



The

Main Line

February 2020



National Model Railroad Association

Mid-Continent Region

The Monthly publication of the **Western Kansas Division**



On the Cover:

The annual **Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet** is in the history books, and scribed in that text is the superb diorama that not only won first place in the NMRA contest judging for Dioramas, but was awarded the Best In Show trophy as voted by the spectators.



- Inside:**
- **More photos from the Wichita Train Show**
 - **More progress on the WKR building**
 - **Videos from the Operating Session from the January BOD meeting in Kansas City**
 - **Experimenting with sheet styrene to replace track ties**

Editor's Musings

About this time last year, I was returning from the Wichita Train Show with the WKR layout loaded in the LTV. Because of the cold weather, I had to return the layout to its home quickly, a home in the second story of a downtown building in Garden City. The twenty-five steps to the second story had long ago claimed my knees, so I hired two younger men to haul the layout up the steps. Don't misunderstand, I was and am very grateful for the building space as the layout would not fit in my old home, but the access was limited.

(Right) The old home of the WKR in Garden City.



This year, after constructing a new home and shop building, and moving to Dodge City things were much different. The new home of the WKR is all on one level, and right next to the garage portion of the building, the new home of the LTV. Currently the layout is still in the LTV while I finish cleaning-out the train room portion and there is no hurry as the building is climate controlled. When it's time, I simply slide-out the layout section, set it on a moving dolly and roll it into position, so much better for my knees, back, and everything else.



The New home of the WKR



Western Kansas Division You Tube Page

The activities of the Division are on my original YouTube page, located here:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9EPv8cQ04rRGAYts-734jw?view_as=subscriber

(Right) Action on Todd Skaggs's HO scale layout



Todd Skaggs Photo

Sometimes Experiments Work

While installing scratch-built switches you need to add plastic ties in between the printed circuit board ties to fill the gaps and look realistic. In the past, I had saved the plastic ties from flex track, shaved-off the nubs that held the rail, then slid them in place. This worked well, but switches use much longer ties than the standard size which caused me to cut two ties to add the proper length, this was inefficient and time consuming.

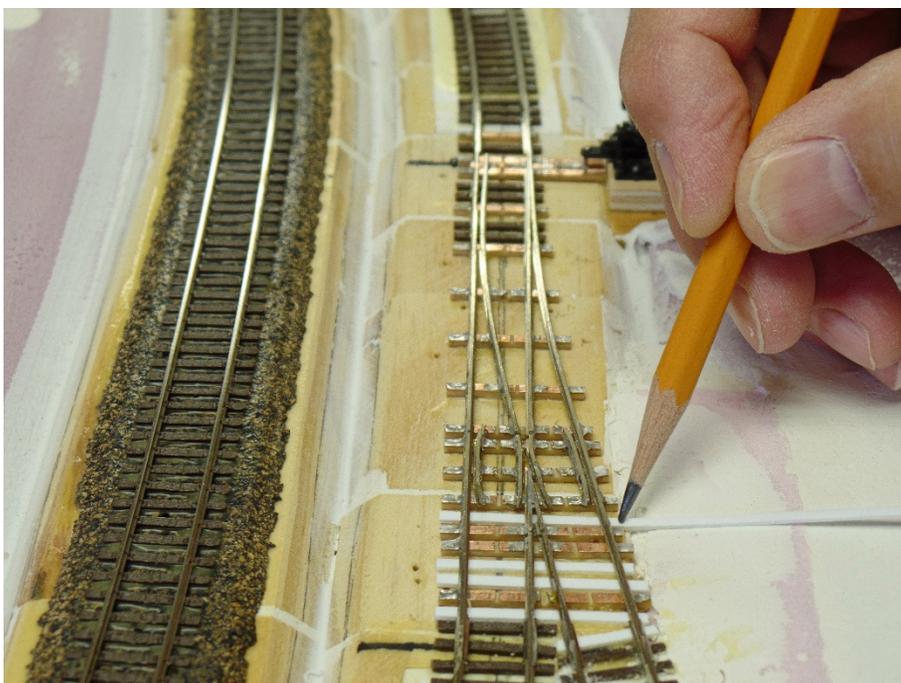
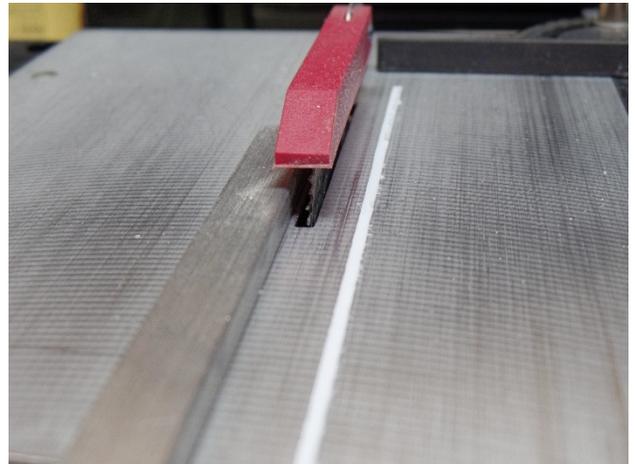
I decided to experiment and find a better process and this led me to sheet styrene. In N-scale, I found the 0.040 Thickness sheet styrene from Evergreen had the desired height to match the original ties.



