



The Engineer's Cab: John Hale

Bob had some personal things that came up this month, so I am stepping in to provide the update. First I want to say that we lost a true friend to Bantrak this past month, Debbie DelGaudio, Alan's wife of 38 years passed away. Many of the Bantrak picnics were held in their house and yard, and as someone who helped Alan with the construction of his home layout, her support for Alan, the hobby, and the club was unwavering. Words can not soothe the pain, but our thoughts go out to Alan and his family.

My model railroading has been all over the place this month. After some discussions with our resident double stack expert, John Hasson, I took the plunge and bought my first couple of sets of Gunderson well cars. I really want to model an intermodal yard as a module set, but I have run out of transport room.

I have made a lot of progress on the new lift bridge. My hope is to have it at Altoona ready to be part of the layout. The new bridge will feature a power interlock, so when the bridge is up, power to the tracks will be disconnected. This feature will work with either DCC or DC track power, but does require the brown line to be powered up.

I will be hosting our annual Bantrak picnic this year at my house. That event will be on July 20th at 1pm, with our business meeting to start at 2pmish. I will send out an email reminder closer to the event to get a headcount.

Bantrak Picnic:

John Hale's House
9244 Sewall Ave
Laurel, MD 20723

After that our next event will be the Altoona show on Sept 20 and 21. We will be making our way up on Friday, Sept. 19th. Martin is coordinating that event and has already sent out a first call for modules. After that is another show in Timonium in October.

Take some time, knock out a small project and keep moving forward down the tracks!

John



Bantrak Ediquettee: John Hale

Over the last year, we have added some new members, so club leadership wanted to communicate some of our clubs' "norms", and "expectations". As a club we have few hard rules, but we do have some behavior that club members are just expected to adhere to.

Our club meets regularly, usually once a month on the third Sunday of a month, although based on schedule, holidays, and calendars sometimes meetings will be moved/rescheduled. We usually meet at members' homes or at setups during shows, and we encourage members to attend each meeting either virtually or in person. We strive to have a zoom link available for meetings that are not held at a show. These meetings are where we provide feedback and updates on previous setups and or club projects. These meetings are also where we plan upcoming setups and meetings, and discuss and vote on the expenditure of club funds, and projects, etc. At the meetings we follow "Robert's Rules of Order" (search online if you do not know how that works). All members' opinions and votes are equal, so please participate. Meetings are a great way to get to know other members on a one-on-one basis.

Our club has a setup schedule that consists of several known shows and venues that we have cultivated over time. We are currently alternating between running NTRAK based layouts and running Free-moN based layouts at various shows throughout the year. We also run T-Trak layouts at most of our shows and there is at least one additional show where we only run T-Trak

This is this year's current schedule for shows:

- Great Scale Train Show Feb.1 to Feb.2, 2025 (Free-moN and T-Trak)
- Great Scale Train Show May 3 to May 4, 2025

(NTrak and T-Trak)

- N Scale Weekend Altoona, PA. Sep. 20 to Sep. 21, 2025 (planned) (NTrak)
- Great Scale Train Show Oct 4 to Oct. 5, 2025 (planned) (Free-moN and T-Trak)
- Roland Place Dec. 6th (estimated date, planned) (T-Trak)
- B&O Museum Dec. 18 to Dec. 31, 2025 (estimated dates, planned) (NTrak)

As you can see, we try to provide a variety of options for club members to participate and run trains.

Regarding setups, for each of these events, we have club members who volunteer to serve as the coordinator for a layout at a given show. For a show where we are setting up two layouts, we will have two coordinators. Those coordinators poll members to bring modules for a given setup. In addition, the coordinators serve as an interface between the club and the venue. Setup of layouts at shows is a coordinated effort between members participating with and without modules. Show coordinators typically give general directions during the set up and breakdown of layouts. Simply stated, "If you find yourself in need of something to do, ask the coordinator and he/she can point you in the right direction."

The show coordinator is also responsible for managing the run schedule for members to run trains at a given setup/show. The time blocks, number of runners, and sign up and management process the coordinator uses is determined by the coordinator. In simple terms, the coordinator oversees Bantrak's presence at a given setup/show. Most coordinators give the priority to sign up for run slots to module owners that are participating in the setup/show, members who help during setup/breakdown are usually prioritized next, then other club members fill in



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slots that are still available. This is not a hard rule and the coordinator has the discretion to change this process to support the needs of a given setup/show. This is a form of “sweat equity” in that those that participate the most, are given priority in choosing run slots.

Run Etiquette.... There are several unwritten rules that our club follows that makes use of our layouts at a given setup/show run smoothly. Do not assume anything but always feel free to ask the coordinator or a club officer.

- In the case of T-Trak, contact the show coordinator and verify a given run slot is available. When you show up for your slot, discuss with those running on the layout what line and direction you should run and verify that it's OK for you to setup and run and that you are not going to interfere with an existing runner.
- In the case of Free-moN, contact the show coordinator and verify a given run slot is available when you show up for your slot, discuss with those running on the layout where you can set up and how you should run. In general, Free-moN adheres to “Right Hand” running, so for double track sections, try to run on the right-hand side of the layout when looking forward on your train. For single track sections, verbally coordinate the management of a given single-track section to prevent a collision; the coordinators try to provide passing sidings for this management.
- In the case of NTrak, contact the show coordinator and verify a given run slot is available when you show up for your slot, discuss with those running on your designated line where/when you can set up and how you should run. In general, NTrak red line runs counter clockwise, yellow line runs clockwise, and blue line runs counter clockwise, but based on a layout those directions may not be adhered to. Coordinate

with the existing runners of your designated line when you are ready to take control of a given line, do not expect this to happen early, but coordinate this change of control verbally. When you sign up for a given run slot on a given line, you are responsible for all trains running on that line. You are more than welcome to share the line, but the primary person is responsible and makes that decision. You are responsible for pulling your trains off the mainline and off the layout at the end of your designated run slot. Once again verbally coordinate this with whomever is taking over for you on that given line.

