



Pleasing most of the people most of the time

If you are reading this and wondering what is going on, it means that I have finally got off my butt and done what I have been talking about for a long time. (Probably a very long time according to the editor!) That is to produce something for the newsletter.

I thought for quite some time about the title before finally deciding on "Irregular Feature", feeling that this would best describe the contents and my style. Given the demands on my time, that is what it could be, sometimes missing one or two editions then popping up again just when you have forgotten about it, but I will try to keep it regular. I also like the fact that when you take the two initial letters you end up with the word "if" and how many of us like to use that to explain why we can't do something? "If only...!"

I plan this to be an informal collection of ideas, things I have heard, seen or thought up, modeling tips, in fact anything that may be of interest to the people who read our club newsletter. I may even stir the proverbial pot at times. I have several topics in mind to get the ball rolling but am open to suggestions, good, bad or indifferent, but I reserve the right to pick and choose as I see fit. I don't know everything and I don't pretend to. My field of "expertise" tends to lean towards things electrical so if you have anything that might be of interest or better still something to balance out the scales please let me know and I'll try to use it.

Being quite new to computers I am still typing slow but learning fast, so please excuse any accidents and hopefully I will improve both my speed and style to a point where it is both easy to do and read. I will gratefully accept any hints or helpful advice.

Enough of my dribble. "What about a topic?" I hear you ask. I thought I would start by opening up a large can of worms!

What is the correct shape, height, width, style, etc. for the layout in our new clubroom? This is a question that has been kicked around for sometime but until now Nobody has picked it up, as he and his brother Somebody Else are no longer with us, I thought it had better be done before Someone Else tripped over it and got hurt.

With around 40 members, if I were to ask each for the perfect layout plan, I would end up with approximately the same number of completely different looking ideas! This would not be as bad as you might at first imagine, for while it would seem daunting at first, once the places where they were similar had been recognised and sorted into a compromise most of the rest would probably fit in quite well. While I am not proposing we start building right now, heck we have lots more important things to do in the new clubrooms first, we should start the planing as early as possible. So here are my thoughts on the subject.

I feel that a fixed main "dog bone" style loop with two or three passing loops/stations should be built and owned by the club.

Leading off from this would be several spurs, built and owned by individuals or groups which would be fully transportable and able to be displayed either on their own or linked to each other via an adapter module or fiddle yard for exhibitions. Some important specifications would need to be set such as height and electronics to retain compatibility, but otherwise all could be at the discretion of the builders ie. Nationality, steam/diesel, etc. This would give variety of both style and operation to be enjoyed by all. The main line would still be fully operational even if all the spurs were removed for exhibitions.

Result? A constantly changing layout for both club running and exhibitions at minimal cost. What do you think? Let me know your thoughts either directly or better still so that everyone can get in on the discussion via this newsletter. Don't be shy, if you don't say anything now, don't complain later!

As for electronic control so that we can have more operators at once that's a topic for another time.

Catch you down the track... Tony Mikolaj