



Lake Erie “N” Scale Society

“L.E.N.S.”

January 2019



NTRAK™

oNe-Track

T-TRAK™
N-Scale Modular Railroading

Fremo-N

Over 30 years of promoting model railroading!

Welcome! LENS is a group of people with a common interest in modeling N scale railroads using the "NTRAK" modular concept.

Any time we meet and/or display our work and promote this hobby, we would love to have you join us.

This means that ALL of us have chances to participate in the hobby by helping with any or all of the following:

**Setting up / tearing down
Running trains
Sharing your knowledge
Learning something new
Answering questions
Hosting a meeting**

Notice that NONE of the above requires a module. We need your help... so bring yourself, your enthusiasm, your interest and your trains.

Thanks in advance for helping!
Hopefully, we will continue to see you at the meetings and display events.

Come and join in the fun!

www.lensohio.org

The Lake Erie N Scale Society newsletter is published monthly for the sole use of its members by a crew of volunteers.

Opinions published here are solely those of the editor and/or the members of the Lake Erie N Scale Society.

This publication is intended to be a monthly newsletter describing the business, events and the common interest in N scale model railroading enjoyed by the members of the Lake Erie N Scale Society.

For information or questions regarding our Society, you may contact Dennis Lloyd at 440-352-7081 - or - (denlloyd@gmail.com)

Meetings normally start at 7:30 p.m., the fourth Friday of each month.

Last Month's Meeting

Last month we ran at the new site at FarmPark for Country Lights. This set-up featured the new 3 foot modules. Thank you to all who helped with set-up, running, and tear down. It was a successful show. Someone mentioned that the first night there were more spectators than the entire two weeks of the previous year.

This Month's Meeting

We will have the January meeting (Winterfest)) at 7:30 PM on January 25th at the actual home of Dave N. This is a great time to bring a spouse or a guest and some food to share. Dave also wants to share some updates on his layout. See you there! (Map attached.)

Next Month's Meeting

The February meeting will be at the home of Chuck L. on Friday, February 22nd at 7:30 PM. We will need to finalize the set-up for Railfest At Lakeland CC in March. This is our major set-up of the year. We need lots of help with set-up, running, tear down, and manning (or womaning) the sale table.

Looking for LENS apparel?



Contact Karen (440-347-0938) to order your favorite items. Quality, prices & selection to fit every budget!



From the Web

The Tantlinger twist lock

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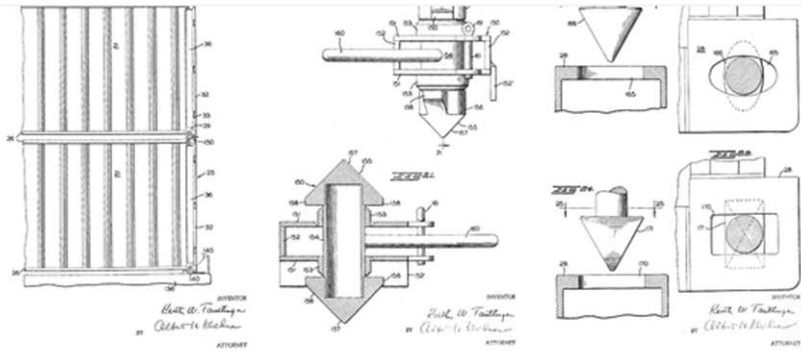
Invented in the mid-1950s by Keith Tantlinger, the simple device made it possible to stack cargo containers aboard ships and securely attach them to truck trailers and rail cars.

Twist locks are placed into the corner fittings of shipping containers, which can then be locked to others by turning a metal handle. They're simple to operate and extremely secure.

To be useful, containers had to be standardized, and others had developed rival ways of stacking them. But after Mr. Tantlinger persuaded his former employer to release the patent royalty free, it was adopted as an international standard.

These standardized stackable containers quickly replaced the manual loading and unloading of cargo and the cost of transport plummeted, ushering in the current era of global trade

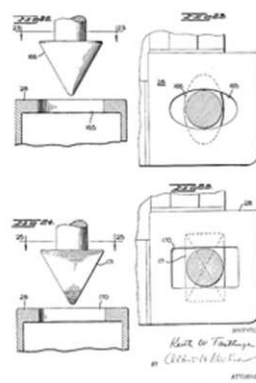
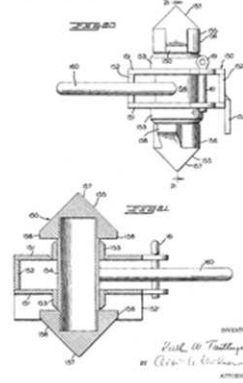
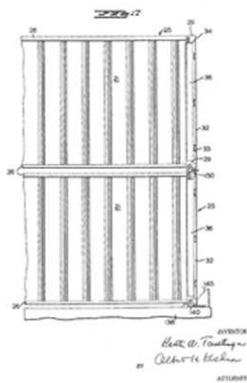
(See illustration on the following page,)



