



HOTBOX

"the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"
July 1982

No. 177





HOTBOX

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • *Teen Association of Model Railroading*

Issued every month with an additional special mailing of a Directory of Membership during the summer.

Annual dues for the TAMR are as follows:

REGULAR: (under 21 years of age) \$10.00

ASSOCIATE: (21 years of age and up) \$9.50

SUSTAINING: (both Regular & Associate) \$15.00

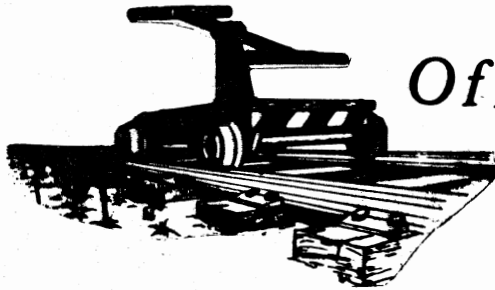
Please address all membership applications, renewals, address changes and complaints of non-receipt of the TAMR HOTBOX to the TAMR Secretary.

TAMR Secretary: Dee Gilbert
for Membership Box 132
Harrison, AR 72601

All other HOTBOX business, except where specifically noted, is handled by the Editor. Please address all comments to the Editor.

HOTBOX Editor: Mark Kaszniak
4818 W. George St.
Chicago, IL 60641

DEADLINES: The TAMR HOTBOX welcomes articles, photographs and artwork pertaining to model and/or prototype railroad subjects. All material for publication must be submitted 30 days before the month of publication. The TAMR HOTBOX assumes that all material is submitted for the mutual benefit and enjoyment of the hobby by the membership and thus no payment will be made upon publication.



Office Car

Hello. I'm Dan Carroll, your newly elected Auditor. First, I'd like to express my sincerest thanks to the few who voted for without them, I wouldn't be Auditor. I would also like to thank our HOTBOX Editor, Mark Kaszniak, and outgoing Auditor, Greg Dahl, both of whom forwarded promotional materials to me and provided useful advice the the proper operation of the Auditor's office.

As I take the office of Auditor, I want to reflect on how things have changed in the TAMR since I joined in January of 1979. When I joined, offset HOTBOXs were rare, now they are commonplace. I have also seen the HOTBOX change from a primarily railfanning format to a modeling one. I have high hopes that the current officers and staff can

keep the TAMR serving teen model railroaders long into the future.

If you have any comments or ideas on how to better promote the TAMR, please feel free to write me. This is your association and whether you believe it or not, it is you the member that makes the decisions on what direction this association will move. We also need your help whether it be an article (if you can write a letter, you can write an article) or your services for our Member Services Committee. Help us if you can!

--Dan Carroll

Pass Listing

Some members have been asking about the current status of our pass listing since Dave Ellett stated that he could no longer handle the duties. Be assured that the listing is not dead! Dan Carroll (11034 W. 78th Ave., Arvada, CO 80005) has taken it over and once again the column will appear in the HOTBOX as often as we have material for it. So send your pass and a 3x5 card with your railroad's name, your name, and address if you want to be listed. Here is this month's listing:

NEW ENGLAND & EASTERN RR
Chris Brindamour
10 Meadowland Drive
N. Kingstown, RI 02852

MISSING HOTBOXES

We've been having some problems with HOTBOX circulation and some members have complained about missing an issue of the HOTBOX. If you did not receive an issue of the HOTBOX to which you were entitled, please contact the HOTBOX Editor to settle this matter. We have extra copies of the most recent issues and can mail any missed issues to you with a minimum of delay.

CRUMMY NEWS



BY MARK KASZNAK, EDITOR

Hard Times For Teens

Teens and model railroading seem to have a love-hate relationship: our love of trains versus the hobby's hatred of us indulging in it. Yet things weren't always this way, back in those good old days (whenever they were), it was down right fashionable to display your Lionel under the Christmas tree and the new Lionel catalog contained enough dreams to keep budding engineers happy for a lifetime.

