

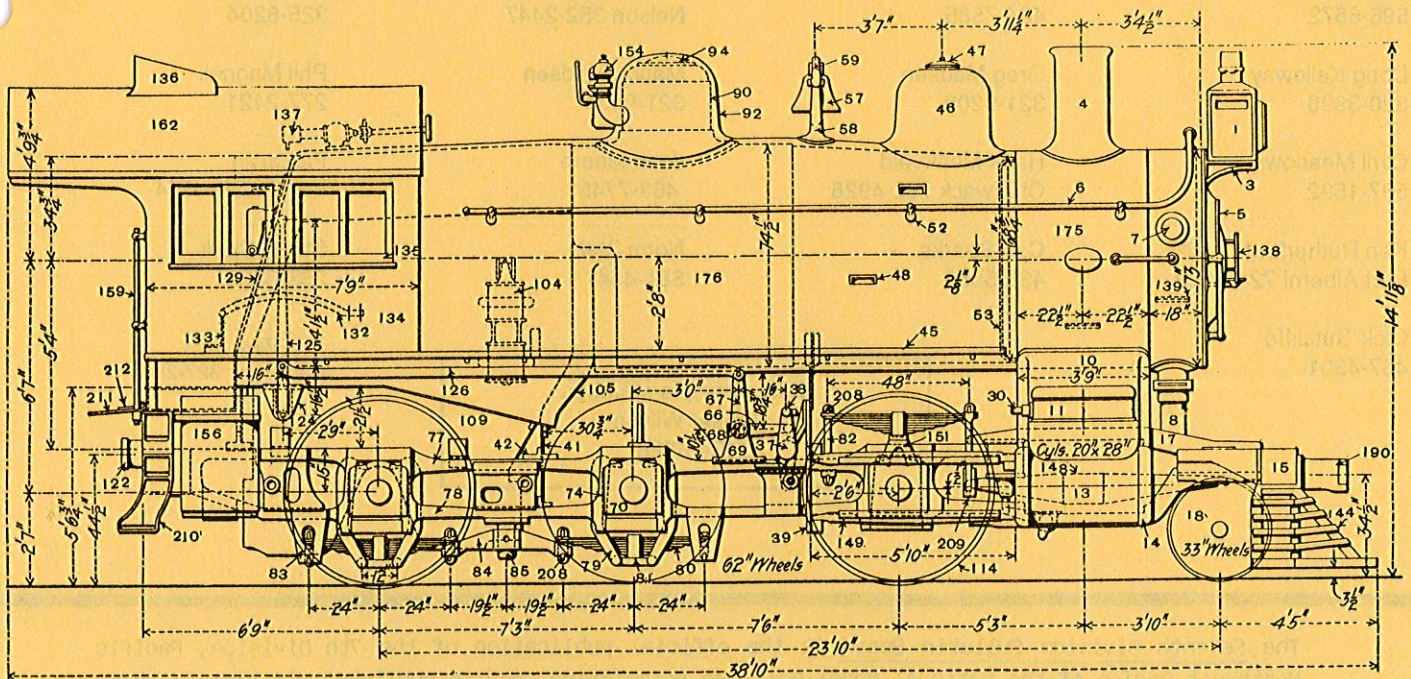
7th Division



BULLETIN BOARD

Published by the Seventh Division, Pacific Northwest Region, National Model Railroad Association.

Steam Spectacular!



Oakridge Auditorium

December 14

NOVEMBER 1986

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The Seventh Division Bulletin Board is the official publication of the 7th Division, Pacific Northwest Region of the National Model Railroad Association, and is published six times a year. It is distributed to all members in good standing.

The Bulletin Board is solely the responsibility of the editors, and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Standing Committee, or the organization's policies.

Correspondence and contributions are solicited, and may be sent to: The Editor 7th Div. Bulletin Board, 9300 Ryan Crescent, Richmond, B.C. V7A 2H2. All other correspondence relating to the 7th Division should be forwarded to the Division Superintendent.

EDITOR PHIL MAGNALL

Everything you ever wanted to know about Steam...

