Contents

Introduction

This book contains 25 track plans that were specially designed for use with Lionel FasTrack. Most of them have appeared in *Classic Toy Trains* magazine, but some have been expanded upon for this book, and several were newly created. The majority fall into the manageable small to midsize range, with a few more ambitious room-size layouts thrown in. They include a variety of themes from Christmas to logging to the Wild West.

A description of the layout, a list of needed FasTrack components, and operating tips accompany each track plan. Some plans also include suggested accessories and scenery ideas. In addition to the track plans, the book provides some handy information on converting traditional O gauge layouts to FasTrack.

FasTrack components

Introduced in 2003, FasTrack components have become a popular alternative to traditional tubular track. Similar to traditional tubular track, FasTrack curved and straight track sections are available in a variety of sizes (see page 7 for a comparison of the two types). Specialty items include uncoupling, operating, railer, and accessory-activator sections. Accessories feature various grade crossings, bumper sections, and crossovers.

While FasTrack components are more expensive than traditional tubular track, they are easy to use and provide a reliable electrical connection (see page 7 for a track cost comparison).

Track component key

Perhaps the greatest benefit of a printed track plan is the guidance it provides when assembling specific track components. The necessary track pieces are listed in a handy color-coded key, such as the one shown at right. Quantities and the product number for each section are also included.

Straight track is shown as squares, curves as circles, and track switches (turnouts) as triangles. Unique colors and symbols within these shapes identify special track sections. On the track plan, these shapes show the precise placement for each section of track.

Whether you are converting a layout to FasTrack or planning a new one, the track plans in this book should provide you with necessary tools and inspiration to create your own exciting O gauge layout.

Track component key

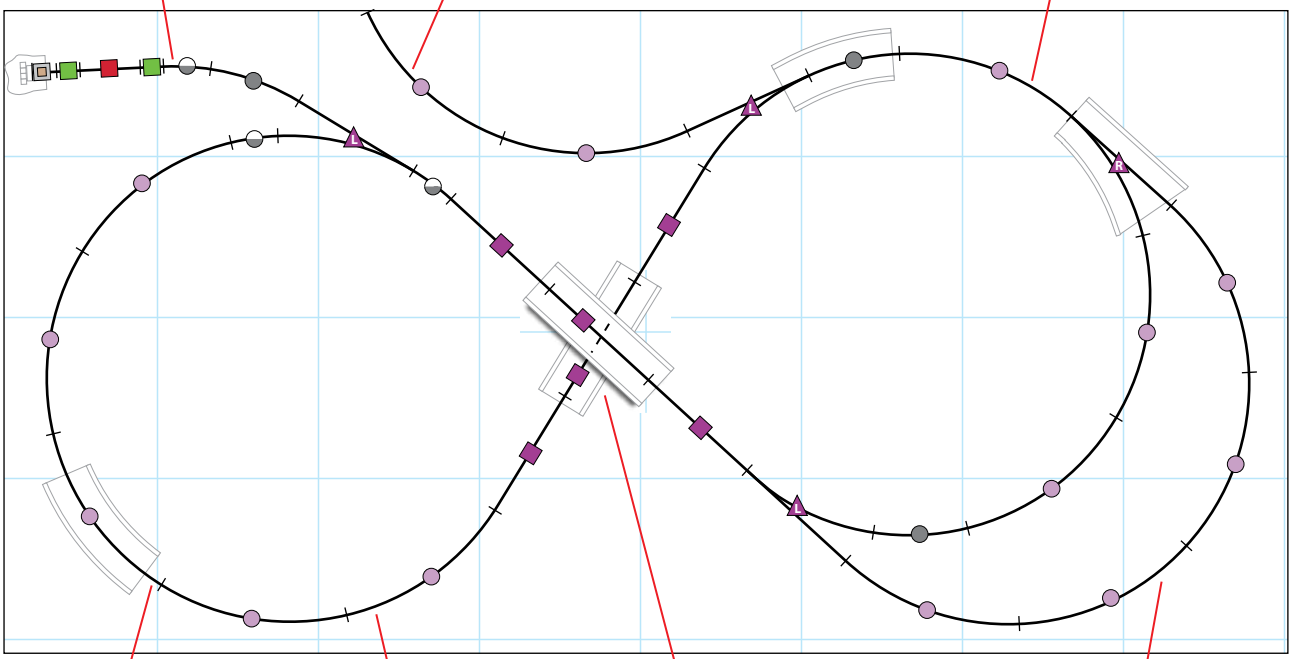
LIONEL FASTRACK COMPONENTS

Quantity	Description/Number
2	1.75-inch straight (12026)
1	4.5-inch straight (12025)
2	5-inch straight (12024)
5	10-inch straight (12014)
6	0-36 curve, 11.25-degree (12023)
1	0-36 curve 22.5-degree (12022)
14	0-36 curve, 45-degree (12015)
2	0-48 curve, 30-degree (12043)
1	0-36 left-hand track switch (12017)
2	0-36 right-hand track switch (12018)
1	5-inch uncoupler (12020)
2	bumper (12059)

