

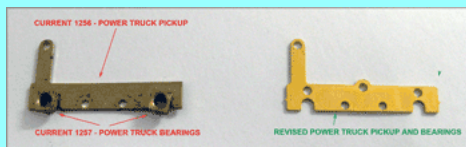
San Diego HO scale SD-100 Light Rail Vehicles Arrive



These long awaited HO scale models are finally here and they are fine models. There are limited numbers and they will be gone soon. Several modelers waited too long when the U-2 model were available years ago so we urge those of you interested to contact MTS Imports, Inc. as soon as possible to obtain yours. This will be a highly prized model that may be the last of its type for a long time. Custom Traxx and the Southern California Traction Club tested samples of these cars and found them good, quiet runners.

Bowser Traction Mechanism Continuous Process Improvement!

After nearly twelve years of operation, Bowser recently began re-examining the 125100 series of traction mechanisms to see what process improvements could be made. It had already been decided that as soon as current stocks are exhausted, all 125XXX traction mechanisms will be provided with a flywheel similar that provided with the 125XX series San Francisco F-line PCC cars. A few years back, during the introduction of the Custom Traxx 125147 Boeing LRV mechanisms with floor, a small problem, was experienced with two parts which were critical to the electrical conductivity of the car. Some of the parts 1256 (Power Truck Pickups) and 1257 (Power Truck Axle Bearing) had been fabricated to the wrong specifications and some cars exhibited stalling tendencies. This caused an in-depth review of both parts and it was decided eventually to combine those two parts to eliminate that problem.



The first new parts manufactured were sent to Custom Traxx for testing last month and some others were placed in a Bowser Brill Suburban for testing on the Bowser Test Track. Custom Traxx installed their new parts, now called part 1379, in a unique metal shelled Boston PCC car, which was also equipped with the latest M4T decoder. Our model, BMTA 3178, represents 55 such cars built by Pullman in 1944-45 with General Electric control, sealed windows, full roof length fan shroud and super resilient wheels. The car was extensively tested on the [Southern California Traction Club](#) test track.

The Next Bowser Trolleys Now in Production!

When Preserving the Old Means Providing for the New!

From the Trolleyville Management Team

"Knowledge is of no value unless shared with others."

If you were an avid traction modeler in the 1970s, you might remember this sentence. During that time a popular magazine existed in the hobby called [Traction & Models](#). It was published by Vane A. Jones, an avid traction expert who passed away in 1987. That sentence adorned each issue of that magazine, but sadly, it seems as though the sentiment of that statement may have died with him.

We here Custom Traxx must admit we never really paid much attention to that sentence until we began doing the necessary research to make decals in 1995. Within minutes of undertaking that process, we realized as members of the traction community we owed much to those individuals who had gone to such lengths to preserve data for posterity.

Seriously, take a moment to think about all the data those "old guard" modelers captured, be it colors, rosters, or all the other pertinent information in all those books we have the luxury of flipping through so casually. Then take another moment to realize these people accomplished this Herculean feat without the benefit of digital cameras, computers, scanners, and the Internet. After that, take another moment to realize these people laid out all this effort for no significant personal gain; they were hobbyists, not entrepreneurs seeking fortune. Rather than enriching themselves, they enriched the hobby through their preservationist efforts.

However, there are some enterprises out there that do not subscribe to Jones' theory. Rather, there is a business approach present today in the traction world which runs precisely counter to the model espoused by the "founding fathers" of traction modeling; people like Vane A. Jones, Ira Swett, Bill Clouser and all those others whose dedication made every single thing happening in this hobby today possible. There are previous instances we have documented about poor business practices, general disrespectful treatment of fellow hobbyists, and even matters as serious as piracy. At the time, we understood those to be fruits of entrepreneurship gone wrong; a misguided attempt to "just make a few bucks."

Let's be honest here. Of all people, we understand the importance of entrepreneurs in the traction community being profitable. We hope that the recent success of the Bowser F-Line PCC will encourage more products into the traction modeling marketplace. While we can bring a few more products not previously available to the table, the niche nature of the hobby belies its wide diversity of interest. In other words, in its present state, no one manufacturer can supply every segment of demand currently in the hobby. This is one reason why it is a "set in stone" policy of Custom Traxx, in conjunction with Trolleyville, to aid in any traction project when asked.

Trolleyville/Custom Traxx policy is to assist any bona fide manufacturer of traction products with any information that we have to support the production of an accurate traction model. This includes photographs, plans, specifications from the Trolleyville Library and the Custom Traxx decal source files. There is normally no charge for this service unless expenses must be incurred in the production or transmission of such data.