December's Second Sunday Workshop has been dubbed the Steam Spectacular. We'll be learning just how a steam locomotive works, seeing some slides and/or movies of the machines in action, and talking about the kinds of engines used for different jobs on the railway, plus the names of all those wheel arrangements from Mogul to Big Boy. After this one you should be able to hold your own with all the self-styled experts at model railroader events! Oakridge Auditorium, as usual, at 1 PM, December 14.

What's wrong with the NMRA? part 2

Last month, I suggested that some of the commonly cited reasons for the declining popularity of the NMRA were, in fact, symptoms of underlying changes in attitudes and technology. If that is an accurate assessment, one might well ask if there is any hope for the long term survival of the organization. I feel there is, but that, sooner or later, the membership is going to have to act to bring the NMRA into the contemporary world, otherwise it will likely degenerate into a contest modellers' "SIG". And just what am I proposing we do? Let's look at the areas previously considered:

Politics: I would be extremely surprised if anyone could justify the number of "brass hats" in today's NMRA. Granted that many give, or have given, generously of their time for the enjoyment of others, do we really need a president, executive vice-president, six regional vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, eight departmental chairmen, seventeen regional trustees, and seventeen sets of assistant supers, treasurers, office managers, and secretaries? Considering that when you get down to it, even national conventions are organized largely at the divisional level, one has to wonder why so many people - some of whom we give nice perks like air fare to conventions - are necessary in the upper echelons. Aside from the fact that the positions are occasionally filled by people whose motives may be unclear, or even questionable, their numbers suggest that we are rather top-heavy. I feel that too much attention and money are directed to Chattanooga for the amount of work the NMRA can practically do for the bulk of its members.

Take a look at the list of benefits *Bulletin* editor Mike Carlson lists in the November 1986 issue of that publication. Of the 25 listed, three (voting, attending meetings, and running for office) are standard with just about any membership, and are means to an end, not benefits in themselves. At least four have a very narrow range of appeal or practical use; two (access to layout tape/slide programs and clinic tape/slide programs) are virtually the same thing; and five are regular *Bulletin* functions. Of the remainder, most are rights to spend more money or one-shot benefits. The most worthwhile are those arising from local shows and contests and from Special Interest Groups. There seems to be a lot of smoke generated when you try to nail down what the national level does. I see the glossy, colour-covered *Bulletin* as an awkward attempt to provide an answer.

Fragmentation of interest: What the NMRA used to do, and did very well, was set standards. Unfortunately, there aren't many left that need setting, but the bureaucracy stays as healthy as ever, nonetheless. There are few causes that I could see providing a worthwhile focus now that everyone's interests and specialties are so diverse. One that does come to mind would be a comprehensive product reviewing council that would test and rate new, and popular existing, model railroad products. The *Bulletin* could become a sort of hobbyist's *Consumer Reports*, with the council assigning some sort of "seal of approval" to items which passed muster. Now that would be of benefit to everyone, since products for every scale could be examined in each issue. New model railroaders could be advised to look for the NMRA seal in order to avoid buying the junk that presently turns many people away from the hobby.

Whether, in fact, the concept is legally or practically feasible, I don't know. If not, I'm open to suggestions for some reason to keep the current size of infrastructure, other than fulfilling the ambitions of frustrated would-be politicians.

Social changes: There is no way that one microscopic section of society is going to reverse the trend toward reservation when it comes to strangers and the reluctance to feel part of a nationwide "brotherhood" just because one has joined an organization. We are going to have to adapt to social changes that cramp the "old" NMRA