Next came the process of cutting the sheet styrene into tie-width strips and for this I used the mini table saw from Micro-Mark (right).

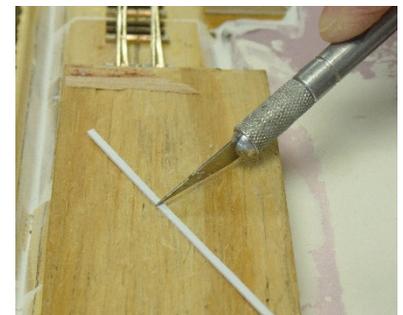


(Right) The table saw came with a guide bar which was adjusted to the proper tie width. This allowed me to make multiple cuts that were straight and true. Even though I use a metal cutting blade with fine teeth, as you can see from the photo, the cuts leave rough edges that were cleaned up with a metal file and sandpaper for smooth edges.

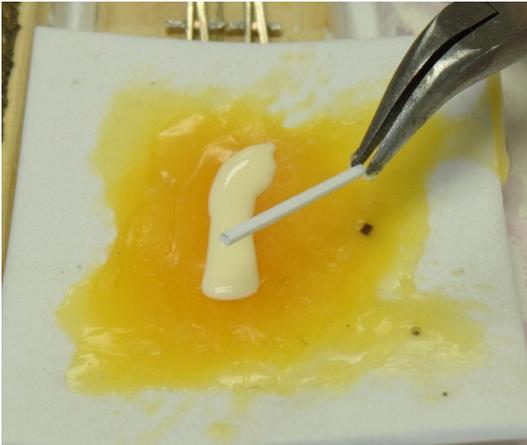


(Left) After the strips are ready to go, I slide each piece into the space I need to fill and make a mark on the strip to find the proper length.

(Below) I used a cutting block of scrap wood, lined-up the Xacto knife on the mark, and made the cut to proper length.



