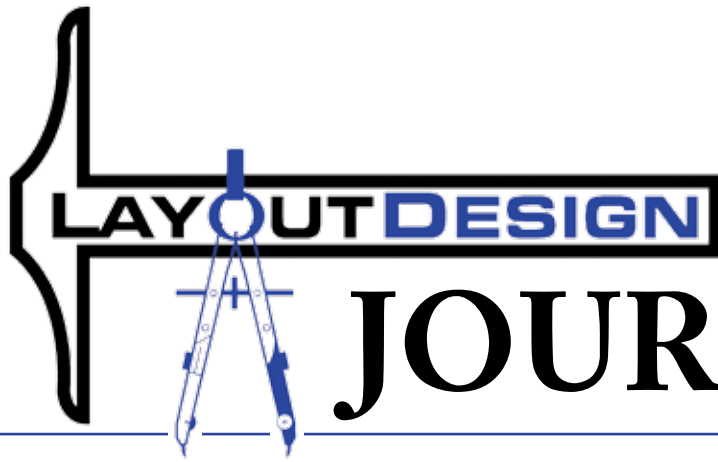
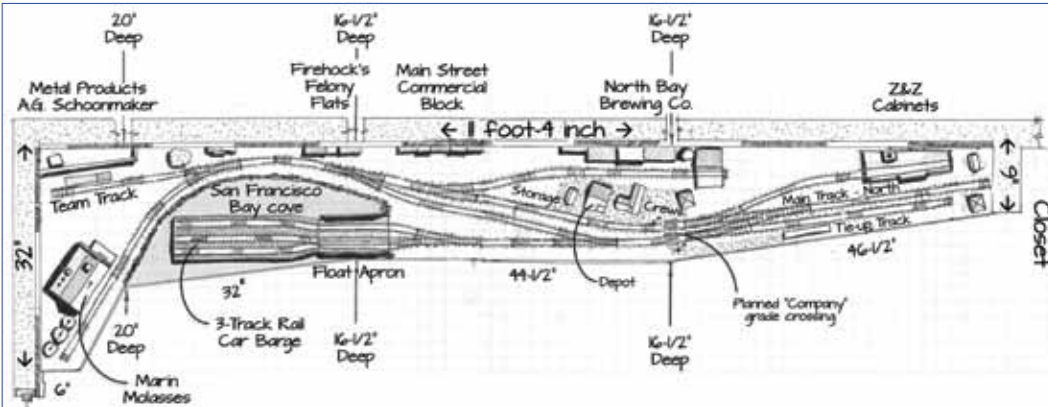


Second Quarter 2021 \$12.00 US



# JOURNAL 69



Pro Railroader's Shelf Layout  
Bigtime Coal Hauling  
Compact Layout Rebuilt for Ops  
Ten Turnout Design Challenge  
AGM Report; Call for Candidates



The Layout Design Special Interest Group, Incorporated (LDSIG) is an independent, IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt group affiliated with the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA).

The LDSIG's goal is to act as a forum for the members' exchange of information and ideas, and to develop improved ways for hobbyists to learn the art and science of model railroad layout design.