Then something happened. The world decided to grow up. Virtual revolutions occurred in many industries and technologies and with these mechanical revolutions also came an intellectual one. Our perceptions and attitudes about our lives and existence on this planet changed and are still changing. Model railroading also came of age. Benefiting from the new technology, smaller scales were developed and the emphasis of our hobby switched from tinsplate to scale models and realism.

Suddenly, our hobby began to look attractive to many professional people who had loved the trains when they were young and now had money to spend on their new found hobby. To serve this lot, manufacturers started to produce ready-to-run models and easy construction kits which soon became very popular.

As our hobby grew, the general public began to take notice. Those who were not interested in our pastime, passed it off with a chuckle and the phrase: "Grown kids playing with their trains." Now model railroading

was on the defensive. Great pains were taken to disassociate the hobby of model railroading--which is a respectable adult pastime--from toy trains--which kids played with. Thus anything that smacked of kids--including teens--or tinsplate had to be avoided. Younger modelers were then removed from the model railroading mainstream even though mass production techniques allowed the hobby to be enjoyed by almost anyone.

The slow process of regaining acceptance in our hobby has begun for younger modelers and many adults are beginning to realize the serious crisis that will occur if new modelers aren't recruited. This is where we stand today. However, another factor is now preventing teens from enjoying our hobby to its full potential. Our current economic woes are having a major effect on teen modelers. Unemployment and inflation are eating away at our already limited hobby dollars. As a result, there has been a drop in the number of teens in our hobby. We are already beginning to feel the effect in the TAMM. What can we do? There are only a few alternatives that teens can make.

In the TAMM, we are hoping to help in a few concrete ways for those who choose to stick out the hard times and continue with their modeling. First, I hope to place much more emphasis on inexpensive options for pursuing our hobby. I also hope to provide a greater amount of information on products that are available so you can pick and choose to get the most for your money.

Jim Kobrinetz hopes to help out by establishing a layout planning service in the TAMM. We will have more details in the future, but basically the plan is to have you submit space restrictions and layout preferences to Jim who would then work up a scale trackplan for your pike. Dee Gilbert is developing a locomotive rating system which should prove useful to those acquiring new motive power and, of course, Paul Ingraham is providing the TEEN TRAK system.

I can only hope that you will continue to support our efforts because we can only produce with your continued support. The future of our hobby depends on us, the teen modelers



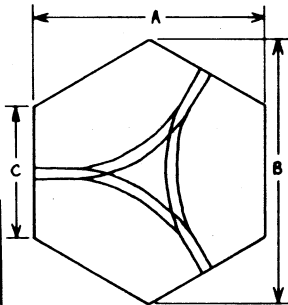
BENCHMARK: Part Two

It's very unlikely that we're going to be able to set up a very large layout without having to put some corners in it. And we also will want to be able to send trains to more than one place at times. That means junctions. And in TEEN TRAK we have come up with a set of junction and corner modules using related geometry that allows us to do both! At the same time, we've found a way to minimize the square corner "toy train" look of modular layouts and keep the corners and junctions to manageable sizes.

The secret is in two shapes: the hexagon for junctions and the trapezoid (which is based on the hexagon) for corners. Let's start with the hexagon; it's the basis of the system.

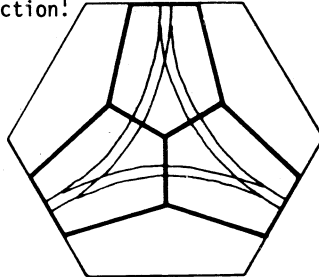
The basic hexagon is designed to accommodate a double track wye junction using the minimum curve radii shown in "The Modular Concept: Part 4", previously published in HOTBOX. Here are the dimensions for O, HO and N scales.

