

The Yardmaster

Southwestern Michigan Division



February 2021

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|--------------------------|------------------|--|
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The Yardmaster is the newsletter published monthly by Division 9, North Central Region of the National Model Railroad Association.

Submissions: Please send articles, news items, inquiries, photos and comments to the Editor of **The Yardmaster**, **Dave Vinci** dj.vinci@frontier.com, **by the 12th of the month** for inclusion in the current month's edition.

Editor's Comments

Greetings from your newsletter editor. If any of you would like to try your hand at creating an article for the newsletter, please try and write one. It can be of any size or maybe just a photo of your latest project. How about a tip that you think other modelers could benefit from? This newsletter will only be as informative and entertaining as you, the membership, make it.

Paymaster's Report

NCR Div. 9 income tax has been filed.

Achievement Program

To see the requirements for AP awards see the NMRA website, or talk about the program, contact our Division AP coordinator, Dorman Wilson at N8YNW@charter.net

February Membership Meeting

NCR Division Nine - News Flash

In-Person/Zoom Membership Mtg. Feb-20th

Our next Membership Meeting will be held February 20th starting at 10:00AM.

We are pleased to announce that we are returning to the **Colonial Kitchen, located at 330 N. Drake Road in Kalamazoo.**

For those members that are either unable or uncomfortable attending an in-person meeting, the meeting will also be run as a Zoom Meeting. Watch for further details as they become available.

The agenda is as follows:

9:00 AM – informal breakfast

10:00 AM – Meeting called to order

- Superintendent's Report
- Assistant Superintendent's Report
- Paymaster's Report
- Scribe's Report
- Newsletter Editor's Report
- Old Business
- New Business

10:30 AM

- **Clinic - "Making Trees My Way" by Rod Thomson**
- **Note: Recording of Rod's presentation is not allowed!**

Adjournment



Hello NMRA/NCR Division 9 Members! Your February Meeting will be unique this year and a first. We have Rod Thomson finally with us to talk about **"Making Trees For Your Layout His Way"** Rod lives in Berrien County, MI just off of I-94 south of St Joseph. I have seen his "trees" on his layout in his home and as well as on display at the Napperville, IL prototype modellers meet a couple of years ago. We scheduled Rod to talk to us before for a January Division 9 meeting that got canceled because of MI winter weather. Then we invited Rod back to talk about this topic for our one day conference which got cancelled due to covid 19 and the governor's rules for fighting the covid.

This meeting will be hooked up to us through the Zoom process with a couple of options to watch.

1. Join a group of us at our regular restaurant (The Colony Kitchen Pancake House) location near the intersection of West Main and Drake Road for breakfast at 9am, business meeting at 10am and Rod and his clinic after that, projected on a large screen in the meeting room. **Don't forget your mask to wear when you are not eating.**
2. Stay home and participate in the meeting using your own laptop computer. Breakfast on your own, but no fellowship with other model railroaders, which everybody has been missing, **the meeting will start on Zoom at 10am.** The Zoom meeting address will be posted this week by email.
3. Join us at the restaurant for the 10am meeting and presentation, but skip breakfast with the Division 9 group, Don't forget your mask.

Rich Mahaney



Here's a photo of a Penn Central E7 on the Grand Rapids Division - photo from Dave Vinci's collection



Works for Me

By Casey Bartman

Like the bad penny, I'm back with another article for the Yard Master. Next month I plan to provide an article concerning turnout control utilizing a penny and an ESP32's. This month I like to tell you what works for me in the form of a board game.

The game I like to share was originally published by The Avalon Hill Game Company in 1957, Dispatcher (**Image 1**). For those keeping score that makes this game as old as me. Besides model railroading, I have been a big fan of boardgame since the 1960s. The first railroad game that I acquired in the late 60s was C&O/B&O (**Image 6**), also by Avalon Hill. C&O/B&O was a game about dispatching trains for these CSX predecessors. While it included tokens for most of the major named trains of these railroads, it was too structured. I'll admit that I lost interest as players simply seem to move the train tokens on the board.

