

**NORTHERN  
VIRGINIA**

**NTRAK**

**Northern Virginia  
NTRAK**

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July 1995

Volume IV No 7

### The Children's Hour

by Gil Brauch

On May 30th, NVNTRAK hosted the students of Prince of Peace Lutheran School at their own private train meet. Most of the members who brought their modules to the Memorial Day setup left them through Tuesday. Gil Brauch served as Dispatcher, Engineer, Road Foreman of Engines, and General Superintendent as he gave the children a tour of the layout and "ran trains" for them. Matt Schaefer gave a helping hand and did some photo documentation of the event. Chester Freedenthal's Bullet Train was the hit of the event as it rocketed around and around the Red Line, easily overtaking Robert Buden's Mallet and it's coal drag on Blue (which also performed magnificently). Gil's venerable ConCor E-8 lugged the Southern Crescent in an opposing direction on Yellow, providing a bit of contrast. On the Mountain Division was the NVNTRAK Yellow Train, of course, complete with the "Club Car".

By the end of the day, about 300 children had visited the layout in groups of 10 or 12. "The first six classes or so were really fun!", said Gil. "But by the time the afternoon classes started coming through I was all "Trained Out!" By all reports, students and teachers alike were thoroughly entertained by the display. Education was also a part of it, though. Each tour ended at the operating crossing flashers on Leonard White's Ice Block Junction module with a talk about "Stop, Look, and Listen" and staying off the railroad tracks.

Thanks go to Gil, Matt, Robert, Chester, Leonard, Edd Braithwood, Lyman Krekel, Keith Holzappel, Rodney Smith, Peter Matthews, and Charles Greenacre for the loan of their modules and trains for the event.

### Car Design Contest

by the N Scale East Convention Committee

Announcing a contest open to members of NVNTRAK only. We need a design for the convention car, so we are holding a design competition among our members. The winning design will be used on the car, which should become a collector's item, as most of them do. The designers name will appear on the car. In addition, the designer will receive the first car produced free.

What are the rules you may ask. They are really very simple.

1. Entries will be accepted from NVNTRAK members in good standing as of 1 October 1995 and all entries become the property of the convention committee staff.
2. Entries must be received no later than 31 October 1995.
3. Colored entries are acceptable, but no more than four colors should be used (not counting the basic paint color on the car itself). Designers should bear in mind that each color used increases cost and the committee will be concerned with cost of production as a factor in judging.
4. Entries must be drawn to scale, including artwork at twice the size of the finished product.
5. Lines in artwork must not be narrower than 2 pt. when reduced to final form.
6. Final design will be selected by the convention committee. Their decision will be final.

We have a lot of talent in the club and are looking forward to receiving some really outstanding entries. All who enter will be suitably recognized, regardless of the outcome of the judging.

Get out your drafting pens, computer graphic programs, and crayons and Good Luck!!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 29&30 Sep 17	Greenberg Show-Timonium Setup at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Va — 1 p.m.
Sep 30-Oct 1	Brunswick Railroad Days
Oct 14&15	Great Scale Train Show-Timonium
Oct 28 & 29	Greenberg Show-Upper Marlboro
Nov 4 & 5	Great Scale Train Show-Richmond
Nov 11&12	Rockville Lions Club Train Show (tentative appearance)

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# **RUNNING TRAINs IN '96**

## **N Scale East Convention**

### **Convention Corner**

*by Rodney Smith*

Ok, I was told to keep it short this month. The convention committee has been busy as usual. This month we have worked on our publicity material, sent out our first mailing to East Coast N Scale clubs, and prepared for this Summer's conventions in Albuquerque and Atlanta. Gil has put together a new tri-fold flier for the convention that we will be carrying to New Mexico and Georgia. Brian is in the process of putting together distinctive convention shirts and hats for members that will be going out on publicity trips for the convention. I am just now completing a mailing out to 53 N scale clubs East of the Mississippi and in Eastern Canada. Hopefully this will start to generate some intense interest and some more registrations. I am hopping on AMTRAK on Monday the 26th to go out to the West Coast NTRAK convention in Albuquerque. A group of us are heading down to Atlanta in mid-July to take part in the large NTRAK layout at the NMRA convention. That's the highlights for this month.

