

The Northern Virginia NTRAK Newsletter is produced for and by the members of Northern Virginia NTRAK. Submissions should be sent to the editor, Bernard Kempinski, 6056 Estates Drive, Alexandria, VA 22310 or by electronic mail to bkempins@ida.org.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**May 15 OPERATING SECESSION AND BUSINESS MEETING** The next operating and business meeting (combined) will be held at the Franconia Community Center Call Matt Schaefer (978-2946) or Dave Greenacre (620-4588) by Friday evening May 13 if you are bringing a module for the layout Sunday. Module inspection starts at 1:00 PM. Tear down is at 6 PM. We will be inspecting for ski jumps as we set up. There will be a short business meeting break at 4PM if you just like to come for the excitement of our meetings! All modules in shows must have all wiring including sufficient 110 volt line.

Some subjects for the meeting are:

- Status of upcoming show at the Fairfax Fair and other shows.

-Changing the by-laws to allow out-of-towners to add modules to our layouts.

-Taking orders for another buy of polo shirts and the funding thereof.

-Status of painting the club cars.

-Contacting local malls for shows.

**June 10-12 FAIRFAX FAIR**

Brian has reserved a 12x22 foot spot straight inside the main entrance between two big pillars in the Fairfax Government Center on Government Center Parkway. The hours are 9AM to 12 midnight Fri and Sat and 9AM to 9PM Sunday requiring scheduling of our operators to assure adequate coverage.

**June 19 MANASSAS RR AND AUTO FAIR** . Matt has reserved the 19x23 foot waiting room of the Manassas Station for our layout on June 19th. Call him ASAP if you are interested in bringing a module to either of the above shows or if you wish to schedule to operate. Both of these layouts will be small. The Manassas show starts at 9:30AM Saturday and runs to about 4:00PM. We will

probably reverse the modules on the back side of the loop leaving 10 feet for the visitor's aisle and ropes.

**FROM THE SUPER-INTENDENT'S OFFICE CAR ENROUTE TO HUNTINGTON, WV**

by Matt Schaefer

**ORLANDO N-TRAK CONVENTION** Brian has been informed that the layout space in Orlando is about 40' X 60', not very big. They only have room for about 60 modules so don't expect to see another Valley Forge layout there. (We had 35 modules in the Landmark Show and the layout was 47 feet long.) I do not plan to go but will go to Portland. Brian, Gil and John have space reserved for Shenandoah Jct Flyover, Loop Mountain and Possum Point modules in the Orlando layout and may take M&K Jct.

**VIRGINIA BEACH GREENBURG SHOW**

Obie says the Hampton Club has invited our members to bring modules and to join them in their layout in the July Greenburg show. It would make a nice vacation spot for the family!

**GREENBURG SHOW, APR 9-10**

Obie's Hump Yard was the highlight of the show adding depth to the club layout. Obie has a lot of design guts and the hump is still in the testing stage. Modifications will be made so cars do not hit the end of siding bumpers or fly off enroute. Our Greenburg layout was a respectable 48' by 14' to fit the narrow confines of the space we were given. But we did have delays setting up. The Super, me, bragged he had extra corners and finally Tony had to go get more club corners to finish the layout which included a horseshoe curve of 4 each, 3' corners. I am hopeful these variations will give others ideas for more



interesting layouts including "tees" of to branch lines as used on many of the HO modular layouts, see layout sketch on page 6 with "T" to branch line off the corners.

#### MARKETING "CLUB" CARS

I received a letter from the Company Store for the Portland Convention asking if clubs had items to offer for sale for 10% commission. This is standard with most conventions. I have talked with Gil and he may paint and decal some cars for shows and give it a go. The Baltimore Club at one time had lots of club cars painted up as a fund raiser and said it took years to sell all the cars.

