

Kansas City Area  
March 24-26, 2006

**Saturday, March 25, 2006**

After driving down to Kansas City Friday afternoon, the club was ready to get down to business on Saturday morning. Our first stop for the day was the West Bottoms area of Kansas City. This area of town is home to many old multi-story warehouses and factories. It really does look like it is straight out of the pages of Model Railroader. Intertwined in all the buildings are tracks of the UP, BNSF and the KCT.

Finding a suitable parking place, the first train we saw was a BNSF transfer job pulled by BNSF 2370 heading south. As the transfer was still passing, a northbound empty grain train could be seen pulling by with a BN painted SD60M leading. Once the grain train had passed, a KCS empty grain train which had been waiting since we arrived was lined to follow. Power was a pair of SD50's. In the middle of the train was a hopper with roots in the Central Iowa area. A BNSF unit ethanol train passed through with BNSF 4025 performing DPU duties. We moved slightly to catch a UP train with three SD60M's before heading to the Doc's Caboose hobby shop a couple blocks away. Next stop was the J&L Trains hobby shop in Buckner, Missouri. The drive to Buckner is worth it for any HO or N modeler visiting the Kansas City region.

When our hobby shop hunger was satisfied, our eating hunger needed fulfillment. We stopped for lunch after getting back in town. A quick drive past the KCS/ICE Knoche Yard found the usual KCS and ICE power laying around and a couple switch jobs working the yard tracks. Mid-America Car had two newly painted NS SD70M-2's sitting in front of their shops.

The main purpose of the trip was to visit the Kansas City Rail Experience exhibit at Union Station. Getting our tickets, we made our way to the very back of the station and down the stairs to track level where the exhibit was set up. At the center of the room was an old BNSF locomotive simulator. Unfortunately, the simulator was just a mock up of a cab, and the controls didn't actually operate the Train Simulator being projected on a screen in front of the nose. Here is Jeff, trying to figure out if it actually worked or not. Two passenger cars were parked outside for touring. The first was a Great Northern observation car, and the second was a Milwaukee dining car. Also on display during our stay was the SP 745 steam engine and a few cars filled with a Marti Gras exhibit. Before leaving, we snapped a club photo and looked at a few model railroads of various gauges set up in Union Station.

Taking the short drive over to Santa Fe Junction next, we camped out there for several trains, including this CSX powered BNSF train on the lowest level of the multi-tiered junction. After seeing a fair number of trains, we loaded up and headed north to the scenic town of Parkville. Parkville is a few miles north of the former BN Murray Yard on the BNSF St. Joseph Sub. On the way, we spotted this great BNSF A-B consist on a northbound train in the West Bottoms.

The first two trains, empty coal hoppers came through right away. The second was led by BNSF 8834. Following the two hopper trains, a rail train with a GP60/GP60M combo rolled north towards St. Joseph. After the 3 northbounds, the direction switched, and the dispatcher ran a southbound coal load with the BNSF 4190 pushing on the back. BNSF 4046 then came north on a manifest. We followed another southbound (a manifest) back towards Murray and spied a new BNSF 'Wedgie' ES44AC on a 1x1 coal empty. We ended the day on this nice looking engine.

### **Sunday, March 26, 2006**

With commitments to get back to Ames at a reasonable hour, it was decided to stick to the north side of town on Sunday. We headed over to the UP/ICE joint main in Liberty to see a southbound UP MCPFW with a trio of SD70M's. With no other trains in the area, we headed down to the BNSF Transcon near Sugar Creek.

The first two trains we saw were UP trackage rights trains, the second with an SD70ACe in the lead. The first westbound was NS manifest 112 (Chattanooga-Kansas City BNSF) with a new SD70M-2 leading. Note the Coors Brewing tank cars, as seen in the April 2006 issue of Trains. Following behind was the classic BNSF 70 mph Z train flying under the classic ATSF signal bridge. Caught up in the slow moving batch of eastbounds was this UP coal load, which will duck down the UP River Sub just a few miles farther down the line. Just as we were packing up to head back to Ames, we were surprised by this westbound stack train with a new image BNSF unit on the point. Not a bad way to end the weekend.