Recently, an east coast manufacturer made such a request for assistance via a Yahoo group. Specifically, they were seeking help in evaluating a model of a car they intended to produce. Another manufacturer had just released a similar model which had been the source of comments about errors and omissions. We applauded the open request for assistance and per our policy offered our sizeable amount of resources. The central theme of our assistance was three-fold:

By the time you are reading this, the last of the six San Francisco F-line PCCs, 1051 (San Francisco 1960s), 1053 (Brooklyn), 1054 (Philadelphia 1938-1942), 1056 Kansas City, 1060 (Newark) and 1062 (Louisville) should be at your dealers.

The next series of Bowser PCC cars are in early stages of production and the first five should be here during the first quarter of 2011. These are:

Philadelphia (SEPTA) 1970s "Gulf Oil" Scheme:



Toronto Transportation Commission:



Johnstown Traction Company:



Pittsburgh Railways Company



Los Angeles MTA



Each road name, except Pittsburgh, will be available in two road numbers each with different destination signs. The cars will be DCC ready, have a working trolley pole, illuminated interiors, working headlights, working rear lights, and improved truck details. The Toronto cars will have the Advance Light and the SEPTA cars will have both the Subway Light and the Emergency (Gumball) Beacon. At this time these special lights will only be made operational with a DCC decoder.

Improving the Operation of the TCS M4T decoder in the Bachmann Peter Witt!

Recently, we announced that the Train Control Systems M4T decoder would work in the Bachmann Peter Witt almost as well as the Bowser F-line PCC. We also noted that the rear light was somewhat dim and hard to see. Bill Hadley of Fort Worth, Texas, sent us a description of [his method for correcting that problem](#). Trolleyville encourages other traction modelers to provide their ideas, findings and hints with us so that we can share them with our readers. The articles will be provided in .pdf format so that any reader can download it and print it out for their use.

Continuous Progress in San Francisco !

1. Due to our relationship with the Orange Empire Railway Museum, the team has unfettered access to prototypes of the actual vehicles upon which these models were based, and we have operated those vehicles as well.
2. Due to having such access to those vehicles, we possess an extensive knowledge library of measurements and photographs.
3. We had just completed a project modeling a similar vehicle, and had developed a methodology for addressing the central problem this manufacturer was trying to correct in the earlier model, namely the difficulties in producing an accurate 3D representation from 2D data.

We stated with what we learned during our own project we could offer a great deal of help mitigating the "trial and error" of getting the body contours of the model correct. To that end, we stated if this manufacturer were to provide us with a 3D prototype shell, we would be more than happy at no charge to provide assistance to take that prototype to a correct, ready-for-production model.

The one thing we wanted to ensure we did not do was increase this manufacturer's costs or lead time getting his product to market by offering inconsistent or inaccurate data. By our experiences, the only way to do this was to employ our own quality assurance protocols on an existing shell; this being the only way we knew to insure the accuracy of the contours in 3D.

What we were unaware of at the time we made the offer was that this manufacturer would take our request for a prototype shell for testing as such an intolerable condition that their response would be to issue a not-so-thinly veiled threat toward us.

"Please do not interfere with another member's modeling or commercial efforts just because you do not want them to succeed unless they are on your terms. That constitutes abuse of membership and will be dealt with accordingly if it continues.."

But another part of the same response was *"...This is trolley modeling, we are here to help each other, and should be free of ego and intimidation.."*

The matter became complicated due to the fact that this same manufacturer also moderates the Yahoo group on which these threats were posted. Since we interpreted that statement to mean any attempts to defend this clear assault on our character would result in our expulsion from a group that represents itself as welcoming all "questions, opinions, and modeling notes," we at the Trolleyville/Custom Traxx team felt compelled to author this clear and defining statement as to our core beliefs as a responsible and productive member of the traction community, inasmuch as we consider the statement "we wanted them to fail unless it was on our terms" to be so grievous and utterly without merit it cannot be left to stand.

1. The Trolleyville/Custom Traxx team has an expressed desire that ALL traction projects succeed, regardless of the scale, where they come from or who is involved. We believe in a "rising tide lifts all boats" philosophy for a small-market, niche hobby such as traction modeling. For the future of the hobby, it is the proliferation of the traction modeling hobby that is the true measure of success, not the monetary success of any individual proprietor.
2. The team believes firmly in sharing of information relating to the production of traction products. To that end, we believe that responsible and productive members of this community are those who take the "knowledge is of no value unless shared with others" espoused by the likes of Vane A. Jones, Ira Swett, Bill Clouser and all those others whose dedication made every single thing happening in this hobby today possible.
3. The team is committed to the future of this hobby. This is the fundamental reason that the Trolleyville [www.trolleyville.com] web site was founded in 1997. Trolleyville was intended as a source of information for all traction model manufacturers and modelers, continuing the efforts of some of those aforementioned "founding fathers." It includes a library of listed publications dating back as far as 1915, and we will share the data in this library with [anyone](#).

