

Accurately Modeling Rear Lights on Bowser Tsunami-Sound-Equipped PCC Cars!

When the first PCC car was delivered to Brooklyn in 1936 and the last one to San Francisco in 1952, they had one thing in common. They had what was considered a major innovation at that time, Stop/Brake Lights. These two rear-facing amber lights illuminated when the operator pressed his foot on the brake pedal. In fact, they had the words STOP imprinted in the stop light lenses. Car 1059 in San Francisco sported a pair of these for a while.

Many PCC cars, when they were rebuilt in the last 20 years, added tail lights to the stop or brake lights similar to those found on almost every automobile manufactured in the last 60 years. Some operators did this by adding another pair of lights to the rear of the cars. San Francisco, when they rebuilt PCC cars from both Philadelphia and Newark, added double filament bulbs to the existing light fixtures similar to those formerly used on many automobiles.

Operating brake lights became available for HO scale PCC models when Train Control Systems (TCS) developed the M4T decoder in 2009 for the Bowser HO scale All-Electric R-T-R PCC models. Soundtraxx-Tsunami replicated this feature in their sound decoders also designed for the Bowser PCC. All the cars released by Bowser up to this time with Soundtrack sound have been models of traditional PCC cars that did **not** have tail lights. One of our readers obtained a Bowser Twin Cities Rapid Transit (Minneapolis-St.Paul) PCC, readdressed the unit to 311 and placed it on the track and found the taillights illuminated. Attempting to remove these lights resulted in much frustration as the current documentation provided with the car was somewhat incomplete. **For these and other cars equipped with Soundtraxx-Tsunami sound decoders, CV 33 and CV 34 should both be set equal to 1. To re-instate the taillight operation, set CV 33 and 34 equal to 3.** This latter instruction should be remembered as before the end of the year, Bowser will be releasing the first San Francisco F-line PCC cars with Soundtraxx-Tsunami sound, cars 1050 (San Francisco) and 1058 (Chicago). So file this article for reference if you plan to acquire one of these cars.

Con-Cor PRR MP-54 Commuter Cars!

Anyone that grew up in the Metropolitan Philadelphia area in the 1940-1950 time frame remembers the MP54 commuter cars. These electrified cars started their life as steam engine hauled coaches, the first of the steel coaches for the Pennsylvania Railroad. They were converted to electric operation starting in 1911 and upgrades continued up until 1950.

Con-Cor has produced very credible models of the coaches and combines. These models run very well. They produced a baggage-mail car also, but we have had problems finding a photo of the prototype.

When we ran our cars, we found two items not mentioned in the recent article in the August 2012 edition of Model Railroad News. The first item is that on the powered cars, one of the four wheels on each truck has a traction tire. The second is that the pantographs have a tendency to get into the "lazy diamond" shape when operated. A critical physical link

San Francisco 1101-1170 series PCC kit cancelled!

During the summer, the Times kept hearing rumors about this kit. So we cornered George Huckaby out at the Orange Empire Railway Museum late last month and asked him about it. George told us that despite efforts to make the car, the costs were too high and the demand too low. He stated that he had extended the reservation period for over three months and failed to get anywhere near the amount of reservations necessary to get this car past the development stage. This car was a very unique shell, only made for the Saint Louis Public Service, and required a totally new mold.

Compounding the problem was the decision of Eric Courtney to cease making traction shells. He reported that his business had lost too much money making trolley shells in the last two years.

George also told us that he individually notified all those modelers that has reserved cars in mid-August about this decision.

This is no surprise to us here at the Times. We always felt that the introduction of the ready-to-run streetcars in HO scale beginning in 2009 combined with the aging of the current cadre of trolley modelers would seriously impact the resin shelled traction market. Ready-to-Run and the introduction of sound has captured the traction market as much as it has the rest of the model railroad hobby. Over half of the Bowser PCC models sell out within a month of arrival from the manufacturer. Some have sold out before they left the manufacturers facility. We will all have to get used to this new market.

