



eCARIBOO

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BC Rail's North End 2008

by Colin Churcher

Despite CN Rail now operating BC Rail, the north end still provides great rail fanning opportunities, including seeing BCR units in service. The following observations were taken on my trip to British Columbia this past September. The trip took me from Dawson Creek to Quesnel and back.

September 23rd

The Dawson Creek Sub was quiet, with CN train 578/579 (The DC switcher) not running. The OSB plant was still in operation despite the recent downturn in BC's forest industry.

The Chetwynd yard was empty. There was not much activity in the yard or on the radio scanner. Very few cars were there, again most likely due to the current slow down with BC's forest industry. The lone locomotive for switching the yard and the Chetwynd pulp mill was the BCR B39-8E 1700 the Whistler Northwind painted unit.

CN train 473 (Prince George to Fort St. John) arrived at Chetwynd around 12:30. The lead unit was BCR Dash 8-40CMu 4625, with SD40-2 747, B39-8E 3904 and Dash 8-40CMu 4652. Lots of grain cars heading for Dawson Creek and Fort St. John, as well as box cars and bulk head flat cars.

The Mackenzie Subdivision was also very quiet today on the radio scanner. Last year, CN had a GP9-slug set for switching the yard, but nothing was

posted here. Both pulp mills are currently shut down, but there were still a number of lumber cars in the yard.

My next stop was to the Summit Lake Quarry, which is located at Mile Post 500. When I was there last year, numerous maintenance of way cars were stored here, probably awaiting scrapping in Prince George. This year the tracks were empty.

Not soon after I caught CN train 472 (Fort St. John to Prince George) at MP 500, with lots of grain cars heading for port. The train was led by Dash 8-40CMu's 4601 and 4620, CN uses mid-train units on southbound trains, SD40-2 764 and Dash 8-40CMu 4623 were used here.



September 24th

The Prince George yard was busy as usual. Gone now are the BCR CRS-20's, replaced primarily with CN's GP9's. The yard assignments now fea-



ture two locomotives with a slug in between them. GP9RM 7280, slug 273 and GMD-1 1444 were mated together. GP9RM's 7223 and 7041 with slug 260 were also mated together. Both were switching the classification yard.

Of other interests, CN still seems to be using a lot of the various BC Rail maintenance of way equipment. Most of these cars are now back in the yard, probably being stored for the winter. The scrap yard continues to see a lot of work, regrettably because this includes seeing a lot of BC Rail equipment getting scrapped. Oddly enough, a lot of the Government of Canada Branchline grain cars were being scrapped, amongst other BCR cars.

September 25th

My day was spent around the Quesnel yard. Similar to Prince George, switching the yard was a combination of GP9RM's with a slug in between them. 7065, 272 and 7236 were assigned here. Late in the day 7236 had electrical problems and was not in operation. This unit was mated to the slug. 7065 was not capable of operating with a slug, and was the only unit switching the yard and Two Mile Flat until the 7263 could receive maintenance.



Early in the evening, train 570 (Prince George to Squamish) arrived, with 4601, 4620 and 4623 powering the train. Minus 764, there were the same units that came out of Fort St. John two days ago. Train 571 was still in Williams Lake at this time, and I would not be able to see it. As well, later that evening the Rocky Mountaineer had stopped for the night, but it was too dark by this time for photographs.

September 26th

This final day was uneventful. North of Prince George I happened to see a coal train making its way south from the Tumbler Ridge subdivision with two CN units were in service here. The Mackenzie switcher (CN train 481)

was on the scanner today, with 4605 being the lead unit, but I did not get the opportunity to see it heading north.

This concluded my fall BC trip. The north end is probably the best place to see BC Rail, such as it is today. With trains heading to Chetwynd and Fort St. John, Mackenzie, Tumbler Ridge, as well as the Dawson Creek Subdivision, there still is plenty of opportunity to see some interesting operations.

Modeling BC Rail Passenger trains in N scale Part 1.

by Craig Aguiar-Winter

Like most train buffs I have some fond memories of riding a passenger train. My first trip was aboard the Royal Hudson in 1983. I was six years old and I still remember the Conductor helping me board the coach. Later in my teens I rode the Budd cars several times to Pemberton on high school cross-country skiing trips. My last trip on BC Rail was with my girlfriend (now my wife) aboard the Pacific Starlight Dinner Train. The thing that has always appealed to me about BC Rail was their eclectic mix of passenger trains. From the Railroad's beginnings in the Pacific Great Eastern days until the end of passenger service in 2001 they offered everything from regularly scheduled system wide service aboard the Caribou Dayliner to the one car, one way, once a day School Train. In a time when most other mainline freight railroads were doing everything to distance themselves from passenger service, BC Rail was catering to the rail fan with world-class trips aboard unique trains like the Royal Hudson Steam Train, the Pacific Starlight Dinner Train and the luxurious Whistler Northwind.