style rather than fight them. This is not to say that children and spouses are excluded now, but it has long been quite common to find that Dad is the only model train buff in the household, his obsession accepted as the lesser evil compared to swilling beer and chasing women. As I remarked last time, that seems to be changing with newer recruits to the hobby. A Saturday trip to the hobby store is - speaking from my own observations - often a family affair today, with the kids allowed to select a new freight car, and Mom discussing the merits of buying another locomotive with Dad. This kind of involvement should be encouraged to a greater degree through NMRA events. With all due respect to the sincere efforts of those behind the "Railette" program, I don't believe I know anyone who wants to be known as a "Railette". Craft competitions for wives attending conventions measure oil paintings and ceramic dolls against Easter eggs and needlepoint; hardly a credible contest for serious hobbyists, I would think. Let's look instead for ways to encourage family involvement at all levels of NMRA functions: activity rooms with things like Faller P-Trains for youngsters; workshops where interested wives and older children can learn to make trees or a small building for the home layout; railfan outings that double as family picnics; "family night" layout tours; and door prizes selected for, and awarded to, wives and kids. There is no reason why brief "rules of conduct" for little folk (and probably for some big folk you know!) can't be printed up in friendly language and passed out to parents to calm the fears of tour hosts and show exhibitors who aren't used to children. Well-behaved kids can not only be a delight, they are the people we have to encourage if the hobby is going to prosper in years to come.

The common thread to these comments is that more attention must be paid to the grass-roots level of the NMRA. We tend to forget that that is where the bulk of activity takes place, and that research time with the "library resources" is not what most people are joining for. If the NMRA cannot find a new unifying cause, its upper echelons should be seriously reduced, along with the associated spending. The *Bulletin* should stop trying to compete with the commercial press, and stick to NMRA news: convention reports and ideas, selected SIG newsletter articles, contest winners, coming events, and the necessary housekeeping items. Let's put more of the money we pay back into regional and divisional hands, and leave Chattanooga to act as record-keeper, information clearinghouse, and co-ordinator. That done, we could choose either to lower dues or provide more tangible member services and free shows. In some areas, perhaps even a divisional headquarters with a library or workshop would be practical.

If we really want such changes, or ones like them, we cannot wait for the bureaucracy to make them, because it never will. We will need letters to the *Bulletin*, petitions, and presentations at BoT meetings and AGMs. And we will need to do what we can on our own, in our division, to prove that a new approach can succeed.

Since Brian Rudko and I took over production of this newsletter, our names have always appeared at the bottom of page one as editors, but we have not yet taken the time to recognize the generous help we have received from others during that period, especially with the tedious chores of collating, stapling, folding, stuffing, labelling, and sealing required for over 200 subscribers. Most "consistent assistant" honours go to **Scott Calvert**, who also spent several hours on paste-up in the pre-computer era. Others who have regularly or occasionally helped out are: **Wayne Sutton, John Fysh, Margo Calvert, Brian Morgan, and John Green**. The entire membership owes these volunteers a tip of the hat for ensuring the *BB* arrives six times a year.

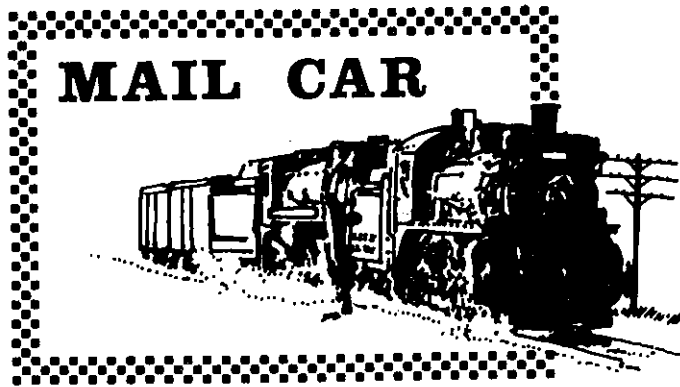
Phil

Oops Department

A couple of errors crept in to the last issue, but as your editor was required to produce the entire thing on his own, he is not very penitent. Apologies to anyone who tried to reach Cyril Meadows at the number cited on pages 2 and 9; two digits were transposed. The number on page one is, and was, correct.

Also, in Brian Morgan's reliable operation article, an extra zero was appended to the wattage of the soldering iron he recommended. 300 watts is probably more suitable for full-size track; try 30 for model work.