Bowser Announces their next PCC car models!

Last month, Bowser announced their next batch of PCC cars, which are due by the end of the year. Preproduction samples were received by Custom Traxx for evaluation late last month.

12550 SF Muni 1050 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12568 SF Muni CTA 1058 Powered No Sound - \$149.95 12450 SF Muni 1050 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95
12468 SF Muni CTA 1058 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95

12670 Philadelphia PTC 2171 Powered No Sound-\$149.95
12671 Philadelphia PTC 2200 Powered No Sound-\$149.95
12672 Philadelphia PTC 2171 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95
12673 Philadelphia PTC 2200 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95

12674 Shaker Heights 55 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12675 Shaker Heights 53 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12676 Shaker Heights 55 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95
12677 Shaker Heights 53 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95

12679 Birmingham Elec 820 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12680 Birmingham Elec 847 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12681 Birmingham Elec 820 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95
12682 Birmingham Elec 847 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95

12683 Pittsburgh Rys 1748 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12684 Pittsburgh Rys 1795 Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12685 Pittsburgh Rys 1748 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95
12686 Pittsburgh Rys 1795 Powered w/Sound - \$259.95

12687 Boston MTA 3197 - Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12688 Boston MTA 3221 - Powered No Sound - \$149.95
12689 Boston MTA 3197 - Powered w/Sound - \$259.95
12690 Boston MTA 3221 - Powered w/Sound - \$259.95

Suggest that those of you interested in these cars, place your orders now. Sell outs of Bowser PCC cars are NOT uncommon, sometimes before they have left the manufacturing facility.

[Torpedos, from Col 1]

that is present on prototype pantographs and many model pantographs is missing from the model pantographs supplied. Also the method chosen to lock down the pantographs resulted in two large tabs under the pantograph shoe that really show up in photographs.

Two More 'Torpedo' Streetcars return to San Francisco!

On August 23rd, the second of the four 'Torpedo' streetcars now being rebuilt at Brookville arrived for testing. Car 1008 arrived some time ago and is in the burn-in cycle. Car 1006 just arrived this week and will start its burn-in shortly after acceptance. Both 1006 and 1008 are in the same 1950's Muni paint scheme, a first for the F-line (two-cars of the same type in the same scheme). Car 1006 was used in the Trolley Festivals in the 1980's and Car 1008 was converted to a utility car and equipped with a pantograph. It is reported to have been the only PCC car to have run in the subway.



Figure 1 - 1006 in 1986.

There were only ten of these cars built in 1947-48, numbered 1006 to 1015. 1007, 1010 and 1015 were rebuilt by Morrison-Knudson in the early 1990s for use on the F-line. They are dressed in the maroon and cream of the Philadelphia Urban Trans'n Co (1007), San Francisco Muni Blue and Gold (1010) and the green and cream of the Illinois Terminal Railroad (1015). Car 1014 was sent to Melbourne, Australia and cars 1012 and 1013 were scrapped. The 'Torpedos' with their double-ended capabilities no longer needed, were single ended. They sort of fell into disfavor so by the time PCC service ended, none were in service. The first three were rebuilt in the 1990s for F-line and when the E-line was conceived, the decision was made to rebuild the remaining four. Prior to rebuilding, 1006 appeared as shown at the Marin Division in Figure 2 below:



Figure 2 - Car 1008 at Marin in Storage.

The necessity to pursue new streetcar lines without currently available loops at both ends of these lines gave these cars a

Figure 6 shows the car in the subway in 1977 before being repainted as the wrecker.



Figure 6 - 1008 at Castro Street Station.

We have only one photo, shown in Figure 7, of the 1008 in the wrecker paint scheme taken while in storage.



Figure 7 - Car 1008 at Geneva in 2009.

