The Trolleyville Times

October 2007

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Allied Model Trains "Grand Opening" Set for October 6th!

Nick Barone, Fred Hill and Brian Brooks, the new owners of **Allied Model Trains**, invite you to join them for a celebration of their **New Store Grand Opening** on **Saturday, October 6, 2007** from **10 AM to 6 PM**.

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The BullAnt "LoBoy"

A Solution to a Major Problem for LARy & PERy Modelers!

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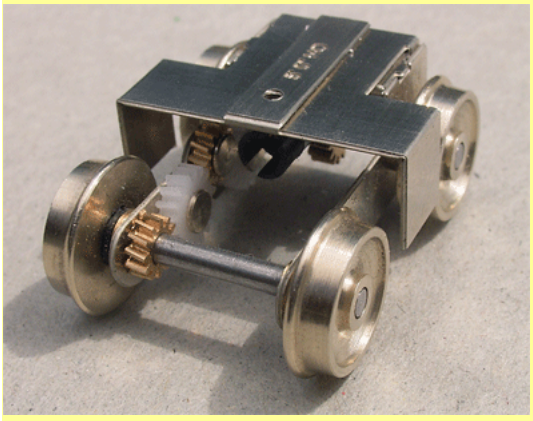
For some time now, HO scale traction modelers of the Los Angeles Railway (LARy) and Pacific Electric (PERy) have had to think twice before purchasing most Soho Los Angeles Railway streetcar models and certain Suydam Pacific Electric Models such as the 414, 1300, 00150 Wire Greaser or the 1544 Electra as they had been constructed with little blue plastic gears which tended to split and render the model barely capable of running. Northwest Short Line had replacement gears but only the most talented of hobbyists could replace them and get the model to run again.

Hollywood Foundry has solved the problem with a BullAnt LoBoy. Shown below is the power truck with the low universal designed to fit the Soho and Suydam cars with the drives with the under floor motors and the five blue plastic gears on the power truck.



The LoBoy non-powered dummy truck can be purchased where you do not want to drive both trucks, but want a matching truck to go with the main powered one. This truck is of identical construction, except it contains no gears. The axles use the same brass bearings as the LoBoy, and run quite freely.

The HO scale 1981 SEPTA Single End Kawasaki LRV

Another Resin Kit for Trolley Modelers!

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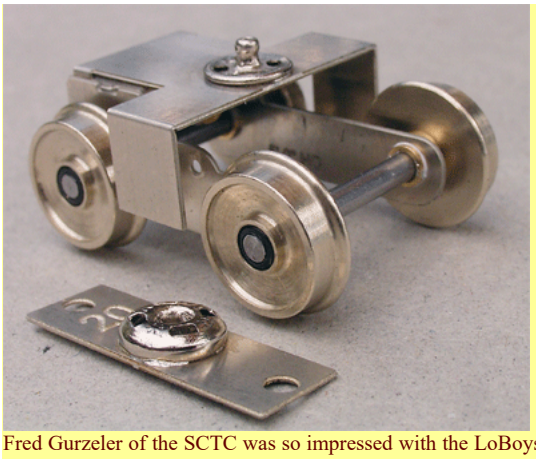
The Trolleyville Times has long been aware of the Kawasaki Light Rail Transit (LRT) cars operated in the Philadelphia area. These remarkable cars have been operated by an equally unremarkable transit agency on five city lines and two suburban lines since 1981 and may be the sole example of excellence in the almost 40 years of SEPTA existence. After additional members of the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) made a May 2007 trip to Philadelphia, they seem to have acquired the same impression of the cars, and, possibly, SEPTA. Interest in Philadelphia area traction within the SCTC was also intensified by this trip, which included the East Penn Traction Club Meet on May 4 - 5, 2007 and the PCC-II trip on Sunday, May 6, 2007. Kawasaki LRT vehicles, now called LRVs, were observed running on route 15 along with PCC-IIs and buses during the PCC-II trip. The 112 single-end and 29 double-end cars were purchased in 1981 at an average cost under $500,000 each. They have been in service for over 25 years and have worn three different paint schemes and survived many SEPTA Managers. Yet every single one of them is still in service and they still look pretty good.

