



With spring finally in the air after a notably hard winter season, a National Capital Trackers (NCT) [<http://www.nattrackers.org/>] show in the month of May got off to a great start at the Chantilly Regional Public Library in Chantilly Virginia. [<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ch/>] This show represents the third annual event in a unique venue and alignment with the celebration of National Train Day (NTD). [<http://www.nationaltrainday.com/s/>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Train_Day]

Setup

Setup started around 4pm on a Friday afternoon with the Trackmaster and other members getting things underway. John was joined by Bob and later by fellow trackers Frank H, Jim M, Jack F & grandson, Joe H & John E. Rick dropped off the VA club trailer a little while later. The power module was installed by Jack in just a matter of minutes without any sparks. Set-up went smoothly although a bit slower than before with trains running around 7:00 pm for completion of the 20'x28' layout. This was the first layout since the York Show that featured three rails operating on all modules along with the two-piece wide radius curves and the club's standard module wiring harness. Thanks to Frank for working on Joe's modules for conversion to three tracks the week before the show. Setup stopped by around 7:35pm with most modules being populated with buildings, scenery, trains, and other displays. In order to use the wide radius curves, a reduction of four straight modules were necessary in order to maintain the same overall layout size. Jim graciously removed one of his modules from the layout so that the geezer gate could be included in the configuration. Setup continued the following morning starting around 8:15am with additional members adding scenery and getting ready for show operations. The Tracker's banner was displayed outside the library entrance for additional awareness to library patrons.

Show Operations

Trains started running around 9am on Saturday in preparation for a 10am show opening. As soon as the library opened at 10am, our first of many spectators arrived. A large number of your train enthusiasts were in attendance along with their parents. Feedback from a few of these spectators was that their attendance was specifically to view the train layout. Through the entire day there were as continuous stream of spectators viewing the layout and asking members questions about their scenery, engines, trains, rolling stock, National Train Day and the National Capital Trackers club. Along with the power

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module and the new wiring harness, train operations were smooth all day except for two minor issues, the 1st being with Joe's steamer that kept jumping the track on the outside line near the end of a curve section, and the 2nd was with one of Bob's engines with respect to being unable to remove a latch-up.

Garrett and son dropped by around 1:30pm for a while to partake in the fun. Jake E joined in the activities around 3pm.

An estimated 250 people viewed the layout during the one day, seven hour show. Some spectators asked if the show was also on Sunday and called friends to come and view the one day train show.

This show provided over 21 hours of running time on three tracks, with most trains running over an hour on the same track. With the ample space inside the layout for staging and the sign-up sheet for train running times, train switch over among members were executed smoothly and relatively quickly. Thus, train changing operations were smooth and were not adversely affected by the lack of an inside yard. Small layouts such as this one can operate very nicely without a yard. During the show, most tracks were running a single train with the occasional track occupied by a classic freight with Thomas or James in close pursuit. Use of the wide radius curves allows large steam engines to traverse the layout without incident except where noted previously.

There were no DCS or TMCC issues during the show.

Takedown

Layout take-down started around 4:00pm with the usual scenery and accessories leading the way. With a show ending at 5pm, take-down was completed around 6:05pm with Rick helping to load and return Krash 1. During the takedown a spectator, Ron requested to watch the end of show activities. Soon after the show ended, this spectator was recruited to actively participate in the take-down and loading of Krash 1.

Rick observed that the new wide radius curves already have minor track damage, which may be the result of transport between the trailer and a show venue. Added protection of these club assets is under consideration at the present time.

The Chantilly Library staff extended an invitation to the Trackers to return next year during National Train Day, 9th May 2015.

Thanks to all who participated and attended. ☺

John M., Trackmaster
18 May 2014

P.S.

The spectator and take-down assistant Ron joined the Trackers club as a Passenger on May 16th.