The long awaited Geneva Carhouse, which houses 24 of the heritage cars, was officially finished early last month. Unfortunately, the six-track facility can not be occupied until a part for the fire alarm system can be obtained and installed.



The next photo shows the state of construction of the new car barn on October 1st:



Meanwhile, around the corner, progress continues on returning car 1058 to service after a collision with a trolley coach on Market Street a few years back. Car 1058 will emerge from the paint shop in an earlier but more pleasing Chicago scheme as shown below:



Also during the holiday weekend, October 8-12, Muni replaced all specialwork at the intersection of 30th & Church. Considering the pace of the current construction at Girard and Frankford in Philadelphia, this video should be used as a training film for SEPTA.

Muni does have a temporary occupancy permit for the facility so late in the evening on Thursday, October 29th, even though the 600 VDC power wasn't yet on, Muni rolled a few cars into the structure since it was threatening, and it did rain Friday morning. Friday came and the power was turned on, and Muni can use all but 7 and 12 track due to a hole in the ground at the rail head, it's a big tripping hazard, so it'll be a few weeks till we use them. The holes are used for grounding connection for welding. Meanwhile Muni did dispatch some revenue cars from there on Saturday, October 30th. As with any construction project, there is a "punch list" of items needing to be resolved before the project can be considered complete. All of these punch list items should be handled during the week of November 15th. The photo at right shows "Torpedo" 1007, work car C1 and Johnstown Car 351 after being moved into the new facility on October 28th. A damaged Milano Peter Witt and Muni Class B #130 were also placed into the facility that same evening.

[See Muni, column 2]

4. Trolleyville has published a monthly on-line newsletter for over a decade which is dedicated to keep readers abreast of new products, advancements in modeling technology, and a host of other general interest items, such as modeling tips. For more in-depth modeling and prototype instructions, Trolleyville includes a Schoolhouse section; an on-line instructional page for many modeling-related topics.

5. Custom Traxx, in an effort to reach modelers in varying demographics, recently constructed a Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/customtraxx> which does not require users to have a Facebook account in order to view the information it contains. Ultimately, we intend to use technology as a means to further our goals of knowledge sharing.

It is one thing to say you believe in "helping each other;" that you believe the hobby "should be free of ego and intimidation." That's easy, as only saying it requires absolutely no integrity, commitment, or dedication. To be honest, those who only "talk the talk" inevitably expose themselves for what they are; standing in your garage all day doesn't make you a car. We can only hope their irresponsible behavior does not sour the love of the hobby for established modelers, nor does it dissuade the interest of new ones.

When you boil it all down, we at Trolleyville and Custom Traxx believe we have amassed a solid record of accomplishments that speaks for us in terms of having a commitment not just to the present, but the future of traction modeling. Realistically, the only reason we felt we had to say it here is because of an utterly needless, yet seemingly never-ending series of attacks on our name by a manufacturer who seemingly has no regard for the traction modeling hobby or its dedicated practitioners.

We pledged from the beginning to support any modeler or manufacturer with data at no cost so long as providing that assistance incurred no cost for us. We have lost count of how many times we have stated that publicly. We have provided data to, and collaborated with large manufacturers, such as Bowser and Con-Cor. We have provided data to, and collaborated with small manufacturers such as MTS Imports, Inc., and Miniatures by Eric.

We have offered numerous levels of data on various issues to customers, modelers, and colleagues. We maintain relationships with traction clubs and railway museums around the country. We do this for no other purpose than to produce or aid in the production of the truest to prototype models as possible.

Most importantly, we believe that no great accomplishment can be made by those who insist on being a "lone wolf." After all, Neil Armstrong's footprint on the moon represented the efforts of tens of thousands. Granted, traction modeling is not "rocket science," yet the success of the Bowser F-Line PCC required a collaboration of no less than four companies on two continents. This is precisely why we have our aforementioned policy on knowledge sharing.

Ultimately, it is you as a modeler and consumer who decide which boats float and which don't in the rising tide of the traction modeling hobby. It is our goal that the products available for this hobby continue to increase both in quantity and quality. We hope that as consumers with an interest in the future of traction modeling, when spending your hobby dollar today, you will keep tomorrow in mind.

[Muni, from column 1]



Muni should get more cars moved back to Geneva, such as NORTA 952, Muni 0304, NOPSI 913, and Melbourne 916. At some point Market Street Railway 798 and Orel 106 should also come back to Geneva. We conclude this article with a

[video of the F-line](#) taken by Wouter van der Bruggen in 2006.

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