

THE BRASS POUNDER

Newsletter of the Carolina Southern Div, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Assoc.
Volume 7, Number 3 August, 2007

Model Railroader University

The MRU will be held September 15, at the Cook's Memorial Presbyterian Church on Mount Holly - Huntersville Road. Registration is at 8:30 AM. Between 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM there will be a series of seminars, clinics and presentations running on a 30 minute format.

Model Railroader University Preliminary Schedule

September 15, 2007

TIME

8:30 Registration

Session A

Session B

Session C

9:00 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT MODEL RAILROAD MODULES: Gil Brauch

9:30 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT MODEL RAILROAD MODULES: Gil Brauch

10:00 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT LIGHT, SOUND ,MOTION : Fred Miller PANEL PRO: Dick Bronson

10:30 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT LIGHT, SOUND ,MOTION : Fred Miller PANEL PRO: Dick Bronson

11:00 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT CRAFTSMAN KITS : Frank Binder PANEL PRO: Dick Bronson

11:30 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT CRAFTSMAN KITS : Frank Binder PANEL PRO: Dick Bronson

12:00 LAYOUT 101 - RICK KNIGHT CREATE AN OP SESS: Carl Wessel

12:30 CREATE AN OP SESS: Carl Wessel

Contact Rick Knight (704-996-6486 rghkiii@adelphia.net) if there are other topics that you would like to have presented or are willing to present yourself.

The Division Brass

Superintendent.....Rick Knight
Asst. Superintendent.....Jack Parker
Clerk..... Jack Haynes
Paymaster..... Dick Bronson
Director 2007.....Michele Chance
Director 2008.....Fred Miller
Director 2009.....Jack Monette
-
Membership Chairman..... Jack Parker
AP Chairman..... Dave Chance
Webmaster..... Gil Brauch
Newsletter Editors..... Frank Binder/
..... Jack Haynes

Next Meeting

Date: Septemeber 15, 2007
Place: Charlotte, NC
Model RR University
Cook's Memorial Presbyterian Church
Mount Holly - Huntersville Road
8:30 - 1:00

CSDiv Meeting and Picnic
Jack Parkers
1:00 - ??

Website:
www.bytedesign.com/CSDiv/

News and Events:

Oct 18-21
James River Flyer
2007 MER Convention
Lynchburg, VA
<http://www.trainweb.org/MER2007/>

August 31 - September 2
NC Rail Run 2007
Various Locations (Triad/Research
Triangle)

September 8
Wade's Train Town

Monthly Open House
Brookford Town Center
Brookford, NC

September 28-30, October 5-7
Thomas Days
NC Transportation Museum
Spencer, NC

October 13
CSDiv Meeting
Waxhaw Firehouse, Waxhaw, NC

October 12-13
7th Annual Autumn Rails Train Show
Bonclarken Assembly, Flat Rock, NC

October 20
Hickory Train Show
Hickory Metro Center, Hickory, NC

November 3 & 4
23rd Annual Neuse River Valley Train
Show
NC State Fairgrounds Raleigh, NC

November 10
Wade's Train Town
Monthly Open House
Brookford Town Center
Brookford, NC

Layout Tour Tip: Wire Management

This month, we are back at Black Cat Station in N Wilkesboro for another tip learned from our visit there and some other ideas on wire management.

Managing wiring under our layouts is always a problem. Wires hanging loose get in the way of other work, and snagging one while working on something else can pull it out, disabling something and causing grief until it can be reconnected (correctly). Bundling the wires with cable ties neatens things up and keeps them together, but if the tie is pulled too tight, it can make tracing a wire, or making changes

difficult. Adding a wire may mean a whole new set of ties.

On my old layout, I had stapled large cable ties to the benchwork but left the loop loose, so wires could be added, deleted, or traced more easily. One drawback to this was that the loop could not be opened, so adding or removing a wire required pulling it through each loop from the starting point to the destination. Recently, walking through Lowe's (one of my favorite hangouts) I noticed packs of Velcro strips in various sizes and colors. It occurred to me that these could be used instead of the wire ties to make hangers for bundling wires. The Velcro loop could be opened and closed as needed, making changes easier. I was planning on that until our Black Cat Station visit.

