

## IN THIS ISSUE:

### INTERNATIONAL SERIES

The 4th Edition of the popular International Series of imprinted freight cars features Mexico in both HO and Z-Gauge. See page 3.

### CARL WEAVER'S COLUMN

Carl's second installment of a two part series on hard shell scenery again offers "How to" information for all scales. See page 4.

### RILEY O'CONNOR'S COLUMN

Riley takes a closer look at Z-Gauge Freight cars. See page 6.

### MÄRKLIN COLLECTABLES

Three new exciting collector's sets available including a Berlin Wall car. See page 5.

### LAYOUT SHOWCASE

How Peter Fragasso brought France, Switzerland and Germany together in his HO layout. Also, the realism of Dieter Waegner's Z-Gauge Layout. See page 7.

### CLUB MEMBER'S TIPS

Lawrance Damokosh's unique track cleaning tool and Timothy Eckert's Signal System will add enjoyment and fun to your own layouts. See page 2.

MÄRKLIN CLUB—North America

# HOTTRAKS

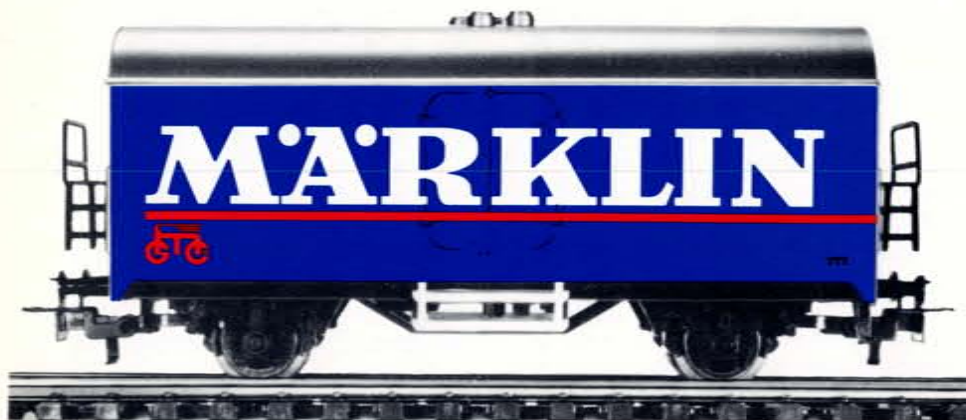
Summer, 1990

Volume 6 Number 2

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Märklin Introduces

## "Special Edition" Collectable Rail Car



### Available Free to You With Purchase of Only \$150 of Märklin Product

Märklin Inc. has introduced a historical "Special Edition" collectable rail car. This \$22.50 retail value car is available to you *FREE* with the purchase of only \$150 of Märklin product through an Authorized Märklin dealer. Please see the enclosed "Ticket" for details on how to obtain your free car. The car is available in both HO and Z-gauge.

This Special Edition car has significant meaning for Märklin enthusiasts. The design of the car evokes the period of the 1950's when Märklin HO came into its own and became known to Americans stationed in Europe with the armed forces. The blue background comes from the color that the factory began using at this time for control devices such as transformers, accessory controllers and distribution strips. The name "Märklin" is done in the unique style of print that adorned all of the company's packaging and literature during this period. The logo in red in the

(Continued Page 3)

### 1990 Club Car

## Entry Deadline for 1990 Club Car Design Contest is August 1!

A reminder that the deadline for entries in the 1990 Club Car Design Contest is August 1, 1990 and fast approaching! We have received almost 100 entries to date, but we've also received many inquiries from members on how to show their designs and ideas. It's really very easy. All you need to do is to convey to us your idea or design in rough form. We can help with the graphics! In fact, the design or idea we select will be judged on the concept, rather



than the design or how nicely it is drawn or applied. Just keep in mind that it will have to fit on the side of a container car in HO or Z-gauge.

You may enter as many designs as you wish, and you must be a club member to participate. The design selected will become the official 1990 Märklin Club Car.

Grand prize is a locomotive. See the enclosed copy of the Depot for entry blank. Hurry, entries close August 1, 1990.

**1990 Märklin Poster Now Available.  
See Depot For Details . . .**

## Handy Track-Cleaning Tool for Z-Gauge

by LAWRENCE I. DAMOKOSH #1018 Burlington, MA

I have a rather large (7 x 4 1/2 ft.) Z-gauge layout, which is "electrified" to about 70%; i.e. it is equipped to this extent with a catenary system. When the layout is not in operation it is protected with a plastic dust cover. It seems, however, that there is precious little I can do to protect its rails against oxidation/corrosion. To equip the room with complete air-conditioning and constant humidity control would be prohibitively expensive. The frequent use of a track cleaning car (#8802), however useful, does not alleviate the problem. I decided therefore to construct a track-cleaning tool.

