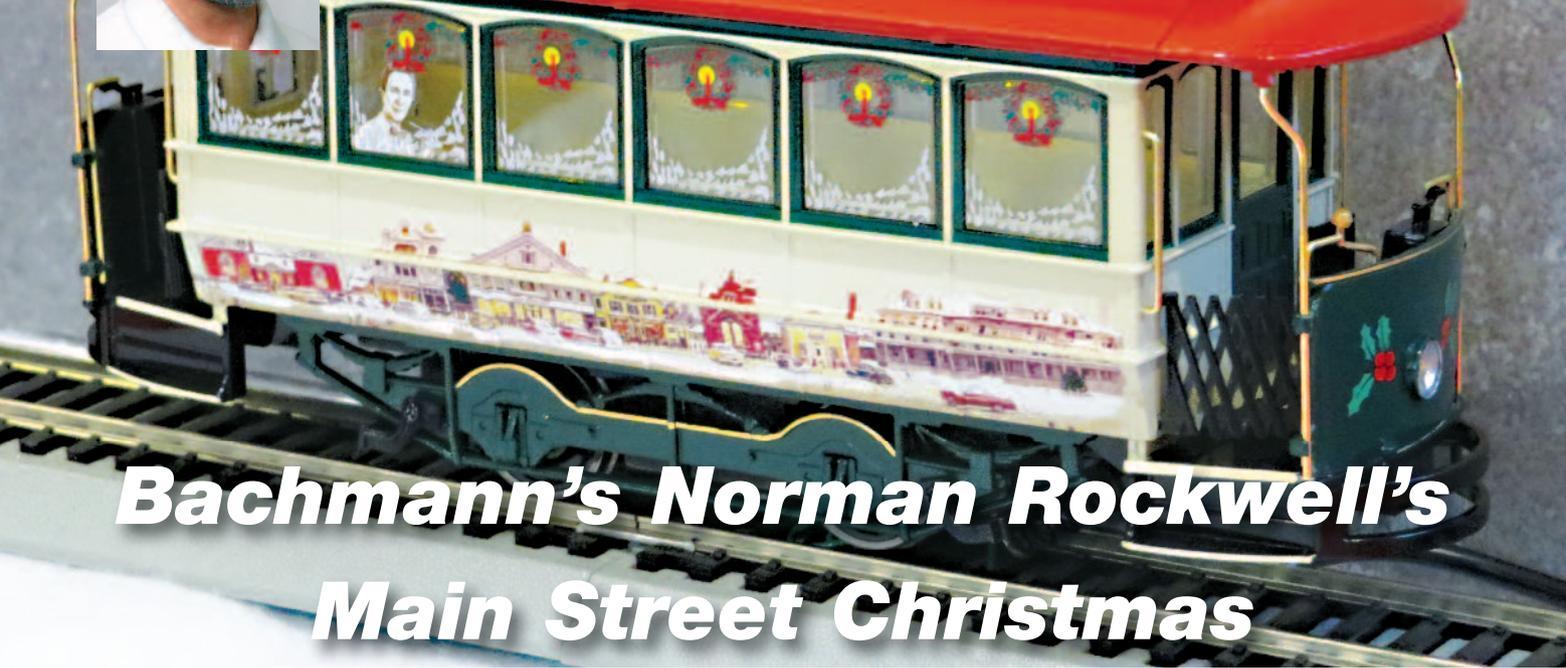




RAILROAD REPORT

Dennis Andreas



Bachmann's Norman Rockwell's Main Street Christmas

By the time this issue is in your hands, the kids have been back in school for a few months, summer is a memory and the Thanksgiving festivities are being planned. As a store owner you have “other fish to fry” as they say and it is time for the upcoming holiday inventory and sales planning. To help get dealers in the mood, Bachmann has supplied its new Norman Rockwell's Main Street Christmas (#25100).

Produced in On30-scale, the Norman Rockwell Main Street Christmas trolley is a festive auto-reversing set ideal for any holiday setting from the base of a tree to a focal point in one of the ceramic village settings that have become so popular at Christmas time. The set is fairly basic, as its intent is not for use with a detailed layout, but it does come complete with track specific for this set that includes four curved and six straight sections of rails. Also included are Hayes style bumpers and a four-cell AA size battery case that also has a USB connection.

