NMRA
CAROLINA SOUTHERN DIVISION
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NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

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

Join us for National Model Railroad Month. Each weekend starting October 24th through November 14th.

It's now officially National Model Railroad Month! Of course, we all know that our division has been in full swing with several weekend open houses already under our belts. We still have two more to go. Make sure you go and register today!

Open houses are perhaps one of the most quintessential things we can do in the hobby. After all, the hobby is meant to be shared. If you can't share your creations with others, then I think we lose the true value of what we are doing. Yes, we get a lot of satisfaction and enjoyment working on the railroad, but it's people…it's the connection that we all need.

I hope you're able to make it out to at least one of these final weekends in November. Even if you can just pop in to say hi to someone for five minutes. That's all it takes to make a connection, make a new friend, discover a new technique, and just to have fun!



Editor's Notes

By Chad Barnette

Things have been busy with me. A lot has kept me from working on my layout but I do know one thing for certain. November 7th is coming and some folks are gonna wanna see my layout. So I really hope to make some good progress over the next week or so.

I guess it's a good thing when there's a deadline. Perhaps creating deadlines for ourselves is the motivation we need to get things done. Maybe even if they are artificial deadlines. Either way, I have an actual deadline! The good news? I don't really have to accomplish a certain task to be "ready". I can simply do what I can and let that stand on its own merits. Trying to do too much sometimes can be detrimental to true progress.

If you haven't heard it enough already, please make sure you take the time to sign up for the two remaining weekends. By the time I release this issue, there will only be a matter of hours before the registration for next weekend disappears. Here is the link to register and we hope to see you there!

https://www.carolinasouthern.org/modelrailroadmonth.html



Click the link to email me articles & ideas:

editor@carolinasouthern.org

Division and Regional News

Wade's Train Town

Wade's Train Town – October Stats

Contributed by Ed Smith, MMR

Open houses: 5

Attendance: 100

Volunteers: Ed Smith (2), Bob Halsey, Joe Pulsone, Chad Barnette

AP Updates from the Plywood RR Desk

Contributed by Neal Anderson, MMR



November Rail Movements

Look.... It's time to work on the railroad. It's also National Model Railroad Month.

We have the next couple of weeks to get AP Awards filled out to support this great hobby.

I know several people working on the AP Awards they don't have yet, but we are working on them.

Five AP Awards have been handed out this year. Lets see how many more we can make for the year.

Phase 3 Project: 2 Down, 2 to go!

Contributed by Dylan Petro

Y'know, the hardest part about doing these modules is in between the tedious steps of waiting for glue or paint to dry while making scenery objects is remembering to take progress pictures!

Anyways, after making sure the A.R.R building was at the right height, I started with the ballast. I looked at many photos of freight car repair shops and manufacturing facilities during N&W and SRR's operation and found that most of the ballast had a brown hue to it. Luckily, I had some on-hand.



I found that a Post-It note, when rolled up, works great as a hole cover. I was bummed to find that Walthers didn't make an add-on gantry crane kit for the overhead structure that comes with the Manufacturing building like they do for HO-scale. I ended up finding a duo crane wood kit on eBay. Both quite nice, the gantry crane I gave a solid color just like the one standing in between the back shop and roundhouse at the NC Transportation Museum. It has a moving hook that slides side-to-side, and is quite sturdy. The other crane I wasn't sure what to do with as it was made for a flatcar but I'll come back to that later.



I had to make use of what I had so added different ballast, turfs, and ground cover to see what looked good. I even tried making my own combos. I later realized that the small ground objects and loads wouldn't stand out much using dark colored ground covers, so I scraped certain areas off and put down fresh gray ballast. The pathways weren't something I originally planned, but after reading the ideas given repeatedly, I decided it would better than trying to do stone pathways. So painted thin balsa wood did just that.






Jul 26, 2026, 12:15 AM

A small detail added was what industrial materials manufacturing plants keep on-hand; kaolin clay, clay, sand, & limestone.

With the buildings, pathways, ground cover, and crane glued in place I then focused on the loads and ground cover objects.