Our meeting next month will be a Prince of Peace Church on the 10th of July at 7:00 p.m. The topic of discussion will be preparations for our participation at Atlanta and lessons learned from my trip to Albuquerque. All members are cordially invited to attend and participate.

### **FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S HEAD SHED**

*by Matt Schaefer*

**FALL CONVENTIONS** - Our Mid Eastern Region, (New Jersey down through Carolina) is having the fall convention Sept 28 to Oct 1, 1995 at the Hunt Valley Marriott just north of Timonium on I-83, about a one hour drive from the Potomac River. This is commuting distance for some members. They have reserved a space for a 15' x 25' layout for our club and any one else that wants to join. The Marriott rooms are \$79. You do not have to be an NMRA member to register, only to enter the judged contests.

**REGISTRATION** - The MER has "the whole lower floor" and the On3 Modular Club has signed up too. Our club has sufficient interest to have a loop there and I would love to run jointly with lots of other clubs in the NE & SE Regions. The Peninsula Model RR Club and John Plant are interested. The extent of the participation of the Peninsula membership will of course depend on what breaks we get on the registration which is now under consideration by the committee. I am pushing for as large a layout as we can get.

**BANTRAK** is setting up the week before at the N Scale Collector Convention and does not want to set up another whole layout at the MER one week later. One featured train will be the "Heart Attack Special" made up of all high dollar collector cars. Bob Winterbottom said the Baltimore club would also like to have a joint meeting north of Baltimore with us and PA and NJ clubs. All options are open for discussion.

**VOLUNTEER** - Take advantage of NMRA conventions. Be sure to take all your contest Quality (top quality) items models and pictures to enter but you must be a member of the MER and NMRA to enter the NMRA judged contests. If you can, volunteer to give clinics and for other positions. And if you are going into Atlanta early the N Scale popular vote contest is open Monday 4-8PM and Tuesday 9-4PM. Winners will be announced at the breakfast Thursday. Then the NMRA contest is open to entries through Wednesday. So take your good stuff.

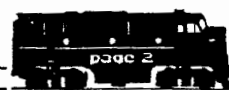
**'96 PUBLICITY** - I had two articles in Jim's N-TRAK Newsletter in May and another article in the July issue, all calling attention to the '96 Convention. We're also getting lots of press from Bob Garland, NE Regional Director. Bob writes in his newsletter, "By the end of this summer N-TRAK will undoubtedly be a corporation... For the summer of 1996 the N-TRAK East Convention in Alexandria will get the lion's share of our attention. We won't attempt to put on a major summer event until 1997 or later..."

**T MODULES** - We should plan to have on hand one pair of T modules ready in case we join another club or have a larger enough layout for two loops and I know of a T called Quinamont nearing completion as we read this. Quinamont has "flex turnouts" and other features. See sketch of Cabin Creek Jct, a variation on the T theme and a fine mate for Miss Quinamont, 1995.

**THE PENINSULA N-TRAK MODEL RR** - The Peninsula Club owns 17 modules with matching scenery including a 12' set of modules with a seaport scene. Obie has seen the layout and says it looks great and they won the big money prize at the Norfolk Great American Train Show. The club just ordered a pot load of Aristo controllers.

**MATCHING SCENERY** - We have lots of great modules but no standards on scenery. Charles has suggested we set up OPTIONAL standards for those that want to build modules with scenery that matches other modules and I think this is a good idea. Our club policy is as long as the basic specs are met other standards are OPTIONAL like these proposed scenery standards, facia, the mountain line, etc. Comments?