**MALL SHOWS** Are we perusing mall shows sufficiently? I contacted the Springfield Mall again in April and they are interested in a fall show and would like to see one of our layouts, maybe the Fairfax Fair. Springfield Mall has two or three areas large enough for our layout. One is in the Mall entrance to Penny's and the other is in the central area around the stage. Fair Oaks does not have adequate space for a layout. Members are urged to use the following procedure and see what kind of deals we can drum up:

- 1) First look around malls and see if there is a good location and ample space.
- 2) If they have the space call the management office and determine the interest and invite them to drop by one of our good shows like the Landmark show.

3) I use the old procedure of following up in a month with a "promotional" or a letter with pictures showing what we do. I sent a follow up letter to the Springfield Mall with snap shots and got a positive reaction.

4) Follow up several more times depending on the club desires.

This is about the right time to make plans for fall and winter shows. Do we have some members that can approach their local malls for us or should we have a committee for this? We then can trade off to get the best deals. Let me know if you need snap shots.

#### TRIP TO TIMONIUM SCALE TRAIN SHOW

This message is from our private car as Monroe and I follow the rails to the Scale Show by way of Huntington, Kelly's Creek and Northwestern RR, Hawks Nest Lodge, B&O at Grafton, Tunnelton (10 miles from M&K) and Hagerstown to Baltimore - all jammed into a seven day period. Our Hawks Nest room overlooked the New River Gorge and we had to endure the screeching of coal trains wheels throughout the night. I guess we could have closed the patio doors! Grafton is still an active engine refueling facility with 10 to 15 units standing by. The double track up to Tunnelton is in top shape and does not look ready for abandonment. A string of hoppers was going west with 6 units on the head end. If you have children on your vacation,

think of their education and stop at a motel next to your favorite line, steel mill or at the Hawks Nest Lodge (\$62/night in April).

**STEEL MILLS** At the WV Steel Works, Huntington, we were given permission to photograph the pouring of bromium steel used in the teeth of shovels and dozers. It is most unusual to be allowed to take photos in a mill much less one in the production of specialized steel. What really convinced them that we were not spies were Monroe's photographs of the steel furnace in his basement.

In Ashland they have been cutting costs by injecting raw coal into the furnace at ARMCO steel. This raises the pressures causing the overpressure valves give off a big burrrrrp sending a thrilling black smoke jet straight up. See pictures. They do not have tours of the ARMCO Steel Works or the Coke Works so we just chartered a plane and buzzed the whole works, hanging out the windows 500 feet over the furnace taking photographs.

Charter flights are an excellent way to get an N scale view of large industries and the surrounding barges dumping docks and of course RRs. ARMCO contains a large rail system and the plant is maybe a mile long and a half mile wide which is hard to conceive from the ground.



### RADIOACTIVE JUNK PILE

We also buzzed a junk pile and took pictures. An old timer that ran a golf driving range on the Ohio River bank told us his brother in law had bought a boat load of junk and billets and filled up his driving range with it because the steel mills would not take it. There was some radioactive problem and the steel may have been dumped from some

foreign country. So they just unloaded the rest of the boat, another 200 tons of it, on the river bank and because the river was up 20 feet the junk was actually piled in the river! We made several photo visits to the site, in day time, a flyover and a night visit to see if Monroe and I would glow in the dark - and to get night pictures. This is a golf driving range, West Va and N-TRAK

