

Train Control Systems continues to upgrade their decoders

After three years of the M4T decoder being available for the HO scale Bowser PCC cars, Train Control Systems (TCS) announced a new line of M4 decoders which have all the functions to which Bowser PCC trolley operators have become accustomed.

The new decoder is the M4P-1", SKU 1391. The P means that it comes with an NMRA 8-pin plug and the 1" is the length of the harness. Both of these work well in the Bowser PCC. This is basically an M4T replacement. The user must change a CV to one value to get the trolley brake lights. Another value inserted gets the brake lights and the tail lights.

The new Keep-Alive feature is also available in a decoder that can be used in the Bowser PCC. This is the KAT14P-1". KA for Keep Alive; 4 for four function; P for the NMRA 8-pin plug and the 1" is the length of the harness. This decoder combines the Keep-Alive and the M4P features into one electronic package. We have used these in about three Bowser PCC cars and while it is a challenging installation, they perform excellently.

Custom Traxx is now testing the new KAM14P-1". This is basically the KAT14P-1" without the JST plug. Removing the JST plug makes the decoder smaller and slightly easier to fit into the Bowser PCC. These new KAM series will have another interesting quality. They will have a feature allowing direct use of LED's without resistors.

Custom Traxx and the Southern California Traction Club just received samples of the KAM series decoders and hope to install them in cars very soon. They hope to have test results to tell you as soon as they can. We are really happy with the KAT series decoders that we have installed in our Bowser PCC cars. Once they are charged, they just run. We make sure that our trolley shoes or wheels have been cleaned, then we place the unit on the track, put the trolley pole on the overhead wire, wait a few minutes and usually stall-free running starts and continues all day.

Stay tuned!!

San Francisco gears up for Muni 100 year celebration!

San Francisco has begun to implement their plans to celebrate the 100 anniversary of the creation of the San Francisco Municipal Railway but they will have to contend with the celebration of their beloved Giants winning the World Series on Sunday, September 28th in Detroit.

The F-line, which was started in 1995 as a seven to nine car operation, is now requiring twenty four cars daily. They have at their disposal, thirteen ex-Philadelphia PCC cars, eleven ex-Newark PCC cars, five (soon to be six) San Francisco Muni "Torpedo" double end PCC cars, eleven ex-Milan Peter Witt cars and three or four other heritage cars including two Muni Class B streetcars 130 and 162 an ex-New Orleans streetcar, 952 and two cars from "down under". Despite all of this increase in service, Muni has yet to increase the maintenance staff to service them, so they often have trouble

We asked you and you told us!

In our last issue, we asked for your opinions and we got them. Here are just a few:

Reader A: In answer to your note in this months issue, here are my comments. First, VERY HAPPY with Trolleyville Times and the website. I look for these things each month: New products and product information; News about the RTR trolleys and future releases; Modeling hints and tips but nothing complex; Museum notes and pictures especially as they relate to the RTR trolleys; and SCTC news and pictures.

DCC/Sound information is very important to the publication and should be in (almost) every issue, even though I do not do DCC/Sound, it is the way most modelers seem to be going.

Thanks for your ongoing efforts!

Reader B: Thanks for asking me. Prices in model railroading are just too high. We're seeing more stuff made in China, but the importers charge "made in the USA" prices. New trolleys now have DCC and sound- these add ons are not cheap. Every year I go to train shows, from Maryland to Massachusetts. Our hobby is graying, and our trolley subset is fast aging out. I'm a trolley fan who remembers riding a streetcar from Park Row to Coney Island, and 242nd Street to Yonkers. I remember riding the old yellow cars on the Newark City Subway, and the last trolley over the 59 Street Bridge. That means I'm pretty old, retired, and on a fixed income.

Reader C: One of the highlights of each month is reading Trolleyville Times. I really love the articles. As I am a novice some of it is above my head but they show me what is possible. And of course I read all the tutorials. The following are my suggestions.

- 1) The reason I prefer RTR models is I just don't have the time. I began collecting structures, track etc and as of yet have not found the free time to start a layout much less paint and detail a trolley.
- 2) I think it would be great to have prototype articles. Knowledge is everything.
- 3) Consider expanding the Times and consider charging a fee to subscribe. I am sure it takes a lot of time to put it together every month. Twenty or so dollars a year is not unreasonable. Thanks for listening.

MUNI, from column 1:



Figure 4 - Market Street Railway 578 at 30th & Church.

getting sufficient cars for all the runs. Remember that the newest streetcar on the line is over 50 years old and they require service. Parts are not available from the corner Auto Zone.

During early November several increases and additions in heritage car service will take place. The J-line opened for service on November 4, 1917 so this year is the 95th year of operation of the line. During the weekdays, November 5 through 9, every available heritage car will be on the street as long as the car is serviceable and they have sufficient operators. The intent is to have San Francisco cars 1, 162, 1006, 1008 and 1040 on the street as much as possible. On November 4th, they will be running from the Ferry Building to 30th and Church (J-line original terminal) and on November 11th they will be running from the Ferry building to the Muni Metro East (MME) facility. Car 578, the oldest of the trolley cars on the property, will be running along the Embarcadero. Some of the cars to be seen are:



Figure 5 - Muni "Torpedo" 1006 at MME.



Figure 6 - Car 1008 operating on the E-line.



Figure 1 - Muni Car 1 at Stuart and DC Way.



Figure 7 - Car 1040 on the J-line.



Figure 2 - Car 162 on Third Street.

One car that will not be able to participate in these festivities is car 130. This car is a sister to car 162 and both were delivered in 1914 after being constructed by the Jewett Car Co in Ohio. It currently has motor problems and may not be able to be repaired soon. This car is lucky to be here today. It was the last of its class to leave passenger service in 1958. Charles Smallwood, Muni Shop Foreman hid the car in the deep recesses of the Geneva Carhouse and then talked his bosses into making it a 'wrecker'. He saved the seats in his basement and the car towed disabled PCC cars back to Geneva Carhouse for the next 25 years. It was fully restored by Muni's craft workers on 1983 and took its place in the Trolley festivals.



Figure 3 - Car 228 ('Boat' Tram) at Geneva (now Beech) Yard.



Figure 8 - Car 130, July 25, 1983!



Figure 9 - Car 130 with PCC 1010, August 30, 1992!

See Muni, column 2

