

Northeast Ntrak, 41 Easy Street, Lowell, MA 01850-1731, Web Site - www.northeastntrak.org

President's Message



In my last message I spoke of building new modules. Bob, Ernie and Ed are going to make that realization happen. For members whom are not skilled with woodworking, they will be able to purchase a basic module frame. There are two basic types that will be made, one with mountain division and one without. Bob will be putting wiring harnesses together for those whom wish to purchase them. After the basic frames are finished we will have some worknights that deal with tracklaying and ballasting. Plan you ideas, ask other members for there thoughts and ideas. There is always help available from someone.

Last month I spoke of the "Worlds Greatest Hobby" campaign. We now have flyers on model railroading that we can give out. I have added our club name and web address on the cover of the flyer. Hopefully we can get more people involved with the hobby. If anyone has suggestions of what we can do as a club contact me with your ideas.

NEW RAILFAN TIMETABLE: Book review by D. Pawling, Sr.

I recently received the "New England Railfan Timetable: Housatonic - New England Central - Providence and Worcester, Timetable # 1, effective July 1, 2003." This is the third volume in the series compiled by Joshua Moldover and published by the Oxford Junction Press.

The first volume, published in June 2002, covered the Guilford routes. The second volume on CSX in New England was reviewed earlier this year in this newsletter. For info on these books go to <<www.oxfordjunction.com>>. Incidentally, I have no financial interest in these publications, but I am excited about what they reveal about New England railroading and want to share it with you all.

Like the Guilford and CSX volumes, this one - quoting from its introduction - is "railroad specific, and includes lists of all stations, bridges, crossings, and other points of interest, for both the lines owned, as well as operated over via trackage rights; complete and up-to-date schedules for both freight and passenger trains operating over the railroads; summaries of all appropriate operating rules; a full listing of all railfanning locations covered by the timetable, showing train operators, frequencies, radio channels, and defect information, along with maps and directions to get you there."

Primary motive power with road numbers is listed, as are major engine facilities and yards, to wit: Housatonic (HRRC) has one engine facility and two yards, the NECR, one and 7, and the P&W, 3 and 11 yards. We also learn the RR's interchanged with and where: HRRC interchanges with 2 other RR's at 3 locations; NECR with 7 RR's at 10 locations, and P&W with 9 RR's at 11 locations. How is that for action in poor, old depressed New England??

Many of the facilities, yards and interchanges are included in the 115 railfan favored sites described and



The photo replicates a 1903 view of the north side of the Danbury RR station. A steam engine heading a freight train sits on one of the two westbound tracks. Soon conductor and engineer will compare watches, the highball given, the crossing gates will drop to block traffic on White Street and the train will begin its trip to the Hudson River on the old Maybrook (NY) Line. More on the Danbury Railway Museum's former Boston & Maine #1455, ALCO 2-6-0 at another time. Photo by D. Pawling, Sr.

mapped in this book. Some others have scenic qualities -- for example, I'd like to get some photos while sitting in a canoe just north of where the CSX/MBTA crosses the Charles River on an arched bridge in Newton -- and I am sure that there are other great places for photo ops along the three railroads in this book. Let me see - there's a spot near the Hell Gate Bridge that I can get to by subway and perhaps spot a P&W stone train on its way to the Long Island RR, or the Acela Express on its way to Penn Station....so, why not some shots of subway trains, too?? Unh ...see ya', guys!

Schedule of Shows for Coming Year

Date	Set-up	Show Time	Show	Place	Show Coordinator
Oct 18	7am	10am to 4pm	Northshore Model RR Club	American Civic Ctr, 467 Main St, Wakefield, MA	John Deveau, 781-599-0854
Nov 15	8am	10am to 5pm	Greenberg Show	Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA	Ernie Poole, 978-658-9563
	16	9am	10am to 4pm		
Nov 23			Mystic Valley Railway Society	Auburn, MA	
Dec 27	8am	10am to 5pm	National Heritage Museum	Museum of our National Heritage	Bob Pawlak, 781-862-2485
	28	noon to 5pm			
Feb 6	1pm		Amherst Railway Society	Big "E" Exposition Center, Springfield, MA	Frank Dignan, 781-294-1925
Feb 7	7am	10am to 5pm	(Winterfest 2003)		
	8	10am to 5pm			
Mar	8am	10am to 5pm	Greenberg Show	Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA	Ernie Poole, 978-658-9563
	9am	10am to 4pm			
Apr			Hooksett Lions Club	Hooksett Memorial School, Hooksett, NH	Ron Wood, 603-889-0741
May	7am	9am to 3pm	Children's Hospital	300 Longwood Dr., Boston, MA	Robert Pawlak, 781-862-2485

For Sale, Starter Modules and Wiring Kits by Bob Pawlak

- 3' Corner \$40**
- 4' Straight Module with Mountain Division \$40**
- 4' Straight Module without Mountain Division \$40**
- 3' Corner Wiring Kit \$38**
- 4' Straight with Mountain Division Wiring Kit \$43**
- 4' Straight without Mountain Division Wiring Kit \$38**
- Wiring Installation Option Fee \$3**

The club as a whole is anxious to make it as easy as possible for new members to finish their first module and start bringing it to train shows so they can fully participate in club activities. Several experienced modelers have volunteered to help make the "Starter Module Project" a success. Ed Smith and Ernie Poole have volunteered to build the modules which will include legs, sky board, and all necessary hardware. Ed and Ernie have teamed up before to make modules (transition corners and One-Trak modules most recently) and do excellent quality work.