HEXAGONS	A		B		C	
	mm	in	mm	in	mm	in
O SCALE	2700	108	3130	125	1565	62½
HO SCALE	1500	60	1740	70	870	35
N SCALE	750	30	870	35	435	17½



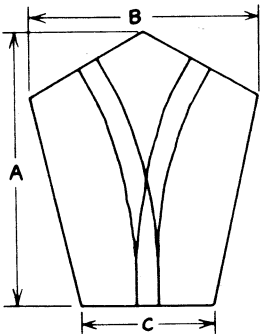
If you're building in N scale, you can easily construct a hexagon as a single module. Even in HO, it's still manageable as a single unit. But in O scale you'll need a depressed center flat car to move the junction!

But, by using the section idea discussed in the first TEEN TRAK article, we can break down the hexagon into smaller units. In this case, it's 3 pentagons.



And, while this is a necessity in O scale, it is also very useful in HO and N scale. Here are the pentagon dimensions.

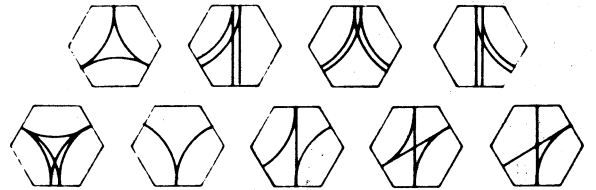
PENTAGONS	A		B		C	
	mm	in	mm	in	mm	in
O SCALE	1500	60	1250	50	720	29
HO SCALE	750	30	625	25	360	14½
N SCALE	375	15	315	12½	180	7



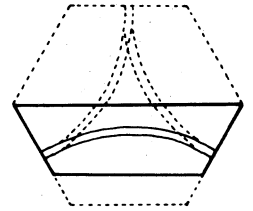
How many of you have figured out where the TEEN TRAK logo came from? It's based on another modern railroading idea, intermodal freight. Modern freight uses modular units like containers and piggyback trailers that can operate on rail, highways and ships - even airplanes - interchangeably. The concept is making the railroads profitable again and will probably be the biggest part of the future of rail freight. One of the pioneering concepts is a company created by and owned by many member railways across the U.S. and Canada. You surely have seen their bright yellow flat cars and the yellow box cars of their subsidiary RAILBOX. Guessed yet? Right! It's Trailer Train.

TEEN TRAK and the modular concept are a kind of parallel to the Trailer Train idea, bringing together interchangeable units from across the country to make a great modeling idea take shape. Modular modeling is a big part of the future of model railroading. With TEEN TRAK, you can be a part of the future NOW! Join the fun! Build a module! Put the future of the world's greatest hobby on the right track-TEEN TRAK!

The wye isn't the only trackplan you can build on the hexagon. Here are only a few of the other useful possibilities.

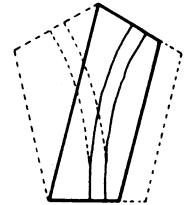


CORNERS: As you can see from the drawing of the wye, if you connect every other side of the hexagon with a curved track, you will go through 60° of curvature. If you put together 3 such curves you get half a circle or 180°. So we've designed the basic corner module as a 60° curve too. It comes out of the hexagon as shown here.



The dimensions are also based on the hexagon with the tracks at the interfaces and the outside of the curve at the minimum side setback dimension (See "The Modular Concept, Part 4").

The 30° corner is based on the pentagon. Its dimensions are derived from the pentagon in the same way the 60° corner dimensions were taken from the hexagon.



CONSTRUCTION: Framing and cross-bracing for these modules is done the same as for the rectangles. The only "tricky" part is marking out the angles for the corners. But all the saw cuts are straight lines. We don't have the space to detail how to do it here and that will vary also with the tools you have available. But here's a chance to apply what you have learned in geometry class!

For legs, the hexagons and pentagons only need 3 legs each. The hexagons have a leg in every other corner, the pentagons have a leg at the two outer corner points and one at the base end. You can also use 3 legs on the trapezoidal corners, one at each outside corner and one in the center of the inside of the curve. But 4 legs, one-in-each corner, is more solid, particularly in the larger scales. Later in this series, when we get into layout arrangements, we'll look at some of the interesting ways you can use these modules.