One of the problems was how to avoid damage to the overhead system, and not to hit catenary poles, especially in the yard areas. To satisfy this criteria, I came up with the following rather simple construction.

### Material required:

- 2 ea. 6-32 round head brass screws, 1/2" long
- 2 ea. 1/4-20 brass nuts, 3/16" thick
- 1 ea. 1/4" dia. brass or alum. rod, 7" long
- 1 mm. thick brass sheet stock
- Approx. 3 mm. thick felt (piece)
- Silicon carbide grinding paper, 600 grit
- Contact cement (Cyano-acrylate) superglue;
- Krazy-glue or similar
- Thick gel superglue

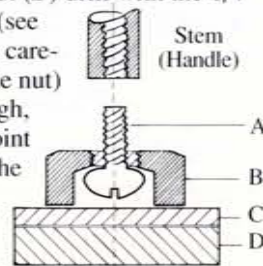
### Tools needed:

- Jewelers saw (to cut the sheet brass)
- Pair of scissors or hobby knife (to cut the felt and grinding paper)
- Pair of long nose pliers
- Drill (preferably electric) with 1/4" drill bit
- #36 drill bit
- 6-32 tap
- Needle file, flat

The idea is to build one tool with two work heads. (One on each end).

The STEM is very simple. Into each end in the centerline of the 7" long brass (or aluminum) rod drill a 1/2" deep #36 hole. Tap 6-32 thread into these holes and the stem is ready.

To make the two WORK-HEADS should not give any difficulties either. They are (almost) identical. Cut and clean/degrease two, small, 13 x 20 mm. brass plates IC (see sketch), and set aside. Into each brass nut (B) drill with the 1/4" bit a partial hole (see enlargement). Be careful not to drill (the nut) completely through, but only to the point where the tip of the drill bit starts to appear. This "cavity" should



be deep enough, however, that the head of the 6-32 screw (A) completely disappears into it. The head of these two 6-32 screws (A) has to be doctored next. With the proper needle file round off the sharp edge of the screw head. (See cross-section of screw (A) in sketch). Be careful not to remove too much material, only that amount that the screw head swivels freely in the nut's cavity. Clean/degrease the "cavity" side of the nut. Cement the nut, with the screw in the cavity, to the center of the brass plate with Krazy glue. Bear in mind that the cavity should face the plate and the screw's threaded part should point up (see sketch). Make sure that the screw swivels freely in the assembly. Cut a 13 x 20 mm. piece (to fit the plate) from the felt and also from the grinding paper. Cement the grinding paper piece with contact cement to one of the heads and felt with thick-gel superglue to the other. Screw the two heads into each end of the stem (handle) and your cleaning tool is ready.

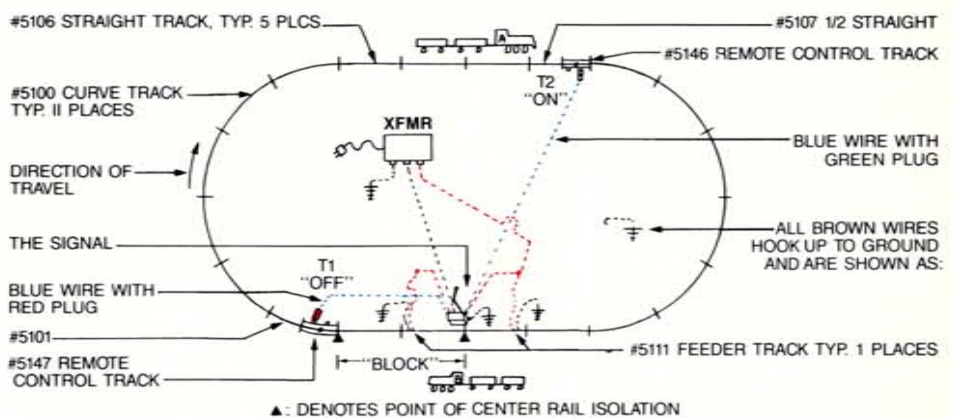
Before OPERATION moisten the felt head with a few drops of lighter fluid. Grind first a rail portion, then wipe thoroughly with the moistened felt. Obviously the grinding paper has to be replaced occasionally.

Note: By using a lathe I can visualize a more elaborate variant with a ball swivel head and a cross slotted holder for it, thus allowing for the handle to move down to an almost horizontal position.

