

Short Track *Gazette*



Inside this issue:

<i>Section House Activity</i>	1
<i>Operations</i>	1
<i>Speed Matching Locomotives</i>	2
<i>DPE Report</i>	2

Short Tract Railroad Club Hosts NMRA Meet

Activity continues in our section house.

In February we hosted the NMRA San Diego Division Winter Meet. (NMRA is the National Model Railroad Association).

We started with a swap meet in the morning, followed by a potluck lunch, and finally clinics where expert model railroaders teach techniques to others.

All the attendees had a good time. We had many comments on the progress we have made on our layouts.

We will host another group for operations at a NMRA regional convention in September.

Prototype Railroad Operating Sessions

Our operating sessions are drawing more and more people each month. We do prototypical operations on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00PM.

This is different from running the trains around on Saturday morning. In prototypical operations, 2 person crews are assigned a train and a list of cars to be picked up and dropped off at various locations around the layout. The crew picks up their engines, couples to their train and heads out to do their assigned jobs. While most jobs run from 45 minutes to 1 hour, a job with lots of switching can take up to 2 hours.

Visitors and museum members are welcome. Come on out. No experience is necessary. Visitors will be teamed up with an experienced operator.

Multiple Engine Operation with Speed Matching

We often get questions from visitors about our engines. They see 3 or 4 engines pulling a long string of cars and ask if all the engines are really pulling? We answer, "Yes". Sometimes they are amazed that those "Small" engines can pull so many cars. There is a trick to doing this. We "speed match" the engines. Two or 3 engines may or may not run at the same speed, even if they are the same brand and model. One may be considerably slower than the other. If that is the case, the faster engines will actually be pulling the slower engines and the train. This does not work very well.

The answer is "Speed Matching". This is a process where we get all the engines that will run together to go the same speed. Sometimes this is a tedious process.

Our member, Eric Bradford built a "Speed Matching" table that has greatly reduced the time and frustration we used to have in trying to get all the engines running at the same speed. We can now match the performance of the engines so all are pulling at the same rate. The Speed Table is shown in action during a recent train show at Del Mar.



DPE Report

We are already working on projects that need to be completed before the June Tractor Show. Plans include a couple of major bridge projects. Attached photo shows one of the already completed bridges. We are adding a yard to the layout. The yard project requires laying track and under table electrical wiring to be fully functional.

Meantime, our scenery crew, "The Greenies" are plugging away at the mass amount of scenery we need. They are busy landscaping the mountains and adding all the scenic details that make our railroad come alive. With all the scenery we are doing, we have a requirement for thousands of trees of many different types, each one individually made. We are always looking for volunteers to help make trees.

Most of our structures are scratch built. This means they are not built from a kit. This photo shows a scratch built railroad bridge over a highway. This bridge was built by Milt Perkins. It has outstanding detail right down to the rivets. More information will be reported on our buildings and bridges in a future issues of the Ignitor.





N Scale is fun

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Short Track RR Staff

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Assistant Superintendent	Eric Bradford
Secretary/Clerk	Pete Steinmetz
Treasurer/Paymaster	Paul Schmidt
Chief Layout Engineer	John Sigurdson
Library/Reference	Blanch Christman
Track	Paul Schmidt
Electrical/DCC	Jim Wirt
Scenery	Don Ham
Lighting	Jim Krater
Buildings	Ross Roberson
Gazette	Pete Steinmetz
Webmaster	Chuck Hart

General Correspondence, Membership, Articles for Publication & Advertising To:

Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum
Attn. Short Track Railroad
2040 North Santa Fe Avenue
Vista, California 92083

modeltrains@agsem.com
www.shorttrackrr.org

SHORT TRACK RAILROAD

Organized in 1991, The Short Track Railroad is an N scale model railroad club in north San Diego County, California, USA.

We are located in our own Section House on the grounds of the Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum.

We have a nice, large and dedicated building, lots of NTRAK modules, a permanent layout under construction, and a great bunch of fun-loving members.

We welcome beginners, families, visitors and people of all ages. No equipment or experience is required. All skill levels are welcome and there's always something for everyone to do.

For more information about items in this issue check out:

<http://www.shorttrackrr.org/>

<http://www.agsem.com/>

<http://www.ntrak.org/>