This short industrial spur also provides means for point-to-point operation to the spur situated below. With the addition of a command control system, you can even consider two-train operation.

Room to expand this railroad comes by way of a spur that runs to the edge of the layout. If you have space in the corner of a room, you can easily form an L-shaped pike by adding another 4 x 8-foot board.

Scenery and structures for the railroad should fit the mountain railroad theme dictated by the tight-radius curves and changing elevations. Also consider using smaller Plasticville structures to make the most of the limited space.



Lionel FasTrack 0-36 curves form the majority of the layout, so it seems logical to develop a layout theme and scenery where sharp curves are expected—a rustic setting in the hills or a busy mine operation are two fitting choices.

Figure-eight schemes can be more than just a gimmick. Here, a 5½-inch-high overpass helps keep trains in continuous motion, without the peril of operating through a 90-degree crossing.

A passing siding doesn't have to be on the straight and narrow. In this instance, I placed a train-length siding along a curve. It's near the outer edge of the layout, so restricted speed operation is a must. Don't forget, you can also use this location to reverse the direction of your train—just be sure to use a locomotive with operating couplers on each end.

A 4 percent grade routes trains up, down, and around the curves at each end of the layout. Don't have a computer or slide rule handy to calculate the proper track elevations? Simply use Woodland Scenics' foam incline and riser components.

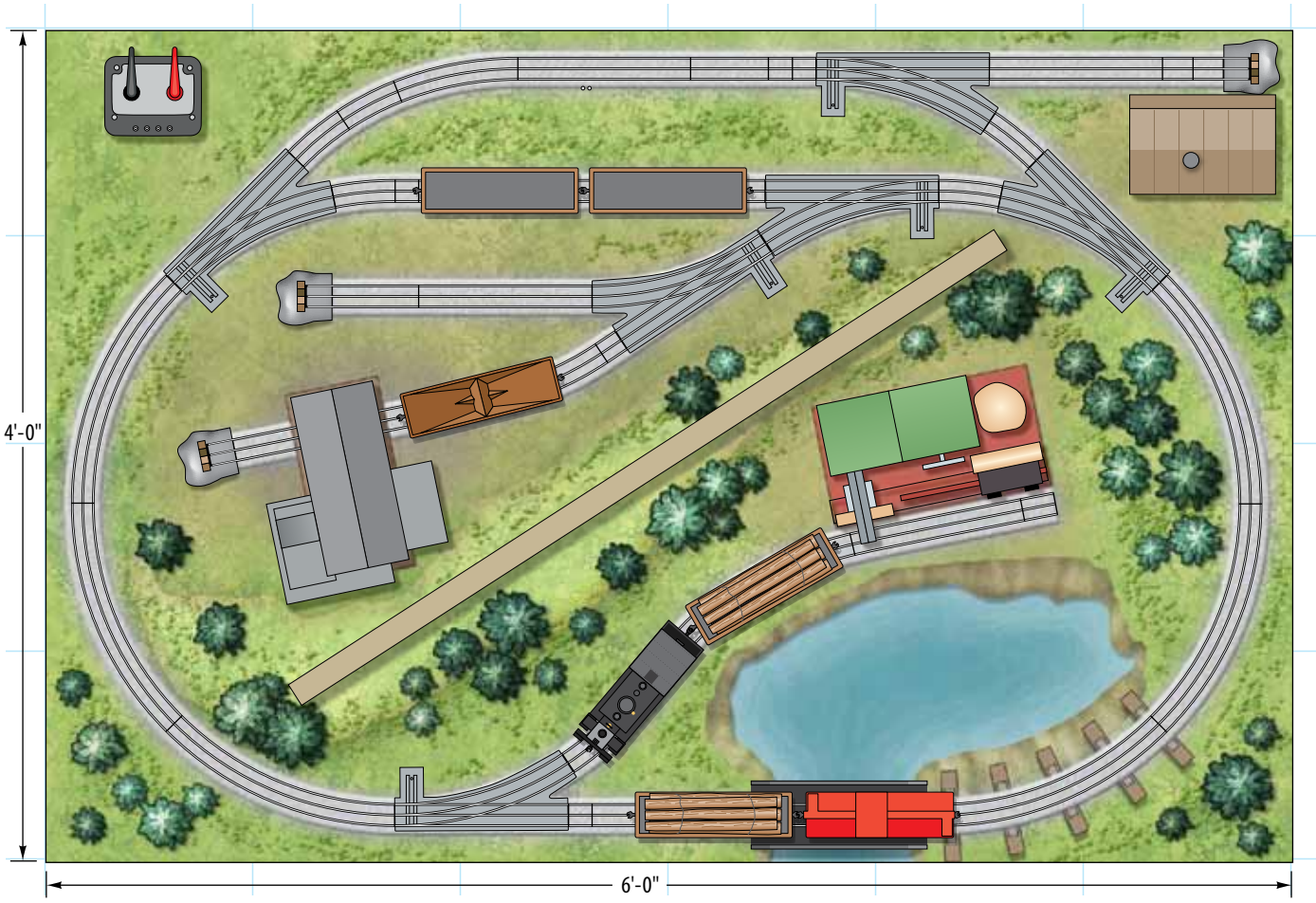
repeated, but another option is provided by a passing siding bent around the second curve. Park a train heading uphill along the siding, and you've got the main line cleared for a second train or maintenance-of-way work.