Such problems would, of course, be (ahem) easier to avoid if this whole publication didn't have to get hammered out in a few hours on a rented MacIntosh. PLEASE, if you have a Mac at home or in the office that we could use for a short time every once in a while, we would be very grateful for your help.



Editors
9300 Ryan Crescent
Richmond, B.C.
V7A 2H2

Dear Sir:

The cover on the October issue is priceless.

Sincerely,
Ken Haun

Why, thank you, Ken. Actually, I kinda liked September's, but no one wrote me about that one. - Phil

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

A very successful mall show was held at Oakridge Centre on October 17, 18, and 19. Three operating N scale layouts were featured, along with a commercial display from Van Hobbies and a PNR/NMRA advertising booth. Special thanks are due to the new "Train Gang" group here in Vancouver, the Dewdney-Allouette bunch, and Bob Millar, who along with Cyril Meadows arranged the set-up and manning of the show. Some interest was expressed for a repeat at other locations. Well done, guys!

Also on the same weekend, the 8th Annual Pacific Northwest Narrow Gaugers meet was held in Coquitlam. About 80 people attended, the furthest away being one from Bufton, Alberta and four from Eugene, Oregon. There were many models displayed, including three O scale sawmills. Four clinics were presented: Trees, by Tom Beaton; Casting Parts from Homemade Molds, by Cyril Meadows; Cutting Scale Lumber, by myself; and a tape/slide clinic on Flume Logging by Ken Schmelzer. 38 people attended the dinner, which was followed by several layout visits.

The Cameron Road show, held November 19, was an outstanding success, with over 1100 people in attendance. Many fine displays, both model rail and commercial, were in evidence, and a good time was had by all. Many thanks to all who participated (and especially Bente and Henny!).

Enough for now; a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

Gordie

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NTRAK Corner Hank Menkveld

Our newly-formed group of NTRAK enthusiasts is off to a good start. Our first public showing of an 8' x 20' layout at Oakridge was a great success and generated requests from other shopping centres for a similar show. We will have to disappoint most of them, as there only seven days in a week and five of them are taken up with the fight for survival, or working for a living, as it is called.

Trains '86 saw us out at the Cameron Rec' Centre with a 14' x 20' layout. Again it was very well received by the general public. So well, in fact, that we walked away with the plaque for Most Popular Display. This proves once more that the public wants to see trains move. And that they did! Freights with as many as 47 cars operated flawlessly around the layout, met by a variety of passenger trains. Additional interest was created by switching operations in the service yard and around the mine.

Thanks to our success, several people have shown interest in building a module and becoming part of the ever-growing family of NTRAK operators.

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Cameron Show a Hit

As noted elsewhere in this issue, the Trains 86 show at Cameron Recreation Centre in Burnaby was a tremendous success, due in large part, we suspect, to a terrific plug by CBC weatherman Phil Reimer the preceding Thursday. The traffic was so busy around the ticket table that counting of heads stopped for some time at one end, thus, a final tally is not known, but estimates were as high as 1400. By comparison, Trains '85 drew something over 600.

The Most Popular Model award went to Gordon Varney for his excellent O sawmill, while the Train Gang's NTRAK layout had nearly four times the votes of any other competitor in the Most Popular Display category. Phil Magnall's N scale Heisler and log cars made up the favourite train.

Special thanks should go out to organizer Cyril Meadows and publicity director Dick Sutcliffe for the efforts.