3D-printed pallets, train wheels, track ties, pipe and steel slab loads were made. I made the pipe load you see above using Evergreen 3/16” tubing. For steel slab loads, I used freight car weights held together by balsa wood. I even added a “junk pile” behind the A.R.R building.



Overall, I like how this turned out. Per the modules I'm doing this round I'm trying to add more detail to the modules more than what I'm used to, and since I'm not freelancing this time, I'm adding small details based off real photos.



When I started getting into this design for this module, it really was a big fat question mark. So I did what I usually do, scour the internet looking at old railroad photos for references. Most scrapyards in and around Roanoke at that time had either a red clay or red dirt ground cover to them, so I went with that. I plan to eventually have trucks entering and exiting the scrapyard but for now I'll make due with what I have. I didn't have anything fine enough to resemble dirt. Though I did think of using cocoa powder, I thought I'd run into mold issues later.



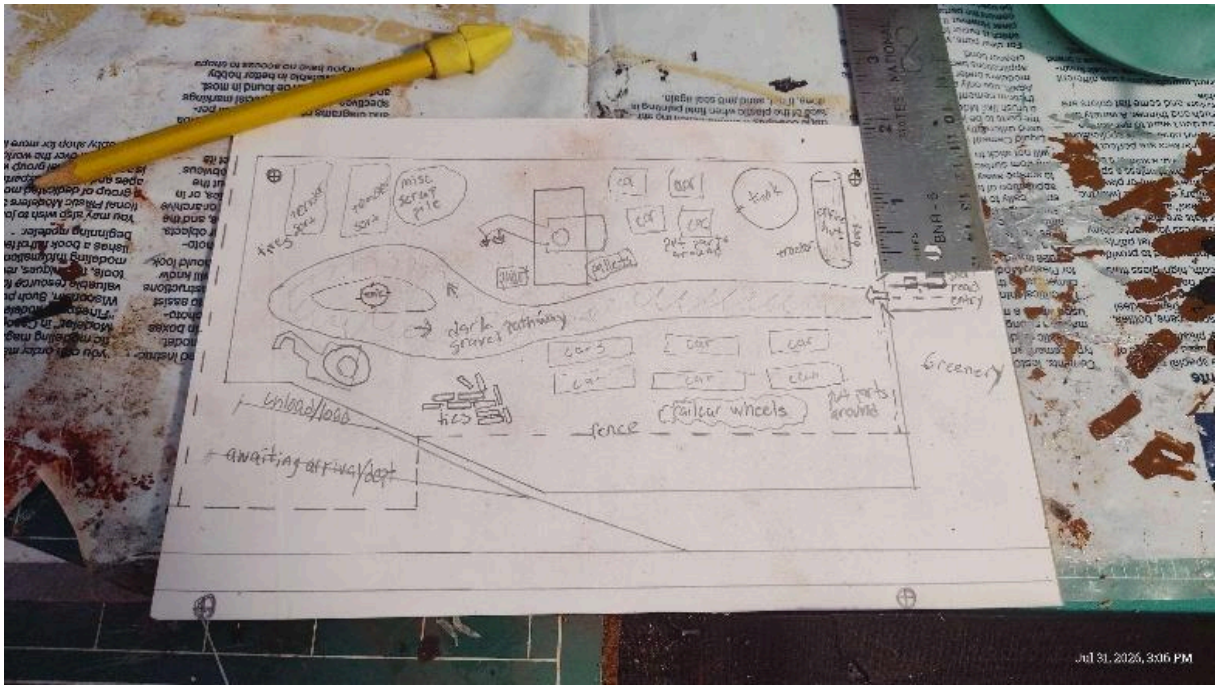


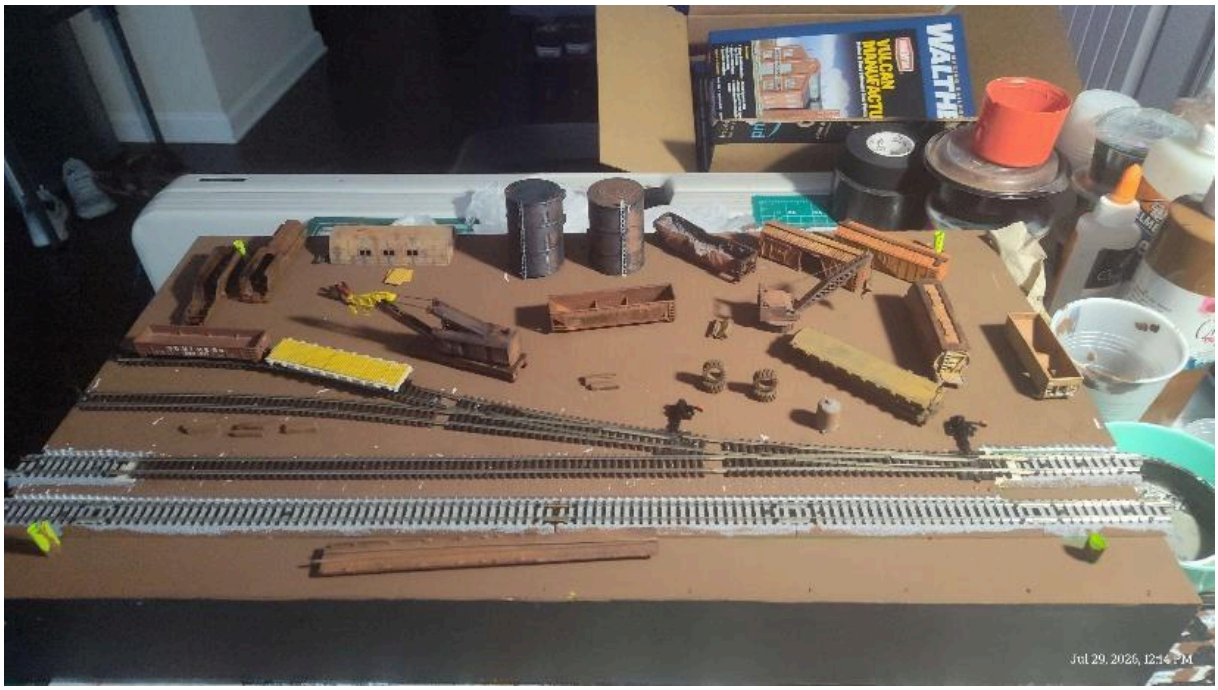
That little tractor used to be a green John Deere tractor, I took it apart and painted it red. So back to the other crane from the duo kit. Gave it a generic all gray before rusting it, and using a furniture cap, glued a screw and bolt underneath to make it rotatable.

The Quonset hut finally showed up after 5 weeks or so. Painted and weathered it. The window frames were initially brown but decided white looked better.



At times pencil, paper, and a ruler just works better to scratch together a quick design. A lot of photos I looked at had a center pile in the middle and several piles around, but it looked too cluttered and difficult for a truck to maneuver in, so instead I put a pathway in the middle and everything else would be on the outer perimeter surrounding the main pathway.





Considering too that scrapyards had to have sold pieces individually or in bulk to make a profit other than the railroad. On the top right; a dry placement of where objects would go. This would be done several times over. Bottom right; at first, I wasn't going to use this crane but since it was just a stagnant piece since it was an old Rapido Arnold German crane, I only

decided to use it since it heavily resembled breakdown train crane cars used in the US as well. I removed the German names and emblems, gave it a solid black layer of paint, then rusted it. N&W crane cars like this one had the whole crane hand and hook areas painted a bright dandelion yellow. Figured it was a safety thing. Though it rotates, it'll remain stagnant.



