

Next Meeting:

3 May 2003

See Meeting Program On Last Page. 10 May 2003

- West Carrollton Civic Center
- Meeting time 7:00 PM
- 

## CSX News....

### *Lease Locomotives Head For Storage ...*

CSX is currently leasing just over 400 locomotives for use in peak traffic seasons. During March, many of these locomotives went into storage. "Our leased locomotives rank below our owned fleet by several percentage points in terms of reliability," said Mike Wall, vice president Mechanical. A recent analysis has shown that they cost more to operate in the long run because of more frequent breakdowns, as determined by a variety of measurements.

"In the last few years, our arrangement with the supplier is that we only pay for days that we use the leased locomotives," Wall said. "By using our more reliable owned fleet, we expect to increase locomotive availability as well as save money. This will help us free up resources - crews and maintenance employees - and keep our system more fluid."

### *On The Ground ...*

Derailments are always a problem (that goes without saying) but to have a mishap, even a minor one, at one of the busiest locations on the railroad makes for headaches all the way around. On March 25, five loaded auto racks of Q278-25 (Toledo to Baltimore multi-levels) derailed as the train traversed the Fostoria Subdivision northeast wye at F Tower in Fostoria, OH, enroute to the Willard Subdivision from the Columbus Subdivision. All five cars remained upright but blocked both main tracks of the Willard Subdivision, the Columbus Street grade crossing and Norfolk Southern's Fostoria District main line. An undetermined number of trains were halted in both directions on both CSX main lines leading into the city. Trains were held at Garrett, IN, Willard, OH, Lima, OH, Toledo and Colum-

bus when it became apparent that line through Fostoria would be out of service for more than just a few hours. NS trains also suffered substantial delays until the CSX-NS diamond was cleared of the rest of Q278. The first track on the Willard Sub was re-opened later that evening while the second main track was restored to service after midnight.

The derailment of Indianapolis to Cincinnati train Q360 on the evening of March 23 on the Cincinnati Terminal Subdivision (Toledo Subdivision) just south of the Hamilton depot played havoc with the joint CSX-NS directional running between Cincinnati and Hamilton. No one was injured in the accident that put five cars on the ground, including one of carbon black powder. Several spectators on a nearby street got dusted with that messy substance after a truck spilled part of its load while leaving the cleanup site.

Northbound CSX and NS trains use CSX's Cincinnati Terminal Subdivisions between Winton Place interlocking in Cincinnati and Butler Street interlocking in Hamilton. Southbound NS and CSX trains use NS's New Castle District between Butler Street and Sharonville, OH (CP-Evendale) and NS's Dayton District between Sharonville and Winton Place.

The derailment created an interesting routing for Amtrak's Cardinal. After attempting the train pulled onto CSX at Butler Street, it was determined that the Cardinal could not back up and pull onto its normal route on the Indianapolis Subdivision at the Hamilton depot because of the derailment. Instead, the train headed north on Toledo Subdivision to Sidney, OH, took the Sidney connection onto the Indianapolis Line Subdivision (Bee Line) then headed east to Ridgeway, OH, where the train was turned on the Ridgeway wye

tracks. The Cardinal then headed west to Indianapolis on the Bee Line, arriving several hours late. The derailment was cleared up by 18:00 on March 24.

### *Operations Update ...*

Following the completion of recent track work projects between New Orleans and Montgomery, CSX has revised the schedules of several trains operating through Montgomery, AL. Pensacola-Atlanta trains Q610 and Q611 have had their southern terminus changed back to Montgomery. Northbound Q610 still operates daily and is due out of Montgomery at 23:45 and into Atlanta's Tilford yard by 09:30 the next morning. Counterpart Q611 departs Tilford at 20:30 and is due into Montgomery by 06:00 the next day.

To replace these trains south of Montgomery, CSX is once again running trains Q520 (Goulding Yard/Pensacola-Birmingham) and counterpart Q521. The Q520 departs Pensacola around 04:00 and is due into Birmingham by 23:00. Southbound Q521 departs Birmingham around 22:30 and is due into Pensacola at 16:45 the next afternoon. Both trains perform work at Montgomery and several other points as needed.

