

BANTRAK News

A Monthly Newsletter for BANTRAK Members • Volume 37 • Issue 05 • May 2024



The Engineer's Cab: Bob Bunge

We can call the April, 2024 Great Scale show a wrap! I know that John and I had a grand time running trains and showing off the great work that Bantrak does. I thought setting up a single, large, Ntrak layout was a nice change of pace from recent shows. The layout at the show was fun since a number of modules that we haven't seen in a while were out, including the harbor scene and Tim Nixon's circus.

An experiment tried at the February show was that Paul Dilly set up his Horseshoe Curve modules and over the course of the show about a half dozen club members helped him to relay all the track and solder up butt joints. This joint effort not only allowed club members to get some experience in track laying, and let Paul get a lot done in a short period of time, but also allowed the public to see how we work on our modules. I know I answered several questions from guests as I was soldering up track.

It all played out with the Curve set up at this past show and running like a champ. If you have a module(s) that could use some work and perhaps don't have time or space to work on them, let's explore this model of club work sessions at Great Scale shows. This could also work if you have a new module that is ready for track, wiring, scenery, etc. This applies to modules of all types.

On Sunday, a number of members explored the show to look at how other clubs have constructed lift bridges. John Hale led a long technical discussion that gathered our requirements and explored construction options. Looking forward to seeing what John comes up with.

Our next Bantrak layout will be at the National Convention in Bethlehem, Pa, June 19-22nd. At least three club corners went home with members to get spruced up prior to this event. Let a club officer know if you are interested in taking home a club module. Many of them could use a good dusting, touched up of scenery, and paint.

The Bob Mohr city modules were recently moved to Eric Payne's house. Last year, the club rescued these modules that had been incorporated into Bob's home layout. As I write this, my 3D printer is buzzing away making leg sockets for them so they can get stood up and be worked on. Come and see these modules and get engaged in making plans for them at the next meeting, to be held at Eric's house, May 19th at 2pm. Eric's address is 619 Elizabeth Rd., Glen Burnie, MD.

Cheers,

Bob

P.S: Cathy, myself and our golden retriever Declan had an amazing experience in Sandusky, Ohio, observing the total eclipse of the Sun. Here I am projecting an image of the partially eclipsed Sun using a 6-inch telescope I built in the early 1980's to a group of hotel visitors and nearby restaurant employees.



Timonium Show Report: Paul Diley

I arrived early on Friday, unloaded my truck while Martin arrived with the trailer. Others started to show up and we had the trailer unloaded by 11:30 and Martin was able to pull the trailer out and park it by the loading dock. Set up started smoothly. LeRoy brought the entire harbor scene, I set up my Horseshoe Curve and Tim brought his circus to make the largest N-trak layout we have had in a long time. Everything was clamped by 1:45 and people started to install joiners, connect wires and other details. Tim showed John Hale how to install the electronics, Bob set up the test track.

DCC was finished and tested at 4:45 with everyone leaving by 5:15!

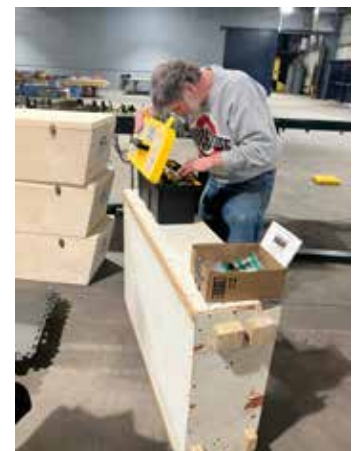
The new Horseshoe Curve track worked very well. It was a club effort at the last show with at least five different people helping to lay track, and solder the track to the butt joints. Between shows, I added many trees and started to put down ballast. I hope to finish this before setting up the curve at the National Convention in Bethlehem.

The layout ran well, but there were some trouble spots, like the lift bridge. Sunday, John Hale took a group around to look at other lift bridges and by Sunday afternoon there was a good planning session talking about how a new bridge could be built that would be easier to install.

It was great to see everyone out running trains, showing the public what we do and answering questions, and just having fun.

Tear down started at 3:30. We had the trailer loaded and ready to go out the door by 6pm.

