

# Highball!

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION 6TH DIVISION PNR

February 2024



The abandoned road and railway bridge linking the Atlas Mine to the joint CN/CP line through East Coulee, AB was still standing in October 2022, and hopefully will still be there for viewing when **Dino Tracks** hits the area next June. While trains and cars haven't crossed the bridge in decades, it along with the nearby Atlas Mine National Historic Site, are reminders of the fascinating and colourful history of the Drumheller Valley. (photo by Rob Badmington)

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## **Superintendent's Report – Ed Molenkamp, Supt. 6th Division, President NMRA Canada**

Greetings everyone

Good to talk to everyone again. It has been great to see some of you in person as the shows have started up again.

The Division had a table at the Convention in Saskatoon this past weekend.

Seeing the crowds there, I am sure it was a success and thanks to those who stopped by my booth to chat.

We had some information at the booth about the upcoming Spring Meet in Drumheller and it appeared to be well received. Some members and a few new members have confirmed their attendance already.

There will more information regarding this Meet in a separate report here in the Highball.

Speaking of upcoming conventions, don't forget to sign up for the Surrey Excursion PNR Regional in Surrey BC, May 22-26.

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## **Assistant Superintendent's Report – Rick Astle**

As we look ahead to 2024, the weather has been a challenge some extreme cold and exceptional warmth, not to mention rain and snow making our roads treacherous. This is the ideal time for working on our layouts or special projects.

The train event schedule is heating up with shows and events planned through to next summer. I hope to be at some of these events to help promote our division and the NMRA. As I write this, the Saskatoon show is a week away. I had hoped to be able to take in the show as it is a little shorter drive than to Regina and Moose Jaw but a

commitment here in central Alberta on the Saturday has my schedule turned upside down. I will be at SUPERTRAIN 2024 and spending time at the NMRA 6th Div booth and Mountain View Model Railroad Club's layout. I am booked in for Surrey Excursion 2024' the PNR convention being hosted by 7th Division in May and I will be in Drumheller for Dino Tracks in June. Stop by for a visit. Check out all the events and contact details elsewhere in this issue.

Until next time keep the throttle steady.

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## **From the Editor – Rob Badmington**

This is turning into another very large issue of Highball!, thanks to the many contributors who keep sending me reports, photos, articles, and announcements. We even have a few items for sale.

We are already into the 2024 model railroad show season, with Saskatoon's All Aboard Model Train Show taking place mid-February. There are many more shows in the next few months, along with swap meets, mini-meets, club open houses, and a couple of new events in Edmonton. Check out the details on the last page.

I am personally looking forward to three upcoming events, starting with SoundRail, an operations weekend in the Seattle area. I will be back to the West Coast in late May for the Surrey Excursion, the PNR Regional Convention. Finally, details of our own Spring Meet, Dino Tracks, to be held in Drumheller in June are starting to emerge. The Drumheller Valley is full of railroad history, along with many other attractions, making this a fun destination for a meet. The committee is working hard to make it an interesting and memorable event you won't want to miss.

Hope to see you there!

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## **Dino Tracks 2024 Spring Meet – Ed Molenkamp, 6th Division Superintendent**

Our annual Spring Meet is coming up **June 21-23** in Drumheller, Alberta.

Please take note of these proper dates and not the ones I sent in the last Highball.

This Spring Meet will have our usual events; Clinics, Banquet with Guest Speaker, and a Meet and Greet. As well, the Atlas Coal Mine (<https://atlascoalmine.ab.ca>) which is a National Historic Site will be one of the highlights of the weekend.

We are also trying to squeeze in layout tours in the area. This will be a great opportunity to visit with each other, to learn and share the vast knowledge present amongst us.

The hotel codes will be available soon on the website. There will be a few options for hotels as the prices vary.

Now we know there are no tracks left in Drumheller but there is a rich railway history in the area that we can all enjoy.

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## **2024 Election Time in 6th Division – Peter Ulvestad**

It's time again to look for nominations to fill the Division's Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent positions. These positions are for 2 years starting September 1, 2024. We require nominations for these 2 positions by May 31 so that voting can take place and have the positions filled prior to their commencement date. Nominations can be sent to me or Dennis Dreher.

The Superintendent represents the over 200 NMRA members in the division (don't let that number scare you off volunteering). A guide book is available at <http://pnr.nmra.org/policies/> that may help answer questions of what this position entails or you could phone Ed to get his take on it after so many years in the position.

Do you know someone who would be a great candidate for one of these positions? Have you approached this person with the idea of a nomination? You may find the person receptive but unsure of their ability to do the job. Your confidence in that person may be all that is needed to unlock a talent the division didn't know about.

The NMRA and in particular the 6th Division owes its success to all of its members in whatever capacity, from home layout builders to convention organizers and division officers. We will continue to flourish with those who are willing and able to step up to the plate.

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## **Achievement Program Report - Doug Burton MMR, 6<sup>th</sup> Division, PNR AP Chair**

Hi everyone. I am back and feeling better but I still have a COVID hangover with my allergies. It has been a tough few months to find motivation to do anything. I apologize to anyone who did not get their awards in a timely manner. I am now completely caught up and again I offer my apologies.

We have many members who have caught the AP bug and are working on things. I will be at the Regina show and have scheduled some assessments for while I am there. If anyone in that area would like to have an assessment done, please send me an email. I am looking for someone to give me a hand running the NMRA booth. You have to be really good at sitting.