After arriving from Brookville Car 1008 was accepted and started its burn-in process. Burn-in requires the car to run 1,000 miles before final acceptance for passenger service. During that process all systems are repeatedly tested and re-tested. It is shown in Figure 8 during one of these trips.

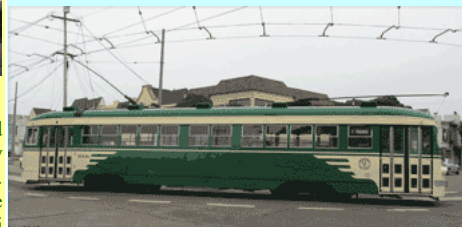


Figure 8 - Car 1008 at 47th & Wawona, August 4, 2012.

The burn-in process continued during the month of August with our final photo, Figure 8, being taken on August 16th.



Figure 9 - Car 1008 at 15th Av & Taraval, August 16, 2012.

Burn-in was completed on August 23rd. The car was taken to Muni Metro East (MME) on Friday, August 24th and was in service on the E-line on Saturday, August 25th under the professional control of Instructor/Operator Angel Carvajal. Angel had assisted Custom Traxx in the recording of sounds for the F-line PCC cars back in 2007. Thanks to the photographers who provided these great shots!

San Francisco Tests "E-line"!

The weekend of August 25-26 saw the another test opening of the E-line along the Embarcadero. This time the event was to support the America's Cup World Series Event. This line must use double-

new lease on life. I would willing to bet that there are more than a few people at Muni who wish now that they had not scrapped 1012 and 1013 some years ago. Yet 1006 along with 1008, 1009 and 1011 were sent to Brookville and returned as seen in Figure 3 below:



Figure 3 - Car 1006 at Beech, August 22, 2012.

Another photo shown in Figure 4 below provided by Peter Groom shows car 1006 with 162 and 1818 at the MME on August 26, 2012.



Figure 4 - Car 1006 at MME with 162 and 1818.

The remaining two Torpedos, 1009 and 1011, are still at Brookville under restoration. Watch for them next year.

Meanwhile, Car 1008 would have another life entirely. Figure 5 shows the car as it was during its single-ended service in the 1970s. During this period the doors on the left side seen in the photo were sealed over and now used. But this car, again due to its double ended capability and its condition, was selected as a wrecker to replace 0130, which is now back to number 130 and has returned to service as a heritage streetcar.



Figure 5 - 1008 on Market Street in 1971.

[See Torpedos, column 2]

ended cars due to the lack of a loop at the southern terminal. The E-line's vintage double-end streetcars will run from the Fisherman's Wharf F-line terminal at Jones and Beach Streets along F-line tracks past the Ferry Building, but where the F-line turns west to head up Market Street, the E-line cars will continue south on track built years ago just for them, connecting with the Muni Metro N and T lines where they emerge from the subway at The Embarcadero and Folsom Street. From there, the E-line cars will share tracks with the N and T trains to a terminal at the Caltrain Depot. Cars that were used for this event included Muni's 1948 'Torpedo' PCC cars 1007, 1010 and 1015 along with just received 1008 and Melbourne 496. Matt Lee and Jeremy Whiteman provided the following photos of Saturday August 25, 2012 E-line service:



1007 with 1008!



1015, 1075 (F-line car) and 1010!



1008 at Embarcadero & Brannan!

Streetcar Mike Strauss provided our final photo of car 1008 on the F-line on August 30th on Market street between O'Farrell and Third Street :



Thanks to all of you who took the time to take these great shots and provide the to all of us who could not be there!

FINAL REMINDER TO ORANGE EMPIRE RAILWAY MUSEUM SEPTEMBER 8TH SWAP MEET VENDORS!

A recent change in museum policy requires vendors to register by September 1st if you intend to set-up on Friday evening and remain on the property overnight. If you are a vendor planning to attend, please check out both the [policy](#) and the [application](#) so you are not forced to leave on Friday night. You must be a member to remain on the property after closing. The Museum asks for your cooperation in this matter.

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