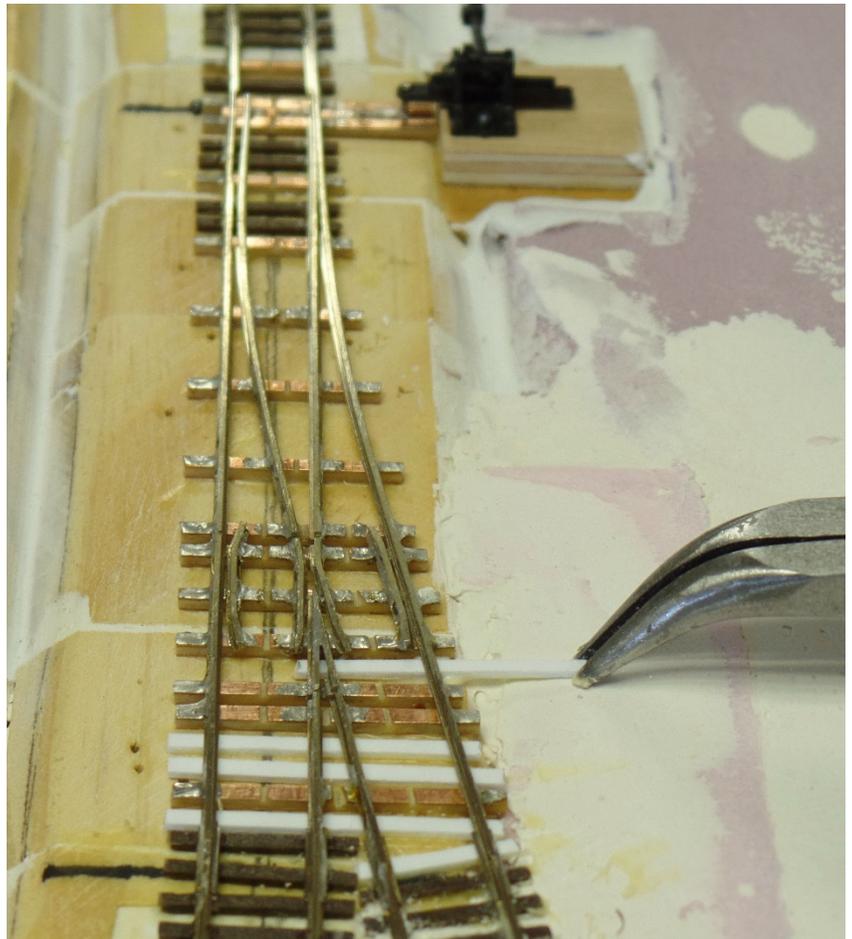
Sometimes Experiments Work



(Left) Once you have the strip cut to proper tie length, I use a scrap piece of plastic as a base and lay out a small bead of wood glue. You can see I have used this piece of plastic many times so the new glue is the light colored bead in the center. I use a pair of needle nose pliers to grip the new plastic tie from one end and then lightly slide the underside of the tie across the top of the glue for a small bead on the bottom of the tie.

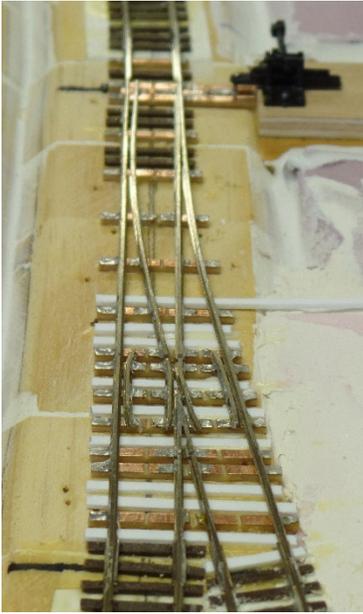
(Right) With the wood glue on the bottom of the new tie, slide the tie into place making sure it is parallel to the other ties. With wood glue you will have plenty of working time before it sets.

Another positive with using wood glue, if you do make a mistake and the glue has already set-up, simply use a clean paint brush and dab water on the area, once the glue softens you can re-position it or remove it with no damage.