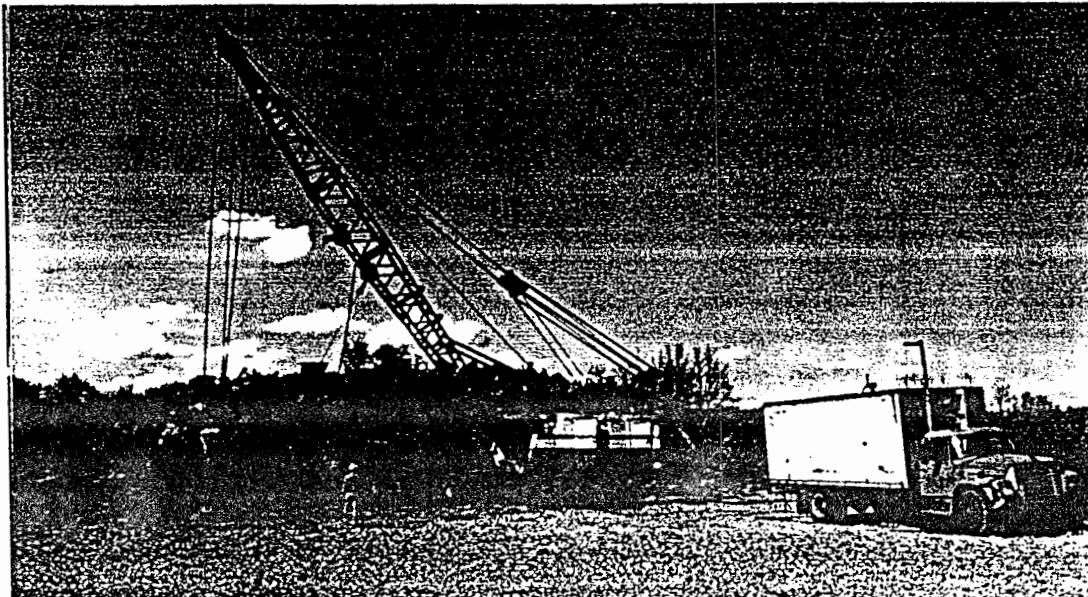
style, with hundreds of tons of billets and junk!

### THE TINOMINUM SCALE SHOW

At Timoninum the Baltimore N-TRAK group was moved into the big room from their time standing location in the entrance room and it was a good thing as not all of the manure had been removed from the last horse show. I saw changes in the club and learned

their leader and others had moved away from the area. They have rented a storage garage for \$60/mo., \$1,200/yr. For the first time EVER they have allowed someone that is not in the club to put modules in their layout. They have always been a closed club and 10 years ago would not allow me to put New River in their layout or hand out FitzGerald's N-TRAK brochures. Note our by-laws do not allow non-members to put modules in our layouts.

Instead of the normal yard with the crossovers at grade feeding all lines the Baltimore club had the visitor's 6" yard on the front with direct access to the red lines very similar to Obie's new S. Alex yard. Ken Mayer commented how interesting and refreshing it was to clamp up with different modules for a change. Several Baltimore members were at the Greenburg show and saw our layout with the new S. Alex hump yard, horseshoe curve and other features. With their new management we may be able to have an integrated layout/show someday. For a big combined layout the two layouts could be joined and interchange trains on the red lines with "Y's" on corners. See sketch of T off of corner module. We wound out the escapade with a visit to the B&O



Museum and picked up Chessie track diagrams for three B&O divisions.

#### NEWS FROM OUR TOM REID

Tom was in town for three days and it happened to coincide with the Timonium Scale Train Show! He hopes to get a position with PRC in McLean, Va. and he has a good chance at a job in Phoenix, Az. Although he likes his present location his wife wants to come back to the motherland.

#### WEIGHT OF CARS

Last Month John Cook had a table on car weights and that reminded me of Larry Loykd of the NJ Southern. He is able to pull 112+ cars with one (1) stock RS3 - and half of these cars were passenger cars. It is about as realistic as Dave's RDC pulling the Cap Ltd but it proves a point. Larry is able to pull off this trick by removing all car weights and by replacing all axles with his homemade stainless steel axles with ground and polished end bearings with a rounded point. The rough finish is done with a ceramic or natural Arkansas sharpening stone. The final polish is done with boron nitride wheel dresser that has been lapped smooth on a diamond wheel. Everyone should have one!

The bearings are checked with a microscope for scratches and tested by spinning. Since the wheels are not balanced the heavier part will cause the wheel to rock back and forth until the heavy part is down like is a bicycle wheel with a weight on it! Larry prefers Rail Line HON3 couplers in Kadee trucks as they have no torque and rotation up like the Unimate couplers which have the offset shanks. Maybe you have seen some of Larry's articles. It makes a good subject for discussion.

