



Dennis Andreas

Railroad Report

MoW Truck by Bachmann

A unique piece of rolling stock that will add interest to any layout.

MoW (Maintenance of Way) trucks are utility vehicles that can run on the street as well as the rail system. This is accomplished with a set of rail wheels and axles at each end of the vehicle. They can be raised for street use and lowered to ride the rails. The drive tires of the vehicle make sufficient contact with the rails to motivate it. These vehicles can take many shapes, from a simple pickup to trucks with cranes and more.

During WW II and the Korean War, deuce and a half (two and 1/2 ton) trucks and jeeps were converted to ride the rails as ambulance and troop transports. These early conversions were made in the field and the vehicles could not be used on both the street and rails. The concept caught on and the idea was developed further. The results are the MoW. These vehicles are used by all rail lines, and there's a simple reason: the bottom line with a vehicle such as the MoW is its versatility. They are not dedicated to only one mode of function; they can be driven on either the street or placed on a set of railroad tracks.

These work horses are key to rail maintenance. A person who looks can find them at any rail yard or railroad construction site. Whether they are hauling ties or repairing signaling, they are a required tool in the maintenance of a rail system.

Bachmann has provided us with a great model of an HO MoW Hi-Rail Equipment Truck with Crane in the scheme of the Norfolk and Southern rail line #16902, and

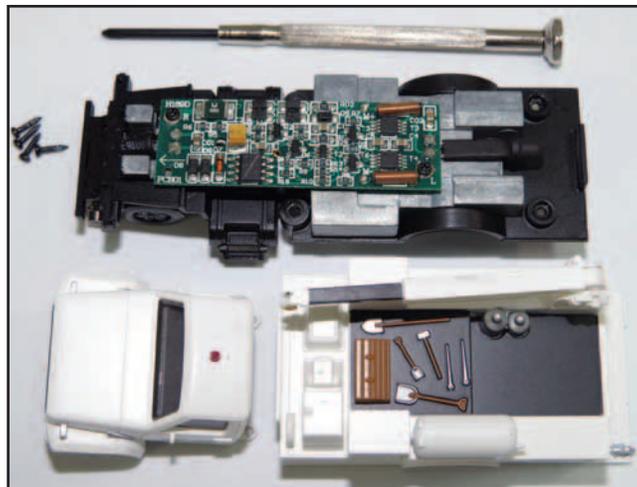


it includes the well known NS Thoroughbred logo on the door. The truck is DCC equipped for smooth control and has functioning front and rear lights. The crane can be positioned manually to simulate the movement of materials around a layout.

To add to the realism, there are tools molded into the truck bed along with equipment like an air tank, generator and welder. There is plenty of additional room in the bed for a customer to add his own touch of equipment to complete the task of the day.

Drive is provided by a can motor which provides traction to all four wheels. The motor and drive assembly is mounted on a cast metal chassis with some additional molded chassis detail of the type customers appreciate in the products offered by Bachmann. Since this is a work truck and not a locomotive there are no couplers provided or needed. Although the MoW is DCC compliant it will operate on a DC only powered layout.

For added stability on the track, the main tires have been equipped with flanges, though from the side they look like regular rubber truck tires. The simulated rail wheels float free and ride the rails exactly as the full scale. The headlights and tail lights are dimmable with the F1 button on an E-Z Controller, and as is standard, on/off is controlled by the F10 button.



As evidenced by the jeweler's screwdriver, the MoW is not a large vehicle, but it will offer a great deal of realism to a layout.

I found the operation to be very smooth with acceleration and braking. Though it is not in the instruction manual, it appears the braking is dynamic. Warn the purchaser to be careful the first time he puts the little MoW on the rails, as this truck has some get up and go. The last thing a store owner wants to deal with is a disgruntled customer who's returning a damaged piece of rolling stock that went flying off the rails. At the absolute most, no more than half throttle is necessary for scale operation.

Bachmann offers a number of different Maintenance of Way vehicles in HO. This particular Hi-Rail is also offered in Conrail Yellow. And even though I'm not one to paint a piece of rolling stock, Bachmann offers this model in unlettered basic white. And the MoW could be a perfect canvas for a customer just starting in painting and detailing his personal stock or perhaps a customer looking for project that's a little different from the norm. Presently in the 2013 catalog there are 12 different models to



Top: A scene reminiscent of dropping replacement ties at a tunnel mishap was recreated. Right: There is plenty of room for the modeler to add a few details of his own to the spacious cargo bay of the MoW crane truck.



choose from. This includes ballast vehicles, spreaders and other truck types, so there are plenty of options available to select from.

To display the MoW, a scene similar to a tunnel mishap was created. Some balsa stained to look like creosote rail ties and a couple of yellow hats (bosses) finish the scene. The rail crew should be arriving on a Bachmann MoW crew bus at any minute.

Vehicles of this type are perfect for your customer who wants to add a bit of realism to

a portion of a layout that may still be under construction.

The price of these units is reasonable considering the product is unique, good looking and a nice operating vehicle. Convince your customer to add a crane truck or ballast vehicle and maybe a pickup and crew bus. These pieces of rolling stock will add tremendously to the scene of that unfinished area. **HM**

Digitrax TOOLBOX APP

Easy to use tools to enhance your Digitrax experience!
FOR FREE!



Available on the iPhone
App Store

Download now @
www.digitrax.com!