An HO scale model of the SEPTA Kawasaki Single End Streetcar has been advertised for some time by Imperial Hobby Productions (IHP) as available either as an undecorated kit (87120A) at $110.00 or as a Ready-To-Run painted model (87120) at $275.00. The Kawasaki Single-End LRV Trolley Kit model consists of one of the best-detailed resin shell castings that we have seen to date. The casting is very accurate and captures the look and feel of these durable cars. Yet for some reason, neither is the trolley catcher molded on the shell nor is one provided as a separate detail part. The kit also contains a cast floor designed for the proven Bowser 125100 mechanism. The shell casting is a distinct improvement over the original kit 87102 casting released in 1997. The original model had some inaccuracies in the shell casting and was equipped with a plastic floor designed for the original Bachmann PCC mechanism. Nowhere is the improvement in the casting more evident than the area of the operator's window, the ends and the vents along the sides. The kit also contains rough roof details, track brake assemblies and dummy folding couplers as exist on the prototype. Also provided are the necessary screws to attach the shell to the floor and to secure the Bowser power and trailing trucks to the cast floor. A trolley pole is not provided in the kit but size of the hole in the casting for the trolley pole seems to have been designed for the use of the Bowser #1251 trolley pole insulator.



Fred Gurzeler of the SCTC was so impressed with the LoBoys that he acquired four sets and presented them to other members of the club. Two members have installed them, one in a suydam Wire Greaser and the other in a Soho LARy Class C Sowbelly. They run smooth and quiet. We can not help but recommend them to other modelers! For more information, check the LoBoy power and trailing trucks on the Hollywood Foundry web site!

KND Enterprises HO scale Lehigh Valley Transit Car 812 Kit (Part 2)!

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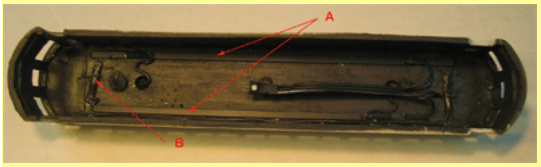
In the previous issue, we introduced our readers to John Kennedy and the family business KND Enterprises. We had started to assemble their HO scale Lehigh Valley Transit (LVT) car 812 kit and continued the process this month. We first thoroughly cleaned the resin casting, installed the roof boards, trolley pole pivots (SCTC-1) and the trolley pole hook, ensuring that the trolley pole hooks extended through the bottom of the roof by at least one inch.

The next step was to install the printed circuit strips as shown on the next photo as "A" on the outer edges of the inside of the roof from end to end. Each printed circuit strip was soldered to one of the trolley pole pivots. Since this is a non-metallic shell, the trolley pole hooks will have to be grounded. As shown in the same photo, these hooks have been attached to smaller printed circuit strips (See "B") that have been wired together. For a larger view, click here!



In most cases, the printed circuit strip attached to the rear pole will be attached to the "-" terminal of the motor and the other strip to the "+" terminal. The need to ground the trolley pole hooks forces the use of a Miniatronics three-pin micro-mini connector. For ease in identification, we use the white marked lead as the ground lead, the center lead for the rear pole and the remaining lead for the front pole. The final step with the shell was to airbrush the interior with Floquil Weathered Black.

Turning our attention to the laser cut wood floor, we installed the truss rods and all the underbody equipment according to the instructions. This wood floor consists of three laminated layers. The planking on the underside of the floor was so nice looking that we refused to paint it. We sealed the floor and painted the cross members only along with the underbody equipment. The floor was designed for the Bowser HO scale traction power truck but no cut outs were provided for the trailing truck. When we talked to John he explained that he provides two floors for the 812 kit. One floor had the cutout for the Bowser power truck and one had no such cut-out. We had the floor with the Bowser power truck cutout. Neither

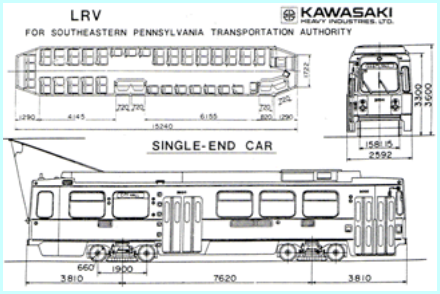
One of the members of the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) obtained one of the IHP 87120 kits in late June. He obtained a Bowser 125100 mechanism and started to assemble the kit. He experienced many problems with the cast floor provided with the kit. See the full SCTC report for details of those problems.

