

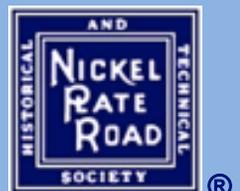
NICKEL PLATE ROAD *Modeler's Notebook*™

Volume 22, May 2016



**Indianapolis North Yard in O Scale
Model NKP 587 in HO Scale
Add an Econami Decoder into a GP7**

The Nickel Plate Road Modeler's Notebook is published by the Nickel Plate Road Historical and Technical Society, Inc. for its members and modelers interested in the former New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad, and its predecessor companies. Articles, manuscripts, photographs, and other modeling material relating to the Nickel Plate Road are solicited for publication. No part of this publication may be reproduced for distribution, either electronically or in print, without permission of the Publications Director and the contributor of the material involved. Please email contact@nkphts.org for more information.



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It is with great sadness that we note the untimely death of Bill Quick. Bill passed away unexpectedly on April 5th; he was 77 years old. Bill was a long-time member of the NKPHTS Board of Directors and a member of the Modeling Committee in addition to being an avid HO scale Nickel Plate modeler himself. His absence will be greatly felt by all of us who knew him. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Bill's family at this time of sorrow. More about Bill's contributions to the Society will be a part of the May e-newsletter and a future issue of the NKPHTS Magazine.

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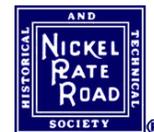
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NKPHTS COMPANY STORE MODELS FOR SALE

HO Models

HO-Tri-level Auto Rack (Accurail plastic kit) \$29.95



HO-40' Double Door Boxcar (Accurail plastic kit) \$14.00



HO-Panel Side 2 Bay Hopper (Accurail plastic kit) \$13.50



HO-W&LE Twin Hopper (Accurail plastic kit) \$15.00



HO-NKP-DLW Wood Refrigerator (Accurail plastic kit) \$15.00



HO-Rider: 1300-series rider car (resin 'craftsman' kit) \$50.00



(kit includes decals, modeler must provide trucks & couplers)

TCS Models

All TCS models kits are composed of resin castings.

While easy to build they are not shake-the-box models. All models HO scale.

CP875: 826-Series Wood Caboose kit, NKP Decals \$55.00

CP911: 826-Series Wood Caboose kit, W&LE Decals \$55.00



CPTWR: NKP Elevated Gate Tower kit, based on Knox, IN. \$18.00



CPVER: NKP Combination Station kit, based on Vermilion OH. \$32.00



CPROC: NKP Passenger Station kit, based on Rocky River OH. \$40.00



Model prices do not include shipping & handling

To order, please visit the NKPHTS Company Store website!

JOIN THE NKPHTS!

Founded in 1966, the Nickel Plate Road Historical & Technical Society is America's only rail-history organization dedicated solely to preserving the history and legacy of the Nickel Plate Road and its predecessors.

The Society publishes a quarterly magazine, maintains an award-winning website at nkphts.org, provides stewardship of a major archive of historical material at the Western New York Railway Historical Society, and offers numerous member programs and projects, including an annual convention. As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, financial donations and contributions of historical photos, documents and ephemera are tax-deductible and always appreciated.

To learn more about the NKPHTS please visit us at NKPHTS.org
For more information on joining the Society, please visit our [membership page](#), or contact us at:

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RIDER CAR KIT RE-ORDER

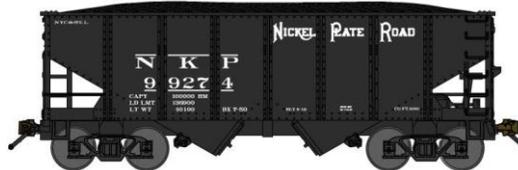


Due to popular demand the first run of the HO scale rider car kits have SOLD OUT. The NKPHTS has contracted with the casters for a second run of the model which should be available for sale by the first week of May.

If you are interested in purchasing one of these car kits, contact the NKPHTS [General Store](#) TODAY. Quantities are limited, and future orders for these cars will be based on demand.

SUGGEST A MODEL!

The NKPHTS is dedicated to preserving the history and memory of the Nickel Plate Road. Part of that effort is offering for sale select models that reflect the NKP's proud heritage.



Model suggestion. N scale model artwork courtesy [Bluford Shops](#)

The Company Store needs your input! If you'd like to suggest a commercially available model for the store to carry, please contact Company Store manager Bud Brueggeman at nkpinal@aol.com.

If you have a suggestion for a candidate for the NKPHTS Model of the Year program, please contact Modeling Services Director Tony Koester at nkpfan@ptd.net.

Nickel Plate Road Tri-Level Auto Racks Now Available!



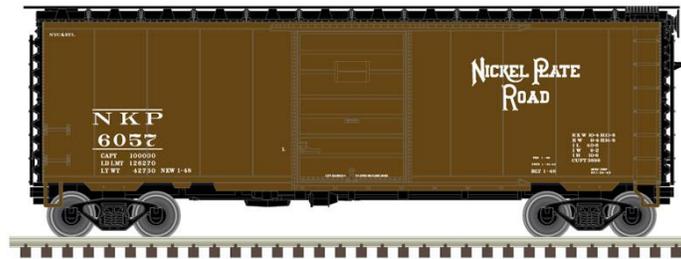
Tony Koester photo

The Nickel Plate Road Historical & Technical Society has launched a 'Model of the Year' program. The first offering in this series is an HO scale plastic kit for the NKP's ten tri-level auto racks.

The Accurail kit is priced at \$29.95 plus \$8.00 shipping for one kit, or \$12 shipping for two or all three kits. Three car numbers are offered: ETTX 500706, 500720, and 500813. Decals are included to model any of the other cars, which are numbered ETTX 500729, 500735, 500736, 500741, 500768, 500798, and 500805. An illustrated assembly guide is available on the [Modeler's Corner](#) page of the NKPHTS website.

To order, visit the NKPHTS [Company Store](#).

Nickel Plate Road 40' PS-1 Boxcars in N Scale



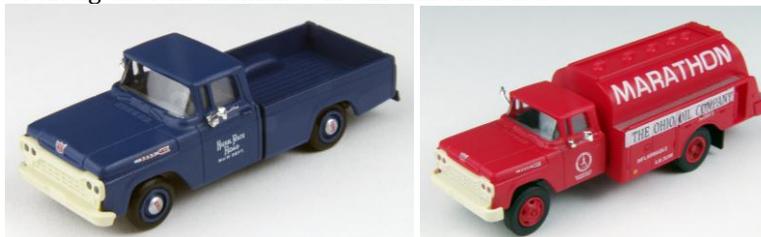
Atlas Model Railroad Co. production artwork

Atlas has announced a new run of their N scale PS-1 steel boxcars, including a NKP version. MSRP is \$28.95, with an expected delivery date of mid-2016. See the [Atlas website](#) for details, and your local hobby retailer to order.

(Atlas has also announced an "Alphabet Route" sister road car for the AC&Y)

New Vehicles from CMW

[Classic Metal Works](#) has announced two trucks of interest to HO scale NKP modelers. Item [#30435](#) is a 1960 Ford pickup painted as a NKP maintenance department vehicle. Item [#30455](#) is a 1960 Ford light tanker truck lettered for Marathon Oil, a commonly-seen fuel distributor along the NKP mainlines in Ohio and Indiana.



NICKEL PLATE RELEASES FROM BACHMANN

Bachmann Trains has announced their 2016 lineups in N, HO and O three rail, each including NKP offerings. In HO scale they're releasing Berkshires 759 and 765 with DCC and sound, and 765 with DCC and no sound. They're also releasing GE 44-ton diesel #90, a USRA twin hopper, and a 40' steel boxcar.



NICKEL PLATE #765 - RAIL FAN VERSION
Item No. 50906



NICKEL PLATE #90
Item No. 62214



NICKEL PLATE ROAD
(illustration shown)
Item No. 15004

In N scale, they're releasing Berkshires 759 and 765 with DCC and sound, and a 4-6-0 with DCC and no sound.



NICKEL PLATE #759 - RAILFAN VERSION
with MARS LIGHT
Item No. 50952



NICKEL PLATE #182
Item No. 51459

In their O scale, three rail Williams line, they're offering a GE Dash-9 in the NKP heritage scheme, and a USRA twin hopper.



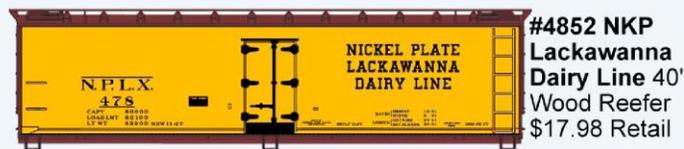
NICKEL PLATE #8100
Item No. 20434



NICKEL PLATE ROAD
Item No. 48206

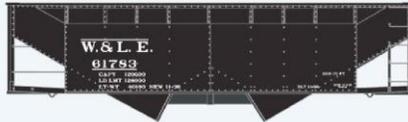
See the Bachmann [website](#) for details and price.

Accurail Announces Two New NKP Family Models



**#4852 NKP
Lackawanna
Dairy Line 40'
Wood Reefer
\$17.98 Retail**

**#7730 Wheeling & Lake Erie
50-Ton Offset Twin Hopper
\$16.98 Retail**



For their March releases, Accurail has [announced](#) two cars of interest to HO scale Nickel Plate and Wheeling & Lake Erie models. Kit #4852 is for a NPLX refrigerator (the NKP was a part owner of NPLX, which mainly hauled eggs, poultry, and 'packing house products'). Kit #7730 is for a W&LE offset side twin hopper in the 61000-series (1000 cars built in 1936; the model is in the delivery scheme).

See Accurail's [website](#) for details and for upcoming NKP models.

New HO Scale NKP Boxcars from Intermountain



Nickel Plate Road
Date: BR 12-51

(6 numbers)

List: \$36.95	-16 25105	-18 25142	-20 25177
	-17 25129	-19 25160	-21 25189

Intermountain has announced a re-run of their popular and accurate X29-type boxcar in HO scale. The releases, due in October or November 2016, includes a Nickel Plate version in six different road numbers. See Intermountain's [website](#) or your favorite IMW dealer to reserve one today!

North Yard, Indianapolis, circa 1958

As Modeled in O scale by Chuck Conway

All photos by the author



NKP 402 stops its run in front of the yard office in Indianapolis.

You might think that since I've lived in Colorado for the better part of forty years I'd be modeling this state's beautiful scenery. You'd also think that since I'm a Denver & Rio Grande historian and author, that I'd be modeling that railroad rolling through Colorado's scenery. Instead, since I grew up in Indiana next to the Nickel Plate's mainline, I've actually created a small portion of the Midwest in the Rockies.

I grew up along the I-MC Division, a few miles from North Yard in Indianapolis, and am modeling the yard and a portion of the rest of the NKP in Indy in O Scale. One of the main reasons I model is to photographically recreate scenes from my youth. I use the camera to do that, but more importantly to find flaws and other issues with the completed models or scenes. There is a lot to learn photographically and many things to attend to on the modelling end to make all of this satisfying (to me anyway). But it's a start and a few of my fellow Nickel Plate modelers have commented positively on my progress so far.



While the crew ties down #402's train, another train is being assembled behind the office. In the 1950s Indy was still a busy rail terminal, and the Nickel Plate was an integral part of that action.



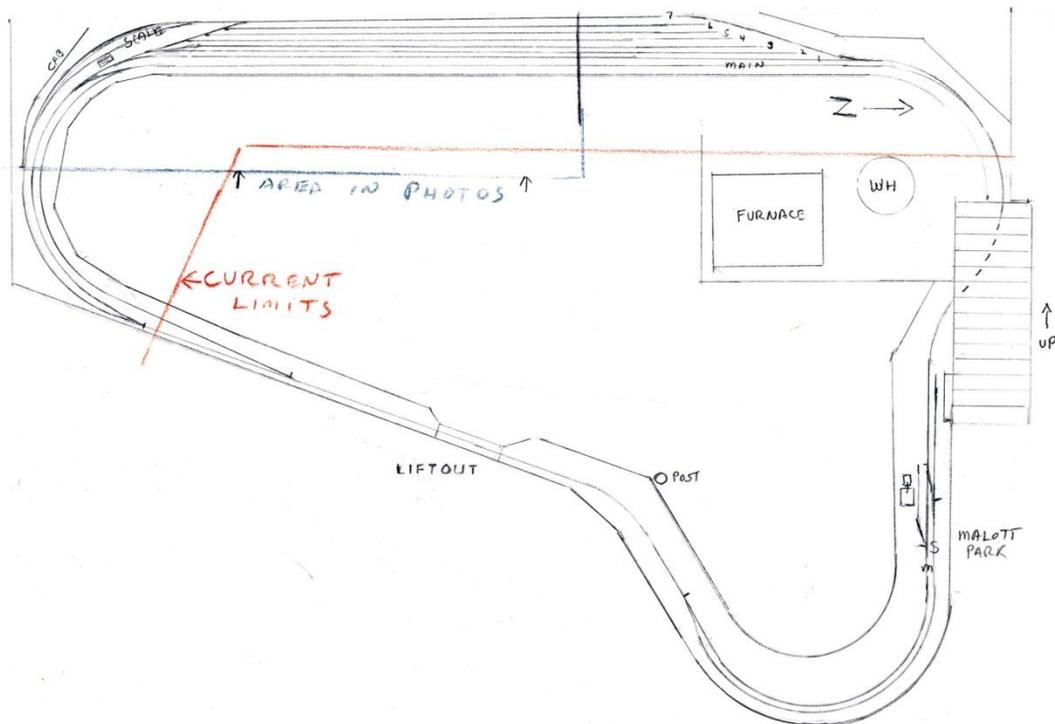
Material moves in, material moves out. Meat and produce reefers out of Kansas City (via Peoria) wait to be delivered to produce terminals around the city, while a load of scrap heads out of town.