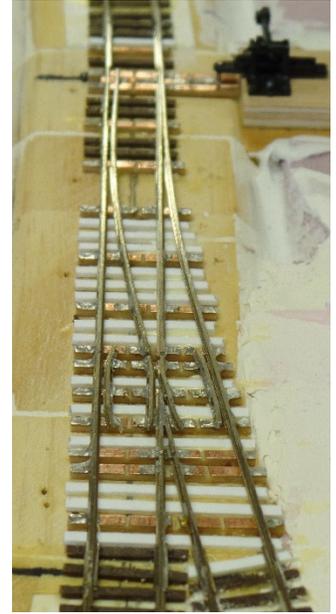
(Left) I found using a straight edge useful both when marking the long styrene strip for cutting, and especially when gluing in place. Here I am using the cutting block but you can use anything straight such as a metal ruler. By using the straight edge, you get a nice, clean, and straight look to your ties on the straight side.

Sometimes Experiments Work



(Left) In this photo, progress is being made with the new ties.

(Right) Most of the new ties are in place and we're almost done.



(Below) All of the gaps have been filled with the new ties in a fraction of the time of cutting and fitting the flex track ties.

Once the wood glue has set, about 24-hours, you are good-to-go on painting the ties Rail Tie Brown, and then painting the rails.



Sometimes Experiments Work



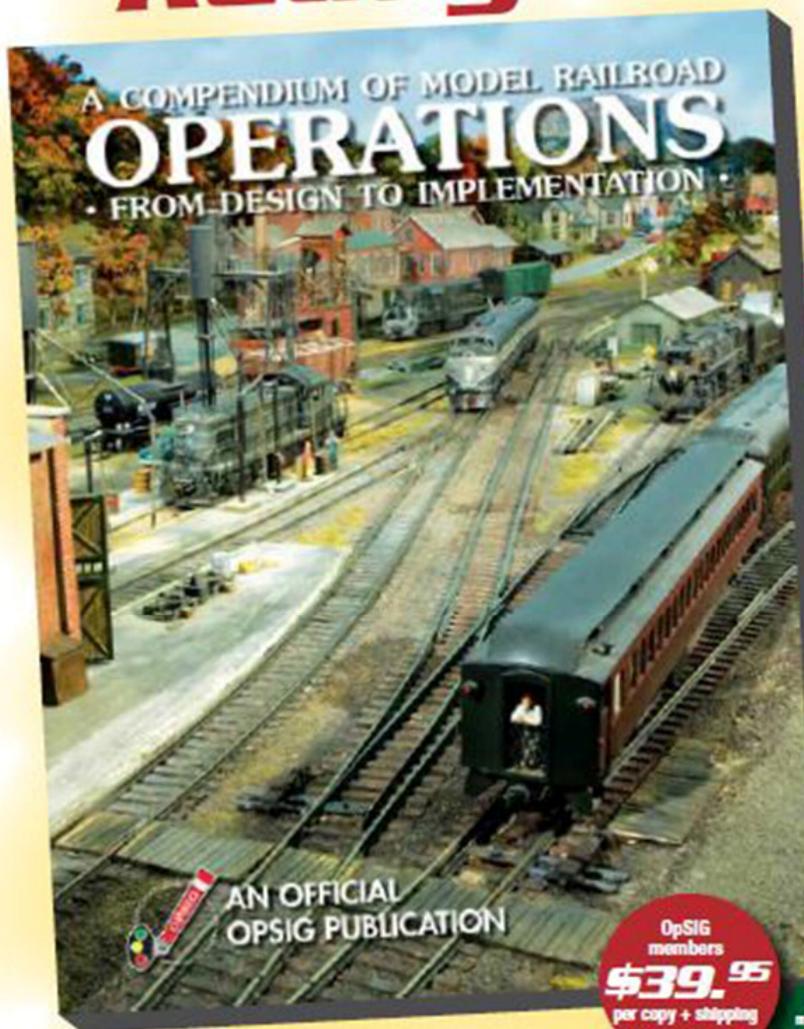
(Above) This is a finished switch on the WKR N-scale layout. As you can see, once the ties are painted “Rail Tie Brown”, the sides of the rails are painted and ballast applied you would never know the “ties” are strips of styrene.