Because of one of many problems with the cast floor, an A-line 40322 motor with A-line 20006 flywheel was installed. The kit assembler mounted the motor with Silicone Aquarium sealer. The results were as shown below:

He then installed the internal wiring and proceeded to install the Bowser power and trailing trucks. Everything went as planned until the casting was placed into the shell. When he did this, a major problem surfaced. The wheels did not line up with the skirt openings and the wheels hit the shirts on curves. See next photo.

After almost a month had gone by and he had tried different remedies and still could not get the floor to fit as he thought that it should, he brought the car to an SCTC work session to obtain other opinions. No one in the club had seen the second IHP run of the SEPTA Single End Kawasaki LRV, so the club members present that day proceeded to evaluate the model and compare it to the first IHP run of this model of this car. The club has been operating one of the first run of the Kawasaki Single End Kawasaki LRV since 1999.

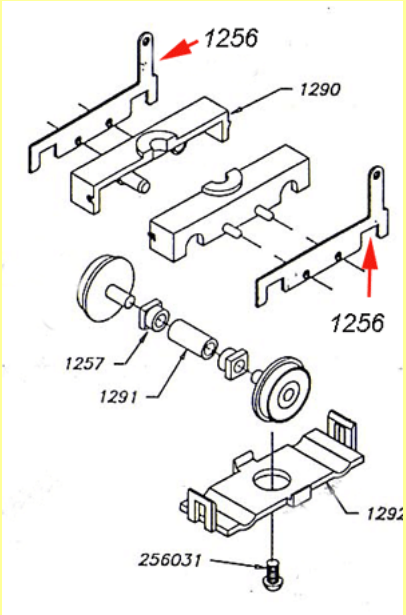
The shell and floor along with the plans of the Single End Kawasaki Car below, were carefully studied.



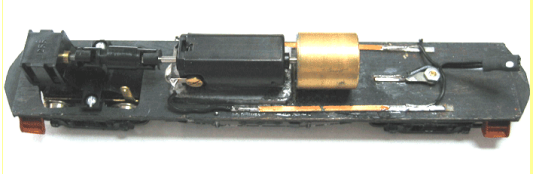
The prototype trucks are 7620mm (25 feet) apart and the bolsters are each 3810mm (12.5 feet) from the car ends. At the conclusion of the examination, the SCTC members present unanimously determined that the floor was defective.

In the process of searching for the cause of the problem, we discovered that the cast floor correctly replicates the 25' center pin to center pin measurements of the prototype. Each king pin or truck bolster on the prototype is 12.5 ft from each end. But when the floor provided with this kit was installed in the shell, the rear bolster was over 13 feet from the rear end, pushing both trucks too far forward in the shell. The wheels actually struck the side skirts on sharp turns. There were now two possible solutions. We could either get a replacement floor from IHP which had the correct dimensions, or modify the cast floor to move the trucks to the correct position. The Number 1 solution was not considered as this was supposed to be the absolutely the very last kit available. So we elected to modify the cast floor by filing the rear end and moving the entire shell rearward until both bolsters were in the correct position relative to the shell. Removing sufficient material from the rear end and reshaping the sides to fit the shell casting allowed the trucks to be in the correct location with the bolsters 12.5' from each end. Note the position of the flywheel (third window) in both photos to see how much the floor had to be shifted to the rear.

floor provides a cutout for the Bowser trailing truck contacts, part 1256, which normally extend through the floor.



