

Dave Goodson's G-Scale Colorado Consolidated

By Brian Kaehler

Blue sky, big trains, and big grins. Dave Goodson and the Colorado Consolidated Railways delivered at SoundRail 2014! Dave and his crew have created a G-scale outdoor railroad that kept eight SoundRail operators and half a dozen regulars busy all day. Trains run regardless of the weather, using battery power and radio throttles.

Loosely based on the Colorado narrow gauge lines, CCR operations focus on car movement with operators using a laminated switch list to direct the pulling or spotting by car type at a siding. Dave developed this system to simplify setting up the railroad, since all rolling stock is taken off the line between sessions. Nearly 30 industries, representing logging, mining, meat packing, perishables, dairy, tobacco and manufacturing are represented across the line.

A scenic highlight of the line is the massive wooden trestle over Stevens Canyon, between White Rock and Laurel Yard. At 25 feet plus in length, and 4 feet in height, it encourages photography, railfan moments, and even a little apprehension as you watch your train ease out onto the bridge deck, creaking timbers soaking up the weight of a 3-truck shay and 7 fully laden log cars.



CCR 2-6-6-2 51 leaving Laurel Yard, heading to White Rock

Solid track work on a deep bed of ballast with good drainage keep the wheels on the rails and the focus on operations as well. Hand thrown turnouts with a white dot indicate the Normal position. At Confusion Junction a 3-way, air-operated turnout takes care of a hard to reach switch. Throughout the railroad, the experience of the owner and his crew shows, with changes made to make the railroad better. That Dave has succeeded is clear by the grins of operators returning to the end of a run 2 or 3 hours after heading out.



Laurel Yard Overview: Pete Cressman, Rick Koehler in foreground



Lineup at Laurel Yard

Dave operates the railroad one to two times a month, with sessions often running 6 hours or more, and operators coming from all around the Seattle area. Running big trains while working on your tan – in Seattle – in March – what could be better?

Jack Tingstad's Cloud City & Western

By John Brennan

The crew for Jack Tingstad's Cloud City & Western departed the Red Lion Hotel in Bellevue, WA in time to catch the 8:30 AM ferry from Mukilteo on the mainland for the 20 minute ride to Coupeville on Whidby Island. Jack's layout was featured in the May 2011 issue of the internet magazine "Model Railroad Hobbyist". The layout is set in the 1920's and is a mountain railroad with all steam powered trains. Control is by Digitrax radio controlled DCC and most locos have sound. Operators were encouraged to use whistle signals. Operations are by scenario method . Each train has a small packet sized folder describing the work to be done and a switch list. Jack provides walk around assistance in place of a stationary dispatcher. Al Fransch and Steve Jaffray assisted jack and provided assistance to the visiting crew. There were two yards on the layout, Cloud City and Breckenridge. Breckenridge also served as the start and termination point for most trains. There is no timetable, train orders, car cards or fast clock. The layout operates on regular clock time and operations were laid back and stress free. The layout is completely scenicked and enjoyable to operate.