Towards Reliable Operation: 2

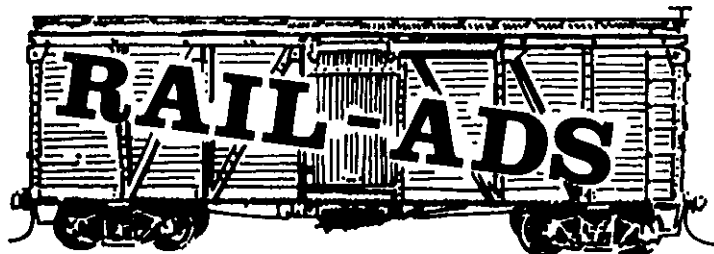
Brian Morgan

I use flex track on the entire layout, with the rail joints soldered and filed smooth. About every 6 to 9 feet, I leave an unsoldered joint for heat expansion. I normally solder the rail while it is straight to ensure smooth joints when the track is curved. While soldering track, I have found the use of *non-corrosive electrical soldering paste* to be a great help. Apply the paste to the rail to be soldered before the heat is applied, and it helps clean the joint and speed the flow of heat to the rails. **DO NOT** breathe the fumes while soldering, as they are toxic. **ALL** electrical connections to the track should be soldered. If a block has one or more unsoldered expansion joints, run separate wires to each section of track. *Never depend on unsoldered rail joiners for electrical conduction!* It goes without saying that all wiring on any layout should be soldered with all wire splices insulated. If they aren't, be prepared to live with short circuits, open circuits, and circuits with varying degrees of resistance.

I also use only one brand of freight car truck (two would be acceptable) as the characteristics vary from manufacturer to manufacturer. As with track, you generally get what you pay for. In N scale, the Cadillac of trucks has to be Kadee. As new cars are placed on the layout, they should be checked to see that they meet a minimum standard. Do the trucks roll freely? Does the car vibrate as it moves? Does it weigh enough? After the car passes, it could be marked as "good" by painting one or both of the bolster pins. (Coloured pins may also be useful in identifying the owners of cars if you ever get involved with interchanging them with other model railroaders, or pooling cars at conventions. If you belong to a "LUG" - a local unknown group - you should co-ordinate the colours used to avoid conflicts.)

Also, use some form of "bad order" markers to identify any rolling stock or track that causes repeated problems. Hopefully, these will motivate you to do the required maintenance, instead of ignoring it.

If you have used quality components, once your layout has been "tuned up", it will take a minimum amount of maintenance to keep it there. By paying attention to these simple but important details, your layout will operate and operate *reliably*.



Rates for Rail-Ads are \$1.00 per 20 words or portion thereof. Commercial rates on request. Send to: Rail-Ads, 9300 Ryan Crescent, Richmond, B.C., V7A 2H2. Make cheques payable to **7th Div. Bulletin Board**.

HO brass for sale:

Sunset/Samhonga Union Pacific 4-6-0 w/Van tender custom painted \$295.

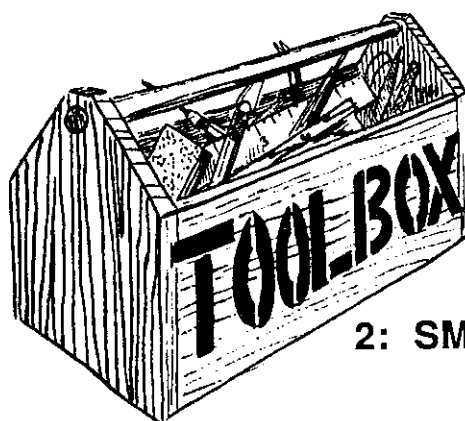
Fujuyama V&T club car unpainted \$65. Both TRO. Kalmbach books - scenery - wiring - trackplans - \$5 ea.

Mainline Modeller charter issue \$12.

CPR books - In Rockies - Hudsons - Jubilees - \$5 ea.

Roundhouse CPR reefer and PGE gondola kits \$7 ea.

Catalogues - Marklin - Roco - Fleischmann - \$1 to \$4 ea. 922-8171.