NKP 402 leads her train past a string of PFE produce reefers, on their way to delivery at various grocery distributors in the Indianapolis area.



An overview of Chuck's North Yard layout. Currently it's the only complete part of the layout, but at "only" 39 feet long it's still impressive. A nicely finished surface, good work spaces, and clearly laid out switch matrix shows that although this may be Chuck's first layout in a while, he's thought things through.



Chuck's rough sketch of his layout. To date only the yard has been completed, but that was the hard part!



Chuck's attention to detail and dedication to replicating specific scenes he remembers from his childhood really shines in this comparison. Above is Chuck's layout, while below is a Soph Marty photo from 1957.

Chuck's model of NKP 410 is a Lionel/Atlas F9 kitbash that he built in the early 1980s. 410 was the only NKP engine Chuck ever photographed in service so it holds special significance for him. (For Chuck's prototype photo, See 'Malott Park Memories' in the Fall 1997 NKPHTS Magazine)

This project has been a real learning experience but I'm having fun with it and that's what counts. My basic interest in the hobby is building cars, locos, buildings, etc. and this layout is mainly a place to store and photograph various scenes. What I've shared here are my initial efforts at layout photography. Boy, is there a lot to learn! But the pictures really help my modeling and I hope the improved models will enhance the photos.

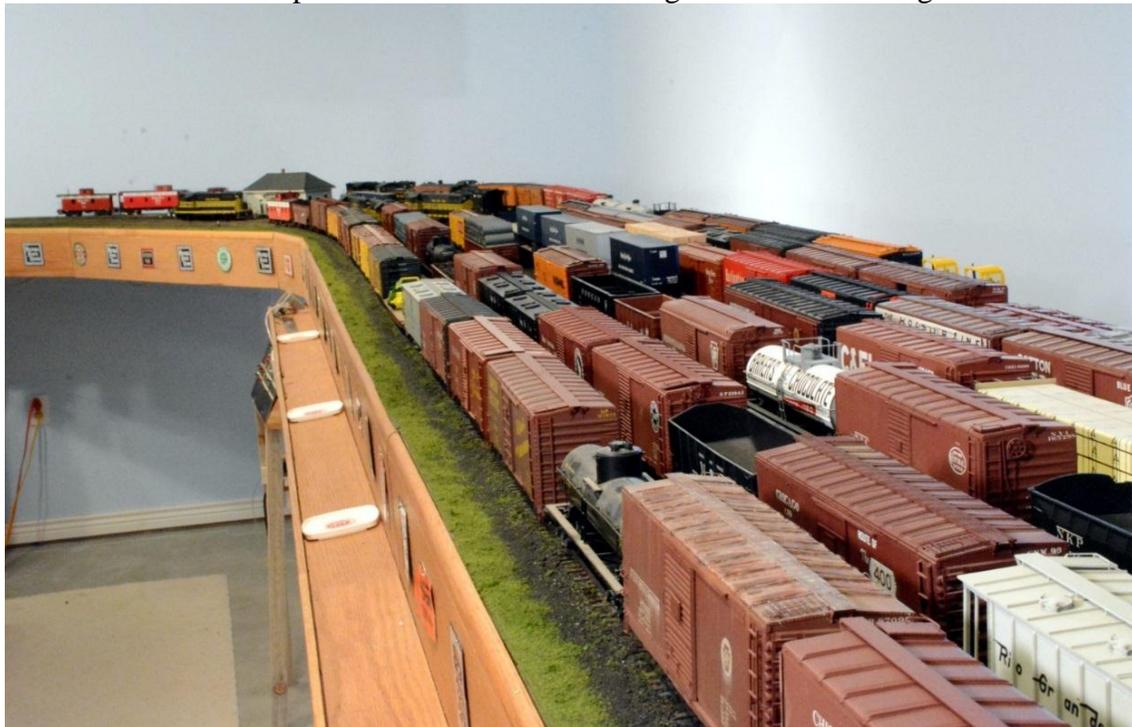


I've been working on this yard section for over 15 years. The slow progress was due work and other interests. Modeling has usually been a 'time being' effort, that is to say I did it whenever I had some extra time or the weather was bad. When completed, the layout will be a modified 'L', roughly 39' x 28' at its greatest dimensions. This first section is roughly 39' x 3' wide, and represents North Yard as accurately as possible given my space constraints. If the basement had been 10' longer, I'd have put the caboose track parallel to the main where it belongs. The rails end just beyond what you see here and my goal has been to get this area mostly finished and detailed before moving on. Currently, all I can do is go back and forth over the trackage seen in the images.





Now that I'm retired, I plan on finishing things, though not as I originally envisioned. This is due to a couple of factors 1) it takes me a while to do this stuff since I don't have a lot of past experience to draw on and 2) my wife has claimed some of the basement for her own interests and it's only fair and practical that I accommodate her. That said, I hope to have the remaining benchwork completed this year, with at least the main line in place. Since I build my own switches, that will slow things down even more but I hope to have a siding and some industries included so that I can do minimal operations with some switching. We'll see how it goes.



A CABOOSE FOR THE BEDROOM

By Chris Ellis



As modelers or railfans I'm sure we've all fantasized at one point in time about owning a real full scale Engine or Caboose. Well, at least I have! With my wife telling me I couldn't buy a real caboose and put it in my backyard, I had to do the next best thing.

My son Brendan had a hideout made from a simple PVC pipe frame covered with bed sheets in our shared toy/computer room that was begging for an upgrade. A trip to the lumber yard netted wainscoting panels that resembled the wood siding of a caboose and other needed lumber and paint for my secret project. You see, along the way this turned into a surprise Birthday present for Brendan. I designed and painted it as a W&LE 0800 style caboose, his favorite railroad.



Brendan's caboose is a simple box frame made out of ½" diameter PVC pipe and fittings. Since it sits in the corner of a room, Chris only made two walls out of ½" thick wainscoting, held to the frame with short drywall screws. The cupola was a little more work, but is still "just a box", framed with 2x2s and covered with more wainscoting. Finishing details include a smoke jack, also made out of PVC pipe.

Presented at his 8th birthday party it was a big hit and I got to fulfill a dream for both of us I'm sure. After almost two years the caboose still gets used by Brendan and even me, it's the perfect place for a quick nap!



INSTALLING AN ECONAMI INTO A NICKEL PLATE GEEP

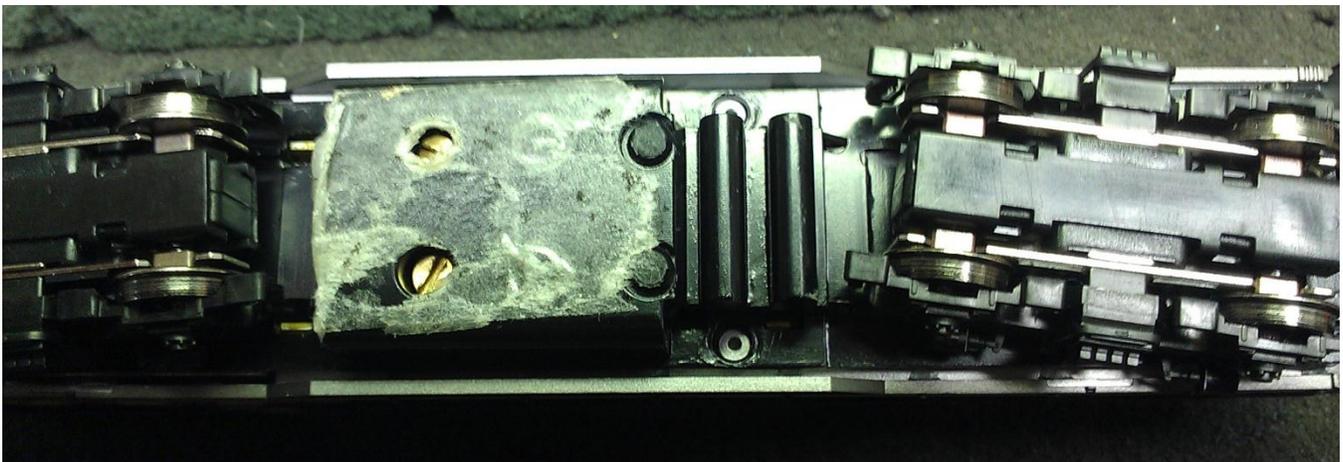
By Joe Bliss



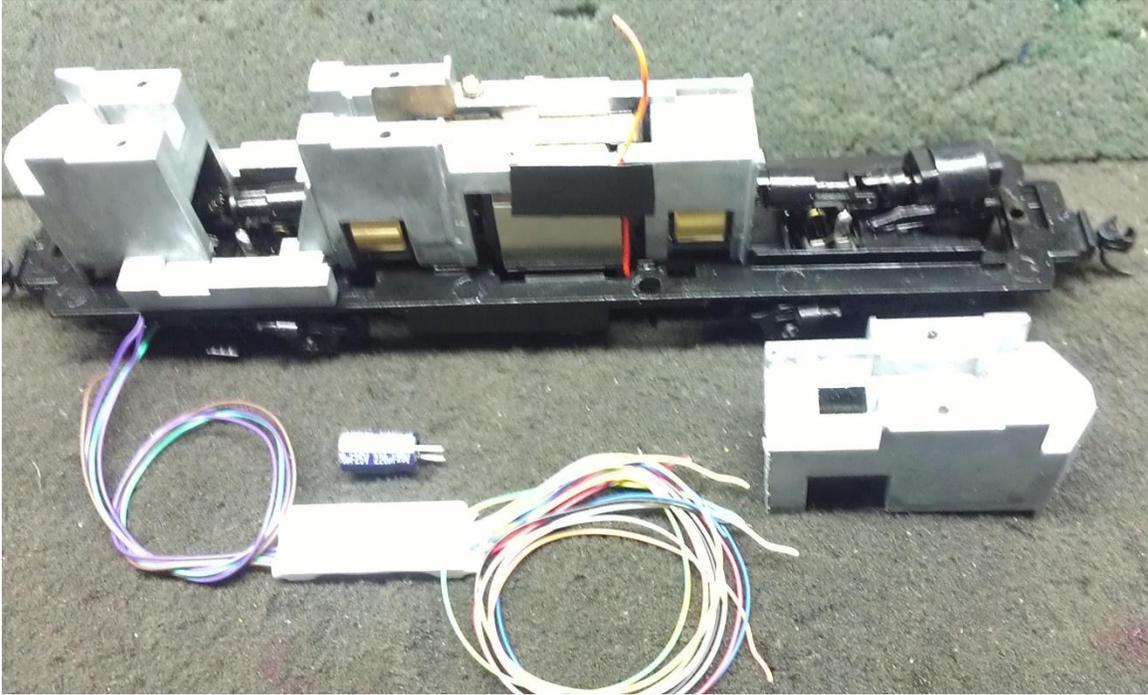
As a professional DCC decoder installer, having my own business installing decoders for other modelers, I've installed sound into dozens of types of models, from small steam to modern diesels. Recently, I installed [Soundtraxx's](#) new [Econami](#) sound decoders into two Proto 2000 Geeps, one being a Northern Pacific GP7, and the other a NKP 400-series GP7 with a Mars light in front. I've done several of my own Nickel Plate and C&O Proto Geeps with the Tsunami AT-1000 series decoders, but the New Econami series decoders make installs much easier!

I begin by checking out the operation of the mechanism, and then test the current draw with a DC power pack and an ammeter. If the engine is drawing more than 1 amp stalled (wheels slipping) now's the time to clean & lube it, or even install a better motor! If a Proto engine draws more than one amp it's usually due to cracked axle gears. In the case of this NKP unit, the factory grease had dried and seized the bearings on the worm gear shaft! A careful disassembly and full cleaning of the drive components, followed by a light installation of quality hobby lubricant, fixed the problem nicely.

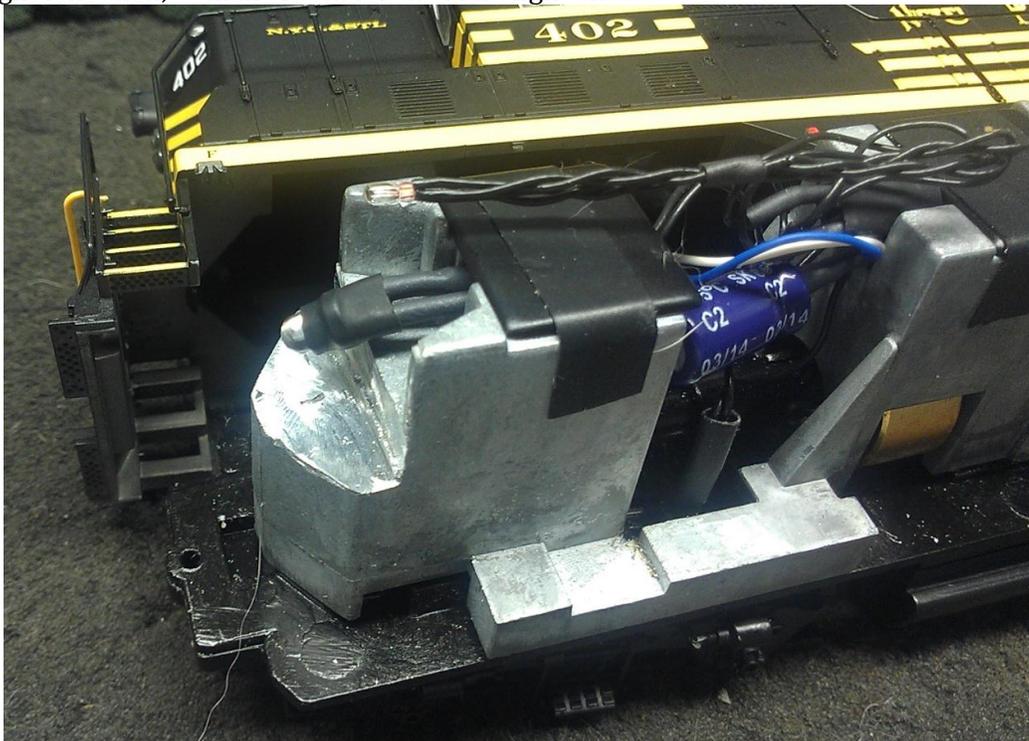
Next, I remove the shell, the DC lighting board, the fuel tank detail, and the weight from the frame. Don't forget that there are two screws under the fuel tank holding the shell on!