There are a couple of events coming up that are co-sponsored by the NMRA AP program. The first is in conjunction with the Edmonton Model Railroad Association. There are going to be clinics offered on Saturday, March 23, 2024 1:00 - 4:00 pm in the afternoon,

at the EMRA Freight Shed at Fort Edmonton. If anyone would like to put on a clinic for this please let me know. You do not have to be an NMRA member to attend but you will receive credit towards the AP Volunteer or Author certificate if you put on a clinic. The room is big enough that you could put on a hands-on clinic if you would like. We would like to make this an annual event with more dates during the winter. There is no charge for this event but you must pre-register. Any questions or to book in to this event, contact Doug Burton at [dwburton1234@gmail.com](mailto:dwburton1234@gmail.com).

The second event will be on Saturday April 6, 2024 following the Edmonton MMRF Swap Meet at the Central Lions Senior Recreation Center in Edmonton occurring in the afternoon from 1:00 – 4:00 pm. This is co-sponsored with the new Northern Alberta Railway Modellers Meet (NARMM) which is a prototype meet. You do not have to be an NMRA member to attend but if you do a clinic you

will get credit towards the AP Volunteer or Author certificate. The room is big enough that you could put on a hands-on clinic if you would like. We want to make this an annual event connected to both swap meets.

This time I would like to go through the requirements for AP Civil as part of my explanation of AP categories.

The requirements for Model Railroad Engineer - Civil may look long and complicated but it really is not. The reason that the list of options is so long is to offer you more alternative choices for meeting the requirements.

## To qualify for the Model Railroad Engineer - Civil certificate:

- Prepare one original scale drawing of a model railroad track plan, identifying overall size, scale, track elevations, curve radii, and turnout sizes. **This doesn't have to be anything too intense.**

Before you start drawing your layout plan, look at requirements 2 & 3 to see what features you are going to want to incorporate in your track plan. **Remember: you do not need to build everything on this plan, just the minimum required part of it.** The plan should be neat and legible, but it does not have to be in ink or computer generated.

You should also consider the requirements for **Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical, and Chief Dispatcher when planning your layout** - it is much easier to include the requirements in the planning stage than to go back and add them later.

This plan must include:

- Adequate terminal facilities for handling freight and/or passenger cars
  - This will vary, depending on the nature of your layout. Keep in mind that a railroad needs to have a reason to exist, other than to provide modelers and railfans something to look at! There needs to be someone that will pay for it to haul something from one place to another, be it lumber, coal, fruit, passengers, etc. (and usually more than one thing). Your plan and your layout should reflect this. Remember, you don't necessarily have to build these facilities, just include them in your plan. This is to show that you know what the design of a logical terminal facility would look like.

- Adequate terminal facilities for storage and service of motive power

- This doesn't mean you need a turntable with a twenty stall roundhouse. For a small operation, a simple engine house with a fueling track may be sufficient. It should be consistent with the theme of the rest of your plan. Again, remember that you don't necessarily have to build these facilities, just show that you know how to plan one.

- A minimum of one mainline passing siding

- Four switching locations, not counting yards, interchanges, wyes, and reversing loops

- These would typically be spurs for setting out or picking up cars. Again, each one should have a purpose.

- Provision for turning motive power (**except for switchbacks, trolley lines, etc.**)

- **A turntable, wye, or reverse loop**, which actually changes the way that the motive power faces. Not just a loop of track that sends it back through the scene in a different direction on another track.

- Provision for simultaneous operation of at least two mainline trains in either direction.

- Remember, you don't have to actually build this, just show it on the plan.

- Construct and demonstrate the satisfactory operation of a completed section of the model railroad and track work described in #1, containing at least 25 linear feet in Z, N, or TT scale, or 50 linear feet in HO or S scale, or seventy five linear feet in O scale, or 100 linear feet in G, F, or #1 scale, or other scales in proportional relationship to HO scale, with appropriate ballast, drainage facilities, and roadbed profile, which may contain spurs, yards, etc.

**Notice that last part** - 50 feet of track, not 50 feet of main line - all operational track counts. While there is some element of scenery (appearance) to the track work and ballasting, the greatest number of points come from Construction and Conformity. In other words, what you need to show is that you know how to build track following prototype practice.

The track work must have **examples of six** of the following features:

- Passing Siding
  - Spur
  - Crossover
    - A crossover is a diagonal track connecting two parallel tracks.
  - Reversing Loop
  - Wye
  - Simple Ladder
    - A ladder should have a minimum of 3 tracks
  - Compound Ladder
  - Turntable
  - Transfer Table
  - Super Elevation
    - Banking the track and roadbed on a curve.
  - Simple Overhead Wire - **A single overhead wire (such as on a trolley system)**
  - Compound Overhead Wire (catenary)
    - One wire which carries the power, with another wire above to support it (such as on high-speed electrical lines)
  - Scale Track
    - A track with a scale for weighing cars.
  - Cog Railway Track
  - Coal Dump Track
    - Could also be for dumping something besides coal
  - Ash Pit
  - Service Pit Track
  - Grade Elevation
    - This is a lot simpler than it sounds: it's any change in the slope of the track, like at the top or bottom of a hill. It's to show that you can make the transition smoothly between grades.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Construct for Merit Judging, scratch built scale models of **any three** of the following, and demonstrate their satisfactory operation: **These do not have to be super detailed; the rail can be just glued to styrene or wood ties. A loco has to be able to operate on it, wiring can be temporary. If you have them built into your layout already you just have to demonstrate a loco**

**running through it. Yes you can use Fast Tracks. You can't build 3 of the same type.**

- Turnout (straight, curved, or wye)
  - Point or Stub
- Crossover
- Double Crossover
- Single Slip Switch
- Double Slip Switch
- Crossing
- Gauntlet Track
- Gauntlet Turnout
- Dual Gauge Turnout
- Gauge Separation Turnout
  - Narrow gauge splitting off from dual gauge.
- Double Junction Turnout
  - One set of parallel tracks diverges from another.
- Three-Way Turnout
- Spring Switch
- Operating Switch in Overhead Wire
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Commercial frogs are not permitted** to be used in any of these items. These models may be built and demonstrated as part of the layout or separately.