To establish the mountainous terrain for this layout, I'd suggest stacking a single sheet of 2-inch-thick foam insulation board over lightweight benchwork or even a sheet of plywood. Assemble the plan on the top surface and trace the position of each FasTrack section. Then, after you remove the connected track, you can use a hot knife or fine-tooth pull saw to carve additional pieces of foam board needed to build up the elevation both under and alongside the track. Even simpler, just use precut foam riser and incline (4 percent) sets from Woodland Scenics—and get to the thrill of running toy trains over a mountain pass on a 4 x 8-foot layout much quicker!

By Kent Johnson

LIONEL FASTRACK COMPONENTS

Quantity	Description/Number
2	1.75-inch straight (12026)
1	4.5-inch straight (12025)
6	10-inch straight (12014)
14	0-36 curve, 45-degree (12015)
3	0-36 curve, 22.5-degree (12022)
3	0-36 curve, 11.25-degree (12023)
3	0-36 left-hand track switch (12045)
1	0-36 right-hand track switch (12046)
1	bumper (12059)



Gold Hill Central

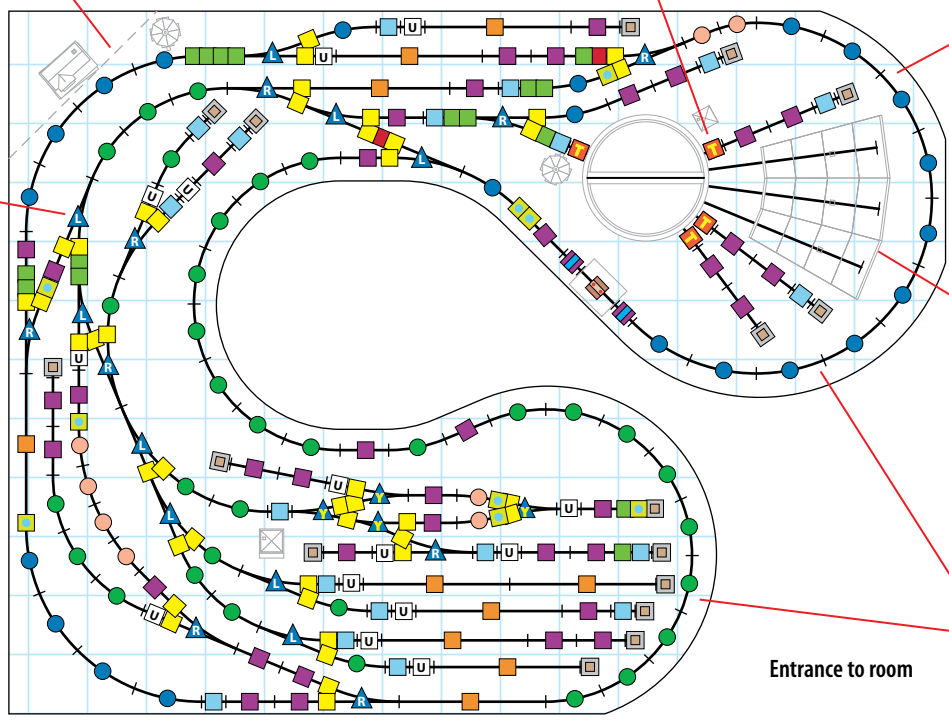
After recently constructing a 4 x 8-foot project layout for *Classic Toy Trains* magazine, I realized that even a small O gauge arrangement could quickly fill up a significant portion of a typical household bedroom. I found that while a small layout might only occupy a finite area of a room, you must still leave room to access all points of the pike. In the case of our project layout, that meant leaving at least a 2-foot perimeter around each side. It didn't take long to calculate that this additional "working room" immediately expands the layout area from 4 x 8-feet to 8 x 12-feet.