#### TRAVEL SEASONS ARE HERE

I can't help but make comparisons between the available subjects for modeling in the DC area and in nearby areas such as Baltimore, WV, Pittsburgh, etc. We're lucky to have the RR traffic that we have BUT when you happen to be driving through industrial areas take time to stop and look at the industries that generate the heavy railroad and barge traffic. With the background of hills, tunnels, misty river valleys and smoke you have

### OBIE'S CORNER

News and Gossip from the Hobby Industry

There are lots of new and stuff in the shop.

*Concor* Auto C&O passenger car 8 packs are out and rolling away. Expected are fuel foiler for Santa Fe, TTX, Conrail, BN and SP. J-3-A 4-6-4 Hudson's and PA-1 are due in stock May.

*Walters* Double stack cars are in stock. # 54141 pack TTX, 4 pack TTX, 1 Pack TTX, CN, CP. All containers also available.

*Microtrains* Pa hopper, GN box and PFE 3 pack

*Lifelike* Their second run GP-18 are due in June 94. Road names include BO, CNW, Southern, Lehigh Valley, BN, NW, NYS&W, Boston and Maine and undec. Low and high hood and with and without dynamic brakes. Lots of kit bash options here.

*KATO* Finally SD-40 will be out. Wow! CSX, Sante Fe, SP, UP, BN, undec. A short supply is expected. Dealers expect to get only 25% of their orders. I order direct from Kato to avoid a shortage like happened on the Concor E8.

*Rix Products* The highway overpasses look pretty good.

dynamite subjects for heavy railroading and photography.

**PHOTO TOURS** There are a lot of spring days with blue sky and no haze that are great for pictures on the ground or in the air. Don't forget to open your window for shooting. The sun is still not straight over head giving more and sharper shadows for detail in the spring than in the summer. Actually the winter is the best for sharp shadows but the weather is not as good and there are less colors from trees and blossoms. What other excuses do you need to stake out your favorite spots?

#### SETTING UP AND TEAR DOWN

by Fred Obermeyer

The following are some observations and suggestions I have for setting up and tearing down our modules.