2: SMOOTHERS

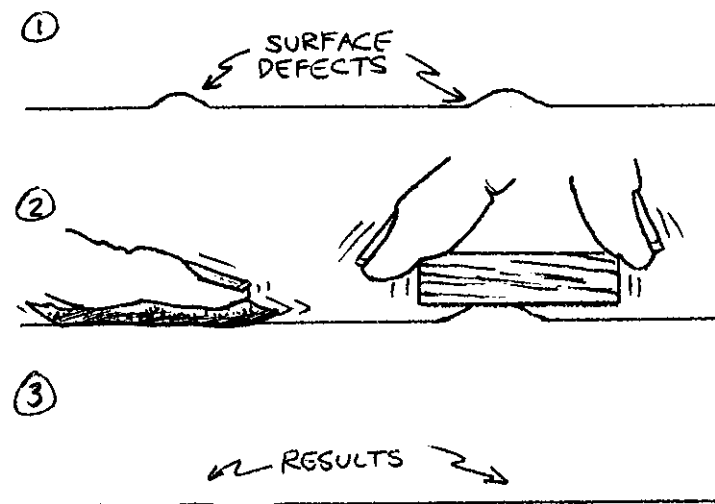
Once you've cut or sawn most materials into parts for a model, it is usually necessary to square up edges and trim lengths to make a perfect fit. If you are fortunate enough to own a disc sander, you can save yourself a lot of hand work, but most of us have to make do with what can fit on top of our work tables.

There are three basic kinds of sanding block which, with care, can most often make up for a lack of expensive power tools. All can easily be made at home, or with a few minutes assistance from a friend with a workshop. The first is a **sanding board**, made from a piece of glass or 1/4-inch Plexiglas. For most work, a surface about the size of this page works well. Using spray adhesive (brushed-on glues tend to

leave lumps), simply stick a piece of sandpaper to the glass, making sure it goes down smoothly and evenly. You may wish to have more than one board, each with different paper grades, but I find a 220 garnet paper is a good start. The sanding board is useful for sanding large or awkward items, such as bottoms of buildings that need just a little trueing up, or the edges of knife-cut sheet stock.

A **square block**, made by glueing paper to a trued block at least two or three inches in each dimension, makes sure that pieces are square. Holding your work firmly on the tabletop or surface plate (such as a piece of plate glass), slide the sanding side of the block across the end or side to be squared up, while making sure the plain wood side is also flat on the surface. A sizeable block can square up the most unusual shape quite easily. This is where a good table saw and/or disc sander can help. If you use good, dry wood and make it absolutely square, you can actually build entire cars and structures accurately using it as your only guide.

Finally, an assortment of **small sanding blocks**, made from scrap wood covered with fine paper such as 400 and 600 Wet-or-Dry are essential for finishing work. I usually have about a dozen floating around the hobby room, many made to special shapes and sizes as the need arises. NEVER use sandpaper "loose", or you'll get uneven results as shown below.



For dealing with metal or plastic, especially in tight confines and difficult angles, a set of **needle files** is a necessity. Actually, you can do almost anything with flat (preferably double-sided) and oval files if you want to save the cost of a complete set. Just beware that they are brittle, and will not withstand use as screwdrivers or prybars. (If you are dealing with more substantial metal parts in the larger scales, you may also want to get a few regular metalworking files.)

FULL STEAM TO EUGENE

1987 NMRA CONVENTION

JULY 28 - AUGUST 2, 1987

CONVENTION SCHEDULE....

Sunday night and Monday, July 26-27

NMRA Board meetings

Monday, July 27

Registration opens at noon

Pre-convention social (evening)

Tuesday, July 28

All-day extra fare trip to Portland, including Tri-Met light rail system and shops, Columbia Gorge club layout and home layouts.

Non-rail social (evening)

Wednesday, July 29

Layout tours, clinics, movies and slides, Non-rail/youth/childrens' activities begin.

Contest entries open, set up for public show begins.

Thursday, July 30

All regular convention activities continue.

Contest entries close at 12:00 (noon).

Exhibit halls and contest displays open for NMRA delegates at 1600.

Friday, July 31

All regular convention activities continue.

Awards and ladies' luncheons (your choice, included in basic registration).

Exhibits and contest displays open for public show at 1600.

Saturday, August 1

All regular convention activities continue.

Exhibits and contest displays open for public show from 1000 to 1500, hall empty by 1600.

Social hour and banquet with entertainment (evening)

Sunday, August 2

Contest entry pick-up 0800-1200.

Exhibits open for public show 1000 to 1500, hall empty by 1600. Exhibit tear-down begins at 1600.

