

For Sale, Starter Modules and Wiring Kits by Bob Pawlak

- 3' Corner \$40**
- 4' Straight Module with Mountain Division \$40**
- 4' Straight Module without Mountain Division \$40**
- 3' Corner Wiring Kit \$38**
- 4' Straight with Mountain Division Wiring Kit \$43**
- 4' Straight without Mountain Division Wiring Kit \$38**
- Wiring Installation Option Fee \$3**

The club as a whole is anxious to make it as easy as possible for new members to finish their first module and start bringing it to train shows so they can fully participate in club activities. Several experienced modelers have volunteered to help make the "Starter Module Project" a success. Ed Smith and Ernie Poole have volunteered to build the modules which will include legs, sky board, and all necessary hardware. Ed and Ernie have teamed up before to make modules (transition corners and One-Trak modules most recently) and do excellent quality work.

Bob Pawlak has volunteered to assemble the electrical wiring kits, perform the wiring installation option, and act as project facilitator to answer questions at (781) 862-2485. The wiring kits will include the necessary Ntrak standard 2-pin connectors 16 and 18 gauge wire, terminal strip, and 120 VAC power strip with 6' cord. The installation option will include soldering and color-coding the connectors, mounting everything, and wiring the terminal strip ready for connection to the track.

Dan Pawling has volunteered to host work sessions in his cellar workshop for cork roadbed and track laying, building scenery shapes, ballasting, painting, etc. to help transform the starter modules into finished modules. Several other experienced modelers have agreed to come to these sessions to help new members finish their modules. The club's two excellent end loops were built at similar sessions in Dan's cellar.

As further incentive and a deadline to work toward, Jim Whitehead is considering including a "Best New Member First Module" prize category at the next Winterfest to be held on February 6-8, 2004. Stay tuned.

To get on board this project, decide which type module(s) you want and send a

check for the appropriate amount (for modules) made out to Ed Smith. Send the check to Ed at 41 Blanchard Road, Harvard, MA 01451-1120. Then decide if you want to buy the associated wiring kit and whether or not you want to pay the extra \$3 to have it installed. Send a check of the appropriate amount (for wiring) made out to Bob Pawlak. Send it to Bob at 18 Burroughs Road, Lexington, MA 02420-1908.

The deadline for receiving checks for a module or wiring kit is Friday, October 24!! Once there is a commitment for a fixed number of modules, Ed and Ernie will buy all the materials and produce all the modules at once to be most efficient. They will not repeat the exercise to accommodate a procrastinator who finally decides in mid October or thereafter that (ho hum) it might be nice to maybe get a module. Enough people have already shown interest during discussion over the last few months to make this project a go! It is only a matter of getting the checks to get a final count of modules to be built.

Train show coordinators are always looking for people with a corner. Be popular, build a corner! The club needs more people with Mountain Division (MD) on their module - go for it! (That is why the price for a module with MD is the same as one without MD.) If you can't fit your dream layout plan on only 4' - buy 2 to build an 8' straight! If you know of anyone thinking about N-gauge, encourage them to join the club now and take advantage of this special opportunity. Even if you have started your first module, plan ahead and buy a starter now for your next project and be sure to bring your current work-in-progress to the sessions in Dan's cellar.

It seems to me that this should be a "no-brainer" decision for anyone who reads this article. The prices are essentially the cost of the materials and the total price for a module and wiring kit is about that of a typical new Kato/Atlas loco. Think of all the time you can save! This opportunity blows away all the excuses people usually give for why they still aren't rolling. Get on board! Get your checkbook out and just do it now!



Why don't elephants like to ride on railways?
They hate leaving their trunks in the baggage car.



Putting the Kato SD-70MAC into Service

Kato's new SD-70MAC is a great model, even by today's exacting standards. It is available in several colorful and prototypical color schemes. The plastic shell, walkways, and railings are very well detailed. The body actually snaps into the top of the fuel tank at four locations to secure the shell to the mechanism. The model also features working ditch lights above the front walkway. A bright white LED illuminates the headlight, number boards with pre-printed numbers, as well as the ditch lights.

The mechanism is the now familiar vertical split frame, with a circuit board on top for the headlights. If you're a DCC user, Digitrax makes two different 'drop in' decoders that will work. The DN144K, designed for the C44-9, works fine, but does not have white LED's. The later DN163K1A has more features and white LED's. I did not find a Lenz 'plug and play' decoder for this unit.

The big trick for this model is fitting Micro-Trains couplers. There is no 'right' conversion on a card like we are used to. A very good result though, is readily possible. After some false starts, and after consulting with Joe D'Amato at Micro-trains, here is the answer. Use the coupler box from the 2004 card, and the coupler assembly from the 1015 card. This is a perfect marriage, and the result exactly matches the height gauge and other truck mounted Micro-Trains couplers.

So, here we are, ready to highball. Ease off the service brake, notch up the throttle, and enjoy. In model railroading, this is good as it gets. Hey, I remember rubber band drive loco's, but that, well that's a whole other story.

What is a lawyer's favorite railroad?
The SOO Line.

Why can't a steam locomotive sit down?
Because it has a tender behind.