**ARISTO CONTROLS** - These radio controls were great at the Fairfax Fair letting the operators roam. Gil confirmed my assertion that the easiest way to run 3+ trains around any loop for hours at a time is to use the 2 block system controlled by one hand controller and one person. One





person is responsible for all trains in that loop and no communication is required except in the case of a mishap. The principal is the same as the slowing block operation except the slowing block is the block that the operator can see best. If you 4 blocked a loop with radio controllers it would just add unnecessary complication to the running of 3+ trains. There are no dials and the only indicator is the speed of the trains.

**SHORTS** - If you're running a long train and your rear end hangs out on to another block you're apt to get some new shorts if a wheel stops on the gap and you power the blocks in opposite directions. We did have a melt down on an engine truck due to a short. The Aristo gives no indication of shorts, but indicators can be added making a nice club construction project.

**MODULE OF THE YEAR**

*(or here is another of Schaefer's hair brained ideas!)*

**E-8 SHOW PLACE** - Everybody is buying those beautiful Life Like E-8's; RF&P in the blue and gray, ACL purple and silver, also C&O, AMTRAK - not to mention B&O and PRR. But we can't run them ALL at the same time guys! Rod is building a large though station and here is another crazy idea for a different station if you have at least a minivan for transportation, see diagram and photo of Broad Street Station.

**FLEX TURNOUTS** - With "flex turnout" you can get beautiful smooth long radius curves to enhance the long E-8's and passenger cars. The diorama is actually compressed to the left giving the best viewing and photography from the right side. The corner is similar to a modified 3x3 module. The connector tracks are kept to a minimum of 7 total between the 2 modules but the prototypical curve bows out to give 16+ car capacity on 3 tracks for the long Florida trains plus plenty of tracks for local, express and the short N&W trains. Of course with an extension module to the left the station could be more fully modeled.

**CRUISING BY** - I remember well cruising down Broad Street in my '50 Merc to get the best spot on the back row of the Hot Shop drive-in around 9PM so we could watch and listen to the ACL East Coast and West Coast Champion E-6's and E-8's line up side by side on the curve past the platforms. What timing. Even the N&W K's and J's were scheduled in here and later all the SAL trains. At the junk pile on the curve is where I started collecting RR lanterns. This would also be a good place to park your varnish and junk for those folks just cruising by.

**'96 CONVENTION** - Now is the time to let go on your set of dream modules so they can be finished to high standards in time for the '96 Convention. We are planning for a 200 registrations but our plans will be flexible enough to entertain F300, 400 or whatever. We have the facilities for whatever.

Who says you only go around once? Take N-TRAK.

**FOR RUMOR MILL:**

John Plant has built a new module that collapses down to 14X14X48" to check on US Air to Albuquerque, NM.

**The long-awaited announcement...**

**Atlas Releases A New N Scale Locomotive**

*Received from Bernie Kempenski*

Atlas is proud to announce the release of an N scale GP-7 locomotive with all-new tooling. This new N loco has a Phase 1 body which includes 36" fans; no access slots in the side sill skirt; correct door heights, wheel base and body length. The model will be available with or without dynamic brakes. The proven split-frame design of the new GP-7 features directional lighting, blackened wheels, dual flywheel, equipped 5-pole skewed armature motor, a low friction mechanism, and full pilots with body mount Rapido couplers which can easily be changed to MicroTrains® #1015/1016 couplers.

There will be two road numbers released per road name, PLUS a fully lettered but unnumbered version ready for decals. The painting and printing on these new units is exceptional.

The following road names will be available: Erie, Atlantic Coast Line, Boston & Maine, Burlington Northern, Canadian Pacific, Great Northern, Pennsylvania, Santa Fe, Soo, Chicago & Northwestern, Rio Grande and undecorated.

