painted a plain dark red color so they will be easy to repaint if any body changes are made. They feature EMD's new HTRC Radial trucks which actually steer the wheels into curves to cut down on flange wear and EMD's new "Whisper Cab" which was first seen on Conrail's SD60Is. The units are currently powered by a 5000 H.P. engine but will soon be upgraded to 6000 when EMD releases the high-H.P. engine block. The 6000 H.P. blocks will also be used in EMD's upcoming SD90MAC, which, so far, Union Pacific has ordered. This locomotive looks like it might just win back EMD's title as the king of the locomotive builders. Be looking forward to an in depth article about this locomotive in the near future.

Speaking of radial trucks, GE has introduced a variation of them, too. They have been installed on CSX AC4400CW number 2 for testing. If you have not picked up a copy of the December issue of Railfan and Railroad magazine, I suggest you do so because it has photos of the MK5000Cs, SD80MAC and GE AC4400CW with the radials. Besides the excellent photos, the whole issue is pretty good. OK you guys, see ya' next time.

-David Lloyd Hadley

David Hadley



PRIME MOVER

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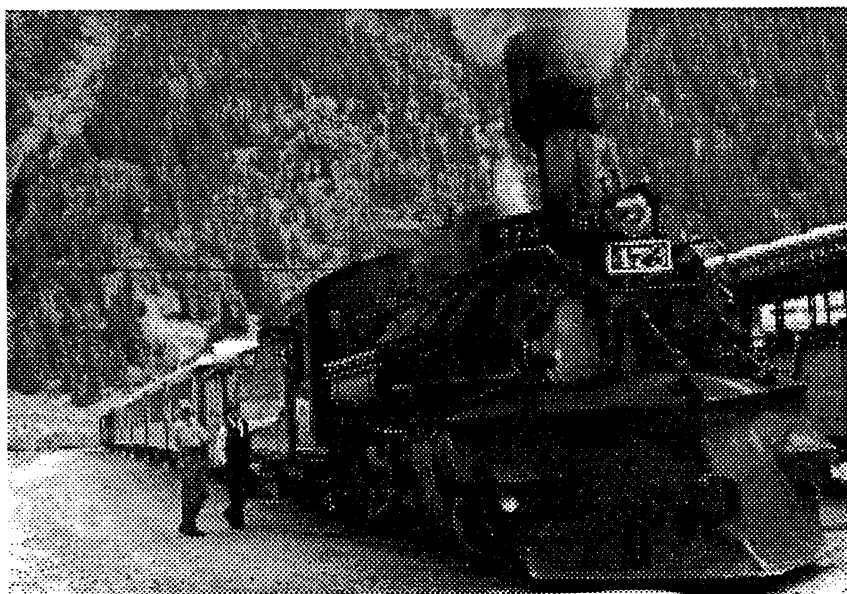
31. _____

Photos



A Conrail SD60I 5620 leads a freight out of Anderson, IN en route to Indianapolis. *David Hadley, Photo*

CSX C40-8W number 7827 and sister pull a long train across the Broad St. overpass and on through Hamilton, OH on a hot July evening. *Mike Riley, Photo*



D&RGW narrow gauge K-27 number 473 sits in Silverton, CO while it's passenger train waits to be boarded on the Durango & Silverton N.G. RR. *Ole Bye, photo*