



The Lantern

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Weight really is a big deal

By Shawn Vann

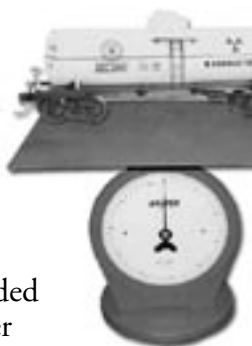
During last year's fair exhibit, I fielded questions from members curious to know how my long trains actually stayed on track. My answer – weight is a big deal. Ever wonder why your long trains tend to pull cars off of curves?

The National Model Railroad Association recommends tested practices about weight [Chart, page 3]. One thing I quickly learned was that most cars are too light out of the box.

With a small ounce scale, you'll get accurate results. For weight I'm using buckshot, but pennies or anything small and heavy will do the trick. Keep in mind, too much isn't good either. The formula is intended to give you optimal results.

Make sure the weight is secured in or under the floor. That way you'll have a lower center of gravity. You'll love the way cars fight back against not so perfect track.

Once you've added some heft, consider tackling other elements that will increase your pleasure when you're running trains. With an NMRA gauge, you can check to make sure wheels and track are in gauge. Some time in the car repair shop will surely equate into hours of fun running the rails.



BNSF 4501, a D944-CW, leads manifest Q608 past the wye east of the yard.

Railfanning the Tallahassee area

By Will Hoover

First and foremost CSX trains with the exception of locals are numbered according to direction, locals according to their initial direction, and work trains and others follow a rather crude system. On our tracks odd numbers are compass west, even compass east bound. CSX's AB dispatcher desk refers to eastbound trains as northbound and westbound trains as being southbound. On your scanner trains heard "releasing" any of the following blocks are northbound:

Tallahassee, Quincy, Mitchell, Gretna, Chattahoochee Yard Limit, Drawbridge.

Trains heard being given blocks are southbound. Unfortunately those of us rail fanning in town won't hear southbound crews releasing blocks because they do so at the south end the Chaires DTC block out of range of most scanners.

On a safety note, it's never a good idea to roam around the tracks after dark or unaccompanied. I have been confronted and asked to explain myself by several police officers, never with any trouble, and always with a very cordial tone. Avoid trespassing for

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CSX 8431 rounds the bend as it heads its train through the Tallahassee area.

Railfanning

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pictures and you should be okay.

Here is a brief list of spots to railfan running from compass east to west on the Tallahassee and Bainbridge Subdivisions of CSX:

- Tom Brown Park – the public bike path gets right up to the tracks, but trains tend to hurdle through this area. Expect great scanner reception and a chance to peek at a wheel flange lubricator, used to ease wear on the rails as

trains round the curve at the south end of the siding at Chaires.

- Adams Street Holdout – the beginning of the siding at Tallahassee is protected by a holdout signal at Adams Street. Great roster shots are possible from the state government parking garage nearby.

- Tallahassee Amtrak Station – those looking for a great sheltered area to railfan will find it under the station's covered platform and bench seats.

- Old "A yard" – off Gaines Street, Stone Valley road just south of the Florida State University campus.

Here is the chance to see the former junction and wye for the Tallahassee & St. Marks Railroad complete with rail rolled in Maryland as early as 1900. CSX and Amtrak frequently use the yard as a storage area for broken locomotives, equipment and work trains. Amtrak also uses the yard to turn their Sunset Limited if service is annulled.

- Tallahassee Holdout – block signals controlling the track indicate clearance to a train, much like traffic lights. Shots are also possible along the twenty mile-per-hour curve and areas adjacent to the tracks. Pull into A-yard, go all the way back and look for a green or red light, that's the southbound holdout signal.

- Tallahassee "B Yard" – the main Tallahassee railroad yard. The Bypass track is to the compass north of the yard tracks and trains run parallel to a road on the south side of the yard.

- Mabry – Road at the compass west end of the yard. Shots are possible on the side street that parallels the mainline. The Signal bank here controls the entrance and exit at the south end of the Tallahassee yard limit.

- GF&A connection/junction – running under Pensacola Street. Here the lines to Pensacola (Tallahassee Sub to Chattahoochee) and Bainbridge (Bainbridge Sub to Georgia) diverge. The signals here control the entrance to the Tallahassee DTC block of the Tallahassee Subdivision.