Price: TBA

Please send any questions or comments to:

74013.337@compuserve.com (Paul Graf, N scale product development)

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Joy Zedowski, Director of Marketing & Advertising - support@atlasrr.com

Atlas Model Railroad Company - Hillside, NJ

http://www.atlasrr.com

"You're on the RIGHT TRACK...With Atlas!®"

\*If you'd like to be on my emailing list, please send an email message to: atlas-l@atlasrr.com with the body saying: SUBSCRIBE ATLAS-L Make sure you don't add anything else.

I assure you I WILL NEVER share my email list with ANYONE. You will only hear from me when Atlas announces a new product. I will not be a pain, I promise!



## Atlas Turnouts

This is a question posted to Atlas by Bernie Kempinski regarding problems with Atlas turnouts.

From: Bernard Kempinski ()  
Subject: Comment on Atlas N Scale Tu  
Sent On: 06/28 09:28 AM PM ET  
Date: 28 Jun 1995 09:25:34 -0400  
From: Bernard Kempinski [bkempins@ida.org]  
Subject: Comment on Atlas N Scale Tu

Reply to: Comment on Atlas N Scale Turnouts

Joy,

Thanks for the notice on the N scale GP-7s. Just about everyone could use a GP-7. I just bought two Atlas N scale RS-3s and they run very well.

However, I'm not so pleased with the Atlas N Scale turnouts I recently installed on my NTRAK module. In particular I am very unhappy with the electrical characteristics of these turnouts. They are allegedly supposed to be all live with insulated frog, yet two out of five that I installed were dead. It required a half hour of troubleshooting on my part to determine that there was not electrical connectivity between the moving points and the frog rails. It appears that the pivot joint does not provide a reliable electrical connection. To solve the problem required jumper wires from the stock rails to the frog.

I discussed this problem with some of my NTRAK associates and they echoed the complaint. Just about all of us have experienced this problem with Atlas turnouts.

We would all feel better if we were assured that Atlas was doing something to address this problem. In other respects the turnouts are fine considering their low cost.

Sincerely,  
Bernard Kempinski

### RESPONSE

Date: 6/29/95 9:15 AM  
From: Joy  
Bernard,

This was a sporadic problem which we have addressed by changing the contact plate. We have not had any problems with this since we changed the plate. You may have gotten turnouts manufactured before the change.

Thanks for letting us know your thoughts. It is always appreciated.