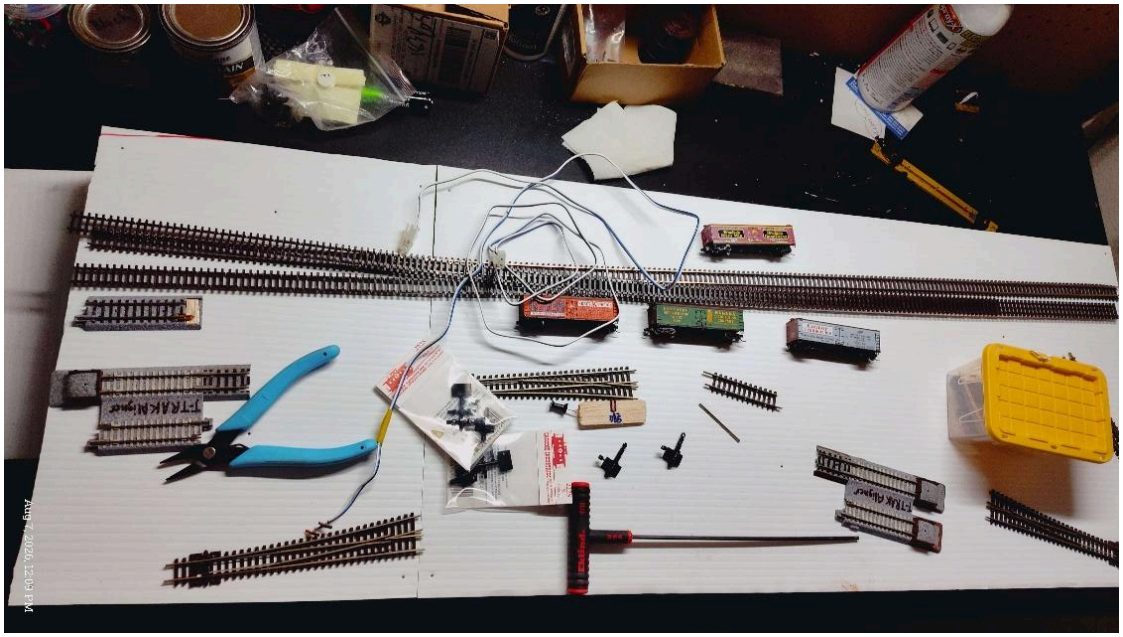
My final issue came when I needed some sort of bulk material to resemble all the cut square pieces of metal from cars. While I decided to use leftover coupler parts, I also grabbed the thin backings of several notepads, cut them into small strips, then roughly cut them into small squares, being that not all of them would be perfectly symmetrical.

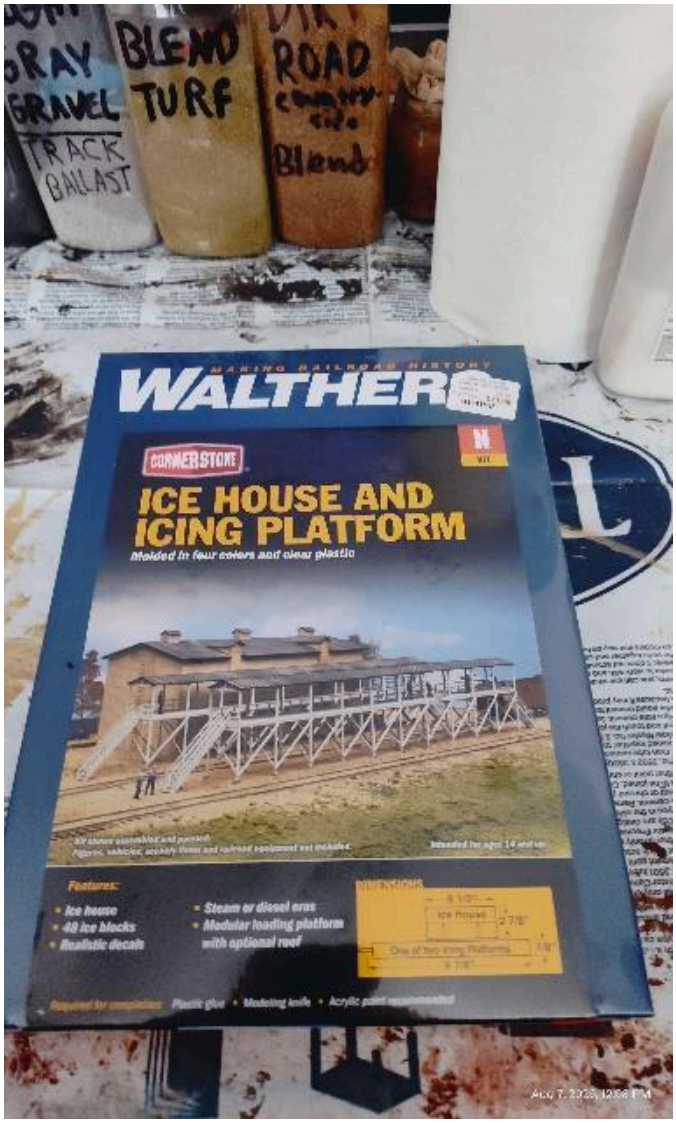

Aug 4, 2026, 12:16 AM





Overall, I really like how this came out, I was going to have a fence around the border but saw it blocked the small details I wanted to be seen. Maybe I'll use the fence for the freight terminal. Well, that's 2 down, and 2 to go. I've already started laying the foundations for the next module which will be the reefer icing facility.