Bob Pawlak has volunteered to assemble the electrical wiring kits, perform the wiring installation option, and act as project facilitator to answer questions at (781) 862-2485. The wiring kits will include the necessary Ntrak standard 2-pin connectors 16 and 18 gauge wire, terminal strip, and 120 VAC power strip with 6' cord. The installation option will include soldering and color-coding the connectors, mounting everything, and wiring the terminal strip ready for connection to the track.

Dan Pawling has volunteered to host work sessions in his cellar workshop for cork roadbed and track laying, building scenery shapes, ballasting, painting, etc. to help transform the starter modules into finished modules. Several other experienced modelers have agreed to come to these sessions to help new members finish their modules. The club's two excellent end loops were built at similar sessions in Dan's cellar.

As further incentive and a deadline to work toward, Jim Whitehead is considering including a "Best New Member First Module" prize category at the next Winterfest to be held on February 6-8, 2004. Stay tuned.

To get on board this project, decide which type module(s) you want and send a

check for the appropriate amount (for modules) made out to Ed Smith. Send the check to Ed at 41 Blanchard Road, Harvard, MA 01451-1120. Then decide if you want to buy the associated wiring kit and whether or not you want to pay the extra \$3 to have it installed. Send a check of the appropriate amount (for wiring) made out to Bob Pawlak. Send it to Bob at 18 Burroughs Road, Lexington, MA 02420-1908.

The deadline for receiving checks for a module or wiring kit is Friday, October 24!! Once there is a commitment for a fixed number of modules, Ed and Ernie will buy all the materials and produce all the modules at once to be most efficient. They will not repeat the exercise to accommodate a procrastinator who finally decides in mid October or thereafter that (ho hum) it might be nice to maybe get a module. Enough people have already shown interest during discussion over the last few months to make this project a go! It is only a matter of getting the checks to get a final count of modules to be built.

Train show coordinators are always looking for people with a corner. Be popular, build a corner! The club needs more people with Mountain Division (MD) on their module - go for it! (That is why the price for a module with MD is the same as one without MD.) If you can't fit your dream layout plan on only 4' - buy 2 to build an 8' straight! If you know of anyone thinking about N-gauge, encourage them to join the club now and take advantage of this special opportunity. Even if you have started your first module, plan ahead and buy a starter now for your next project and be sure to bring your current work-in-progress to the sessions in Dan's cellar.

It seems to me that this should be a "no-brainer" decision for anyone who reads this article. The prices are essentially the cost of the materials and the total price for a module and wiring kit is about that of a typical new Kato/Atlas loco. Think of all the time you can save! This opportunity blows away all the excuses people usually give for why they still aren't rolling. Get on board! Get your checkbook out and just do it now!



Why don't elephants like to ride on railways?
They hate leaving their trunks in the baggage car.



Putting the Kato SD-70MAC into Service

Kato's new SD-70MAC is a great model, even by today's exacting standards. It is available in several colorful and prototypical color schemes. The plastic shell, walkways, and railings are very well detailed. The body actually snaps into the top of the fuel tank at four locations to secure the shell to the mechanism. The model also features working ditch lights above the front walkway. A bright white LED illuminates the headlight, number boards with pre-printed numbers, as well as the ditch lights.

The mechanism is the now familiar vertical split frame, with a circuit board on top for the headlights. If you're a DCC user, Digitrax makes two different 'drop in' decoders that will work. The DN144K, designed for the C44-9, works fine, but does not have white LED's. The later DN163K1A has more features and white LED's. I did not find a Lenz 'plug and play' decoder for this unit.

The big trick for this model is fitting Micro-Trains couplers. There is no 'right' conversion on a card like we are used to. A very good result though, is readily possible. After some false starts, and after consulting with Joe D'Amato at Micro-trains, here is the answer. Use the coupler box from the 2004 card, and the coupler assembly from the 1015 card. This is a perfect marriage, and the result exactly matches the height gauge and other truck mounted Micro-Trains couplers.

So, here we are, ready to highball. Ease off the service brake, notch up the throttle, and enjoy. In model railroading, this is good as it gets. Hey, I remember rubber band drive loco's, but that, well that's a whole other story.

What is a lawyer's favorite railroad?
The SOO Line.

Why can't a steam locomotive sit down?
Because it has a tender behind.