



For the enjoyment and edification of model railroad operators

## Railroading in the “land of the long white cloud” (NZ) provides a new theme to model

Fresh from our near month-long family vacation in Australia and New Zealand, I was very impressed with the KiwiRail which operates throughout New Zealand. At the Port of Tauranga, I found time to visit the port freight yard where an employee had me don a reflective vest, then turned me loose to take pictures of locomotives in service (right) as well as a group of fresh arrivals from China, still quarantined until they could be inspected and put in service. Locomotives built in China powering trains—sound familiar, hobbyists?

At Auckland, we experienced a two-plus hour bus ride to and the TranzAlpine ride through the New Zealand Southern Alps to board a scenic ride (billed as among the top seven in the world) on a diner car, terminating in Rolleston (see below).

The New Zealand’s KiwiRail offers a number of viable projects. Port cities, Alpine mountains, and passenger service are new opportunities for layout and scenery, making it a fun theme to model.



On top of that, Tauranga and Napier (both ports on our cruise) each had hobby shops. I found the blue passenger car models, such as the one shown (left), as well as reasonably priced (and marked down for a discount) locomotives and “wagons” with a good variety. Since most of our models are made in China, just as the prototypes in Tauranga, it was logical to continue the practice and purchase equipment for the KiwiRail.

Another plus is that numerous featured loads—including lumber, merchandise in containers, and coal, already make up a hefty portion of my current scheme commodities. It’s also a cinch to find plenty of on-line info on KiwiRail to do it justice based on the prototype.

Since I’d be modeling a foreign railway, no one here in the states would know how prototypical it was—nor be able to criticize what and how I modeled.

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## Expanded club layout debuts at Council Bluffs People ask: How much larger will it grow?

The DSED modular layout, under Crew Chief Scott Nesbit and bolstered by a hearty group of faithful DSED members, again wowed the crowds at the Great America Train Expo. The event took place February 8-9 at the Mid America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

This two day event provided opportunity to show off the recently added center staging yard as well as new scenery and structures not seen before in Council Bluffs. Plenty of visitors gave favorable comments. Crew members answered lots of questions about the layout construction techniques, rolling stock, and structures. Thanks to each DSED member who made the Great Train Expo a priority last winter.



Here's a trackside view of the new staging area that fills the center of the DSED modular layout, with plenty of trains ready to depart and entertain guests. Below is a portion of the fascinated audience in Council Bluffs.



## Dakota Southeastern Division Doings

### Upcoming events in our division and the Thousand Lakes Region NMRA

Our local NMRA division begins a busy spring and summer schedule with the Monday, April 7 meeting at Terry Anderson's in Harrisburg. Meeting time is 7:00 p.m. Check your recent email from chief clerk Rich Phillips for the agenda.

Next up on our schedule, the Thousand Lakes Region Prairie Lakes Division hosts our annual convention in Sioux City, Iowa. The dates are May 2 through 4. See the spring issue of The Fusee for details and registration information or contact PLD director John Davis at 712 852 2278. You won't find another TLR convention closer to Sioux Falls (until our division again hosts one).

The Caille Library in southwestern Sioux Falls welcomes back our division on Saturday, June 14 for another full day of model train displays, clinics, and an opportunity for kids of all ages to experience "driving the train."

The Granite, Iowa, Threshing Bee, to be held on July 19, also invited our ever-growing club modular layout to return for an encore performance. Stay tuned for details on this and other upcoming DSED activities in our area.

Compliments and thanks to the active division members dedicating their time and efforts to continue the surge in model railroad activities in and around the Sioux Falls area. Division membership, activities, and funding to continue promoting our hobby are at an all-time high water mark. It couldn't have happened without a core group of planners and the active participation by many members.



Another enhanced feature of the club layout is the variety, detail, and quality of structures, which makes the exhibit more interesting for the audience.



A unit grain train heads onto the mainline. The eight track staging yard provides new opportunities for long trains to enter and exit the display layout in an efficient fashion.

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# April Fool!

Did I have you falling for the “new theme” ruse? Let me know if you thought I was serious: [saatkamp@iw.net](mailto:saatkamp@iw.net). Come on—I know some of you were, especially DSED members!

## Australian Modellers (that’s how it’s spelled) model BN in PNW

The surprises awaiting my visit to Canberra last month included an N gauge operating session (my first) featuring—guess what? The Burlington Northern in the Pacific Northwest. Not only does host Steve Walker feature the BN, so does another member of the four man crew that evening. It was fun to see and operate on Steve’s layout, and as Brad promised, wife Lorraine’s treats were unsurpassed (on two continents at least).

Below left and clockwise: the BN crew at Steve Walker’s layout last week—Mal, John, Brad, Steve, and Greg; Superior Paper mill; Brad Hinton’s garage sized layout with nearly all the main deck benchwork complete; and another nicely modelled industrial area on Steve’s layout N scale highly detailed.