The club there used sections of plastic cable trays to hold wiring (Fig. 1). The trays are sold at office supply stores to attach to desks for managing computer cabling. They are sold in three foot sections, but can be cut easily into pieces any length you choose. They have an adhesive strip on the back that can be used to attach it to the benchwork, or you can use a couple of screws to make the connection stronger. Wires can easily be added, removed, or traced through the tray. The trays come with or without a cover. The cover is attached to the tray and snaps closed to hold the wiring in place, but would make taking a wire out a little more difficult. The trays without a cover still have a lip at the top that helps keep wires inside.



Fig.1 Cable tray under Black Cat Sta. layout.

Leftover pieces can still be used on your computer desk if you have one like mine that needs a little organization (Fig. 2). Now if I can find something that can help organize the top of the desk.



Fig. 2 Also useful for computer cables behind your editor's desk.

Saga of a Spare Room Baron

Episode 2: Relocation

Once moving had become a certainty, I thought about whether to try to move the existing layout or just scrap it. It was well-built (in my humble opinion, and no other opinion matters) and had a lot of handlaid trackwork that I thought worth preserving if it could be reused. I mentally cut up the layout into sections of roadbed that might be reusable with minimum adjustments in a new layout. Most sidings would be kept intact. Most of the curves were a full semicircle. Expecting that I would build the new layout in the around-the-walls style, quarter circle arcs would be adequate, so I planned to cut each arc in half.

When moving time came, I went around the layout with a rotary tool and a cutoff disc removing an inch or so of rail at the point where I wanted to cut the roadbed. My son-in-law followed me around with the power saw (he's very handy with one of those) and cut through the roadbed and subroadbed. Fortunately, I had followed the L-girder, joist, riser and cleat method as described in

Westcott's book on benchwork. That book is a great reference; I frequently go to it for ideas on ways to construct benchwork to fit specific situations and for sizing support members. Joists were fastened to the girder flange by a screw up through the flange into the joist. Risers were fastened to joists by screws through the riser into the joist. Roadbed was fastened to the cleat on the riser by screws up through the cleat into the plywood subroadbed.

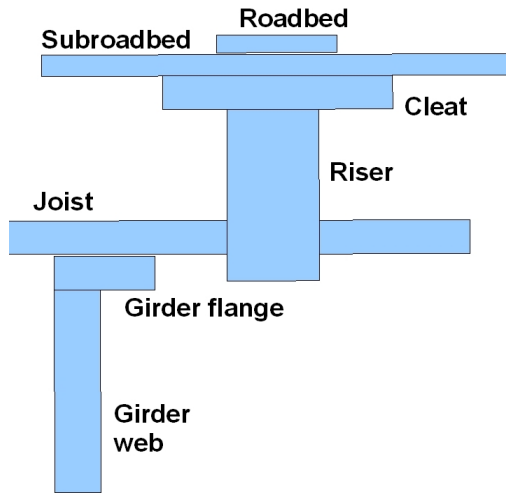


Fig 1. Girder.Joist/Riser construction detail

Every screw holding the layout together was accessible from below. The only glued joints were between the girder web and flange and between the riser and cleat. Those could be left intact.

The layout disassembled neatly into reusable parts. Every girder, joist, and riser-cleat piece was removed and bundled up for moving unscathed. The risers/cleats were packed into boxes, the joists were tied into bundles, and the girders were nested in pairs and fastened together with a couple of drywall screws.

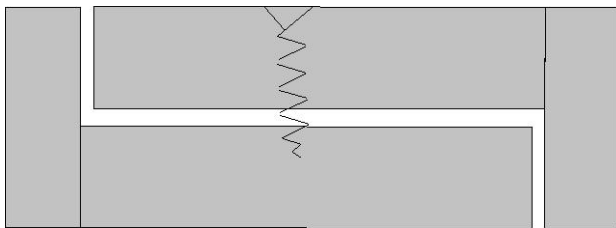


Fig. 2 Nested girders cross section

The track work was covered on the track side with a layer of bubble wrap and corrugated cardboard and wrapped with tape to protect it and tossed into the truck.



