

NMRA

THE BRASS POUNDER

Newsletter of the Carolina Southern Division 12, Mid-Eastern
Region, National Model Railroad Association

Superintendent's Corner

By Chad Barnette

Division Coming Events

Monthly Meeting for August

**Lunch and railfanning
at Deejaal Noodle Bar
3629-103 N Davidson
St, Charlotte, NC
28205**

**Bring a project for
show and tell**

Summer has been a busy and exciting time for the Carolina Southern Division, and it's been great to see so many members getting together to enjoy the hobby.

Our July meeting at Neal Anderson's incredible KK&L Railroad was a real highlight. A big thank you to Neal for opening his home and sharing his amazing layout with us. Everyone enjoyed touring the railroad, talking trains, and, for several lucky members, even getting the chance to operate. It's always inspiring to see the creativity and craftsmanship that our members bring to the hobby.

Many of our members also made the trip to Chattanooga for the NMRA National Convention. Whether you attended clinics, toured layouts, visited the National Train Show, or simply enjoyed spending time with fellow model railroaders from around the country, the convention was a wonderful opportunity to learn new techniques and come home with fresh ideas for our own layouts.

The excitement continues this month as we head to Charlotte for a tiny bit of railfanning at our August meeting. Looking ahead, don't forget one of our favorite traditions—the Carolina Southern Division Annual Picnic on September 19 in Kannapolis. It's always a fun, relaxed gathering with great food, good conversation, and plenty of railroad talk. Whether you're a long-time member or attending your first Division event, we'd love to see you there.

As always, thank you for making the Carolina Southern Division such a welcoming and active group. I hope to see many of you at our upcoming events, and until then, happy railroading!

Editor's Notes

By Chad Barnette

Progress has been made! Fresh off of my trip to the NMRA National conference in Chattanooga, I have revived all of my model railroading ambitions. First up - completing all of the trackwork (for phase 1) on my basement HO layout. As you may recall (if not, check out the Brass Pounder archives) we last left off with me trying to complete the loop for the continuous circuit portion of my railroad.

I am a couple iterations in and actually scrapped what you saw last time. I am satisfied with what I have now and you can see where things stand now. The other exciting thing is that I have a few Kato wiring pieces that I needed coming tomorrow. I needed this to be able to really complete the loop as I won't be able to easily access this portion of track once the benchwork is fully in place.



Now that you've seen my progress - how about yours. I wonder if I can get at least five people to send me just one still image of their current project along with a tiny blurb. How fun would it be to have a monthly section covering all of the different projects going on in the division. Please drop me a line at the email address below.

Click the link to email
me articles & ideas:

editor@carolinasouthern.org

Division and Regional News

Wade's Train Town

Wade's Train Town – June Stats

Contributed by Ed Smith, MMR

Open houses: 3
Attendance: 132
Volunteers: Ed Smith, Tim Rust, Bob Halsey, Danny Poole

AP Updates from the Plywood RR Desk

Contributed by Neal Anderson, MMR

August Rail Movements

- Dick Bronson's Chief Dispatcher was handed to him at the July Meeting.
- Jim Thomas Chief Dispatcher was handed to him at the July Meeting.
- Richard Shulby, how are you doing on Chief Dispatcher? If you need more help just contact me.
- Dylan Petro's Scenery is in my hands to pass it on to him.
- P.S. We have been contacted to add another member to our Division by the MER.



July Monthly Meeting

Contributed by Chad Barnette

Our July meeting was a tremendous success as members enjoyed a visit to Neal Anderson's outstanding KK&L Railroad. Neal welcomed everyone to his basement-filling HO scale layout, which continues to impress visitors with its exceptional scenery, detailed craftsmanship, and realistic operations. Members enjoyed touring the railroad, asking questions, and sharing ideas, while several attendees even had the opportunity to step behind the throttle and operate trains on the layout. It was a great morning, and we extend our sincere thanks to Neal for opening his home and sharing his layout with the Carolina Southern Division.



Join Us

Contributed by Chad Barnette

We still have two open positions that we are looking to fill. I would love it if you would consider volunteering a bit of your time to help out our group. After all, it takes all of us working together to create a lively and engaging division. Thanks for your consideration!

CSD Program Chair – Responsible for arranging programs for Division meetings. This may include presenting a program, recruiting a presenter, or coordinating a remote (Zoom) presentation. Once confirmed, program details (who, what, when, and where) must be provided to the *Brass Pounder* editor and webmaster so members can be notified before the meeting.

RMU Chair – Oversees the Division's annual Railroad Model University (RMU), a day-long clinic event for model railroaders. Responsibilities include recruiting presenters, creating the clinic schedule, coordinating the venue, promoting the event, and assisting with registration and A/V needs.