April 16, 1963 K. W. TANTLINGER 3,085,707
 PNEUMATIC SWITCHING ADAPTED TO BE USED IN
 Original Filed April 8, 1958 18 Sheets-Sheet 12

April 16, 1963 K. W. TANTLINGER 3,085,707
 PNEUMATIC SWITCHING ADAPTED TO BE USED IN
 Original Filed April 8, 1958 18 Sheets-Sheet 14

April 16, 1963 K. W. TANTLINGER 3,085,707
 PNEUMATIC SWITCHING ADAPTED TO BE USED IN
 Original Filed April 8, 1958 18 Sheets-Sheet 15



- Editor's note: This device is commonly referred to as an inter box connector (IBC).



One Person's Opinion on Ballasting

I've ballasted MILES of code 55 and 40 track in N scale and have come up with some methods that seem to work well for me.

First off, NEVER use Woodland Scenics ballast...it's not real rock. Anything that isn't real rock will float, no matter how much "wet water" you slobber onto it first. I also went out and actually measured the size of rocks on the UP mainline near where I live, and shopped around till I found real rock ballast that was the scaled-down size of the real ballast I measured. I did this because most of the "fine" and "N-scale" ballast that I was looking at appeared to be WAY big...and it was. HOWEVER Highball Products Ballast in "N" size is just right. Comes in seven different styles/colors, which is good because when I looked at the real stuff, I found out it was about four or five different colors, so I mix my ballast to get a close approximation of the real color. I'm sure there are a couple of other manufacturers (Arizona Rock and Mineral to name one) who also offer real-rock properly-sized ballast.

If you continue to have problems with your ballast not sticking to the sides of your cork, an easy solution is to go to Wal-Mart with a rock you like, get them to mix up a couple of pints of ULTRA FLAT Latex paint to match it...take it home, brush it on the sides of your cork and sprinkle on some ballast while it's still wet. Let it dry overnight, brush off the excess ballast (save it) and continue on....

Okay, now that you have the proper size and color of ballast mixed up, you might also find that branch lines and sidings have a different color of ballast...or in some cases...hardly ANY ballast at all...or what looks like just dirt and weeds. Railroads usually keep up their mainlines and well-used sidings the best. If you're modeling a modern, major railroad like UP or BNSF or even the recent SP or Conrail

etc. (you get the picture) they keep their mainlines really well maintained in the ballast dept. So, it might be a good idea to mix up a few different textures and colors to be able to readily apply them.

OH YES, did I mention that BEFORE you ballast you need to do a couple of things to your track. The first thing is to fill in all the spaces where there needs to be ties (mostly where you've used rail joiners). Make sure you don't just stick regular ties underneath the rail joiner spots...grind off a bit of the tie so that it clears the rail joiner underneath or your track will hump along with the tracks gaining a few thousandths every place there's a regular tie stuck under a rail joiner. The SECOND thing you should do is profile and rough-sand any sharp edges on your cork roadbed, ESPECIALLY the edge between the top and the angles on the sides. THEN, paint your rail. I use Krylon Flat Black and spray the track from both the inside and outside to make sure I cover both the inside and outsides of the rail. I then scrape off the tops of the rail before the paint dries completely and use my rail burnisher to polish the tops. I then paint the ties using the appropriate dark brown color by spraying directly down (vertically) onto the ties. A little overspray will get on the sides of the rails (which is good), but try to keep your spray can straight up from what you're spraying...then clean and burnish the tops again. By the way, keep your paint on the rails as thin, but covering as possible...don't glob it on. I then go through the foreground scenes and pick out some ties and make them different colors using various Floquil paints (Editor's note: These are discontinued. Substitute appropriate paint.) to represent new or old ties or just different colored ones. AND if your turnouts pick power up just by the points, you need to mask them before painting. If you use switch machines and DPDT routing relays/switches underneath your benchwork, then don't worry about it. Next, make sure all your holes are filled in your subroadbed. Be especially careful where

your electrical feeders come up. I use a little modeling clay (brown) to do this...it's easy, cheap and readily available.

You'll need to prepare some solutions and their applicators before you start socking down your ballast. Before you apply your adhesive you **MUST** pre-wet your ballast (as well as your ground cover) I use a fine atomizer to do this using "wet water"...just water with a little detergent in it. Liquitex also makes a surface tension breaker as well as Kodak (Photoflo) that also works well. Some people use a water/methanol combination...and it works well too. I prefer the "atomizer" (a very fine spray). I don't like to use a dose-dropper for pre-wetting my ground cover OR my ballast, as the dose-dropper will wash away your contours if you're not careful. I found a good, really fine sprayer is the one that comes with ACC glue Accelerant in it. After the accelerant is gone, I fill it full of wet water and use it to spray on my scenery and ballasting before applying my glue/water solution, but you can buy them empty. **NEVER** use an empty 409 sprayer or Windex sprayer or even the sprayers that Woodland Scenics sells...their spray is **MUCH** to **COARSE** and the water-bombs they produce will dimply your dry scenery if you use them to pre-wet it.

