

O Scale Module from the East Penn Group. This one forms part of John Derr's home layout. Jack Kennedy Photo.

## EAST PENN MEET



Trolley meets all trains on John Derr's home layout. Jack Kennedy Photo.

A Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA, convention at Willow Grove, Pa. in early May turned out to be one heckuva fine show for the traction fans in the group.

In the heart of the East Penn Traction Club's territory, it could hardly have worked out otherwise.

The convention's sponsors got together with the East Penn group and set up a traction room devoted to O scale modules that were in (relatively) flawless operation almost constantly; several clinics, both the posterboard kind written up in T&M a few issues back and some utilizing slides projected on the back of a screen; collections of cars in both O and HO scales, and a real prize that turned up Saturday morning.

East Penn's Jimmy Sparkman is one of several club members who work for Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). He also likes to build models big enough to detail—3/4" scale. He brought in a model of a Philadelphia streetcar and about 50 pictures showing, step by step, how he goes about putting together a model that big.

One of his previous accomplishments is a 3/4"-scale model of a Budd-built Market-Frankford Subway-Elevated car. He's reported currently at work on a steel subway car circa 1906 that John Derr calls "quite a project."



O Scale cars by Ray Peck, Milford Conn. Rick Shoup Photo.

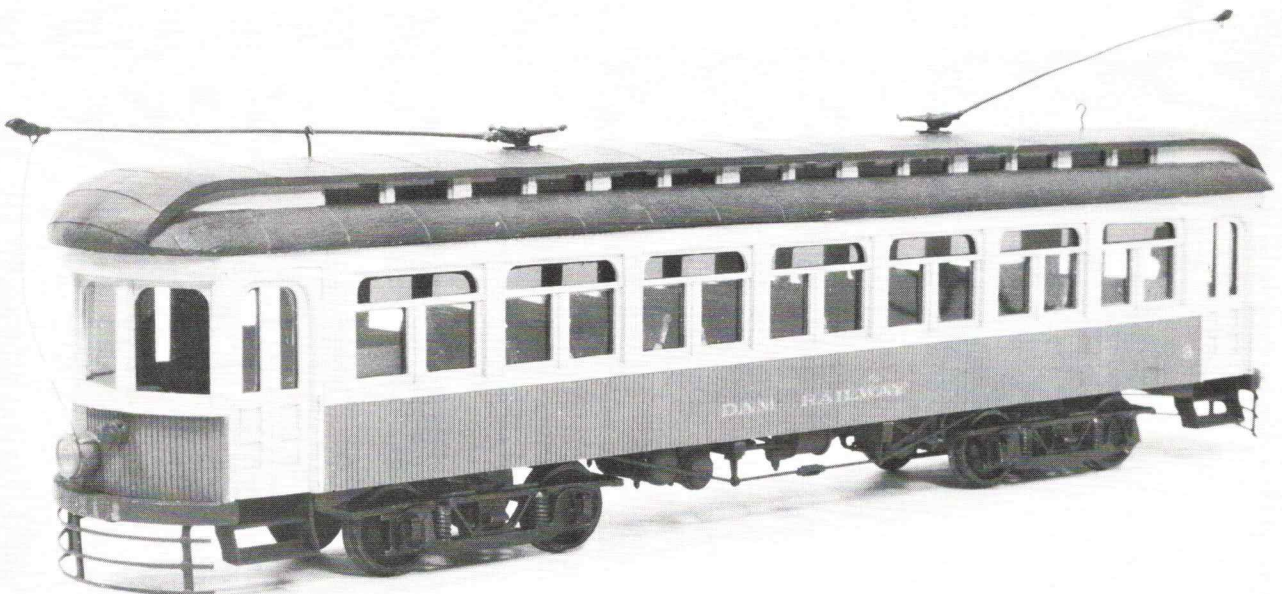
Away from the hotel, three home layouts were open—Derr's O scale pike, Jim Richards' 1/2" scale one and George VanDeventer's HO layout.

About half of John's trolley line is in modules, so he can pack it up for meets. It shares basement space with the standard steam railroad and the On3. No narrow-gauge traction was in evidence . . . yet.