For additional information, write to:

Dave Kleger, Registrar
2154 Golden Garden Street
Eugene, OR 97402

Or call Dave at (503) 689-2536 or

Bill Bain, Co-chair (503) 686-2246 or
Elaine Jones, Co-chair (503) 746-4785

Island Spring Meet a Growing Success

Rick Lord

On April 20th of this year, the 2nd Annual Vancouver Island Spring Meet was held at the Beban Park Recreation Centre in Nanaimo. 150 model railroaders, an increase of 50% over the previous year, came to what is becoming an annual event for central Vancouver Island.

Displays ranged from N scale cars and scratchbuilt structures to an Sn3 module and On2 and On3 models. The swap and shop tables were busy with twice as much stock as last year: back issues of hobby magazines, books, rolling stock, building kits, and even some Lionel tinplate! Five Kalmbach videos ran continuously, while some visitors brought tapes to share (White Pass & Yukon and CPR steam in Ontario) - special thanks to them.

Commercial displays included Kanamodels, Pacific N Scale, and Phil Babcock of Grand Forks with a beautiful line of scenery materials. Door prizes were donated by: Leisure Time Hobbies, Nanaimo; Brass Hat Model RR. Supplies, Campbell River; B.C. Shaver Shop and Royal Oak Hobbies of Victoria; and Kanamodels. We hope the winners of kits will build them and show off the results at next year's show!

Planning is already underway for the 1987 meet to be held in April. The precise date will depend on the timing of the 7th Division's Interior Spring Meet and events scheduled in Vancouver that month.

News from Offshore: a Report from Vancouver Island

Rick Lord, our faithful island correspondent, sends these notes of activities across the Strait.

Due to the IWA strike, some Island model railroaders have used spare time to move from the armchair and books to active status with sawdust and plaster. One local hobbyist has taken past articles published in *Model Railroader* to start construction of a 4 x 6 foot "Gold Hill". The height of this layout, combined with the rigid backdrop which splits the layout in two 2 x 6 foot modules makes it look much larger than it really is - proving you don't need a large area to build a layout. The layout is now at the scenery stage, using many tips from Dave Frary's "Realistic Scenery for Model Railroads" (Kalmbach).

Several Island modellers have contacted me regarding the building of HO scale modules. We hope some will

be ready for operation at the Nanaimo Spring Meet. Interested islanders can contact me for a copy of the spec's we are using for the modules:

Rick Lord, R.R. #3, Site 329 C-6,
Port Alberni, B.C., V9Y 7L7
phone: 724-4205

Also due to the strike, the regular supply of logs to MacMillan Bloedel's Alberni pulp and paper mill has stopped. To fill the gap and meet sales deadlines, M&B has purchased logs in the Fraser Valley and the east coast of the Island. The Esquimalt & Nanaimo (CP Rail) is hauling 16 to 22 loaded log cars twice a day from the Ladysmith booming grounds and the car ferry dock at Nanaimo to the Alberni mill. 30 log cars, plus several tons of pulp shipped from as far away as Nova Scotia, are required every day to run the three high speed newsprint mills. The log cars are from CN, CP, and BCR; boxcars are too numerous to list, but include lots of shortlines. From two or three trips per week from Port Alberni to Nanaimo, trains now run that many round trips per day!

STEAMEXPO Souvenirs Still Available

For those who missed getting the souvenir items they wanted from Expo 86's STEAMEXPO, there is good news: their manufacturer still has most available by mail order. In stock:

1 1/4" SE logo button	\$2.00
Logo embroidered patch.....	4.00
Engineer's cap with crest.....	9.95
Official 24-page program.....	3.00
1986 Calendar (for pictures).	3.00
SE logo T-shirt.....	9.95
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with 2 diff. .34 stamps...	2.25

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**Have you made your plans for the
NMRA National in Eugene ?
July 28 to August 2, 1987**

TIMETABLE



December 14, 1986

7th Div. Workshop: Steam Spectacular. Details on page 2. Oakridge Auditorium, Oakridge Centre, 41st Avenue and Cambie, Vancouver, 1 - 4 PM.