I can only imagine the trouble I'd encounter trying to explain to my spouse how a small 32 square-foot layout now requires a 96 square-foot space! While there are many effective techniques for begging and pleading for more space, there's only one way to make things work and leave your dignity intact—shrink a 4 x 8-foot layout down to size. And that's precisely what I did to this compact FasTrack plan for the Gold Hill Central.

Simply by trimming the excess tabletop area from an otherwise full-featured 4 x 8-foot design, I was able to fit standard FasTrack O-36 curves into a 4 x 6-foot space. Now when you add on the 2-foot working-room perimeter, the overall area holds steady at 80 square feet. So what did I have to sacrifice to make it all work, you ask? Nothing (other than a wee bit of my dignity)!

Pint-sized pike packs a punch

Everything you'd expect to find on a small layout can be found on the 4 x 6-foot Gold Hill Central, a railroad serving gold mining and logging industries in the western United States. Since the action isn't fast paced in and around the two industrial areas, separated by a 2-foot-tall view block



If the Timesaver section of the layout isn't enough to keep you engaged, this plan also includes a small yard with four tracks used to sort cars without fouling operations on the main line. In fact, whether you're working the yard, the industrial spurs, or the Timesaver section, your switcher doesn't ever need to venture across the main line—even when moving to and from the locomotive servicing terminal.

Full-service terminal

Though it's hard to imagine, there's room for structures as large as an Atlas O operating turntable and roundhouse sections, the plan includes both of these. You'll need to use Lionel transition pieces and Atlas O transition pins to connect the FasTrack sections to the turntable. Also consider installing insulating track pins to create electrically isolated storage tracks for your prized motive power.

An operating Lionel water tower or coaling tower could provide additional intrigue when placed adjacent to the other terminal structures encircled by a ring of O-72 curved track. If you do include more operating accessories, be sure to leave room for an access road that begins at the Lionel 12062 Grade Crossing with gates and flashers.

