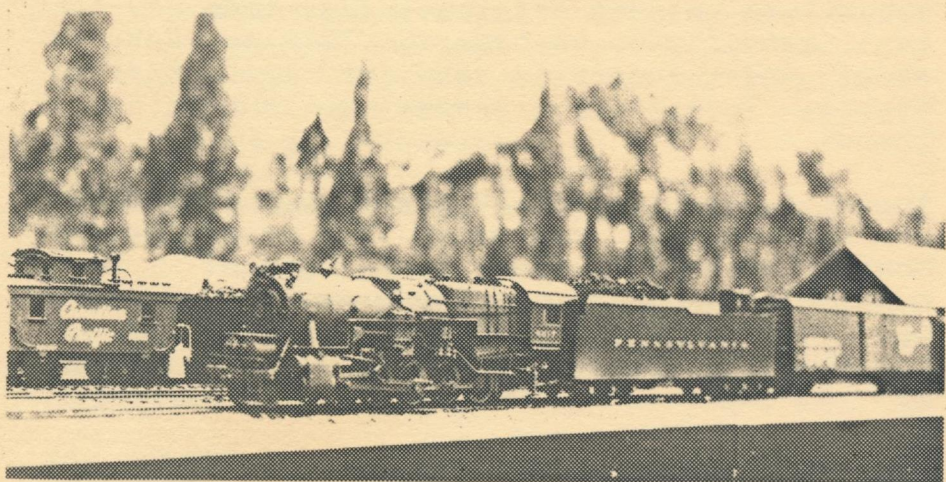


ESSENCE

A monthly publication of the
S Scale Special Interest Group

1:64 scale modeling with 1:1 fun

September 1985



News from the 50th NMRA Convention:

JOHN BORTZ WINS AGAIN !

S MODULE IS THIRD

LARGEST S MODULAR LAYOUT

S TEAM SHOWS OFF

S SCALE SIG FORMED

Foolscap

Ken Mackenzie
Editor

Welcome to the first issue of Essence. This is your newsletter, so I will try to stay in the background and convey your knowledge, your ideas, your hopes with as little distortion as possible. Of course, all editors are crusty and opinionated, but I will try.

I wish we didn't need a newsletter. It is a poor substitute for those warm easy work sessions and bull sessions when we kick things around face-to-face. Since it is our only substitute between get-togethers, lets try for that same flavor on paper. Talk to Essence about what interests you, or may interest others. This is your grapevine, your bulletin board.

There is plenty to talk about. Who else do you know that is interested in S or Sn scale? What's doing in your local group? What materials or products impressed you or gave you trouble? Are you looking to buy/sell/swap something? Do you have a question? If so, ask it here.

This first issue is not typical, I hope. It is long on first-time organizational stuff and short on stuff about modeling and modelers.

EDITORIAL POLICY: I will not print abusive or disparaging remarks, except ones about me. No tinfoil or high rail material will appear; there is another special interest group for that. The focus is on modeling, so there will be very little space for prototype material. I'll try not to duplicate the hobby press. Essence will be printed every month. If no stuff is submitted, I will print blank pages.

COVER PHOTO: John Bortz's award-winning deca pod in the S Team RR's yard. Thanks to Ken Zieska for sending this picture in time.

Coordinator's Corner

Ken Mackenzie
Coordinator

Welcome to the S Scale Special Interest Group (SSSIG for short). The purpose of this group is to provide a focal point within the NMRA of information, ideas, and activities for model railroaders interested in 1:64 scale realism.

We formed this group because S scale NMRA members were so few in number that:

- * we have difficulty getting/staying in contact with each other,
- * the NMRA has difficulty finding out what we think and what services we need, and
- * potential S scale modelers and suppliers don't know how to reach us for assistance or information.

There are some things we can be doing to help our hobby:

We can locate other S scale modelers. Nobody seems to know how many of us there are, but the count must be changing fast. Half the S scalers I know were in HO three years ago.

We can provide information (propaganda?) about S scale to the rest of the NMRA membership.

We can find a way to provide special help and encouragement to modelers and suppliers who are entering S scale.

I know it sounds like a lot of work, and it will be. But if we all do a bit, and we encourage other S scale modelers we know to lend a hand, we may help the hobby a little.

One thing is certain. We will gain at least as much from the group as we put into it. The fellowship of sharing experiences, knowledge, and a common love of 1:64 scale modeling will be well worth the effort.

WHAT A WEEK !

It was the 50th anniversary convention of the NMRA, and S scale modelers and suppliers celebrated by capturing more than their share of attention for 1:64. It seemed that everywhere you turned there were S scale products, layouts, models, and modelers.

JOHN BORTZ capped the week by placing first in the steam locomotive category of the model contest. His entry was an S scale model of Pennsylvania #4617, an I1 class decapod built largely from S Scale Locomotive Supply parts. This was the second major triumph for John, who won the Gold Award for his S scale Texas type locomotive at the 1978 NMRA convention in Minneapolis. The decapod was built on commission for another modeler. "No more", he says. "I have too much work to do on my own railroad".

DARIEN STEVENS' 2x4 foot rural scene placed third in the module category. Her entry scored 96 of a possible 120 points in this very competitive event. The module was built as research for an article on module construction which she is writing for the hobby press. When asked if her husband Paul had provided much help, she said: "He held the boards while I nailed them, and worried that I would smash his fingers."

