



Consolidated Rail Corporation

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CONRAIL BULLETIN # OPTUD-7

General offices at: 851 Reed Road
Clarion Pa, 16214



OP Till U Drop

OPTUD – 7

Well as amazing as it sounds I finally decided that it's time again for another OPTUD (OP Till U Drop)! It has **only** been 5 years since the last one!

This is the official **OPTUD-7** announcement!

This one is being scheduled for **July 31, 2010** and as usual is a Saturday session.

Things will get underway at 9:00AM and will proceed until 9:00PM.

Again you do **not** have to be present for the whole day and you may come at any time until 9:00PM.

So please do not feel that having to work until 12:00 on a Saturday that it would be too late to come. We **NEED** operators for the afternoon and evening shift. This is where we tend to fall short in the afternoon and evening shifts.

Things have actually worked out better when we have 3 actual shifts (9:00am – 1:00pm – 5:00pm). We did this at previous Operation Sessions and it worked out very well. Hopefully the weather will be cooperating and it will not get crazy hot !

Food and refreshments will be provided but bringing a **Covered Dish, Soda, Chips, DESERTS**, to share, will help out.

We will be stopping to eat between 12:00/12:30pm and again around 5:00pm. Snacking will proceed throughout the day.

This announcement is approximately 60 days in advance to the day (May 31, 2010). So now is the time to get your schedule rearranged so that you will be able to attend.

We have about **15 open slots per shift** (not counting my regulars) so it will be on a first come basis. Please e-mail as soon as possible if you are at all interested in coming and what shift/time you can make it.

We will using Digitrax Radio (both Duplex & the old Simplex systems) .

So bring your keypad, FRS radio, some food and have a great day Operating (playing) trains.

What is NEW!

Other than the fact that I added 256 sq ft (16' x 16' room) to the layout area - quite a bit!

Each level has added about 32 feet in length of track (YAH! – 3 x 16ft walls = 48 ft – but remember that I took out 16 ft when I opened up the wall for the new room). There is about 3300 feet of track down now.

I will go through each level and highlight the changes.

Top Level – Driftwood/Emporium

- **Driftwood Staging** – I moved this area down onto the left wall of the new room. This added 16 ft of open area above NUBE. Driftwood yard now has 4 tracks instead of 3 like it had before.
- **Emporium Staging/Yard** was moved down on the Right side wall of the new room. This area was directly affected when the wall was removed. I added 3 extra tracks to this yard/staging (giving a total of 7). It also has an industry to the rear of the yard for some additional switching which the Falls Creek RR will handle.
- **Connector tracks** – The one between Driftwood & Emporium is now about 12 feet long and will allow switching off the ends with trains and should not interfere with the other yard. Also the Ridgeway connector track is also about 8 ft long and will provide some spacing before the trains enter Emporium when leaving Ridgeway.
- The **JF&C track** also comes up from ROSE still, but the grade has increased quite a bit. Helpers **WILL** be needed to move any trains in this area (**both up & down**)!

Level 2 – Sutton Interchange

- This is all **NEW** and includes the Sutton Interchange with the LEF in the new room. It takes off the JF&C branch part way up the hill after leaving ROSE. The track is fairly flat and will not require helpers. There is a passing siding/run around track at the LEF interchange.
- CR engines are **NOT** allowed down the interchange track or onto the LEF. LEF engines **ARE** allowed up on the CR Sutton interchange/passing tracks and allowed to use the run around tracks without Dispatcher permission!

Level 3 – LEF&C

- The LEF is all new in the room – added is **Stahlman Tipple – the Wye** and **Sutton Interchange**. Several industries have been added.
- Mainly the **Stahlman Tipple** complex – which had a tipple (yet to be built) and 4 sidings (2 tipple & 2 flood loader). This will allow additional coal trains to be run out of LEF.
- **Dolby Blasting** – which is located at the one end of the Wye
- **The Wye** is located at the back left of the room. It has most of the coal tracks interconnected within parts of the Wey legs, complicating the switching.

Level 4 – Lowgrade Line

- Everything from **NUBE down to Summerville** is all new.
- **Hawthorn** is all different and was flipped from front to back compared to the old one.
- **Crawford Furniture** now has 2 actual sidings that must be switched and the building complex is a 48' x 18' area with several different sized buildings (in the process of being built).
- The grade into Summerville was changed and is hopefully flat enough so that all trains will be able to make the grade.

Level 5 – Kiski Line

- The area from **Ford City** south probably was the most changed other than the additional area for the LEF.
- The **Scrap/Pulpwood track** was moved down on the left side wall of the new room. They now have a separate track for each industry. This also gave some additional running room south of Ford City.
- Just north of Kiski Jct. is **Schenley** which has a branch track towards Leechburg (Bagdad) and will have some resemblance to a steel mill. There is also a Passing/Runaround track for trains arriving from the north needing access to the steel mill.
- A new longer **Kiski Bridge** is in place (2 spans).
- The **Staging Tracks (Kiski Jct.)** is all new. The staging is now made up of Passing Sidings instead of Sequential Staging. This will allow taking any train in staging out without having to move any other train up. This will make pulling through trains in/out of staging simple and it is hoped that the operators will find running a through train easier and faster.
- A new **10 track Stub End Staging** area has been put in place off the end of Kiski Staging. The Trains can be backed out on to the Loop Staging, then proceed on around the Loop and not have to be turned on this end!

LAYOUT:

View blocks have been opened up where possible with the addition of Thin-Edge benchwork. The benchwork is only 1 inch thick at the front giving much better viewing of the lower level tracks and structures without having to step back from the layout.

This was done on the NUBE deck and all new benchwork in the new room except the center peninsula and any run through tracks on the lower levels at the rear of the new room.

The only areas that are less than desirable are the outside corners as they take up way more space sticking out into the aisles but are required to keep the radiuses proper.

Improvements have been made all over the layout in addition to those mentioned above, mostly in the Scenery and Structures area. Minor track rearrangements have been done to improve switching of industries where necessary.

ELECTRICAL:

I have rearranged a lot of the Layout Electrical Blocks. This came about due to a problem with too many sound engines congregating in one block.

I added an additional BOOSTER (I now have 4) and another PM42 power manager. This makes 12 electrical blocks.

Although the sound engines continue to show up on the layout I feel that there will be more Boosters needed within the year!

ROOM IN GENERAL:

I now have add a Pooper Room , as part of the new room, and it is working great! I have both a Pooper and a Urinal. This will eliminate having to run up stairs for relief.

The room lighting has had additional lights installed and others moved to improve illumination over various sections of the layout and to eliminate shadowed areas - more changes are pending.

OPERATIONS:

I have most of the buildings and towns labeled on the layout. Several Industries have been moved and those that I have yet to begin building the structures for have a sign on the Fascia to show its location.

I have also improved the Scenario (Train Movements) Cards. This is an ongoing process and probably will never be finished. We are still using the Modified Pin System with minor revisions. Several Thru trains have been added to the OPs schedule as I learn more about how the real railroads ran.