Next, I remove the factory wires, but leave about 1" of the orange motor wire intact above the top of the weight.



I then clamp the weight in my vise, and remove the weight just behind the flywheel to make room for a [16x35mm](#) Rail Master Hobbies speaker and enclosure. For the NKP shell, I also cut down the front weight area about 1/4" below the headlight lens shelf, to make room for the Mars light effects



Many installation articles tell you to add a "sugar cube" type speaker in the cab area, rather than disassembling a model and hacking away at the frame and weights. But I prefer adding the largest speakers I can into an engine, and don't mind the extra work milling the frame and losing a little bit of engine weight (especially since most diesel models are MU'ed together in groups, overall pulling performance isn't hurt at all)

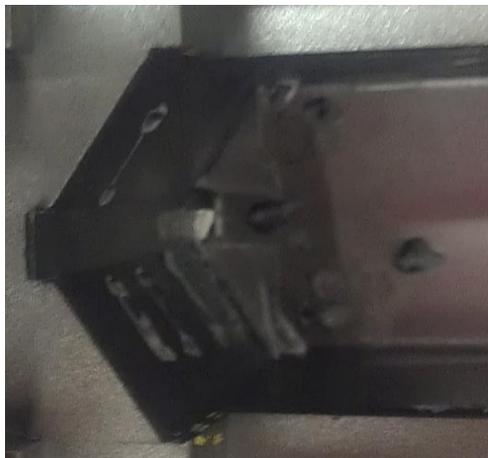
One of my “tricks” to squeeze everything into a model is to run the rear headlight LED through the speaker enclosure. To do this, drill two #53 holes in one end of the enclosure to run wires through, and drill a 1/8" hole in the other end to accommodate a [T1/3mm warm white LED](#).



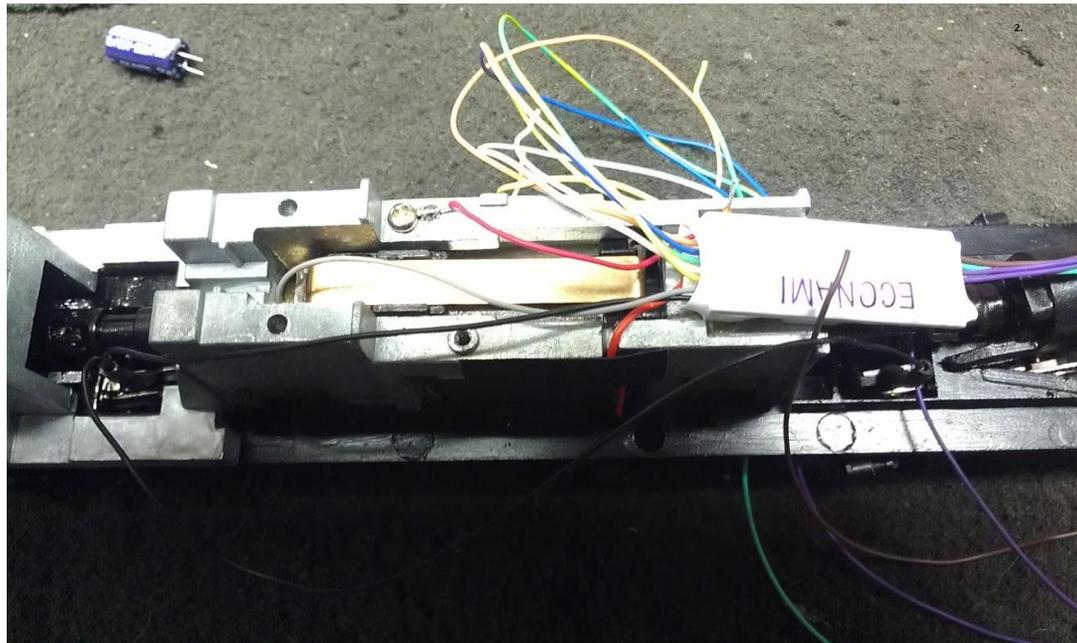
Next, to install the Detail Associates [#1004](#) Pyle dual headlight casting and the [#1008](#) Mars light casting, first carefully remove the headlight/number board lens. Next, remove the cast on headlight on the short hood with an Xacto knife, and attach the Detail Associates castings. I used Tenax [7R plastic welder](#), being careful not to get excess on the painted surfaces surrounding them. Set the shell aside, and then drill them out once the glue has completely dried.



While that's drying, cut the number boards off the lens/light pipe. I held the front lens in my Pana-Vise and carefully used a razor saw to do this. I then positioned the number boards back in the spell opening and used a small drop of Tenax to secure them in place.



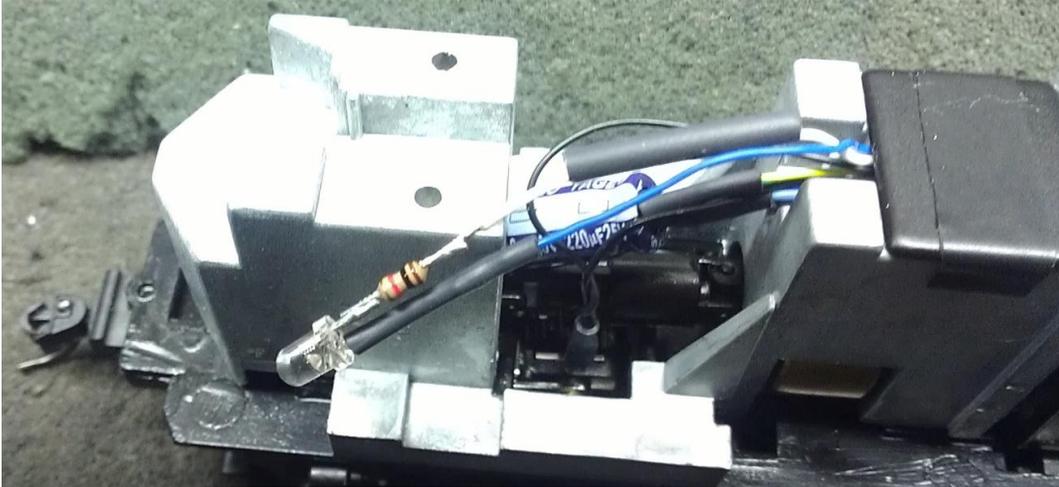
Now back to the decoder. I solder the gray wire to the upper motor brush contact, the red wire from the decoder to the frame, and splice the orange wire together, covering the splice with [1/16" diameter](#) heat shrink tubing. Apply electrical tape to the top brush contact and to the top of the weight to keep anything from shorting out. Run a new piece of [30 AWG black](#) wire from the left rear truck contact, and solder the black wire from the decoder to the front truck.



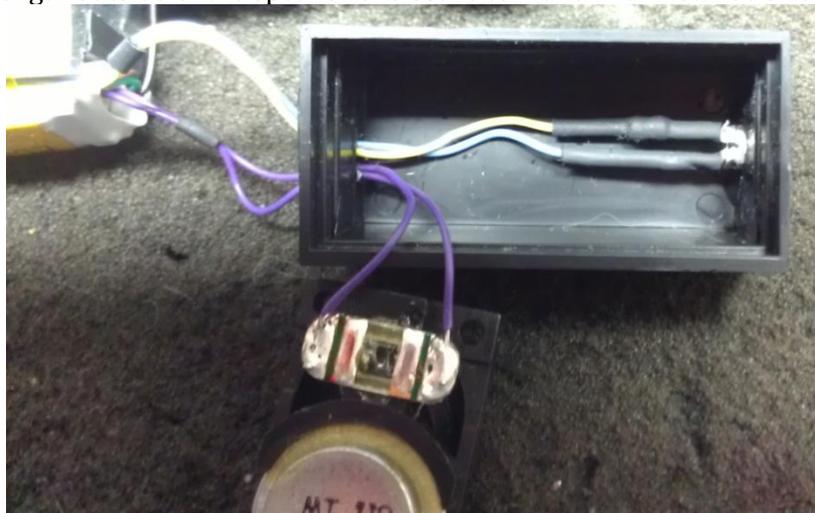
Now, carefully tuck the wires along the top of the weight with the Econami decoder, and use [Kapton tape](#) to hold the decoder in place.



To wire the front headlight I solder the blue wire to the Anode (+) lead, and added a [1,000 Ohm, 1/4 watt 5%](#) axial resistor, to the cathode (-) lead of the LED (T1/3mm size white). Make sure you insulate all exposed leads and wires them with more 1/8" diameter heat shrink tubing, slipped over the wires before you start soldering!



Next, run the blue and yellow rear headlight wires and the the purple speaker wires through the small holes in the speaker enclosure. Solder the cathode (-) lead of the LED to another 1,000 Ohm resistor, and solder it to the yellow wire. Solder the anode (+) lead of the LED to the blue wire. Shrink the heat shrink tubing over any exposed wires, and secure the LED into the 1/8" hole you previously drilled into the side of the enclosure with a small drop of ACC. Leave some excess wire length outside of the speaker enclosure to make final installation and positioning easier.



Now, attach the speaker wires to the speaker, observing the polarity! Usually the positive (+) connection is on the right (Holding contacts at the bottom facing you), or marked with red paint, or a "+". Snap the speaker in the enclosure and fill the screw holes with [putty](#).



With the speaker and enclosure assembled, add some "[Fun-Tak](#)" mounting putty on the back side of the enclosure, to hold it to the roof of the shell.



Now, return to the front headlight castings, which should be dry and secure by now. Pilot drill the lens area with a .035" drill in a pin vise. Next, drill all the way through them with a #53 drill bit. I used some clear Lucite rod this size for the headlight lens, about 1/4" long, and let the front LED shine on the backs of them and the bottoms of the number boards. For the Mars light casting, I inserted 2 Miniatronic's [1.5 volt, 15mA, 1.2mm lamps](#) in the holes.

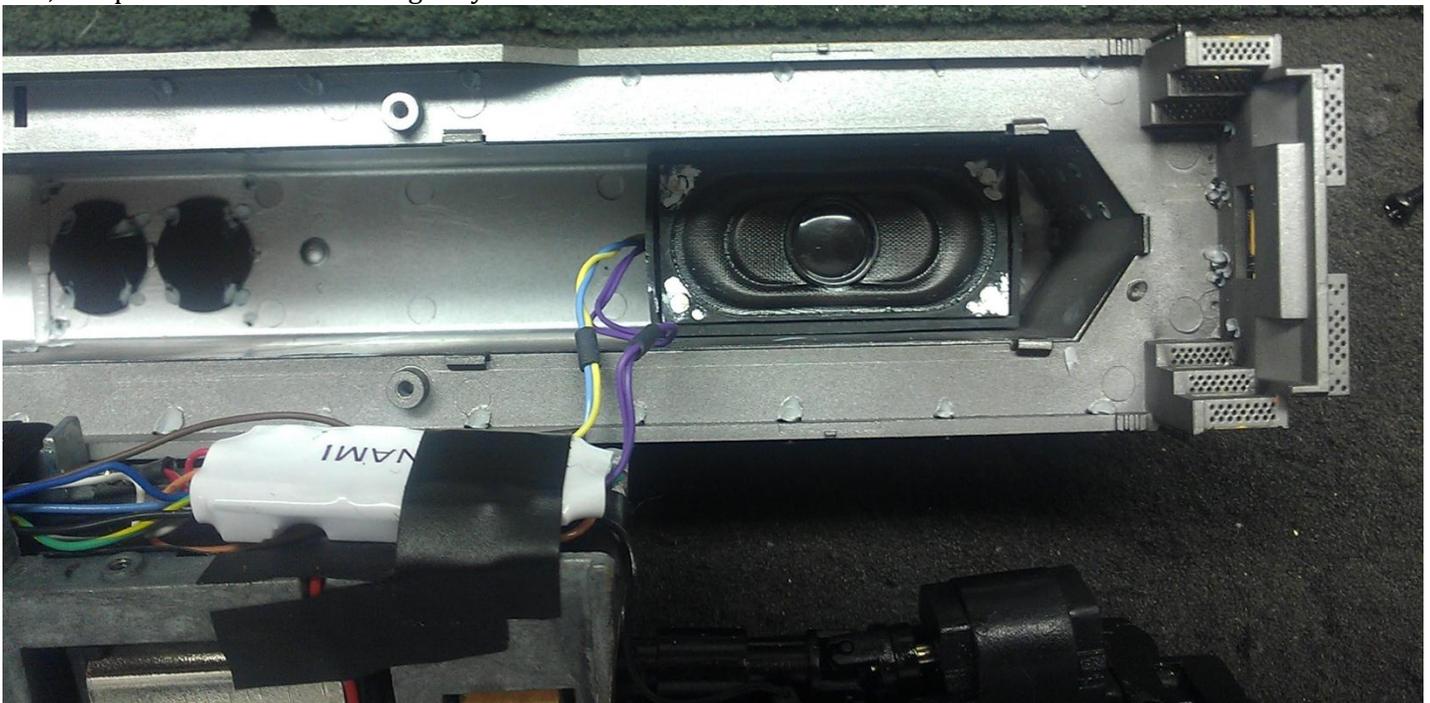


Hook one lead of each of the Minatronics lamps to the blue common (+) decoder wire, and the others to the "green FX3, or brown FX4 wire", soldering a [680 Ohm, 1/4 watt 5%](#) axial resistor to both lamp return wires. Don't forget to add the heat shrink tubing!