KND shows on their web site a method of connecting the trailing truck without cutting the floor. The SCTC employs this method when installing a complete Bowser power and trailing truck into a brass car. But we designed an alternate method of using the Bowser power truck without cutting the floor to allow electrical connections. This method grounded all four wheels to the center mounting screw. At almost the center of the trailing truck, we drilled a .025" hole through the assembled power truck from one 1256 to the other through both parts 1290. We then inserted a length of .025" spring wire and soldered each end to the part 1256, removing any excess solder so not to foul any sideframes to be added. After removing the part 1256 vertical tabs, which now are no longer necessary, the spring wire contacts the shouldered mounting screw. This screw is provided as an alternate mounting screw in the 125100/110/120 Bowser mechanisms without floor. Both the Bowser 125120 power truck and trailing truck was installed after the wheels had been replaced with NWSL nickel silver wheels. We also elected to upgrade to the Mashima 40324 motor with the large A-line 20006 flywheel. The floor to roof distance inside the car was calculated at about 20mm and the Bowser 79 motor is about 15 x 25mm so the A-line 40324 motor (16 x 30 mm) was a great fit. Most kits with resin shells will need some weight added for good operation under overhead wire, so for extra weight, we used the A-line 12401 cradle but we filed it down to ensure the correct height of the motor shaft in relation to the shaft on the Bowser power truck. As of this point, the shell and chassis weighed about 7.2 ounces. which should be sufficient for this car. The complete chassis is shown below. The chassis is electrically connected to the shell shown above using a Miniatronics three-pin micro-mini connector.



The kit uses two or three sets of steps depending whether you elect to model the car in either the 1936 or 1942 versions. In all cases, it was intended that the laminated wood floor provide pockets for these stairs but they were erroneously committed. We tried to attach the steps but could not eliminate the interference with the rotation of the trailing and power truck. We contacted John Kennedy, and after another informative conversation, he referred us to Jim Maurer. (Jim Maurer assembles the first of each of the KND kits to validate the parts list and the attached instructions.) After an even more

New holes would have to be drilled for the mounting screws and some material removed from the mounting lugs inside the shell secure the floor to the shell. By now, six weeks had elapsed and we considered the cast floor to be so deficient, that it must be defective and IHP should be notified. On August 7th, IHP was notified and told of the problems being encountered and the solutions that the club had implemented. IHP responded within 24 hours. They admitted defects in the floor. They offered a solution that did not make sense to the club but they offered a free replacement floor was accepted and requested on August 8th. Testing of the completed but unpainted shell with mechanism on the first floor was accomplished at the SCTC test track over the period of one week in August. The originally supplied IHP floor was equipped with the Bowser 125100 mechanism equipped with the NWSL 2634-6 26" Nickel silver wheels. The shell was equipped with two printed circuit strips, both connected to the chassis with a Miniatronics Micro-Mini 2-pin connector.

The promised floor finally arrived on September 6th. This review had been postponed a month waiting for the replacement floor. The club felt that an accurate review could not be completed without examination of another floor. The second floor was an improvement over the first one but is also considered defective as explained in the club report.

After the many floor discrepancies were corrected, this kit was made into a very fine working model for club displays. One modeler is working on developing a folding operating coupler for the models so a two-car train can be operated. As previously stated, the quality of the shell casting is excellent/outstanding, except for the lack of a trolley catcher. The repowered chassis was eventually given a certification run on the SCTC test track and ran smoothly at 40 scale miles per hour at 7.0 volts and .1 ampere. Shown below is the 87120 car before the roof equipment was installed and while in process of being painted in the latest SEPTA scheme. Behind it is the older 87102 car.

In the next photo the older 87102 car is in the front with the newer 87120 car in the rear. Both cars are on one of the downtown modules of the SCTC.