Remember that these items do not need to be part of your layout - they don't even need to be the same scale or gauge. They don't even need to be part of a layout at all. You can build them on separate pieces of wood. They just have to be big enough and with enough track on either side to "...demonstrate their satisfactory operation." This means that a unit of motive power must be able to travel through them (along all the possible routes) under its own power.

**It is NOT sufficient** to push or pull a car through by hand.

- You must earn a Merit Award (there are three pass/fail criteria) with the items in section 3 above.

Note that you only have to earn a Merit Award with the items in section 3 - the trackwork items in section 2 don't have to be judged at all, except to demonstrate that they work. They must be available for examination by the judges, however.

- You must submit a Statement of Qualification (see SOQ below) which includes the following:

- Attachment to the SOQ showing the track plan required in Section 1 above. The attachment should include:

- Identification of all scratch built features
- All commercial components used
- Materials used in building the model

(This is just a list of what was used - you don't have to try and figure out how much)

- Description of the track work features, methods of construction and identification of commercial components used in Section 3.
- Verification of the Merit Awards (Photocopies of the certificates or signed evaluation forms.)
- Witness Certification showing that each of the above models meets all applicable NMRA standards.

You may have most of this done on your layout already.

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## **Area Reports**

### **Lethbridge – Paul Smith**

The Southern Alberta Model Railway Club is planning for a busy schedule over the next month. We'll be holding our Semi-Annual General Meeting on February 27, followed by our Winter Social for members and guests on March 9. Our Spring Open House is scheduled for March 23 and 24 (1100 to 1600 on both days) - any Highball readers planning to be in Lethbridge that weekend are cordially invited to visit us at our Gyro Park location.

We're continuing work on our HO and N scale layouts.

We're refining operation schemes for the HO scale, including an update of industrial locations and associated car requirements. The N scale group is drawing closer to drafting a comprehensive picture of what the club would like to see in this layout, and what we might do to realize that.

Any Highball! readers who happen to be in Lethbridge on a Tuesday are welcome to visit us in our Gyro Park clubhouse starting at 1900 hours.

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### **Regina – Echo Valley Railroad Guild – Doug Johnson**

Members of the Guild have been very active in the last few months. The Echo Valley Free-Mo group attended the shows in Prince Albert in January and Saskatoon in February. The On30 group is hard at work preparing new modules for the expanded layout which will be unveiled at the Regina show in April. Preparations are

continuing for Regina Railfest 2024 which will be held at the Caledonian Curling Club on April 27 and 28. Several out of town groups will be attending so it promises to be a good show. Further details are available at [www.reginarailfest.com](http://www.reginarailfest.com).

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### **Moose Jaw - Thunder Creek Model Railway Club – Al Howard**

Our activities are currently focused on the preparation for our Annual Show, March 23 and 24 2024, at the Western Development Museum in Moose Jaw. As of February 18, we had 31 commitments from clubs and vendors to attend with more expected to confirm before our deadline of February 29. For additional information, please check the website at [https://wdm.ca/event\\_manager/modeltrainshow](https://wdm.ca/event_manager/modeltrainshow).

We had 5 members attend the Prince Albert Model Train show on Jan21 and 22 with a 28 X 11 foot operational display. We also had 7 members attend the Model Train Show at the World Trade Centre in Saskatoon February 17 and 18. We had a 40 X 11 foot operational display that was very well received by the public and it won the Best of Show award. The photos below from Saskatoon show that there was a lot of interest in our work. We want to

thank the Prince Albert Model Railroaders and the Prairie Rail Workshop for hosting excellent events.

The club meets every Tuesday evening at the Town & Country Mall in Moose Jaw. The mall has new owners as of January. They are enthusiastic about our involvement in the mall and we will continue have our existing space



Figure 1: A section of the Thunder Creek display at Saskatoon

for our meeting room and the operational display for the foreseeable future. Please contact [webmaster1@tcmrc.org](mailto:webmaster1@tcmrc.org) for more information on meeting times and logistics. Visitors are welcome!

**We have a great Annual Show lined up for you. We look forward to seeing you on the 23rd and 24<sup>th</sup>.**



Figure 2: Jim Carr's HO/N gauge module at Saskatoon.



Figures 3 & 4: Our display garnered lots of public interest and interaction at the Saskatoon show

## **Airdrie / Iron Horse Park – Greg Orme**

Regardless whether the rodent saw his shadow or not doesn't change the fact that the May Long isn't really that far off and we are getting ready for our opening day of the 2024 season.

On Family Day, February 19 we successfully held our annual Frostbite Run. This is the first time in a couple of years that Mother Nature has cooperated with us. It was a full day starting at 11 AM with the last train leaving the station at around 15:40. A total of 661 passengers were given a round-trip journey to Vancouver and return.

At this time last year we were contemplating on having a Come and Drive the Train event at the park but for whatever reason this never came to pass, so we're going to try to have it this year. The idea behind the event is to give an opportunity to those who would like to run one of our trains and possibly think about becoming a member.