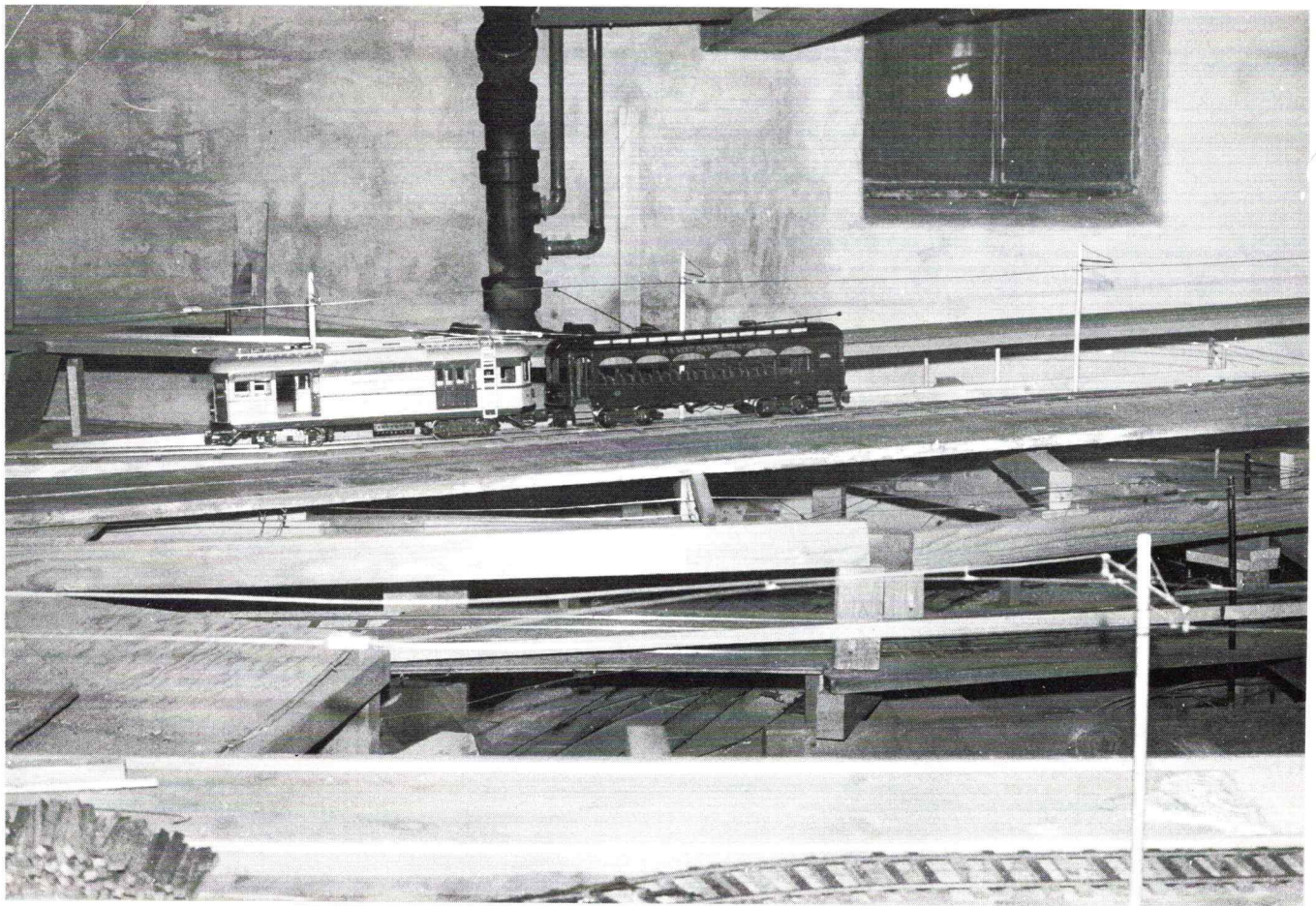
The fascinating thing about the 1/2"-scale equipment, aside from its sheer size and the respect due any man who'll tackle modeling from the railhead up, is the sound those heavy cars make when they hit special work. Talk about an authentic-sounding rumble!

For a change, the traction fraternity was reasonably well represented in the MER's model contest. Considering that three previous contests had drawn a grand total of three models, a turnout of nine for this convention isn't to be sneered at. Dave Cope's pair of O scale MU cars tied for first place with an O scale car built by John Worley from a La Belle kit; Harry Meem sneaked in the back door for third place with a scratchbuilt HO model of a Hagerstown & Frederick line car.

