

NEWSLETTER

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Are you going to the "CALGARY STAMPEDE"?

A number of you folks are also members of the National Model Railroaders' Association. The NMRA's national convention will be held in Calgary, Alberta this summer and may be as memorable as NASG's bash in Princeton, at any rate, it will be closer for some of you and perhaps you will be going.

We urge you to take some of your handiwork for those poor deprived folks in other gauges to drool over and to never be bashful about the scale you model in when you are attending NMRA meets.

Tony Beaton, our Standards Committee chairman, will be manning an S Gauge booth at the convention. Drop by and say hello. You might ask him if there is anything you can do for him. Like hold the fort while he goes for some fresh air or something. Or perhaps run an errand or something.

If you are really ambitious, and would like to offer yourself for more time, write to Tony and let him know that you are coming, when you might be available, and what you would like to do (or simply be at his disposal).

For those who don't have it, Tony's address is: 5355 Maidstone Road, N. E.; Calgary, Alberta T2A 4C1.

Eds Note: The Calgary Convention is scheduled for July 16 through July 21, 1979

RAILCON 79

Information and registration for the RAILCON 79 CONVENTION to be held at the Princeton University August 1-5 is available by writing to:

RAILCON 79
Prospect House
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

Complete package (includes 4 nights accomodations, all meals, registration, banquet, and tours) is \$135 per person single. Other arangements available by writting Chairman Bob Latham at the above address or calling (609) 452-6115 or (609) 921-9276.

To The Editor-NASG NEWSLETTER:

First, my compliments on the fine job you are doing. Having published a newsletter myself for two years and having written a regular magazine column for several years, I can appreciate the job and the product--congratulations.

To the members---we have a good start and a capable editor--lets feed him more material.

Steve Butler wants definitions of the various aspects of S-this has been done in the past but perhaps it is time to do it again. It is necessary to keep in mind that the borders between various interests are often fuzzy. Also, many people are into several or all of the following. Anyway, here are Porter's Pearls (boy, am I asking for it!).

1. TRAIN COLLECTOR:

- A. American Flyer only- wants one of everything (sometimes he seems to want all of everything) Gilbert ever produced in 3/16- better known as S. Usually also has interests in other scales--Standard, O, HO, etc. and other manufacturers- Lionel, Marx, Ives, etc.
- B. Brass-- mainly interested in brass display models; may concentrate on one scale or have many scales; if he buys kits he usually pays someone else to assemble them.
- C. S Scale Collector: wants one of everything (or all of everything) ever produced in and for S scale. In my experience he seldom assembles (or sells) anything.
- D. Various combinations of above-may also collect various letterings put out by Kris, Seltzer's, etc.

2. TIN-PLATER: Person who operates (has layout, plays with, uses) manufactured (as opposed to kit built or scratchbuilt) trains in any scale or gauge without modifying the wheel flanges, details, etc.

3. HI-RAILER: Person who operates modified tinsplate equipment (in our case AF); sometimes in conjunction with a mixture of kit, converted, or scratch built items. By modified, I mean the AF stuff has at least been changed to so-called Hi-rail flanged wheels, which flanges are smaller and thinner than AF flanges but coarser and larger than "scale" flanges. This may also include but is not limited to removing cast-on over-size detail and replacing it with more "scale-like" details. The differences between Hi-rail and Scale are a matter of degree- the more one leans to NMRA standards, the closer one is to scale. Also, most Hi-railers will convert to direct current for control. However, the AF operator making no change in his equipment except a change to DC would hardly have become a Hi-railer. Again, its a matter of degree.

4. SCALER: By far the largest group of model railroaders in all scales except S. (Here I am not including the kids who take the Lionel set out of the box, put it down on the rug, and then pack it away. I'm talking about people with permanent or

semi-permanent layouts.) Even in S we are seeing a gradual shift to scale as Hi-railers become more sophisticated and many AF operators are now changing to scale by disposing of or displaying their AF equipment rather than going thru the Hi-rail stage. What is Scale? Basically it is model railroad equipment generally adhering to NMRA standards. The size of equipment, details, wheel flanges, etc. are as close to a scale reduction from the real thing as is thought generally practical for most modelers and manufacturers. It is not a strict scale reproduction from the prototype.