Working the railroad

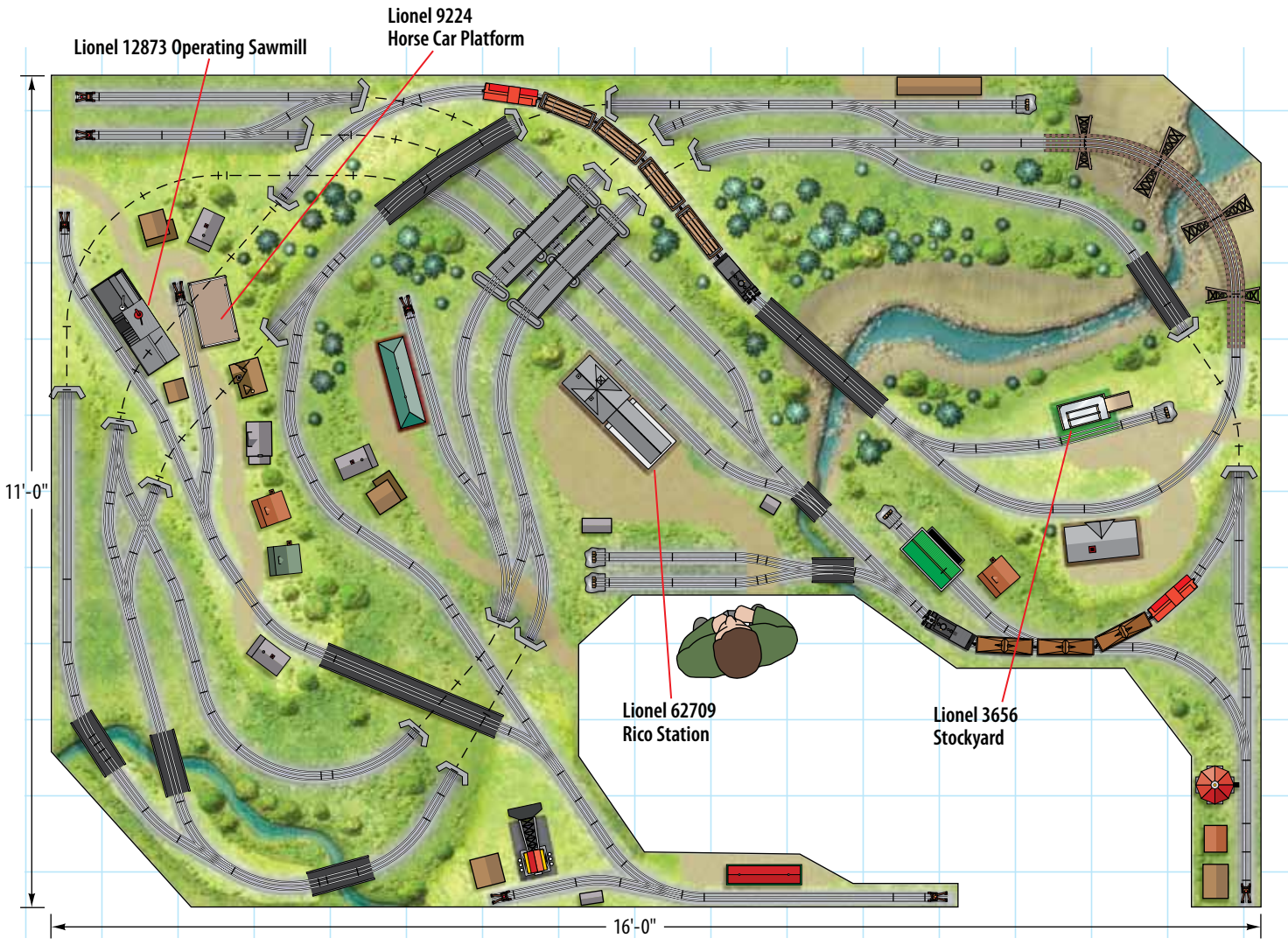
Fitting all of these features into the 12 x 16-foot confines requires a few small concessions. The ideal location for running the layout is from a control panel at the center of the layout. Perhaps even three control panels—one for the main line, another for the terminal, and the third for the Timesaver/yard area—would be best, but access to this point is rather constricted.

The area just inside the room is a good secondary operating location, but you'll still want to create a pop-up access area at the center of the layout to reach any derailments. More likely, you'll just want a place where you can immerse yourself in all the Timesaver switching or the smooth-sailing action over the continuous mainline loop.

By Kent Johnson

LIONEL FASTRACK COMPONENTS

Quantity	Description	Number
9	1 ⅜-inch straight	(12073)
42	1 ⅜-inch straight without roadbed	(12074)
16	1.75-inch straight	(12026)
2	4.5-inch straight	(12025)
19	5-inch straight	(12024)
39	10-inch straight	(12014)
10	30-inch straight	(12042)
33	0-60 curve, 22.5-degree	(12056)
22	0-72 curve, 22.5-degree	(12041)
8	0-84 curve, 11.25-degree	(12061)
4	0-72 wye track switch	(12047)
9	0-72 left-hand track switch	(12048)
9	0-72 right-hand track switch	(12049)
14	5-inch uncoupler	(12020)
2	5-inch isolated block	(12029)
4	5-inch transition	(12040)
1	grade crossing with gates and flasher	(12036)
16	bumper	(12059)



Rio Grande Southern

Narrow gauge railroads aren't often modeled on O gauge layouts, as our toy trains are typically able to navigate tight curves without reducing the spacing between rails. But rather than miss out on the features associated with that brand of railroading, I decided to capture many of these charms on this 11 x 16-foot O gauge track plan.