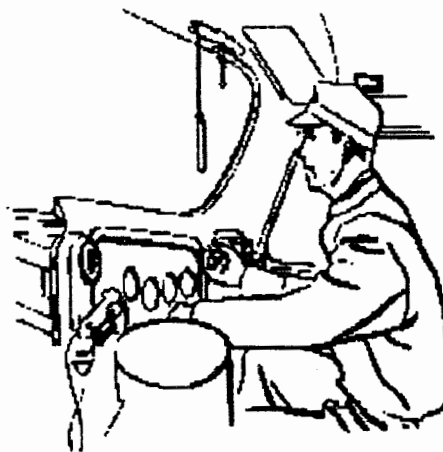
Paul, N scale product development

## June Setup

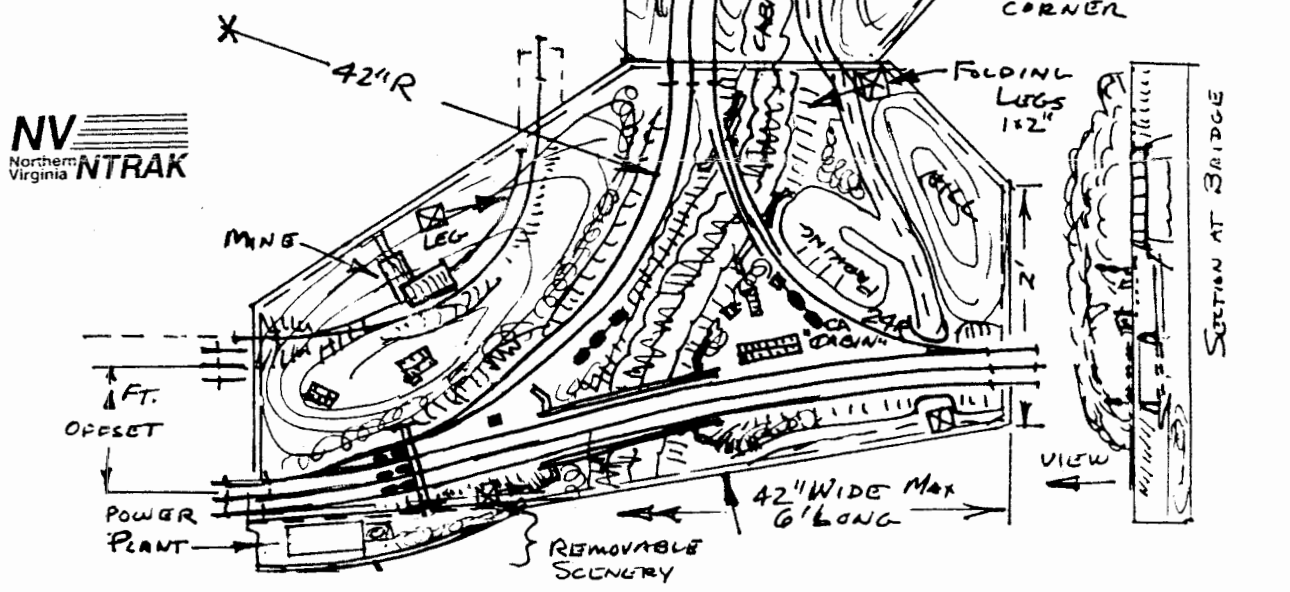
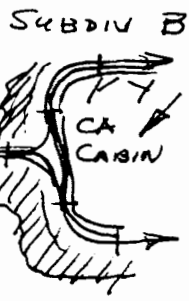
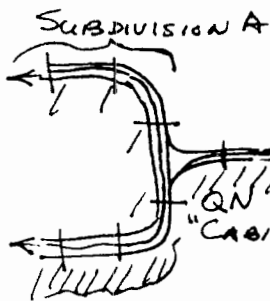
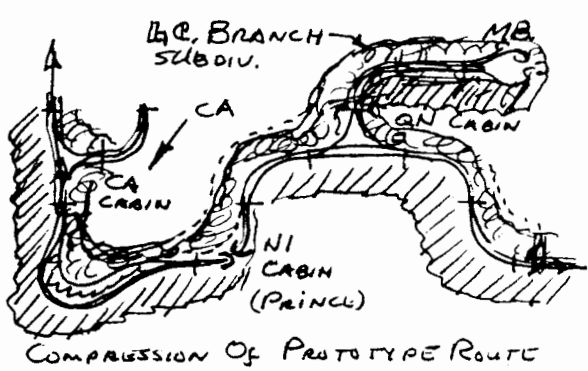
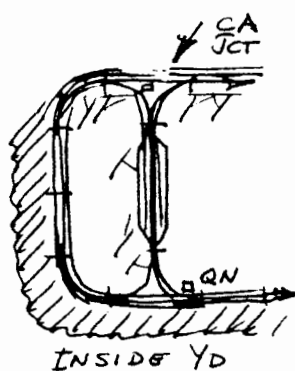
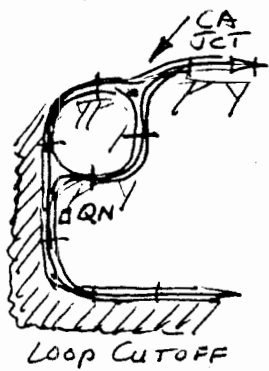
by Fred Obermeyer

The June setup at the Church was great with the active guys who are attending the Atlanta convention were testing their modules. We want to wish them good luck and hope bait is live for the tackle box on our '96 convention here in Alexandria. Rodney showed up with 12' of new modules with mountain division and setup tracks on all lines. Hats off to Rodney for a nice set of modules. An 8' viaduct module showed up without scenery or tracked yet. This was Obies new module with a separate passing track on the mountain division and a valley below with a separate home pike in the bottom. Check it out at the July setup at the church. The club had a regular business meeting and is asking for people to register for the '96 convention. So hurry up and register now!!

