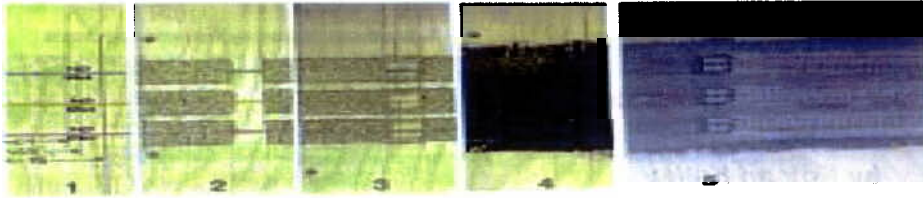
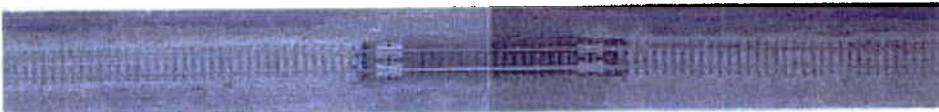


Rail Connecting Made Simple by John Dunne



If you have ever had to hook up mutual modules you know what a task those little rail joiners can be. In the past few months I have tried to make it easier and have found that Kato has rail joiners (24-815) that will actually make the job enjoyable. With 20 pieces to the package there will be more than enough to hook up ends of your module.

1. After laying out Ntraks 3 main lines (red, yellow and blue), parallel with the end of your module, draw 2 lines, one at 3 1/8", the other at 2 1/4". Do not glue between these lines. This eventually will house rail joiners.
2. Lay your roadbed as you normally would. Go across the no glue area and let dry. Remove the road bed from the no glue area with craft knife and straight edge. Save cut outs for step 3.
3. Take the cut outs...and on the beveled edge cut back approximately 1/4" and glue into form a well for rail joiners to set in. Make sure that you have at least 3/8" opening either side of center line for a total of 3/4" opening.
4. Paint roadbed and all areas to be ballasted a color to match your ballast. Pay attention to coupler well.
5. Put track on road bed 2 1/2" from each end. Remove 3 or 4 rail ties on ends as necessary to install Kato 24-815 Unijoiners. Ballast if you like. Make sure unijoiners slide freely and the rails protrude when in the rear position.



Hard Times Ahead? by Bob Gatland

Two significant developments have arisen in the past few months that could greatly affect the hobby of model railroading. I'm referring to the strict application of copyright laws by the Union Pacific Railroad on their logos and the claiming of patents on certain aspects of DCC by MTH (Mike's Train House). The manufacturers and dealers I talked to at the Springfield Train Show are definitely concerned.

The Union Pacific Railroad has laid claim on all uses of its logos and designs not only for the UP but for all of its sub-subsidiaries past and present.

If a company is churning out thousands of toy cars the cost of

licensing fees can be readily absorbed and/or passed on to the consumer. For the typical N scale manufacturer where runs of under thousand units is common, the cost of complying with Union Pacific's demands can be time absorbing and expensive. One manufacturer told me that Union Pacific wants to see a sample of the finished product before they approve it. If they don't approve it, precious time and money gets wasted. Unfortunately, other railroads have been watching the Union Pacific and may decide to follow a similar path. The results of these action could stifle the industry. You may already be seeing higher prices on trains decorated for UP.

On the DCC front, MTH has taken out patents on certain DCC functions that are built into decoders. They are

telling other DCC manufacturers that they are violating patent rights by selling decoders that they have designed themselves to perform these same functions. The lawyers are getting involved with this one, and it may get ugly before it gets resolved.

The company reps at the Lenz booth were quite upset with MTH. After all, Lenz got the DCC ball rolling by allowing the NMRA to adopt its technology and to set standards for DCC. Now another company wants them to pay royalties to use certain functions. I don't think so!

Your Newsletter by E-mail by the Editor

This is the first issue to be sent out via E-mail as a .PDF file. Would like to thank all of you that have elected to receive it via e-mail. A special thanks to Doug Lawson for his help. Please consider this option if you have not already. E-mail me at: rkrbbb14@msn.com

Change in Children's Hospital Show

The Children's Hospital Show has been scheduled for **Wednesday, May 12, 2004**. This is a change from prior years when it was on Thursday.

Please note change.



Wire Car at Connecticut Electric Railway Museum, East Windsor, CT. The wire car rides on two axles - adequate for this short line. Note bundle on roof which are festive lights to be strung along the R.O.W. Photo by Dan Pawling Sr.