For the modeller, these trains are begging to be modelled and what better scale to this in than N scale. With the ability to fit so much into a small space it is the perfect scale in which to model passenger trains. N Scale has really come into it's own and these days there are a myriad of models available. With some needing only paint and decals, while others require extensive kit bashing, there is something for every skill level of modeller. I have researched many consists of BC Rail's trains and in the following article I will share my findings in hopes that it inspires someone to take the plunge and model one of these fantastic trains.

The Caribou Dayliner

The Caribou Dayliner was made up of Budd built self-propelled passenger cars called Rail Diesel Cars or RDC's. First purchased in the 1950's by PGE, they lasted until the end of passenger service in 2001 and wore no less than five different paint schemes over their careers. BC Rail used the RDC-1, RDC-2, and RDC-3 models.

These are by far the easiest BC Rail trains to model. Unlike HO Scale there are no decorated BCR RDC's but Kato offers all three models. The most notable differences between the prototype and the Kato models are on the ends. The models are what some refer to, as a "Phase One" while the

BCR cars are "Phase Two". The Phase Two cars have a raised roof top head light housing and larger end windows. The headlight housing would be an easy scratch build and the windows can be enlarged, but even by simply painting them one would have very realistic looking representations of these cars. Proper decals for all schemes were available from ORO decals but now out of print, they are getting harder to find. With out too much effort one could make decals by scaling down logos on an inkjet printer. With trains from one to six cars in length these trains are a perfect choice for those of us without basement empires.

Pacific Starlight Dinner Train

This train was in service from 1998 until the end of service in 2001. It offered travellers a sunset ride along the coast while enjoying meals prepared by chefs and accompanied by fine wine. Like a glimpse into the glory days of rail, travelers rode in gleaming, stainless steel clad, streamlined cars built by Pullman and Budd. Originally built as dining and lounge cars, the savvy rail fan could find hints to their origins, like the etched glass depicting the Empire State Building in the ex-New York Central car I rode in.

The eleven piece consist of this train is one of my favorites because it starts out incredibly easy to model, with virtually ready to run models, and as you progress through train you have to utilize just about every modeling trick out there. There are simple repaints, cast resin car bodies, etched sides, kit bashes, and some scratch building as well. As the length of your train progresses so do your modeling skills.

Dividing them into construction methods, I will describe each car starting with the easiest and getting more complex as I go.

Ready to Run Cars

Twilight, (ex-AT&SF Pleasure Dome #501) was built by Pullman. It is available in set "A" of Kato's "Super Chief" train set. Kato also released this car on it's own.

Budd built Dome Car *Moonglow* was originally Western Pacific #812 *Silver Feather*. This car was originally part of the famous California Zephyr. A beautiful model of it is available as part of Kato's California Zephyr train set.

Both of these cars require only a simple repaint.

Core Kits and Sides

The next two cars are made using etched stainless steel car sides from M&R Car sides. These sides are representations of the cars as they were while owned by the Santa Fe. Over the years they had alterations performed by their various owners. In comparing the sides with pictures of the BCR train you will see that some windows have been filled. This can be done

simply by filling the appropriate windows with styrene of the same thickness as the sides.

These sides require a core kit or stock car to use a base for the model. Accurate, smooth rolling Budd stainless cars are available from Con-Cor and Kato. (I prefer the Kato models as they are freer rolling and have electrical pick-up in the trucks for the Kato lighting units.) On the Con-Cor models, the roofs are molded as part of the windows. These work well as you can cut the sides off the body and laminate the new sides onto the windows however the Con-Cor models are pre-war units and have some differences. Kato has two types of Budd equipment. The older ones, offered in the original corrugated side sets, have a one-piece body. You would have to cut the sides away from the roof and ends. Extreme care would be needed to ensure a straight cut is made other wise when you mate the sides and roof together, the seam would have spaces. You would be better off using the newer style offered in the California Zephyr set. These post-war models have a removable roof. The method here would be to cut the sides from the body (or sand them thinner) and replace them with the etched sides. The roof would then slip back on as it did with the original sides. The sides to use for these two cars would be:

Lounge Car *Continental*

Ex-AT&SF #1389 - M&R Car Sides MSR-60-144

Lounge Car *Rainbow*

Ex-AT&SF #1971 - M&R Car Sides MSR-60-145

Kitchen Car *Savoy* and Dining Car *Apollo* were built in 1948 by ACF, as a two unit kitchen-diner set, for the C&O. Originally named *Hanover Kitchen* and *Botsford Tavern*, they managed to stay together their entire careers. To build these cars you would use laser cut styrene sides from Union Station Products (7605F & 7607F). The sides are available with either smooth or fluted sides. (While the BCR train has smooth sides I ordered the kits with fluted sides for reasons you will learn later.) As with the two previous cars a few windows need to be altered or filled. You could start with either an American Models Limited Pullman Standard core kit, or any Kato Pullman smooth side car. The core kits are pretty straight forward, but I would again go for the Kato models. Like the original Kato Budd sets, you would need to carefully cut the sides away from the roof but I think it is worth the trouble. The core kits lack some important details that the Kato Models have, like roof seams, end details, and correct trucks. While the core kits start out a bit cheaper by the time you add the extra details you need you will have overrun the cost of the Kato cars and, again, they use the same lighting kits making them the ideal choice in my books.

Dining Car *Manhattan* was originally NYC Dining Car #406. For this car I would start with two Kato Budd cars from the California Zephyr set as it has skirted sides like this car. You would cut them in half and reassemble them in order to get a car with no doors. Like the two ACF cars, #406 was built as part of a two-unit diner/kitchen set and while we

were lucky with *Savoy* and *Apollo*, these sets of cars were not very common and there are no sides available for this car. A fellow modeler shared a line drawing with me and because the windows are all located within the window band and it has no doors, modeling this car would actually be fairly simple. One way would be to print out the drawing in N scale and laminate it to some thin styrene. Then cut out all the windows. To mount them either glue them over the existing window band and cut out the portions of the car that interfere with the openings or cut out the window band entirely and brace the new piece for added strength. Then glue it as an insert creating a new window band. Another way you could try would be to load the drawing into a computer program like PhotoShop. You could then draw the stripes and windows and print out full colour sides on a clear transparency. I have seen this method used by another modeller in N scale and it looks quite good. You can even add the window gaskets. The new windows could then be mounted using either of the methods discussed above.

Cast Resin Shell

The Super Dome *Stardust* (ex Milw Rd. #58) is a very unique car. Built by Pullman for the Milwaukee Road, it originally had smooth sides. However at some point in it's life time it had stainless steel Budd style fluting added, most likely to match other cars in a consist. Years ago an N scale model of the Pullman Super Dome was offered in brass by Railway Classics, however I chose to use a cast resin shell offered by nscaleskytops.com. No matter which model you start with there are major alterations required so I opted not to do this to a \$300 brass model. On the resin shell the alterations are fairly easy. The sides are smooth and with out any detail so in addition to some windows needing to be filled, you also need to add a couple of vented equipment doors and the Budd style fluting. This is where the fluting from the Union Station Products sides comes in. USP offers Budd Fluting as a stand-alone product, but since it comes as a separate piece, you can save some money by ordering the sides with the fluting included. I mentioned the idea to USP and they were nice enough to change the fluting to the Budd style instead of the included Pullman Standard style. (Up to that point I did not know there was a difference, but there is!) As far as adding details to this car that is pretty much it. It is really very easy. The reason I ranked this car among the harder ones is because of the hours of preparation needed before you can even add parts to the shell. Now before I move, I need to say that I do not blame the person who makes them. He is one of those fellows who is a modeller before a manufacturer and was gracious enough to go through the effort to make these shells AND share them with the rest of us. Anybody who models BCR knows that we need to search every corner to find models that even remotely resemble what we want so while they require a ton of work, we are lucky to have these. So getting back to the preparation, every window and the bottom edges are filled with thick flash that needs to be carved out. Extreme care must be used in the dome section of the car or you run the risk of accidentally carving out the window frames. This car has sixty windows so turn on the TV and have at it. In order to keep them uniform in height I clamped a metal straight edge to the bottom windowsill. I then carved, filed, and sanded each window out down to the straight edge.