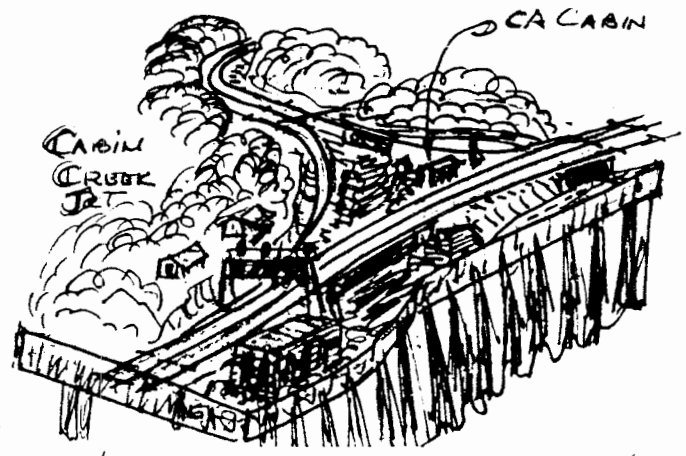
Contact Charles Greenacre if you are planning to attend the July setup at the church. A lot of new modules need to come in for track work and testing. Those not attending Atlanta are encouraged to attend and run trains. We hope to see all of our new members.



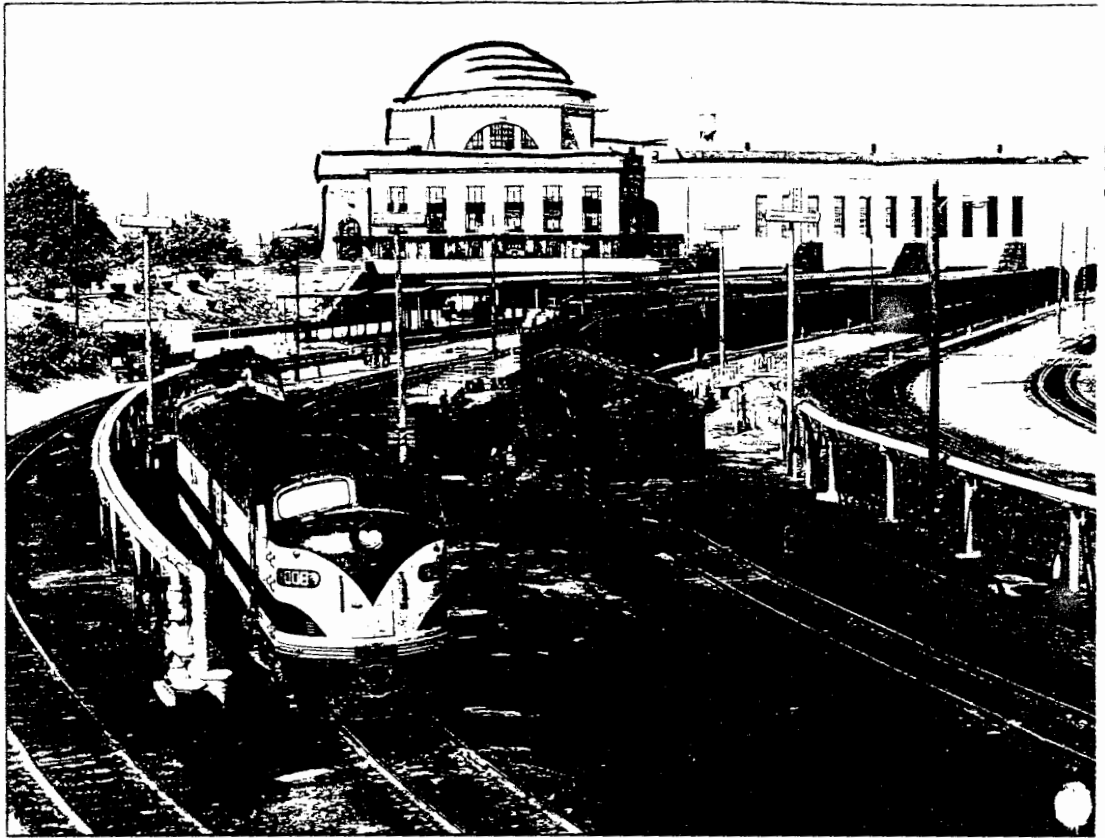
APPLICATIONS FOR CABIN CREEK JCT (CA CABIN) *HILD HURK*



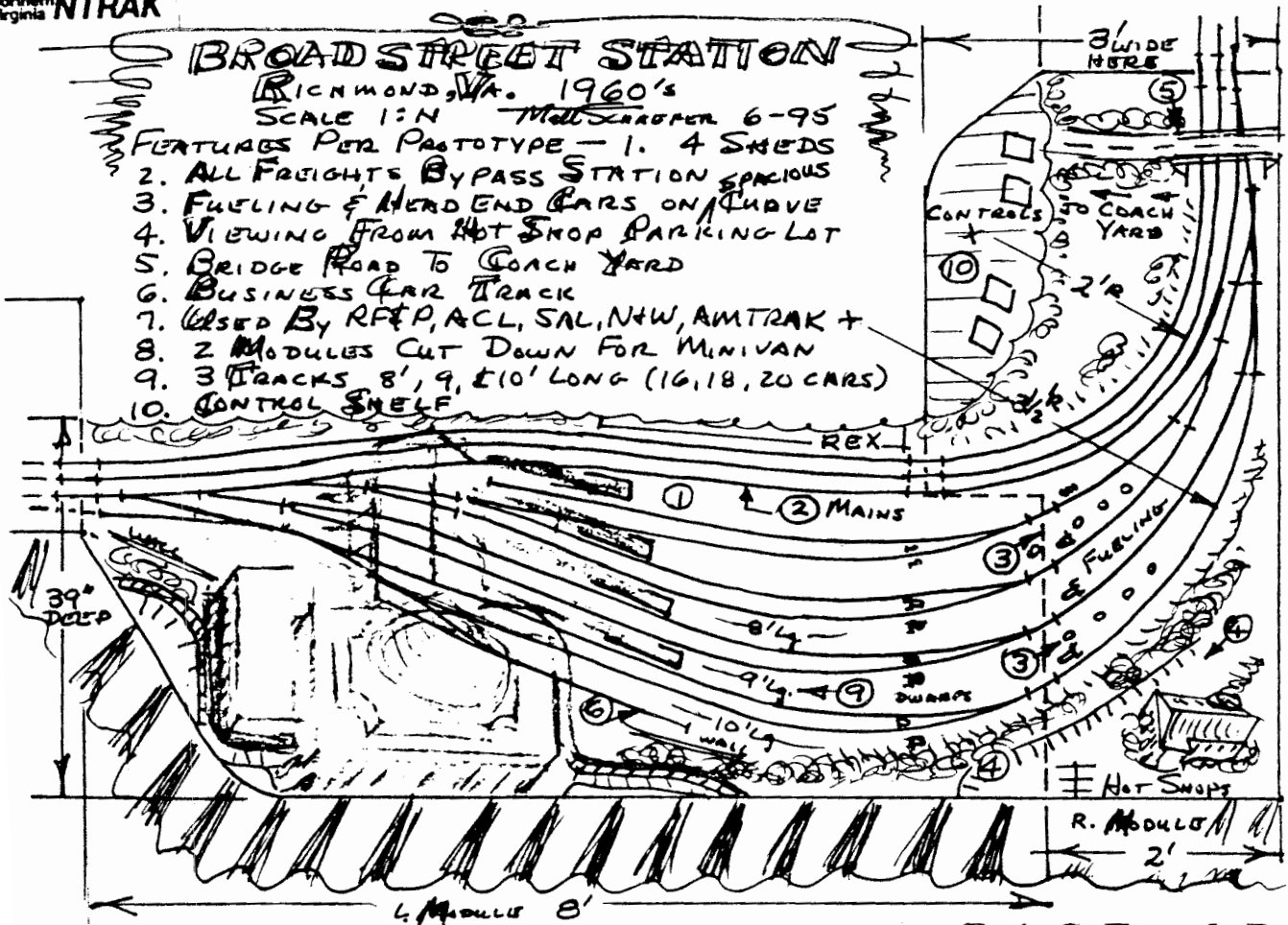
NV Northern Virginia **NTRAK**



**CABIN CREEK JCT**  
*CHD*  
 "T" TO CONNECT 2 LOOPS  
 OR REVERSABLE TO  
 DEEP SCENERY WITH "Y"  
 TO BRANCH SUBDIVISION  
 OFFSET ONE FOOT ON FRONT  
 TO GIVE WIDE 42" R  
 6' LONG X 42' DEEP MAX.  
*W. Schaefer 3-95*



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# Obies Corner