That was the organized part. The best thing about the whole weekend, however, probably was the opportunity afforded a limited few to rub elbows and talk traction with Blair Foulds, who's been building trolley cars since before World War II.



Awarded First Place (tie) in Traction, John Worley's O Scale coach, built from a LaBelle Kit. Jack Kennedy photo.



Just a part of Jim Richard's 1/2" scale home layout and two of his 14 scratch-built cars. Rick Shoup photo.



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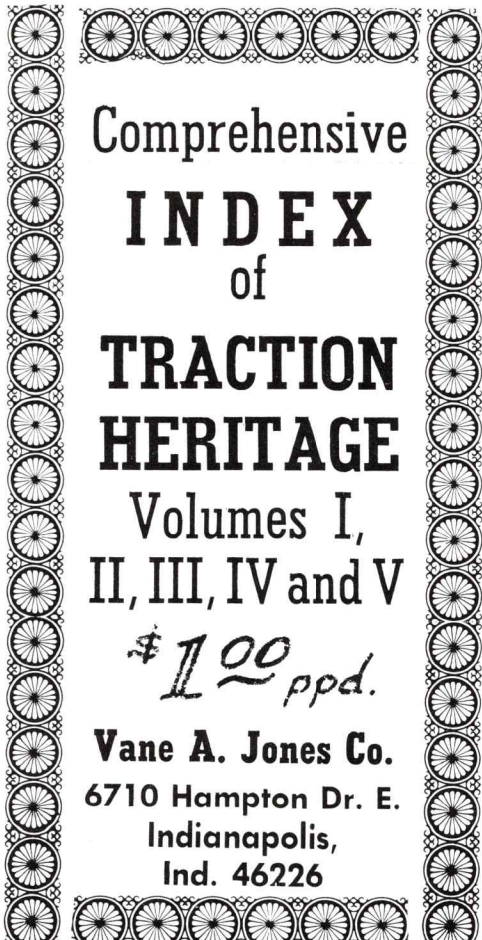




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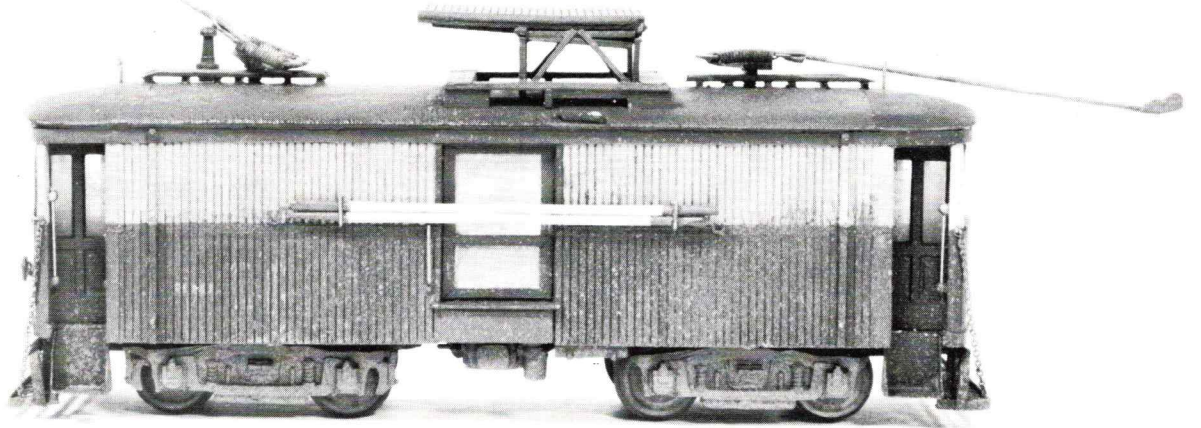


