

The N-Circle Railroad Is Running Again!

As the attached video and photo show, the N-Circle Railroad is finally running again, in its "final" configuration! No more coiled wires next to the track to knock trains asunder, or classic "Plywood Pacific" decor.

Paul and Dana widened the support rack before the holidays to its final 8.5 x 3.5 foot dimension (thanks!), to accommodate double crossovers in the center of each end cap. Jeanne and I added a coat of lovely calf-shit brown paint to all ten modules to provide a look of ground cover underlay, and all of the power drops and turnout control wires now pass through holes under the roadbed.

There will be panels to fill the center of the "doughnut" hole soon, which will accommodate scenery for a town, etc. At this point the layout is wired as one block until I am sure all of the kinks are worked out, and I build a control panel. But with the use of Kato UniTrack power routing turnouts, it can already support having multiple trains on the layout, while only running one at a time.

For the inaugural run in the video, I chose CV 3609, which was my first real "model railroading" loco purchased in 1986, after the Santa Fe war bonnet units from my original toy store train set. (Anyone still remember Cassler's?) CV 3612 is a custom painted unit from N-Rail/Owen Jarvis, purchased about a year later. The boxcars were chosen to represent the connecting railroads of Vermont in the 1980s - my initial modelling "theme"... the RailBox car is a Rapido-to-Knuckle coupler converter, because the GP9s still have the old couplers.

All ten modules are T-Trak compatible, and the double-crossovers at each end allow the outer loop to act as staging yards for the inner loop on each side.

The five re-railers in the foreground create a non-prototypical grade crossing across the yard, but make it easy for adding rolling stock to the session, as I have way more cars to run than track to run them on, so they will be swapped in and out. Thank you Dave for providing that fifth re-railer track! (though I may occasionally still use my Al Belcher railing ramp for long strings of cars...!)

The buildings are a few pre-fabs I have, set in temporarily on PowerPoint streets to give a starting impression of the scenery that will eventually develop from boxes of unbuilt kits. In the distance behind Main Street, you can see the back of a couple of Shell oil tanks, marking the eventual location of the Shell refinery on the Southern Pacific's "Southern Division" - for Jeanne's 20+ years working for Shell. I dunno if there will be an IBM plant someday...!

Anyway, after 30+ years of planning and dreaming, the N-Circle is finally coming together as a real model railroad!

Ron