Please contact me (superintendent@carolinasouthern.org) if you have any questions or would like to volunteer.

2026 CSD National Model Railroad Month Celebration

Contributed by Dave Thrums

It's time to talk about this year's Carolina Southern Division (CSD) celebration for National Model Railroad Month. I want to thank all the layout owners that have shared their layouts over the past two years! This fall will be our third year of layout open houses to celebrate National Model Railroad Month.

Would you like to join in the fun of celebrating the World's Greatest Hobby? There are two ways to join in on the fun.

One way is to visit some or all of the layouts that are open for us to see over four Saturdays. By visiting the layouts, you get to fellowship with model railroaders you may not know. By talking to them and asking questions about their layouts, you get to know them and who knows, you may have a new friend at the end of the visit.

The second way is to open your layout for our members and friends to see. We don't advertise to the public, but we encourage our members to invite friends and someone that has an interest in model railroading but maybe not an NMRA member....yet! Who knows? That person may decide to join the NMRA party.

If you participated in the past, you may have learned it doesn't matter if a layout is under construction with benchwork and a little track, or if it has full scenery, people enjoy learning from others' experiences. We get to see how the layout owner put together trackwork,

scenery, or electronics and by exchanging information of how it was done, or maybe should have been done differently, everyone learns something new.

Layouts change from year to year too! Just to name a couple, Joe Skorch has expanded his layout and you'll be able to see lots of changes he's made to his layout. Andrew Stitt has built an entire second layout in his basement so now you will see two operating layouts when you visit him.

In addition to seeing changes to some layouts, two layout owners, Steve Colby and Joe Pulsone will be opening their layouts to us for the first time! Thank you, Steve and Joe!!

Even though we currently have eighteen layouts that have agreed to open for us. We are still in the planning stages of this wonderful month of model railroading and we can always add more layouts to this celebration. You are welcome to add your layout to this list! Who knows? If we get enough new layouts on this list, maybe we can add another Saturday, or shift the hours when layouts are open, so we can all have even more fun!

So, have I just created a new model railroad mathematical formula? More Layouts = More Fun?

Below are the dates and layouts confirmed to be open this year. This schedule may be subject to change.

October 24, (North/Northeast)

Steve Colby Denver (new)

Joe Skorch Kannapolis

Marcus Neubacher China Grove

Andrew Stitt New London

October 31, (Southwest) Gaston County/West CLT area

Seth Gartner West Charlotte

Dave Thrans Stanley

Alan Hardee Bessemer City

Cherryville Model Railroad Club (10am – Noon)

November 7, (Southeast) Fort Mill/Lancaster/Fort Mill/Waxhaw area

Dick and Karen Bronson Waxhaw

Dave Myers Waxhaw

Dylan Petro Fort Mill

Chad Barnette Fort Mill

Tim Rumph Lancaster

Gordon Miller Matthews



A view of Gordon Miller's Proto-Freelance 1950's Pittsburgh Northern Railroad layout. (CSD website photo)

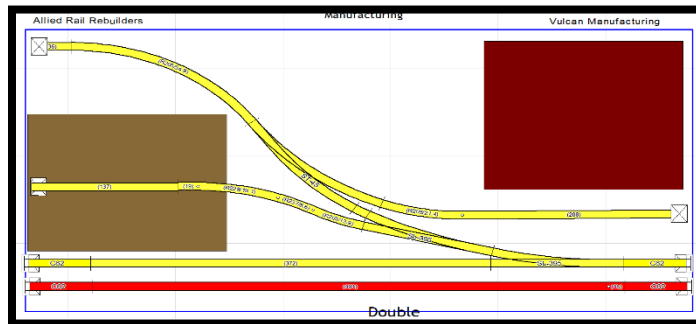
One of the layouts at the Cherryville Model Railroad Club. (Dave Thrans photo)



T-TRAK Phase 3: Progress finally

By Dylan Petro

I'll start off by saying this project is taking a lot longer than expected. The latest price increases this year have prevented me from bulk buying almost everything at once as I usually do. Not complaining, just explaining myself. It's been almost 6 months now since I started gathering materials, structures, track, and track accessories. With that, I've only just now finished the hard parts for 2 doubles; track planning, laying, and wiring. At this rate, I'm unsure whether or not I'll meet the deadline for October.



Anyways, track planning. SCARM is always my go-to for T-TRAK planning as it has a massive database for track pieces. I usually use it for Kato Unitrack but this time it's Peco Streamline code 80 track. Since I'm doing industries this go around, using Kato track would've been cumbersome to use for me, so I decided to go with Peco since Micro-engineering track is too pricey for me. The picture above shows how I wanted the track plan to look for the Manufacturing double. It did not go according to plan.