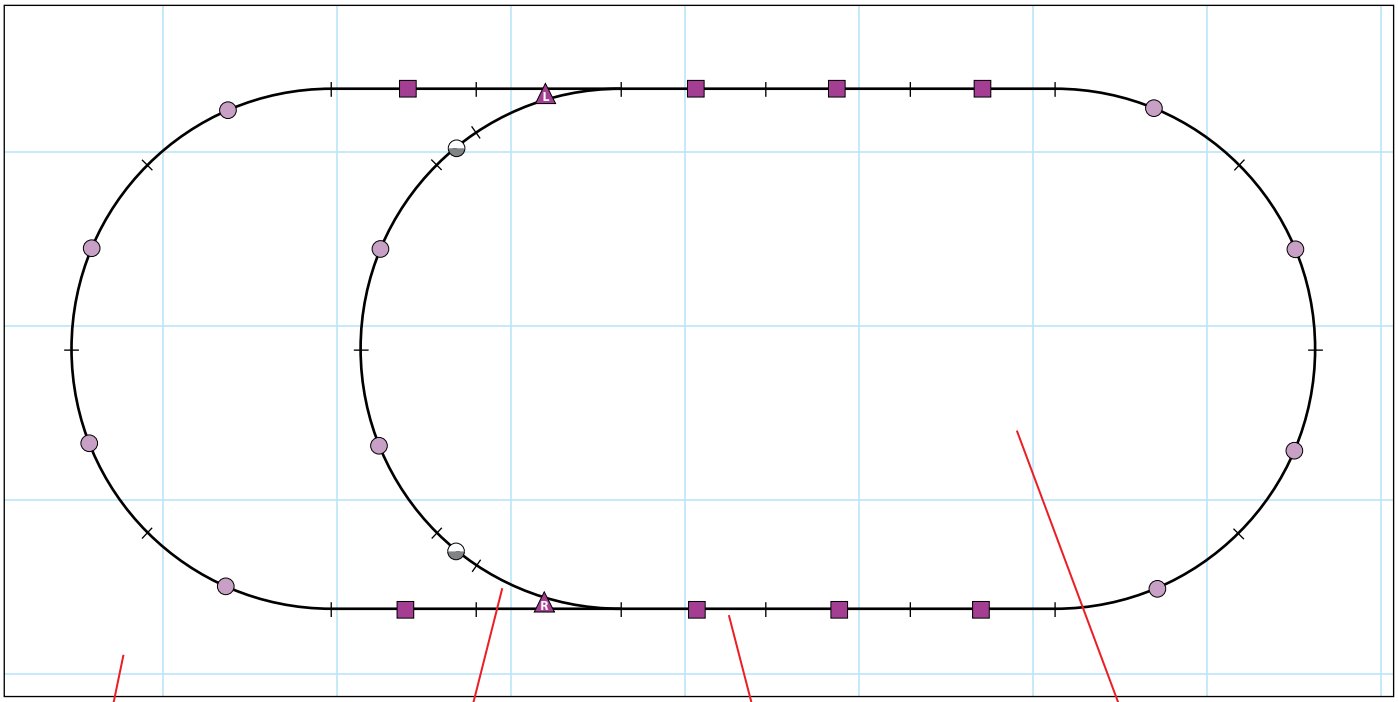
My version of a western narrow gauge railroad was inspired by a scheme from the late John Armstrong, an innovative contributor to *Model Railroader* magazine. I adapted his original HO scale plan for the Rio Grande Southern, a railroad serving the silver mining towns in the mountains of western Colorado well into the 1950s, to suit Lionel O gauge FasTrack components.

To represent an appropriate mountain railroad setting, I made generous use of noticeable grades (as much as 4 percent), tight curves (O-36 minimum), and smaller-portioned equipment and structures. The selectively compressed (O-27) locomotives and rolling stock are good options. Structures on this layout are generally associated with the cattle ranching, logging, and mining industries, each of which provides good reason to include operating accessories and freight cars.

The real draw of this layout is the potential for spectacular western mountain scenery. Rail lines are carved out of sheer cliffs and route through numerous tunnels and over tall trestles crossing steep gorges, tumbling rapids, and waterfalls. Depending on the type of mountain range you model, it's possible to get by without adding a large number of trees. The goal is to develop terrain that looks as though it can challenge our toy trains.

While this may not be the route of the *Super Chief*, tiny trains slowly negotiating precarious mountain tracks can be every bit as exciting!

By Michael Tylick



You can expand the layout here to create an L-shaped railroad.

Passing siding

You could add a track switch here to form an industrial spur.

Depending on the scenery motif, this area could be developed into a small yard.

LIONEL FASTRACK COMPONENTS

Quantity	Description/Number
8	10-inch straight (12014)
2	0-36 curve, 11.25-degree (12023)
10	0-36 curve, 45-degree (12015)
1	0-36 left-hand track switch (12045)
1	0-36 right-hand track switch (12046)