

AUERBACH YARD (HO Scale)

Auerbach Yard is a fictional urban switching yard on the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio RR, “somewhere in Illinois”, set in the early 1970’s prior to GM&O’s merger with Illinois Central RR in 1972.

The layout has been constructed over the last four or so years, the track plan being broadly based on “Southside Connecting”, in ATLAS’s 1970’s publication “Six HO Railroads You Can Build”, written by John H. Armstrong. The elevated rear section of the track, fed by cassettes at either end, (behind the backscene wing panels), has been added to give extra interest, and so that I can indulge my fancy to demonstrate non-GM&O prototypes (some admittedly out of period) from time to time.

The trackwork is a mix of Atlas Customline and Peco Streamline. All turnouts and switch machines, except the Peco pair forming the crossover near the loco depot, are Atlas products dating from the late 1970’s. All turnouts are operated by Atlas remote turnout control boxes; a Gaugemaster CDU is used. The main trackwork is divided into 12 sections wired on the Twin Cab basis, controlled by Atlas track selectors (also late 1970’s vintage), and fed from a Morley “Vector” controller fitted with electronic track cleaner.

The majority of the trackside buildings are from the Walthers “Cornerstone” range of kits – a few have been modified to suit requirements, such as the sand house and storage bin, which were reduced in width to fit between the tracks by the loco depot. Some smaller structures were scratchbuilt from bits left over from the Walthers kits. The plate girder bridges in the elevated sections are Atlas kits; the arch bridge is a Pola kit (all from the late 1970’s).

The buildings depicted on the backscene panels were produced from photographs taken during a tourist boat trip on Cleveland’s Cuyahoga River (never throw anything away!), during “free time” on a business trip to the US in the late 1990’s. Sections of photos were scanned, imported and manipulated using Adobe PhotoShop Elements, and printed using the Posters facility in Greeting Card Factory.

Motive power is principally recent products from Proto 2000 and Athearn, the smooth slow-running characteristics of which are preferred on the sometimes complex yard trackwork.

Rolling stock is a mix of both recent products mainly from Lifelike, Athearn and Walthers, and older (1970’s) Athearn kits. The latter have been given new wheelsets, and all are fitted with Kadee couplers.