Now, modify the rear number board/headlight lens, in the same way that we worked o the front lens. Cut off the light pipe squarely behind the back edges of the number boards with a razor saw, replace in the opening, and secure with more Tenax.



Now, you should be ready to re-install the shell onto the frame. Make sure that all of the wires are properly routed away from any gears, motors, or "pinch points", carefully turn the shell upside down, and press the speaker enclosure with the putty as close to the back of lens as it will fit. Make sure that it clears the weight and decoder, and tuck your 1.5V lamps in the Mars light holes you drilled. Again, make sure you don't "pinch" any wires along the sides, and push the mechanism in gently.



One thing: don't snap, screw, or otherwise secure the shell to the frame right now! Leave the shell loose for the time being, place the locomotive on your track, and test it! If all is well, then go ahead and fasten it to the chassis and re-install the coupler pockets!



Finally, with the decoder installation complete we can "fine tune" some of the decoders CV values.

- Set CV37/FX3 or CV38/FX4, depending on whether you connected the Mars lamps to the green or brown wire, to a value of "4".
- Set CV51 or CV52 to a value of "2", and set CV133 to a value of "0". Otherwise, when you turn on the Mars light you may also turn on the Dynamic Brake sounds, which these NKP units never had.
- Next, set CV49 (headlight), and CV50 (backup light) to "Bit 7=1". Since we used LEDs for this install this will properly set those lighting functions for LEDs, and allow them to dim down like incandescent lamps.
- Now, to get the optimum sound out of you oval, or even a "sugar cube" speaker, set CV225 to "7". This enables the 7-band equalizer function. Then adjust the individual bands as follows:
 - CV 226 = 0
 - CV 227 = 0
 - CV 228 = 175
 - CV 229 = 200
 - CV 230 = 225
 - CV 231 = 200
 - CV 232 = 185

You should notice a great improvement in sound quality. But if it's too loud, you can lower the master volume, CV128, or the individual sound volumes! (See Soundtraxx's website, and look up the [Technical Manual](#) for all of the Econami's CV settings & default values).

Finally, enjoy your new sound and light effect equipped Nickel Plate Geep!

Joe Bliss is a modeler and professional DCC installer, and has been a fan of the Nickel Plate and Chesapeake & Ohio for most of his life. Head to his online store, [Allegheny Model RR Services](#), to see more of his work, and to YouTube to see a video of a [similar DCC installation](#) (sound, lights, and Mars light) in action!

MODELER'S REFERENCE

NKP Caboose Lettering, circa 1900-1920



Dr. Dave Campbell collection

Nickel Plate Road cabooses wore six basic paint schemes during their nearly 100 years on the road. The second scheme, shown in these three photos, is among the least-well known, and one that I've never seen modeled. It's also the simplest to paint!

Good evidence on early NKP paint schemes is hard to find, but beginning around 1905 the road began applying large corporate initials onto the sides of their freight equipment and cabooses, and this is the scheme shown here. The cabooses were painted a rich, deep brown color identical to the road's boxcars, but was varnished like passenger equipment, which is why the cars look so dark. Lettering was in white, and consisted of simple 12" high characters on the sides of the cars (AC&F-built cars did also include the car weight, but that wasn't applied on railroad-applied paint).



ACF builder's photo, Westerfield collection



Ray Breyer collection

NKP lettering was changed to include the "Nickel Plate Road" monogram during World War One, and the railroad completely changed both steam and caboose lettering at that time. Given that varnished equipment had to be stripped and repainted every seven to ten years, the last of the cabooses lettered this way would have disappeared by 1927.

MODEL A MIKE

NKP 587 in the 1948-1952 Period

(Part One of Two)

By Ray Breyer



These days, assembling a Nickel Plate steam roster in model form has never been easier. Berkshires, USRA Mikados and 0-8-0s, and Consolidations have recently been made in HO, N, O, and even S scales. But besides the Berkshires most of the equipment offered is generic at best, and only partially looks like something that actually ran on the NKP. Leaving “rivet counting” out of the equation we still have to do at least some work on our models to give our fleets a proper Nickel Plate look and feel.

In this installment of “Model A Mike”, I’ll tackle a very popular subject: NKP 587. Probably the second best know Nickel Plate Road steam engine, 587 was a steam ambassador for many years and for most people is the archetypical NKP Mikado.



NKP 587 doing what she did best: running in fantrip service in the late 20th Century as a fantastic example of every day steam power from 50 years earlier. Monticello, IL, 5/28/1997. Ray Breyer photo.

Sadly, the story that 587 tells us today really isn't very accurate, since as far as anyone can tell, her fsntrip appearance today is nothing like her appearance when running in regular freight service. Specifically, when hauling freight from the 1930s through 1950s, there's no direct evidence that she ever used a 22-RA tender like the one she has today.

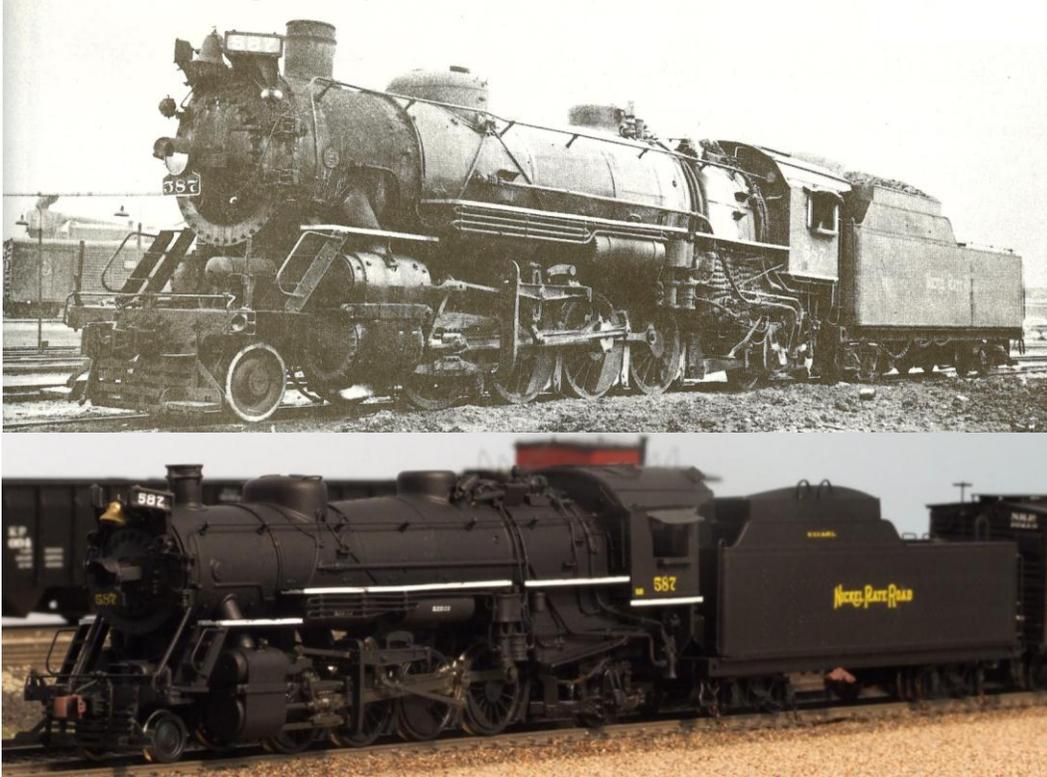


NKP 587 at three distinct phases of her life: the 1930s as an anonymous freight hauler, 1951 as one of the last original USRA Mikes on the roster, and 1954 as emergency standby power at Frankfort. In all three cases she's sporting three different tenders, none of which are the big 22-RA she has now. Other small appliances are also different, but the lack of a gigantic tender is readily apparent.

(photos: Paul Stringham, Sandy Goodrick, unknown/Jay Williams collection)

As far as I can tell, 587 was actually a pretty unique-looking engine on the roster, so isn't actually representational of the other 85 H-6 class Mikes. Still, most people want a model of her, and she is a pretty simple engine to modify. Since

I've chased and ridden behind her several times, and have even been lucky enough to have two cab rides, I definitely had to have my own model of the engine in my fleet.



My model of NKP 587 is as close as I could get to her appearance as a mainline freight hauler in the 1948-1953 period. My personal bias towards big Nickel Plate freight power is with the top-mounted number boards but without the Mars light. Nickel Plate H-6 Mikados changed their appearance fast and often in the ten years following World War II, so it's sometimes hard to find really good documentation on what a specific engine looked like during a specific year, but I finally lucked across a couple of photos of her in the early 1950s with the overall appearance that I was looking for. With a large pile of reference material in hand to fill in the blanks that the period photos didn't cover and a couple of parts catalogs, I was ready to dive in!

[STARTING THE PROJECT](#)

As with any other project you need to have a plan, and you need to have parts. Since 587 is an original USRA locomotive, finding a starting point for a super detailing project was easy: find a model of one and get cracking! In HO scale we've been blessed with an overabundance of USRA Light Mikado models in plastic, white metal and brass. Pick your favorite and start there. I generally find that working on modern, DCC-friendly, "plastic" engines is faster and easier than working with all-metal models, so I started with one of those. I actually built this model several years ago using an Athearn Genesis engine; these days I'd default to either BLI or Bachmann, both of which are slight improvements over the older Athearn model, and are currently available. Overall, I wanted this to be a fairly detailed model, but one that didn't end up eating a huge amount of time. I settled on NOT soldering anything on the model, and keeping as much cast-on and stock detailing as possible.

Finding a tender to use was next. The NKP swapped tenders around a LOT, assigning engines ones that were sized for their intended role. In the case of 587, I've identified eight different tenders that she trailed in the postwar years. The early 1950s photos I found showed her with a 13-RA mid-sized tender, so that's what I looked for. Since this was supposed to be a simple project, I looked around for something as close to the 13-RA's as possible. Bachmann's "USRA Long" tender is almost perfect, so I settled on that model as a base, with some added details (if you want to model the larger 16-RA or 22-RA tenders you're going to have to wait for future articles! I'll get to each of those...eventually).

Next up is assembling a parts list. I've been a diehard steam modeler for decades, so my own personal parts stash is larger than at most hobby shops. No one manufacturer makes everything you'll need, so you'll have to source things from all over. Precision Scale comes the closest to having almost everything you need, but Bowser does have some nicer parts, especially in their Cal-Scale line. Finally, some parts are only made by a single manufacturer and are sometimes out of production, so you'll have to hunt for those. I've included a "full" parts list that includes multiple sources for the same base part if available. The parts that I actually used in this project are underlined. Everything else needed are "scratch building supplies". Don't let that scare you off of a project like this, since in most cases "scratchbuilding" means adding a single chunk of strip styrene somewhere, or occasionally building a simple box.

PARTS LIST:

- USRA Light 2-8-2: Athearn, Broadway Limited, Bachmann
- USRA "Long" Tender: Bachmann

BRASS DETAIL PARTS

- Flying Numberboards: Cal-Scale 190-6262, Cary 13-184
- Bell, Front Angle Mount: Cal-Scale 190-299, Cary 13-249, Bowser 90013, Precision Scale 31601
- Class Lights: Cal-Scale 190-280
- Smokebox Hinges: Precision Scale 32308
- Blow-Down Muffler: Cal-Scale 190-223, Cary 13-206
- Low Water Alarm: Cal-Scale 190-333, Precision Scale 31997
- Generator: Bowser 90392, Cal-Scale 190-234, Cary 13-126, Precision Scale 31280
- NKP Whistle with Shield: Cal-Scale 190-6538
- Power Reverse: Cal-Scale 190-218
- Injector Controls: Precision Scale 32212
- Emergency Air Reservoir: Bowser 90436 *, Cal-Scale 190-272 **, Precision Scale 3405 (* best match. ** only need part of this detail kit)
- Mechanical Lubricator: Bowser 90414, Precision Scale 3382
- "Random Piping #1": Cal-Scale 190-6318
- "Random Piping #2": Cal-Scale 190-6319
- (Optional Wind Deflector: Bowser 90322)

PLASTIC DETAIL PARTS

- Pyle-National Headlight: Precision Scale 31299
- HO scale plastic traffic cone (beats me who made the ones I have, as they don't show up anywhere on the Walthers catalog or online. Bush 7788 are similar, although there seem to be others available online as well. Honestly, so long as you can get something conical that will work, anything is usable!)
- Ladder stock: anything will do. I think I used about half of a boxcar side ladder from an Intermountain kit.
- Turnbuckles: Tichy 8021
- Standard NBWs: Tichy 8016
- Rivets: Tichy 8018 (.025" diameter)

SCRATCHBUILDING SUPPLIES

- Styrene strip, .01" x .02"
- Styrene strip, .01" x .03"
- Styrene strip, .01" x .04"
- Styrene strip, .01" x .06"
- Styrene strip, .01" x .08"
- Styrene strip, .02" x .02"
- Styrene strip, .02" x .04"
- Styrene strip, .03" x .06"
- Styrene strip, .04" x .04"
- Styrene strip, .06" x .156"
- Styrene strip, .125" x .188"
- Styrene strip, .135" x .195"
- Styrene strip, .08" angle (or "L beam")
- Styrene strip, .06" U-channel
- Styrene round rod, .02" diameter
- .020" thick plain sheet styrene
- Shim brass strip, .005" x .065"
- .010", .012", .015", .025" diameter wire (brass, etc.)