If you have any questions or ideas, please write the HOTBOX or to me directly.

Paul Ingraham 3304 Maybelle Way, No. 1 Oakland, CA 94619

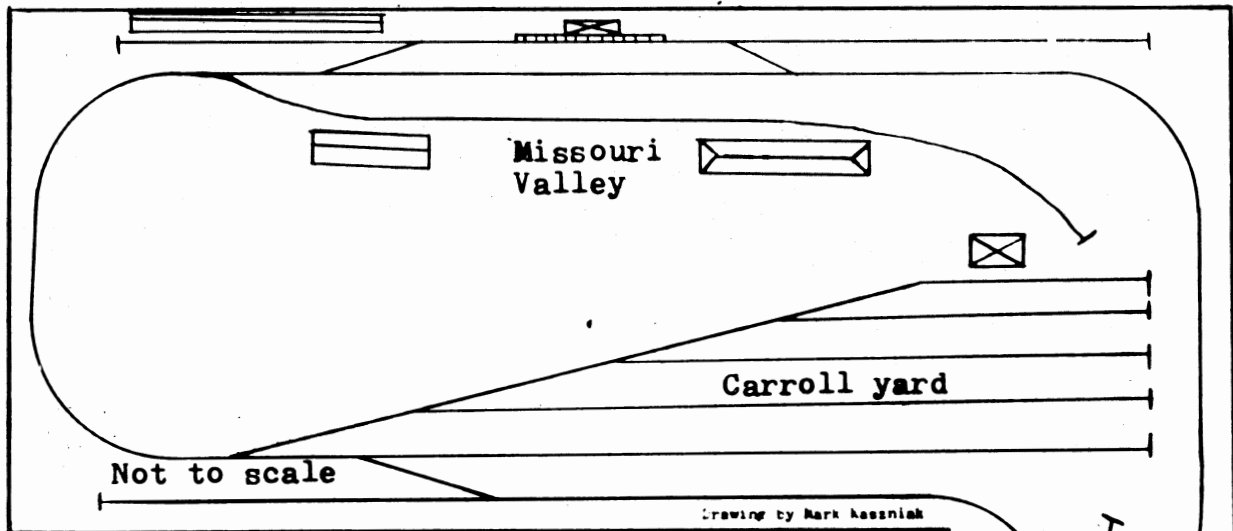


JULY 18 - 23, 1983

How about a TEEN TRAK layout at the 1983 Winnipeg NMRA National Convention? It's not too soon to start planning and building a module. If you'd like to be a part of such a layout, please let us know soon so we can reserve the space for it. Let us know what scale you're building and anything else you'd like to let us know.

A modular layout, together with a couple of Teen Clinics and a TAMR display booth would be a great introduction to the hobby for a teen modeler - and a big attraction to TAMR! We know how great TAMR is. We know how much talent there is in our group. Let's share it with other teens in an operating modular layout!

C&NW - IOWA DIVISION



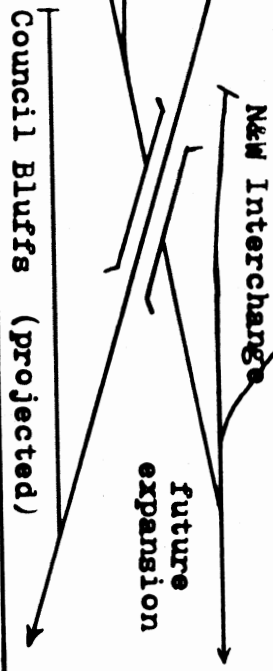
Drawing by Mark Kessniak

I am modeling the Iowa Division of the Chicago and North Western Railway. At the moment, I have the 4 x 8 foot board completed and am working on the five foot extension. My motive power currently consists of an Alco Century 424, a GP9 and an SW1. In the future, I plan to add some F units and a couple of steamers.