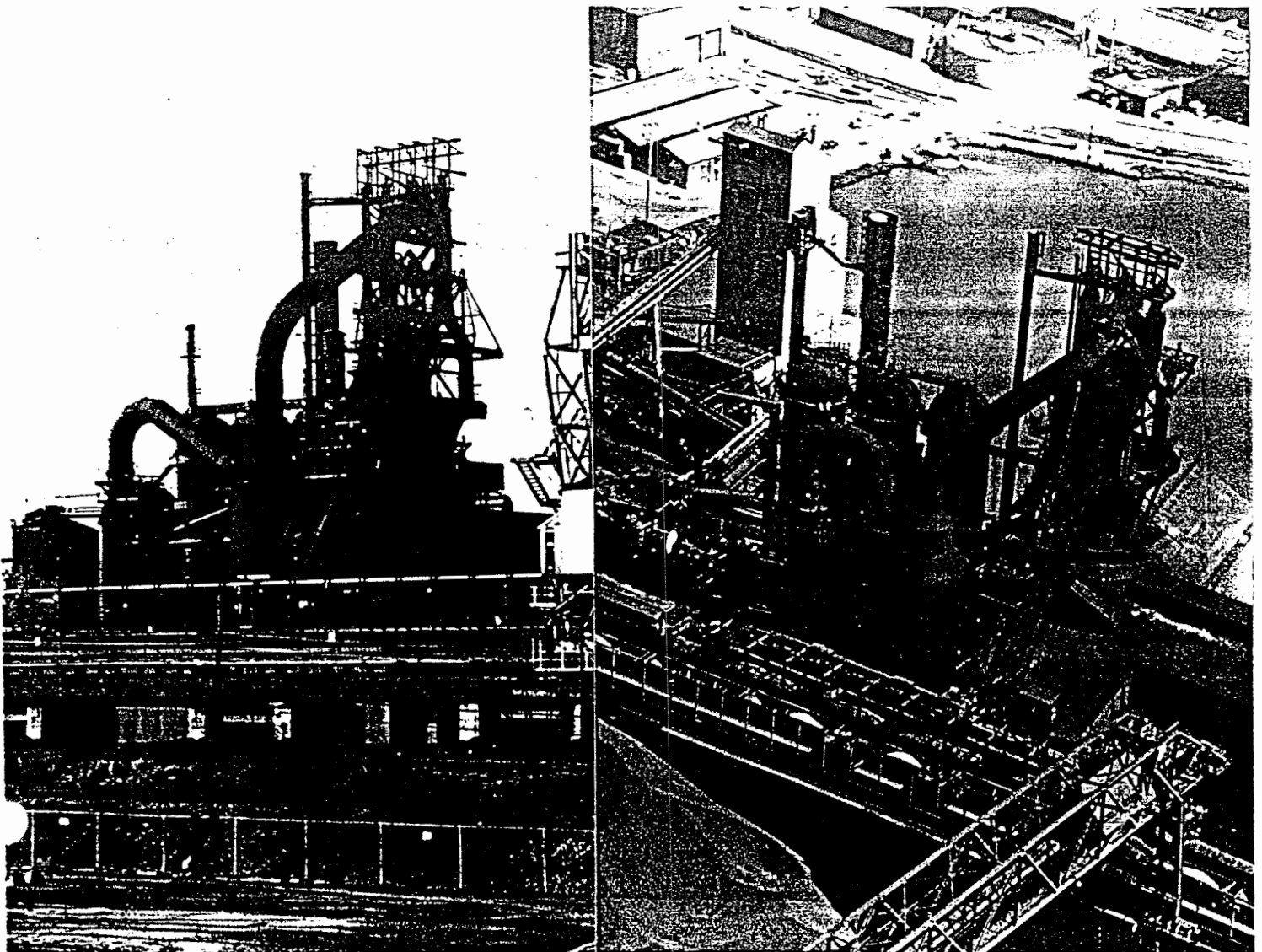
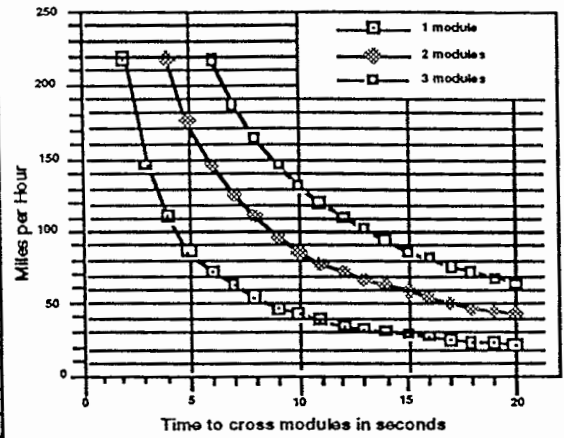
1. Decide the size of the area (pretty basic but important.)
2. Locate a square straight line to start from.
3. Double check all measurements from walls. Don't forget to allow 30-36" for ropes.
4. Check with coordinator before situating your module in its spot.
5. Have a check list for ropes, poles, power packs, skirts and headsets. A tool box is handy for emergency repairs and adjusting legs.
6. Clamp modules in groups of 6 to 8. More than 8 clamped together is stretching it. This groups can be more