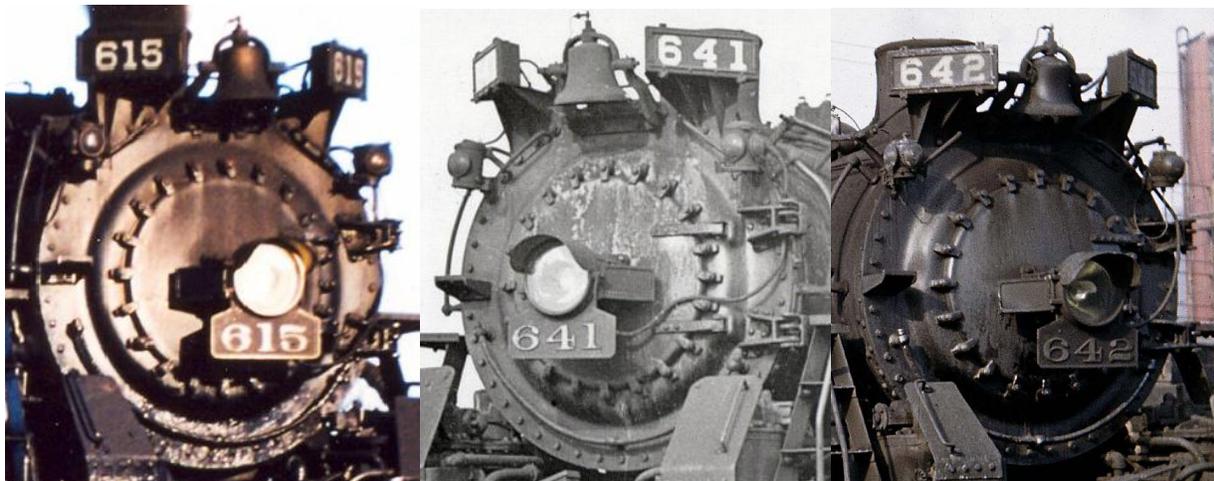
OTHER PARTS

- Decals: Resin Car Works NKP002, Nickel Plate Mikado decal set
- Couplers: Kadee #58 semi-scale couplers

Now that you have the parts on hand, let's get started! I'll break down the modification into several simpler sub-assemblies to make the process less intimidating. Some of the specifics are unique to this engine, but the techniques are applicable to every H-6 on the roster.

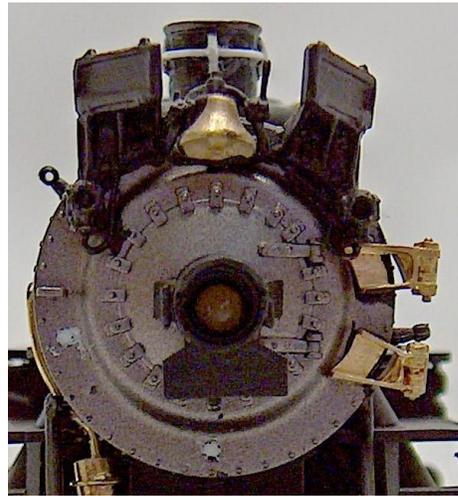
THE SMOKEBOX FRONT

I like to work on the smokebox front first with any steam detailing project; as the “face” of the engine, it gives the rest of the project some immediate character. In the case of Nickel Plate Mikados, changing the appearance of the smokebox front is probably the single biggest thing you can do with any project to give your model a NKP feel. In fact, this is the one thing I do to an H-6 that I want to add to my fleet, even if I’m not going to be performing a major conversion until years later.



As you can see, it doesn’t matter which class of H-6 you’re thinking of modeling, as they all have the same “nose”. This commonality of parts is great since not only does it give all of the engines an immediate “family look”, but it also makes your life easier when it comes to buying parts and doing the conversion work!

(note that 587’s face is a LITTLE different than the others. At some point between 1948 and 1951 she lost her lower curved grabiron, which she’s missing to this day. I’ve studied this area up close and there’s no hint of welded and patched holes. I suspect she developed a crack in her original smokebox front at some point around 1948 and had a replacement added. This is another case of paying attention to your specific prototype and specific time range!)



Here's a comparison between a stock USRA light Mike's front and my modified version. If you're modeling an original H-6a or H-6o between 1919 and 1930 you can get away without any work at all. But if you're modeling any time after 1927, and especially after 1947 when these engines had the flying numberboards added, you'll have to do all of this work. Thankfully, it's all pretty simple.

To start off this conversion, pop the smokebox front off of the model, disconnect the LED headlight, and remove the class lights, headlight, the bell and bracket. Remove the LED from the headlight, and keep it and its wires; we'll be using it again soon. Remove the rivet detail from the top of the face, between the mounting holes for the class lights (they need to go because of all of the stuff we have to put up there), and fill in the holes where the lower curved grab used to be.

First, let's get the hard part out of the way: adding the top angled numberboards (I call them "flying numberboards"; I have no idea where I got that term, but I like it. The NKP called them "Illuminated Number Boxes". Bo-ring!). The two halves of the numberboards are held together by a central mounting plate, with a predrilled hole for a bell bracket. I like the idea, but the central plate is too large to fit properly, especially the area around the screw hole. File/cut/snip/sand it down until only a small "crescent moon" strip at the top remains. Straighten the piece with a pair of flat-jawed pliers, test fit it onto the smokebox front, and ACC it into place. Be sure that the top chord of the bracket is even with the top of the front, and be sure that the entire piece is even! Lopsided numberboards will ruin the whole look.

Second, add the bell bracket into the existing hole for the stock bracket. The crescent of the numberboards should just clear the top of the hole. Third, add the class lights into the existing class light mounting holes. The Cal-Scale lights come with neat little wiring detail; keep them in place! They wrap around and up towards the boiler grabs as shown below. You can carefully and slowly bend these cast wires if you use chain-nose pliers and work deliberately.



If you look closely behind the bell, you can also see what's left of the numberboard bracket.

Fourth, add the smokebox front hinges to the fireman's side of the face. You need to reattach the front to the boiler for this step, since the hinges have a small lip on their sides that should touch the side of the boiler. Cut and sand the mounting pins from the hinges, file the backs smooth, and ACC them into place, making sure to NOT ACC the face to the boiler!



The hinges are a little large for the engine, and at a slightly larger radius, but they're the closest parts on the market. Because they're slightly oversized, they don't sit at quite the same place as on the real engine. (one note: for some of these detail photos I'm using close-ups from other engines I've modified, since I didn't plan on writing an article about 587. So ignore the grab iron in the middle of the lower hinge!)

Fifth: modify and re-install the headlight. This is an imprecise exercise; I've done it to three engines now, and I'm still not quite sure how I got away with it each time without ruining the LED. The LED is a T1 (or 3mm diameter) leaded lamp. It has to fit inside of the plastic Pyle-National headlight, which is ALSO 3mm wide. Using the drill bit closest to 3mm, 1/8", drill out the center of the headlight, starting at the front and working to the back. You'll end up removing most of the headlight material, but that's OK; the LED will replace the lost material. Next, FILE DOWN THE SIDES OF THE LED. This is the tricky part. You don't have to take off much, but the LED has to fit inside the headlight casting, AND it still has to work. That means working slowly and carefully with a sharp file, so you only remove a little material at a time. What you don't want to do is take off too much and expose one of the leads inside of the LED, which will ruin the whole fool thing. Try not to scuff up the front of the LED either.

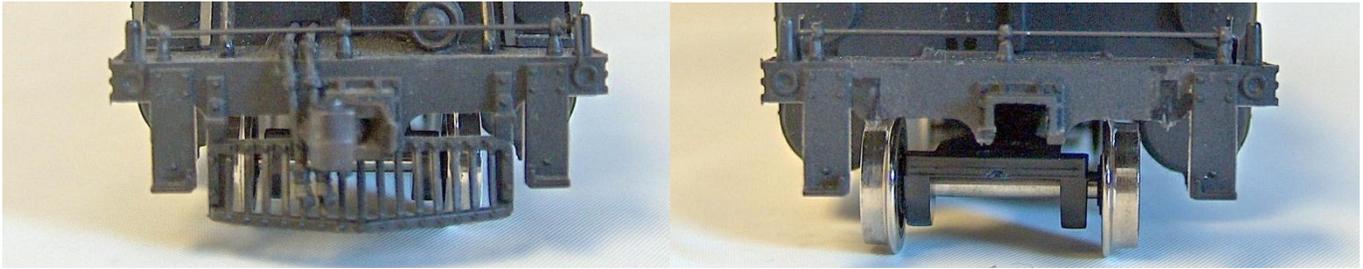
Once the hole is drilled, the LED is reduced in size, and both are test-fitted together to make sure that this conversion actually worked, ACC them together. Once dry, glue the headlight to the smokebox front.



Once the glue is dry, use putty to fill in the rest of the hole left over from the stock headlight. Let the putty dry and smooth out any ridges (I use the scraping method, since it's pretty hard to get sandpaper or even rifing files into all the nooks and crannies).

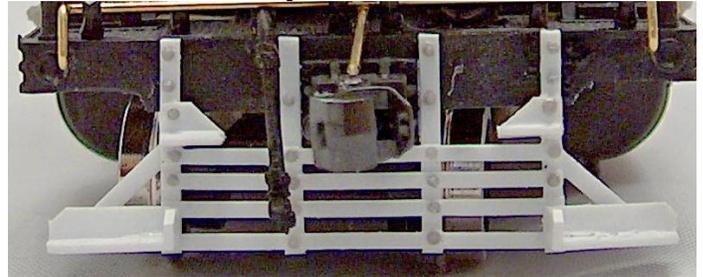
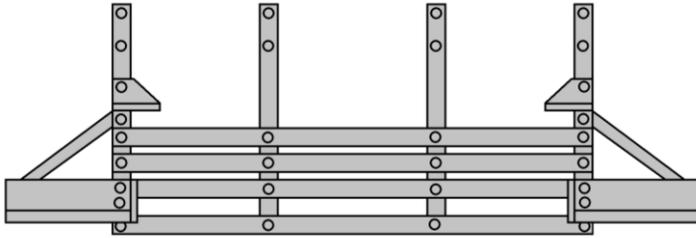
And finally, scratchbuild the headlight number board using .010" styrene. Unfortunately, I forgot to measure the part I made, but it's ABOUT .6" long by .3" high. Just do what I did and scale it off of prototype photos:





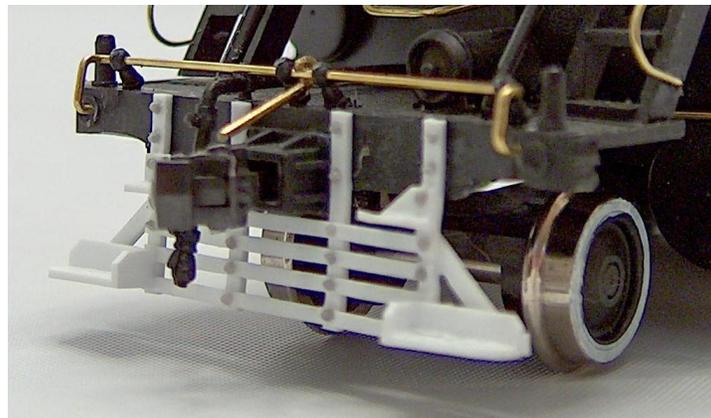
You need to remove the entire “cow catcher”, its vertical supports, and both of the side steps. Leave the coupler pocket detail intact.

Once that’s been removed and the area sanded smooth, you can “scratchbuild” the pilot.

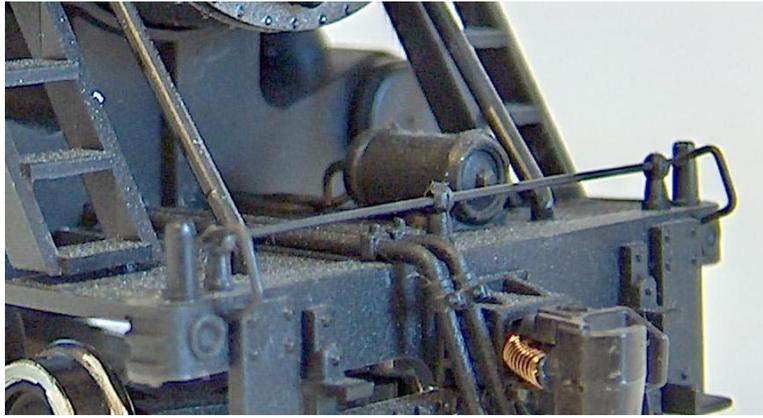


This really isn’t as hard as it sounds. Basically, just draw up a quick sketch of where the centerlines of each part is supposed to go onto a sheet of paper (or print out the handy drawing I’ve provided!), lay a sheet of glass over it, and start gluing styrene pieces to it. Once everything’s glued together and the MEK has dried fully, “pop” the part off of the glass with a #17 chisel blade.

Start by gluing the 2x4 verticals to the glass. Double check the spacing of the inside two pieces, since they need to clear the cast-on coupler box (each model is slightly different, so this is almost the only critical dimension in the entire process). Add a SMALL amount of MEK to each one to temporarily stick them to the glass, and then add the 1x3 horizontal slats (I generally cut them to exact length after they’ve been installed). When they’re on, add the upper and lower steps, and the lower step ends (1x6 material cut to size). Add the NBWs or rivets (your choice: the NKP used square head bolts; I used NBWs because I had them and because Tichy only makes 3” square head bolts, which are a little too large). With the assembly dry, pop it off of the glass and add the two 1x3 lower step supports to the back side of the pilot. Test fit the part, check to make sure that it clears the rail heads, and glue it to the engine. And you’re done!