My C&NW will interchange with the Norfolk & Western (another personal favorite) and one other road which I have not decided on yet. Most of the action on my layout takes place in Carroll yard. I usually run a three or four car local over to Missouri Valley, a small industrial town dependent on the railroad. The biggest customer in Missouri Valley is the Dependable Chemical Company and followed by the Hillside Lumber Co. and then the Missouri Valley freight house. The empty siding will eventually serve another industry in this prosperous town.

Incidentally, Carroll yard is also where the road's passenger trains will be made up. The first westbound stop will be Missouri Valley and the first eastbound stop, Council Bluffs. Council Bluffs will be a very small town when completed and will consist of only two industrial spurs and the N&W interchange.

At the present, the C&NW has a fleet of some 30 pieces of rolling stock and while there are many problems to be worked out in getting the road into top shape, I hope to have a lot of fun in the process.



LEGEND

min. rad. 18"
 turnouts #4
 Overall size:
 4x8 with a
 3'6" x 5'
 extension

Roll of Die	Scale Weather Chart			
	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1 or 2	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny
3 or 4	Spring Rain	Sunny	Fog	Light Snow
5 or 6	Heavy Rain	Thunder Storm	Fall Rain	Heavy Snow

SCALE

WEATHER

As you know, the weather effects the operations on the real railroads a great deal. Rain, snow and fog cause real problems for railroads trying to route goods across the country. However, our model pikes are protected from the elements and we usually carry on our business in the perpetual sunshine of a shining light bulb sun. Thus in order to make operations on our pikes a little more realistic, we should incorporate the weather into our operating sessions somehow.

Now I am not advocating that we all transport our layouts out into the backyard and try to operate under real weather conditions, but some way is needed to simulate the effects of weather on our layouts. In order to do this, we must examine how weather really effects the railroads.

Basically inclement weather can effect a railroad in two ways: (1) it slows down train speed so that it takes longer to get from one station to the next and (2) it causes some malfunction in either equipment or trackage that the railroad must correct before service can be resumed. Since both of these events are really a matter of chance, we should be able to simulate these actions with a method determined by chance, such as the roll of a die. The latter effect

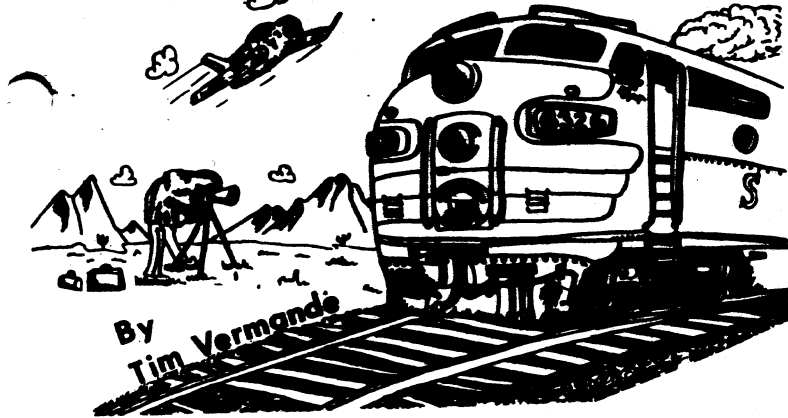
can easily be simulated with situation cards explaining some snafu on the railroad and picking a number on a die that will cause you to draw one of these cards. You can then roll the die say twice during an operating session to see if any problems crop up.

The former effect can be simulated also by the roll of a die and the scale weather chart shown above. Of course, you'll have to develop maximum train speeds for conditions other than sunshine. Try maintaining your regular operating schedule at a reduced speed and you'll find that it isn't that easy provided you haven't really padded your schedules. There are many variations that you can adopt to this scheme. For instance, you could even roll a die to determine what season you are operating in. Use your imagination and operation will be interesting.

DRAWINGS WANTED

The HOTBOX is looking for original artwork by TAMR members for use on future covers of this publication. Of course, the drawing should have a rail oriented theme and be drawn in black on plain white paper. Anyone interested in submitting artwork should contact the Editor.

