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Issue 6

Volume 20

# BANTRAK

# Newsletter



## *N-Scale – Realism in Miniature*



### *The Engineer's Cab*

by Mark Bandy, President

**Don't Forget  
the  
BANTRAK  
Picnic  
Saturday,  
June 23rd**

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### **The Brunswick Show**

**T**he Brunswick show was fabulous! For the first time the Brunswick Railroad Museum put on a model train show. This was not like the "Brunswick Railroad Days" held previously years. The museum considered the show a success with an attendance at 500 and \$4000 in revenue. Cathy Tynan has asked us back for another year. As a perk we'd get a free annual membership to the museum. If we decide to participate we've been asked to provide recommendations.

We had good weather and the location from the street was fine.

Friday set-up was interesting, members showed up at different times from 10-1:30. Most of the modules were there by noon and the trailer was already unloaded. For the amount of space provided it worked out nice. We made an 18' x 18' layout with our club's four corners and half the yard on the back end, basically in a 26' x 28' garage that had a high roll up door at the front for spectators to notice we were in there. The track work was tight and the modules were level. Running trains on Saturday and Sunday went without a hitch for most of us. From time to time the real trains would recognize their presents by blowing their horns through the town and we would look down the hill to see what kind of freight she was pulling.

I would like thank the members who took time to help set-up, spot, and tear down the layout. It was a far trip from Baltimore, but I thought it would be neat to combine seeing real trains and other club layouts at a historic event for Brunswick.

Now, for our next event....

Are you ready for the club picnic?

Are you putting the final touches on your models for the contest?

#### **Our Next Meeting**

**Our next BANTRAK Club meeting will be held during the BANTRAK Picnic SATURDAY, June 23rd @ John & Elaine Darlington's home in Timonium, Md.**

**1PM to 5PM**

Who will be named "Modeler of the year"?

The club's annual picnic is approaching in June, as I said before this is a time to relax and be social and a time to share train modeling methods and experiences and have fun. We will have our club meeting and there is a lot on the agenda this

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## RIP TRACK

### A User-Friendly Layout

By Phil Peters

**B**uilding a home layout we usually cater to our individual preferences by designing for specific types of operation. For some it is for passenger trains with large downtown terminals and long runs where you can view the trains snaking through curves and canyons. Others prefer complex yards with complicated classification schemes and detailed engine facilities. And many go for switching layouts that combine yards and several or many towns that pose particular switching problems.

One thing that all of these layouts have in common is that there are specific spots for particular cars. The trains and the cars on them must be delivered to passenger platform in a designated order at a precise time. The freight cars must be set out at the proper industry on the proper track in the exact spot for loading/unloading.

**BUILDING A HOME LAYOUT WE USUALLY CATER TO OUR INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCES BY DESIGNING FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF OPERATION.**

Frequently the builder has created some track arrangements that are not only interesting, but sometimes, pose switching problems that are nearly impossible to resolve in a timely fashion. Maybe he/she thought of being diabolically clever; maybe it was the only possible track plan for that space. For whatever reason when a crew arrives at that town, the conductor cringes at trying to figure out how to carry out the work of the day and still stay within the twelve hour rule. Stopping a train on the main on the way home because the crew has run out the clock is hardly the way to run a railroad.

In real life, conductors work a district or industry in accordance with a routine that experience has shown makes the job doable and is reasonably efficient. They also carry a car locator book that shows the individual sidings and the numbered spots on those sidings for setting out cars. These schematics make the job easier and the conductor and crew can work out in advance the precise moves to save time and energy.

How can we make switching on the home layout more efficient and less intimidating? Even if you have switched a particular town before, it is often hard to remember which industry is where and where Track 2, Spot 3 is.

Lots of layouts have schematic panels on the fascia or hanging from the ceiling over the town to help guide the crew. These are usually lines representing the tracks and blocks to identify the industries. Sometimes the industries have signs to identify them, sometimes, not. Transference from a two-dimensional plan to a three-dimensional world is not always easy in a rushed operating environment.