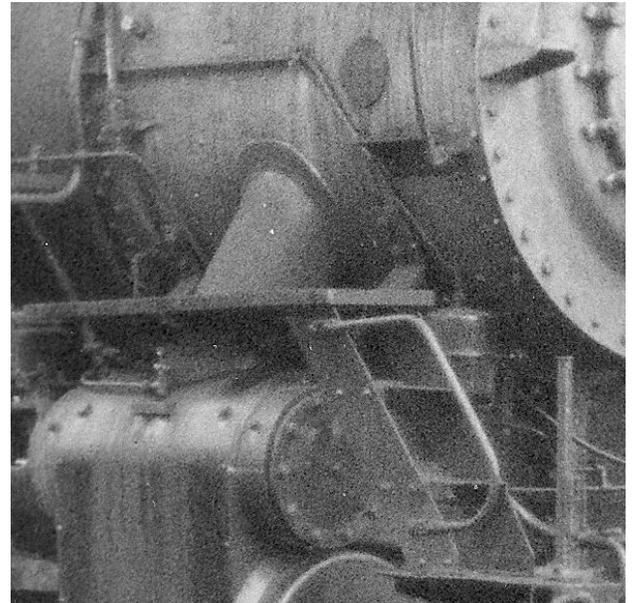


Next up is the emergency air reservoir. Mine came out of Cal-Scale 190-272, air brake detail set, but Bowser part 90436 is a closer match (and is most likely long out of stock, now that Bowser has discontinued all of their steam kits). This part just gets added onto the left side of the pilot deck.

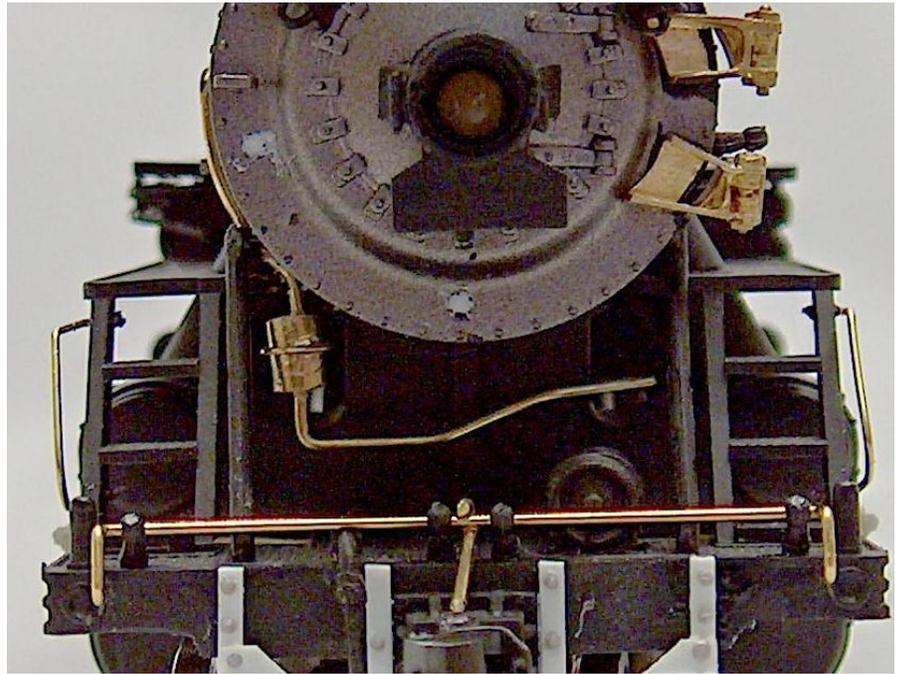
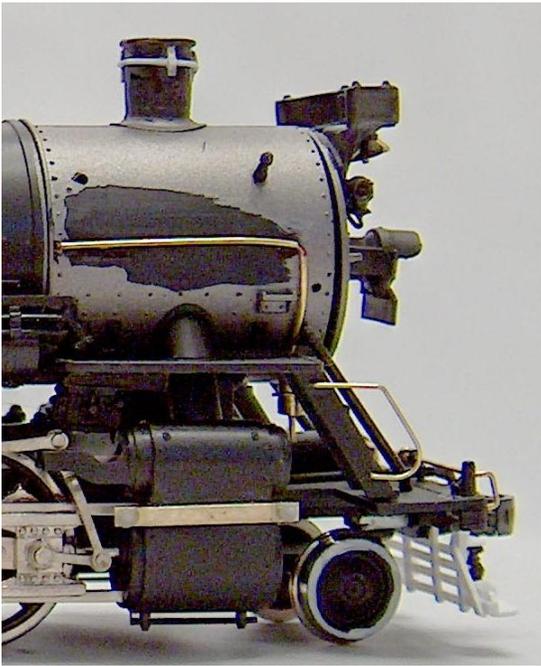


My part came with two cast-on pipes attached to one side. I ran those towards the cylinder saddle, but otherwise ignored “piping” this small detail.

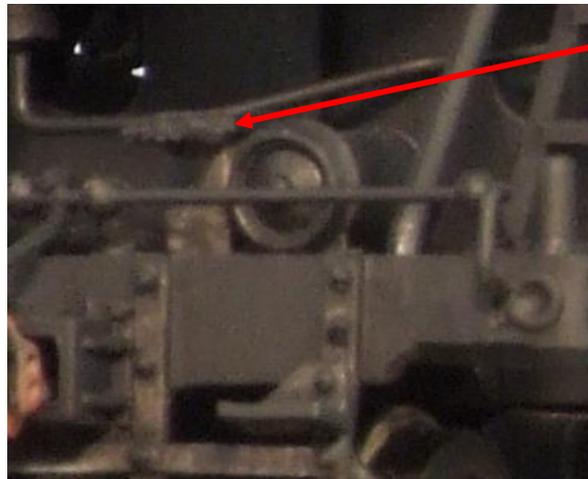
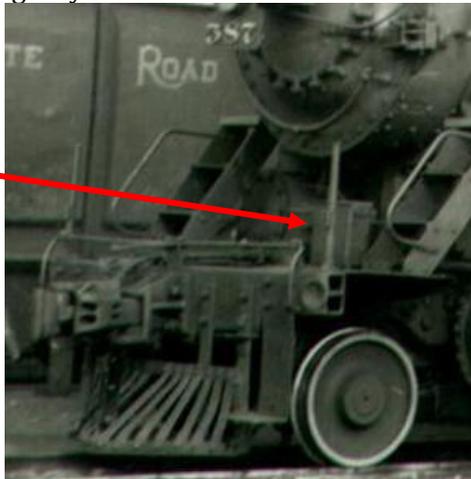
The next detail is what I “think” is an oil filter for the train air line. I’m not really sure about that, but my motto has always been “you don’t need to know what something is in order to model it!”



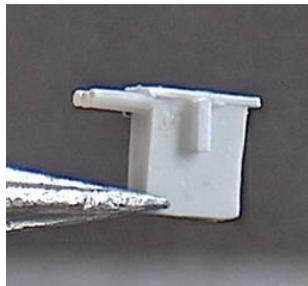
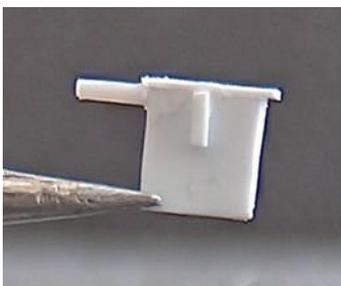
This picky little part doesn’t need to be modeled, but it does help clutter up the front end of the engine and add some “cheap” detail. The part is best described as a “coffee can with pipes coming out of each end”, so that’s about what I did: My part is a piece of scrap brass tubing with a small piece of wire wrapped around the center of it. I filled the tubing with Squadron putty, shoved a piece of .015” diameter brass wire through the still-wet putty, and let it dry. Once it was dry, it was a simple matter of hand bending the wire to run from the lagging on the right side of the engine, down the smokebox, and across the pilot. I wasn’t sure just where this pipe went, so I made it “disappear” behind the right side cylinder.



The last thing we need to add to the pilot is the flag box. NKP Mikes had their flag boxes mounted all over the place on the pilot, and they tended to move around a bit. I wanted mine to stay on the model securely, so I glued it to the side of the emergency air tank.



The flag box is another easy scratchbuilding project. The body is a .156" long piece of .060"x.156" styrene, the lid is a piece of scale 1x6 that's cut just longer than .156" (.165"?), the lid latch is a very short piece of .01"x.02" strip, and the flag poles are .020" styrene rod (you can use .012" wire if you want; I didn't want to drill out the box body to accept wires!).



THE CAB

We'll focus on the back end of the engine now, which besides the nose of the engine gets the most scrutiny (our little bitty engineers are in there!) Comparing the prototype with the model, there's actually very little to add to this part of the model:



The stock cab is essentially correct, but I decided to super detail it to bring it a little closer to the prototype. This means removing the stock part's sun shades, cab roof wind deflector and arm rests, and adding new wind deflectors, armrests, grabs, sun visors, and windows.

First, remove the unwanted detail. Using a #17 blade, I carved off the wind deflector, sun shades and armrests. I wasn't all that careful about removing rivet details at these areas, since the new parts would hide the rivets anyway. Since I'm modeling summertime in central Illinois, I also removed the window frame on one side of the engine (most steam ran during warm weather with the windows wide open).



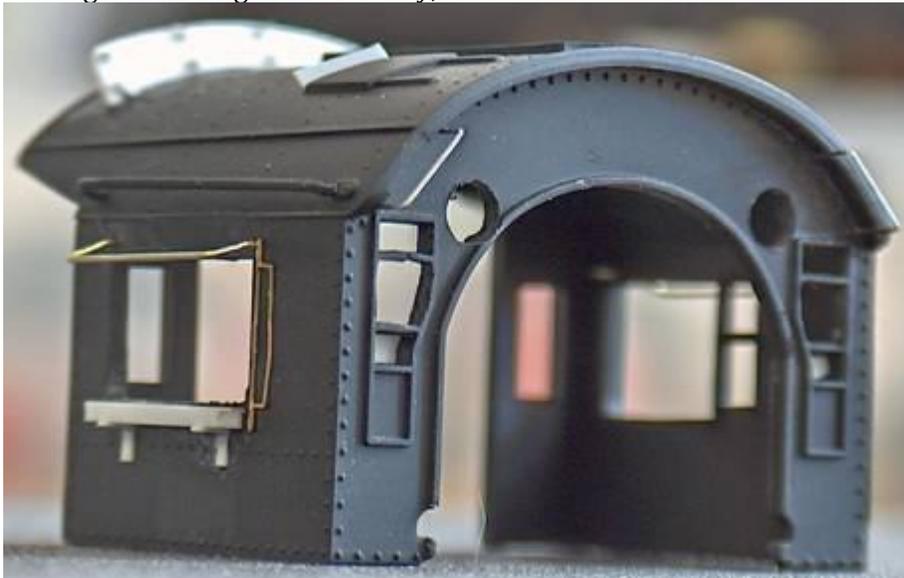
Next, the cab doors need to be modified: the number of window partitions are correct, but the lowest one should be solid, not open. To better match the cab windows I drilled out the center window, cleaned up the frame with a #11 blade, and blanked out the lower window with a scrap piece of .010" styrene:



Next, I added the cab portholes. There are two round windows near the top of the cab roof (see the above prototype image) which aren't on the model, so I used a 1/8" drill bit to cut out the window openings. Spacing and positioning isn't critical on this small detail, just so long as they're there!



Once you have all the hacking and drilling out of the way, it's time to add the new details.



The cab armrests are .03"x .06" styrene with .01"x.02" support brackets. The arm rests run the full width of the cab window.

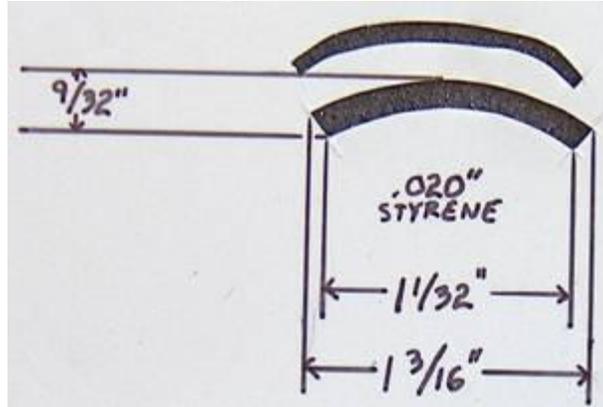
The sun shade bracket is .015" brass wire, bent to shape and added to appropriately drilled holes. I went with thicker wire for survivability since this part sticks out from the model. The simulated canvas sunshade material will be added after painting and decaling the engine. I used my ever-handy metal foil tape, but have used plain old tinfoil glued to a bracket in the past. You can also use something like tissue paper, but that likely won't survive very long on a layout.

The grabs on the front of the cab above the windows are .010" brass wire, bent to shape and surface-mount glued to the underside of the cab roof (which is simpler than drilling tiny holes along the edge of the cab roof. No one will ever see that the grabs are glued to the surface of the part).

The photo above shows foldable wind guards. 587 sometimes had those, so I mocked up a set to see how they'd look. I ultimately decided to leave these parts OFF of my model. If you want them, Detail Associates makes several versions of diesel wind shields.

The wind deflectors on the small rooftop ventilation hatches are just pieces of .01"x.04" styrene, glued to the ends of the doors.

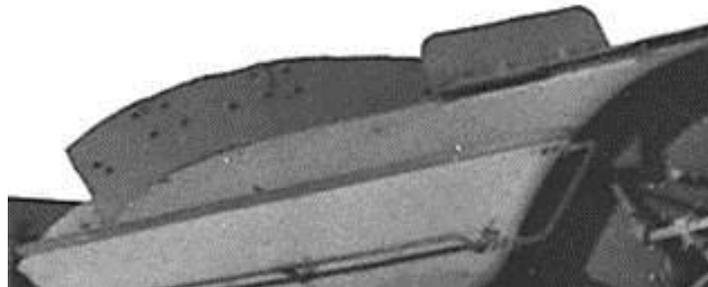
Now for a fun part: the rooftop wind deflector. I cheated when making this part: I just used the back of the roof as a curve template, cut out a few, and used the one that looked best. It took me three tries to get the cut even, but I ended up with this:



You can see an earlier failed attempt above. After I had the piece I liked, I beveled the lower edge to about a 45-degree angle by running it along some sandpaper wrapped around my finger, and glued the piece to the roof with MEK. You have to hold the part in place until the glue sets, or it will end up crooked and improperly bonded (it has to follow the roof curve).