Beautiful sunny weather along with train rides were enjoyed by large crowds for the annual Frostbite Run at Iron Horse Park on Family Day.

We're also getting ready for this year's SUPERTRAIN. Last year the organizing committee was not able to give us enough space so that we could offer our normal train rides to those who attend the show. We did, however, have a static display set up right at the entrance when you came in. This year, the organizing committee has once again made room for us so we're planning on

bringing a couple of trains, some riding cars and a few lengths of track.

Our bunny run last year at Easter was such a success that we're planning on doing it again this year to once again support the Airdrie Food Bank. Hopefully the weather cooperates as it did last year and we're able to collect much needed food for those in need in the Airdrie area.

Last season we started our re-ballasting project and managed to re-ballast approximately 1500 feet of our mainline track. This is just a fraction of what we have to do and the ballasting project will continue this year and possibly into 2025.

Other than getting ready for SUPERTRAIN and our opening day, maintenance continues in anticipation.

As I have said, in previous reports there is never an end to the work required to keep things interesting and the trains running throughout the summer months at Iron Horse Park. So if you find yourself with some extra time on your hands we are always looking for new members or volunteers to help out. If you would like to get involved we would be happy if you would consider joining us. Information is available on our Web site [Iron Horse Park - Public Pages](#)

Till next time Happy Railroading....

## **Edmonton – Peter Ulvestad**

The MMRF Spring Swap Meet is scheduled for April 6, 2024 at the Central Lions Seniors Recreation Centre. For more info, please visit the website [https://www.mmrf.ab.ca/spring\\_swap\\_meet](https://www.mmrf.ab.ca/spring_swap_meet). Plans are already underway for the 2024 Greater Edmonton Model Train Show.

The Edmonton Model Railroad Association continues its work on the building expansion. The floors in both the north and south basements have been completed. The A/C unit for the addition has been installed but we are waiting on the arrival a new unit to replace the old one on the original building.

We continue to have our quarterly Saturday operating sessions. Our most recent one in January saw another increase in attendance over the November session.

The EMRA has benefited recently with the addition of several new members. Some of these new members are on the younger side (younger being a relative term) and finally may drive our average age down.



New cabinets and desk are in place on the epoxy flooring in the new addition to the EMRA building at Fort Edmonton Park.



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## **Calgary – Dale Sproule**

The Calgary Model Trainmen's Club recognized our first 50 year member, Garth Praestagaard on February 7, 2024 with cake and appropriate comments from club President Howard Nason. Some of Garth's friends who were previous members were in attendance.

The evening also saw Garth's realization of our helix to connect our modular floor layout to the trackage running high around the wall. The helix measures 6.6 feet by 9.5 feet with 10 levels starting 3 feet from floor level then topping off at 6.5 feet above floor level. The outer track is 36 inches in radius, the inside track is 33.5 inches in radius with 18 - #6 Fast track turnouts and Tortoise machines. The helix has been under construction since April 15, 2023.

Another club activity that I have been promoting is SHOW AND TELL where members bring their projects from home to show and tell other members about during our May Business Meeting night. Does your group have the same?

On December 27 for the 2nd consecutive year following COVID, some of the younger members took it upon themselves to plan and execute a Christmas Party Pot Luck. It was fabulous with all sorts of food being brought forth by members and there were plenty of left overs.

CMT is hosting our annual Spring Flea Market as part of the CMRS Spring Mini-meet to held in the Glenmore Inn Hotel, 1000 Glenmore Court S.E , on Sunday March 3 running 9 am-11 am. Admission is \$3.00 each for CMRS members, \$5.00 for non members, free for children under 12 years of age. FREE PARKING! Vendors tables: \$25.00 Each (8' x 2'), Half Tables and Extra Tables are Available. For tables or info, contact email:

[calgarymodeltrainmenclub@gmail.com](mailto:calgarymodeltrainmenclub@gmail.com)

A special RAPIDO product seen in Trains And Such drew my attention, an apparent sleeper car product #119038 that appears to be a normal VIA coach but on closer



inspection is lettered AMROAD from the movie Silver Streak shot in and around the Calgary area shot in 1976. It's a movie worth looking at and the closing scene has a passenger train crashing into the Toronto Union Station. Well, not really as the movie world goes, the end scene was done full-scale with a train engine mock-up shell mounted to a flatbed pick-up truck (like used for parade floats) and driven through a train station set built inside a hanger at Burbank Airport.

HELP: I have a modeling question that I need help with: My supply of Floquil Coach Green which dries in a relatively short time is drying up. The Floquil paint cross-reference chart suggests Tamiya Acrylic XF-71 Cockpit Green as a replacement. NOT EVEN CLOSE FOR A COLOR MATCH but Tamiya XF70 Acrylic Dark Green is a good color match. The Tamiya paint is advertised as a flat finish but it dries with a shine, advertising says it should dry with a flat finish. I sprayed Dullcoat which does not help, neither does some slight sanding, Floquil Flat Finish is of no help either. Can anyone suggest how to dull down my shiny Tamiya paint. Please reply to me at [sroules@telusplanet.net](mailto:sroules@telusplanet.net).

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## **Olds - Didsbury - Carstairs - Rick Astle**

Mountain View Model Railroad Club – Didsbury Museum

The club is still looking for new members to help with scenery work to be completed and is looking forward to operating some trains. The layout is dual power and we encourage visitors to bring some of their rolling stock and locomotives to run with us. With the flip of a switch we can move from DC to DCC operations. We are always looking to help fellow modellers with repairs and advice



on any subject from bench work to layout planning and construction. Our layouts are also kid friendly and we encourage the budding model railroaders to give operation a try.