Bantrak's mission is to spread the word of N-scale model railroading to the public and to show off the work and skill of our members. Remember that when the public approaches a Bantrak layout, they will expect to see a train running as they explore the layout, so it is important that if you sign up for a run slot that you show up 15-30 minutes early and be prepared to run at least one train for the entire run slot. A run slot is your opportunity to enjoy your trains, but also show off your most recent purchase, or that amazing piece of custom equipment you have made.

If you provided a module or filled a run slot on a given layout, you are expected to be present and participate in tear down and clean up. If you cannot, ensure you communicate that with the show coordinator. Newer members may not know what to do or where to pack club property during tear down and cleanup, ask questions, we were all new at one point, and we all had to learn the process.

Other activities you can take part in are work sessions. These are often hosted at a member's home and involve working on a club module,

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project or another member's module. In recent years, as we built up our Free-moN modules, we had work sessions to help members build out their modules. A couple of years ago the club acquired a set of modules built by a former Bantrak member. This year we have been having work sessions to get these modules ready to show as well as to store in the trailer. These work sessions are the best way to get to know other members. They are also an outstanding way to learn the tricks and trades of model railroading. At these work sessions, you can learn about track work, wiring, and scenery of all types.

John Hale



Con Cor Gon Truck Swap Instructions: Ed Kapuscinski

A quick how to for when you need to update your old Con Cor Gondola couplers

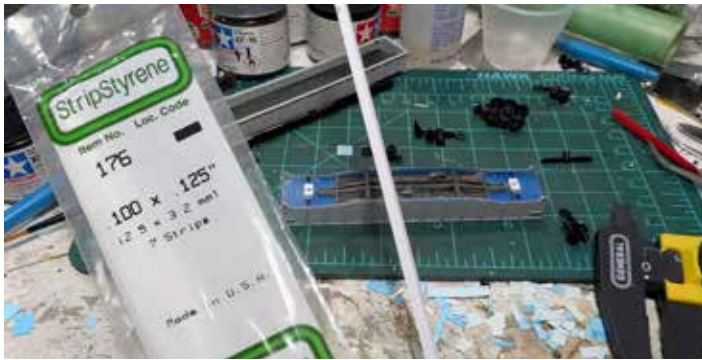
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Step 1. Remove the old trucks and bolsters with a saw or blade.

Step 2. Measure a .020 piece of .100x.125 styrene.

Step 3. Drill 5/64 holes in the center of each piece of styrene.

Step 4. Cut off the styrene pieces.



Step 5. Install the styrene and glue it in with your adhesive of choice.



Step 6. Install the truck with an MTL bolster pin.



Step 7 place on track and run.





BANTRAK 2025 Calendar

August 06, 2025

Newsletter content deadline

We need content, please submit your articles by the deadline.

July 20, 2025

Club Picnic & Meeting

Location: John Hale's house.

9244 Sewall Ave

Laurel, MD 20723

August 17, 2025

Club meeting / Fieldtrip:

Location: Baltimore Streetcar museum.

901 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211

September 20 & 21st, 2025

Altoona N-Scale Weekend

Blair County Convention Center

1 Convention Center Drive,

Altoona, PA 16602

Coordinator: Martin Myers

October 25 & 26th, 2025

Great Scale Show

Timonium Fairgrounds

Setup is Friday October 24th

Coordinator: Tim Nixon

BANTRAK Membership: Eric Payne

BANTRAK does a significant amount of charitable activity, although we rarely think of it that way because we get pleasure out of it. When you think about it, that is as it should be with all giving from the heart.

What is our charitable activity? Our major participation is in the B&O Museum's (which is a charitable organization) Annual Festival of Trains. Our display has been a major draw for people to come to the Museum for many years, both recent and in the past. There are plenty more examples, this is just one.

Please contact Treasurer [Tim Nixon](#) for more information regarding your membership status and roster questions or contact [Eric Payne](#) with general questions.

Member Benefits:

- Sharing of your knowledge (railroading and modeling) with others of similar interests
- Access to railroading and modeling knowledge of other members
- National exposure and recognition of your endeavors in modeling
- Hands-on activities: Club modules - track, wiring and scenery. Raffle layout - track and scenery Members' layouts
- Recognition as being part of a Nationally known club.

Train Spotting: David Betz



San Francisco

BANTRAK was founded in 1983 as the Greater Baltimore N-Scale Associates. Begun as a “round robin” group to share skills and experiences, we have expanded our focus to include participation in many diverse activities to promote model railroading in general and N-Scale model railroading in particular. Activities include participation in local, regional and national shows, meets and conventions. BANTRAK membership includes membership in the national NTRAK organization.

The BANTRAK Newsletter is the official publication of Baltimore Area N-TRAK (BANTRAK), Inc. This is **your** newsletter! Please send articles, photos, and suggestions to newsletter@bantrak.net
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