

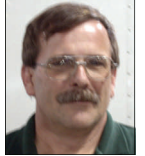


BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 24
Issue 5
May 2011

The Engineer's Cab

Martin Myers



Aprils' Scale show is behind us. It was a rousing success. Our combined layout with Northern Virginia NTRAK gave us almost double the run on red line. I couldn't be happier with the new Digitrax Duplex radio system. We had a total of three different radio frequencies on the combined layout. Red line had its own, our blue and yellow had a second, NVNtrak had a third controlling their yellow and blue lines. In addition we had two frequencies available on our old simplex system. There was no interference reported. As always, our yellow and blue lines offered the choice between analog DC and DCC. NVNtrak had the same choice going on their private lines. Set up was just a little more complicated running multiple systems. We look forward to doing it again.

Our next endeavor is the N Scale Convention. Volunteers are needed to man several locations including the door for the public show, Contest room. Swap meet, and of course our layout. Times vary depending on the convention schedule. I hope to get an online schedule up soon on our web site. The link will be forwarded to all.

We want to show our best to the N scale world. ***A work session is planned to spruce up our club modules. The session is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday May 14 and 15. Location is Skip's.*** There will be a short meeting on Sunday.

Bring your favorite scenery tools. Supplies are appreciated as well. We will be sprucing up the corners and yard scenery. In addition, Skip has a plan to turn our inside corners into a Horseshoe Curve replica. We'll be using clump foliage to make a lot of tree lined background.

I have space in the convention layout for a few more modules. A couple of alternates would be beneficial as well.

Hosts for future meetings are needed. We should have a final "before convention" meeting in June. If anyone can host this meeting, I promise to keep it short.

See you at Skip's

Martin

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Next meeting...

Sunday, May 15th, 2011
2pm - 5pm
Host: Skip Hayes

On the web...

News, information, & forums are all at
<http://bantrak.net/>

Great Scale Model Train Show Review (April 2011)

Al Del Gaudio (Coordinator)



Many thanks to all those who participated in the April Great Scale Model Train Show in Timonium this month!

Set up was essentially completed on Friday by 6 pm and by 7 the blue and yellow lines were operating in DC mode and cleaned.

The red line was operating well in DCC and cleaned on Saturday. We operated a combined red line with the Northern Virginia NTrak club. All participants had a nice time and were able to run the trains they brought.

We had very favorable comments from NVNTrak as well, several mentioned to me that we should do it again.

I for one enjoyed running on "new" modules and having had a chance to chat with fellow N-Trak members.

We saw the debut at least 2 of the new Kato Amtrak Intercity Express. It will be interesting to see or hear the reviews.

Just for the record;

We had between the 2 clubs; 3 command stations, each with a booster and each with a UR 91 and 92.

BANTRAK and NVNTrak had autonomous operation and selectivity of our own Blue and Yellow lines [DC/DCC]

We also had a Zephyr on our test rack so there were 4 Digitrax systems.

I experienced no 900 MHz interference for other clubs/DCC systems.



Looking beyond our N-TRAK world, the Slippin' & Switching societies of Ohio and North Carolina had a tremendous 250-foot layout and some fabulous scenery including; a very cool steel mill, transfer site and B&O station.

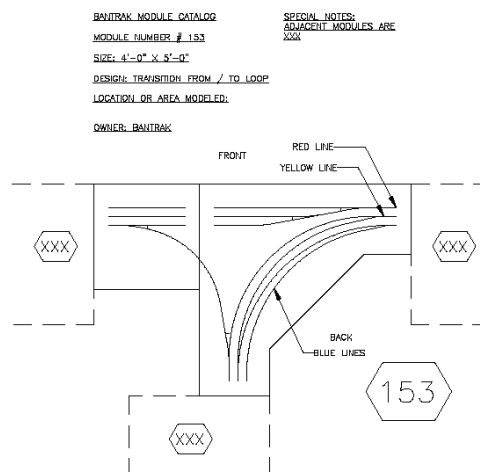
They employed some novel techniques in building lightweight modules and broad curves [even for HO].



Four Counties had a terrific set up as well.

The Fox Valley B&O round top box car was on display as test shots; 2 HO, 1 N-scale]. This looks very promising indeed.

We will address the junction module issue that caused track repair along the spine between 11 -12 on Saturday.