Scanner frequencies

161.100	Road
160.230	Dispatch
452.900	Amtrak
457.900	Amtrak
452.9375	EOT Device
457.9375	EOT Device

Note: EOTs squawk once every 30 seconds giving you about a kilometer of warning.

Executive board reports

Upcoming events

One week earlier
Tuesday, April 12, 2005
7:30PM at Myers Park.

Folkston Traifest will occur
April 9, 2005 in Folkston, GA.
<http://www.folkston.com>

Sal Martocci, Vice President Taking time..

I've noticed that at our monthly meetings there seems to be an "unseen gatekeeper" keeping track of how long or short our meeting last. Now I know I am speaking as a retired person and some of us have to go to work in the morning. But most of us don't go to bed at 9PM either.

Kind of reminds me of Sunday morning church service when we hope the preacher doesn't talk too long. Since our meetings are planned at least one month in advance let's try to get our supper in and any other distractions that keep us from having the best time we can.

Rushing through the hobby that we all love diminishes the enjoyment of our get-togethers. So let's make an effort to "have time" for each other and keep the rushing for the hours of nine to five.

Larry Benson, Secretary

The March 15th meeting of the BBMRA was held in the conference room at Florida Insurance Council with 39 members in attendance. Jim McGill and John Edrington presented a talk entitled "Card Modeling 101," about building models with paper. Jim gave out CDs with samples and information about his other favorite past time to each member present.

The Treasurer's report and Min-

utes of the February meeting were approved. Division reports and an update of our 2005 Train Show by John Sullenberger were received. There currently are 72 vendor tables sold, with a waiting list in place.

The April meeting date has been changed to April 15, the second Tuesday, at Myers Park.

N Scale crew

Final preparations for the show are upon us. Thanks to everyone that has worked each week to ensure our layout is ready for prime time. Workdays will continue Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday morning.

We will discuss moving the layout at the upcoming meeting. The current plan is to breakdown and be ready to move the first load to the fairgrounds by noon on Friday.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the meeting for running time on the layout. This will allow everyone a chance to run and show us where the missing links are.

HO Scale crew

HO members should meet Saturday, April 9, at 10AM. We will meet at the storage unit to load the trailer. On Friday, April 15, we will meet at the fairgrounds at 1PM to set up.

HO members are asked to contact me if they are available for these sessions and to let me know when they will be working throughout Saturday, the day of the show. We need folks to help breakdown at the end of the day and return everything to storage.

Large Scale crew

Large Scale will discuss at the meeting a plan of action to move the layout and set-up for the upcoming show. See you Tuesday night.

It's Showtime!

Make sure you tell all your friends to come out and support the club. Our annual show will take place April 16 from 10AM to 5PM. Admission is \$5 for adults and children 13 and older, children 12 and under are free. Parking is also free.

Club member admission

Each member who has paid their 2005 dues qualifies for free admission. You will have a name badge at the front door.

Any 2004 member can either pay admission for the show or preferably, pay their 2005 dues to the treasurer at the April meeting or at the show.

Welcome new vendor

IronPenguin Electronics joins us this year. They provide high quality electronic products that are reliable and easy to use.

<http://www.ironpeng.com/ipe/>

Breakdown

Please plan to help with the clean up process after the show.

NMRA optimum train weight

Scale	Initial*	Extra*
N	.50	.15
HO _{n3}	.75	.37
HO	1.00	.50
Sn ₃	1.00	.50
S	2.00	.50
On ₃	1.50	.75
O	5.00	1.00

Start with the initial weight for your scale. Then multiply the car's length in inches by the extra weight shown in the chart. Add the initial and additional weight together.

*Weight in ounces.



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2023 Gardenbrook Ln, Tallahassee, FL 32301

- *Don't miss the meeting one week earlier on April 12, 2005*

www.bbmra.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April	4	5 N scale workday: 7PM at Garth's	6	7 N scale workday: 7PM at Garth's	8	9 HO Workday; N Workday
10	11	12 Club meeting: 7:30 Myer's Park	13	14	15 Show set up: See coordinators	16 Annual Show: Fairgrounds
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
May	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14