January 11, 1987

7th Div. Workshop: After-Christmas Beginners' Workshop. Specializing in what to do with that train set you got for Christmas. Time and place as above.

February 22, 1987

N-Con 87: North Vancouver's 3rd Annual N scale convention. Details in January *Bulletin Board*.

February 28, 1987

4th Div. NMRA Hobo Mini-Meet: See railroads as the hobo does - take photos, hike to abandoned tunnels, handcar races, model clinics and contests, awards banquet. Everett, Washington, 10 AM to 8 PM. Info: Roger Ferris, 19929 Second Ave. NW, Seattle WA 98177. Phone (206) 283-0637.

March 1, 1987

Swamp Creek & Western RR Club "Rollin' Rails" introduction to model railroading. Displays, layouts, dioramas. Francis Anderson Recreation Centre, 700 Main Street, Edmonds, WA. 11 AM to 5 PM. Info Roger Ferris, 211 Railroad Ave, Edmonds, WA 98020. Phone (206) 283-0637.

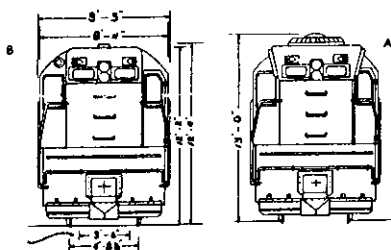
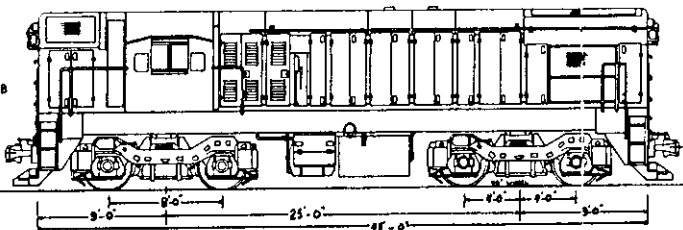
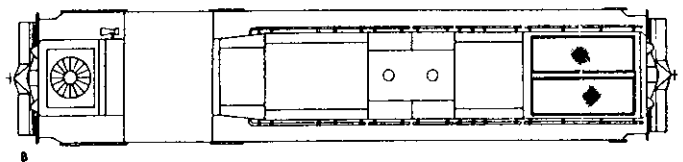
July 28 - August 2, 1987

Full Steam To Eugene: NMRA National Convention, Eugene, Oregon. Info: Dave Kleger, Registrar, 2154 Golden Garden Street, Eugene, OR. 97402. Phone (503) 689-2536.

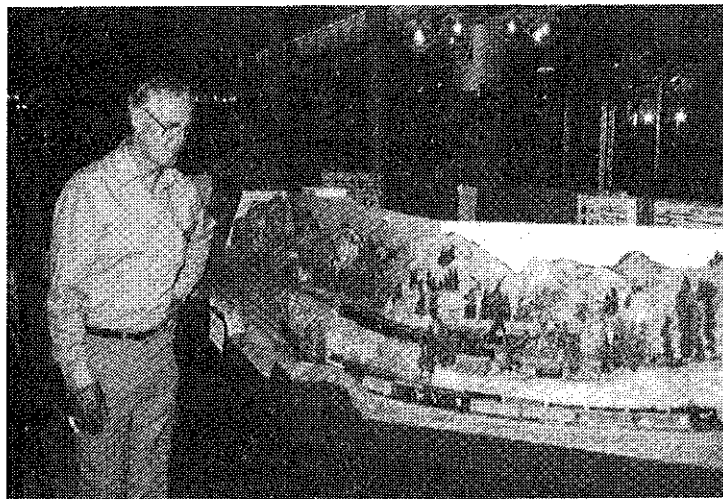
MINI-PLAN

GENERAL MOTORS DIESEL, LTD. —

CANADA — MODEL G-8 — 875 HP



N Scale



Train Gang Co-ordinator Hank Menkveld watches a meet on his own module at the Oakridge Centre Mall Show last month. Hazards of such operations include a lot of grabby little fingers, but the public relations value for both the hobby and the host mall is tremendous.