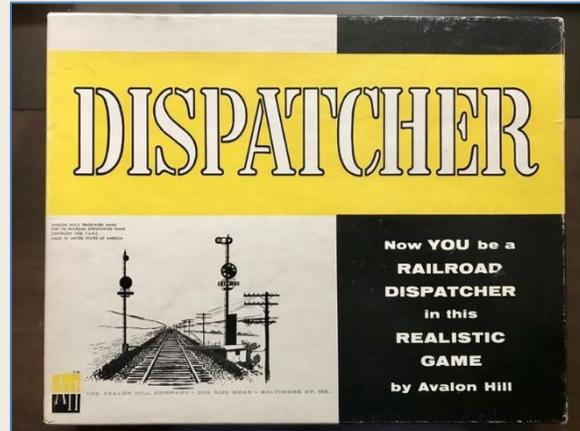


Image 1



Image 6

More recently, I discovered the game Dispatcher thanks to the web site <https://boardgamegeek.com/>. While C&O/B&O was produced as a replacement for Dispatcher in 1969 by Avalon Hill, I have found that Dispatcher is much more interesting from a railroad operations standpoint.

Dispatcher represents a rail system in the eastern United States. There are two divisions, each of which are controlled by a player/Superintendent. To some extent, this railroad could be the Pennsylvania, the B&O, the C&O, or the Norfolk & Western. The divisions meet at a central division point on the map. The Eastern Division Superintendent must deal with mountain grades and helper districts, while the Western Division Superintendent deals with significantly more

traffic. In addition, the Eastern division has a southern go around, which avoids the grades but takes longer. A player is therefore penalized for using this route unless called for on the schedule.

One thing that is common to both games is situation cards. At the start of every turn, a card is turned over that reports some event on the system that may delay operations. My recommendation for the first few games is to set these aside.

In Dispatcher, there are first-class, second-class, and extra trains. Parts of the system represented have CTC operation, parts TT&TO operations, and parts track warrants. These concepts were lost in the C&O/B&O game.

The first-class and second-class trains operate by timetable scheduling (**Image 2**).

It is up to the Superintendent to schedule the departure times of the extras. Besides copies of the timetable for both players, a list of scheduled departure times is also included (**Image 3**).

The goal of the game is to have the lowest score, as points are awarded for negative events. Delay a first-class train, because the track is occupied, and you receive three points. Delay a second-class train and receive two points. For every extra that remains in the yard at the end of a turn, you receive one point. The whole goal of the game is to move the extras out as quickly as possible, without interfering in the operation of the scheduled traffic.

**EASTBOUND FROM AVALON—
WESTBOUND FROM DAMASCUS**

| | | 6 | 14 | 26 | 31 | 28 | 33 | 32 | 24 | 10 | 16 | 30 | ME 104 | ME 108 |
|-----|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|------|------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| lv | AV | 8:00 | 8:15 | 9:00 | | 11:00 | | 1:00 | 2:00 | 6:00 | 6:15 | 7:00 | 8:00 | 9:20 |
| arr | VO | 9:00 | 9:15 | | | | | 2:00 | 3:00 | 7:00 | 7:15 | | 9:20 | 10:40 |
| | DA | | | | | | | 2:45 | ↓ | | | | | |
| | EL | | | | | | | | 3:45 | | | | | |
| | JO | | | | | | | | 4:45 | | | | | |
| | FM | | | 10:00 | | Noon | | | | | | 8:00 | | |
| | JO | | | 11:00 | | 1:00 | | | | | | 9:00 | | |
| | PA | 10:30 | 10:45 | | | | | | | 8:30 | 8:45 | | 11:30 | 12:40 |
| | WN | 11:15 | 11:30 | | | | | | | 9:15 | 9:30 | | 12:40 | 2:00 |
| | SU | Noon | 12:15 | | | | | | | 10:00 | 10:15 | | 1:40 | 3:00 |
| | KD | 1:15 | 1:30 | | | | | | | 11:15 | 11:30 | | 3:40 | 5:00 |
| | HX | 1:30 | 1:45 | | | | | | | 11:30 | 11:45 | | 4:00 | 5:20 |
| | CV | 2:00 | | | | | | | | Mid. | | | 4:40 | |
| | VI | 4:00 | | | | | | | | 2:00 | | | 7:20 | |
| | FR | | 2:30 | | | | | | | | | 12:30 | | 6:20 |
| | SE | | 3:45 | | | | | | | | 1:45 | | | 8:00 |
| lv | DA | | | | 9:00 | Noon | | | | | | | | |
| arr | VO | | | | 9:45 | 12:45 | | | | | | | | |
| | AV | | | | 10:45 | | | | | | | | | |
| | EL | | | | | | | 1:30 | | | | | | |
| | JO | | | | | | | 2:30 | | | | | | |