Don't forget to visit the [Face Book](https://www.facebook.com/Western-Kansas-Division-592835177514577/) page of the **Western Kansas Division**
<https://www.facebook.com/Western-Kansas-Division-592835177514577/>

Dispatcher to OpSIG Publication No. 2, you're ...

Ready to Roll!



All model railroaders, whether expert or beginner, will find a wealth of useful information in the OpSIG's second publication, **A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations - From Design to Implementation**. A complete guide to all things operations, our latest offering covers every aspect of prototype operations and how to apply them to your model railroad—from design and staffing to yards and paperwork, from communications and signals to dispatching and car forwarding—in 310 full-color pages. Written by ten of your fellow modelers and professionals, **The Compendium** contains more than 350 photos, 120 illustrations, and countless tips, pointers, suggestions, and prototype information to help guide you on your journey. A must for any modeler interested in prototype operations, add it to your library today!

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Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020

The Super Bowl weekend of February 1st and 2nd saw a caravan of cars, pick-ups, and trailers of all sizes meet at the Cessna Activity Center in the heart of Wichita, Kansas. The Western Kansas Division was proud to be a part of the event by displaying the N-scale “WKR” layout. We were just one of several layouts on display with a host of vendors providing the new supplies.

The way the Activity Center is laid out, as you enter the building and purchase your ticket, you are greeted by a sea of vendors featuring the best of old and new models in all scales.

(Right) The vendor area before the action started on Sunday morning.



(Below) Once you pass into the back room, you enter Train Show Heaven.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020



The "Ark Valley Short Line" displayed one of their live steam locomotives, a 4-4-0 American, number 612 easily the largest locomotive to be viewed. I did not measure, but I believe it is a 7-1/2" gauge type riding on it's own trailer.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020



Displaying exceptional craftsmanship has become the norm for members of the **Boot Hill Model Railroad Club** of Dodge City, Kansas.

The Boot Hill Club has several members who specialize in On30 modeling, each one has their separate module but can also join the separate pieces together.

This is the logging module displayed by former Club President Mark Fisher of Ingalls, Kansas. It features a working sawmill as shown above.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020

Continuing with the **Boot Hill Model Railroad Club**, we switch to the mining module designed, created, and displayed by Steve Weidner of Sublette, Kansas. On Steve's module, not everything can be seen from above. The mine scene below leads to a lower level with a working mine train with a compressed air locomotive which can be viewed through windows in the sides.

On the upper level, the mine bucket and elevator work and are on a delayed timer circuit. Everything on this module is scratch-built by Steve, including the depot below which was constructed literally brick by brick (after he made the bricks).



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020



The Wichita Area Garden Railroad Society showed one of the larger layouts in the show.

In years past, the Society had rolled out some "grass" carpet and set up their layout on the floor. Of course, this was a big attraction for the littlest ones, who sometimes got carried away in excitement, and then carried away in their parents arms.

This year the Society brought their own tables and set up a bit higher off the floor which just perfect for viewing from the chairs they had around the layout. The steam engines were a crowd favorite and again the children loved them.

Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020



N-Trak is a national organization that is mostly credited with bringing model railroading out of basements and into the public eye. The **Kansas Area NTRAKers** showed-off their collection of N-Trak modules, each with a unique view of the world.





You can register for free and receive Model Railroad Hobbyist Magazine each month in your e-mail box
Just click on the link below:

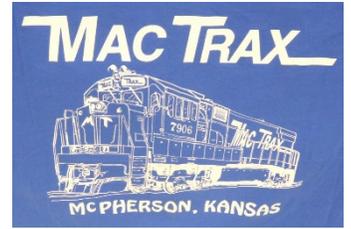
<https://model-railroad-hobbyist.com/magazine>



See Dave & Deb at a train show near you, or check-out their website by clicking on the link below

<https://www.springcreekmodeltrains.com/>

Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020



The **Mac Trax Club** from McPherson, Kansas featured the most unique large layout with several straight modules with turn around loops on each end. One of the favorites of the crowd, this N-scale layout never failed to impress.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020