5. Fine Scaler: Those who make no compromise. Wheel flanges are exact scale even if there are operational problems. Pipe sizes, for example, may be as fine as hair. Some modelers claim to achieve satisfactory operation with fine scale. That may well be, but the number of large, operating fine scale layouts is infinitesimal.
6. NARROW GAUGER: Many confuse gauge with scale-years of using the words interchangeable are to blame. Real railroads were built to many gauges. Real people are all built (grown?, created?) to the same scale. Thus a six foot person is six feet tall whether he rides AMTRAK (track gauge 4'-8½"), the Silverton in Colorado (track gauge 3') or the railway at the Milwaukee Zoo (track gauge 15"). Likewise, a model of a person will be the same size in Standard gauge or 3 foot Narrow gauge (S or Sn3) or in wide gauge for that matter, although I have never heard of a wide gauger in S scale. (There's a place for a very poor joke here but I'll ignore it! Hah!)

In summary, then, I would say.....

1. COLLECTOR: Collects trains to look at and trade with other collectors
2. TINPLATTER: Has American Flyer trains and his primary interest is in operating them.
3. HI-RAILER: Has a mix of American Flyer and scale equipment running on flanges smaller than AF but larger than scale. Has probably gone to wider track radius than AF and changed some of the coarser details.
4. SCALER: Generally follows NMRA standards, especially in track and wheels.
5. FINE SCALER: Insists on a direct reduction from the prototype in all matters.
6. NARROW GAUGERS: Models railroads with a gauge of less than 4'-8½", usually in either scale or fine scale.

And remember, most of us are in more than one of the categories. Fun, isn't it?--now if I only had more time.

Chuck Porter

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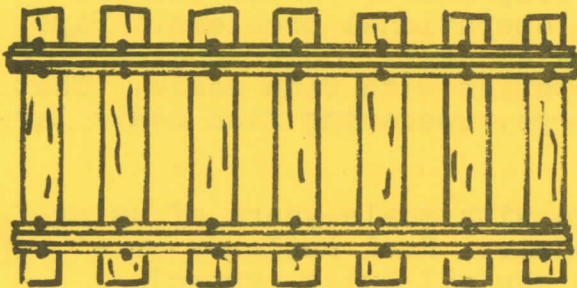
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Rod Moore
1314 Forest Hill Drive
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THE HI RAIL COMMITTEE REPORT

By Sig Fleischmann

First I want to thank all of you who sent in your comments on Lionel RTR S gauge.

Fundimensions has agreed to a meeting with us to discuss where we see S gauge going and what they, as the only major S gauge manufacturer, can do to help get it there.

S gauge can use a quality line of RTR train sets to expand the gauge. DC motors, improved drive systems, plastic trucks with needle bearings, operating knuckle couplers, pikemaster track, would compete directly and effectively with RTR HO gauge.

All S gaugers should sound off on RTR S gauge by Lionel!!!!!!!

The Chicagoland Association Of S Gaugers is also making a well organized promotional effort to promote Lionel RTR S gauge.

We all remember the Westside Mikado project, also, the many reasons and opinions of why it failed, rumors indicate its not dead but waiting. The reintroduction by Lionel of the 0-6-0 Penn switcher, regearred and powered by a 5 pole DC motor could clear the track for brass S gauge RTR locomotives.

RTR S gauge by Lionel has sidetracked pending Hi Rail Projects at the present time.

Send your comments to:

Sig Fleischmann
22475 Violet
Farmington, MI 48024

REPORT # 2 ON SURVEY NUMBER ONE: Here's the information you've been waiting for, concerning the ratings you and your friends made on the products you bought in the six months preceding our last survey. But first, a few introductory comments ...

A total of eighty NASG members finally responded to this survey, with 65 arriving by the cut-off date for the last article. What a terrific response! Thanks again, friends! Will you do it again for the survey printed in this issue? (See the back page.) Of those 80, ten did not rate any manufacturers or dealers, 30 rated American Flyer dealers only, and 40 respondents rated scale modelling products. It is these 40 scale modelers whose responses I'm reporting in this article. (Total NASG membership stands at about 240, I believe).

These respondents rated 32 different manufacturers and dealers. Fourteen of these received three or more ratings, and are reported below. A numerical rating was asked of the price, quality, speed of delivery, and instructions provided, but most people rated only the last three items, and so I have no indication of people's opinions on the prices our manufacturers have to charge.