This is how it actually went. The only part I don't particularly like is the janky bend-straight-bend in the rail after the turnout leading to the building on the right; but that was what I had to do in order to fit the building on the module, barely giving it enough clearance of the ground throw, and to allow one diesel and one car to fit on the switchback track before entering the turnout. Also, to give the sidings enough space next to each other for the gantry crane, which by the way is a neat wood kit. The crane hook slides back and forth.

I also had an electrical issue with the turnouts and the whole siding. I've used Kato track most of my model railroading years, so I wasn't used to any of the extra steps needed to electrify frogs, insulate turnouts, and wire soldering turnouts. All good tips I know how to do now. After posting about it on Facebook, many people gave me great amounts of information

on how to fix the power short problem upon the engine entering the siding. Many solutions people gave failed, not to discredit them, just didn't work on my end. What did work was a combination of a method from Ken from the K&R RR, and a tip from Bruce Arbo. One without the other didn't work. Isolating the turnout's siding rails with insulating joiners and covering the frog with Aluminum tape.



The buildings for this module were fun to do as I got to weather more buildings again since my first attempt with the coal mine building from another module. I got a set of rusting powders and rust liquid and used those, as well as several examples on Pinterest to weather them. I used the brown iron oxide to fill in most of the cracks on the bricks to make them look worn, then used the rust streaks to add the look of weathering drippage.



After seeing it was an option to cut off the door and just leave the frame, I decided to do so as it would make the siding longer and worth having another siding. This started the idea, earlier on, to add a switchback siding instead of a split siding.

These same powders I used to rust some old rolling stock and other pieces I gathered for the Scrapyard module. I started as always by looking at pictures for reference; where does the rust accumulate on each type of car, what direction is the rust moving, what areas are darker or lighter, what stage is the rust?



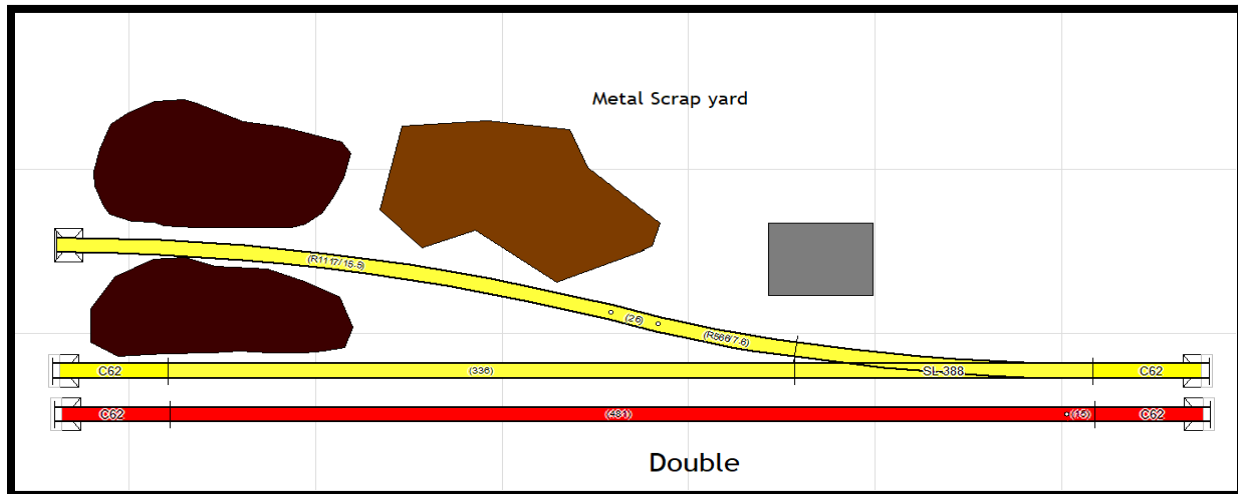
I started by sanding down all the sides and roofing of each car, then painted over emblems, cut or broke off pieces, marked off decals, or warped some plastic with a fuse lighter.



From there it was several layers of Brown Iron Oxide, Rust, Old Rust, & New Rust powders brushed or rubbed on.



The track design I had for this module was simple so it did go according to plan unlike its counterpart.



Something I will add is initially I was going to use Peco Flex track for both Red and Yellow mainlines, shown in the picture above on Red line, but after seeing that it wasn't necessary to do that since Red line wouldn't have any switching to do, it would stay standardized with Kato track and the Yellow line would have Kato track transitional pieces instead.