Front to back Ron Peterson, Henry Freeman, Jim O'Neil



Jim O'Neill, Steve Jaffray, Daniel Miroballi

Greg Wright's 3/8n2 Consolidated Republic Mining Company

Review by Terry Dillon

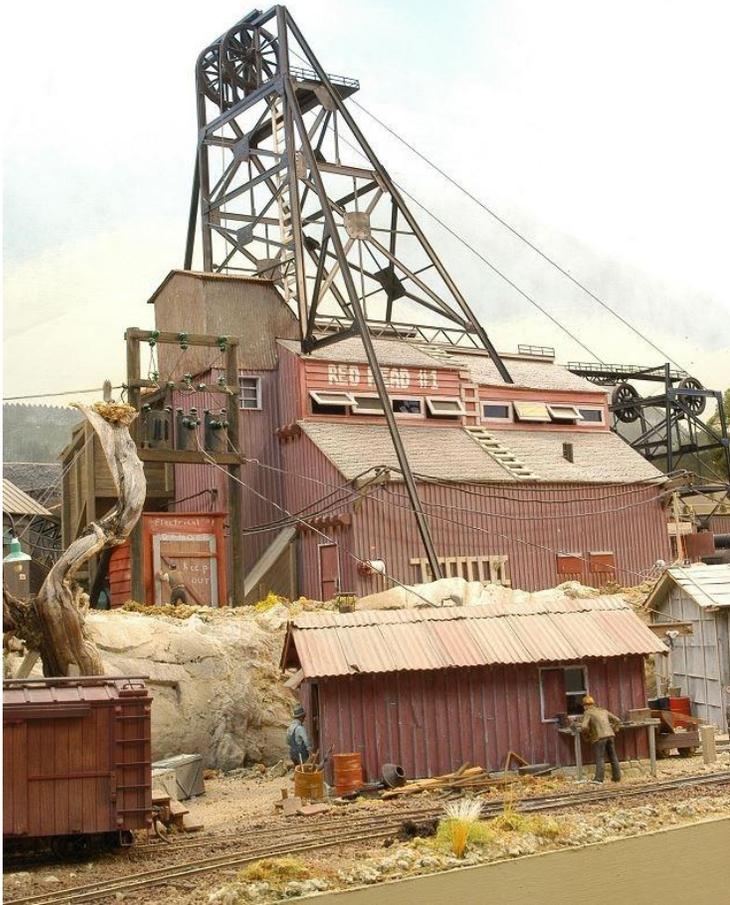
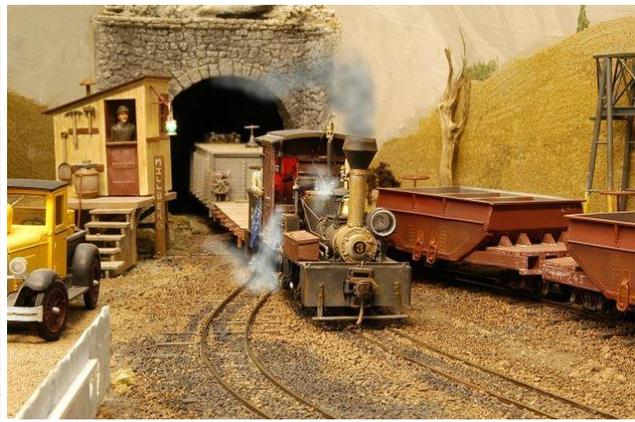
All Photos by the late Paul Scoles except where noted

Greg Wright (MMR 520), with assistance from Scott Gibson, opened his Consolidated Republic Mining Company RR to four guest operators and we had a tremendous time. The layout is well presented with lots of light, spacious aisles, and a realistic operating concept. The excellent track work, ground throw turnouts, detailed scenery, DCC, and sound-equipped locomotives enhanced this almost "real life" experience. Situated in the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains in north central Washington State, the operations focus on hauling ore from several mines located at the extreme ends of the railroad to the concentrator mills at Millburg. It is depression era, hard rock mining, operating with very limited capital (i.e. no excess track, minimal clearances, and homemade equipment) and lots of people willing to work hard just to keep a job.

Greg's railroad is 1:32 scale, running on 20 inch gauge track. The scenery, structures, people and trains bring the operator closer to being into the scene than anything I have visited before. Yet the engines and freight cars are diminutive. Most of the motive power is kit bashed (HO and On30 mechanisms) with large scale cabs. Freight cars are both kit bashed and scratch-built. Each steam engine is unique, but all of them follow prototypes. Structures and equipment are well detailed and weathered appropriately. The scenery is excellent with lots of interesting vignettes and reflects the 25 years of work Greg has put into his reliably operating railroad.

Operations are naturally focused on switching. Well-designed view blocks cause one to forget the layout's 14 x 20 foot size, and keep the operators focused on their part of the railroad, adding realism to the unexpected arrival of the next train in their yard. Operators are assigned to the towns of Division (the heart of the hard rock mountain mining region) and to North Ellensburg (the connection with the Milwaukee RR). Perhaps the busiest operator runs the "yard" complex in Millburg: sorting, weighing and emptying the ore cars at the mills. The Millburg yard operator is "fed" by the mine shifter, a train run by the fourth operator that earns the railroad money by hustling loaded cars down to Millburg and returning the empties to the mines. Although the yard appears to be very adequate, we soon found out that switching cars and accommodating the mine resupply freight train are a part of a well-designed challenge when combined with the frequent mine shifter arrivals and tight clearances.

Operations reflect the era and economy of the railroad. Car cards and waybills direct movements. Dispatching is by telephone allowing clearance to enter the mainline (partially exposed helixes with clearances for only a single train at a time.)



Charles Laggan, Mike Chandler, Terry Dillon, David Hunt
Photo by Greg Wright

Lee Thwaits' O-scale SP and D&RGW

By Terry Dillon

Photos by Lee Thwaits

Descending the stairs to Lee's railroad is a trip back into the wonderful age of steam, with large photos and paintings of Lee's favorite locomotives adorning the walls. Entering the well-lit layout room one first sees the terminus of Duato, with a large yard and fully equipped engine terminal. The roundhouse and garden tracks contain a large number of prototypically detailed, sound equipped, steam engines from the SP and D&RGW. This is one end of the point to point, 365 foot mainline that envelopes the 26 ft. x 42 ft. room on two decks to reach the other terminus at Ware. There are three passing sidings and several switching areas, serving a dozen on-line industries. Adding to operational interest, a 140 foot branch line is on its own level, serving mines, stockyards, and lumber industries, with a connection to the mainline at Sequoia Interchange.