The club will be at SUPERTRAIN 2024 April 20-21 with some of our usual exhibit pieces and this year we plan to include a loop or two of Garden Railroad operation. Stop by and talk with our members while you watch the train on Orbit Junction of the Nowhere Specific, or Thomas on Pack-it-Place-it HO portable, or an N-scale loco speed around the Echo Valley portable.

We would love to have you visit the museum layouts both indoors and out and you can find our schedule at [www.mvmrc.ca/page2.html](http://www.mvmrc.ca/page2.html) or call Rick at 403-507-3314

day or 403-556-8121 evenings to arrange a group or any time year round visit.



We are excited to announce a new chance for modellers in the Edmonton area to come together, share their work, learn what others are doing, make new friends, and most importantly, have fun!

The Northern Alberta Railway Modellers Meet (NARMM) is an afternoon of clinics, model displays, and a show-and-share of prototype-inspired rail and rail-related modelling in the spirit of the popular RPM-style meets.

**Model railroaders of all skills and experience are welcomed and encouraged to attend. We are open to all no matter your interest or ability!**

NARMM 2024 is taking place on April 6th at the Central Lions Rec Centre in Edmonton from 1pm to 5pm. (Same date and location as the MMRF Spring Swap meet).

Attendance this year is FREE (although donations are gratefully accepted).

Bring your work-in-progress or your favourite models for the display. You'll be encouraged - but not required - to talk about what you are working on during the show-and-share in a positive, fun way.

This event is made possible by the generous support of [The Train Exchange](#) in Edmonton, [Signallogic Systems](#), and your 6th Division of the PNR, NMRA.

Visit [NARMM.ca](http://NARMM.ca) for more details and to register today! You can also find us on Facebook by searching for "Northern Alberta Railway Modellers Meet."

# Operating Your Railway – Cal Sexsmith

## TIME TABLE & TRAIN ORDER OPERATIONS

### Part 2 – Adapting to Model Railroads

#### Introduction

Last time I explained how TT&TO works in the real world. This time I will show how various aspects of TT&TO can be incorporated into an operating session on a model railroad. Although it is possible to implement full TT&TO on a model railroad complete with Dispatcher, Operator(s), Train Orders, Train Order Signals and Clocks (fast or otherwise) often the size of a model railroad precludes including all features. Although I have operated on a number of small to medium sized model railroads that included most of them.

#### Time Table

If you are going to implement some form of TT&TO you will need a time table. In fact you should have a time table for any model railroad operation where at least part of the operation is on a main track outside of a yard or industrial district. For your initial time table it is not necessary to list train schedules. You simply need a station list with distances and track capacities. I have attached a time table I have created for my current layout. For distances I have used actual feet instead of miles. For track capacities I followed the lead of a 1960 Canadian National time table where siding capacities were calculated assuming 48 foot cars plus 115 feet for two diesel locomotives. For example, if a siding measures an actual 8 feet that translates into 696 HO feet, less 115 feet is 581 feet, divided by 48 is 12 cars. The capacity of other tracks is measured in terms of 48 foot cars (no locomotives) so a 3 foot siding would hold 5 cars.

#### Time Table Without Train Orders

Many model railroaders have set up operating systems where most if not all trains are regular trains with a schedule. If everything runs close to schedule there is no need for intervention by a dispatcher. It is possible to have extra trains, but only one at a time or on different parts of the railway where they won't conflict with each other. In this case train orders for the extra trains can be written in advance.

I used this system with a previous layout. There were two way freights, both extras. The first way freight had a running order reading "C&E Eng 1063 run extra Able to Baker and return" and the second way freight's order read "C&E Eng 1040 run extra Able to Baker and return after Extra 1063 East arrives at Able.

You do need a clock with this system, but not necessarily a fast clock. A roving dispatcher would also be useful as described in the section on Dispatchers & Operators.

#### Train Orders Without Time Table

Another option is to run only extra trains. With a bit of thought all of the orders for an entire session can be written in advance and it is possible to get away without a clock. I used this system on another previous layout and may institute it on my current layout. Basically what you do is write running orders for all trains and meet orders where you want trains to meet.

Feet from North Battleford	Symbols	PARKLAND DIVISION		Car Capacity	
		STATIONS		Office Signals	Sidings Other Tracks
0.0	CKPWZ	NORTH BATTLEFORD		NB	YARD
		10.4			
10.4		-----CAMEO----- Jct. with Amiens Sub.			
		6.2			
16.6		-----BIG RIVER JCT.----- Jct. with Blaine Lake Sub.			
		16.0			
32.6	PZ	-----DEBDEN-----		DB	8
		5.2			
37.8	PZ	-----TOBY----- Jct. with Big River Sub.			
		3.6			
41.4	P	-----LEOVILLE-----		LV	6
		16.4			
57.8	PYZ	-----CHITEK LAKE-----			
		6.0			
63.8	Z	-----PANTON----- Jct. with Medstead Sub.			
		4.7			
68.5	PZ	-----MEADOW LAKE-----		ML	14 35

For example:

**Train Order 1 to C&E Eng 7009: Eng 7009 run extra Able to Charlie**

**Train Order 2 to C&E Extra 7009 West and Extra 4803 East: Extra 7009 West take siding and meet Extra 4803 East at Baker**

**Train Order 3 to C&E Eng 4803: Eng 4803 run extra Charlie to Able**

Although not necessary, a clock would be useful as would a roving dispatcher

### **Dispatchers and Operators**

A full blown TT&TO system requires a dispatcher and one or more train order operators. The La Mesa Club in San Diego, which has a 30 scale mile mainline in HO, has a dispatcher and five train order operators each located at a specific station and performs the duties of a prototype operator. Most model railroads do not have the space, people or infrastructure to have an operator for each individual train order station.

Many model railroads have a dispatcher and one or two operators each handling multiple stations. Part of the problem is finding a space for the operator to sit and this is often the limiting factor on how many operators. Ideally the operator should sit where they can see their stations so they can OS trains (report passing trains to the dispatcher). If they can't see the stations then the crews will need to OS their trains to the operator. Some have installed security cameras at the stations and provide the operator with a screen so they can monitor the arrival and departure of trains.

Another option is to eliminate the operators all together and have the dispatcher communicate directly with the train crews and works well on smaller layouts with few trains running simultaneously. Sometimes the dispatcher will write the train orders and hand them to the crews. In other situations the dispatcher will dictate the train orders to the train crews.

I had earlier mentioned roving dispatchers for less formal sessions. In this case the dispatcher wanders around the layout keeping tabs on the trains and when necessary issues verbal orders to keep things moving.

### **Train Order Signals & Communications**

In the prototype the dispatcher communicates with the operators by telegraph or telephone and the operator communicates with the train crew by train order or in person. In the event of an emergency a train crew may use a phone located at a station, where no operator is on duty, or with a field telephone to communicate directly with the dispatcher.

The operator lets the train crew know that they have orders for them by setting the train order signal. A yellow aspect indicates that the orders may be picked up on the fly while a red aspect indicates that the orders must be signed for. In the US a Form 19 train order may be picked up on the fly while a Form 31 train order must be signed for. In Canada these are known as Form 19Y and 19R respectively.

For a model railroad operating train order signals operated by either the dispatcher or the operator are the most authentic. Some model railroaders use small lights on the fascia serve as train order signals and others use "flags" made from push pins or wire nuts set adjacent to the tracks. For practical purposes train orders on a model railroad because of the time necessary to read and interpret the order the train usually comes to a stop before receiving their orders. In some cases the train crew has to walk to a remotely located operator or dispatcher.

For communications between the dispatcher and the operator a telephone system is the gold standard. However: intercoms, radios, cell phones and simple lung power can be used. Sometimes the dispatcher and operator sit next to each other making lung power work best. In situations where the dispatcher and operator positions are combined the train crews may use the phone system to contact the dispatcher. Radios for train crews would be verboten for TT&TO.

### **Clocks**

A clock of some sort is required for most variations on TT&TO other than for train orders without time table and even there a clock is useful and desirable. It does not need to be a fast clock.

On a previous layout I initiated TT&TO using real time. The main line was less than 100 feet long and running time between stations was only a minute or two. Even with these short running times a time table was still possible and actually helped to slow down trains to more prototypical speeds. I used a digital clock with a large readout as the

standard clock. Operators could synchronize their watches with the standard clock if they wished to but most relied directly on the standard clock.

There are fast clocks available from a variety of sources including hard wired analog and digital clocks, digital clocks on DCC throttles and clocks displayed on computer screens. There are also fast clock download apps for smart phones. If you are using smart phone apps you still need a standard clock so everyone can synchronize their phones. There is also much discussion on fast clock pocket watches and I suspect it's only a matter of time, no pun intended, before they are available on the market.

### **Virtual ABS**

One easy to implement simplification for TT&TO is virtual ABS. Basically in order to simplify flagging rules you just assume that ABS exists and place block markers on the layout where train crews need to visually check to see if the next block is clear before passing the block marker. The block markers can be dummy signals, notes on the fascia or something like a push pin or wire nut adjacent to the track. It is also relatively easy to implement flagging by using paper flagmen that can be down loaded off the net or the previously mentioned push pins or wire nuts. Blue push pins also make good blue flags.

### **Conclusion**

This concludes my discussions on TT&TO. Next time I will move on to other dispatching methods. Last time I had mentioned the book "19 East, Copy Three" by David Sprau and Steve King. I noted that this book was out of print but that there was talk of an e-book version. I have since learned that the Operation Special Interest Group has made the book available as a downloadable PDF to Operation SIG members. Contact the Operation SIG at [www.opsig.org](http://www.opsig.org) for further information.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or corrections at [calvinsexsmith@sasktel.net](mailto:calvinsexsmith@sasktel.net).

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## **More photos from the Frostbite Run at Iron Horse Park**



(photos by Greg Orme)

## The Checker Players– Dave Audley

Dale and I alternate driving as we go Thursdays to our weekly lunch. This affords opportunities to discuss all things model trains, railroads and sundry other topics. A recent discussion centred around checker players!

As usual, Dale started with “I have a question.” This one was “Who makes checker player figures?” Wow – I had never given this subject any consideration at all! It was completely off my radar!

Before Thursday lunch we usually stop at one or both train related stores in Calgary. This particular Thursday, we headed to Trains & Such to see if we could find checker players. Nope. None in the store. A look through the Walthers catalogue didn't help. But we found Checker Players Wood Land Scenics #A1848 set on line! See photo #1.



Photo 1



Photo 2

We each ordered a set and they arrived after 3 weeks or so. I took the figures out of the packaging to see exactly what I purchased. It even included a sleeping dog! See photo #2.

While I was studying the figures, I was considering just where on the layout I would set up this scene. I walked around the layout looking at various locations and realized that along the side of the Volunteer Didsbury Fire Department was a very blank sidewalk. That seemed like a very good spot for a new scene – see photo#3.



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

Photo #4 shows the start of setting up the scene. I tried a couple of different arrangements before I was satisfied with the look. Photo #5 shows the final permanent arrangement. This was a fun little exercise in that a conversation led to a new scene on my layout! Having conversations with buddies can lead to all sorts of interesting projects around the layout!

Thanks, Dale!

## Speeders- Dave Audley

We have been meeting for lunch Thursdays for more than 18 years now. On any Thursday, surprises do show up. Recently, my friend Doug showed up with a small 15 drawer cabinet chock full of items model train related.

Doug has been down-sizing his vast collection of books. When he removed the books from one shelf, he discovered the little cabinet sitting behind the books with about 1/2" of dust on top! Doug offered ( and I accepted ) the cabinet complete with all the parts.

Recently I went through all the drawers, sorting various items into my own parts bins. There were two small kits – one an old fashioned pump hand car and the other a motor equipped rail car. No instructions were included but I thought these would make an interesting one evening build.



These photos show the two rail cars built up. There was some flash that had to be removed taking just a few minutes. It was very minimal. I assembled each unit using thick ACC to bond the parts. The roof for the motorized unit was too short, so I added two styrene strips to one end of the roof and sanded to shape.



Assembly now complete, I painted both units CPR Diesel yellow. That was the paint I had on hand. I brush painted three coats of yellow to get the coverage I desired. I then painted the wheels a rust colour and then the wheel treads with old silver. I also silvered the head light and then painted a white dot on the front of the head light. Weathering completed the two models and they now sit at the back corner of the engine house in Crowsnest.



The last photo shows the two units in situ. One of the things I enjoy most is building items to put in different scenes around the layout. While the layout is mostly built, adding these little scenes keeps the layout fresh and my buddies can find new things to look at!

## Even More Photos



A longshoreman waits for the rest of the crew to transload a New Haven produce barge in New Bedford, Mass. around 1953 on *The Cape Cod and New Bedford Railway*. Dean Turta is rebuilding his HO scale layout representing the Old Colony Division of the New Haven Railroad. For a light hearted look at what he's rebuilding, there's a 9 minute Youtube video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMSOfjwa9A>. (photo by Dean Turta)



One of the fun things to do at the Atlas Coal Mine in the Drumheller Valley is to go for a ride on the mine train. (photo by Rob Badmington)





## PNR 2024 Regional Convention Surrey, BC May 22-26, 2024

By Bill Van Horn  
Advertising & Publicity

<http://pnr2024.7divpnr.ca/>

### PNR Regional Convention - Surrey Excursion 2024

If you've already registered for the 2024 PNR convention, we look forward to seeing you on May 22-26<sup>th</sup>.

On the other hand, if you've never been to a regional or national convention, let me share some thoughts.

PNR conventions were new to me in 2016. I didn't know what to expect, but off I went to Salmon Arm - and I genuinely enjoyed myself. The clinics were good, the people were great, the atmosphere was fun. I'm not a Master Modeler, far from it, but I never felt badly outclassed or uncomfortable or unwelcome. Quite the contrary. Most of the attendees were modelers with average skill levels and interests. It was a perfect opportunity for me to meet them, learn more about model railroading, and enjoy myself.

I got to know folks from other parts of my own division and from further afield and I can honestly say I formed friendships that are still running 8 years later. There are some awfully nice people in this organization and almost every one of them is friendly, approachable, willing to offer helpful advice and suggestions, and to take an interest in what you're doing.

The Surrey Excursion organizers are putting together an entertaining show, and I'm positive you won't be disappointed with the clinics, open houses, displays, and activities they have planned. The highly regarded G-3 Grain Terminal tour has attracted a lot of attention all on its own and shouldn't be missed.



There's another very notable consideration - the event is being held in Greater Vancouver. You'll find CN, CP, and BNSF in the area, as well as the Southern Railway of B. C. – all while enjoying a hotel room at a rate we will likely never see again.

Please check out our website at <https://pnr2024.7divpnr.ca/> The “[[click here to register](#)]” button is easy to find – and I think you'll be glad you grabbed the opportunity. Why not give it a try?

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Lori Sebelley, Convention Chair, 7th Division

The Surrey Excursion Convention will take place May 22-26, 2024, and be held at the Sheraton Guildford Hotel in Surrey, British Columbia.

We are now in the second stage of registration fees being \$149.00. This rate will expire midnight March 31 so make sure to hop on board for the discounted fare. The registration rate will then be increased to \$169.00 as of April 1st. I am happy to see a good number of the 6<sup>th</sup> Division took advantage of stage 1 and I thank all whom took advantage and registered early.

Registration pricing gives access to self-guided layout tours, contests, displays, AP evaluation, clinics, operation sessions, and in-house non-rail activities.

All clinics, display/contest, banquet, and non-rail rooms will be located on the 2nd floor of the hotel. There is access to all these rooms by conveniently located elevators to assist with helping to find the locations for all the events.

We have 50 clinic spots arranged for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Please take a look at the website as the topics and brief descriptions are being continually added under the Clinic tab. If you are interested in giving a clinic, please contact Marc Simpson @ [surreyexcursionclinics@gmail.com](mailto:surreyexcursionclinics@gmail.com)

There are still a handful of Deluxe King rooms available @ \$185+ taxes per night and Club rooms @ \$225+ taxes per night. These prices are in **Canadian** dollars.

