

BANTRAK News

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The Engineer's Cab: Chris Quinlan

Happy September, BANTRAKers, and welcome to autumn! This is a big month for us with our Altoona show. Thanks to Martin for getting us organized to have an absolute blast. We'll also be pushing our club car project into the final stages. Thanks to Bob, Ethan, and Dave for working hard on initiative and everyone who hung out after our last business meeting cleaning up cars and preparing kits. Who would have thought 10 years ago that we would be printing our own models?! It's amazing.

Last month, I mentioned I was readdressing some old projects I had done when I wasn't as skilled as I am now. I'm still plugging away at those projects. Like my amazement with the previously mentioned printing technology, I'm impressed at how far I've come since I started painting, decaling, and kitbashing my own models 25 years ago. I have a testimony of how perseverance pays off. The road was bumpy often, and I know there are still bumps ahead, but my progress is satisfying. Also, the bumps have been blessings. I have learned from them, and they've made me a better modeler despite the discouragement I felt then.

Lao Tzu penned, "Failure is the foundation of success and the means by which it is achieved." If you are trying to develop a skill and it's slow going, keep doing it. You'll get there, and the satisfaction is rewarding. If you need help getting started, ask someone with the desired skill to teach you. I can't think of anyone in the club who wouldn't be delighted to help you. When I was 13, two guys from my club in New Mexico taught me to paint, decal, and kitbash. Buzz Leander and Doug Gary. I still talk to them frequently to this day. The skills they taught me are still what I do to relieve stress at the end of the day, and thus, an essential part of my life all these years later.

Happy modeling! See you soon!
Chris



Buzz, Donovan, and me.
Friendships created in this hobby can last a lifetime and transcend ages.



Donovan and me in front of the Union Pacific's Frontier Days Train in Wyoming in 2015.



A DD40X!



ABA UP E8s!

How to Apply Decals: Chris Quinlan

This will be a step-by-step instruction on how to apply decals to your models. For me, this is one of the hobby's most enjoyable and rewarding aspects. Decaling is easy and straightforward but takes a little patience and some practice. A lot of people, including myself, are initially intimidated by this part of the hobby. It takes time to perfect this art, but you'll find your efforts and time invested are well worth the result. There is nothing more satisfying than running something you made yourself. The directions below are what work for me. Everyone has their own style and preferences.

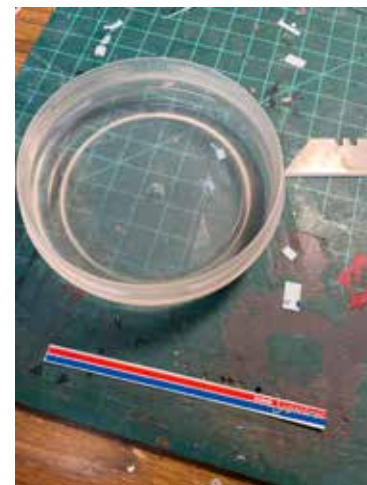
Supplies needed:

- Two paint brushes
- Razor blades
- Toothpicks
- Q-tips
- Paper towels
- Warm water
- Microscale Microset (known as the blue bottle)
- Microscale Microsol (known as the red bottle)
- Gloss coat, semi-gloss coat, and/or dull coat sealant
- Magnifying lenses depending on your age and/or the size of your decals

Step 1: Ensure the model you are decaling is painted and then has a coat of gloss coat. The glossier, the better. A glossy surface helps the decal adhere and conform better to the face. Ensure the gloss coat has completely dried before starting decal work on your model. Each gloss brand is different, so read the bottle. As a rule of thumb for myself, I let it set overnight or for eight hours.

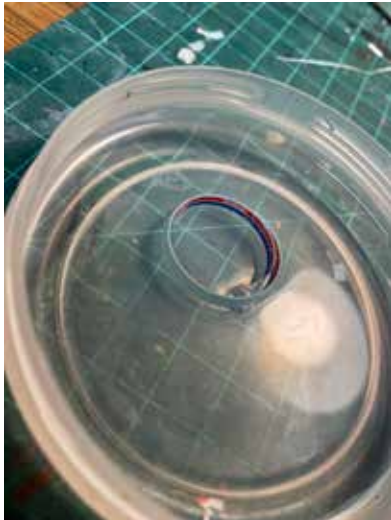


Step 2: Cut your decal out with your razor blade. There is usually a small amount of clear border (called film) around the graphic portion of the decal. Keep that clear portion if possible.



How to Apply Decals: Chris Quinlan

Step 3: Put your decal in your warm water. It will probably curl up. Leave it in the water for about 60 seconds or until it can easily slide off the backing paper.



Step 4: While your decal is in the water, apply your Microset to the part of the model where you want to place your decal. Microset will help remove air from under the decal and prepare it to conform/stick to the surface by softening its material.

Step 5: Carefully remove the decal from the water with your toothpicks and slide it onto the model in the desired location. You can dab it up with your tissues if there is too much water and/or Microset. After the decal is in place, cover it with Microset again. It may start to wrinkle. This is fine. That's the Microset doing its work to make your decal look good! You can use your brush to make it a little smoother if you want; I usually do. Let this completely dry before moving to the next step. You can repeat this a few times if you want. I usually do it two or three times.



Note the decal has become wrinkly. This is okay!β



How to Apply Decals: Chris Quinlan

It's hard to tell in the last photo but in the orange square, there is a batten stripe under the top, white pinstripe. Microset has allowed the decal to conform mostly to the surface of this Superliner, but not perfectly. In step 6, this will be addressed with Microset. What's a batten strip you might ask? I didn't know until a few years ago. Haha! It may be hard to see, but there is a strip of metal under the white pinstripe and the top of the red stripe that holds two pieces of sheet metal together.



The batten strip is between the two wavy lines.

Step 6: After your Microset has completely dried, you'll notice your decal is hugging the surface of your model, but there might still be parts that are not completely adhering to the model, especially if you are working on a non-smooth surface (like fluting or panels). This is when you will apply Microsol. Microsol is much more invasive and stronger than Microset and will help the decal conform more closely to the model. It will basically "dissolve" the film and only leave the decal (which is pretty much just paint). Your decal may wrinkle significantly, but this is okay. It will smooth out after a while. Again, you can use your paintbrush to help smooth it out a little bit, but you have to be careful because now your decal can easily stretch and get skewed. You might need to repeat this step a few times. After the Microset has had some time to work on the decal, I use a wet paper towel and press

down carefully with my finger if there are still excessive wrinkles. This helps the decal conform to the surface even better. In the Superliner example, the batten strip is now perfectly conformed to.



Step 7: After the Microset has completely dried and you are happy with all your decal work, it's time to seal your decals with gloss, semi-gloss, or dull coat. This keeps the decals fresh and prevents them from yellowing from age over time. Using a semi-gloss or dull coat will mask the little decal film left and give your model a cleaner look. Be careful when spraying this, especially if you do it from a can. Too much will cause buildup and irregularities in the surface and finish. I would practice on a test car a few times.

Conclusion: If you ever need any help doing decals, I'm happy to have a work session with you. It's a lot of fun and a great modeling skill to have! Reach out if you have any questions!

BANTRAK 2023 Calendar

October 06, 2023

Newsletter content deadline

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

September 18-19, 2023

NScale Weekend

Blair County Convention Center

Altoona PA.

Cordinator:Martin Myers

October 14-15, 2023

Great Scale Show

Location: Timonium Fairgrounds

Cordinator:Tim Nixon

BANTRAK Membership: Al Palewicz

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 [Al Palewicz](#) 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



East Broad Top 2023

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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