S MODULES were combined to form an even larger operating layout than the one at Kansas City last year. Ken Zieska of the Pines & Prairies S Scale Workshop was one of the additional contributors this year. Look for details and pictures in the NASG Dispatch and hobby press.

Overland Models, American Models, and the NASG had side-by-side booths near the S Module and S Team layouts. Near the center of the hall, they created a hub of S scale interest for the rest of the public display to revolve around.

Towering over the rest of the displays was the big blue sign over the S Team exhibit. This 10x30 foot sectional display railroad in dual gauge was built specifically to publicize S scale by members of the S/Sn3 Scale Workshop. An impressive array of available S scale rolling stock was in operation and a display of S Scale Locomotive Supply detail parts was on hand. Members passed out a brochure (donated by Don Heimbürger) which described the cost and size benefits of S scale.

But the main message was reliable operation. Omnicon's 2-8-0 locomotive stole the show by first pulling a 38-car train with ease, and then running UNATTENDED for hours with a second Omnicon consolidation at the tail end.

Charlie Sandersfeld sold at least a half-dozen of these engines at the show, including one to John Bortz, who had just won the locomotive model contest.

LAYOUT TOURS took hundreds of visitors to see the S scale railroads of Bob Ristow and Roy Meissner. Both railroads have been described in the NMRA Bulletin.

THE BEST PART of any gathering of modelers is the exchange of ideas at bull sessions or clinics. At one of the Layout Design clinics the subject turned to the difficulties of uncoupling in the smaller scales. John Armstrong, who likes to kid non-O scale folks, quipped "Well, you could try machining down your fingers."

At one of the late-night bull sessions, we learned that Barney Daehler had disbanded the S Finescale Special Interest Group. Before morning, the determination to form the S Scale Special Interest Group was born. In the next three days we got out a leaflet, attended the SIG Coordinator's meeting, and applied to the NMRA Groups Chairman for SIG status.

Cinders

Ron Bashista of American Models plans to add two new types of freight cars to his popular line of plastic car kits:

- * 52 foot mill gondolas (Pullman-Standard PS5)
- * Offset side two-bay hopper cars.

Look for these around the first of the year.

Charlie Sandersfeld of Omnicon Scale Models says his imported consolidation is selling so well that he has scheduled the introduction of an Erie 4-6-0 for March/April. As with his current 2-8-0, the ten-wheeler duplicates a specific prototype locomotive, but is a relatively "generic" engine chosen for its similarity to ones used on many other railroads over a long period of time.

Other projects which Omnicon is considering include:

- * A conversion kit for PA diesel plastic body shells, consisting of a high-grade mechanism and detail castings.
- * Coined truck sideframes for certain geeps.
- * Four-wheel passenger car trucks in brass.

Jon Stetz walked up to the S Team layout at the NMRA national convention and introduced himself. He said he was switching to Sn3, was selling all his HO equipment at the convention auction, and planned to bring out a line of structure kits under the name of Finestkind Mdl's. (His abbreviation, not ours. Ed.) Five kits ranging in size from Miner's Shack to Ten Stampmill will be available by November. For details, write Finestkind Mdl's, P.O.Box 25052 Overland Park, KS 66210-25052.

S Scale will prosper and grow if our suppliers do, so when plans like these are important to you, let the supplier know you are interested. Ron's and Charlie's addresses appear elsewhere in this issue.

Wheels and Deals

We will run a buy/sell/swap column under this heading whenever there is a need. Members are entitled to two free classified ads here per year; more if space permits.

New Members

- Ron Bashista, American Models
22055 West Brandon
Farmington Hills, MI 48024
- John Bortz
3377 Papermill Road
Huntington Valley, PA 19006
- Tom Hawley
2311 Strathmore Road
Lansing, MI 48910
- Dave Jasper
8900 Birchwood Lane
Bloomington, MN 55438
- David Koehler
303 South Maple Street
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
- Ken Mackenzie
5969 Sugarbush Lane
Greendale, WI 53129
- Clark O'Shaughnessy
1215 Mulford
Evanston, IL 60202
- Charlie Sandersfeld, Omnicon Scale Models
30 Witt Road
South Barrington, IL 60010
- Ken Zieska
11810 52nd Avenue North
Plymouth, MN 55442-1820

ESSENCE
5969 Sugarbush Lane
Greendale, WI 53129

EDITOR - Ken Mackenzie
CIRCULATION MANAGER - Ann Mackenzie
PHOTOGRAPHER - Ken Zieska

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Membership in the S Scale Special Interest Group is \$1 per year (August thru July). Subscriptions to Essence are \$6 per year for members and \$10 for non-members. Change of address must be received 4 weeks in advance; second-class material is not forwarded.

Essence solicits articles, drawings and photographs on any model railroad topic applicable to S Scale model railroading. All material submitted is understood to be gratis and contributed for the benefit of the hobby.

To:

Ads are not solicited. However, pre-printed advertising material which is deemed of interest to members may be included with the newsletter. Ad material must be cut or folded to 5-1/2" by 8-1/2", and may be printed on one side or both. Advertiser supplies 100 clean copies. The cost per issue for inclusion of ads in the newsletter is \$5 per 5-1/2" by 8-1/2" sheet and \$10 per 8-1/2" by 11" sheet. Send a copy of proposed mailing to Circulation Manager for review. Disapproved copy may not be returned.

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