

O SCALE KINGS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

January, 2006

President's Message

Welcome to the first issue of the O Scale Kings (OSKers) quarterly newsletter! We are planning to issue it four times a year and to combine items from "management", such as this President's newsletter, and technical ("SIG") information. Ted Byrne has agreed to be the editor. I think we all will find these quarterly newsletters to be interesting.

Your annual dues are now payable: \$10 minimum, \$25 suggested, manufacturer or sustaining \$50 or more. Please mail your payment to Forest Trent using the enclosed envelope.

In 2005 two Director's positions and the Secretary's positions were open for nominations to be followed by an election. No nominations other than the incumbents were received. The election was not held. To move ahead, I am declaring nominations closed. You will find enclosed with this newsletter a ballot for that election. Please mark the ballot and mail it using the enclosed envelope. In the event there are write-in candidates, the candidate

(incumbent or write-in) receiving the most votes will win.

Nominations for the O Scale Hall of Fame election to be held at the 2006 O Scale National Convention should be mailed to the 2006 O Scale Convention; see O scale magazines for the address.

In 2006 we will elect the President, Treasurer, and the Director's office currently held by Dan Mason. I will not run for re-election because I think it important that fresh perspectives be brought to that office during this formative period for our organization. Bob Plageman, our Treasurer, and Dan will be up for re-election. Using the enclosed envelope, please submit your nominations for any of the above three offices to Forest Trent.

Lastly, OSKers lapel pins are being purchased in red and blue, 500 of each color. The standard pin color is blue. To show our appreciation, the red pins will be distributed to the first 500 members who have paid two or more years' dues, whether they are current with their dues or not. Blue will be used for all new and renewing members.

Rod Miller

Technical Introduction

Rod's letter above says it all. We are combining the OSK Newsletter and the O Scale SIG (technical) bulletin, and sending them out quarterly.

From the technical standpoint, we can share much expertise with our friends in the smaller scales. But our HO comrades are unlikely to help us much with: how to convert 3-rail trucks and couplers to 2-rail; which sound works best with our three, largely incompatible computer control methods; the best weights to put in cars; how to modify turnouts to work with snap-track, etc. So we need to help each other.

We also don't get much help from NMRA. That is not a complaint because we also don't provide much input to NMRA. But it would be nice to have an On30 standard, and an O scale clearance gauge, and an O scale weighting formula that is realistic and timely.

Please contact me about your problems, solutions, resources and aspirations. What can we do to capture the unique mystique of O-scale, 2-rail railroading. mdflatland@cs.com

So, read on.

Ted Byrne



Old Business: On30

I spent the past year talking to people about On30 standards. I kept hearing stories that there is some effort to standardize but the consensus was that it didn't need attention because it wasn't a problem. Some comments were:

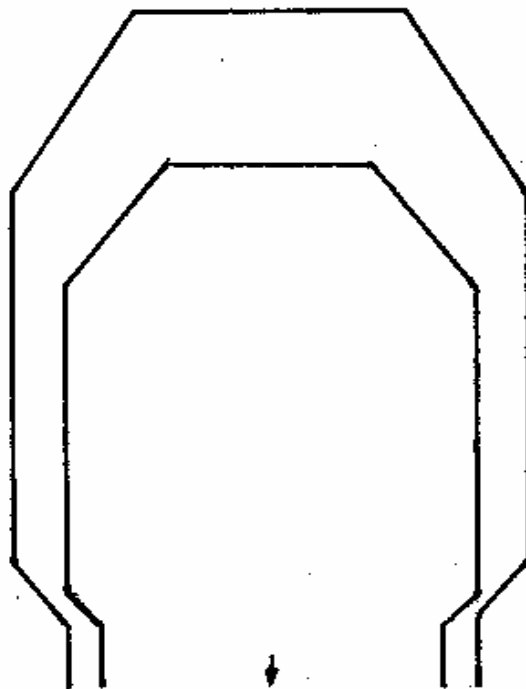
- On30 is based more on a fantasy history of prototype 30 inch gauge.
- Never call it On2 ½.
- Real narrow gauge railroads didn't interchange so model railroads don't need to either.

The NMRA Standards Gauge

NMRA makes and sells a standards gauge for all the popular scales. The devices for scales smaller than O, show both track spacings & clearances, and other clearances such as loading dock/platform and tunnel openings. The O scale device just contains track dimensions. I don't know why the rest is missing; perhaps to keep the price down or to allow mailing in a regular envelope. The information does exist in the NMRA standards and the reduced size drawing here (the outer drawing) shows the complete gauge. By the way, it should be updated to allow for container cars. The inner drawing shows my best guess for On30 dimensions. It uses HO values for the track of course, and, as was suggested to me, On3 dimensions for the remainder. I would be interested in comments from anyone about whether these are reasonable. The actual dimensions for these templates are on the NMRA website: www.nmra.org or from the NMRA CD.