Fortunately, a recently-installed modification allowed it to operate as a traditional corner, so we were able to operate on the red line as part of the BANTRAK loop in that hour. Thanks Bob Mohr for the hard [no pressure] work-as well as Tim, Steve and Rodney at NVNTrak for supplying the guinea pigs-oops-test locomotives.

Also, thank you to Martin and Bob for bringing their personal Digitrax equipment to help with this endeavor!

Best regards

Alan

A View from Toledo "The Fairmont Speeder"

Ralph Grutzmacher



I think that most of you know that I fell into a band of 1:1 railroad folks centered around the Yaquina Pacific Railroad Historical Society here in Toledo. This same group lets me play with a club-sized HO layout owned by Bill Bain, who is the current mayor of Newport and the current president of the YPRHS.

This summer we were giving rides at the railroad museum on our motorcar, which is a truck/bus car that used to provide passenger service to logging camps at the end of the rail lines. The event in town was the annual classic auto show which drew several thousand people. A local man showed up early in the morning and asked if he could park his Fairmont speeder and try to sell it. No problems. As the day started to pick up, a couple of people asked about the car and we discovered that we didn't even know how much money he wanted for it. Bill, who already owns a speeder, put in a call so we would at least know the asking price, which turned out to be \$600. Since similar cars in ready to run condition sell for between \$4,000 and \$6,000, a conversation ensued.

The member giving motorcar rides with me is named Robert Topham. Bob retired from the Western Pacific/Union Pacific several years ago. We started talking about the condition of the speeder (it runs) and speeder excursions and decided that each of us has wasted \$300 on lesser items of material goods, including Bob's recent purchase of an HO steam locomotive with DCC and sound. We solved the problem of where to park the thing (a siding at the railroad museum "needed" an additional exhibit) and we were all in.

The two photos show the speeder with the protective side boards in place. The current paint is a red, white, and blue parade scheme. Bob and I are researching the identity of the speeder's original owner. If the original paint is other than orange, we are going to restore our speeder to its original paint. If it started its life in orange, we are going to paint it for his former employer, the Western Pacific.

The goal is to have our speeder ready to go for a spring outing riding the rail somewhere in the Pacific Northwest. I knew that retirement was going to be fun.



Exploring Operations A Novice's Experience

Eric Payne



Over the past 3 months I have been busy transforming my home layout from what I term a "casual running" (as in "running trains in circles and havin' fun") to an "operational" layout (cars have car-cards and destinations while trains have routes and schedules). To do this, I needed some willing volunteers to dedicate (i.e. suffer) the time and willingness to endure growing pains with me.

Things have gone ok and we now have 6 or 7 sessions under our belt's and trains are running with a semblance of order. To accomplish this we have re-laid track, installed switch machines, tweaked motive power and had ordered cars as necessary. In the end, things are going ok.

I decided to explore Operations in order to gain momentum on improving my layout as well as continue to share time (and stories) with fellow modelers. It is great to see the layout being operated by upwards of 10 people at a time. Sometimes it is quasi-perfect harmony as trains come and go, and other times, well, let's just say it is fun to watch the madness ensue.

I am by no means an expert, and can only offer very limited experience and knowledge, but if you want to stop by some time and either a) casually run a train or b) attend an Operating Session (every other Friday) then drop me a line.

Eric

p.s. Here is a link to some [pics](#).

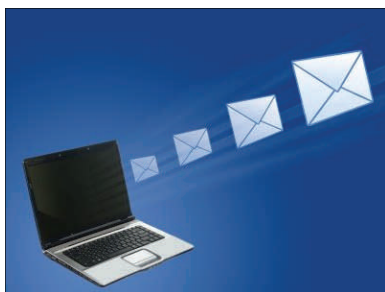


New & Notable: Membership

Al Palewicz, Membership



A vote was taken at the last Club meeting and we will now be getting the N-Trak newsletter via email



New & Notable: National N Scale Convention 2011

For more information contact trainbyskip@yahoo.com



Hershey, Pennsylvania, June 22-26 2011

Presented by **Baltimore Area N-Trak "BANTRAK"**, **Capital PenNScalers** and the **N Scale Enthusiast (NSE)**

With a central location in Pennsylvania, the convention hotel is close to one of the greatest selections of railroads and railroad history in all of America.

BANTRAK Members are eligible for a small discount (a Club benefit for assisting with the convention). [Register for the Convention](#) and make plans to attend this summer !!!