GRAY GRAVEL
TRACK BALLAST
BLEND TURF
ROAD
Blend
WALTHERS
CORNERSTONE
N
ICE HOUSE AND ICING PLATFORM
Molded in four colors and clear plastic
Features:
• Ice house
• 48 ice blocks
• Realistic decals
• Steam or diesel eras
• Modular loading platform with optional roof

2026 CSD National Model Railroad Month Celebration

Contributed by Dave Thrams

Hi Carolina Southern Division members!

This is a friendly reminder to register on the CSD website to view our fellow members home layouts, fellowship with other members, and just have a good time visiting fellow model railroaders! Go to CSD website, click on this link or copy and paste to browser:

National Railroad Month Schedule

There have been a few changes to the schedule. Please note the changes if you've signed up already. If you haven't signed up yet, now is the time. Registration deadlines are approaching and after the deadline passes, layout addresses will be sent out to registered visitors.

Registration ends Sunday November 1
Addresses will be sent a day or two after the deadline

Date	Last Name	First Name	City	State
7-Nov	Miller	Fred	Charlotte	NC
7-Nov	Petro	Dylan	Fort Mill	SC
7-Nov	Barnette	Chad	Fort Mill	SC
7-Nov	Miller	Gordon	Matthews	NC
7-Nov	Myers	David	Waxhaw	NC
7-Nov	Bronson	Dick	Waxhaw	NC

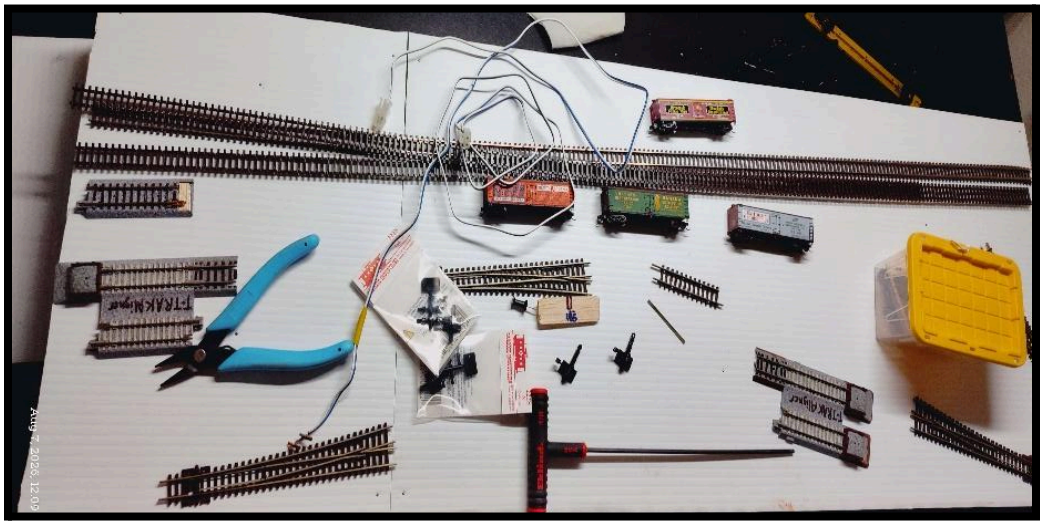
Registration ends Sunday November 8
Addresses will be sent a day or two after the deadline

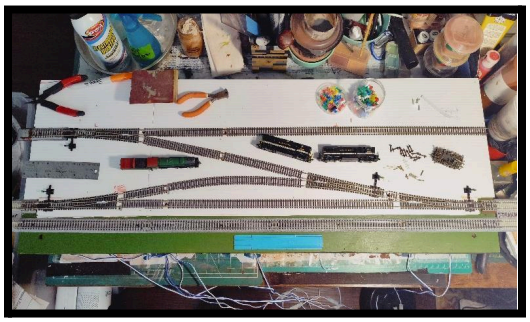
Date	Last Name	First Name	City	State
14-Nov	Club	Wades Train Town	Newton	NC
14-Nov	Short	John	Nebo	NC
14-Nov	Anderson MMR	Neal	Statesville	NC
14-Nov	Pulsone	Joe	Statesville	NC

Happy Model Railroading!!