The computer can enable us to enhance the schematic with photos of the industries rather than the rectangles & circles. Perhaps the schematic can be superimposed on an overview photo, an aerial view, so to speak, would make matching the picture with reality easier. With digital cameras and home computing power and inexpensive printers, the operating possibilities of our towns can be more attractive and, at the same time, more effective. Creating meaningful signage for the buildings and sidings, then taking appropriate photos of each and putting them onto or inserting them into a clear track schematic make it possible for a crew to recognize where they are and where the cars in the train go with fewer possibilities for confusion. And these more attractive designs will make the layout look better and more inviting for visitors, helping them to see the grand scheme we have built into our home empires.

*Editors Note: Isn't it wonderful to be retired ?*

**ONE THING THAT ALL OF THESE LAYOUTS HAVE IN COMMON IS THAT THERE ARE SPECIFIC SPOTS FOR PARTICULAR CARS.**



Ouch !!!!

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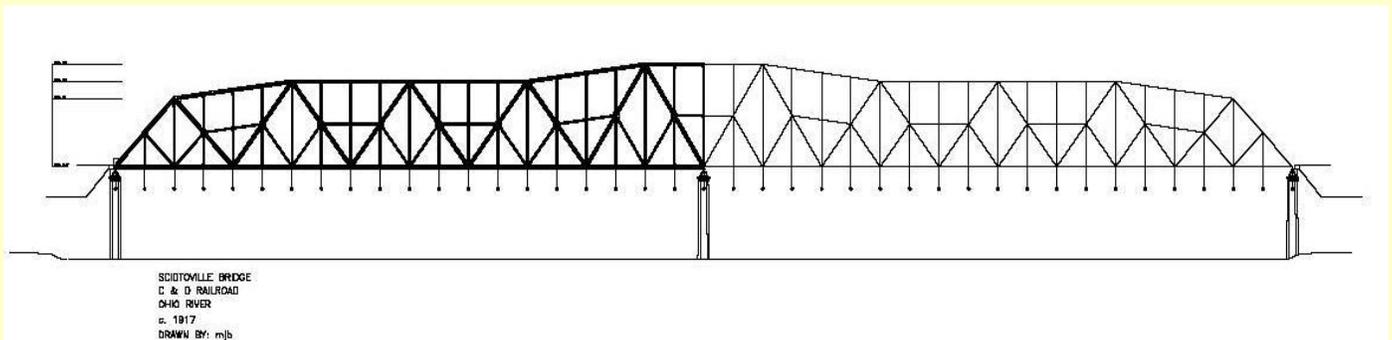
month. Some club awards will be given out.

Please let John Darlington know if you plan on attending and if you are bringing a dish of food. Also spouses and children are welcome.

## “Everything Big!”

I am enthralled with long span bridges. Lattice work attached to stringers and intermediate post that support the cross stringers give character to the bridges. After the club’s OneTrak meeting hosted at Alan’s house last month, I established that a long span bridge is what I wanted to make for my One-Trak module. Not a switch area for One-Traker’s to move trains back and forth on, but a passing area. One-Traker’s will need to pass each other as they move from the N-Trak layout to the One-Trak layout.

I’ve decided to model the Sciotoville Bridge. The mammoth bridge truss spans 1550 ft. long with two tracks over the Ohio River between Kentucky and Ohio, Southeast of Cincinnati. It was built by the C & O in 1917 and engineered by Gustav Lindenthal, (the man who designed the well known Hell Gate on the East River in New York). The Sciotoville Bridge is still being used today by CSX, at its inception it was considered the longest continuous truss bridge type in the world. Lindenthal designed the span for heavy freight trains in fact it was designed to handle 425 tons per liner foot. The bridge has three supports, one on each end and one at the



center in the river, which divided the span in half making two 775 ft spans. The truss height on at the center of the span is 129 ft. and height from the track deck to the water is about 45-65 ft. The bridge doesn’t stop at the ends. Intermediate short spans continue over the land making the total span to 3086 ft. (about 20 ft. in N scale) I haven’t figured out how much of this I want to model.

I researched the bridge in train reference books and the internet so I could get as many pictures, drawings and specifications on the span for precise detailing. Then I started the drawings and making modeling notes for this project right away. I won’t have the time necessary to complete the model at the October show, however, I am hoping to finish for the December show being held at the B & O round house. Now that I have done a good part of the research for this project, one thing I have in my favor is redundancy of construction and design throughout. Of course the monotony of that could prove challenging.