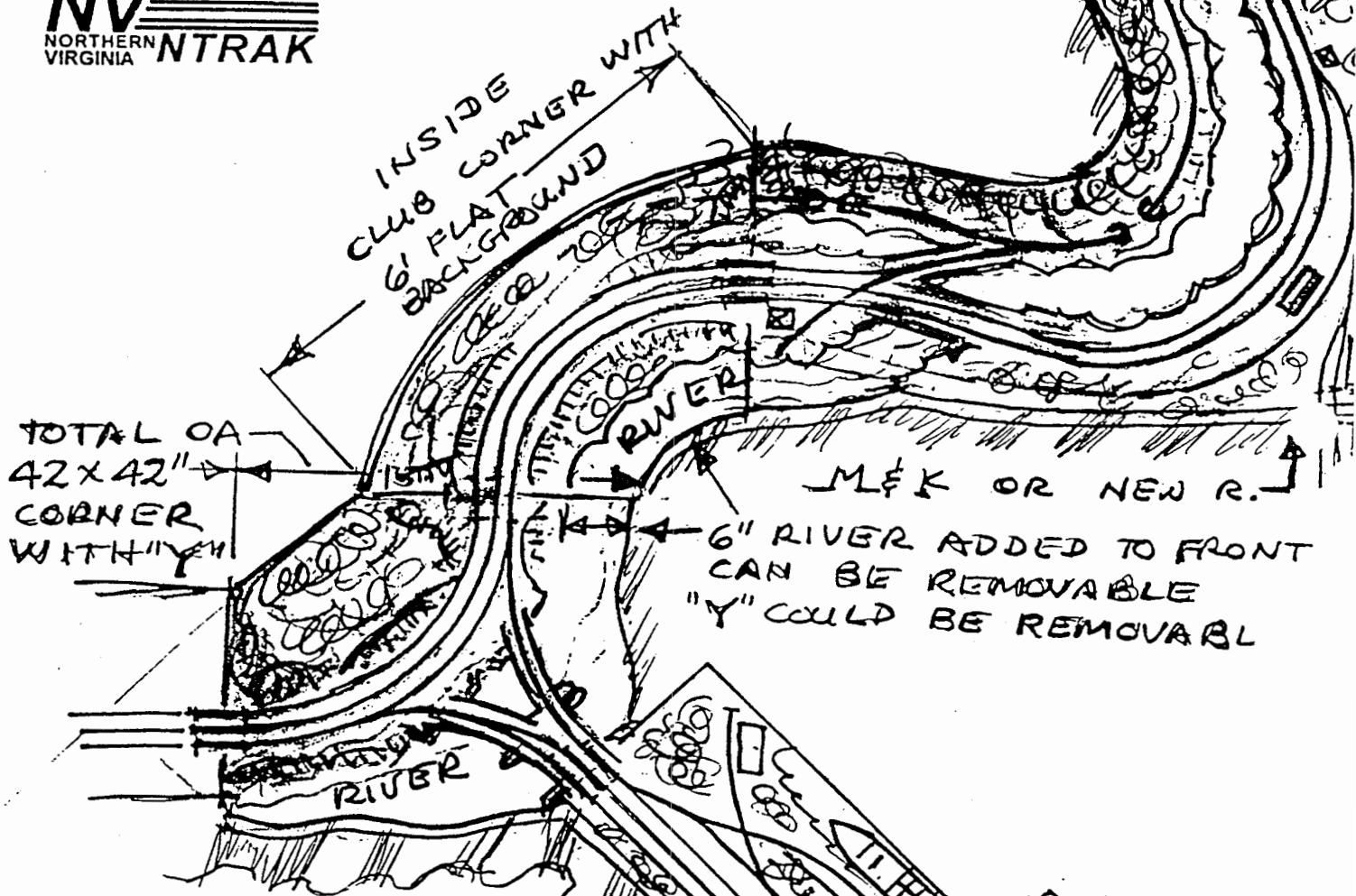
easily shifted as the layout comes together. Final hook up when the layout coordinator says "go for it."

9. Assign an individual or a team to
  - a. Adjust legs and height
  - b. electrical connections
  - c. Electrical boxes and power sources
  - d. location of power packs and mounting brackets.
  - e. double check all connector (usually the club electrician)
10. Once all this is done you can connect your tracks.
11. Each member can be assigned a task.
13. **Module take down.**
  - a. Leave ropes up until the last minute to prevent strangers from wandering through the layout.
  - b. Fold skirts up first.
  - c. Remove all Cinch Jones and track connections. All electrical boxes disconnected.
  - d. No module should be removed without the layout coordinators approval.
  - e. Modules without legs must be removed first. We have had problems with these falling or breaking when suspended in air form one side.
  - f. Always have two people take down corner modules. Three legged modules are especially prone to damage if two people don't cooperate in taking them down.
  - g. Hold a small meeting at the end to discuss what went right and wrong.
  - h. Have Fun!

The Following charts were submitted by John Cook.

| N-Scale Miles Per Hour Calculations                          |                             |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|--|-----------------------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Check Time in Seconds to Cross One or More Four Foot Modules |                             |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Seconds  | Number of Four Foot Modules |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|  | 1                           | 2   | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8    |
| 1  | 436                         | 873 | 1309 | 1745 | 2182 | 2618 | 3055 | 3491 |
| 2  | 218                         | 436 | 655  | 873  | 1091 | 1309 | 1527 | 1745 |
| 3  | 145                         | 291 | 436  | 582  | 727  | 873  | 1018 | 1164 |
| 4  | 109                         | 218 | 327  | 436  | 545  | 655  | 764  | 873  |
| 5  | 87                          | 175 | 262  | 349  | 436  | 524  | 611  | 698  |
| 6  | 73                          | 145 | 218  | 291  | 364  | 436  | 509  | 582  |
| 7  | 62                          | 125 | 187  | 249  | 312  | 374  | 436  | 499  |
| 8  | 55                          | 109 | 164  | 218  | 273  | 327  | 382  | 436  |
| 9  | 48                          | 97  | 145  | 194  | 242  | 291  | 339  | 388  |
| 10   | 44                          | 87  | 131  | 175  | 218  | 262  | 305  | 349  |
| 11   | 40                          | 79  | 119  | 159  | 198  | 238  | 278  | 317  |
| 12   | 36                          | 73  | 109  | 145  | 182  | 218  | 255  | 291  |
| 13   | 34                          | 67  | 101  | 134  | 168  | 201  | 235  | 269  |
| 14   | 31                          | 62  | 94   | 125  | 156  | 187  | 218  | 249  |
| 15   | 29                          | 58  | 87   | 116  | 145  | 175  | 204  | 233  |
| 16   | 27                          | 55  | 82   | 109  | 136  | 164  | 191  | 218  |
| 17   | 26                          | 51  | 77   | 103  | 128  | 154  | 180  | 205  |
| 18   | 24                          | 48  | 73   | 97   | 121  | 145  | 170  | 194  |
| 19   | 23                          | 46  | 69   | 92   | 115  | 138  | 161  | 184  |
| 20   | 22                          | 44  | 65   | 87   | 109  | 131  | 153  | 175  |
| 30   | 15                          | 29  | 44   | 58   | 73   | 87   | 102  | 116  |
| 40   | 11                          | 22  | 33   | 44   | 55   | 65   | 76   | 87   |
| 50   | 9                           | 17  | 26   | 35   | 44   | 52   | 61   | 70   |
| 60   | 7                           | 15  | 22   | 29   | 36   | 44   | 51   | 58   |





TOTAL OA  
42 X 42"  
CORNER  
WITH "Y"

INSIDE  
CLUB CORNER WITH  
6' FLAT  
BACKGROUND

M&K OR NEW R.  
6" RIVER ADDED TO FRONT  
CAN BE REMOVABLE  
"Y" COULD BE REMOVABLE

CHASE  
MARINE

LOONEY  
JCF  
SECOND  
LAYOUT  
OPT

FROM CORNER MODULE  
FOR  
BRANCH OR FIDDLE YARDS  
Matty Juf 4-20-94 C/15  
NOT TO SCALE (NOT EVEN CLOSE)