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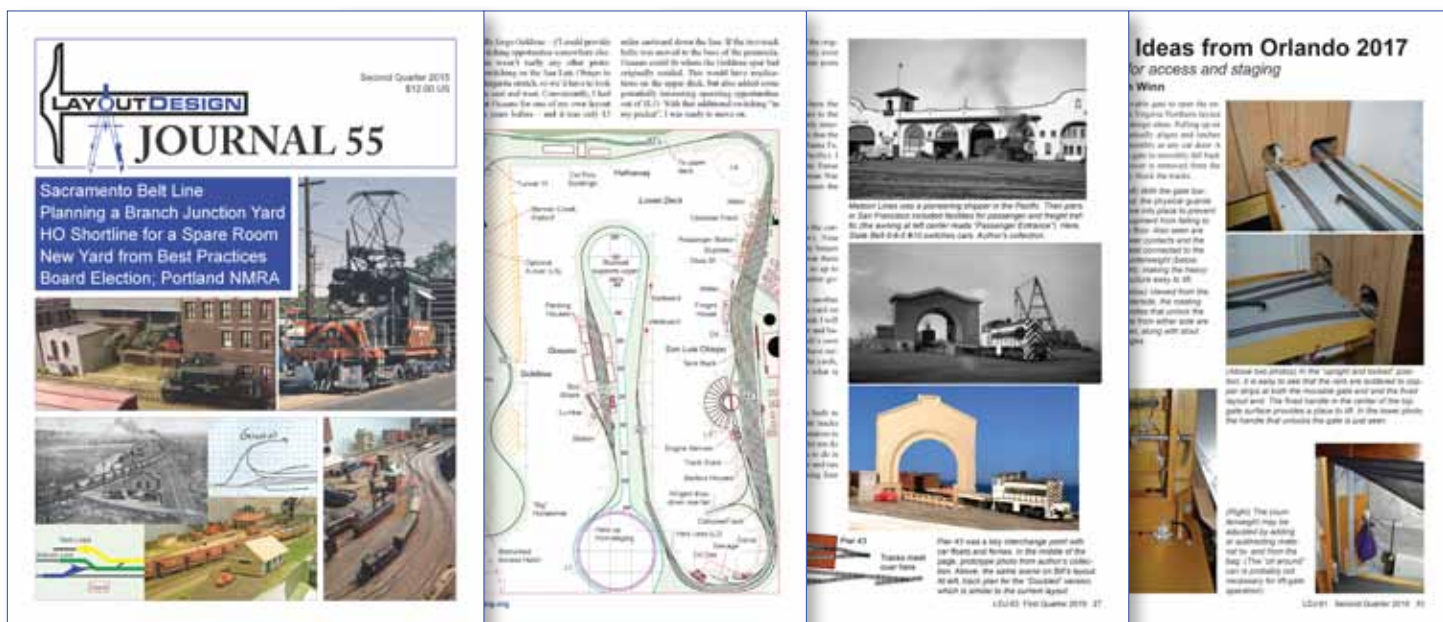
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so I wasn't as concerned allowing for a long switching lead.

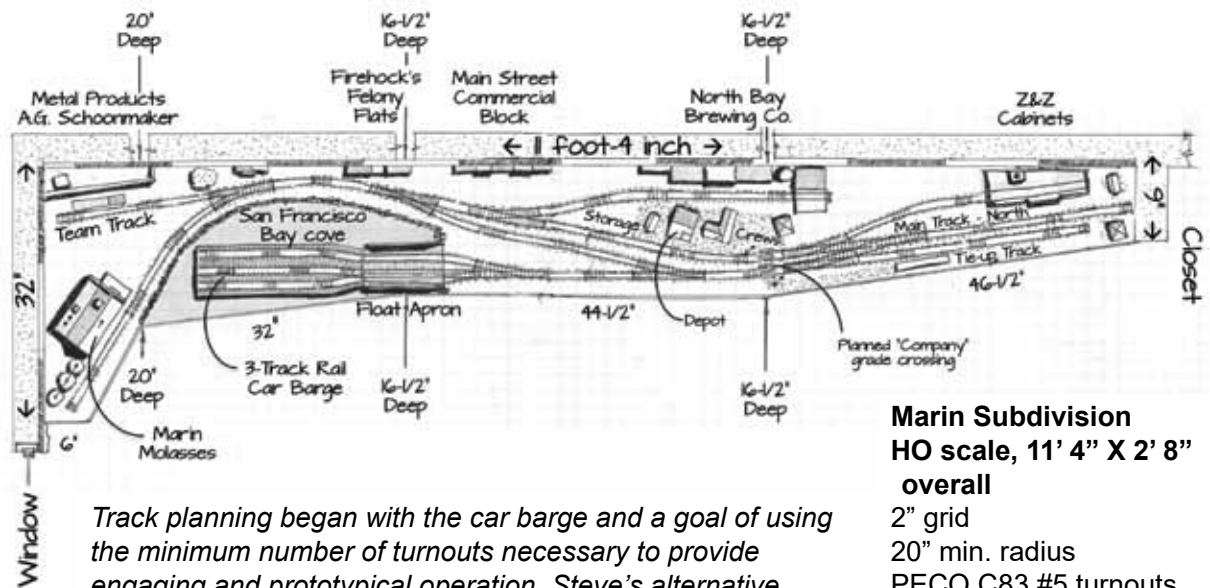
### Challenge with procedures, not spurs

As my track plan (below) progressed, it was clear the pulling and spotting of my four industry tracks was not going to pose much

of a problem. There are two facing-point and two trailing point industries. It was the issue of the barge restrictions that would provide the greatest challenge for my crews. I also considered that real estate in Sausarion was expensive and the railroad would be required to maximize the efficiency of every track. I wanted



The Marin Sub is designed to efficiently share the room, with storage cabinets above and home office below. To best share the space, the layout is not a simple rectangle, but tapers at one end. We are looking from near the narrow end toward the car barge on the wider section. All photos by the author.