At Trackside



AT TRACKSIDE is a column that explores the hobbies of rail photography (for modeling purposes or preservation) & railfanning. Please address all comments and questions on this column to: Tim Vermande, 51528 Ford Street, South Bend, IN 46637.

TRIPODS & Other Ways to SHAKELESSNESS

The most common quest in photography is for sharp pictures of whatever is your favorite subject. Now despite the recent efforts of certain railfan magazines, unsharp, murky pictures are not satisfying--no matter what the subject. I won't deal with murkiness now, but rather will turn my attention to sharpness.

Unsharp pictures are not nearly as often caused by (choose one): bad lense, film, too slow a shutter as they are by MOVEMENT of the camera. Yes, you may be shooting at fractions of a second, but that does not necessarily mean you are steady. Furthermore, we all (or should) know better than to use ourselves as a support for an exposure requiring two to three seconds. In these endeavors, some assistance is needed and that is provided by a machine that can do the job better than we can. The common lowly tripod provides an excellent solution and should be used for all exposures over 1/30th of a second and can even be a definite advantage at other times. You might be surprized at the results even at 1/500th.

Since you buy a tripod to eliminate shake, the stability of your prospective new friend is obviously important. Now the best place to shop for a tripod is your local camera store. Sure, you may pay a couple of bucks extra, but the sales clerks can help you wade through the forest of available types to find the one that best suits your needs. Be sure to

take your camera with you so you can judge first hand if the tripod is high enough as well as the ease in mounting/dismounting your camera.

Below is a brief list of some of the common features you will find on tripods:

Quick release--These are small plates or studs which fit into your camera while the other end drops into the tripod and locks. They are nifty for fast work or those who don't like to struggle in mounting their camera. Yet without that little stud, your tripod is scrap metal. If you are inclined to lose things, this can be somewhat of a pain; however, most of these gizmos can be left on your camera permanently.

Tripod legs--There are basically two types, those locked by levers and those locked by rotating collars. The levers are quick, but can wear out after many years. These types of tripods have U-channel legs that are theoretically less stable in high winds. Tubular legs with locking collars are more durable, but can be difficult to loosen at times and can be stripped if you aren't careful.

Leg Spikes--Found on better tripods. Rubber tips can be retracted to reveal spikes for outdoor work. Most useful for railfanning.

Centerbracing--Found on the most expensive models to add increased stability for bigger, heavier cameras, but also makes tripod heavier.

Pan heads--Useful for those who take movies as they permit smooth panning of moving subjects or scenic vistas.

Table tripods--These are the cutest little things, but this does not necessarily make them functional. They have uses in model or still photography, but are no substitute for a regular tripod. Some people also advocate "chest pods" which holds the camera against your beating heart and thumping lungs for, of all things, stability.

Clamps--Have many uses in the studio or if you happen to have a tree handy but otherwise are of little use outdoors.

There you have it. A tripod should become a permanent part of your photographic gear. I realize that they are bulky to carry around and can be quite heavy after carrying them for a period of time, but then you usually need them most when you least expect to use them.

**ON THE
POINT:**

"Motorman" Harry Loew, as he affectionately signs himself, provides us with this whimsical look at the famous Toonerville Trolley. Could Harry's interests lie in the traction area of our hobby?

MARKERS:

ARRIVING NEXT ISSUE: Join your host, Lucio Russo, as he takes you on a trip to Italy and explains the country's railroad system. Having trouble keeping track of all those maintenance headaches on your pike? If so, then Frank Rudowski has a system that might interest you. Also, Greg Dahl will provide some interesting ideas for structure conversions. All this and our usual columns will be loaded into the consist of our hotshot August issue of the "Un-Magazine of Model Railroading."

REMINDER - Dee Gilbert is handling all new memberships, renewals and TAMR supplies. Please write to him for the quickest response. TAMR buttons are still available (quantities limited) for \$1.00 each. These are professionally made buttons with our famous logo on the face. Send all orders to Dee. Show your support for the TAMR by showing a TAMR button at rail related events.

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