

N-Circle Railroad Update – September 10, 2020

In this update on progress on the N-Circle Railroad, we have now transitioned to the 1950s Vermont scenario. The scenery panels have remained the same for now, as have most of the buildings. However, the vehicles are now all from the 1930s through 1950s, and one of the freight transfer buildings has been replaced with a kit-bashed freight depot we just completed for the 1950s. More details on that in the “educational clinic” section later below!

[N-Circle_200908-8_1950s_Vermont](#)



It is now “steam day” on the Central Vermont, as I got out my only two steam locomotives, and replaced the 50' steel boxcars with 40' wooden boxcars with roof walks from northeast railroads. The SW1500 switcher has been replaced with CV 389, a 0-6-0, and the GP9s and RS-11s with CV 266, a 4-6-2. No, I don’t find that the CV ever had locos with either wheel configuration, but

you take what you can get in N-Scale steam for the smaller railroads. A couple of Rutland first-generation RS-1 diesels are just entering the yard from the east.

I believe you have to really love steam to try to run it in N-Scale, as the mechanisms are just so small and finicky. Or maybe invest in some of the new, expensive units from recent years. This old 4-6-2 runs rough at high speed, and rarely at low speed. The 0-4-0 switcher actually runs pretty well, but is too light to pull many cars. The steamers will be going back under the layout soon, and I suspect these will be the only steam locomotives I will own...

[N-Circle_200908-10_MainStreet](#)



Since the previous view of Main Street, I have installed raised sidewalks for the two city blocks. For now I just used some box board, which is a bit too thick for N-scale, eventually I will use styrene of the proper thickness. But these temporary pieces add a bit more realism to the scene, and provided a platform for experimenting with adding Power Point sidewalk sheets with cement segment lines, etc.

N-Circle_200908-10_WestSide



In this updated view of the West Side, I have removed the sidewalk that was attached to the A&P store, so it now integrates better with the other stores on the block. You can also see the new raised sidewalk surface details a bit better here.

Note the red A&P truck backed in to make a delivery to the back of the store, while Borden's delivers dairy products on the side. And the Shell truck is trying to find that refinery that is supposed to be around here somewhere...!

N-Circle_200908-11_Suburbs



In the updated suburbs shot, we get our first glimpse of the new 1950s freight terminal which has replaced the previous blue steel building, and you will see more about the log truck rounding the corner soon too!

Meanwhile, we find the end of the CV steam train with an old wooden caboose, and a Borden's milk truck making home deliveries to the suburban homes in the distance!

And yes, I should have removed the TOFC crane from the background before taking this photo...and my finger...

N-Circle_200908-12_FreightTerminals



In this scene, note that the Roadway trucks from my previous update have been replaced by their 1950s forbearers, and now a Sears truck is making a pick up at the small brown steel freight building, from the Santa Fe boxcar on the opposite side.

Now, on to the "educational clinic" part of this update:

[N-Circle_200908-1_DepotKit](#)



I had two versions of this same truck terminal kit, one produced by Pola, the second produced later by Model Power. They were made from multi-colored plastic sections, so it was intended that one could simply glue them together to produce the model shown on the cover. However, having been produced at different times, the wall panels were not the same color shade, so painting was required to integrate them together.

As can be seen from the box cover, the model only had two truck docks on one side, and though you can't see it here, there were no docks on the other. However, I wanted a building with rail docks on one side, and trucks on the other. Note that the two truck docks are closely spaced, too close to service two boxcars. Therefore, to have rail docks with a 50-foot-plus spacing, I had to cut the panel between them, and place them on opposite ends of the wall panel.

N-Circle_200908-3_DepotTruckSide



First, the truck depot side is just a front and rear panel placed together, with no modification. I painted everything with shades of aged brown, and a cement foundation, to disguise the differences in plastic shades from the two kits.

N-Circle_200908-7_DepotRailSide



This is the more interesting rail docks kit-bashed side. The center is just the rear wall section of the kit, but the left truck dock has been cut off from the front wall section on the right and reattached on the far left side. Nothing is lost here, so these three sections are the same total length as the two sections on the other side. Some modifications were also required to the raised floor for the four docks.

Note there were two options in the kit for the center lower door section. Here I used the windows with one small door, whereas on the truck side I used their two tall doors with one side partially open, as freight could be loaded from the ground level parking lot from that entrance.

Eventually we will need to add some forklifts, pallets and people in the loading docks, and warning signs, etc. on the walls. The kit comes with a roof sign, I intend to make interchangeable versions of it, so the building may be used across multiple of the four N-Circle Railroad location and period scenarios. This building was finished intended for use in the 1950s, but with its worn, weathered look, it could still be in use in the 1980s, with personalization of a few details.

N-Circle_200908-2_DepotTruckSide



This is another shot of the truck docks side of the building, but it shows the newly detailed Con-Cor log truck. The logs were very simple plastic brown rods. However, after filing the ends off square, painting them a lighter color, adding branch scabs along their lengths, and adding chains over the load, we now have a log load that hopefully would make a forester like Alan Belcher proud! The tractor is a Classic Metal Works standard IH R-190.

N-Circle_200908-13_DepotLayout



In this final shot, I later found some square plastic sprue pieces which fit very nicely over the gap between the two sections of roof seen in the previous photos. Now it just looks like a natural structure of the roof of this long building!

Note there is ample space for two 40-foot box cars at the two docks, and in fact they are separated sufficiently to accommodate two 50-footers if the building is used in the 1980s.

And yes, that's a wooden reefer off-loading to the non-refrigerated Roadway trucks on the other side – I should have either spotted a standard box car for the photo, or brought in my refrigerated A&P semi-truck!

Anyway, soon the CV steamers will go back in their boxes, and I will bring out 1950s Delaware & Hudson diesels to interchange with the Rutland, some of which have never been run – stay tuned, Jack!