Once the piece fits properly, I added some rivet line detail to the front edge, since the rivets are very apparent on the prototype.

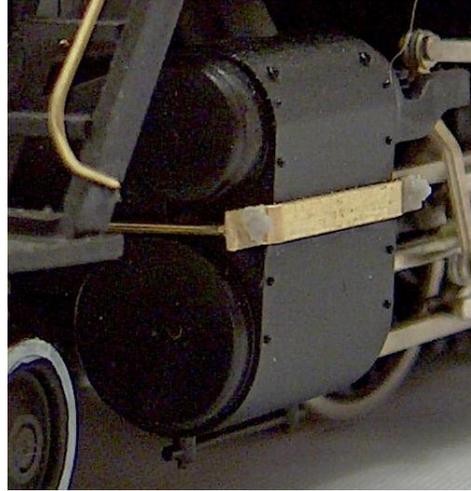
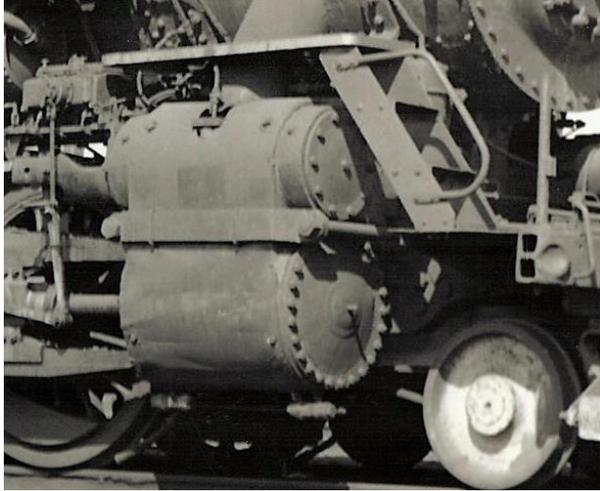


There's nothing hard about adding surface-mounted rivets to a model: just cut out the ones you need, pick them up with the tip of a fresh #11 blade gently poked into the part, add a small dot of MEK to where you want the rivet to go, and add the rivet to the MEK. It took me longer to type this than it did to add all ten rivets to the part!

Once the wind deflector is in place, you're done with the cab for now. Later in the assembly process we'll add the injector control knobs and sunshade canvas.

THE CYLINDERS

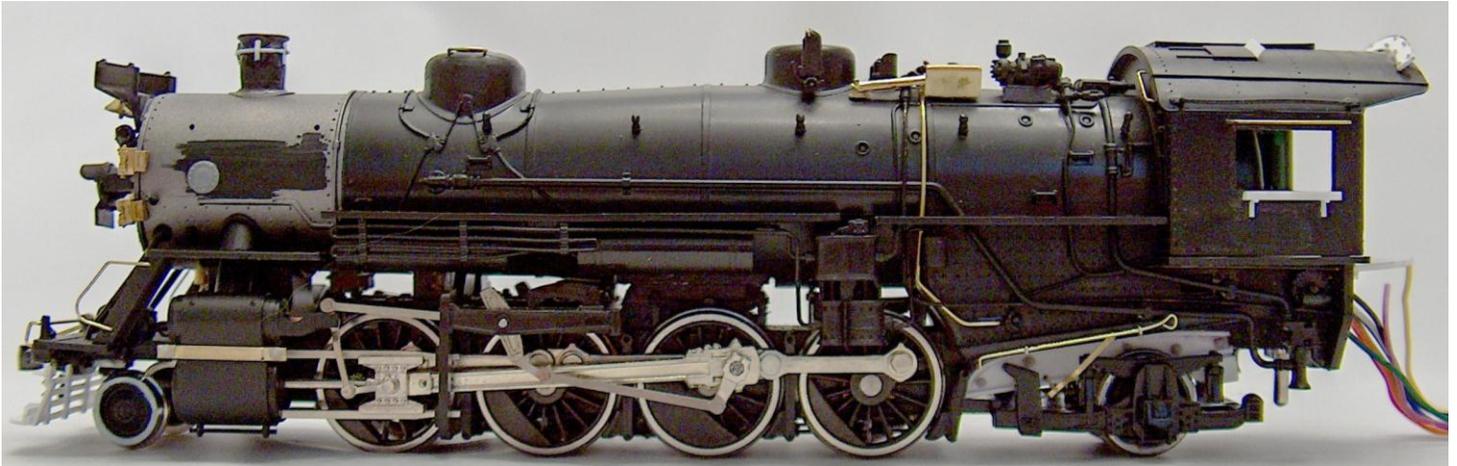
Between 1935 and 1937, NKP 587 had cylinder braces added, as did virtually every other H-6 in the fleet (there was some concern about the castings cracking). This was a steel bar bolted across the sides of the cylinders and onto the frame of the engine designed to keep the cylinder from flying off into space if it broke, and was very rudimentary. It is a distinctive spotting feature on NKP Mikes though, and is easy to model.



To make these braces I used a piece of brass bar stock, .005" thick and .060" wide, cut to .595" long (if you can't find brass bar stock, you can hand cut these out of a piece of brass sheet .005" thick). The ends make a jog inward about the width of the material, and are .065" long. Once the parts were made I used ACC to glue them to the cylinders, and added a small NBW to either end. To simulate the rod attaching the brace to the frame, I just glued a small piece of thick-ish scrap wire to the front of the cylinder (I think it's .020" diameter, but this is another non-critical part, so anything will do!). Don't add a bar to the back of the cylinders, as it could interfere with the valve gear. Finally, I added the small drifting valve to the top of each cylinder. Honestly, I have no idea WHAT these detail parts were, since they were just random pieces that I found in my parts stash. Precision Scale does make them as a brass part, but just about anything will do including the insulators off of O scale Lionel telephone poles!



THE FIREMAN'S SIDE

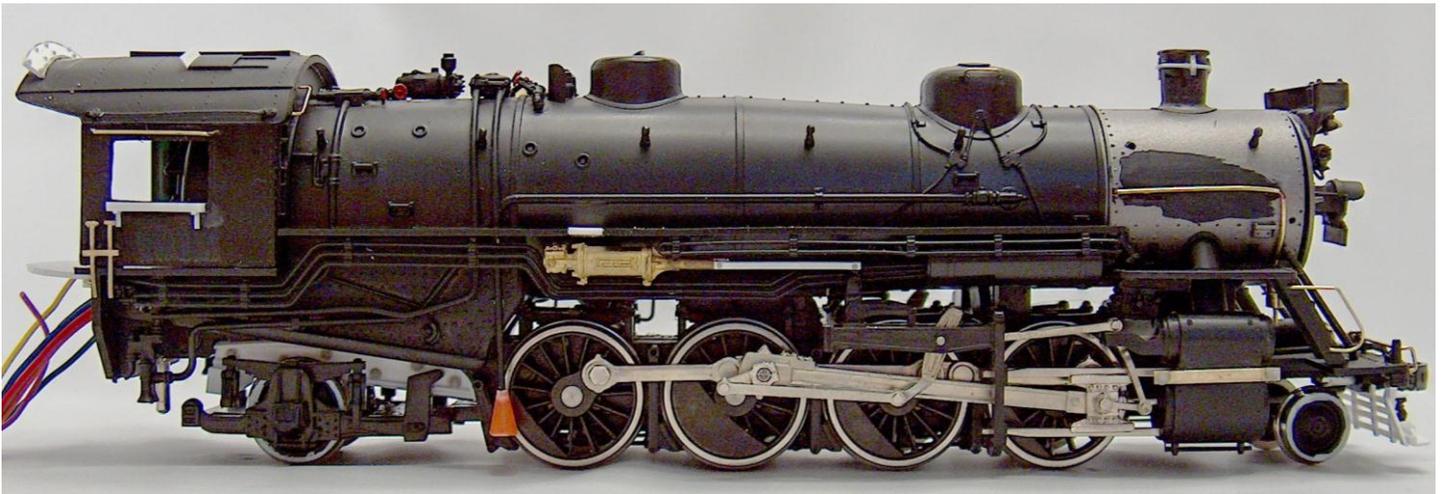


There's not a lot to do between the smokebox and the firebox, so these two steps will go fast. On the fireman's side there's actually nothing to add until you get to the turret area, which I'll get to later. So for this step I'll actually focus on the stack.

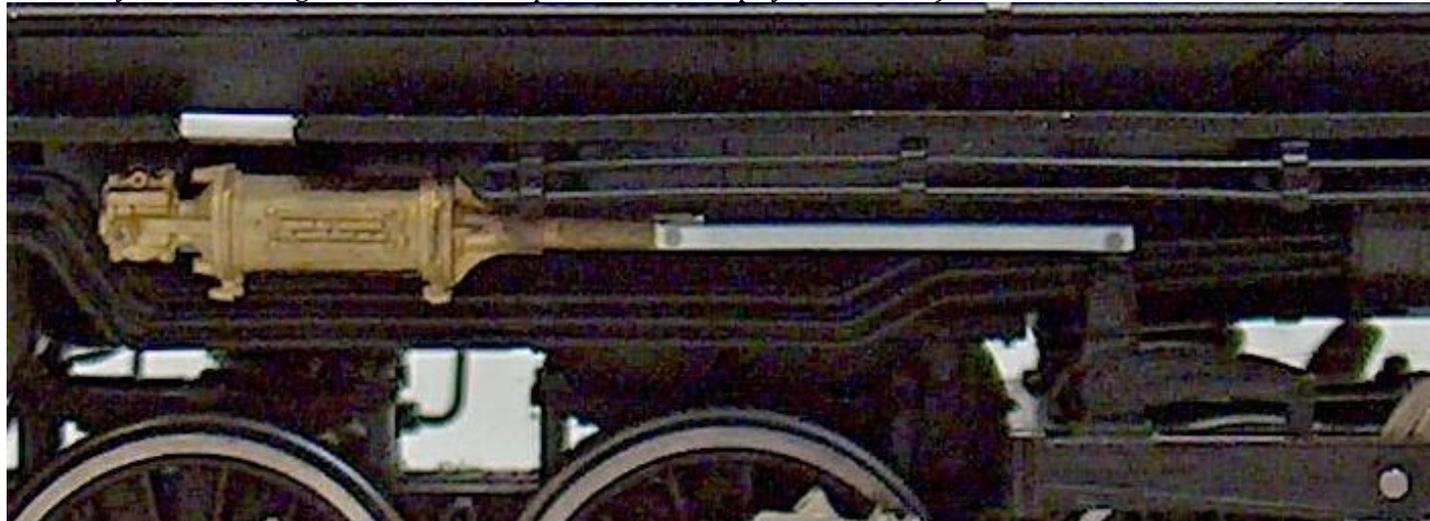


In 1948, most of the H-6 Mikes got a stack extension to improve drafting. The extension was just a chunk of pipe bolted to the existing stack, and wasn't anything fancy. I really couldn't find anything that represented the extension nicely, so I just decided to "fake it" by adding the spotting feature of this extension, which is the extra band around the stack. I did this by wrapping a piece of .010" thick styrene rod around the stack, gluing it into place, and then added four short pieces of 1x2 as the straps. I didn't bother with adding rivets.

THE ENGINEER'S SIDE

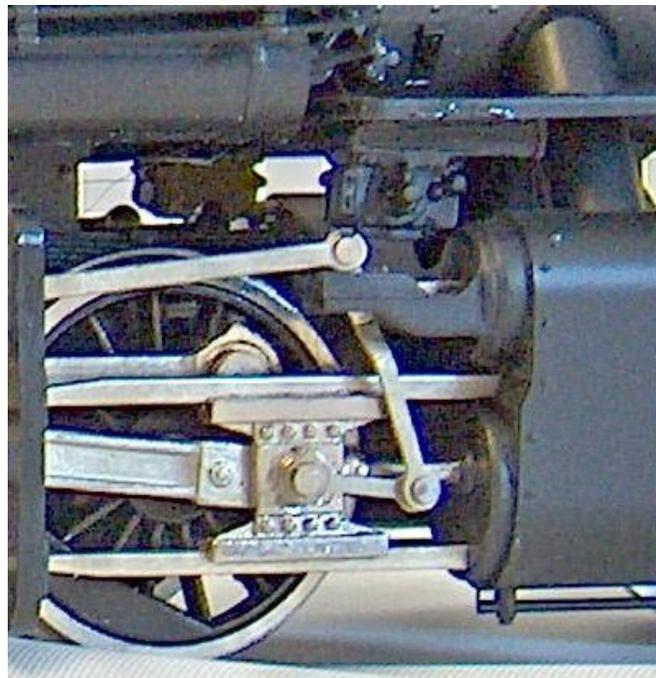
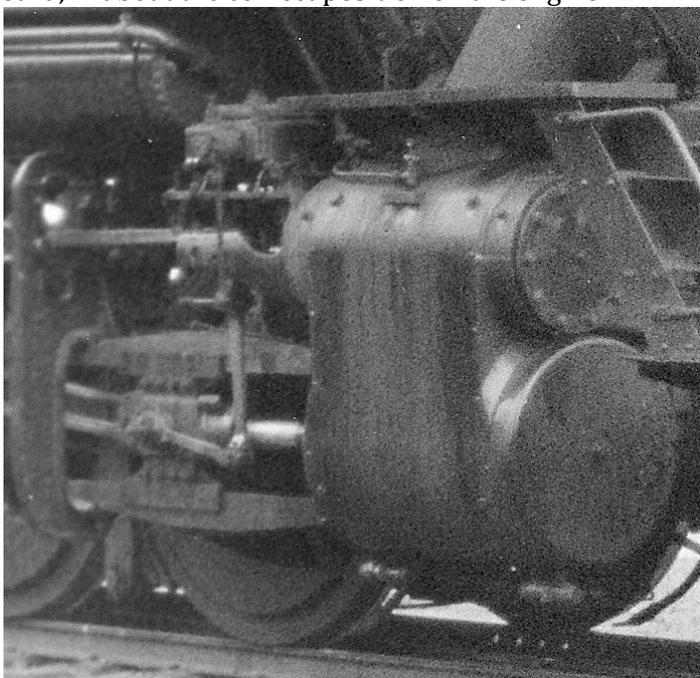


There's a little more to do on this side of the engine, but not much. The power reverse on the stock USRA model doesn't quite match the one on 587, and since I had one in my parts stash I decided to replace it. Just pull off the existing one, drill a new hole in the mounting pad where the old part used to be, and add the new part. The actuating lever didn't reach all the way to the valve gear, so I just used a short piece of .02"x.04" strip to replace it. Final detailing of this included two rivets (once you get used to adding small, random rivets to projects it's not scary, and will find yourself adding them all over the place to "dress up" your models!)