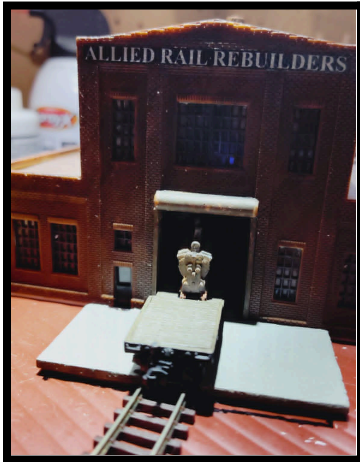
Back to the manufacturing module, I am excited to use a curved turnout. The last time I used one similar to this it was made by LGB that was about 4 scales bigger back in my garden railroading years.



as



After seeing several examples of the Allied Rail Rebuilders kit on other people's layouts or railcar shops in real life, I decided to put a small concrete slab in front of the shop. I mixed Khaki, Pewter Gray, and Black Noir together to make it as close to real concrete as I could but with some age. I then painted it on top of balsa wood and layered paper, and glued it down.



In case any of you are wondering what the rippled base is for the ground work, it's a wall insulation sheet I got from Lowes. I just needed a lightweight, flat, yet sturdy material that was a 1/16 of an inch thick.

That's all the progress I've made so far. Scenery for both modules will begin very soon. Still waiting on the Quonset hut for the scrapyard. Once more progress is made, I'll update further. Till then, that's all for now.

CAROLINA SOUTHERN — DIVISION —

MID EAST REGION • NMRA

MONTHLY MEETING



DEEJAL NOODLE BAR

3629-103 N Davidson St,
Charlotte, NC 28205



**SATURDAY,
AUGUST 15, 2026**



10:30AM



LET'S GO RAILFANNING!

We'll take a bit of time to
railfan the area—bring your
camera and enjoy the action!



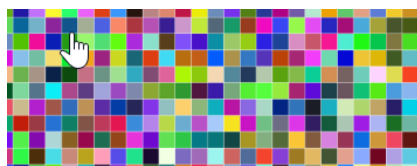
SHOW & TELL

Bring a project piece
to share with the group!



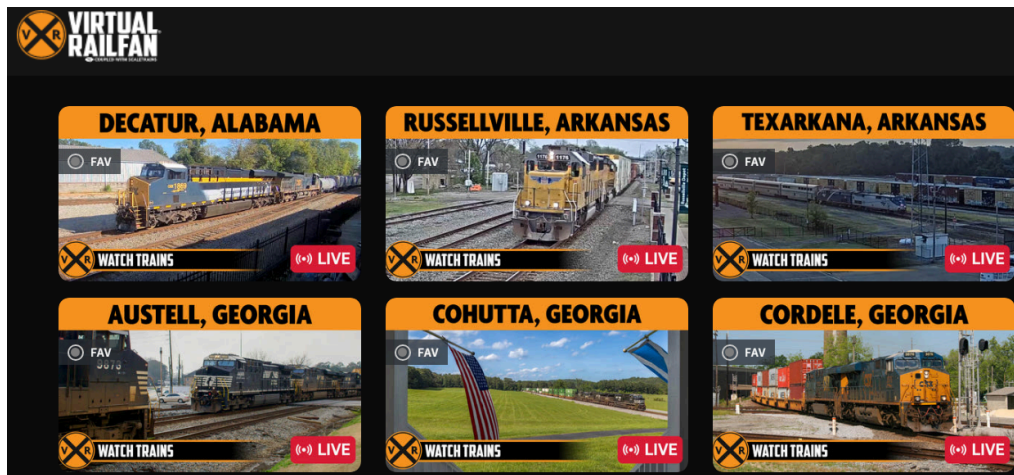
NO ZOOM PROVIDED

We hope to see you in person!



Digital Distractions

Virtual Rail Fan - I came across a booth at the show in Chattanooga that was surprising to me. Believe it or not, I was unaware there were websites you could subscribe to that give you access to cameras 24/7 at select popular railfanning sites across the country. There are other services out there, but this is one such option. If you are interested, take a look.



VirtualRailFan.com

Division Brass

<u>Superintendent</u>	Chad Barnette	superintendent@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Asst. Superintendent</u>	Richard Shulby	assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Clerk</u>	David Myers	clerk@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Paymaster</u>	Tim Rumph	Paymaster@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Director 2028</u>	Alan Hardee	director1@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Director 2029</u>	Joe Skorch	director2@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Director 2027</u>	Ed Smith, MMR	director3@carolinasouthern.org
<u>AP Chairman</u>	Neal Anderson, MMR	Apchair@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Webmaster</u>	Joe Skorch	Webmaster@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Newsletter Editor</u>	Chad Barnette	editor@carolinasouthern.org
<u>Program Chair</u>	Still Looking!	program@carolinasouthern.org
<u>RMU Chair</u>	Alan Hardee	RMUchair@carolinasouthern.org