TTRAK Phase 3: Last Pair

Contributed by Dylan Petro





As I left off with my last article, I was laying the foundations for the reefer facility. Once the track placement was decided, I secured all the track with track nails.

I still look forward to using ground throws for these modules as it will add realism to Operations. Granted, I've operated on many layouts that use electrical throw turnouts using turtle servo motors, but there's just something about manual throw turnouts I enjoy more.

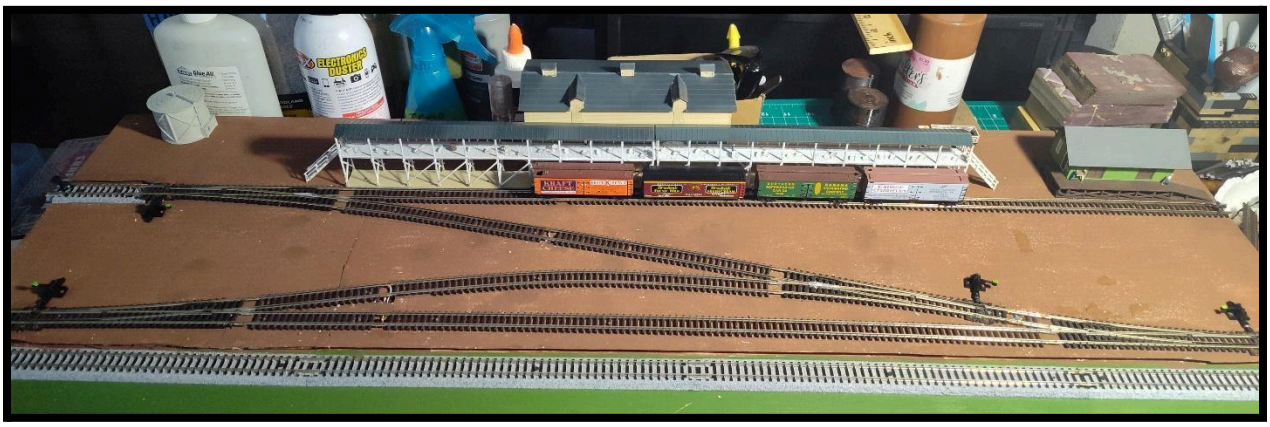




While I forgot to take progression pictures of putting together the icing facility, I can tell you that the building was mainly four sides and a roof. While I couldn't find any old colored photos of reefer icing facilities in real life, several other layouts I'd seen painted theirs a beige-cream color, so I did the same.

For the platforms, I gave them a one-over brown wood color, then took some old sticky matte white Testors paint and painted a messy coat over the brown. I did this because many of these facility platforms baked in the hot sun, so they were painted white to reflect sunlight and prevent heat absorption to help keep the platform decks from getting as hot.

While the color of the freight depot may not be historically accurate, I didn't want it to be the usual brown, red, or yellow. This freight depot had a lot more small pieces than I was anticipating—pieces such as the roof supports and deck beams. Instructions on the placement of the roof supports were really hard to understand.



The ground base is the same insulation tile I've been using for all four of these modules. I cut it, painted it brown, re-laid the track and nails, and glued/nailed down the structures. An early onset problem I had was the forward-facing slant beams scraping against the cars in certain places. After going back and forth trying to adjust the troubled spots, I ended up removing all of them.



I used a blended ground turf mix with a smidge of fine yellow turf and laid it across the brown tile. I ballasted the inner track, and made a narrow-to-wide road going around the backside of the facility to access not only the icing facility structures, but also the freight house. An old tanker truck refills the water tank used in making ice; the hose is a black twist-tie.