## Märklin Signal System Made Easy

by TIMOTHY ECKERT #6478 Granbury, TX

The best way to learn how to use and hook up the Märklin signal(s) is to build a simple oval track as shown in diagram to the right. No need to mount this on a board, just set it up on the kitchen table. This plan allows for two (2) trains to run on the same track without running into each other. (However, the trains should be of about equal speed.) The ability of the parked train to leave the "BLOCK" in time to get out of the way of the 'incoming' train can be adjusted by moving the location of the T2 ("ON") trip section. Please call me at 817-326-2523 if you have any questions. Much more complicated uses of the signal system can be understood by reading the Märklin #0342M or #0361/0368K Signal Manual.



### LOGIC:

#### ACTION

- Train 'B' leaves the "BLOCK" and trips 'T1'.
- Train 'B' goes around, trips 'T2' and continues.
- Train 'A' leaves the "BLOCK" and trips 'T1'.
- Train 'A' goes around, trips 'T2' and continues.

#### RESULT

- Signal turns off, which results in:
  - the "BLOCK" power goes OFF
  - Train 'A' parks at the "BLOCK" when it gets there.
- Signal turns on, which results in:
  - the "BLOCK" power comes ON.
  - Train 'A' starts and leaves the block.
- Signal turns off, which results in:
  - the "BLOCK" power goes OFF
  - Train 'B' parks at the "BLOCK" when it gets there.
- Signal turns on, which results in:
  - the "BLOCK" power comes ON.
  - Train 'B' starts and leaves the block.

(Continued from Page 1)

lower left corner is a stylized combination of the initials for the company's full name, Gebr. Märklin & Cie GmbH, and is well-known among older Märklin enthusiasts as the "bicycle logo". Its red color is presently the primary color used for the company name. The logo in the lower right corner is the current Märklin logo and its color harkens back to the 1950's when black was the primary color for the company name and logo. Even if you are new to Märklin, we're certain this car will become a treasured part of your Märklin collection or layout.

## Robert Monaghan receives "Author of the Year" Award



Robert Monaghan, author of "Greenburg's Guide to Märklin HO Trains," has received the prestigious "Author of the Year" Award bestowed by the Poor Richard Society of Philadelphia. The award was presented in Philadelphia, PA on May 21, 1990. Shown in the photo is Fred Gates, Märklin USA President, (right) who presented the award to Mr. Monaghan and Bruce Greenburg (left) who attended the ceremonies. Our congratulations to Mr. Monaghan.

### Trade Show Information

**NMRA Train Show**  
Pittsburgh Convention Center  
Pittsburgh, PA  
August 3rd 4-9 pm  
August 4th 10-9 pm  
Dr. Tom Catherall, Märklin's  
Digital Consultant, will be there  
to answer any digital questions  
you may have.

**Chicago Model &  
Hobby Show**  
Consumer Days  
October 20-21, 1990  
O'Hare Expo Center,  
Chicago, IL

## Mexico Added to International Series of Imprinted Cars



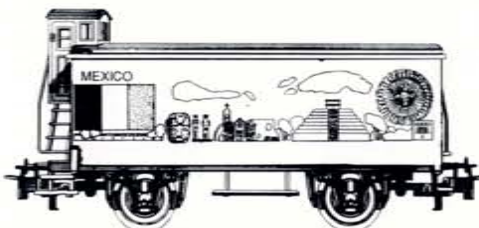
The 4th Edition of the popular International Series of imprinted freight cars will feature the country of Mexico in both HO and Z-gauge. Also, four nations already represented will be available in a different gauge—Japan and Sweden in HO; and France and Australia in Z-gauge.

Fashioned from original artwork commissioned by Märklin exclusively for this project, the new Mexican car features symbols and architecture from Mexico's colorful past. The car design, as with all International Series designs, includes the Märklin registered trademark and the official International Series mark to identify the year and series the cars were produced. Also, as with other International Series cars, the imprinted car in Z-gauge is a container car and in HO is a Württemberg boxcar.

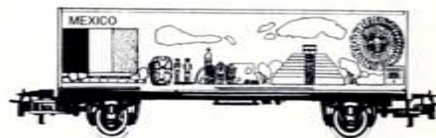
As in the previous three editions of the series, production quantities are limited. Regardless of demand, additional production runs will not be authorized. The suggested retail price is \$39.95 for the HO cars, \$24.50 for the Z-gauge cars.

We encourage you to reserve your cars today. Your authorized North American Märklin dealer has complete details. For the name and address of the authorized dealer nearest you, call the Märklin Club 800-772-2490.