I used to use Matte-Medium/water to glue down my ballast, but I had a couple of bad experience with it leaving an ugly white residue, so now I use just plain old Elmer's white glue. Mix up a good portion of glue and water in a 60/40 solution (60 water/40 white glue and some detergent). Don't add a whole lot of detergent to it...you don't want it to foam and bubble...you just want it to break the surface tension of the glue/water solution so it'll soak down into your ballast. Get a big "dose-dropper" from your pharmacy...get a few of 'em. You'll be using them to apply your pre-mixed adhesive.

Another thing: If you're ballasting around turnouts, soak the closure points, throw rods and flexible rail joints with Labelle

Oil...before you start ballasting...the ballast glue won't stick to them and you'll be able to break them loose very easily after the glue has dried.

So, just brushing on your ballast isn't really optimal although some brushing will have to be done to get almost all the rocks off the tops of the ties and not stuck up against the sides of the rails. Mainline trackage has a "contour"...which is an actual specification laid down by the railroad you're modeling to provide drainage to the roadbed. Most likely you haven't gone to the trouble at this point to provide the proper contours to the terrain around your rails, but it's a good idea to make up some "ballast contouring" tools out of styrene to drag along the track before you sock your ballast down. This will do about eighty-five percent of the contouring of the ballast. You'll have to approximate it at turnouts, crossovers and anywhere there's a frog, crossing or diverging rails...but for the long stretches of mainlines, sidings and branch lines, your little contouring tools will make for really nice looking ballast. I've posted some pictures of the ballast contouring tools I made, along with pictures of ballasted track on my module in the Files section under Bob Gilmore's Stuff.

Okay, your ballast is pre-soaked with wet-water from your atomizer and now you're ready to apply your pre-mixed glue/water adhesive. I use a good sized dose-dropper and get real close to the tops of the ties (between the rails) and gently (GENTLY) soak the entire ballasted area...just let it run down to either side of the rails. Don't squirt your adhesive, or let it drip on your ballast as it will leave impressions or wash away your carefully contoured ballast profiles.

You can easily see where your adhesive is flowing because it's like thin milk...but rest assured, it will be invisible in the morning and your ballast (as well as your track) will be socked down, solid as a rock.

I can do long distances of ballast this way. Just remember that it's nearly impossible to contour your ballast after it's wet. If you screw up and apply more pressure from your dose-dropper than you should and wash away a bit of your ballast contour...just leave it till the morning, scrape it away and re-ballast it with dry ballast and re-wet it and re-soak it.

Now that your ballast is DRY and solidly stuck down, it's time to go and pick the rocks off the tops of your ties and off the sides of your rails. You will INEVITABLY have these little derailleurs there. Touch up your rail colors as sometimes pulling these off also scrapes the paint off.

Done yet????....well, ALMOST. Now is the time to weather your ballast and rails. I use an airbrush to shoot a very thin wash of grimy black or flat roof brown to the center of my rails. UP uses a rusty colored weed-spray on their main-lines and it's really evident in pictures and when I'm out rail-fanning. Your prototype might be different...but NOW is the time to do this over-all weathering...before your structures are in and your railroad is full of cars and engines that you'll have to take off to do this.

Okay...VOILA!!...wow...your track work looks SO great!!! A compliment to your ultra-detailed N-scale engines and cars that are available today!!

Have fun

Bob Gilmore
Ogden, UT

Beautiful rivers and ponds the easy way

Now that I am 70 years old, I am beginning to find that luck is the most important characteristic of a winner. For instance, I have always struggled with saw, hot wire, knife, etc. to form my rivers and ponds. It was very difficult to have a nicely contoured shape. It was impossible to have a gentle or steep slope to the water without building up the sides. But as I was struggling along with our 6th layout, I flipped my paint thinner rag on my train top, muttered some and went out of my train room. Now my train table top is hardboard, topped by two insulation sheets, each at 3/4" thickness, for 1 1/2". The next day I picked up my rag and looked in amazement. There was the perfect pond, about 15 inches in diameter. It had an uneven shape contour with a scrolled shoreline. The sloop went down 3/4". In most of the area it was a gentle slope to the bottom, but in one area it was quite steep. Since then I have made all sorts of shapes and depths in the insulation for rivers and ponds and house foundations and - well, you just name it, as I'll be trying it.

So don't be smart, just be lucky.

Fred

Time Capsule: Who are these young guys?



“F.R.E.D.”



See you at the next station!