Fig. 3: Trackwork wrapped to go

In Charlotte, most of the pieces went up in the attic to rest until the room was ready.

As with any relocation, moving in was only the beginning. There were lots of projects, big and small to occupy my time for a while. Along the way, however, new layout designs appeared on scratch paper or in CadRail on my PC. I had reproduced my old layout in CadRail, anticipating making some changes, so I was familiar with the program and could use it to doodle various ideas. The file for my old layout also came in handy. Just as we cut up the old layout physically, I cut it up electronically in CadRail. I could then drop the pieces into a possible plan to see where they could be reused. The pieces could even be cut up further if needed to fit the plan. The old carpenter's rule of "measure twice cut once" doesn't apply to computer models. If you cut and don't like the result, you can just go back to the original figure and try something else.

Building a computer model of a layout is time-consuming, but there are some paybacks.

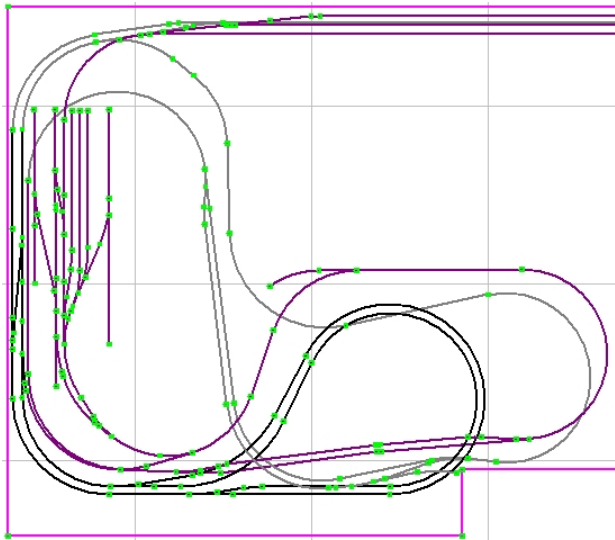


Fig. 4 Old layout track plan in CadRail

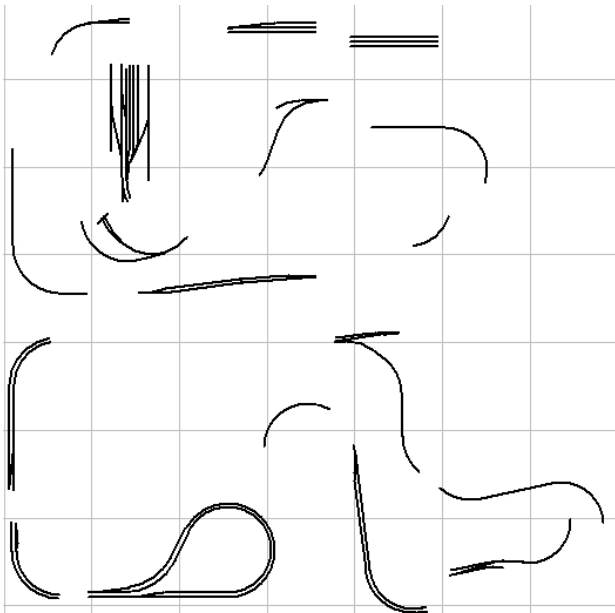


Fig. 5: Old layout pieces in CadRail

The alternate plans that developed and activities to prepare the room for construction will be the subjects of the future episodes.

Submissions For Brass Pounder

Our planned schedule for publication of the Brass Pounder is for five issues per year. They will be issued in the odd-numbered months with July and September combined into one issue in August. Deadlines for submission of articles will usually be the tenth of the month of publication. January will be an exception for the Annual Meeting issue:

Issue	Submission Date
August	August 10, 2007
November	November 10, 2007
January	January 1, 2008

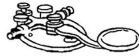
Our requirements for submitting articles are a little looser than the national publications. Any form of text or pictures is pretty much acceptable.

The Editors

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