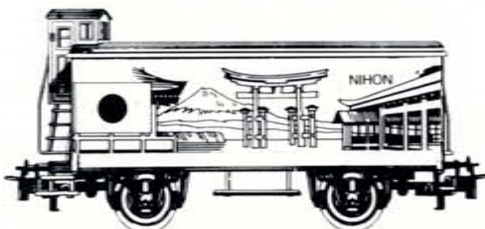
As previously announced, the International Series will extend one more year, making it a five-year series. Fifteen nations will eventually be represented. Three cars will be produced each year, with imprints alternating between gauges until all nations have been offered in HO and Z-gauge.



HO #2557A Mexico



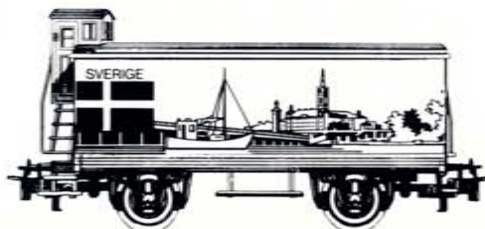
Z #2558A Mexico



HO #2550A Japan



Z #2512A France



HO #2552A Sweden



Z #82513A Australia

# The Basics of Hard Shell Scenery

Part Two of a two-part article for layout builders in any scale.

By CARL WEAVER  
Contributing Editor

Carl Weaver is a charter member of the Märklin Club and a respected author of several articles and books on model railroading including "Greenberg's Layout Building Handbook for Operators of Märklin HO Trains," available through the Märklin Depot for \$12.95.

Part One of my article appeared in the last issue of "HotTraks" and covered planning, building a frame, and skinning. In this article, I will discuss the essentials of texturing and detailing. When I left off in Part One, I had just instructed you on how to apply latex paint to the hard shell. Now you are ready to put in roads and streets and apply texture.

## Roads and Streets

Plan roads and streets just as you did your track design. Long strips of 3-inch wide cardboard can be used as two lane roads. Mount the road right on the hard shell surface and cut and fill using the techniques you learned in Part One of this article. Be sure to keep the road level from side-to-side with a slight crown in the center of the roadway. Simulated concrete, tar, and cobblestone road surfaces are available from hobby shops. These can be mounted right on the cardboard strips or you can use concrete colored water based hobby paints. Scribe concrete joints in the cardboard before painting. When the road surface is in place, run paper towel skin right up to the edge of the pavement.

Once the roads and streets are in, place your buildings in their proper locations. (The assembly and installation of structures is the subject of a future "HotTraks" article). Do not glue them down yet. Use a felt tip marker to outline where they go so that you can leave these areas free of texture.

## Gathering Materials

Now it is time to put down the texture. To do this, you will need the following items for your work session:

1. A variety of modeling textures such as those sold by "Woodland Scenics." I found that T-49 Green Blend is the best for grassy fields. You will also need

2. earth, soil, cinders-fine, dark brown-medium, and any others that suit your fancy.
3. One small glass jar with a screw-on top for each color of texture. Punch holes in the tops from the inside out.
4. A soft brush about one inch wide.
5. A drinking straw.
6. A 3x5 card folded in half lengthwise to form a "V."
7. A variable spray squirt bottle with a strainer on the bottom of the pick-up tube.
8. Liquid detergent.
9. Matte medium, a craft store item.
10. T-pins (straight pins will do).
11. Glue.
12. Scissors.

13. An air brush and compressor (or cans of compressed propellant such as "Propel"). An air brush is not essential, but it gives better results than a brush.

## Texturing

Before applying the texture, you must first cover your tracks if you have not done it already. Do not use tape to cover tracks. Also cover any structures you did not wish to remove from the layout, cover roads and streets, and cover the outlined spaces of the buildings that you did remove. Next, mix a solution of bonding spray by mixing three parts cold water, one part matte medium, and four drops of liquid detergent per pint of solution. Put the solution in the squirt bottle.

If the latex paint is still wet, sprinkle the "grass" or other ground texture directly on the paint. If the paint is dry, then spray the surfaces to be textured with the bonding solution. Use a mist setting on the nozzle of the squirt bottle. Use the brush to get the texture into tight corners. Don't worry about over sprinkles, you can vacuum them up later. To texture steep slopes, put some texture in the "V" shaped 3x5 card and move it on to the slope by gently blowing through the drinking straw. Use your imagination on what colors you want where. I use dark colors in low places, and cinders and gravel near the tracks. Try putting brown-medium texture along the sides of your roads to simulate shoulders.

