

**TCA EASTERN DIVISION YORK MEET  
YORK, PA FAIRGROUNDS  
OCTOBER 15 – 17, 2009  
SHOW REPORT**

**OVERVIEW**

This was our third show event at the TCA Eastern Division York Meet, Black Hall, and a very successful show it was! We had 22 Trackers participating with table modules and several “Passenger” Trackers helping with setup, takedown, and layout operations. Although the entire York, PA area had rain over the three meet days, this did not prevent very large crowds of TCA members and guests from enjoying our layout, particularly on Friday and Saturday.



This was perhaps our largest and most complex layout we have done for any show so far. Ed Beaver designed a marvelous “dual football” layout with a cross-over module connecting the two “footballs”. A special thanks to both John Harper for first proposing football shaped layouts in February 2007 and Skip Scheetz for his prior planning work for York. The lower “B” loop (towards the rear of the Hall) contained Mike Fistere’s multi-track Yard which was a great addition. We staged many trains in this yard and, via the track switches, ran trains to and from the main line.

The upper “A” loop had two yards, Potomac Yard and Outside Yard, and trains were staged in these yards as well. Also, there was a “middle loop” here where we ran conventional mode trains. We had some attractive bridges, including the “Hundred Year” Bridge.

With each large loop have its’ own “inner loop”, we had the long “outer loop” that traversed the entire “dual football” via the cross-over module. This was a major crowd pleaser as we ran up to three separate trains simultaneously on this loop using the DCS and TMCC Command Systems. Of course, the operators were “on their toes” to avoid collisions at the cross-over (we had a couple – that’s the way it goes in the “Krash Wilson” tradition).

Perhaps our biggest crowd pleaser was our 124 car train that wrapped an entire “football” to close the event. The trick was to have just the right amount of cars such the train would just miss crashing into its’ tail at the cross-over. We did this on the last day and the 124 car train was announced over the fairgrounds PA system. The crowd erupted with cheers as a collision was missed by less than inch! The only glitch happened twice when Ed Beaver attempted to restart the 124 car train on the Horseshoe Curve and managed to have the 20 BEEPS pull the cars off-of-the-track ☺!

The DCS System, often a concern at our shows, performed admirably over the entire length of our 120’ layout. We used the middle track isolators, filters on some club modules, and a nearly star feed from interconnects near the crossover – our experimental efforts have paid-off! The TMCC System also

performed well. We had minimal layout malfunctions (blown power fuse, track power interruption on one switch) and we overcame these fine.

Setup and takedown went very well. We had an early start on Tuesday and Wednesday, before the start of the Meet. About 10 Trackers set up about 60% of the layout (the cross-over, Mike's Yard, Potomac Yard and Outside Yard) and performed electrical checks. The remainder of the set up finished up efficiently on Thursday AM and we were running trains in plenty of time prior to the 12:00 start time. We had spectators through 1:30pm on Saturday. Takedown on Saturday was hectic with a two hour schedule and a difficult load in the rain – a few items are missing.

There were technical problems with donuts. On Thursday, Ed Beaver was unable to bring Maple donuts. Somehow they disappeared anyway. Jack Frost provided technical assistance to deliver Maple donuts on Friday.

We received many, many complements on our show layout, plus the Eastern Division of TCA made a \$125 cash contribution to the Trackers. The TCA President, Clem, told us of all the very positive feedback he received on the Black Hall Show.

We did it! In spite of the hard work and bad weather.

## MODULE HIGHLIGHTS

Visitors entering from the front doors (North) were immediately greeted by outstanding country themed modules by Rick Eudy, Craig Schelle, and George Tsakiris. On the West side of Loop A, Bob Easton and Andrew Isreal set-up the Potomac and Outside Yards to provide an impressive staging area for 30 car trains – this was connected on a curve with Dick Myer's helpful local Yard. The East Side of Loop A contained the Horseshoe Curve handled by Carl Condon – a truly impressive display when traversed by large PRR locomotives pulling long trains. The fact that we had an active middle track helped with the modeling of the Horseshoe Curve operations. Of course the outstanding new module was Regis Harkins' scratch built model of Pittsburgh Steel Mill – many rave comments! The return of the cross-over module, scenically enhanced and maintained by Brian Turner, surely provided the interesting centerpiece at which visitors could be embraced all around by the layout.

South of the cross-over, the West side of Loop B started with Joe Helsing's industrial area and connected to John Zampino's bridge now updated with a Bill Buschmeier heritage town scene. Don Robert's factory area got isolated by our string of bridges which actually provided an interesting sequence of scenes. Next, Jack Frost's construction theme modules used real mulch to create a very realistic scene. At the South end of Loop B, Gil Balwin's country scene transitioned nicely into Glen MacKinnon's small town street scene enhanced by a rich variety of figures and supporting details. Heading up the East side of Loop B, Fred Koester's Grain Silo theme modules were rich in detail. Across the extra 2 foot bridge (accommodating the Yard length), Chuck and Michelle Pestacchi's amusement park provided an interesting action area. Mathew Kehn's village scene illustrated what extra scenic details can do with conventional Plastic Buildings. Steve Kehn's Halloween village provided an appropriate Fall Theme. Continuing around the Curve, John and Karen Harper added a great amount of rocky hills scenery to Dave Sealing's T-module entrance to the Yard and roundhouse area. John's outstanding roundhouse and turntable was a focal point for the layout. At one point, John was able to help a young man test his new purchase in the Yard – a good step to building

interest and fellowship in the hobby. Another focal point of the layout was Mike Fistere's impressive looking 32 foot long eight track yard – always a center of activity. Together, John's roundhouse and Mike's Yard make a truly spectacular display of railroad maintenance and storage areas that cannot be easily created in most layouts.

John and Nik Masiyowski joined TCA at York and operated trains and helped with takedown on Saturday. Throughout the event, Skip Scheetz seemed to be everywhere lending a helping hand and answering questions for the crowd. Dave Eadie also helped with takedown.

## PERSPECTIVES

(1) The 14 hours of elapsed setup times by smaller groups on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday morning could have been overlapped but we estimate it would still require about 7 hours of setup time for a layout of this size and complexity. Takedown was complete in 2 hours but rushed. We were lucky that the York Show Black Hall has easy unload/load access. Other venues for such a large layout need to have the setup/closedown access and time schedule considered carefully.

(2) Stowage and loading of equipment needs to be done carefully. We are missing items such as the T-modules, the Maryland Fiber pins, and the Gargraves Pin supply supporting the Middle Track Kit. Any insights?

(3) We used the Virginia Corners for the Layout – some had tracks out of the ties and had to be re-assembled during the setup. This means that safe handling and transport of the Club modules remains a challenge since the corners had been used twice in the previous two months. Does anyone have any suggestions on improvements?

Thanking everyone for their contributions and hard work,  
Trackmasters,  
Ed Beaver and Joe Helsing