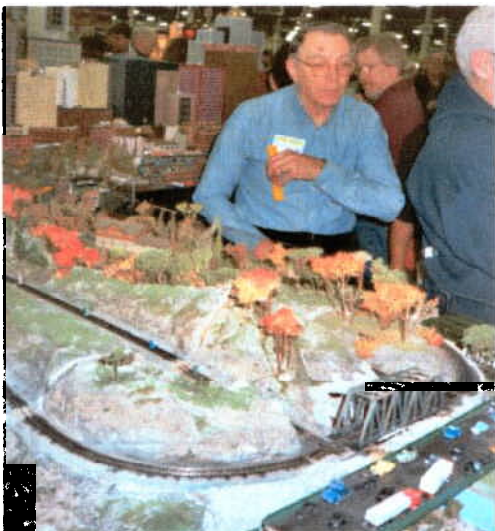




Jim Whitehead with the new dress code for Winterfest.



Frank Dignan making sure the trains are running smoothly.



Bob Pawlak checking out the bridge and seeing if he might use it on his new module.

Marketing Follies by Bob Gatland

Life-Like is making good stuff these days and doesn't even know it. Take the case of their newest steam engine, a 2-8-8-2.

The first run completely sold out and got rave reviews. You would think that this would have been duly noted by the marketing department. (Do they have one?)

I guess not. Instead of increasing the second run substantially, they came out with another limited run. It sold out instantly --long before any reached dealers shelves. I found it amusing and slightly insane that when BLW posted it for sale on their web page, it was already marked as being completely sold out.

It's all part of a current marketing strategy employed by many N scale manufacturers of making limited runs that they are confident will sell out quickly and eliminate the expense of unsold inventory sitting in storage.

I'm looking at the bright side of this situation. I won't be tempted to buy one on impulse.

Competition Is Good by Bob Gatland

My first reaction to the news that both Micro-trains and InterMountain were going to produce the same model of the EMD FT's was negative. I thought that it would have been better for us if one of them had produced a model of another prototype. But the head to head competition has taken us to new heights.

Both companies have pulled out all of the stops to produce outstanding locomotives.

Handrails? Cast on handrails are out and so are cast on ladders and grab irons. These are being individually applied by both companies.

Grillwork? Wherever possible grillwork details are photo-etched metal parts that allow you to see details behind them.

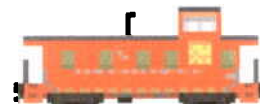
Authenticity? The single mold master has yielded to multiple masters each one representing as accurately as possible the variations actually used by the railroads.

Painting? As perfect as could be with

magnification needed to read the small print.

Operation? I haven't seen the Inter-Mountain FT operate yet, but I assume it will be just as good as the Micro-train product which seems to be a good performer.

Would we have gotten all this if the competition wasn't head to head and intense? Perhaps, but not for quite a few years.



WINTERFEST LOST AND FOUND

LOST :-)

Joe Sacca (Valley NTRAK) reports losing a brand new Life Like "Pacific"-type locomotive. If you threw it in your box by mistake or find it amongst your belongings, please let us know. Send us a note via e-mail to webmaster@northeastntrak.org.

FOUND :-)

One bag containing an assortment of Micro-Trains cars (new releases, probably purchased at the show) and some other items. If this is yours, please contact us via e-mail at webmaster@northeastntrak.org

One Sears Ratchet and 7/16" socket. If this is yours, please contact us via e-mail at webmaster@northeastntrak.org
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