Removing the stock reverse left a hole in the walkway, which I filled in with a scrap piece of .030" thick sheet styrene.

Next, we need to add the automatic lubricator. There are all kinds of different ways to model this appliance, many of which get pretty involved. I just wanted the part there and recognizable, so I opted for the most simplified installation possible. The part that I had on hand is an old Bowser brass detail that's likely no longer made. It comes with a mounting bracket cast on. All I did was flip the part upside down and glued it to the underside of the running board, in about the correct position on the engine.



There are several options for this detail. Both Cal-Scale and Precision Scale make them in various styles in brass, and Precision Scale also makes them in plastic. Since most of my steam modeling work is on "plastic" models these days I have a large stash of the plastic parts around, which gives me more options when it comes to mounting parts.

OK.....I think I've bored you all long enough with this article, so I'll stop for now. In Volume 23 of the Modeler's Notebook I'll finish the conversion, working on the rest of 587's body, the tender, and final finishing. Stay tuned!



NKP 587 and 601 simmer on the ready tracks of my home layout. 601 is an example of one of my "bare bones" conversion, with only a set of flying number boards added to give the engine a basic NKP look. 587 was far more work, but definitely worth the effort!



My model version of NKP 587 doing what she's supposed to: leading a short local freight through the sleepy towns of central Illinois.

ALONG THE LINE



Art Shale is hard at work increasing the size of his Nickel Plate steam fleet. Here NKP 612 and 587 team up to haul a heavy Clover Leaf District freight eastward through New Douglas. Both engines are new Bachmann releases that Art has heavily modified to resemble their prototypes.



The Dingy Dog drops off weary passengers at the NKP depot in Frankfort. Soon they'll be traveling in style! Tony Koester photo



Caboose are an ever-popular subject for any modeler, especially fans of the Nickel Plate. Above is Steve Grigg's O scale model of an ex-C&O 'War Baby' caboose, and below is Matt Smith's latest HO scale AMB kit fresh out of the backshops.

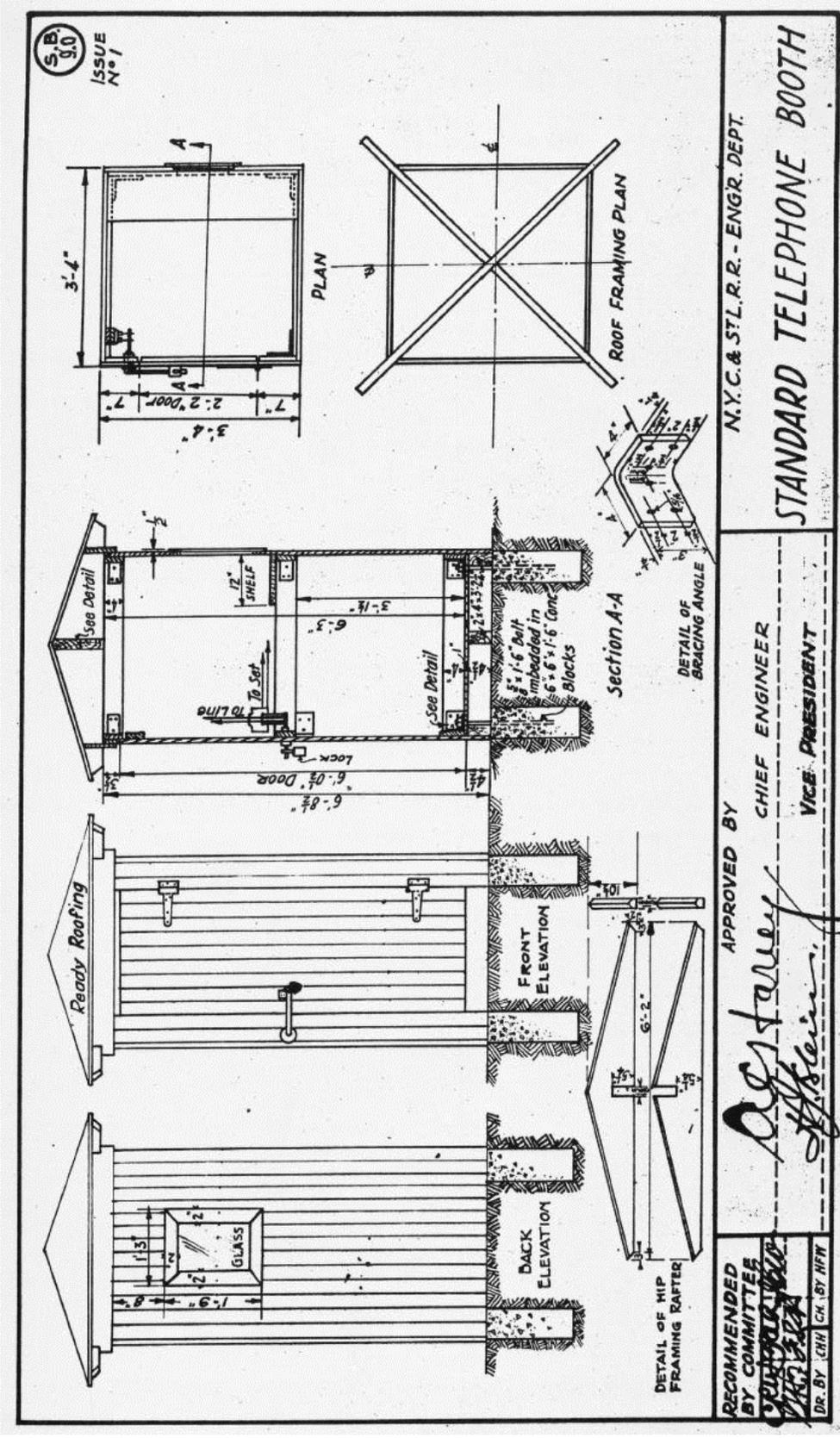




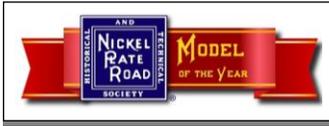
Buck Beeson sent in two photos of an older project of his. NKP 870, one of the last Nickel Plate diesels bought, is a very heavily kitbashed Atlas model that Buck reworked in the late 1980s! This 'late 20th Century modeling' holds up very nicely in the second decade of the 21st Century.



MODELER'S REFERENCE
NKP Standard Telephone Shed



Nickel Plate Tri-Level Auto Rack Kit



The NKPHTS has launched a Model of the Year program for modelers. The first offering in this new series of model railroad products is an HO scale kit based on the NKP's ten tri-level auto racks, which comprised Trailer Train flats built by Pullman-Standard equipped with racks built by Paragon, both in early 1962.

Since an HO scale plastic kit based on the Paragon rack is not available, we chose to use the Accurail tri-level kit, which represents a car built in the late 1960s, as a reasonable stand-in. It is priced at \$29.95 plus \$8.00 shipping for one kit or \$12 shipping for two or all three kits. Three car numbers are offered: ETTX 500706, 500720, and 500813. Decals are available to model any of the other cars, which are numbered ETTX 500729, 500735, 500736, 500741, 500768, 500798, and 500805.

At first glance, this looks like a difficult kit to assemble. But by taking it in steps, it goes together surprisingly quickly.

Step 1 is to paint the metal weights flat black. Careful inspection of the diagram provided with the kit shows which side of the weight faces the floor. I attached the weight to the underframe using CA (Canopy Cement would also be a good choice); do *not* use Walthers Goo, as this can warp a plastic floor over time.

I spent some time studying the drawing until I was comfortable I understood where every part goes. Well, *almost* every part: The large X-braces are for the bi-level version of this kit and are not used. There are also two plates with three ribs on the back that are not used in this kit. The NKP prototype did have smaller X braces, four per side, which could be fabricated for greater accuracy per the prototype photo of car 500720.

I found the kit easy to assemble as follows:

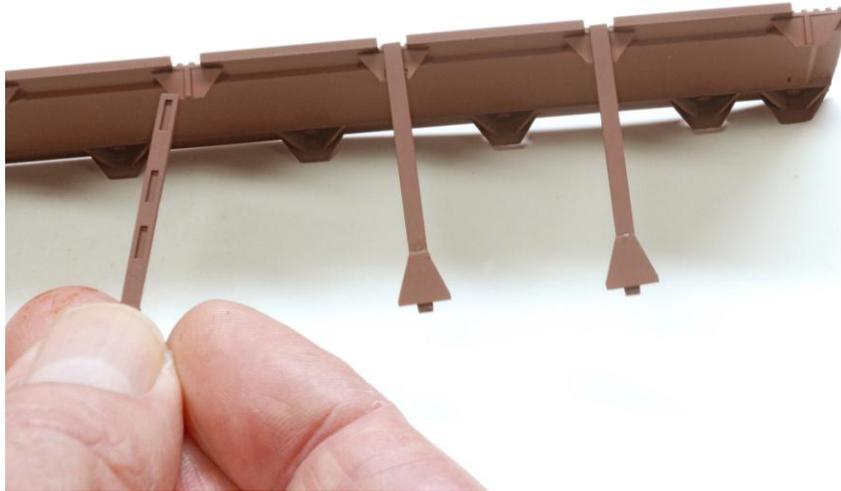
Flat car

- I attached the air brake components *after* the weight has been glued to the underframe. I then added the center sill, ensuring that the cross members fit below the flat car's side sills. Next come the coupler assemblies and trucks, as I didn't want to deal with them after the rack had been glued to the flat.

Tri-level rack

- I glued the gussets to the posts, making sure that they fit flush with the sides of the posts. Note that two posts are marked with a tiny R and two with an L (for the right and left ends of the car). I attached them to both sides of either end of the car, as the instruction sheet shows, *after* I had joined the top and middle decks.

- I glued the gussets to the posts using a fast-setting solvent such as Tenex-7R. Then I glued the posts to the top deck on one side only (*first photo*). They were secure in seconds.



- Holding the top deck with the posts only attached to one side in one hand, I moved the second deck into position on one end and applied solvent to the joint between the first post and the second deck (*second photo*). Note that there are two slots in each post for the second deck's tabs; I used the lower slots. Then I aligned and applied solvent to the joint for the second post and deck, etc.



- With the posts on one side secure, I laid the car on its side with the post side down and added the posts to the other side; I could feel them “snap” into place.
- I then added the R and L posts and ladders and the bridge plates. Note that the top deck plates are stowed down when the car is empty.
- The brace for a stowed bridge plate shown in the drawings on the right side of the instruction sheet is hiding in plain sight on the sprue. It contains a tiny slot into which I glued the bracket that secures the top-deck bridge plate in the upright position.

For a loaded car, don't glue the middle and bottom deck bridge plates in place until you have added vehicles.

Freight car authority Jim Eager, who uncovered the non-series numbers used on NKP auto racks, reports that the prototype car had 28", not 33", wheels, but this kit is based on a car that had 33" wheels.

I acquired six of these kits, half to be loaded and half empty. Finding early to mid-1960s vehicles for these cars is problematic. Plastruct sells inexpensive, pre-painted plastic 1:100 (slightly smaller than HO's 1:87) Mustangs, which may be suitable for the bottom and middle deck. A check of the Walthers 2016 HO catalog found several other suppliers who sell higher quality (and more expensive) Mustangs with the convertible top up. I also found an early '60s Thunderbird. The choices appear to be slim, but I'll keep looking. Metal vehicles could create a top-heavy car if used on the upper decks.

- Tony Koester, NKPHTS Modeling Services Director

THE NKPHTS MODELER'S NOTEBOOK NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Are you a Nickel Plate modeler? Or a modeler of the Wheeling & Lave Erie, the Lake Erie & Western, the Clover Leaf, or any of the predecessor roads that went into creating the Greater Nickel Plate? Do you have a digital camera? Would you like to share what you're doing, or what you know, or your tips and techniques on modeling the NKP? Then have we got the forum for you!

These issues of the *Modeler's Notebook* mark the rejuvenation of the e-zine, which can become the greatest resource available for modeling and showcasing the work of NKP modelers around the globe. Ultimately, the plan is to issue the virtual magazine quarterly, but that means that the editorial board of the NKPHTS will need YOUR help in adding to its contents!

We're looking for just about any and all submissions for the magazine. Full-length features, small one to three page "mini features" and stand-alone photos are all welcome and desired. So long as the subject matter is NKP-related, it's fair game! You say that you aren't a writer? No problem: the NKPHTS editorial staff is here to help. With good quality cameras coming standard with just about every smart phone these days, taking photos couldn't be simpler! (so long as they're relatively well lit and in focus, that is) And we'd love to see your work in all scales and skill levels: S, TT, High-Rail and live steam are all as welcome as O, HO and N.

So share your love of Nickel Plate modeling today! To talk to the editorial staff about a submission, or to submit an article, please contact the following:

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Arthur Shale modeling and photo