**Marin Subdivision**  
**HO scale, 11' 4" X 2' 8"**  
**overall**  
 2" grid  
 20" min. radius  
 PECO C83 #5 turnouts  
 No grade

Track planning began with the car barge and a goal of using the minimum number of turnouts necessary to provide engaging and prototypical operation. Steve's alternative history is that this section of the NWP was isolated by a tunnel closure (as actually happened) and was spun off to a shortline operator. The only connection to Class 1s ATSF, WP, and SP is via the car barge to serve the remaining industries. Track plan by Steve Gust, rendering by Dave Clemens.

# Bigtime Coal Hauling in HO

## *Two key LDEs, trackage rights, and prototype features*

by Richard Turton

Having grown up in England, my experiences with railroads, railroading, and model railroads were quite significant. In fact, I travelled to (grammar/high) school every day for four years by train and was, at an early age, quite adept at planning long distance railway journeys from my home in London to anywhere in Britain. However, on moving to the US many years ago, knowledge of the railroads of my youth (London Midland Scottish (LMS), Southern Railway (SR), London North Eastern Region (LNER), Great Western Railroad (GWR), and of course British Rail) was not much help when transitioning to a US-based layout.

When I moved to Morgantown 34 years ago to take up a position at West Virginia University, I made a pact with myself to plan and build a US-prototype railroad. The big question was on what location and railway to base

the layout. Being an avid fan of Tony Koester's Allegheny Midland and living in the heart of coal country, developing a coal-hauling layout seemed like a natural choice. I tinkered around with many ideas and built a few small layouts in the various apartments I lived in, but nothing really gelled for me.

In 1991, my wife and I built our current home and finally I had access to a significant amount of space in our basement. Up to this time, I had acquired a fair amount of Western Maryland (WM) freight cars and first-generation diesels – but I still really had no clear plan for the location or function of my layout other than it would feature the WM in the 1950s, post-steam era.

Fast-forward to 2009, when I received my quarterly copy of *The Blue Mountain Express* (the magazine of the Western Maryland Railway Historical Society) and read the lead fea-



*The bigtime coal-hauling theme of Richard's layout is aptly demonstrated here, with first-generation WM diesels in the "Fireball" livery leading strings of hoppers. All model photos by the author.*