When the surface of your layout is to your liking, spray bonding solution over

the whole thing. Be sure to remove all your locomotives, cars, and anything else you don't want to be sprayed. The detergent that is in the spray will help to carry the solution deep into the texture. When the surface is dry, it will be permanent. Of course you can add more texture or change the color later by merely following the process again. Be sure to clean your squirt bottle with soap and warm water when you are done with the session.



Photo 1. Lichen used around a tunnel portal

## Detailing

Once the texture is dry, usually overnight, you can start detailing. First you will want to hide anything that doesn't look right. Imperfections in the surface of your layout can be covered up with shrubbery (Photo 1). I use dark green lichen. First cut the bottom of the lichen with scissors to give it a flat surface to sit on. Dab the flat surface with glue and hold it in place on the skinned surface with a T-pin as shown in Figure 1.

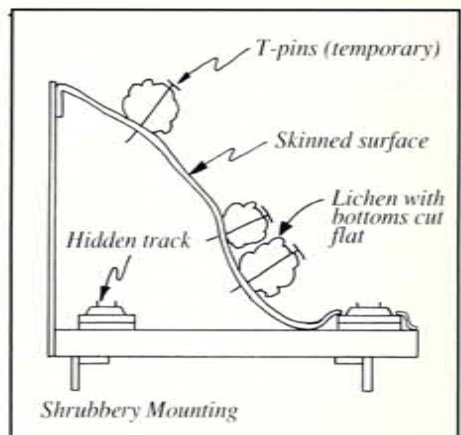


Figure 1.

Once the major imperfections in the scenery are corrected, the next task is to make all the scenery blend together. This can be done with water soluble medium

brown paint such as Polly S or Pasche and an air brush. (If you don't have an air brush, a lot can be done with a soft brush). Mix a very, very thin mixture (almost a wash) and spray any white spots that remain from the plastering. You can also spray any spots that did not get textured or that do not look right. Spray the shiny, new look off tunnel portals, abutments, and your ceiling tile "rocks."

Now is the time to reinstall your structures, plant many trees (the more the better), and develop mini-scenes. You can buy ready made trees, you can buy tree kits, or make your own. I suggest that you buy one kit, see how they're made then make your own. When you plant your trees, mix sizes and types and glue them to the cardboard webbing and not to the thin paper towel shell. You may have to add a piece of webbing underneath if a tree has to be precisely positioned.

One scenic detail you may consider is the use of retaining walls which is a clever way to smooth the transition from one track level to another one nearby. There are several versions of walls available from hobby stores in both plastic and dental stone.



Photo 2. A work crew with tools. Note texture.

From this point on you can let your imagination run wild. But before you do, I want to give you some things to think about. Number one is a *scenery concept*. My personal concept for a model railroad is to have numerous highly detailed scenes all over the layout so that no matter where a viewer stands, there are details to study. Make a list of scenes that you would like to incorporate into your layout such as a flock of sheep with a shepherd and dogs, a work crew repairing track (Photo 2), a crew clearing a small landslide, a backpacker and his two dogs walking on a path, a family picnic, a

logging operation, or a group of men loading or unloading a boxcar. The list of scenes is endless especially if you include people in them. Use people in scenes other than standing on station platforms. Have your people doing something and incorporate tools, vehicles, and anything you can think of (Photo 3). It makes the layout more exciting.



Photo 3. Note how clutter adds to the realism.

Number two is *scale*. If you are a stickler for scale and detail, then do your thing. If you are not, then do what pleases you. This is your hobby and don't let the rivet counters bother you. One piece of information you may find useful for detailing is that the official scale for HO is 3.5 millimeters (or 9/64ths of an inch)

per foot. Scale rulers are available from hobby stores to make measurements easier.

Number three is *purpose*. Consider a purpose for your railroad such as passenger or freight service. This will influence your detailing with types of buildings, vehicles, people, and rolling stock that you buy.

Number four is *anachronisms*. If you are a real rivet counter, then you will not want to mix old and new. Personally, I put whatever pleases me on my railroad and I say that the old stuff is for rail fans and excursions. There are four German railroad eras which you can model and they each overlap. Era I is from approximately 1880 to World War I, 1914-1920. Era II is from 1920 to 1945 when many small provincial railroads were consolidated into a state railway system known as the Deutsche Reichsbahn-Gesellschaft (DRG). DR was used as the logo on equipment with the words Deutsche Reichsbahn. Era III was from 1945 to 1970 when the Deutsche Bundesbahn (DB) was formed and officially started in 1949. Era IV is from 1965 to the present and is a period of intense modernization under the administration of the DB. Remember that when detailing a specific era, you also have to pay attention to the dress of the people, the year of vehicles, the style of buildings, and the types of railroad signals that you use. Have fun with your hard shell scenery!