The fourteen manufacturers who received 3 or more ratings in any category are listed below in alphabetical order. The numbers in each column represent the total points scored, the number of ratings, and the average rating on a scale of one (low) to five (high).

| Manuf'r or Dealer | Quality | Speed of Delivery | Instructions |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Ace S Guage Equip. | 34/9/3.8 | 39/8/4.9 | 9/2/4.5 |
| Cascade Models | 11/3/3.7 | 8/3/2.7 | 12/3/4 |
| Delaware Valley Supp. | 11/3/3.7 | 11/3/3.7 | not rated |
| DMK Scale Models | 19/5/3.8 | 18/5/3.6 | 21/5/4.2 |
| J-C Models | 31/8/3.9 | 22/5/4.4 | 8/4/2 |
| Leheigh Valley Mod. | 14/3/4.7 | 14/3/4.7 | not rated |
| Loco Workshop | 35/9/3.9 | 34/9/3.8 | 14/4/3.5 |
| Rex S Guage Models | 21/5/4.2 | 13/5/2.6 | 16/4/4.0 |
| Sandusky's Supplies | 11/3/3.7 | 12/3/4.0 | not rated |
| "S"cenery Unlimited | 58/14/4.1 | 62/13/4.8 | 26/7/3.7 |
| Seltzer's | 13/4/3.3 | not rated | not rated |
| S Scale Loco & Supply | 27/6/4.5 | 29/6/4.8 | 14/4/3.5 |
| Sunshine Models | 15/5/3.0 | not rated | not rated |
| !#@*?! Trainstuff | 121/31/3.9 | 119/27/4.4 | 85/21/4.0 |

The number of ratings per manufacturer vary because respondents rated several different products from the same sources. Obviously, Trainstuff is the most popular manufacturer with NASG members, and receives high ratings in all areas, especially speed of delivery. But, Rex Models apparently gives very high quality with very good instructions, but you have to wait a while to receive their product. From this brief overview, it looks like our manufacturers put out high quality stuff. Why not sample their wares for yourself?

Personnel Director's Report

Martin Van Horn

NASG Referral Service

Several members have taken advantage of the Referral Service for assistance with some particular problem; how about you? Experienced S Gaugers have volunteered their expertise on the following subjects and will answer your questions:

- I Wiring American Flyer
- II Repairing American Flyer diesel locomotives
- III Repairing American Flyer steam locomotives
- IV Finding American Flyer parts
- V Sectional trackplans
- VI Collecting
- VII Converting to scale
- VIII Building with styrene
- IX Building with brass
- X Wiring scale DC power
- XI Repairing scale locomotives
- XII Building turnouts
- XIII Painting
- XIV Lettering
- XV Benchwork
- XVI Scenery
- XVII Building with brass
- XVIII Building with wood

If you would like some help in one or two of these categories, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Martin K. Van Horn
1007 Roland Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21211

Of course you can order more than two categories, but PLEASE, only two per S.A.S.E.! This service is meant to operate without my making a trip to the Post Office to weigh each outgoing request for correct postage. Thanks to everyone, especially all those who returned their questionnaires and all *of* you volunteers for the referral service.

PROMOTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Ed Loizeaux reports that the "S" gauge brochure is in the hands of VICOM Services for type setting and paste-up. The final draft copies will be checked in March and final production would follow soon after giving us a promotional brochure by summer.

Ken Zieska is spearheading the S gauge module layout effort indicating that 'prototype' modulars are to be constructed in April. These units will be the "test" modulars which will be the basis for the final design of S modules.

THIS AND THAT

The first 6 issues of the NASG Newsletter were designed to be assembled in a two or three ring binder. Most likely, there will be no major change in this format until a magazine format would be appropriate. Until then, I hope you keep the issues by assembling them in a binder.

CLUB CAR

Bristol S Gauge Railroaders meet on a regular basis at member's homes. "World's Oldest S Gauge Club" has a new set of Officers and new membership and enthusiasm promise to keep the club going. People in the Massachusetts area may like to contact secretary Tom Coughlan for further information about the club. They presently have 15 members but would expand to a total of 20. All but two or three of the present members have layouts so there would be much to gain as a new member.

Bristol S Gauge Railroaders
Tom Coughlan, Secretary
84 Morgan Street
Melrose, Ma 02176

Roland Pelland, President
42 Jane Avenue
Fitchburg, Ma 01420

COMMING EVENTS:

NMRA National Convention
July 16-21, 1979
Calgary, Alberta

RailCon 79
August 1-5, 1979
Princeton, New Jersey

All Western S Gauge Convention
September 1-3, 1979
Spokane, Washington

Fall S Fest
October or November 1979
Chicago Area

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
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