Lee's intent was to build a railroad that allowed him operate way freights with a fleet of 2-8-0's and 2-8-2's, yet still operate heavy steam (cab-forwards, northerns, mountains and even a three cylinder D&RGW M-75 4-8-2) on main line freights that originate or terminate in the storage tracks. He has enhanced the realism of this 2-rail, O-Scale layout thru well developed scenery and numerous detailed structures. The tracks are arranged to be close to the aisle to allow the use of ground throw turnout controls and manual uncoupling. The combination of large scale steam engines and well detailed freight cars (no passenger trains) presented in realistic scenery at close range is truly a great experience.

Operations are superb. The track work is flawless and easy to follow. Lee hosted 6 guest operators. With a yardmaster at each yard, and one operator on the branch line, the three operators on the main line were able to relax and enjoy steam era railroading. Way freights are limited to 9 cars and work only industries along the route with trailing point switches. Car cards are used to make up and operate the trains. Dispatching is relaxed with Lee serving as the roving dispatcher. Two co-hosts, Dave Brown and Ron Schwartz, served as engine hostlers and were available to help us when questions arose.

The operators worked well together, with each person having the opportunity to work positions they wanted to experience.

Guest operators were David Cochrun and Kathy Sparks (Colorado), Randall Stockberger (Oregon), Steve Schiffman (California) and Pete Johnson and Terry Dillon (Washington)





Dick Karnes' S-Scale New York Westchester & Boston

By Cal Sexsmith

The NYW&B is an S scale layout representing a double track heavy electric railroad connecting New Haven, CT with Boston, MA via Troy, NY in 1955. There are also single track steam/diesel lines from New York City to Springfield, MA on the Troy to Boston line; and to Montreal, QC from Troy. The prototype NYW&B never reached this extent and was merged into the New Haven in the 1920s.

The modeled portion of the NYW&B represents that portion of the railroad where the single track New York/Springfield line joins with the double track New Haven/Boston line between Cornwall Bridge and Springfield Jct. The double track line to Boston is also represented as far as Troy. The electrified lines have exquisite scratch built catenary.

A number of operating positions were available. I took the Station Master Job which is responsible for the stub end terminal in Troy, the through station in Cornwall Bridge and operation of the passenger trains to, from and through those points. The Assistant Stationmaster, Dan Thompson, helps the Stationmaster by operating the steeple cab electric switcher in Troy, the boxcab electric switcher in Cornwall Bridge and serving as a road crew on some of the passenger trains.

During the session we switched the Montreal to New Haven Grand Isle Limited in Troy and Cornwall Bridge, including a change from Canadian National diesels to a NYW&B electric in Cornwall Bridge. We also originated and terminated the Adirondack in Troy and ran several through passenger trains across the railroad.

While Dan and I concerned ourselves with the passenger services, others operated the Troy freight yard, way freights and through freights which weaved their way through the constant parade of passenger trains.



Dan Thompson drops a Pullman at Putman Hills



Jim O'Neill and Ron Petersen work Troy Freight Yard

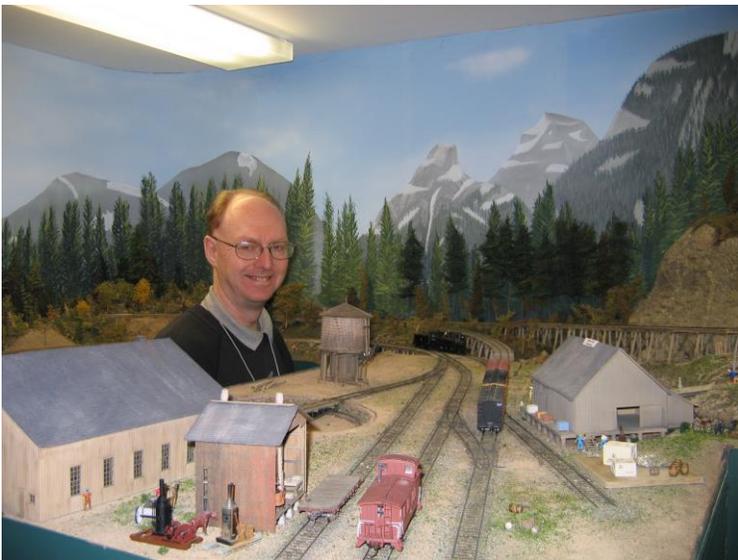
Di Voss' HO-Scale Everett & Monte Cristo

By Cal Sexsmith

Thursday was a two fer at a couple of smaller railroads.

