



Consolidated Rail Corporation

Internal use Only!!

CONRAIL BULLETIN # 100107

General offices at:

851 Reed Road
Clarion Pa, 16214



Crew Call time is 18:00 hrs. (6:00pm – for the civilians)

HAPPY NEW YEAR! - It's on again, the FIRST OPs session for 2010 - Thursday night Jan 07, 2010 at 6:00pm!

Trackwork:

The MOW work continues on several sidings around the area. The ROSE Siding has been lengthened by about 3 car lengths. This should ease some of the congestion in the area.

Scenery:

Some preliminary work has been started in the Rose area. I am roughing in of the base scenery adding contours and sealing the turnout throw wires. It sure takes a while to get the sand/glue combination to dry. Once that is done then I need to tint the sand down to earth colors. When that is done then comes the ground foam application!

I like using sand for basic land forms on relatively flat areas of the layout. When poring the sand down it seems to follow the contours I have laid down for the base. For the under base forms I have used wet newspapers and paper towels. The Newspapers work well when there are long straight sections of underbase, while the wet paper towels work better in close spaces that have a lot of nooks & crannies to fill in.

Operations:

A reminder that Locals still run with 12 cars - There will be times that you may end up dropping off more cars than you can pick up in a given town. This will leave you with less than 12 cars. At the next INTERCHANGE (P&S – LEF) try and take a number of cars heading in the direction you are going to keep the Interchange tracks as empty as possible and still keep to the 12 car limit!

As for switching the proper number of cars into an Industry. I am not going to be standing there watching everyone to see if they are switching the cars properly – this is a decision you have to make. But remember that when YOU host an operating session don't be unhappy if the operators do not seem to want to follow YOUR RULES. What goes around comes around! If this does not bother you then WHY have operating Rules ON YOUR LAYOUT in the first place! Are we not trying to replicate the Real Railroad?

One of the jobs of the Shortlines is to run the **COAL**. Now during most of our Thursday night OPs we are not blessed with an abundance of operators. We did have (in Sept) 20 operators and I was NOT ready at that time for so many and did not have the Scenario Cards set up to keep everyone busy. But then this was an exception rather than the rule.

Now getting back to the Shortline operators, once you have run the local switching you will have some time to work the coal trains. If we had a full crew (15 plus) then the extra operators would Pick up the COAL train at one of the Staging yards and run it to the P&S or LEF and swap out the Load/Empties and return.

With the short crews the Operator of the LEF or P&S could run the coal themselves. They would go to the Kiski Staging (for LEF) or Venango Yard (for P&S) and run the Coal train (get and engine/caboose if needed) up to their respective Interchange – do the swap – and run back to staging. This would get the Coal run and also get some time out on the Mainline. This way the LEF or P&S operator is not standing around wondering what to do if traffic is slow that night. **YES**, you are allowed to run something other than the area you start out with. I have had to do this many times to keep the Interchanges cleared of excess cars. This week's Bulleting Extra explains the basics of Coal Runs and how they should be run on the Lowgrade.

I am continually making changes to the Operations of the layout (this includes Trackwork) per your SUGGESTIONS. If you think that an improvement can be made to speed up OPs or make a congested area less so then make the suggestion! Be ready to explain your reasoning (as I may not understand your thinking as to how it will operate) and I can then evaluate the idea and in all likelihood make the update to the layout

Thanks for your cooperation and understanding.

BOB H General Manager of Operations for Conrail - Lowgrade Secondary

BULLETIN – EXTRA

In this **Mini-Clinics** issue I am going over the **UNIT Trains**.

While most Operators are very familiar with how we run the Local Switching trains few understand how to run the **Coal Unit trains**. The Question is Who makes the decision to run a coal train?

In real life, it is not the Coal Loader that requests a train of empties as such. If they did and they filled the cars with Coal they then would have to find a buyer of THAT TYPE of Coal they loaded into the train. This would almost always be the wrong type of coal! While the Coal Companies work with Coal Brokers the Brokers are the ones that do the selling of the Coal. They know what each mine supplies and how much it can supply.

The call for Coal comes from an Industry that needs the Coal – They will request the Type, Size and Quantity of Coal to be delivered to them.

Now, how to make this work on the Model Railroad? We have to ASSume that an industry (Power Plant, Steel Mill/ Coke Plant or Overseas Buyer) has gotten in touch with a Coal Broker and has placed an order for a certain Type and Size that is available from one of the Lowgrade online Suppliers.

The Coal Broker will then get in touch with that Coal Company and get a price and find out the timeframe as to getting it ready to ship. The Coal Company will sometimes have to actually dig it out of the ground while other times just load it from the Companies Stock Pile.

Once the deal has been made the Broker or Coal Company will call the Railroad and request empties (a train) to fill the order. When these trains arrive then it will be loaded and be shipped.

Usually the order will be large enough (these contracts usually are for a year or longer) that it will take multiple train loads to fill the order. **This is what we are modeling!**

On the Lowgrade we are bringing Empty cars BACK from Pittsburgh to Kiski Jct. and then moving them to Phillipston where the train moves onto the Lowgrade to the appropriate online coal company. Usually there will be a waiting LOADED coal Train that will be ready to be moved back to Pittsburgh to the customer that ordered it.

We are not concerned with which customer has ordered the train only that it needs to be moved back to Pittsburgh.

So what we the Operator has to do is determine which Coal Company has a loaded train. Then we need to go to the Staging area and select a train to run to the Coal Company (During an **OPTUD**- this would be taken care of by the **FREIGHT MANAGER**)!

While there will be several Coal Trains in Staging (Kiski, Driftwood, Emporium) it is best to select a train with like cars that the Coal Company would ship (LEF&C would more than likely ship coal in LEF cars – P&S would ship P&S cars). Any of the Coal companies located on the Lowgrade would run any RR companies cars (CR – B&O/C&O/ WM/Chessie/CSX – N&W/NS – etc.). Unfortunately if there are no P&S or LEF cars to be had then any other cars can be used as we are not shutting down the RR for lack of cars!

The Scenario Cars give the directions and Info necessary to move the Unit Coal.