



GREAT NORTHERN



BRASS CAR SIDES

Passenger Car Parts for the Streamliners

Great Northern 82' Rebuilt Baggage-Express-Mail Storage Cars [Item No. 173-80]

This sheet is supplied with our HO-scale brass car side set for modeling the Great Northern 82' Baggage-Express-Mail Storage cars numbered in the GN 308-313 and 200-207 groups, as well as other similar GN cars. It supplements modeling information contained in our *Empire Builder* sheet.

The Great Northern Railway held the contracts from the U.S. Post Office Department for transporting transcontinental mail between St. Paul and Seattle. The GN operated its *Fast Mail* as trains 27 and 28 from the early steam era through the consolidation of this train over parts and then all of its route with the *Western Star*, GN Nos. 3 and 4, with the latter train adopting the *Fast Mail*'s numbers by 1960. These trains as well as the *Dakotan*, *Winnipeg Limited*, *Red River*, *Gopher* and *Badger* among others carried not only railway post office and storage mail cars but also baggage and express cars. The GN responded to the need for replacement and additional headend cars in the 1950's by converting dozens of heavyweight sleepers and a few dining cars from its own fleet and purchased from the Pullman Company to groups of modernized baggage, express and storage mail cars in various groups in the 200-400 series.

The primary resources used in the creation of these etched parts were the following:

“Great Northern Head End Cars Part X - Rebuilds of the 1940s and 1950s” by John R. Westley and Kenneth R. Middleton. Great Northern Railway Historical Society Ref. Sheet No. 370 (Sept. 2011)
Burlington Northern Passenger Cars by Charles A. Rudisel (C.A.R. Publications, 1974) Out of print

The references above, plus the last three of John Strauss, Junior's Great Northern Pictorial books published by Four Ways West (listed below) describe and illustrate the equipment and operation of these trains and cars.

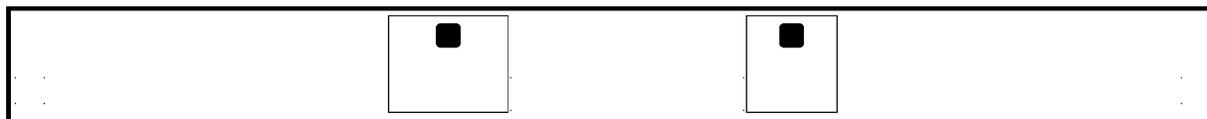
Vol. 3: Rocky's Clean Window Trains for 1947, 1950 and 1955 *Empire Builder*.

Vol. 4: Rocky's Northwest Postman and New Companions for *Western Star*, *Fast Mail*, *Winnipeg Limited*, *Red River* and other post-war trains.

Vol. 5: Rocky's Robe of Many Colors for coverage of all trains during 1960-1971.

The GNRHS Reference Sheet No. 370 is indispensable for anyone modeling any of the Great Northern's rebuilt headend cars.

The pair of identical brass sides and four identical door pieces in this set are etched from 0.010" spring brass, with etched grabiron and handrail holes. The doors are also available in pairs as our #173-307. The sides with doors installed are illustrated below.



The sides are designed to be used with our #173-101 Basic Body Kit, which offers the streamlined roof and ends of the prototype, as well as maximum flexibility in choice of underbody and roof details, trucks and couplers. Some modelers may choose to use these sides and doors to kitbash the Walthers heavyweight 12-1, 10-1-2 and 8-1-2 Pullman sleeping car bodies (#932-10xxx) in order to model a these or other series of rebuilt cars. To make this an option, the brass sides are 11.134" long, which is approximately 15" longer than the prototypes' 79' 7" length over frame. The Train Station Products #807 PS/ACF Passenger Car Core Kit is a potential source of streamlined roof and ends to go with the Walthers underframe and trucks. Just shortening the TSP roof and floor and selecting six-wheel trucks is another alternative for modeling the GN cars that have the streamlined appearance. At the other extreme, GN cars that retained the heavyweight roof and ends, such as GN 484, would use all of a Walthers Pullman except with the brass sides and doors, either as overlays or side replacements.

The six-wheel trucks of the original cars were retained in the rebuilding but they were converted to roller bearing types. The Walthers #933-1079 trucks are of this type but they were replaced with the #920-2201 which were announced for release on 2-28-15 when this sheet was revised on 12-30-14. The trucks on the Walthers heavyweight Pullmans have friction bearings, as do the classic Central Valley six-wheel trucks in both the cast and riveted frame types. These latter are readily available second-hand and can offer excellent rolling qualities. The Branchline and Rivarossi/AHM heavyweight sleepers are other potential sources of underframes, trucks and detail parts. Other truck possibilities include Bethlehem Car Works (BCW) #718-1272 and Athearn #90413. Candidates for the roof vents are the BCW #28 Long Garland Roof Vents (14) on page 5 of Catalog 110 and the #30B Passenger Car Fishbelly (plastic).

Warning. Because of the narrow bands of brass at the tops and bottoms of the door openings these sides are particularly vulnerable to bending during any kind of handling. We recommend that the brass door pieces be affixed to the backs of the sides with contact adhesive, tape, or solder at an early stage of fabrication to provide resistance to bending.

GN began applying "Big Sky Blue" to its cars in 1967 and photographs show that a few of the rebuilt headend cars did receive this scheme. However, the dramatic drop in demand for such cars after the post office cancelled many (but not all) mail contracts in October of 1967 caused most of these cars to remain in their classic Omaha Orange and Pullman Green until their conversion to company service or scrapping.

Decals: Microscale Set 87-153 for lettering and numbering, Set 87-154 for striping. Champ PH-122 has lettering and numbering for those who can find this set from that much-missed supplier.

We solicit your photos of completed models and descriptions of construction techniques using these brass parts for revision of this sheet and addition to the large number of examples of our customers' work already on our web pages. We would also appreciate hearing of any other decals and detail parts that are appropriate for these cars.

All of our catalog and modeling sheets and forms are available for downloading and printing at www.brasscarsides.com. To receive paper copies of our combined HO and N-scale catalog, reservation sheet, and current bulletin, please send a two-stamp SSAE to **BRASS CAR SIDES**, 715 S. 7th St., St. Peter, MN 56082. Address e-mail to info@brasscarsides.com. Revised Dec. 30, 2014