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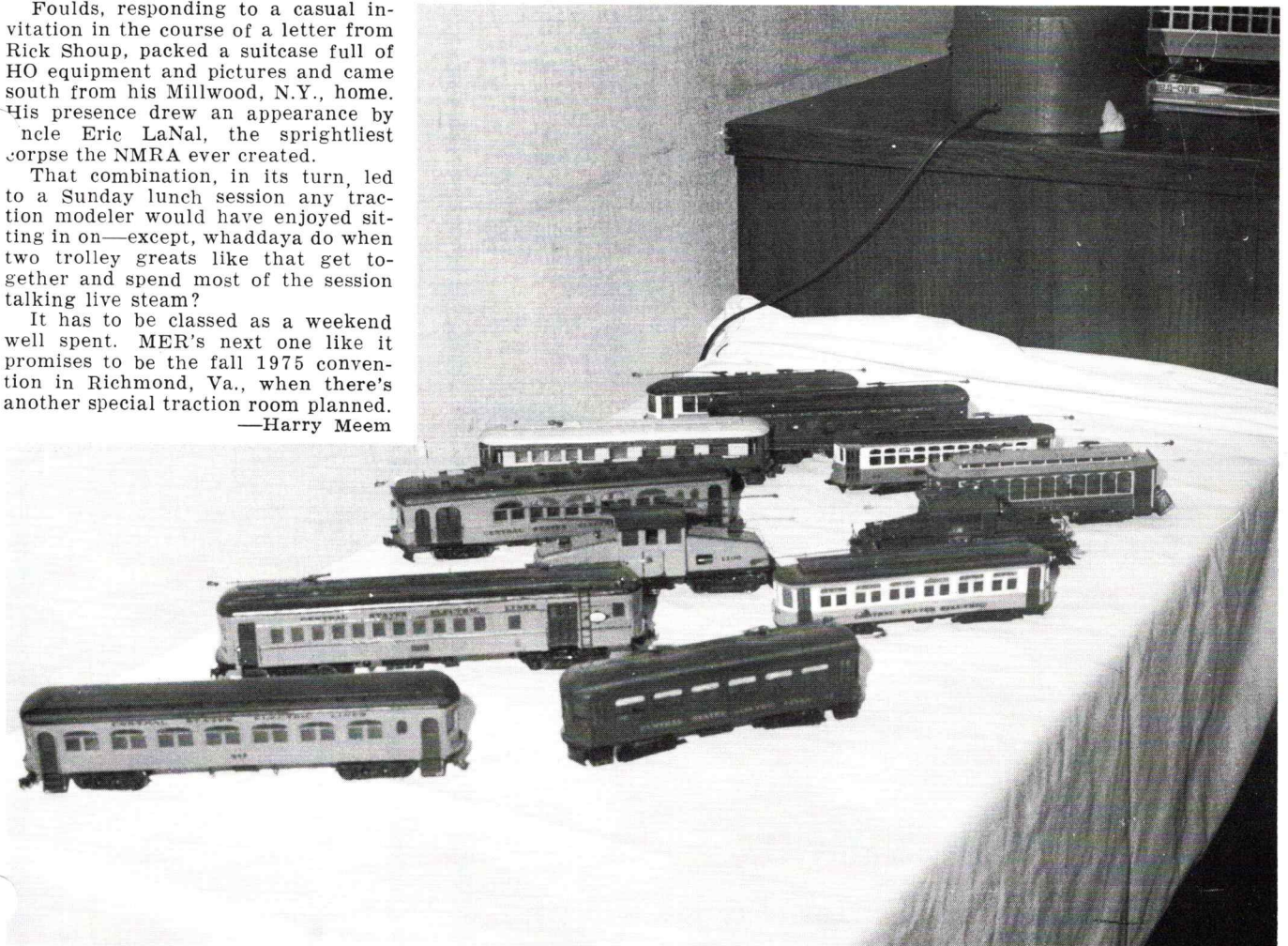
**Awarded Third Place, Traction, was this line car by Harry Meem, scratch-built in HO from pictures of one similar car on the Hagerstown & Frederick. Jack Kennedy photo.**

Foulds, responding to a casual invitation in the course of a letter from Rick Shoup, packed a suitcase full of HO equipment and pictures and came south from his Millwood, N.Y., home. His presence drew an appearance by uncle Eric LaNal, the sprightliest corpse the NMRA ever created.

That combination, in its turn, led to a Sunday lunch session any traction modeler would have enjoyed sitting in on—except, whaddaya do when two trolley greets like that get together and spend most of the session talking live steam?

It has to be classed as a weekend well spent. MER's next one like it promises to be the fall 1975 convention in Richmond, Va., when there's another special traction room planned.

—Harry Meem



**Some of Blair Foulds historic HO cars. The steeple cab is said to be the first trolley car model to operate from the trolley wire. Rick Shoup photo.**