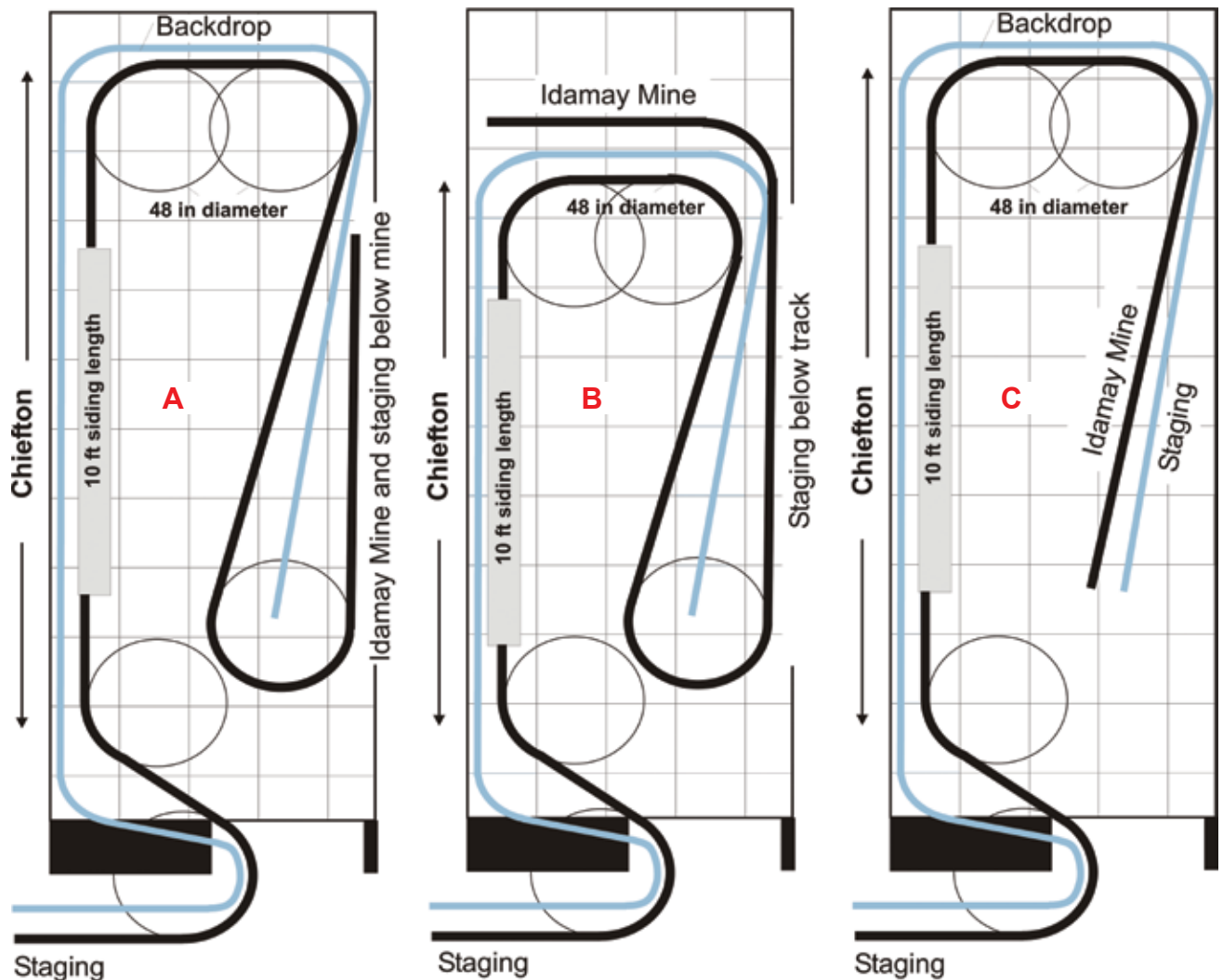


Figure 5: Alternative arrangements considered for the track plan. The 48" circles reflect the 24" minimum radius desired and a 10' target-train-length siding was included for reference. (2'X2' grid, not to scale)

lead track to the mine. However, because of the new location of Idamay, the length of the Chiefton yard was significantly reduced and would no longer accommodate the train length that I was seeking.

The compromise was Alternative C, in which Idamay and staging were located either side of the backdrop. This ended up being the final configuration and, apart from the closeness of Idamay to Chiefton, this design was able to satisfy all my other constraints.

### Prototype track plans at Chiefton and Idamay

The schematic track plan (not to scale) for the Chiefton Yard around 1920 is shown in Figure 6 (page 17).

Over the years, the prototype arrangement was modified. For example, at the end of the steam era for the WM (1954), the coaling facility and ash pit were removed. At about the

same time, the sanding facility was moved closer to the engine house. It appears that the coaling facility spur and ash pit spur were also removed or abandoned at that time. Likewise, the B&O siding is not shown in photographs from the early 1970s, but an additional siding on the WM side is seen.

In Figures 7 (page 17) and -8 (page 18), photographs around the Chiefton yard are shown – these were taken mostly in the late 1960s and early 1970s but clearly show many of the features of the track plan in Figure 6.

There are several “signature” buildings and structures shown in the photographs, and I have attempted to include these in my plan and to replicate them in HO scale. Perhaps the most unusual of these structures is the turntable shown as Figure 7(A). Over half the perimeter of the turntable was not submerged into the ground but rather supported on a set of stone arches located close to the riverbed



(DB – German Federal Railways), the national railroad of Germany. I had rolling stock and sectional track from my father's layout, so I continued with that, both for practical and sentimental reasons.