If you do not do this you could wind up with all your windows at different heights that will be very noticeable when looking down the side of the car. Do the same where the windows meet the roof, the wheel wells, and for the bottom edges of the car. I spent a total of about five hours on this. When it is done it looks really nice. The shell is designed to drop onto the under frame of a Bachman Budd full-length dome car. Newer models come with low profile wheels, which is a nice bonus. The pins on the frame line up with holes in the body but once assembled it looks like it will ride a little high compared to photos. I will wait to finish mine until I have built the cars that go before and after it. This way I can set the frame in a spot that ensures the rooflines of the train match. Detail in the Bachman shell is good and parts of it can be used to make the vented doors on our model. The interior is wrong for our car but it can also be used if you like. The fellow who made the shell says that the glass can be used but due to irregularities in the thickness of the roof it does not fit in my shell. I would not use the Bachman glass anyway because on the prototype the glass is flush mounted and with glass set back in behind the shell, it looks very toy like. I plan to mount thin clear styrene behind the windows and fill them in with layer after layer of Crystal Clear. I am not sure if it will work but it is a place to start. I think it is clear now as to why this car is near the top of the list for difficulty so I will move on.

Kit bashing

Budd built the Diner Observation Car *Indigo* as C&O 1921 in 1948. I thought for along time on how to build this one. The car is very unique and being at the end of the train, it is really one of the cornerstones of the consist. I looked at various etched sides available, an old observation car from Rowa, and others, finally settling on Kato's Budd Stainless Business Car, two of them actually. At first glance one would not think to use this car as a starting point, especially considering that it is not even an observation car. It is a business car with an open back porch. Oddly enough this is the exact reason I chose this car. Instead of focusing on what is missing, look at what is there. The roof profile is perfect, the end fluting is a match, the back door and windows are very close, and the marker lights are correct. These are important details that really give the car its identity. The rear window/door piece just pops out so to fix the back end I would use the piece out of both cars and close in the back of the car. This simple modification completes the hardest part of the car without having to scratch build any of the complex curves and fluting. The right side of the car has the side door and the correct number of windows but they need to be rearranged. Also some are a little too short in length but I would choose to leave them so as to be able to use the Kato window glass. Compare with photos to plan the location of the new windows. Cut the entire window band out and cut the windows into individual pieces. Then rearrange them on a piece of styrene strip using a straight edge to keep them lined up, almost like a game of Scrabble. Once you are happy with the placement glue them down and use spare window band parts of the cars to fill in the spaces between the windows. Now glue the new window band back into the car. The same

procedure can be followed on the left side of the car with the inclusion of the door from the second car.

Power Car *Borealis* was built by CC&F as a Steam Generator car for the CN, and converted to a head end power car by BC Rail. It closely resembles a boxcar, but with some doors and vents so that is exactly how I would proceed with the model. In appearance it is very close the 40ft boxcar offered by Intermountain and a good-looking model can be built using two of them. Cut the first car into pieces on either side of the sliding door, discarding the center. Two more panels are required where the door once was so cut these out of the other car. Once reassembled you have a twelve-panel car that looks much the Power Car. Discard the dreadnaught boxcar ends and replace them with flat styrene. Once the roof details and doors are scratch built we have really nice looking model of *Borealis*.

Power the dinner train was usually CRS-20 (RS-18u) 601. I have chosen the locomotive as the hardest part to build because it will require the most scratch building. To begin you could use a Kato RS-11 or Trueline Trains RS-18. Both need to have the noses chopped, fuel tanks rebuilt, and extensive reworking of the long hood. Articles in the *Caribou* can be of help in building this one, but your best asset would be good close-up photos. I plan to leave this one until the very end in hopes that one of our Resin Wizard Friends will release a shell. We have seen many new offerings over the past couple of years and I have a hunch this one will come along soon enough.

When 601 was out of service, other locomotives were used to power the train as well. These included several B36-7s but realistically you could use any locomotive, as power would likely have been assigned based on what was available at the time. Atlas made two blue white and red lightning striped models numbered 3606 and 3616. Either of these would be realistic.

Part 2 will go into the detailing and painting of the models.

Motive Power Department

by Paul J. Crozier Smith

CN has retired all the remaining RS-18u's and slugs as follows: 404 1/2008, 405 12/2007, 406 1/2008, 407 11/2007, 410 11/2007, 604 1/2008, 605 12/2007, 607 1/2008, 610 1/2008, 615 9/2007, 617 2/2008, 629 5/2008 and 630 3/2008. Also retired was SD40-2 758 10/2007.

CN has painted the first BC Rail unit into CN scheme with BC Rail sublettering, Dash 8-40CMu 4515 was done in the fall of 2008.

Complete: 2009-01-09

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PJCS