As outstanding as the 87120 Kawasaki LRV shell is, the many floor deficiencies seriously detract from the overall kit quality. The floor is a good example of a great idea combined with miserable execution. When our promised replacement floor finally arrived and was examined, we concluded that both floors were defective but can be made useable with a bit of work. Nevertheless, the floor provided with this kit and the replacement floor had to be modified with considerable filing and drilling to allow the trucks to wind up in the correct locations relative to the shell. After the floor problem was corrected, this kit was made into a very usable model. As previously stated, when compared to the prototype, the quality and detail of the shell casting is excellent/outstanding, except for the lack of the trolley catcher. Because we know of no streamlined trolley catcher casting currently available, we were forced to make our own from brass. Using the Bowser drive makes this model even more desirable. Bowser traction drives have proven to be rugged, durable and smooth running. The very first Bowser 125100 power truck given to us by Lee English in 1999 is still operating flawlessly at appearances of the Southern California Traction Club. IHP states in the kit instructions that *"...This model is not for the beginner. Have someone who is experienced in building kits assemble this kit for you if you are unsure of how to proceed..."* In our opinion, this

pleasant discussion with Jim, it became obvious that our floor did not have the pockets, as described in the instructions, for the steps. When we realized this, we cut out our own pockets, carefully removing only two of the three laminated layers of the floor. The three sets of steps fit perfectly. But one must be careful as the steps can interfere with the swing of the trucks and some adjustments may have to be made to eliminate the problem. We made sure that the Custom Traxx 13-15 sideframes were as close to the wheels as possible and made some small adjustments to the truck sideframes to avoid the steps. After we made some drawbars from styrene, we mounted the Custom Traxx SCTC-40 automatic couplers, painted the car and applied the decals supplied with the kit. However, when we attempted to couple the car to our LVT C-5 kit, also produced by KND Enterprises, and our Bowser LVT 803, we noticed that the car was low. So we removed about .5 mm from the plastic Bowser bolster, part 1264 and added a 2-56 washer between the trailing truck and the floor to correct the situation. If a similar situation occurs in the future, we will try the Bowser 1335 bolster. The completed car is shown below on one of the SCTC modules along with LVT Jewett 803 and Express Motor C5.

The MTS PSTCo "Brilliner " Model A Real "Jewel"!

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Last month, the Times received our model of the Philadelphia Suburban Transit Co (PSTCo) "Brilliner" imported by MTS Imports, Inc (MTS). The prototype cars had been delivered to the PSTCo in 1941 and numbered 1 to 10. Ours was from the first batch of 50 models delivered in August. The total run will be only 150 units and they all should be here by the end of October. The car is a real beauty. It captures the look and feel of the Brilliners as we remember them. The prototype cars ran for forty years until replaced by Kawasaki vehicles in 1981. Now PSTCo modelers have models of all four of the cars that held down most operations on the PSTCo until its absorption into a regional transit agency in 1970. The 1920's era Center Door cars, the 1932 Brill "Master Units" and the 1949 St. Louis Cars have already been produced in brass with this car now completing the list.

We took our model out of the box and ran it in the two-rail mode on the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) test track and certified its operation at a very smooth and flawless 25 scale miles per hour at 7.0 volts. Before any more testing, the car was disassembled and readied for SCTC overhead wire operation. In accordance with normal club procedures, printed circuit strips under the roof, directional headlights and a Miniatronics two-pin micro-mini connector to electrically connect the chassis to the body shell were added. The chassis and all eight wheels were grounded and the car was wired for trolley-pole reverse. Since our model will be used exclusively with overhead wire power, the selector switch allowing two-rail or overhead operation was removed and the car was rewired accordingly. This selector switch is hard to find with the floor factory painted black. It is located practically under the rear axle of the trailing truck and is hard to find for that reason. Using SCTC shop trolley poles, the car was tested on the SCTC test track and easily negotiated curves with radii of 12", 9" and 6".

The car comes with a fully painted floor (except for the Canon motor), extra chassis mounting screws and trolley pole springs. The unpainted model is also supplied with window glazing that appears blue when initially examined. Both sides of the glazing are covered with a protective plastic "peel-

should have been a great kit for a beginner if a little more "up-front" thought had gone into it. After all, it is a one piece shell, a floor, an easy to install Bowser drive and some added detail. If all the pieces had been supplied and they had fit correctly, assembly should have been a "snap". Painting is also relatively easy. The body is mostly one color with a black roof surface. Apply decals and you should have a nice model! This could have been a great "starter" kit for a model of a trolley that is on the streets today!