The prototype E&MC was built in the 1890s to haul concentrated gold ore 50 miles from Monte Cristo to the smelter at Everett. Later the railroad also handled logs and tourists. The final approach to Monte Cristo is via a switchback. The model E&MC is a well detailed HO scale representation of the prototype.

Three trains were operated during the session – a Monte Cristo Everett turn, an Everett Monte Cristo turn and an ore train. I served as conductor on the Everett Monte Cristo turn with Brian Dobbin as my engineer. As an aid to operators a lanyard was provided to hang the paperwork from the conductor's neck, it worked very well. After switching various industries in Everett and making up our train, we departed for Monte Cristo. We met the downhill train at Hanford Jct., where the E&MC interchanges with the Northern Pacific. We switched various industries on the way up the hill to Monte Cristo. After working the industries in Monte Cristo we turned our train for the return trip meeting the uphill ore train before arriving back at Everett. At Everett we encountered another train and worked with that crew to wrap up the switching at Everett before putting our locomotive away in the shops.



Brian Dobbin works Monte Cristo



John Green works Everett Yard

Gary Jordon's O-Scale, Multi-Gauge Gilpin Tram

By Cal Sexsmith

After lunch at a local restaurant we headed over to Gary Jordan's Gilpin Tram. Another well executed prototype based layout, this time in O Scale, the Gilpin Tram is three railroads in one. The first is the standard gauge Colorado & Southern in Golden, CO; the second is the 3 foot gauge C&S between Golden and Blackhawk and the third is the 2 foot gauge Gilpin Tram from Blackhawk up the helix and switchbacks into the mining district. I ran the C&S between Golden and Blackhawk and managed to make two round trips. The car cards and waybills were designed to simulate trans-loading between the different gauges. What came in one standard gauge car could take two 3 foot cars and perhaps 4 or more 2 foot cars.

At one point during the session someone asked what time it was, guessing it to be about 3:30, it was actually 4:30 and almost time to go! A sure sign of a successful session.



John Ryczkowski works the 3 foot yard at Blackhawk



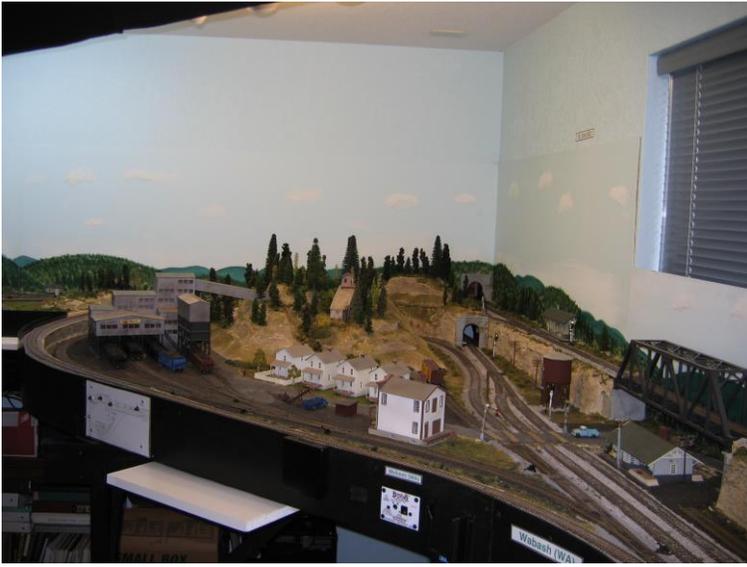
Brian Dobbin works Golden Yard

Brian Ferris' HO-Scale Port Townsend Southern

By Cal Sexsmith

The Port Townsend Southern is a proto-freelanced HO scale railroad representing part of the Portland-Seattle line. Trains of the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, Union Pacific, and Milwaukee Road travel over all or part of the railroad. The railroad is dispatched by TT&TO and I volunteered to dispatch. As a result I spent most of the session in the laundry room (dispatcher's office) dictating train orders. Fortunately I only wrote one lap order! Brian does not use a fast clock so all trains operated using real time. Operators had to synchronize their watches to the standard clock in the dispatcher's office.

The railroad is a walk in around the walls layout in a purpose built room behind the garage (which contains the staging yards and a branch line terminal). So far Brian has resisted the urge to fill in the middle of the room with more track giving a wonderfully wide aisle (at least 8 feet!). I only wish I had as much self-control.



Wabash, Washington



Bob Ferguson and Charles Laggan work the yard