The questions still unanswered: How much do I model? Where do I break the model for easy shipping? How does it fit in the One-Trak layout?



Double  
Ouch!!



### BANTRAK Organization

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## Brunswick Train Weekend

By Al DeGaudio

A nice time was had by all! We were set up in the Ambulance station, which permitted us to have an 18-foot square, 3x 4-footers per side plus corners. We used 2 sections of the yard. Set up began Friday around 11:30 and we established a relaxed, but focused pace. We took our time with the lift bridge since it was between a corner and Martin's town. [A note, in an ideal world, the lift bridge should be between 2 4-foot modules, but between the yard and Martin's and Al Palewicz' module sets, we did not want to break up those themes]. Anyway, DCC went in with little or no hassle and we got to run trains Friday. Cathy, the organizer, came by and was absolutely thrilled with the layout. The guys in the ambulance station were really into it as well. Although, when we had all the modules and crates lying around early Friday, they had to have been a tiny bit skeptical.



As far as the crowd, we were blessed with a fantastic sunny day on Saturday. The ambulance group was out in front of the station with all their gear displayed plus there were balloons and a snowball ice machine. We had our banner in the driveway, so our area was a real magnet for the crowd. Many came by never really having seen anything bigger than the Christmas tree layout or 4x8 train garden, so N-Trak was a revelation. Hopefully we interested a number of rail fans and casual weekend passersby to come to Timonium and the B&O shows.



Sunday started out rainy, but cleared up early enough to bring more folks. The Saturday morning crew took the afternoon for some rail fanning and to see the other clubs. Two G layouts were there with good crowds. About a half-mile away were the Japan Rail Modelers of Washington DC [N-scale] and Washington DC Z-Bend



groups. I had a chance to talk to one of the Z guys who ran a Pennsy 100-car coal train with 3 SDs on point. [Okay, 2 SD-40s and an SD-9]. This ran well enough. I was impressed. A good deal of their scenery was comprised of Micron Art photo-etched buildings.

### What about 1:1 trains?

Well, as luck would have it, they ran when I did, but Mark reported an All-Canadian freight going by on Friday, as well as numerous other trains. Saturday had several coal and mixed freight trains plus an auto rack train of over 50 cars. They must have been empty

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because I'd swear the head end was only a couple of smaller SD-40-sized locos. [It sped by and I was barely able to get out of the ambulance bay in time to see them.] On Sunday we saw the Capitol Limited heading west with a business car looking like a freshly shopped Pennsy car. Some of the 1:1 track work was surprisingly nasty from the rocking motion it imparted on a mixed freight we saw go by. It would have been an action item for the rail joiner crew in 1:160 world.

I think all who attended from the crowd enjoyed the show and for us at BANTRAK, it had the relaxed, good time feeling we've had at Sykesville and "Bedford I".



Skip railfanning an autorack train



Alan shoots the west-bound Capital Limited



FRA Safety Car



Picture Credits go to Tim Nixon and Mark Bandy



## SPIKES AND SLEEPERS

## NEWS FROM M.B. KLEIN

## New Location Update

Our Gay Street store is now closed permanently. We will open in Cockeysville approximately June 23rd, 2007. Our website is now fully operational and you will be able to place orders on our website during this time.

## Picnic News

Hey Guys and Gals, I have not heard from very many of you concerning your attendance at the BANTRAK Picnic. I must ask you again to let me know whether or not you are coming, bringing a spouse or a guest, and if you plan to bring a dish, desert or soft drinks

As you can imagine, organizing this picnic entails a lot of work, especially for Elaine, so please let me know ASAP about your plans.

Thanks

**John**

## COMING EVENTS

1. **BANTRAK Picnic—Saturday, June 23rd @ John Darlington's 1PM to 5PM (A Club Meeting will be held)**
2. **Scale Show @ Timonium Fairground Saturday and Sunday, June 23rd and 24th.**

*The BANTRAK Newsletter is the official publication of the Baltimore Area N-Trak Club.*

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We are on the Web! Try "BANTRAK.NET"

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