- Real narrow gauge railroads typically used mismatched and homebuilt equipment.
- On30 modelers are the mavericks of O scale and don't want to be told what to do.
- HO track looks strange because of the tie size and spacing. If that bothers you, fix it, but, either way, it doesn't affect operation.
- There are two types of couplers in use: HO couplers and Kadee On3, #803 couplers. Modelers who use Bachman equipment use the former and scratch builders take their choice. I heard no opinions that one was better than the other. Be prepared with one transition car that has both types.

The On30 people are a close-knit group. A good source of information on On30 is: groups.yahoo.com/group/on30conspiracy2



O Scale Car Weights

I have heard considerable comment about the ancient NMRA car weight standards for O scale. In case you have forgotten, these are in NMRA Recommended Practice RP-20.1. The rule for standard gauge O scale is 5 ounces plus one additional ounce per inch of length. So, a 40 foot (10 inch) boxcar should weigh (5 plus 10 times 1 ounce), or 15 total ounces. An 80 foot passenger car should weigh (5 plus 20 times 1 ounce) or 25 total ounces.

There is no rule for On30 but the rule for On3 is probably equivalent. It is 1.5 ounce plus 0.75 ounce per inch of length. So a 32 foot logging car should weigh (1.5 plus .75 times 8 ounces), or 7.5 total ounces.

So the questions are: Do you agree with these rules or do you follow some other rule? Do you have some evidence or experience that these rules work well or to the contrary? Do we even need weight rules? I would like to hear any inputs. We will discuss weights in the next newsletter.

You heard it here first

I do a slow burn whenever I see the Kadee advertisements in the HO magazines telling how their #58 coupler will support 12.3 pounds. What about O scale couplers? I couldn't find an answer so I decided to measure them myself. The short answer is that my O scale #805 metal coupler supported 74 1/8 pounds. It failed by fracture of the knuckle at the 90 degree bend. It is surprisingly difficult to make this test as the coupler supports have to be stronger than the coupler or they break first. The couplers have to be square or they slip apart. The ridge on the end of the knuckle can break off and then they will not stay coupled. So, what good is this measurement? I don't know; ask Kadee. Surely you will not pull that much and surely something else, probably plastic, will break first. But we do have bragging rights: Our couplers are better than their couplers.

All-Purpose Response Form

(Send all responses, except dues, to editor for distribution, address on reverse)

- DUES
Individuals: \$10 minimum, \$25 suggested _____
Business or Sustaining: \$50 or more _____
(Send dues to Forest Trent, 304 Christopher Place, Union, MO 63084—2931)
- 2005 Officer Election Wrap-up
Secretary: Incumbent: Forest Trent: _____
Director: Incumbent: Bob Lavezzi: _____
Director: Incumbent: George Wallace _____
- 2006 Officer Nominations (elections conclude at O Scale National in July)
President: Write-in _____
Treasurer: Incumbent candidate: Bob Plagemen _____
Write-in _____
Director: Incumbent candidate: Dan Mason _____
Write-in _____
- 2006 O Scale Hall of Fame nomination (elections in July)
Write-in _____
- Any other comment or question:

Upcoming Meetings

February 2-4, 2006, San Francisco, CA area
16th Annual O Scale West Meet.

Register at the door. Make hotel reservations with Hyatt Regency Santa Clara (Formerly the Westin), 800-233-1234. Ask for the O Scale West rate.

March 18, 19, 2006

Chicago Midwest O Scale Meet

Sheraton Chicago Northwest Hotel
Request information from PO Box 333,
Park Ridge, IL 60068

July 2-9, 2006, Philadelphia, PA

NMRA National Convention

Independence Junction 2006
Philadelphia Convention Center
Philadelphia Downtown Marriott hotel
www.ij2006.org for information

July 19-22, 2006 Parsippany, NJ

2006 O Scale National Convention

LSSAE for information to: Bob Lavezzi,
c/o New York Society of Model Engineers,
341 Hoboken Rd., Carlstadt, NJ 07072-1152

Periodicals featuring O scale:

48/ft O Scale News

PO Box 51
Elmhurst, IL 60126-0051

O Scale Trains

PO Box 238
Lionville, PA 19353-0238

O Gauge Railroading (primarily 3-rail)

33 Sheridan Road,
Poland, OH 44514-1680

Model Railroading (features On30)

Highlands Station Inc.
2600 S. Parker Rd. Suite 1-211
Aurora, CO 80014

Return Address

Ted Byrne

OSK NL Editor

PO Box 449

Chestertown, MD 20620-0449