The existing material was a relatively cheap way to get started, and, even more importantly, it gave me confidence that I could do this. I set the layout height so that my oldest daughter (then age ten) could see the trains easily. That meant I couldn't sit comfortably under the layout joists to work. Once the layout frame was built from L-girders and installed in the room, I built the hidden staging tracks and the ramp to the first tier rather quickly. In the first year, I experimented with digital conversions, computer layout control, braking sections, and making this thing work the way I had imagined.

### Discovering operations

At the same time a co-worker of mine, Robert Bowdidge, introduced me to the concept of operations on his Vasona Branch layout. He invited me to come to the Layout Design and Operations weekend held annually in the SF Bay Area. I was able to listen to talks, visit local layouts on tour, and participated in operations sessions at the Silicon Valley Lines club and Rick Fortin's beautiful ATSF Fourth District layout\*. My mind was blown.

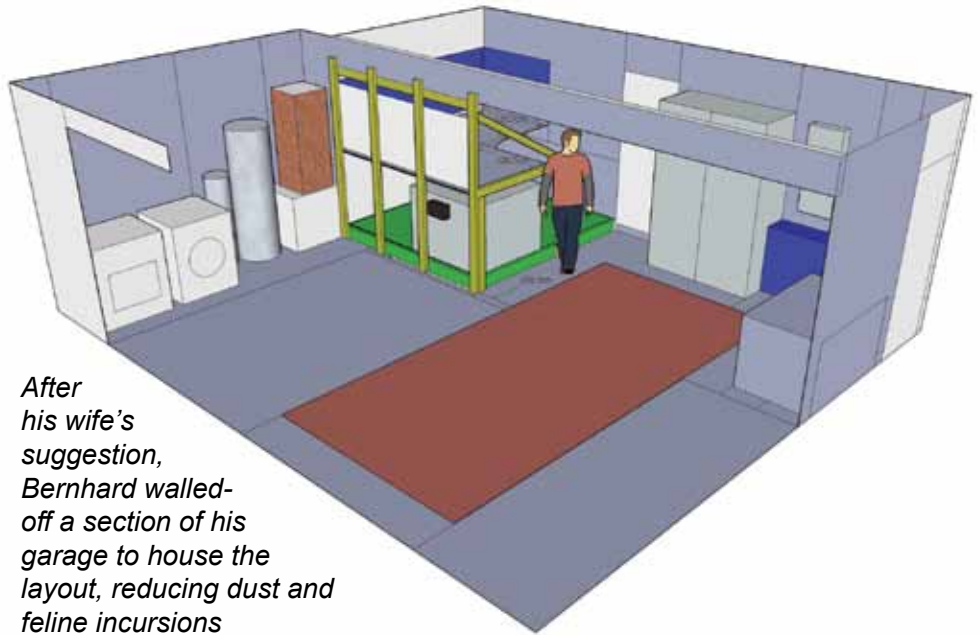
The concept of running the train vs. running the railroad fascinated me. Modeling traffic flows added a whole new dimension to what I planned to do. This is what I wanted to do on my railroad. (Of course, with German prototype operating rules.)

### What to do two years in?

And now I had a choice to make with the (in my eyes) half-built railroad in the garage. Should I start over? Keep on going? If I kept it, I should find plausible explanations for design

\* [www.vasonabranh.com/railroad/vasona.html](http://www.vasonabranh.com/railroad/vasona.html)  
[www.siliconvalleylines.com/](http://www.siliconvalleylines.com/)  
[www.layoutbuilders.com/personal-layout](http://www.layoutbuilders.com/personal-layout)

*View of the layout from the entrance doorway. The layout is set efficiently against the wall, surrounding visitors and operators.*



*After his wife's suggestion, Bernhard walled-off a section of his garage to house the layout, reducing dust and feline incursions*



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Present/past occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Special interest or skills, such as scratch building structures, yard design, cars, operations, scenery, etc?

☐ Yes ☐ No Special interest or skill: \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you model a specific prototype? ☐ Yes ☐ No Prototype(s) modeled: \_\_\_\_\_

What specific areas or locale of railroading do you model (location) ? \_\_\_\_\_

Era modeled: \_\_\_\_\_ Scale(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Other interests (Main line, branch, yards, division, multi-scales, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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