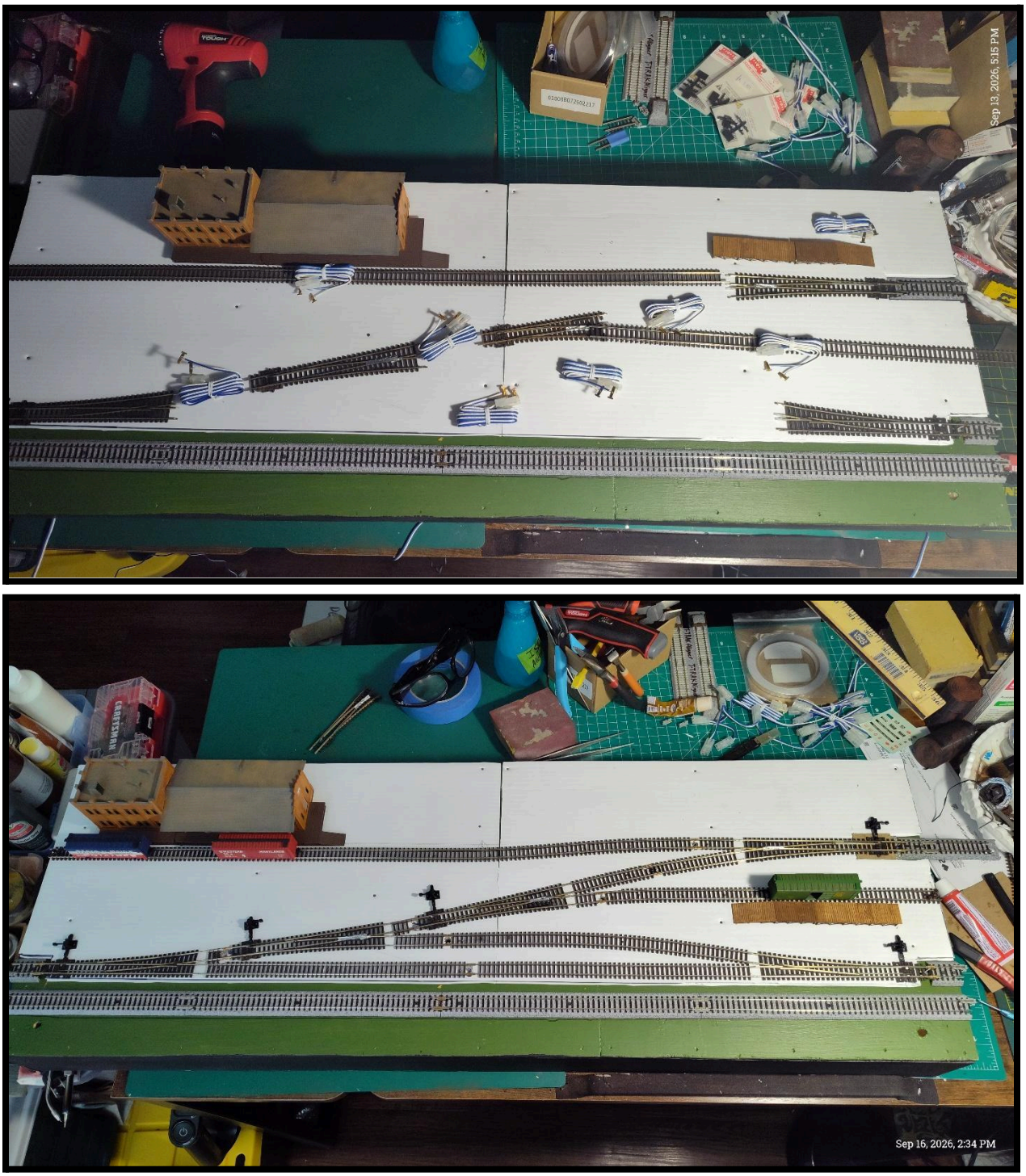
All trucks are secured to the wood base underneath by removing some part of the top shell frame, screwing a small track screw through the frame underbelly, and then gluing the top shell back on.