Image 2

As a rule states, you cannot have a score of zero as all the extras could not be dispatched on the first turn. Like



Image 4



Image 5

| DEPARTURES | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| <u>8:00</u> | <u>8:15</u> | <u>8:30</u> |
| 1-VI | 5-VI | 17-VI |
| 2-JO | 4-JO | |
| 6-AV | 14-AV | |
| <u>9:00</u> | <u>9:15</u> | <u>9:30</u> |
| 20-AV | 9-SE | 13-SE |
| 31-DA | | |
| 34-JO | | |
| 25-JO | | |
| <u>10:15</u> | | |
| 18-SE | | |
| <u>11:00</u> | | |
| 28-AV | | |
| 27-JO | | |
| 20-SE | | |
| <u>NOON</u> | | |
| 33-DA | | |
| <u>1:00</u> | | |
| 32-AV | | |
| 19-VI | | |
| <u>2:00</u> | | |
| 24-AV | | |
| 29-JO | | |
| <u>3:00</u> | | |
| nothing | | |
| <u>4:00</u> | | |
| nothing | | |
| <u>5:00</u> | <u>5:15</u> | <u>5:30</u> |
| 7-VI | 9-VI | 21-VI |
| <u>6:00</u> | <u>6:15</u> | <u>6:30</u> |
| 10-AV | 16-AV | 15-SE |
| 8-JO | 12-JO | |
| ME 101-VI | 11-SE | |
| ME 105-SE | | |
| 23-JO | | |
| <u>7:00</u> | <u>7:15</u> | <u>7:20</u> |
| 30-AV | 22-SE | ME 106-JO |
| ME 103-VI | | |
| ME 102-JO | | |
| <u>8:00</u> | | |
| ME 104-AV | | |
| <u>9:20</u> | <u>9:40</u> | |
| ME 108-AV | ME 107-SE | |

All locations listed here represent point of departure . . . not destination. Light figures are a.m., bold figures p.m.

Image 3

C&O/B&O, the game represents one day of operations for the Eastern railroad. Each turn represents one hour of that day. Unlike C&O/B&O, there are fewer counters, and the game moves along faster. While the review on boardgame geek.com states that both games take about six hours, it has been my experience that Dispatcher can be played in about 2 hours, when you get the hang of it. **Images 4 and 5** are the initial set up and the status of the game board after turn 1. By the way, the game table was built with lumber left over (in part) after the construction of bench work.

In the rule book for the game, Avalon Hill recommended that players record there dispatching of extras. Players were then encouraged to send those schedules to the publisher. I don't know if these were ever complied.

If you enjoy boardgames, I recommend you find a copy of Dispatch. One can be found on eBay for about \$25.



A Modeling Idea

By Rich Mahaney

On February 2nd, I was driving east on US 12, west of Niles area. Having done that drive numerous times, but today I noticed an old tank car in the woods next to a barn, so I had to take some photos. It is on the north side of the road, at a corner, west of the new US 31 highway. I might not have seen in during the summer, because of the trees around it. It would make a nice model using a surplus tank car body some flat styrene for the concrete support legs.



Prototype Photos

If you have some photos you've taken or have permission to submit for publication, please send scans of them to your editor for inclusion in our Prototype photo section. If you need help with this, contact Your editor.



CN EB train last January 21, 2021 at Marcellus, MI. photo by Rich Mahaney



CN train EB in Marcellus, MI Feb 2nd, 2021

photo by Rich Mahaney

Division 9 Calendar for February 2021

| Sunday | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Saturday |
|--------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Div 9 In-person Meeting With Zoom |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | | | | | | |

Division 9 Calendar for March 2021

| Sunday | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Saturday |
|--------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|--------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Div 9 Zoom Meeting |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |