



John Sipple

Sipple on Trains

Walthers' Union Pacific City Trains Series

A look at cars number seven, eight and nine

The complete series of Walthers' Union Pacific City Trains will consist of 14 different cars and two locomotives when fully complete. This issue's offerings include numbers seven, eight and nine. Walthers is releasing them at the rate of about one car a month, and this is a wonderful recession-resistant form of marketing. The series delivery runs over 15 months and lets customers buy gradually. You can also help a late bloomer buy previously released cars. If a customer doesn't want the entire set but perhaps only one loco and eight cars, that can be arranged quite easily.

During 1953 Union Pacific decided it needed help at the front of the train. UP determined that it not only had additional baggage needs but also needed more space for bulk mail and express freight for Railway Express Agency. REA owned a fleet of trucks for delivery to and from terminal stations all over North America and handled parcel traffic along with heavy freight. At the time this was considered high-speed service and offered a good profit for the railroad. The cars were marked REA. From 1953 until the loss of postal service contracts in 1967, most passenger trains were pulling several "front-end" cars. These cars rode on six-wheel trucks, reflecting the heavier loads they carried. They often employed a messenger, so there was a berth along with office space and lavatory.

In addition to the REA cars, UP added what appeared to be a combine, or part coach and part baggage car. In truth, this was a baggage-dormitory car. Passenger luggage went into the baggage section, and there was also a 35-foot section that served as a dorm for the on-train service crew. The dormitory section featured windows



From top to bottom, the three Walthers UP City cars reviewed are the Baggage car, Baggage-Dorm and the Cafe-Lounge. All three cars are posed with the front of the car to the left.

along with tiered bunk beds and lavatory facilities. It was soon found that with trains as long as 20 cars, heating from the locomotives back to the last car was inadequate, so several of the baggage-dorm cars had the baggage compartment converted into a boiler section. Its purpose was to provide steam heat along the entire length of the train.

Meanwhile, there was a need to serve coach passengers who didn't necessarily want to sit down to a full meal with its big price tag in the dining car. To discourage passengers from bringing baskets of food to sustain them over a four-day trip, UP instituted a cafeteria-lounge car. At first the car was intended primarily as a lounge, so the process was initially focused on that section of the car. But as progressive rebuilds went along, the quick cafe section continued to expand at the expense of the bar. By 1959 the car featured an eight-seat lunch counter in the cafe and even offered radio-telephone service.

Features

If your customers have shied away from purchasing series trains in the past because Walthers didn't install the handrails, tell your customers not to worry. Show them that Walthers now installs the handrails at the factory. These long, sleek, Armour Yellow and Harbormist Gray with red stripe cars add a wonderful touch to virtually any layout modeling the era from around 1955 to 1971.

Further detailing is easy. With a little twist and a bit of coaxing, each roof will snap off. Once the roof is off

the car, a customer will find that the light butternut gray molded interior can also be removed. This allows the end user to paint and add figures to add details to his liking. In addition, there are contacts to add optional lighting kits. These snap in very easily and draw power from contacts that are already built into the trucks. As a Walthers dealer, you have very quick access to the lighting kits and other detail items through the Walthers catalog.

I didn't try a 20-car train, but my experiences with Walthers passenger car couplers, since they upgraded them, indicates they could undoubtedly handle a similar load.

The only requirement is that the user observes the minimum recommended radius of 24 inches. The couplers are mounted in a body mechanism that allows them additional swing with little vertical play. It should be noted that the baggage car, with its six-wheel trucks, requires a minimum radius curve of 28 inches.



By snapping off the roof of the Baggage-Dorm car, a modeler is allowed a peek into the private world of railroading, in this case, where the train's crew slept.

The trucks for the regular cars are the type 41 passenger trucks that provided such a smooth ride when used on the full-scale version. Installed on a model railcar, they track well. I found the wheel sets to be in gauge and the flanges all RP25, which accounts for such smooth operation. These cars are very free rolling, so long trains can

get by with just one or two of the recommended Walthers E8 locomotives. The six-wheel cars feature the GSC three-axle truck, also a very free-wheeler.

Details about on these models. The truck side frames are accurately modeled, and the car-end diaphragms are

functional. The various vents on the cars plus the kitchen chimneys are all replicated. The rungs, ladders and steps—items that helped turn these cars into rolling resorts—are all in place for customers to enjoy. Whether these beauties are operated or placed on static display, they can help bring back the glory of railroad travel. **HM**



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