The West Yard at Corbin, KY, is typically used for the staging and inspection of unit coal trains. However, it is sometimes used for swapping blocks of autoracks. During early 2003, it has once again been performing that duty for multilevels originating in the Midwest that are destined to Georgia, Florida and South Carolina. For years, CSX has typically run an afternoon fleet of southbound autorack trains daily out of Cincinnati on the former L&N route to Atlanta via Corbin. These include trains Q211 (Cincinnati-Cayce, SC), Q213 (Cincinnati-Baldwin, FL) and Q215 (Cincinnati-Jacksonville). These trains are now stopping at Corbin as required to pick up connections from Q243, a train that runs most days between Detroit and Corbin.

In addition to making connections with the traditional three southbounds, CSX has been running a Q221 train several days per week between Corbin and the GM auto distribution center in Lawrenceville, GA. The other southbound autorack train on the line is Q245 (Detroit-Jacksonville) and it too works Corbin when needed. CSX will also abolish Q215 on days when Q245 can handle all the Jacksonville cars south from Cincinnati and Corbin. Empty racks return north on trains Q210 (Cayce, SC-Walbridge, OH), Q218 (Atlanta- albridge), Q228 (Baldwin, FL-Marysville, OH), and Q236 Baldwin-Walbridge). Q210 runs daily, but the others only when traffic dictates. That can be five or six days per

week for some of these trains and once or twice weekly for others.

### *NS News....*

#### *Peavine Update ...*

As reported last month, NS recently rerouted Greensboro, NC-Chicago intermodal trains #217/#218 off the route through Cincinnati back to their old route via Columbus and Bellevue, OH. This leaves the former N&W's "Peavine" route between Portsmouth and Cincinnati devoid of any scheduled through traffic. There has been speculation among local employees that the line will eventually be severed as a through route due to the costs of maintaining the Scioto River bridge at Vera, OH, near Portsmouth. Ice storms this past winter also took a toll on the aging CTC system and its position light signals.

However, at least for now, NS continues to operate unit coal, sulfur and grain trains via the route. As of April, an average of one loaded and one empty were traversing the Peavine daily. These include coal train #84A operating between Pocahontas Division mines and Indianapolis. Most of the grain traffic originates in the Midwest and is destined for export at the Port of Norfolk or feed mills in Virginia and the Carolinas. The Indiana & Ohio also delivers eastbound grain to the NS at Clare Yard. In addition to these trains, local L51 (currently base out of Portsmouth) works local customers during daylight hours.

#### *Which Route Now? ...*

Last month, we discussed changes made to the routings of three trains between Bellevue and Cincinnati, OH, via Fort Wayne, IN. No sooner did that issue go to press than NS changed them back to their old routes! Bellevue-Chattanooga manifest train #179 is again scheduled to operate via Columbus and Dayton. It departs Bellevue during the early morning, Columbus' Buckeye Yard by noon and arrives at Gest Street Yard in Cincinnati around 20:00. Northbound #180 (Chattanooga- Bellevue) departs Gest Street in the mid afternoon and arrives Bellevue by early the next morning. Automotive train #287 (Bellevue-Shelbyville, KY) departs Bellevue around noon and arrives Cincinnati by midnight. All three trains are subject to occasional rerouting via Fort Wayne whenever capacity issues on the Columbus route dictate.

With the addition of #180 back on the Dayton District between Cincinnati and Columbus, NS has revised the

schedule of train #116 out of Chattanooga. Instead of terminating at Buckeye Yard, it now operates only as far as Sharonville Yard north of Cincinnati. After dropping CSX interchange traffic at Gest Street Yard, it continues north to Sharonville with local traffic and a Canadian National/Detroit block to be picked up by the Indiana & Ohio. The power from the train is either moved back south to Gest Street by a transfer job or it is towed to Buckeye an eastbound, such as #180.

#### *Red Means Stop ...*

On the afternoon of April 5, westbound Sperry Rail Services test car 141 failed to brake in time at a stop indication displayed at Root Road interlocking in Sheffield, OH, on the NS' Buffalo line. This is west end of double track and unfortunately the switch was occupied by eastbound train #14T (Bellevue-Bison Yard/Buffalo). The NS pilot conductor and the Sperry car operator both jumped prior to impact with the side of the moving eastbound. Both were treated for minor injuries at a local hospital. The Sperry car sustained heavy damage, but fortunately #14T did not derail from the impact, although the rear 63 cars of its train were set off for inspection by mechanical forces.