Progress for the freight terminal started with these small and very fragile featherweight wooden docks from Blair Line. The grime stain I had on-hand worked perfectly to stain the wood on these, too.





Secondly, the terminal itself—so many windows to all glue right-side up! I went with a straightforward color this time, as that's what I saw in the real-life photos. Overall, the kit was simple, except for the small concrete slabs that went on top of the structural pillars on the roof. I was surprised that this kit was built as two separate buildings even though the loading docks were fixed. Two drilled holes, a screw, and a nut fixed that issue swiftly.



Next came track placement and many power drops—one for each turnout and one for each siding, plus five ground throws.

Originally, I was going to have the terminal at the end and that be that, but there was going to be an empty, wasted space where the green boxcar is. Instead of a building, I'd much rather have more track space. So, I squeezed in another siding with the wood dock kits from Blair Line. Those docks align quite well to the boxcars, too.



I painted the base the usual dirt brown, put turf down, and glued the terminal in place. I then applied the road using a mixture of fine gray ballast and fine cinder ballast. I plan to add wood grade pathways over the tracks with the road leading to the loading dock, but for now, it'll remain this way.





I got two packs of dock workers from Woodland Scenics and used the barrels that came with the kit.

Of course, I had to add my last hot dog food trailer—glad I kept it all these years! One of the figures from the packs has his hand up to his mouth like he's thinking, which worked great for this scenario. The other one is located on the reefer dock having a smoke break (or, at that time, probably more likely smoking on the job).





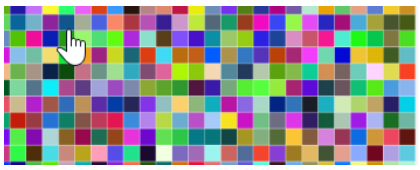
I have plans to add a truck to this trailer, but for now it'll remain this way. This trailer is secured with a screw and plastic cement underneath.

The fourth and last module is done! Yay! Well, sort of. Phase 4 is long-term, while Phases 1–3 I wanted to complete short-term. Phase 4 will consist of adding more details to increase realism over time. Almost every module has a list of details I'd like added to them:

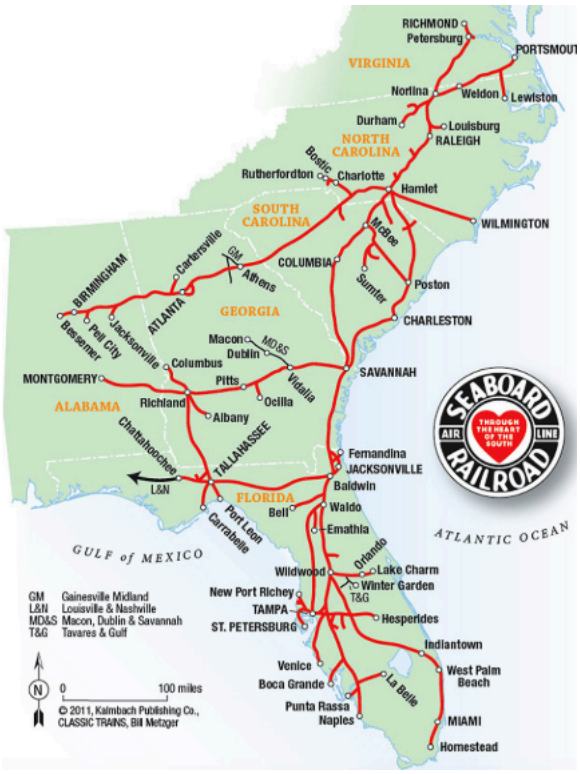
- **Duskvale:** Needs stop signs and sewer covers.
- **Coal Mine:** Needs a mill house.
- **Island Yard (formerly Storage Yard):** Needs a touch-up on scenery, shacks, and trackside details.
- **Hilltop Church:** Needs a wired border fence.
- **All Industry Modules:** Need more barrels, crates, figures, and trackside details.

At least all of these details can be done over time since I'm no longer working under a self-set deadline. Thank you to those of you who took the time to read my progression articles—I have enjoyed typing them!

Editor's Note: I want to personally thank Dylan for the multiple articles he has contributed over the last several months. I appreciate it and so does the rest of the division!



Digital Distractions



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