The Convention numbers as of February 15 are as follows:

- Full Fare Registrations – 151
- Non-Rail – 29
- Youth – 4
- Banquet – 116
- MWTM – 13
- G3 Grain Terminal Tour – morning – 20, afternoon – 20
- Operations – 82
- Celebration Room – AP – 10, Contests – 17, Display – 16

Speaking of banquet, the menu is posted on our website and sounds delicious. Please also remember that it is your very own Paul Clegg who will be the guest speaker. He will be talking about his many years working for

CP. I am sure you will want to give him your support. If you haven't signed up for the banquet yet, you can either go into your account you set up from your registration confirmation, or email Larry [pnr2024registrar@outlook.com](mailto:pnr2024registrar@outlook.com) and he can add it for you using the same credit card you originally used.

Check out the convention website and please check back often for additional updates.  
<https://pnr2024.7divpnr.ca/>

I am looking forward to seeing you in May at Surrey Excursion!

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### **For Sale - Peter Ulvestad**

2 x Van Hobbies CNR S2 2-8-2, and 2 x Van Hobbies CNR S2 2-8-2a



\$500 each or \$1600 for all 4. Will consider reasonable offers. [ulvestad@telus.net](mailto:ulvestad@telus.net)

# Upcoming Events in and near the 6<sup>th</sup> Division

See all the PNR events and our most recent additions at [www.pnr.nmra.org](http://www.pnr.nmra.org)

## **Mar 3 (Sun), Calgary, AB**

CMRS Spring Mini Meet, Clinics, Show & Tell. 09:00 – 15:00 Glenmore Inn. For more info see: [CMRS - Events \(calgarymodelrailway.ca\)](http://CMRS - Events (calgarymodelrailway.ca))

## **Mar 3 (Sun), Calgary, AB**

CMT Flea Market. 09:00 – 11:00 Glenmore Inn, in conjunction with CMRS Mini Meet. VENDOR TABLES: \$25.00 each (8'x2') Half tables \$15 and extra tables available. Room for over 40 tables! To book Flea Market tables or for info, contact: [calgarymodeltrainmenclub@gmail.com](mailto:calgarymodeltrainmenclub@gmail.com)

## **Mar 23 (Sat), Edmonton AB**

Edmonton Model Railroad Association Clinic Afternoon. At EMRA Freight Station, Fort Edmonton. Free but attendees must pre-register with Doug Burton [dwburton1234@gmail.com](mailto:dwburton1234@gmail.com) 13:00 – 16:00.

## **Mar 23-24 (Sat-Sun), Moose Jaw SK**

Moose Jaw Model Train Show. Check [www.tcmrc.org/](http://www.tcmrc.org/) for updated information.

## **Mar 23-24 (Sat-Sun), Lethbridge AB**

Southern Alberta Model Railway Club Spring Open House. 11:00 – 16:00 on both days. Club building in Gyro Park

## **Apr 6 (Sat), Edmonton, AB**

Mainline Model Railroaders Fellowship (MMRF)'s Spring Swap Meet. Central Lions Senior Recreation Centre, 11113 - 113 Street, Edmonton. Public hours: 11 AM - 3 PM. Admission: Adult \$5, Youth (6-16) \$3. Vendor table rate: \$30. Vendor reservations will open end of January 2024. Contact: Ric Francoeur, [swapmeet@mmrf.ab.ca](mailto:swapmeet@mmrf.ab.ca)

## **Apr 6 (Sat), Edmonton, AB**

Northern Alberta Railway Modellers Meet (NARMM) is an afternoon of clinics, model displays, and a show-and-share of prototype-inspired rail and rail-related modelling in the spirit of the popular RPM-style meets. Model railroaders of all skills and experience are welcomed and encouraged to attend.. Central Lions Senior Recreation Centre, 11113 - 113 Street, Edmonton. 13:00 – 17:00. Same date and location as the MMRF Spring Swap meet. Attendance this year is FREE (although donations are gratefully accepted). Visit [NARMM.ca](http://NARMM.ca) for more details and to register today! You can also find us on Facebook by searching for “Northern Alberta Railway Modellers Meet.”

## **April 20-21, (Sat-Sun), Calgary, AB**

SUPERTRAIN 2024, Canada's Largest Model Train Show. 9 AM to 5 PM both days. Genesis Centre, 7555 Falconridge Blvd. NE, Calgary. Adult - \$15, under 16 - free. Over 50,000 sq. ft. of operating layouts, exhibits and displays, railroad artists, hobby shops, model manufacturers, demonstrations, museums and railroad historical associations, Lego and Thomas Play Area, garden railways, ride-on trains, and much more. Info:- [www.supertrain.ca](http://www.supertrain.ca) or email to [info@supertrain.ca](mailto:info@supertrain.ca)

## **April 27-28, (Sat-Sun), Regina, SK**

Regina Railfest – Model Railroad Show. Over 25,000 sq. ft. of model railroad layouts, displays, exhibits, and vendors! SATURDAY 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. SUNDAY 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. ADMISSION: TBD, More information available at [www.reginarailfest.com](http://www.reginarailfest.com). Caledonian Curling Club, 2225 Sandra Schmirler Way.

## **May 22-26, (Wed-Sun), Surrey, BC**

2024 Surrey Excursion PNR Convention at the Sheraton Guildford Hotel. <http://pnr2024.7divpnr.ca/>

## **June 21-23, (Fri-Sun), Drumheller, AB**

Dino Tracks, the 6th Division Spring Meet. Clinics, prototype tour, banquet with guest speaker, and much more. Hotels, website, and further info coming soon.