#### *Power Notes ...*

Helm Leasing has acquired the following 24 former Conrail GP38-2s that NS elected not to renew the leases on: NS 5362, 5363, 5364, 5365, 5368, 5369, 5371, 5372, 5373, 5374, 5376, 5378, 5379, 5380, 5381, 5382, 5383, 5384, 5386, 5387, 5388, 5389, 5391 and 5393. NS has been storing the units at Enola, PA, and Helm is sequentially renumbering them into the HLCX 3817-3840 series.

#### *Intermodal Update ...*

During the first few months of the year, NS has made several revisions to how it handles intermodal traffic in the Detroit-East Coast corridor. All eastbound traffic from Detroit's Livernois intermodal terminal now moves on new train #20V (Wayne, MI-Maple Heights, OH). It operates Monday-Friday, departing Livernois around 21:30 and arrives in Cleveland's Maple Heights intermodal terminal around 06:00. At Maple Heights, its intermodal traffic is picked up by #24V (47th Street/Chicago-Dockside, NJ) after the latter completes setting off its Cleveland traffic from Chicago. Train #24V then handles the traffic from Detroit to Harrisburg, PA, where connections are made to Baltimore (#22M) and Norfolk (#228). Dockside traffic continues through to destination on #24V.

As a result of these changes, #228 is now a Harrisburg-Norfolk schedule instead of a Detroit-Norfolk run. It operates Monday and Wednesday-Saturday, departing the Harrisburg ramp around 04:00 and arrives in Norfolk the next morning by about 03:15. It continues to pick up at the Virginia Inland Port intermodal terminal near Front Royal, providing second morning availability at the Port of Norfolk.

NS continues to run counterpart #227 all the way through to Livernois/Detroit via Harrisburg, originating at Norfolk on Monday-Friday evenings. NS is also continuing to run the pair of Lynchburg-VIP trains on Mondays in order to handle weekend traffic not covered by #227 and #228. These trains are morning northbound #24G (Lynchburg-VIP) and evening counterpart #22G. At Lynchburg, these trains make connections to Norfolk with east-west intermodal trains.

#### *Shorts ...*

On the morning of March 26, train #184 (CN/Toledo, OH-Norfolk, VA) derailed 13 cars at the east end of the yards in Bluefield, WV. The derailed cars struck a switch heater's propane tank, resulting in a fire that destroyed the contents of at least one loaded autorack. Fortunately, no one was injured and the adjacent yard tracks allowed trains to continue operating past the wreck site until cleanup could be completed ...

As of early April, signal crews had completed the installation of at least five new color-light signals on individual masts at East Conway, PA. They feature full-hood sun visors and once placed in service, will replace the PRR position light signals that had protected the interlocking for several decades ...

The March 30 derailment of a Consumers Energy coal train on Canadian National's Flint Subdivision near Belleview, MI, resulted in several CN trains detouring from South Bend, IN to Detroit via the NS through Toledo. CP train #534, one of the Chicago-Toronto overheard trains that use the CN across Michigan, was also run via Toledo ... During April, the Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern gave notice to NS that it was terminate their existing interchange agreement, and would transfer their interchange point covering local traffic from Lehighton to Penobscot, PA. NS then petitioned the Surface Transportation Board to order the RBM&N to maintain the Lehighton gateway until the two roads can mutually reach a new interchange agreement.

## **Update To Meeting Pro-**

## **gram.....**

Please note that the following is a last minute update to this month's meeting as well as an advanced notice to the next two months meetings.

I received this update after this months newsletter was printed.

**This month's feature show will be presented by an outside guest, Dan Macke. Dan is a railroader and will be sharing his photographs taken in Cincinnati during the early 70's. Special thanks to Brad McClelland for helping to arrange this guest presentation, which should be a good one.**

As an ADVANCE notice, the June 14 (next month's!) meeting is currently planned for Steve Hood's house just north of Carlisle. Steve has indicated that people are welcome to arrive earlier this year (from 5:00 on) and bring food/snacks/beverages as they wish. We'll show slides in the garage as soon as light allows. Until then, we'll socialize, watch trains, and have a general good time.

Also, the July picnic at Sidney is currently slated for the second Saturday, the 12th. More information will be sent in the newsletter as the time approaches.