## NEW PRODUCTS!!

### Bachmann

F-7's NYC, GN, B&O, and PA  
 ABBA sets all powered includes flywheels,  
 laser printing. \$32.95 list per engine  
 Run pretty nice. Also available matching  
 65' heavy weight passenger cars with lights.

### Concor

Lackawana and Nickel Plate Hudsons are out. More  
 corrugated passenger sets available. Santa Fe, PA, and  
 undecorated.

### LifeLike

E-8 \$35.00 for club members  
 Available with two road numbers  
 NYC,ACL,RF&P, C&O,Wabash  
 CB&Q, MO PAC

## MicroTrains

69080	NYC	51' mechanical reefer	\$15.65
		Yellow, Blue & Silver	
53030	UP	60' Centerbeam bulkhead	\$19.60
		Red & Yellow	
44040	CP	50' flatcar	\$8.90
		Black & White	
55360	Delaware, Lackawana & Western	33' twin hopper, black & white	\$11.60

## MDC

12 car set of TTX container cars

## Delaware Valley Freight

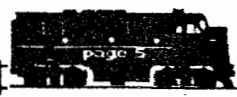
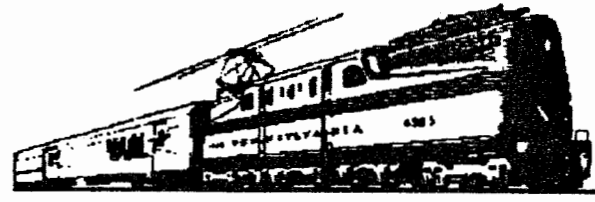
Champion Spark Plug Cars 3-pack, red, black & white.

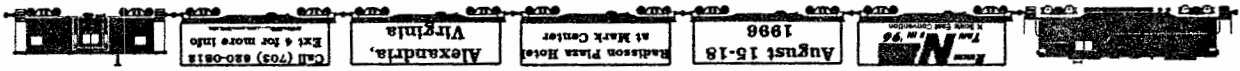


The Northern Virginia N-TRAK Newsletter is produced for and by the members of Northern Virginia N-TRAK. Membership is \$30/year or a Newsletter subscription for continental USA residents is just \$10/year for twelve issues. Send check: Treasurer, Northern Virginia N-TRAK, P.O. Box 1951, Herndon, Virginia 22070.

Submissions should be sent to the editor, Jackie White, 137 Jasper Place, Alexandria, VA 22304, by electronic mail to PNUM72A@Prodigy.com or faxed to 703-370-9682.

Please send articles for the August 1995 Newsletter by July 21, 1995. Thanks.





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