### Märklin Collectables

## 1990 Limited Edition Imprinted Car Collector Series Now Available

Three new exciting Limited Edition Imprinted collector sets from Märklin. See your authorized Märklin dealer.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE	GAUGE	DELIVERY STATUS
4400E	<b>Automobile Companies of Europe.</b> Includes 6 cars with car company imprints of BMW, Porsche, SAAB, Volvo, Jaguar and Mercedes Benz. Limited production of 500 sets.	\$159.00	HO	IN STOCK
8400C	<b>Breweries of Berlin.</b> This 6 car set features 3 Breweries each from East and West Berlin. Limited production of 500 sets.	\$159.00	Z	IN JULY
2520A	<b>Berlin Wall Car*</b>	\$31.00	HO	IN STOCK
2521A	<b>Berlin Wall Car*</b> *(Car design features Berlin Wall and Brandenburg Gate.) Limited production of 500 cars.	\$32.50	Z	IN STOCK

## Z-Gauge Freight Cars—A Closer Look

By RILEY O'CONNOR  
Contributing Editor

At the risk of sounding obvious, let's take a look at the different Z-gauge freight cars, and what they carry. Most freight cars are either open or closed. The open cars include hoppers, flats, and gondolas, while the closed cars include beer cars, box cars, and covered hoppers. Also, there are special service cars.

Closed cars are used to haul items which need to be protected from the elements, such as appliances, dry chemicals, or perishables. 8605 is a basic boxcar; 8639 is an older version of a boxcar. The raised cabin on the end of the 8639 provides an enclosed area for the train's brakemen. Before the use of air brakes, trains had to be stopped by hand operation of the brakes on both locomotive and cars. Through the use of whistle signals, the engineer would tell the brakemen to apply or release the hand brakes. The arrival of air brakes eliminated the need for such a cabin, yet they often remained on equipment until well into the 1950's. The 8605 and the 8608 banana car both have "ventilators" cast into their sides. In real life, these sliding vents were used to air out the cars. The American prototype cars, such as 8641 and 8672 represent 50 foot long boxcars with sliding doors.

The 8635 represents a car with a sliding top which allows heavy steel coils to be carried without being exposed to the weather. Once delivered, the sliding cover is opened so that a crane can pick up the heavy coils. The 8623 has sliding doors on both sides so that a forklift can place loads of construction material such as sheetrock and plywood into the car. Once these cars' doors are closed, the materials are kept secure and dry.

"Intermodal" transportation means that a shipment of materials can be made via several different forms of carriers. The intermodal container can be carried on ship, or by airplane, or truck, or train. The container car, such as 8615 and 8617, represents the rail portion of intermodal transportation. Loaded at a factory, the container can be taken by truck to a railroad yard and loaded onto a special flat car. This car is taken to its next destination in a train, then transloaded by the 8972 crane from the railroad to other modes of transport.

Tank cars, such as 8611, 8629, and others, haul a variety of petrochemicals and fuels. The newer cars, such as 8625, 8626, and others, carry other chemicals and pressurized gasses. The beer cars such as 8600 and 8648, are a celebration of the countless individual brews throughout Europe and the U.S. These cars are refrigerated cars (using blocks of ice or dry ice), which keeps the beers cool until they arrive at their destination.

Open cars are used to haul items which do not need to be protected from the weather. Coal, scrap metal, sand and gravel, and railroad cross ties are examples of such loads. Machinery and heavy equipment could be carried on the 8610 flat car, but would be covered with a tarp or plastic sheeting. In service, the gondolas (8622, 8650-52, 8642, 8674) often carried heavy materials which would damage the car, either when being loaded, or while in transit. The walls of these cars eventually would bulge somewhat from the shifting of these loads. The 8630 hopper would carry coal primarily, but could also carry other bulk minerals which did not need to be kept dry.

Another open car is the 8619, the lumber carrier. To a logger, the 8619 is called a "disconnect" car. That is, the wheelsets (called "trucks" by railroaders) arrive at a logging area in a long train of truck sets. They are disconnected and the cut lumber is loaded onto a pair of these trucks. In this way, the lumber becomes part of the structure of the "car" for the trip. At their destination, the lumber is removed from the truck pairs, and they are joined back together for the return trip. Märklin's car does not actually disconnect.