New & Notable: 2011 N Scale Weekend (7th Annual)

For more information contact nscaleweekend@yahoo.com

N-Scale Model Trains & Supplies

**TEXNRAILS, HB PETERSON, WINGARD'S TRAINS, MIKE BENCS, THE N-CELLAR,
BOSTON & ALBANY HOBBIES, N&O TRAINS, DETRICH ENTERPRISE,
KENRAY MODELS, ABH MODEL TRAINS FRED-EOT, DELUXE INNOVATIONS**

15+ Large Operating N-Scale Train Layouts

**BALTIMORE AREA N-TRAK, NORTHERN VIRGINIA NTRAK, TWIN TIERS N-TRAK,
JERSEY CENTRAL N-TRACK
CAPITOL PENNSCALERS N-TRAK, CENTRAL OHIO N-TRAK. STEEL CITY N-SCALE,
ROCK SPRING STATION,
THREE RIVERS ASSOCIATES N-TRAK, KEYSTONE N-TRAK, NEW JERSEY SOUTHERN N-TRAK,
CANTINGTON N-TRAK
GENESEE & ONTARIO MODEL N-GINEERS, PITTSBURGH LITE TRAK,
& BEDFORD MODEL RAILROADERS**





Email the [webmaster](#) today !!!

during the past 4-6 weeks, new updates have been made to the website. I'd like to pass along a brief note of each.

1. 04 / 06 / 2011 - The April Newsletter is now available.

DCC Corner: (Exploring Digital Command Control)



Email the [editor](#) and suggest a DCC topic !!!

[Resetting Your Mobile Decoder](#)

Most mobile decoders have a global reset function, which returns the Factory-default settings of the decoder.

Program CV8 to a value of 08 and, in most cases, things will return to what they were originally. Remember that this process will also reset the CV's that worked the way that you wanted them, so keep track of your settings as you program the decoder so that you can easily reprogram the "good" CV's if you reset the decoder.



Website of the Month: Radical Flats

Email the editor and recommend a site !!!

[Radical Flats](#) (KingMill Enterprises) continues to expand their line of backdrop buildings with a total of 30 N scale offerings.

In addition to backdrops we've now added 4 simulated metal roofing sheets digitally printed on high quality 80 lb. cover stock. These Radical Roof sheets are pre-weathered for a fantastic looking roof in minutes not hours.

All sheets are affordably priced at \$5 for N scale. Bulk packs available at even greater savings

There is a FREE e-Newsletter [here!](#)



BANTRAK: Company Store

For more information contact treasurer@bantrak.net

Baltimore Area N-Trak presents a special run of a 40' standard box car with a single Youngstown door. Road #466008 has the B&O logo, and road #52008 has the BANTRAK logo. We are pleased to commemorate our 25 years in modular N-scale railroading by offering this commemorative two-pack.



Building a module or rescuing an old one? Get your wire harness. It doesn't get easier than this. Color coded / pre-installed power poles included.





"The Klein's Display Layout"

Bob Mohr

A few pics from the Klein's work sessions in 2009





BANTRAK Call Board

(Activities & Events of BANTRAK Club Members)

Email the editor with your info !!!

CRHS Rail-B-Q
May 7th, All Day
Info Contact
Ed Kapuscinski

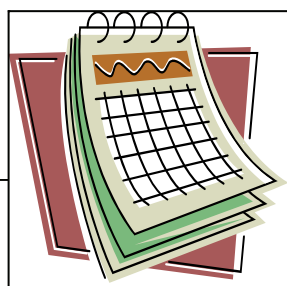
NMRA Chesapeake Div. Mtg.

May 22nd, 2pm

Info Contact

Arthur Boyd

Viva Vienna
May 28th, 1-5PM
Info Contact
Eric Payne



BANTRAK Calendar



6/21~6/26/2011.....N-Scale Convention, Harrisburg/Hershey, PA.

8/26~8/28/2011.....Bedford N-Scale Weekend, Everett, PA.

9/24~9/25/2011.....Train Festival, Oakland, MD.

10/28~10/30/2011.....Great Scale Model Train Show, Timonium, MD.

.....(TBD)Turf Valley Model Train Show, Ellicott City, MD.

.....(TBD)B&O Museum Festival of Trains, Baltimore, MD.

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 the Baltimore Area N-TRAK organization.

This is your newsletter! Please send articles, photos, and suggestions to newsletter@bantrak.net.

Editor: Eric Payne