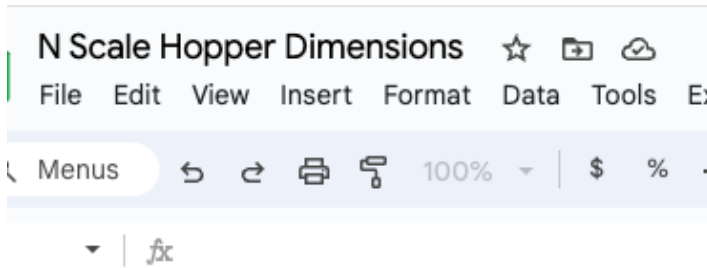
Paul



3D PRINTABLE N SCALE COAL LOADS: Ed Kapuscinski

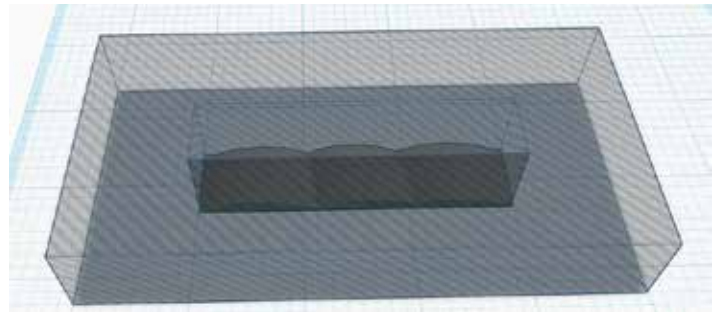
A discussion of coal loads on The Railwire prompted me to think about a smart way to easily create them for my hopper fleet. Because it's 2024, of course I turned to 3D printing. Here's what I did and how you can do the same thing. I started with an Atlas 90 Ton Hopper (a terribly named model, since the prototype is actually a 100T car, but I digress).

First I measured up the inside of the hopper using my calipers and recorded the internal dimensions. I've stored them, and the other cars that I've done in a [Google Drive spreadsheet](#), available [here](#).



A	B	
Car	Inner Length	Inner W
Atlas 90 Ton	3.28"	.64"
Atlas 2 Bay Offset Side	2.40"	.64"
Micro-Trains Offset Side Twin	2.41"	.68"
Bluford Rib Side Twin	2.22"	.69"
Bluford Offset Side Twin	2.40"	.64"
Athearn / MDC Triple	2.95"	.64"

With those dimensions in hand, I headed over to Tinkercad to draw up both some loads and a useful device for covering them in coal. The loads are straight forward. I simply use a combination of parabolas and "mountains" to create a variety of coal lumps to fit inside the dimensions of a hopper, then draw a box with the inner dimensions of the hopper body to "cut" around them (like a cookie cutter).



Tinkercad isn't good at providing a "coal texture", so covering the loads in real coal was going to be required. When I did this type of thing before I would just put the load in a car (maybe with some cling wrap to protect the car), paint it with glue and paint, and then sprinkle on coal. I figured I could design something to make that job far easier and less messy while eliminating the chance for damage to the cars. I settled on a "box" sized to fit the load with an open bottom and sloped sides. I use Ultimaker Cura as a slicer when preparing objects for printing and enlarge the boxes 1% before slicing to provide a little clearance for the loads to drop in.



3D PRINTABLE N SCALE COAL LOADS: Ed Kapuscinski

With the loads and “loader” printed, I paint the load with a mix of white glue and black paint



and place it into the loader then sprinkle coal on top. I give it a minute or two to “tack up” then dump the remaining coal for future use.



Then, thanks to the generous open area on the bottom you can pop them out and let them dry. Easy-peasy.

So, now you may be looking for the files. The existing ones, along with new ones will be added to this [Tinkercad collection](#). but here are the individual ones I have so far:

- [Atlas 2 Bay Offset Side Twin Hopper Loads](#)
- [Walthers Ballast Hopper Load](#)
- [Athearn/MDC 70T Triple Hopper Loads](#)
- [Atlas 90T Hopper Loads](#)



BANTRAK 2024 Calendar

June 06, 2024

Newsletter content deadline

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

May 19, 2024

Club Meeting 2:PM

Location: Eric Payne's house,

619 Elizabeth Rd

Glen Burnie, MD 21061

June 18-23 2024

N Scale Convention

77 Wind Creek Bethlehem

Bethlehem, PA 18015

Coordinator: Paul Diley

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: Ed Kapuscinski



Martin State

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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