There are a variety of special service cars. The 8621 crane is a railroad company car; that is, the crane is not a revenue producing car. Rather, the crane is used by railroad crews for maintenance of way and for derailment cleanup. The car must be used with a boom tender; an 8610 carries a small pedestal (included with 8621) which holds the boom of the crane while it is in transit. In normal operation, this car is run with the boom pointing toward the rear of the train. Should the boom accidentally get loose and swing, there would be less possible

damage than if the boom were pointing forward. The 8624 can be used as a company service car, too. Designed to carry loads of gravel, the car has chutes which discharge the load to the sides of the track. This is convenient for track ballasting operations, since the car can be unloaded along the railroad right of way while the train is slowly moving.

The all time granddaddy of the special service cars is the 8620 transformer car. I must admit that this is my sentimental favorite, since it is HUGE. Similar to the disconnect lumber cars, the end cars of the 8620 carry bridge supports. These supports are connected to the transformer and suspend it between two cars. While the prototype cars have 12 axles to support the load, the Märklin car uses only four axles. Called a "Schnebel" car (after its designer), this car usually operates as a special movement. That is, the transformer car moves in its own special train, with a locomotive, the transformer, the necessary tool and equipment cars, and a "rider" coach for the train crew and manufacturer's representatives. Because of the car's size, it also moves at a relatively slow speed. Once at its destination, the transformer is disconnected from the carrier cars and moved into place. The two carrier cars are joined together, and are returned to the transformer factory for the next load.

In the U.S., the traditional end to a passing train is the caboose (such as 8636). In earlier days, the caboose was a home away from home for train crews; they ate and slept on their cab. As train speed grew faster, and hours of service became shorter, the caboose became less important. Now, most American trains end with the last freight car and an "EOT" (End of Train) indicator device. The EOT (also called "Flashing Freddy" by some) is connected to the train's air line and sends radio signals to the engineer indicating that there is braking pressure at the end of the train. In Germany, freight trains did not use a caboose. The 8609 "package" car or "brake van" is similar to the American caboose, but it was usually tucked in behind the locomotive. Meant to carry parcels and small freight, the brake van's location behind the locomotive was for the crew's convenience at a station stop.

The cars are formed into trains of different types. Many trains operate as a dedicated train, handling only one commodity. Unit coal trains are such a train, moving from mine to power plant as one unit. Along the way, the train

changes crews (and even refuels) while on the main track. Piggyback and container trains are another example, moving quickly from intermodal yard to intermodal yard in competition with highway truck traffic. Other trains handle a mixture of freight cars, but still move quickly to their destination. Smaller trains move slowly along mainlines and branchlines both, stopping everywhere to drop off and pick up cars. For many branchlines, the train includes an old passenger coach, making the train a "mixed". In the United States, passengers on mixed trains often rode in the caboose with the crew. The mixeds are gone now; one of the last was on the Georgia Road (but that's another story). Your railroad offers you the chance to run the trains that interest you.

## "Hills Are Alive" HO Layout Brings France, Switzerland and Germany Together

by PETER N. FRAGASSO, #0215 Woodhaven, NY

My HO L-shaped layout of a medium sized German city near the French/Swiss borders allows me to operate trains from all three countries. The large mountain gives that "hills are alive with the sound of music" quality. Underneath it lies a reverse loop and a hidden track which can hide an Inter-City after it has passed through the small city where ICs don't stop. There is a small freight yard with hump track plus two additional yards. Horizontally placed dressing mirrors along the walls make the 10'x7'6" layout seem bigger and make for exciting night operation.



## 9-Year-Old Wins Science Fair with Märklin Metall "Steam Engine Governor"



Nine-year-old Paul Miska recently won top honors in the model category at the Emerson School (Ann Arbor, MI) Science Fair. Paul's model was that of a steam engine governor built with a Märklin metall construction set. Also, he supplemented his model with photos of actual steam engine governor taken at the Henry Ford Museum. Our congratulations to Paul Miska.

## Realism is Key to European Z-Gauge Layout

By DIETER WAEGNER, #3430 Salt Lake City, UT

After three years of construction, and two more to go, my Z-gauge layout is beginning to take shape. I like to put a lot of life and realism into my layouts. Most items, such as the Ferris wheel, Carousel and Coaling cranes, are all motorized. Also, I have scratch built a lot of the accessories, as many of the items I wanted in my layout were not available to buy.