It's always fun researching a project, and while looking into the history of this style of the street car, I came across a copy of an 1879 drawing used for the patent of an almost identical trolley to Bachmann's scale version. I'll admit, with an engineering background I'm fascinated with the way things were done so many years ago. During my engineering days we used PCs and CAD, but when designing I have always felt just as comfortable with a piece of paper

A battery operated trolley that is perfect for the holiday display.



The Norman Rockwell Main Street Christmas set contains everything needed to add a functioning streetcar to any holiday display or setting.

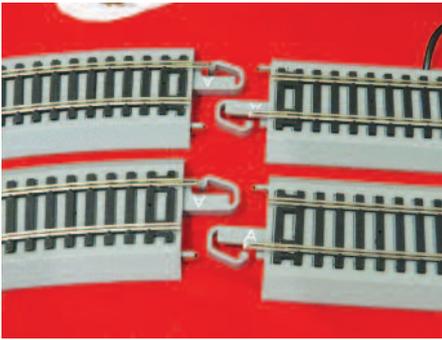
and a pencil. The old line drawing has character and this same character has been translated to the Bachmann Norman Rockwell's Main Street Christmas trolley.

Like all of Bachmann's streetcars, Norman Rockwell's Christmas is equipped with head lamps and interior lighting. But it is the really nice details that are plainly visible on the side panels and the windows that stand out. The entire streetcar is wonderfully decorated with what can easily be interpreted as a compilation of Christmas paintings by Norman Rockwell and one of the windows even has a likeness of the artist as a passenger.

In addition to the streetcar's side panels the metal wheels and wheel guards, along with the trucks are equally well done. Considering its intended use, the streetcar end platforms are exceptional and are highlighted with brass poles and hand grips. Overall the paint and detail on this holiday masterpiece is really striking.

To simplify track assembly the locking tangs on each track are labeled with the letter A or B. A person can assemble a variety of cross-town layouts, but when connecting the rails he does have to match the letters with like letters—A to A and B to B—for the set to run properly.

Operation of the streetcar could not be made any simpler. Once the track has been setup as desired just add four AA batteries to the battery case and flip the switch to on. The street car will light up with a gentle glow, the directional headlight illuminates in the direction the street car will travel and it starts to move smoothly towards one of the



The track is specific to the set and although there are several options for the layout, for the set to function properly it must be assembled with the letters matching: A to A and B to B.



The streetcar is adorned with Norman Rockwell's Christmas paintings, and considering its intended purpose as a holiday only set it is exceptionally well detailed.



The car's end platforms are meticulously painted and feature brass hand rails and passenger grab bars. The trolley's headlamp is also illuminated and automatically changes with the direction the car is traveling.

bumpers. As the trolley approaches the end of the line it begins to slow, then comes to a complete stop (naturally for the loading and unloading of passengers). After a few moments' pause, the headlight indicates a change of direction and the trolley begins to move again and once at the other end of the line the process repeats itself.

Although I could not find a specific recommendation in the instruction manual, as mentioned the power-pack does include a USB receptacle. Since USB is rated at five volts, the same nominal voltage as when using four batteries, the track was powered with a USB source and it ran perfectly, but please note: not all USB power sources are created equal. Even though USB outlets are all rated at five volts, one used for an overnight phone charge may not have the necessary amperage to work properly with the set, so only run the trolley when it can be observed. This is common sense and should-

n't need mentioning, but there are times when even the obvious needs to be said out loud.

Bachmann's Norman Rockwell's Main Street Christmas is very nicely done, reminding everyone who sees it of simpler times. As stated earlier there are many options for its use, as it could easily be setup around a Christmas tree, holiday village display, an executive desk, fireplace mantle, or as the centerpiece for any holiday layout. The streetcar is versatile, portable and a must for the holiday season.

The Norman Rockwell's Main Street Christmas streetcar is available either through your favorite distributor, or you can go to Bachmann direct. **HM**



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