Natural History Museum Hosts the Southern California Traction Club!

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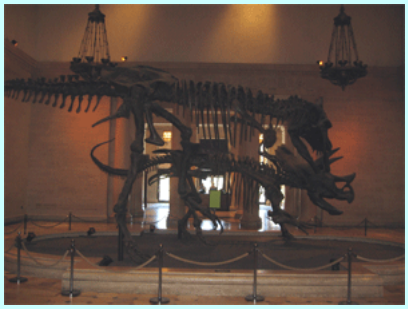
In late July, the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC) was contacted by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County inquiring whether we could set up our display for a members-only Grandparents Day celebration on September 9, 2007. This Museum is the home of the famous dinosaur skeletons shown below, that are often shown both on television and in motion pictures.



Our position was that due to the length of time that it normally takes to set up the operation, the club does not set up for any appearance that is not at least two days in duration. They said two days would be wonderful. Because this appearance is in-line with the club desire to display operating trolley cars in pure public settings, the appearance was considered mutually beneficial and set. This museum is located at 900 Exposition Boulevard in Los Angeles, right across the street from the University of Southern California and just north of the Coliseum. This museum has been the source of filming many movies.

The club moved their modules in to the Museum Friday afternoon September 7th beginning at 3:00 PM, and found that entry in to the Museum and set-up was much more challenging than we anticipated. The display was completely ready of operation by 8:30 PM. For a more detailed report about this display, review the club report. The display was available to the public on Saturday, September 8th from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and on Sunday, September 9th from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. During that time, almost 2500 paid admissions to the museum visited the modules.

Several cars not displayed previously were available at this appearance including some Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) Nearside and 1923 Double-end cars.

Also displayed was one of the just released and painted Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company (PSTCo) "Brilliners" in the company of other PSTCo models, including brass MTS Imports Inc. models of the 1932 Brill lightweights, a center door interurban, a resin cast model with Bowser power, and a Bowser PTC PCC car.

The next photo is of Pete DeBeers Soho Class C "Sowbelly" with the newly installed BullAnt LoBoy Power running on

away" coating. Also with the model are a set of Custom Traxx CN-007 decals especially designed for this model. These decals permit finishing the car in the as-delivered 1941 all red scheme with the silver and black belt rail, the 1949 scheme with cream added around the windows and the final red and cream schemes worn in the late 1950's and 1960's. For more painting hints, click here!

As with any model, there have been compromises. There are some minor discrepancies in both the body shell and the underbody equipment. But none of these detract seriously from the overall appearance of the model. This is the second brass model produced in China by Stanching for MTS. Because of the excellent running qualities of the gearbox used in the first SanCheng model, the CTA "Baldy" Elevated cars, MTS chose not to change it. The same truck wheelbase, 78", used in the CTA model was used for this model. The ten prototype cars used Brill 97ER1 trucks with a 72" wheelbase. SanCheng then made the sideframes to a 75" wheelbase so these variances are hardly noticeable, especially when placed next to our recently acquired Bowser powered model of the 1949 PSTCo Saint Louis Cars. The four-spring trolley poles, while excellent in appearance, would not raise more than 30 degrees from the horizontal and would not reach our overhead wire. MTS told us that the manufacturer would correct this problem and the poles will be replaced as soon as the replacements arrive. Custom Traxx finished their model last month in the as-delivered paint scheme and it is shown below:

the new downtown "short turn" loop.

Being a public show, there were many different reactions to our layout not normally seen at model train shows. Some of the visitors were totally surprised at the concept of trolley cars, overhead wire and the extensive history of electric railways. One art student immediately started sketching items that caught her eye and showed us several of them. The club is looking forward to more such public displays. The club is also seeking new members. If you live in he Southern California area and would like to participate in public displays, build modules and run cars plus enjoy the camaraderie of some really fun people, please call us at 310-990-5422 or contact us by email. The club is really looking for people to like to do scenery and detailing. just let us know if you would like to come out and visit with us. The club holds work sessions on most Sunday mornings and Tuesday afternoons.