### How About You?

## Showcase Your Layout in the Next Issue of HotTraks!

Send a black and white photograph of your layout, along with a brief essay (100 words or less) which describes your layout. Tell us what era your layout represents, which Märklin trains you run on it, and anything else of interest you would like to share. We will publish at least one HO layout and one Z-gauge layout in future issues of *HotTraks*—more, if space permits. If your layout is

featured, you will receive a \$25.00 Gift Certificate which can be applied to any gift featured in the Märklin Depot. Get going now! Send your black and white layout photos along with your layout description to:

HotTraks Layout Showcase  
c/o The Märklin Club  
P.O. Box 319  
New Berlin, WI 53151

## Delivery Update

### New Items Now In Stock! See Your Authorized Märklin Dealer Today!

TYPE	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTED RETAIL
HO	4261	Passenger Cars 2/pk (supplements #2660 set)	\$ 179.00
HO	4439	"Stuttgarter Hofbran" Beer Car	14.50
HO	1898	Oldtimer Mail Vehicle Set (L)	62.00
D	4998	Digital Dance Car	332.00
Z	8870	King Ludwig Express Locomotive (L)	199.00
Z	8880	German Diesel Locomotive (L)	167.00
Z	8134	German Postal Service Freight Train (L)	221.00
D	6074	2-Rail DC K87 Accessory Decoder Panel	134.00
D	2604	Digital Electric Turnouts/Built in Decoder Panels	121.00

## Club Member's Corner

### Earn Up To \$25 Cash For Sharing Your Model Railroading Expertise

We need your expertise! Please send us your best model railroading ideas, hints, tips or feature stories of 500 words or less and we will send you a check for \$25.00. If you submit a model railroading question or problem to our panel of experts, you'll receive a \$15.00 Gift Certificate which can be applied to any gifts featured in the Märklin Depot. Send your best ideas and/or questions to:

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c/o The Märklin Club  
P.O. Box 319  
New Berlin, WI 53151

When applicable, be sure to include a list of all materials and time needed to complete a project. Be sure to include your name, address, phone number and Club membership number. The Club reserves the right to substitute rewards based on availability.

## Substitute Z-Gauge Layout Book (#0292A) Now Available



The Märklin Z-Gauge Layout Book (#0292) has been completely sold out, and the new book (#0295) isn't due to be published until late 1990. So, in the interim, we have produced an updated version of the #0292 that is available and in stock now (#0292A) for only \$12.95. Please see your authorized dealer to order your copy. Contains black and white track diagrams only.

## Club Member's Q & A

Club Member #6474  
Harry Schulze  
Huntingdon Valley, PA

### QUESTION:

*Is the 6080 decoder capable, perhaps with additional circuitry, of providing the four function outputs like the 6085?*

### ANSWER:

While the 6080 decoder cannot be upgraded to four auxiliary functions, the factory has advised us that it is working on a decoder panel that would allow additional functions, as well as incorporate the features of the 5-star propulsion system concept.

Club Member #0169  
Roland Baker  
Nashville, TN

### QUESTION:

*I have been operating "five star" equipped engines with 6600 controllers and they seem to perform with no difficulty. Am I harming these motors in some way by doing this? Their performance is always quiet and smooth, but I do not, of course, wish to place a burden of some kind on them.*

### ANSWER:

The factory advises us that the 6600 and older 6699 controllers are not compatible with the 5-star propulsion system. You are probably not harming the motors, but there may be a risk to the 5-star circuit plate, and it would be best to operate 5-star locomotives off of a conventional transformer. You could still continue to operate non-five star units from the 6600 controller.

Club Member #4553  
Allan Gartner  
Rock Hill, SC

### QUESTION:

*I have the Märklin track cleaning vehicle with the special dirt scraping wheels. It works too well. The dirt loads up the wheels causing it to make poor contact. I disassembled the unit and cleaned the unit with a rotary bristle (not wire) brush. It not only didn't clean it thoroughly, but it was time consuming and I was afraid of damaging the wipers. Is there an easier way to clean it?*

### ANSWER:

Our service manager advises that the only effective way he knows to clean the 8802 track cleaning car is to disassemble the unit and clean the wheels in a jeweler's sonic cleaner, so that the wheels are chemically cleaned.

## HOT TRAKS

Märklin Club, P.O. Box 319, New Berlin, WI 53151

The Märklin Club is dedicated solely to serving the special interests of the Märklin enthusiast. Our goal is to help you get the most from your Märklin trains and model railroading; we want to make a fun hobby fascinating . . . for you.

To do this, the Märklin Club publishes one of the most highly informative newsletters in model railroading, *HotTraks*. The newsletter is your direct line to all the latest product news and developments from the Märklin Factory in Göppingen, West Germany. *HotTraks* is also a valuable resource for articles and features on a broad range of model railroading subjects.

Membership in the Märklin Club is renewable annually for only \$10. Your satisfaction is guaranteed. If at any time for any reason, the Club or *HotTraks* is not as fulfilling or exciting as we promise, tell us why in writing and we'll refund your dues for the remaining months in your membership term.



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