A blast from the past... Many young boys received Lionel sets for Christmas or birthdays and many still have their original sets. The Wichita Toy Train Club harkens back to favorite memories but with brand new equipment they could only dream of back then.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020

Contest Judging



(Above) According to the spectators who judged the "Best of Show" award, this diorama went home with Best of Show and first place in the Diorama category. One of the best ways to scenic a layout, this diorama was constructed to fit into a space already prepared on their home layout. It's a lot easier to work on a scene on the work bench rather than leaning over a layout.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020

Contest Judging



Details abound on this entry in the Structures category, and the model earned the First Place award.



Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet 2020

Contest Judging



First Place in Diesel Locomotive category



First Place in Freight Cars category



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January Board Of Director's Meeting

Several of us had the opportunity to travel to Kansas City early on Friday for the Saturday meeting and we were met by some intense Winter weather. The weather ranged from very heavy rain, to light ice, to snow, to heavy ice but road conditions were not too bad. On the morning of the meeting, I was greeted with ¼-inch of ice over the entire car which took some time to break into the car.

On the bright side, by coming to the meeting early, we were treated to a great operating session on the HO-scale L & N Railroad of local resident and NMRA member Mark Juett. I would like to personally thank Mark for opening his home and layout to us. Although I did not take any still photos, I did record several videos which I can share here.



Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKKiIX2Vkm8>
Host Mark Juett explains the operating rules to the group

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7sHtl7pwQ4>



Part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZ7V2dJLM3Y>

Part 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aErxCDgG8w>



January Board Of Director's Meeting



Part 5: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXp97r43Ntg>

Part 6: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4wTBBJwEXg>



Part 7:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2z2q9jQRD6o&t=2s>

Not part of the Board Meeting, but a short little video of the WKR layout in a beam of natural sunlight.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l04aRrCwFG8>



The Mid-Continent Region Facebook Page

The Mid-Continent Region has its own Facebook page, open to all members to post everything model train related. You are encouraged to post any activities such as train shows, clinics, and upgrades to your home or club layouts. This is your page, so feel free to use it, just take this link to your page:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1851848998468077/?ref=group_header



Jim Senese's HO-scale KCT Layout in Tulsa, OK.



If you are interested in operations, you can check out the group Operations Special Interest group on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/OperationsSIG/>

Date Book

March 2020

7 th & 8 th Sat & Sun	Rocky Mountain Train Show Denver Mart – 451 E. 58 th Ave. https://rockymountaintrainshow.com/Default.aspx	Denver, CO.
14 th & 15 th Sat & Sun	Boot Hill Model Railroad Club Show Finney County fairgrounds	Garden City, KS.
20 th – 22 nd Fri - Sun	Layout Design & Operations Weekend http://ldopsigmeet.tulsanmra.org/	Tulsa, OK.
21 st Saturday	Southwest Kansas Railroad Society Sebastian Huelskamp	Cunningham, KS.
28 th & 29 th Sat & Sun	Free-Mo Event (Spring Creek) Thayer County Event Center – 304 E. Bryson Ave.	Deshler, NE.

April 2020

18 th & 19 th Sat & Sun	26th Annual Train Show (Nebraska West-Central Division, NMRA) D & N Event Center – 501 E. Walker Road	North Platte, NE.
TBD Saturday	Southwest Kansas Railroad Society Curtis Butler	Great bend, KS.

May 2020

2 nd & 3 rd Sat & Sun	2020 Herington Railroad Days Herington Historical Society & Museum - 800 South Broadway	Herington, KS.
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On the back cover...

One last look back at the Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet with the Western Kansas Division's "Western Kansas Rails" (WKR) N-scale layout

The **Main Line**

Publisher & Editor: Robert A. Simmons

The newsletter of the Western Kansas Division is published monthly for no charge by Robert A. Simmons, Division Superintendent / Director

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